

By SCOT K. MEYER

Battalion Staff

"If you ask me, they should take the whole thing and move it out in the country — about 10 miles or so. Just move it out there where it won't be in anybody's way."

The man was concerned about the drunken revelers who would be spilling out of the wurst-site into the small town of New Braunfels. He was probably justifiably concerned too, as there had already been a shooting out there the previous weekend.

But it was really hard to take his concern seriously when he was collecting a \$1 for every car parked on his lot. Besides, the people he was complaining to were only interested in getting over to the Wurstfest site to make merry.

It cost \$2 to get into the Wurstfest grounds, which look like the site of an abandoned factory. But the conversion to a German Wursthalle and marketplatz seemed complete enough, especially with the polka music dancing through the air.

There was a tent set up across the marketplatz from the Wursthall, where a polka band was playing. The audience swayed to the music and there was an old man on stage — in regulation shorts, suspenders and knee socks — who said he could teach anyone to polka in the first five seconds of the dance.

Across the marketplatz the University of Houston band was playing some decidedly un-German music. They still drew a crowd though, perhaps because of the cheerleaders who were accompanying them.

The U of H band really fit right in at Wurstfest, because so many of the Wurstfesters were college students. One of the great sports at Wurstfest was seeing what interesting kinds of loud and obscene school yells you could come up with.

The main attraction of the festival was located inside the Wursthalle itself. The food. There was strudel and other pastries, shish-kabob, kartoffel pancakes, sandwiches, and best of all, the wurst.

There was wurst and sausage on a stick, which came with a roll on the end as well. Of every 50 people in the Wursthall, at least five were clutching wurst-sticks. Or so it seemed. The trick was to avoid being poked by any of them.

The Wursthalle was also outfitted to handle those consumers who were keen for souvenirs. Imported beer steins, quilts, hats and many different types of cuckoo clocks were all available for all those who wanted to take a piece of Wurstfest home with them.

A particularly cynical wanderer through the Wursthalle might won-



Photo by Bob Sebree

A Wurstfest official spreads salt on the dance floor to keep dancers from slipping.

der at the authenticity of it all. There were signs advertising "wurst tacos," and the band occasionally played oompa versions of songs like "the Mexican Hat Dance."

And even the beer was not German. Not unless Lone Star has become the national beer of Germany. But hey — no one likes a nitpicker.

There was a friendly, weird attitude attending so many of the people there. Complete strangers would come up and describe the best places to buy felt hats with

turned under brims. Much of the friendliness seemed to flow from the plastic mugs of beer which everyone carried. Spilling that beer on people was another favorite pastime at the Wurstfest.

Drunk people were not in short supply, largely because of an attitude that beer drinking was German, and hence the best thing to be doing at a Wurstfest.

So Wurstfesters were carrying around empty cups to indicate just how much beer they had quaffed. Some of the cup collections were quite impressive.

Which is perhaps why the lines to the restrooms were as long as they were. Merry-makers only thought they had waited in line for beer or admission to the dance hall. They found out what line-waiting was all about when it came time to use the restrooms. One person claimed, while waiting in line, that human beings were invented by beer as a means of getting from one place to another. If it's true, there were quite a few people functioning as shuttle buses that day.

And the fact that so many of those shuttle buses were planning to hit the highway no doubt explained why the complaining old man was gone by the time the festival was winding down for the night. But he can sleep a little sounder now, because Wurstfest is over for another year.



Photo by Dave Einset

The gateway to the Wurstfest welcomes visitors.

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This has been a long-time favorite with instructors and students; despite its low price it has a fan-braced spruce top with genuine wood inlay around the sound hole. The edges are celluloid bound. The back and sides are made of Nato mahogany. Neck is also Nato mahogany with a rosewood fingerboard and nickel silver frets. Rosewood-faced headpiece has decorative center stripe. The machine heads are finished with butterfly pearlloid buttons.



ALVAREZ TREE OF LIFE.....NO. 5056

Craftsmanship, materials and dimensional design are combined to make this one of Alvarez' most outstanding models. It has fine projection, sensitive response and speedy action. The inlaid Tree of Life design on the rosewood fingerboard adds to its graceful distinction. Sides and back of flame grain rosewood are bound with ivoroid. Machine heads are chrome enclosed for longer life. Tuning is fast and precise. Slender mahogany neck with adjustable steel rod reinforcement. The top is select spruce chosen for its acoustic quality.

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CLASSIC.....NO. 5001
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ALVAREZ MAHOGANY DREADNOUGHT.....NO. 5022

Oboncol mahogany used for sides and single-piece back. Fine white spruce top has genuine wood inlay on sound hole; ivory binding on top and back. Adjustable rosewood bridge. Nato mahogany satin-finish neck, adjustable rod. Rosewood fingerboard has attractive snowflake design pearl inlay; Jacaranda faced headpiece with individual chrome heads; tortoise shell pickguard.

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