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Jan-Erik and Beate Kuenstler, Germany



Thirty years ago, Jan-Erik Kuenstler lived with the Mick and Judy Gutttau family as an exchange student from Germany and now their son, Jona, is an exchange student in Treynor, living with the Josh and Shelly Gutttau family. Jan-Erik, Beate,

and son Simon are visiting for 20 days.

Today they shared research about Bea's (pronounced "Bay-uh") grandfather, Adam Nold, who served in the German army during WWII and was in a POW camp in the U.S. for three years. Opa (Grandpa) Nold was born in 1915 in Dornheim. He went to school for 8 years and was confirmed in 1930. He started a career as a carpenter and worked for Opel (car manufacturer), but was called into military service in 1937. Two years later a terrible war started.

Adam Nold was married in 1939 but before they were married they had a child in 1938, which was very unusual. They had not been able to marry earlier because the government could not approve the marriage until it was determined there was no Jewish blood in their bloodline, going back four generations, which took much time. Their marriage was the first "War Marriage" in their home town. He and his wife Margarete Metzger eventually had five more children.

During the war he was deployed to France, then Italy. He got his drivers' license and became an instructor. He was supposed to go to Russia, but instead he went to North Africa. If you became a POW in Russia, many died. Adam Nold was there briefly and the soldiers were lacking toilet paper and used Hitler's book as toilet paper.

Adam fought in the battle of Tobruk and El Alamein in Africa. When he was captured, he was a POW of the British, then of the U.S., and shipped to Boston. He remembered Boston

being such a bright city, compared to Germany where the electricity had been destroyed in his home town. He commented that the women dressed prettily and wore makeup. The people were friendly. He then went by train to Texas, where he was in three different POW camps in 1943-1946.

Arriving first at Camp Bowie, he was interrogated a lot, not about Nazis or Hitler, but about Communism, which the US was afraid of, and that surprised him. He stated he was treated very well, the same as U.S. soldiers in the area. They were not treated as criminals. They had the same ration of food as U.S. soldiers and their beds were good. They had regular soccer games, tournaments on Sunday and saw two movies a week. They could go to the city on their own too. They were paid a daily wage to work on farms. It was a win/win – Americans needed labor, and it was a good life for the Germans.

A postcard which he sent from Camp Bowie to home reported his health was good. An emotional letter from Camp Brady was written stating, "When you are at home, do whatever the occupying forces want you to do. Don't care about anything but your health. Americans and English are humans like us, whoever behaves decently will be treated decently. Trust in God even in the darkest hours and pray that the worst will be over soon and we will see each other again soon."

Mick Gutttau reported that when he and Judy met Bea's Opa Nold, he stated that being in American POW camps were among the best years of his life.

Adam returned to Germany in 1946, received his German ID and was "politically checked". He went on to live a productive life working for Opel/GM and was active for 75 years in the local Sports Club and served in the parliament, dying in 2006.

Jan-Erik also was asked about how Germany is doing today which he spoke about for 15 minutes which was also very interesting.

**Next week's Speaker:
To be announced.**

Famous Quote

"Adopt the pace of nature; her secret is patience."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Meeting Minutes

Jordan Campbell called the meeting to order. There were 24 members present. Guests were Jan-Erik, Beate, and Simon Kuenstler.

Jordan led the pledge and Dee Gutttau offered the prayer. Dale Willenborg, Keith Denton, and Bill Vorthmann shared jokes.

50/50: Glenrose Meier won

Attendance: Linda Danker's name was drawn but went unclaimed.

Birthdays: None

Anniversaries: We celebrated Jim and Diane Clausen's 56th anniversary.

Bragging Rights: (Dollars are contributed to benefit local youth programs.)

- John Klein bragged about the Treynor Jazz Band receiving 5th place out of 16 bands in their class at the Iowa Jazz Championships.
- Jeff Jorgensen stated that he was impressed with John Klein's application presentation to the Board of Supervisors.
- Judy Gutttau announced that Jona Kuenstler has been starting on Treynor's Varsity Soccer.
- Dee Gutttau shared that Gary Gutttau had done a good job presenting about Loess Hills to the Master Gardeners last Saturday.
- Jordan Campbell stated he is still walking, but is incredibly sore from the Treynor Alumni Tournament last Saturday. Blair Hoegh was the oldest person playing.
- Dick Fox shared reported on his grandson, Tyler Brown's success for Univ. of Neb. in spite of standing rain water throwing discus at 165 ft. and had his PR of 25 ft. further in the javelin.
- Dale Willenborg praised his wife for preparing 45 meals for his parents who are 98 and 92.

- Jan-Erik Kuenstler bragged that in a basketball game between Jan-Erik and Josh against their sons, Jona and Dane, that the dads won the 2nd game.

Community/Business:

1. Scholarship applications are being reviewed as a group today after the meeting.
2. The Can Kennel sorting will be Wednesday at 5:30 PM to support Keep Kids Alive. Pizza will be served afterwards so let Dale know if you will help.
3. Gary Gutttau reported that three JOI club members helped sort cans recently so they were thankful for Doug and LaJean Wehring helping the Optimists.
4. Dale Willenborg stated that flyers about flags sponsorships will be distributed by the Cub Scouts Saturday, in addition to their flyers.
5. John Klein stated that KMA called to interview him about the Can Kennel and it will play on Tuesday.

Auction: None

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned.

HUMOR



Calendar

Events

April 12	Can Kennel Sorting – 5:30 PM
May 1	Mulch Madness –Adults arrive at 12:30 PM

Birthdays

Apr 20	Steve Chambers
Apr 24	Linda Danker

Apr 25 Irvin Saar
Apr 28 Gene Seran

May Dale Willenborg

Anniversaries

Programs:

Apr Keith Denton
John Klein (last Sat.)

Speakers

Apr 15 TBA
Apr 22 TBA
Apr 29 TBA

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Dues/Donations/Flag Money: Mail to Optimist Club of Treynor, PO Box 354, Treynor, IA 51575