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# AATG – MI

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Fall 2007

Newsletter

Let's all meet at the Holiday Inn South Conference Center in Lansing for the 2007 MiWLA Conference: "A Core Investment for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century." The dates for this year's conference are October 18 and 19. Early Bird Registration is now open on-line until October 1<sup>st</sup>. To register, visit [www.miwla.org](http://www.miwla.org)

## German Sessions at MiWLA in Lansing

**Auf dem Philosophen Weg** Ballroom G Thursday 8:00 – 8:50 Katherine Tosa

**Experience Switzerland: The Swiss Investment in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century** Imperial West Thursday 8:00 – 8:50 Renate Pennington

**No, There Are No Kangaroos in Austria! A Century of Austria for the German Classroom** Imperial West Thursday, 9:00 – 9:50 Judy Cooper

**Making Karneval/Fasching/Fastnacht/Mardi Gras Come Alive Across the Languages** University 1 Thursday 9:00 – 9:50 Florina Kapitzke

**How to Use and Contribute to swisstudies.org** University 2 Thursday 9:00 – 9:50 Margrit Zinggeler

**Enhancing Students' Exposure to FLs Through Online Homework Activities** Ballroom H Thursday 1:00 – 1:50 Angelika Kraemer, Senta Goertler

**Educational Drama for Teaching Culture in Foreign Language Classrooms** University 2 Thursday 1:00 – 1:50 Steffi Schütze

**What You Should Know Before You Go: Fostering Global Competence in the German Classroom** University 2 Thursday 2:00 – 2:50 Katharina Gross

**AATG-Michigan Chapter Meeting** Ballroom H Thursday 4:30 – 5:20 Janet Harris

**New Tools for the German Teacher's Toolbox** University 1 Thursday 4:30 – 5:20 Christopher La Cross

**Contemporary German Music in the Foreign Language Classroom** University 4 Friday 2:00 – 5:30 Senta Goertler

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### RENEW!!

This will be your last newsletter if your membership has expired (see mailing label). If you wish to continue to be a member and get the newsletter, you need to renew your membership immediately. Look for the renewal form on page 8 of this newsletter

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## AATG-Michigan Minutes April 28, 2007

The meeting was called to order at 2:05 pm by President Janet Harris in the auditorium of Dewing Hall on the Kalamazoo College campus in conjunction with a workshop called "Breaking the Sound Barrier," presented by Jo Sanders, former national president of AATG. The minutes were approved (motion by Janet Lein, seconded by Kathy Tosa) with one correction: the income received of \$950.30 came from the national level (not lever).

Janet Harris could not contact Kara Stutzman or Sabine Spezia to get an update on the Care Basket project for new teachers. The CD of tips and tricks costs \$10.00; it is German-specific. Since the methods courses at the universities are not all language-specific, it is a big help for young teachers of German.

There are 175 Michigan members in the national AATG.

Donna Kameron-Houskamp gave the treasurer's report which was accepted (motion by Maryanne Heidemann, seconded by Kathy Tosa). Our balance on October 25, 2006 was \$2,751.92; as of April 28, 2007, we have \$3,094.82.

Since Gisela Moffitt could not be present, the official acknowledgement of her retirement will be held at the fall meeting.

Kathy Tosa is now co-editor of the newsletter with Mitch Place. Contributions are welcome and the deadline for the fall newsletter is August 30.

MiWLA (Michigan World Language Association) meets October 18-19, 2007. We don't know yet when the AATG-Mi meeting will be scheduled.

A possible contribution to Virginia Tech to honor slain German instructor, Jamie Bishop, was discussed. A motion was passed to contribute \$200 (motion by Kathy Tosa, seconded by Angela Erdman). Treasurer Donna Kameron-Houskamp will take care of sending it.

...Continued from page 2

Janet Harris brought materials donated by retired teacher Gerda Stefanovic; a couple of new teachers were able to take advantage of them.

The chapter website is in need of an update, with current minutes, etc. Mark Ferguson at Wayne State University is the webmaster.

A lengthy discussion followed about the question: Should students whose teachers who are not current AATG members receive awards? Evidently, it is not possible to exclude such students from taking the test, so one possibility would be to tell them up-front that there are no prizes for students whose teachers are not members. It needs to be taken up with national AATG. A motion was made that students whose teachers are not current members of national AATG would not receive awards (motion by Janet Lein, seconded by Kathy Tosa). Motion was tabled, to be discussed in October.

Discussion followed about German programs that are under threat, specifically Farmington Public Schools. A possible workshop topic was suggested: How to deal with “Nacht- und Nebelaktionen,” which many of these attempts seem to be. Initial suggestion: get involved.

There is a new national dues schedule, which makes it more expensive for new teachers, but there is money to reimburse newer members of the profession for the first three years to encourage them to join national AATG. We can subsidize and be reimbursed.

Our chapter constitution needs to be revised before 2009. There will be a template.

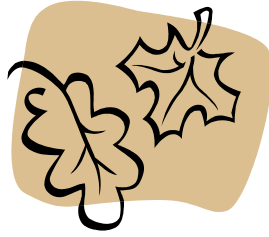
The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 pm (motion by Kathy Tosa, seconded by Janet Lein).

Respectfully submitted,  
Maryanne Heidemann  
Secretary

## Electronic Newsletters

At the last Executive Board Meeting the option of an electronic newsletter was discussed. Our Michigan Chapter currently prints (\$80) and sends (\$50) about 100 newsletters. These costs could be reduced and more frequent contact could be maintained with the use of an electronic distribution list. Each member could have the option of an electronic newsletter, a traditional hard copy or both. What are your thoughts?

Please email comments to [AATG-MI\\_News@hotmail.com](mailto:AATG-MI_News@hotmail.com). Thanks.



## President's Corner...

Liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen:

It's hard to believe, but the time has come to write my fourth and final message to you before Jennifer Redmann takes over the presidency of AATG-Michigan this coming January. I hope that you've had a relaxing summer and are feeling refreshed and prepared to tackle the challenges of the upcoming academic year. With the critical state of education funding in Michigan, it is difficult to feel optimistic about the immediate future of foreign language education at the state level. Please forgive me for the fact that I'm unable to offer much in the way of encouragement, as I feel I should, at the beginning of this school year. When I take stock of developments in my own District over the 4-year period that I have been an officer in the Michigan Chapter, I cannot overlook the fact that there has been a dramatic change for the worse, which I hope has not been paralleled in your teaching situation.

In 2004, Farmington Public Schools eliminated its Elementary Spanish program for budgetary reasons. In Spring 2007, as part of an effort at drastic staff reduction, a proposal was made to no longer offer German at one of our three high schools, thus eliminating one of two German-teaching positions in the District. This second position was only created in 2004, when

it was deemed too expensive to continue teaching German via interactive TV, with one teacher and three paraprofessionals. As many of you already know, I tried to rally support from parents and colleagues to prevent the cuts and I'd like to thank those of you who got involved by writing letters of support and making phone calls to the responsible administrators. Unfortunately, all our efforts were in vain, the cut was made, my young colleague lost her job and half the German program ceased to exist. It's very hard not to feel thoroughly discouraged when you've spent 9 years building up a program. Distance Learning was far from ideal, but at least any student in my District who wished to learn German had equal access. The only happy ending I can report at this point is that my colleague was successful in finding a full-time German position in another Michigan district.

I've learnt the hard way that when administrators are facing a budget crunch, no logical argument about the need to offer German will sway them and they are forced to make short sighted decisions. Short sighted in the sense that secondary schools should currently be building up their foreign language programs in anticipation of the fact that the high school graduating

class of 2016, in other words this year's 4<sup>th</sup> graders, will have to fulfill a 2-year foreign language graduation requirement. If you're not familiar with the new graduation requirements, you can find more details at: [www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/New MMC one pager 11.15.06 183755 7.pdf](http://www.michigan.gov/documents/mde/New MMC one pager 11.15.06 183755 7.pdf) All the new requirements, except for Foreign Language, came into effect at the beginning of last school year for the class of 2011. The Foreign Language requirement is different in one other way – it can be fulfilled in elementary or middle school, beginning with last year's 3<sup>rd</sup> graders. I predict total panic in a few years, as districts scramble to meet this mandate and I sincerely hope that meanwhile potential teachers will not have been discouraged enough to leave the state. And I haven't yet mentioned the increasing need for global awareness and cultural competency . . . .

Let's turn to more practical matters. I hope that you are planning on attending our Fall Business meeting at the MiWLA Conference in Lansing. It is scheduled for Thursday, October 18<sup>th</sup> from 4:30 to 5:20 pm. The most

important item on our agenda is the election of a new Vice-President from the K-12 level. If you would be interested in running for office, or would like to suggest the name of a colleague, please contact me as soon as possible. The position of secretary will become vacant at the end of 2008, so that will be a further opportunity to inject some new energy into the running of our Chapter. AATG-MI will again sponsor a mini-grant (worth \$130) for a student teacher or new teacher of German to defray the cost of attending the MiWLA conference. The application deadline is fast approaching - September 20<sup>th</sup>. A further way in which our Chapter could support you is if you wish to apply for funding for a project, for example, an immersion day. Our recent most successful project, the Care Baskets for new teachers, is ongoing, but if you have ideas requiring (modest) financial support, please let us know.

I look forward to seeing you in October, Janet

### Central States Conference

The Central States Conference will be held this year in Michigan. The "Friendly CSC" will be held at the Hyatt in Dearborn, March 6-8, 2008. This chance to attend a regional language conference happens every three years. In addition to many exciting sessions (see <http://www.csctfl.org/2008conference.html> for details) a German Immersion Session is being planned for Thursday March 6, 2008.

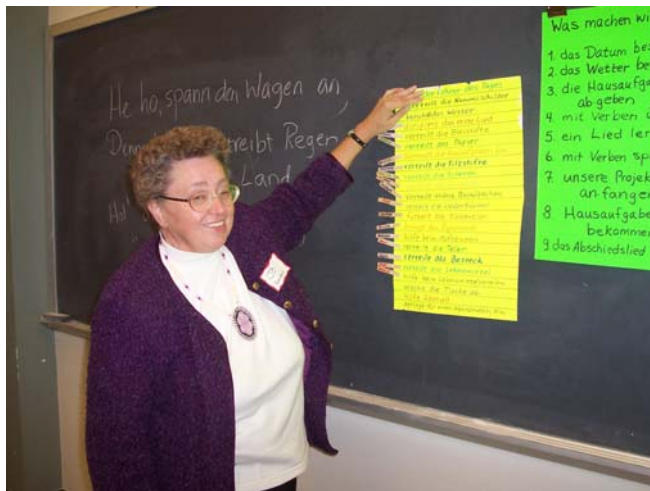
**The German Immersion Program will examine the topic of German immigration - yesterday and today. Participants will journey by bus to Frankenmuth, Mi to see an early German settlement - its museum, church and cemetery. They will also enjoy authentic German food and try their hand at pretzel making - suitable for classroom implementation. A German film dealing with immigration problems in Germany today will be viewed while traveling to and from Frankenmuth. Exercises for classroom use concerning immigration and specifically about the film will be produced. A resource list will be provided.**

So mark your calendars now and plan on attending.

## Mini Grant

AATG-MI is again sponsoring a mini-grant to attend the MiWLA Conference Oct.18-19, 2007 at the Holiday Inn South in Lansing. The mini-grant covers the conference registration, a workshop, the Awards Luncheon and dues for the year. See the following form. It is also available at [www.miwla.org](http://www.miwla.org). On the home page look under “Most Popular Pages” and choose “Forms for Members” The deadline is September 20, 2007. See you in Lansing!

**Jo Sanders, past AATG-National President** came from Alaska to lead our workshop last Spring at Kalamazoo College. Her presentation was very interactive as she shared various techniques for getting our students talking. Along with the Spring Workshop and Business Meeting we also honored some top winners of the testing program at a special luncheon. Erin Rioux was the winner of a study trip to Germany, where he stayed with a host family. Erin goes to Rochester High School.



**Testing Chair Linda Marlow** reports that “a total of 1,043 students participated in the contest at three levels of testing. 91 students...qualifying at the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile or above...received medals from the national AATG and certificates and prizes from the Michigan Chapter.”  
**Congratulations to all the students and their teachers!**

## Feiertag zur Erinnerung

“Seit dem Jahr 1990 ist der 3. Oktober ein Feiertag. “Tag der Deutschen Einheit” heißt der. Da feiern wir, dass unser Land ein Land ist. Davor gab es zwei Deutschlands: Die DDR, die “Deutsche Demokratische Republik” im Osten und die BRD, die “Bundesrepublik Deutschland” im Westen. Und Berlin, die geteilte Stadt, mitten in der DDR. Am 3. Oktober 1990 wurde die BRD um fünf Bundesländer größer und die DDR gibt es seit dem nicht mehr. Aber bis dahin war Deutschland ein geteiltes Land: Geteilt durch Mauern und Stacheldraht seit 1945, seit dem letzten großen Krieg.

Deutschland hatte den zweiten Weltkrieg verloren. Die USA, Großbritannien, Frankreich und Russland, damals die Sowjetunion, waren die Gewinner. Jeder kümmerte sich um einen Teil von Deutschland. Das ging nicht lange gut: Russland hatte andere Vorstellungen davon, wie Menschen miteinander leben sollten als die anderen drei Siegermächte”...

Diese Erklärung, und viele andere, sind auf der folgenden Seite zu finden.  
[www.br-online.de/kinder/fragen-verstehen/wissen](http://www.br-online.de/kinder/fragen-verstehen/wissen)

Das heißt “Wissenslexikon” und ist ein Kinderprogramm des Bayrischen Rundfunks. Es gibt verschiedene Themen, die unsere Schülern/Studenten interessieren würden.

We are currently seeking nominations for Vice-President of the Chapter. This is an office that would be held for two years, at which time the VP would take over the duties of Chapter President for a further two years. The new VP candidate must be a member of the national and state AATG and they must teach at the high school level. If you are interested in nominating someone or running for this office contact Janet Harris.

## Vote for VP of the Michigan Chapter!

I hereby cast my ballot for \_\_\_\_\_  
as Vice President of the Michigan Chapter of AATG.

Membership Renewal form:

\_\_\_\_\_ Please renew my membership immediately. I am enclosing my dues in the amount of \$ 5.00 from Aug. 2007 to Jul. 2008 which helps defray the cost of producing and mailing the newsletter.

Send dues to:

Donna Kamerman-Houskamp  
4548 Wilkshire SW  
Wyoming MI 49548

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## **AATG-MI**

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**Important Information for  
AATG-MI Members!**