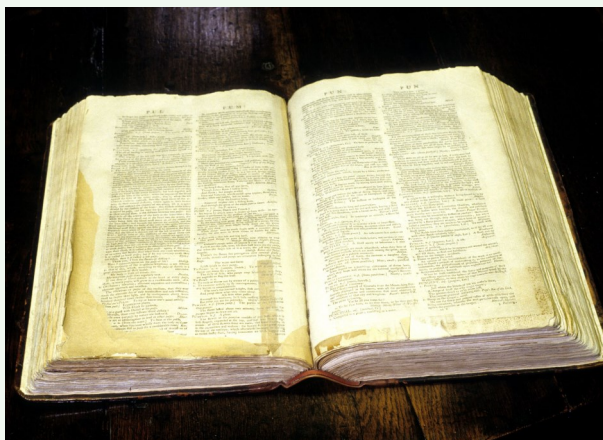




## *Plans for a Texas German Dictionary*



For the past decade, TGDP members have been asked whether they are creating a dictionary of Texas German. Compiling dictionaries is a difficult and time-consuming task that

requires detailed research on written and spoken word usage over longer periods of time, which is why we have never seriously considered compiling a dictionary until now. How-

ever, now that we have interviewed more than 850 Texas German speakers over the past 20+ years and have gathered extensive written materials (letters, newspapers, diaries, etc.), we have enough linguistic data to compile a Texas German dictionary.

In March 2022, Dr. Hans C. Boas, the director of the TGDP, organized the Texas Symposium on Lexicography at UT Austin. The participants from Germany, Hungary, France, P.R.

*continued on p. 7*

## *Jim Kearney's Texas German UGS course*

Texas is a colorful tapestry of many nationalities and ethnic groups, each contributing in their own way to the rich diversity of Texas that should be celebrated. In the nineteenth century, waves of immigrants from several Central and Northern European countries altered the demographics of Texas significantly while accelerating both economic and cultural development of the republic and (later) state. German immigrants formed by far the largest component of this migration. Painted churches,

dance halls, sausage festivals, etc., still speak to the rich popular culture created by these immigrants in large swaths of Texas while, amazingly, pockets of bilingualism still survive after several generations. The German immigrants also bequeathed a substantial cultural legacy to the state in literature, music, and material culture. Fascinating cultural fusions arose while novel and improbable ethnic redefinitions took shape as these immigrants interacted with other ethnic groups—Hispanic, African,

Czech, and Anglo. Many German immigrants championed progressive political and social attitudes current in Europe that they transferred to their new Texas home: free public education for both men and women, support for the arts, concern for the environment, sustainable agriculture, and so forth. Other attitudes led to serious conflict, especially during the Civil War since many of the immigrants openly opposed secession and/or slavery. Their gener-

*continued on p. 6*

### TGDP MILESTONES 2021–2022

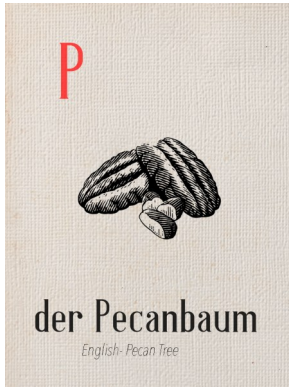
- ◆ The TGDP has interviewed 38 new speakers since November 2021.
- ◆ TGDP members presented their research at academic conferences in Bamberg, Erfurt, Göttingen, and Mannheim (Germany), Iowa City, College Station, and Salzburg (Austria).
- ◆ A generous anonymous donor donated \$100,000 to the TGDP to support student research assistants.
- ◆ Jim Kearney's 2021 book *Inside the Texas Revolution: The Enigmatic Memoir of Herman Ehrenberg*, received the Summerfield G. Robertson award for the outstanding Texas history book.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

<i>TxG Dictionary</i>	1, 7
<i>TxG History Course</i>	1, 6
<i>TxG Letters</i>	2
<i>New TGDP Members</i>	3, 6
<i>TGDP Alumni Update</i>	3
<i>TxG Sound System</i>	4



## (Texas) German Word Formation



One particularly interesting area of morphology is compounding, a process by which different words (or sometimes morphemes, the smallest unit of meaning) get combined into larger words. An example in English would be the noun *homework*, which is a combination of

*home* and *work*. The same process is at play in German, where nouns can be combined with other nouns to form longer nouns. Some Texas German compound nouns are different from words in Standard German in that they are based on their English counterparts.

For example, Texas German *der Pecanbaum* (English: pecan tree) is based on its English counterpart. Similar examples include *die Dreckerd* ('dirt road'), *das Phonebuch* ('the phonebook') and *das Molassesbrot* ('a slice of bread with molasses on it').

## Historical Texan German Letters

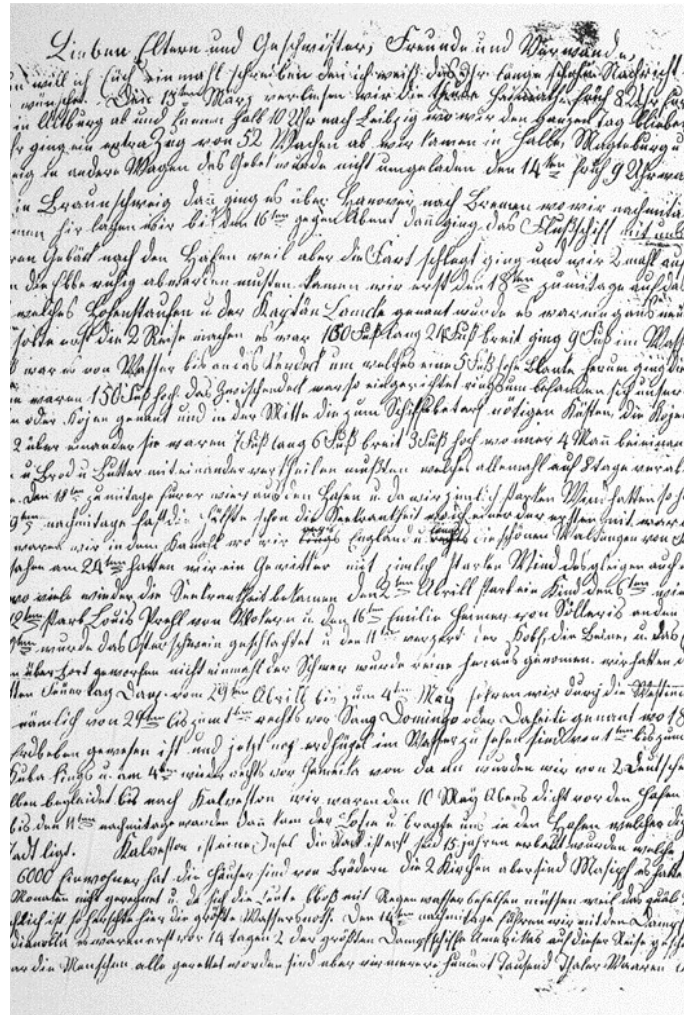
Since the TGDP was founded in September of 2001, the project has focused primarily on recording speakers of Texas German and to transcribe, translate, and archive these recordings in the freely available online Texas German Dialect Archive ([www.tgdp.org/dialect-archive/](http://www.tgdp.org/dialect-archive/)). Over the years, many Texas German speakers have given us old family letters and diaries written by their ancestors in German. In some cases, the TGDP could keep the letters, in other cases, we digitized the letters and saved the digital copies on our servers.

Time and again, we found the stories in the letters and diaries to be similar to many of the stories we recorded with present-day Texas German speakers, which is no surprise. In order to supplement our existing record of spoken Texas German of the 21st century, we are currently in the process of exploring different ways to make the German

letters from the 19th and 20th centuries available to a larger public for teaching, research, and outreach.

This is no easy task, since older German handwriting appears in different scripts, some of which are difficult to decipher. Working with a team of transcription specialists in Germany, we are getting many of these Texas German letters transcribed, then we translate them into English. Our goal is to create a supplementary online platform where people can access digital images of the original letters, together with the German transcriptions and their English translations. To this end, we are exploring different ways of cooperating with the project "German Heritage in Letters" ([germanletters.org](http://germanletters.org)), which is housed at the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C.

If you or someone you know has family letters or diaries written in German, please let us know.



Texas German letter from the 19th century



## New DAAD Professor: Jana Weiss

Jana is a historian and DAAD Associate Professor at the University of Texas at Austin. With a focus on U.S. and transatlantic history, her research interests include 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century immigration, knowledge, and religious history as well as the history of racism.

After studying at the University of Bremen, she received her PhD in 2013 at the University of Münster with a study on the role and functions of civil religion on U.S.-American patriotic holidays after 1945. Currently, Jana is working on her second book (*Habilitation*) titled *The Lager Beer Revolution in the United States: The History of Beer and German-Americans as a Reinvention of Ethnicity, Knowledge, and Consumption*. In



Jana Weiss

this book, she analyses the technological and cultural transfer of the “German art of brewing” to the United States, covering the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, when German-style, bottom-fermented beers were first introduced until national prohibition in 1920.

## New TGDP Member: Verena Sauer

Verena Sauer is a Feodor Lynen Fellow (funded by the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation) from Germany and has a PhD in Germanic Studies with an interest in minority languages, perceptual dialectology, and Frame Semantics. Her postdoc project focused on historic Frame Semantics. She analyzed language attitudes of authors from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> centuries and reconstructed their knowledge of the term *High German* within semantic frames.

Her research for the TGDP is about speech attitudes of Texas Germans towards *Hochdeutsch* (Standard German), i.e.,



Verena Sauer

what is associated with the term, what knowledge is available, how Hochdeutsch differs from Texas German as perceived by interviewees.

Verena has been working with the TGDP since October 2022.



Ad in the *Seguer Zeitung* (March 13, 1906)

Her research has been generously funded by the German Research Foundation (DFG), the German

Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), and the German Historical Institute in Washington, D.C.

## TGDP Alumni Update: Margo Blevins

Margo Blevins, the previous Graduate Research Assistant (i.e., Project Manager) for the TGDP, completed her PhD in August 2022. Her dissertation *The language-tagging & orthographic normalization of spoken mixed-language data, with a focus on Texas German* proposes ways to streamline the annotation of Texas German transcripts to make them more usable for researchers.

Margo was first introduced to the TGDP in 2012 when she took Hans Boas' course on Texas German at UT Austin and has been working with the TGDP since 2016. For the next year, she will continue her



Margo Blevins

work with the TGDP as a postdoc and she looks forward to making significant headway on several TGDP projects.



## Dissertation on Texas German Sound System

Matthias Warmuth is currently in the final stages of his dissertation project on Texas German phonology. His dissertation focuses on how language death and language attrition, i.e., the process of forgetting a native or first language, affect the pronunciation of the heritage dialect.

More specifically, the dissertation addresses a variety of changes in the sound system, contrasting data collected by Glenn Gilbert in the 1960s with more recent data collected by the Texas German Dialect Project (TGDP). His focus lies on developments that are most likely due to transfer from American English, the domi-

nant/every-day language for almost all speakers of Texas German. The analysis relies on quantifiable measurements of consonants and vowels using the phonetic software *Praat* and perceptual analysis.

The data reveals a variety of previously undocumented changes that suggest the transfer of dominant language articulatory habits, e.g., the long vowels /e:/ and /o:/ are often articulated as American English diphthongs [eɪ] and [oʊ]. This phenomenon has not yet been described for any of the German-based dialects in North America. Furthermore, the analysis suggests the centering/fronting of

segment /u:/ to /ʊ/ (e.g. in words such as *gut* 'good' and *tun* 'do') and a much broader distribution of lateral /l/ and approximant /ɹ/, the AE r- and l-sounds.

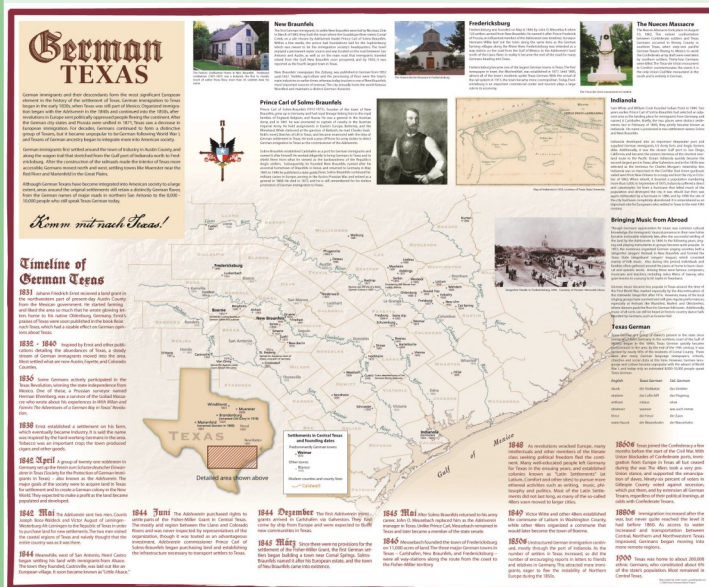
Matthias' work will not only help document TxG specifically, but will also lead to a better understanding of sound change in heritage dialects, which is of significant interest to scholars of German-American Studies, historical linguistics, and language contact.

Over the past year, Matthias presented some of his research insights at two academic conferences and published a paper titled "Rhotics, /u:/ and diphthongization in New Braun-



Matthias Warmuth

fels German" in the journal *Linguistics Vanguard* with the German publishing house De Gruyter Mouton (Berlin) (see <https://doi.org/10.1515/lingvan-2021-0076>).



The German Texas map is available exclusively from the TGDP for \$40.00 (includes shipping and handling). See enclosed order form for details.

## Featured: Texas German Map

Show your Texas German pride and contribute to the Texas German Endowment at the University of Texas at Austin by purchasing one of our high-quality prints of the history of German immigration into Texas!

Donated for fundraising purposes by mapmaker and German American Justin Cozart, this **beautiful 34"x28" map** includes a chronology of the history of Texas Germans dating back to 1831, when Johann Friedrich Ernst first fell in love with the wide-open country and wrote a book about it, *Reise nach Texas*. It also explains key concepts in German immigration, such as the role of the *Adelsverein*, an organization that was instrumental in the settling of Texas, the founding of Texas German towns, basic differences between Texas and Standard German, the popularity of German music, and more. **Contact the TGDP for yours today!**



## Support the Texas German Endowment at the University of Texas at Austin: Purchase a Texas German Map!

The Texas German Dialect Project (TGDP) is proud to offer a **beautiful 34x28" map** of German Texas for purchase (**see reverse for image**). Surrounding the map of Central Texas are several paragraphs about important Texas German people, places and events, and an extensive timeline of German Texas from 1844 to 1900. The maps cost **\$40.00 each, including shipping** in a 36" cardboard tube mailer via USPS.

*Please fill out this order form completely and return with payment to:*

Department of Germanic Studies  
Texas German Dialect Project  
2505 University Ave, C3300  
Burdine Hall 336, 3rd Floor  
The University of Texas at Austin  
Austin, TX 78712 -1802

**All proceeds from this map benefit the Texas German Endowment. Delivery will take 2-3 weeks.**

### **Billing information:**

Name (Last, First) \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Other Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

Would you like to include a donation amount of your choice with your purchase?  
(Donations are tax-deductible.)

☐ Yes! I have added an extra donation in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ ☐ No

Number of maps \_\_\_\_\_ Total amount \$ \_\_\_\_\_

### **Form of payment:**

☐ **Check** enclosed made payable to University of Texas at Austin. Please write "Texas German Endowment" in the memo line

☐ **Credit card:** ☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

Credit Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card \_\_\_\_\_

Shipping address: ☐ Same as above ☐ Alternative address - indicated below

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature** x \_\_\_\_\_ **Date** \_\_\_\_\_





## New TGDP Member: Katja Levina



**Katja Levina**

Katja Levina is a PhD candidate in the Department of Linguistics at the University of Texas at Austin. Her areas of special interest are semantics, its interface with syntax, and pragmatics. Her doctoral research concerns external possessive constructions, such as *Peter kissed Mary on the cheek* as opposed to attributive possessives *Peter kissed Mary's cheek*. Katja is puzzled by the composition of the meaning of external possessives in German, as well as with meanings of their parts and, more gener-

ally, with the encoding of possessive relationships.

Before starting her PhD at UT Austin, Katja received a BA in German and Spanish and MA in Theoretical Linguistics from the Humboldt University in Berlin. Before that, she graduated from a German as a Foreign Language program at the University of Leipzig. She also holds a degree in Law and has a strong interest in the legal use of language.

Katja is curious about everything related to languages. She is a passionate language teacher and language learner. She speaks Russian, German, Spanish, English, and Italian fluently, as well as a little Turkish. In her free time, she enjoys Austin's vibrant music scene, reads, dances and makes modular origami.

Her main tasks at the TGDP are to find and interview Texan German speakers, as well as to store the resulting data properly.

## Jim Kearney's Texas German UGS Course

*continued from p. 1*

ally more enlightened attitude about Native Americans also offers a bright spot in an otherwise sordid narrative of displacement, cultural extinction, and ethnic cleansing. The much lauded but controversial German/Comanche Peace treaty of 1847 is emblematic of this contrast. The UT Austin undergraduate course UGS

303, the "Texas German Experience," taught by Jim Kearney, explores all these aspects. It also examines both the push and pull; the root causes of massive German emigration, which led millions to emigrate in the nineteenth century, and the enticements of Texas, which led thousands to choose our state as their destination for new home and community.

## Comparative Speech Island Archive — An Update

In our 2016 newsletter, the TGDP announced the overhaul of our computational infrastructure behind our online Texas German archive ([tgdp.org/dialect-archive](http://tgdp.org/dialect-archive)). While the archive on our website looks largely unchanged, the infrastructure behind uploading new audio and transcriptions, and creating new locations on our map, have all been updated.

The introduction of this new infrastructure acts as a foundation for the future construction of a compara-

tive speech island archive in which users can listen to German dialects from around the world, e.g., Wisconsin, Brazil, Siberia, and Australia. During our initial tests of this comparative aspect of our new system, we encountered several technological challenges that have prevented us from rolling out the comparative speech island website, as we intended. We are still working towards this goal, however, and hope to unveil it within the next two years, hopefully by 2024.

## Texas German Recipes

*Kochkäse, Panhas, Wurst, Musbrot, süßer Reis* — long-standing connections between Texas Germans and their ancestors can still be found in the kitchen. For example, *Kochkäse* is a regional specialty from northern Hessen, *Panhas* (similar to American scrapple) is well-known in northwestern Germany (particularly Westphalia), and the term *Musbrot* (bread with jam) is often used in the Palatinate region of Germany.

As part of our efforts to preserve and share Texas German culture, the Texas German Dialect Project would like to compile a collection of Texas German recipes and the stories behind them. In addition to this, we would also like to include guides to other everyday activities such as doing laundry, making soap, sewing, slaughtering, and baling hay.

If you have a recipe or knowledge about another everyday activity, please send us an email at [texasgermandialect@gmail.com](mailto:texasgermandialect@gmail.com) or leave us a message at (512) 910-5047.

Thank you!

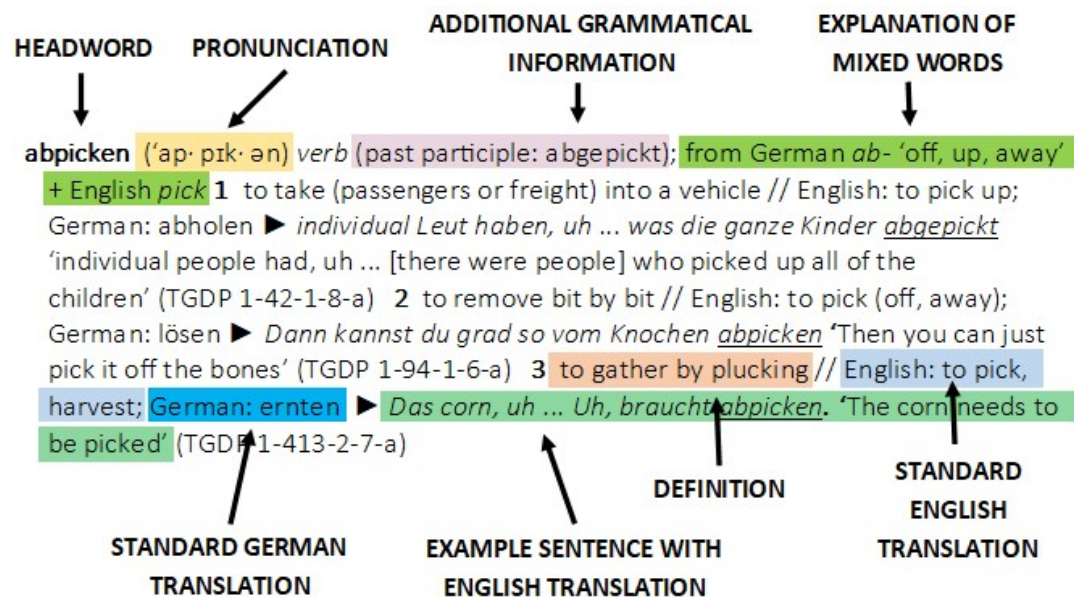


## Plans for a Texan German Dictionary

*continued from p. 1*

China, Ukraine, Georgia, and the United States each gave presentations on their own line of research and provided useful input to our plans for a dictionary of Texas German. During the summer of 2022, Dr. Boas spent time with colleagues who are involved in various German dictionary projects in Göttingen, Erfurt, Leipzig, Berlin, and Vienna. The goal was to find out which databases and software each project uses to compile their dictionaries, how they find clear examples of word usage, and how they compile dictionary entries. This served as the basis for an exploratory study of the structure of a future dictionary of Texas German.

Based on this information, several graduate students started a Texas German dictionary pilot study. They started with Gilbert Jordan's (1977) list of English loanwords in use in Hill Country German. These words include nouns such as *der County Commissioner*, *die Fence*, *die Creek*, *die Shotgun*, etc., verbs such as *liken*, *campen*, *raufmoven*, *naturalizzen*, *dehornen*, etc., and discourse markers such as *you know*, *well*, and *anyhow*. They then searched the Texas German Dialect Archive online database of transcribed Texas German interviews to find examples of these words in context. While they were looking for



Sample of a Texas German dictionary entry

examples, if they came across additional unique Texas German words, they added them to the list. This resulted in a list of over 500 words that are now stored in the online lexicographical database.

Equipped with the list of words and the examples they had found in the TGDA database, the graduate students then started compiling draft dictionary entries for each Texas German word (see image). Over the next academic year, these dictionary entries will be supplemented with phonetic transcription and, when possible, etymological information. In the future, we also plan to search 19th century German newspapers printed in Texas, letters, and diaries, with the goal of documenting how word mean-

ings in Texas German evolved over the past 150+ years. In addition, we hope to learn which factors triggered the change in word meanings over time.

In 2023, we plan to move to the next phase of the dictionary project by conducting systematic searches of the transcripts in the online Texas German Archive. We are interested in automatically comparing words in our corpus with words in a machine readable dictionary of Standard German. We expect this automatic comparison to yield an alphabetical list of all the Texas German words that differ from Standard German. Next, we plan to create additional entries for these Texas German words, similar in structure and content to our existing entries. We

expect this effort to take at least 2-3 years. We will then explore options for publishing different versions of a Texas German dictionary (online, print, domain-specific, etc.). Our goal is to provide useful information about Texas German words and their usage for teaching, research, and outreach.

One factor complicating our research is that Texas German is not a uniform regional dialect of German. Unlike Bavarian, Swabian, or Saxon, Texas German is a mixed variety consisting of at least 5 different regional dialects from Germany. This great degree of linguistic variation means that the Texas German dictionary will be different from other German dialect dictionaries.

## TEXAS GERMAN DIALECT PROJECT (TGDP)

Department of Germanic Studies  
Texas German Dialect Project  
2505 University Ave, C3300  
Burdine Hall 336, 3rd Floor  
The University of Texas at Austin  
Austin, TX 78712-1802

E-Mail: [texasgermandialect@gmail.com](mailto:texasgermandialect@gmail.com)  
Phone: (512) 910-5047

AS REPORTED BY



### Plans for 2023

- ◆ Continue to work on the Texas German dictionary pilot project by adding and enriching lexical entries.
- ◆ Record more Texas German speakers.
- ◆ Continue to work on the comparative German speech islands archive and make it available to the public.
- ◆ Continuation of the compilation of a traveling museum exhibit on Texas German language, culture, and history.



## **We are still looking for Texas German speakers!**

Do you or does someone you know speak Texas German? We're always looking for more speakers to talk to, and we need your help!

Don't worry if you haven't spoken German in a while and feel a little rusty — we're just trying to preserve as much as we can while we can, and we're happy to come to you. You are also welcome to visit us on the the University of Texas at Austin campus.

E-mail: [texasgermandialect@gmail.com](mailto:texasgermandialect@gmail.com)  
Phone: (512) 910-5047

Thank you for your help and support! We couldn't do it without you.

