



Berlin Brats Alumni Association Newsletter

April 2023

Volume 19, Issue 2



April is the Month of the Military BRAT.
April 30th is our National Military Brat Day.

Purple is our color.
The Dandelion is our flower.



About one in 25 Americans ... is a Military Brat.

No one is sure of the number because the Department of Defense did not keep precise records of the children of military personnel. Nonetheless, those children make up a cultural group whose members live in all 50 states, in most American Territories and innumerable foreign countries. Their careers are various, their interests are many, but they share a common culture.

FOR US WE'RE CALLED THE BERLIN BRATS!

History:

The month of the military child was established in 1986 by Caspar Weinberger, Defense Secretary under President Reagan. Since then, April has been considered



as the military kid month by the Department of Defense and celebrated by all military branches. Every year, the President gives a proclamation about the month of the military child.





APRIL'S MONTH OF THE MILITARY CHILD.....

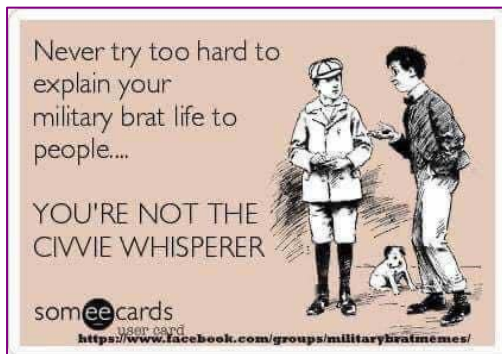
To celebrate April's Month of the Military Child, Stars and Stripes is conducting an early submission call for gathering stories, poems, art/drawing, and coloring pages that reflect life as a "military brat" from kids stationed in Europe, Mediterranean, and Middle East.

Early submissions for content may be included as a printed

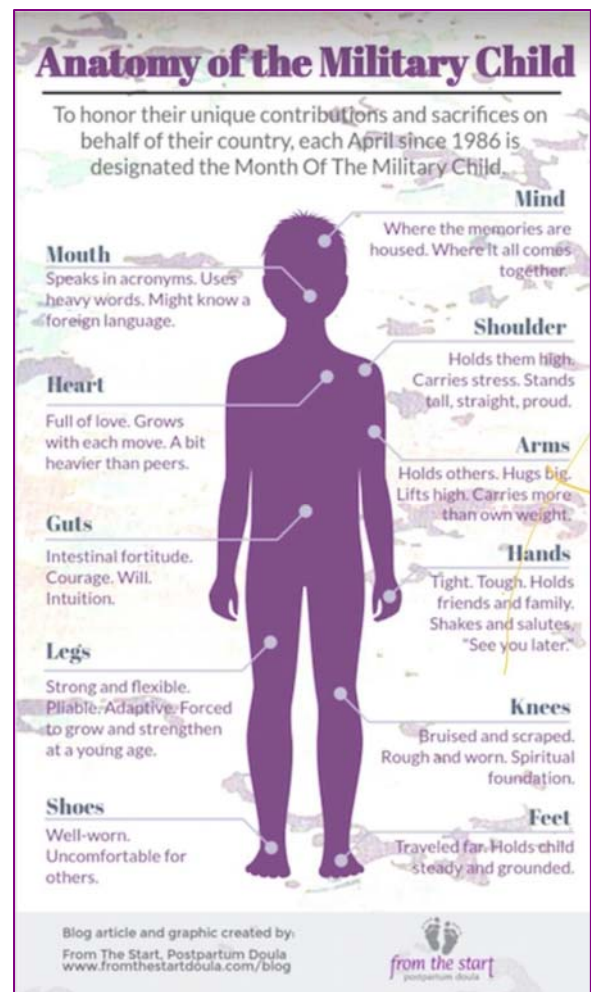
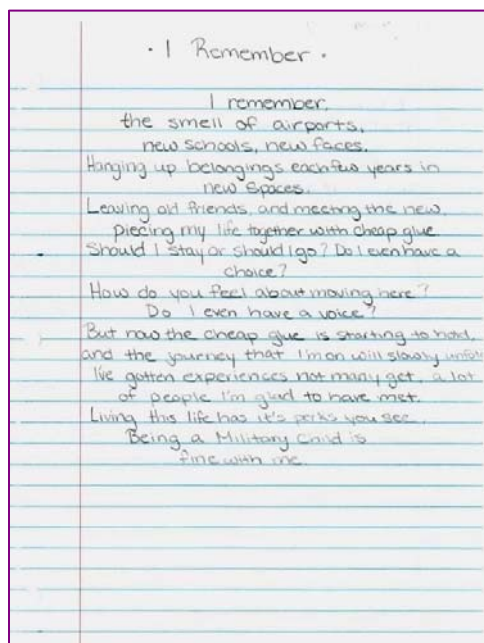
tabloid insert that is published in our global newspaper each Thursday in April, April 1, April 8, April 15, April 22 and April 29, 2023. Stories may also be used elsewhere at other times as Stars and Stripes deems appropriate.

Content submissions may be uploaded to: <https://militarychild.stripes.com/.../month-of-the...>

Bulk Uploads (classroom, groups, family, etc.) can be scanned and emailed to SUBJECT MOMC: MOMCEurope@stripes.com



....a repost from the Military Child Education Coalition



Shaq's BRAT story!

When Shaq lived in Wildflecken, Germany he played at Fulda HS before moving to San Antonio. LSU Coach Dale Brown discovered Shaquille O'Neal while in Germany visiting military bases. O'Neal's stepfather, a former drill sergeant, was stationed at the base and his mom worked at the PX.

As Shaq recalls it...

So, I met Dale Brown and I asked him; "Could you send me some exercises for my lower body? I'm 6'9" but I can't jump." He gave me this look and he's like, "Yeah sure soldier, how long you been in the Army?" I'm like, "I'm not in the Army sir, I'm only 13."

"Dale Brown went crazy." "After that I got a letter from him every week."



Shaq and his teams...

GUEST BLOG from Berlin Army "Brat" Jim Branson '64

- by Laura Malone Elliott (author of "Walls" – see January 2022 Newsletter)

November 3, 2021

Note from Laura: *One of the great joys of writing WALLS, my new novel about Berlin 1960-61—the volatile year leading to the shocking overnight raising of the infamous wall—was talking with former military kids who had been teens in that American "outpost of freedom" during the height of Cold War tensions. Now in their 70s, these "Berlin Brats," as they call themselves, shared vivid memories of their experiences as high schoolers in the divided city behind the Iron Curtain, where their fathers could be called to action at any moment against Russian troops and their communist East German minions that vastly outnumbered them, posted just a few miles away. If you find authenticity, poignancy, and rueful laughter in the novel, it has everything to do with how generous those Berlin alumni were in sharing their memories and knowledge, graciously (and patiently) answering my incessant questions.*

Jim Branson (class of '64) really helped me understand the vital importance of music in building community and a sense of collective identity among American teens posted so far away from the United States. And what a lifeline of creative thought American music was, floating free in the air along radio waves, to teens trapped in communist East Berlin and its repressive dogma.

Jim hosted a radio hour on AFN for two summers and graciously agreed to write a guest blog about that experience and the music of that time.

JIM'S STORY:

My dream of becoming a radio deejay started when I was about 12-years-old.

My older sister had graduated from high school in Japan and taken a job with an insurance company when we came back to the States in 1955. As a teenager, my sister collected 45 rpm records and had two boxes of 75 records each. I had always been impressed by the music emanating from her room in the evenings when she got off work: the Four Aces, Pat Boone, Perry Como, Harry Belafonte, the Platters, the Crew Cuts, the Diamonds, Jo Stafford and all of the teen idols that teenagers listened to in 1953, 1954 and 1955, before the advent of Rock'n'Roll.

One day while she was at work, me and a buddy were trying to decide what to do with our day when we walked by her room and saw the boxes of records sitting there. The temptation was just too much. We commenced to pulling out and previewing each one on her 45 rpm record player, finding gems that I had never heard before: Chuck Berry, Gene Vincent, the Everly Brothers, Fats Domino, Amos Milburn, Joe Turner and several early Elvis Presley recordings from the beginning of his career were mixed among the others.

Both my friend and I were hooked. We started listening to the best deejays on our local radio stations and other radio stations that we could pick up at night from Memphis, Chicago and Nashville. The disc jockeys on those stations were incredible personalities, to say nothing of the R&B music they played. They each had their own schtick and my friend and I would spend hours in his basement trying to imitate them. He had a very cool setup of two record players, and his Dad's reel-to-reel tape recorder. We would make recordings and listen to them to decide who did the best. He was very good with electronics and would hook up microphones, and all kinds of little gadgets that made us sound better. We also got very good at calling radio stations when they were running contests and we'd win more records. Also, my older brother had been babysitting for a family who were close friends with an Army Sergeant that was the weekend jock on one of our favorite local stations. He gave duplicate 45s to the family and they in turn passed them along to my brother, who would give them to me. My collection was growing.

Fast forward a couple of years and it's early 1961. I was 15-years-old.

I was sitting in the American teen club in Berlin, Germany talking to a classmate and mentioned my time playing around as a deejay. She told me that her Dad, a Captain, was the station manager at Berlin's American Forces Network radio station, AFN. She asked if I would like to meet her Dad and tour the station. I couldn't believe my luck. This had been all I wanted to do for a few years—touring a radio station was my dream.

Her father invited me to bring along a couple of friends who might be interested in seeing the station. We all headed to the station on a Wednesday afternoon in late April of 1961.

The station tour was very impressive. Located near the Army compound and housed in a beautiful older home that had belonged to one of Hitler's bankers, the station had two studios with adjacent control rooms where they recorded future programs and a master control room for one studio where they did live programs that were broadcast around the entire AFN Europe network. I'd never seen anything like their record library—a huge collection of recorded music on 12 inch transcription discs recorded by the Armed Forces Radio & Television Service in Los Angeles. The L.A. headquarters would preview all the newly released 45s and transcribe them to the discs—this was the way the military could control the music AFN stations played. If something was seen as objectionable to the military censors, it didn't get transcribed to these discs.



At this time, Staff Sergeant George Hudak—who had become very popular with the American GIs, and also both East and West Berliners, hosted a daily program of music called "Frolic at Five." He took requests and had plenty of postcards to attest to his popularity. Occasionally he would do a live remote broadcast from somewhere in the American sector and there would be crowds in the hundreds that came out to see him broadcast in

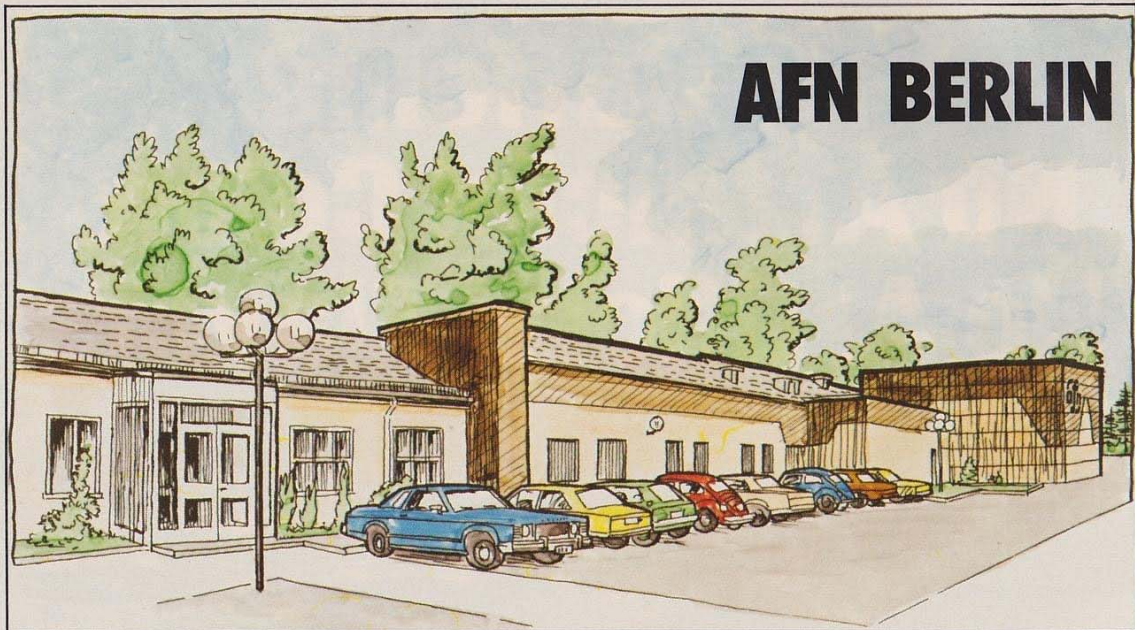
person.

At the end of our station tour, Program Director Mark White asked if we would like to do a live program once a week after school. The Army was trying to replicate American life for us dependents as best they could in a place where, for instance, there was only German TV. All of us were astounded. Me especially. Here was my breakthrough into the world of radio.

They paged George Hudak and he came up to the office. When they made the suggestion to him about our doing a 5:00 to 6:00 show, He didn't seem extremely enthused, but he relented and agreed to giving us the "Frolic at Five" spot on Wednesdays. George would be our mentor and producer of the program, which meant he'd be in the main studio playing the music, while we sat in another studio announcing the records and using some of George's fan mail to do requests and dedications. We would also throw in some names of our high school friends, couples who were going together. On May 17th, 1961, we did our first broadcast of the "Teen Beat." That first show had to have been a complete disaster. We had called a military taxi to pick us up at the teen club and take us to the station right after school. Early enough that we would have time to pick our music from the library. But I also had to type up a cue sheet, so that George would know what and when to play after we announced the song and did the dedication. This was with no typing experience in school yet.

We tried to stay away from the music that George usually played on "Frolic at Five." We had gotten tired of hearing the same top 40 hits over and over. The program director was also more into big band and jazz. So we tried to play more current music that they didn't. The only place we high school kids had been able to hear current British music, for instance, was Radio Luxemburg, but it was an AM station so it would fade in and out. I started going into the library on weekends to look for singles that weren't well known yet, even back in the States—like Dick Dale, from Southern California, a guitar surf god, who was just starting to get popular. We mixed in these new songs with records that had been popular two or three years earlier. A pretty eclectic mix, compared to George's straight Pop 40 music from Billboard magazine.

Continued on page 23



When AFN Berlin signed on the air August 4, 1945, sixty percent of the city lay in ruins and the station consisted of an improvised hut on the back of a truck with a transmitting antenna strung between two trees.

Today the ruins are gone and the Berlin affiliate is a modern broadcasting showplace. The story of AFN Berlin is also the story of the post-war history of this exciting city.

By 1948 when the Soviets drew a blockade around the city, AFN Berlin was established in modern studios, broadcasting from a 400-foot antenna. Normal broadcast times were only 19 hours a day, but because Air Force pilots requested the station stay on around the clock so they could home on the signal, the station began a 24-hour operation. When the airlift ended in 1949, AFN resumed its 19-hour schedule. Then, in the 60s, the East Germans began broadcasting an English language propaganda program called "Berlin International" which they put on AFN's frequency the instant the station signed off.

Visiting officials from Washington heard tapes of this anti-American propaganda

effort and ordered AFN Berlin to stay on the air around the clock.

The station has reported history in the making. Stories covered in depth include the East German uprisings in 1953, the construction of the infamous Berlin wall in 1961, President Kennedy's "*Ich bin ein Berliner*" speech in 1963 and subsequent visits by Presidents Nixon, Carter and Reagan. Almost every world figure to visit Berlin faces an AFN microphone or camera.

Today AFN Berlin is located in one of the most modern radio/television facilities in the world. Located across from U.S. Army Headquarters, Berlin, at 28 Saargemunderstrasse, the AM-FM radio portion of the facility has two stereo studios, two mono studios and a news studio. The TV studio can accommodate six separate sets and is equipped with three color cameras and the latest video control equipment.

AFN Berlin serves a community of about 15-thousand U.S. military members and their families. Major units include the Berlin Brigade, Field Station, Berlin and the 7350th Air Base Group at Tempelhof Air Base. □

Volksfest used for a Military Mission

By Jim Pooley '64 ·

The annual Volksfest has been mentioned quite often but I may be the only one who used the Fest experience during my military career. During the very first Volksfest I was one of the cowboys (Horst Breuer '64 was another) who roamed the streets and conducted gun fights; most of the other cowboys were German and our audience was largely German. I came to realize that Germans were avid fans of the American Wild West.



About a decade later, as a young captain, I was stationed at the Presidio of San Francisco in the G2 (intelligence) division (as a side note Rick Roemmer's ('64) father was my boss at one time). San Francisco, then as now, was on every tourist's bucket list and that included foreign military VIPs when they came on business' trips to the US. The Protocol Office was overwhelmed by the number of visitors and asked some of the single officers to help out. It was a neat job; among others I escorted the Chief of Staff of the Greek Army and the Chief of Staff of the Bundeswehr. After I'd picked up the Chief of Staff of the Bundeswehr at the airport, and we started to drive to the city, I started the usual tourist spiel about San Francisco. He interrupted me to explain that he'd visited the city many times and that his daughter had gone to college here. This created a bit of a bind for me – how to entertain a 4 star for the weekend when he knew more about San Francisco than I did! That's when the Volksfest kicked in. I remembered there was a herd of buffalo in Golden Gate Park and gave our driver directions to the Park. We pulled up to the buffalo pen and the 4-star acted like a 4-year-old – he ran up and down the fence taking pictures and yelling at the buffalos to get their attention. I had to take pictures of him with the buffalo as the backdrop. My gamble that he was a Wild West fan paid off; he had a great time there and we got along famously for the rest of the weekend.

Others from the Early '60's weigh in:

Chuck Hewins '63

Neat story. I too was a "gun fighter" at the Octoberfest. Fun.

Lamar Skeebo Gilbert '59

Interesting, I did know that the Germans were avid Wild West fans, and on a computer WWII game that I have, the American Pilots would call out BOGEY when they spotted a German plane. The Germans would call out "INDIANER " (Indians) when they spotted ...

Frankie Pacheco Quiñones '66

GREAT...I REMEMBER VERY WELL!!!!

Gale Andrew Younger '65

When we performed Oklahoma I carried my Dad's Remington Frontier. 22 cal on stage as Judd. Looks just like an Old West pistol. I recently gifted that Frontier .22 to my son. The West lives on in many, odd little ways.

Fred Simpson '64

Rocking the plaid Jim! What hand gun did you carry in the gunfighter role? Fanner 50's with Greenie Stickum Caps would have been appropriate! Or were you more authentic with real revolvers and blanks? Great flashback. Thanks for sharing.

Jim Polley '64

All the "western attire" to include the six-shooter belonged to an officer that worked with my Dad. He was from OK and had the "real deal,. My father was furious that I'd borrowed it since he was that officers supervisor. Since it was a real weapon ...

Jim Branson '64

The Germans were nuts about our Country and Western music and Jazz also.

Kathee (Anderson) Gladden '64

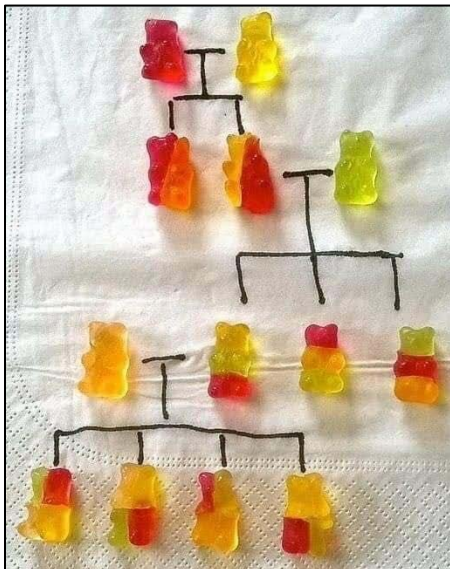
What a great anecdote!

Pamela (Bright) Nemeth '65

Quick mind and good story, Jim! I remember dressing up as a cowgirl and having a "gunfight" with someone during that time.

Doreen (Maloney) Anderson '65

Great story, Jim! btw, I still have my gun and holster. 😊



< - Study of "Mendelian Inheritance" patterns...or a BRAT with too much time on their hands!

Yet another perspective... - >



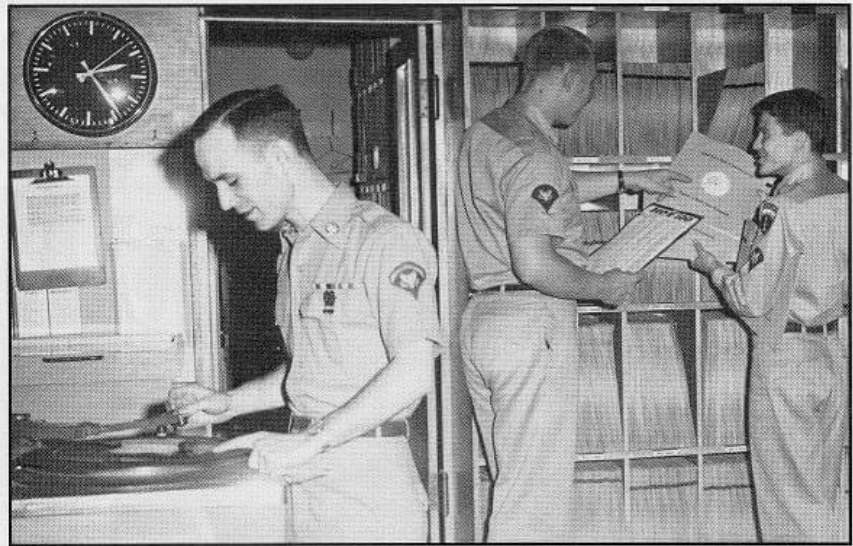
Throwback in time.....

Jim Branson '64 spent countless hours in the little office behind them typing program scripts (even before he took typing from Miss Johnson) and looking through the Billboard magazine following the latest hits and radio news from the States. He knew what he wanted to be when he was 13.

It only took him 27 years later to get his first REAL radio job in Ohio.

BRAT Persistence!

AFN turns 80! (Sadly without Berlin)



A corner of the AFN Berlin record library. Berlin's library was second only to Frankfurt's and the station was designated to be the backup to Frankfurt in case of war. For years people kept asking why this should be, seeing as how Berlin would undoubtedly be the first to go should Warsaw pact troops invade. For years no one was able to provide an answer—and they still haven't.

Seen here L to R are Army Specialists Dan Eads, Milt Fullerton and Dick Chapin standing in front of the 16" transcriptions which were still commonly used back in 1965. (Photo courtesy of Milt Fullerton)

Throwback pic:

A few of us from the 2006 Berlin American High reunion. The "Early 60's Bunch".

Berlin was still known as "crane city" in 2006 with all the on-going construction.....look closely for "Brandenburg Tor" over their shoulders.

Back row L to R:
Bob McMorris '64, Jim Palmer '64, Tom Post '64, Lee Angel '64, Mike Jiru '63.

Front: Skip Jiru '66



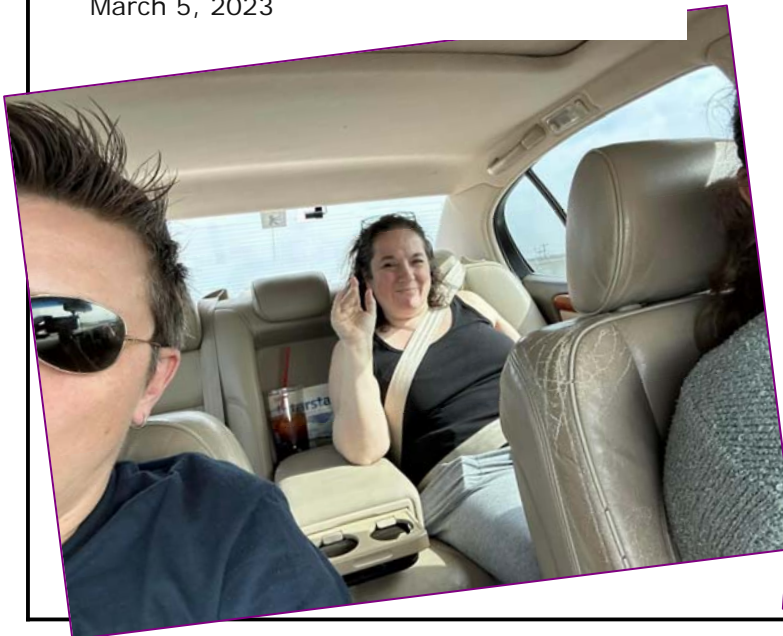
BRAT GET-TOGETHERS

Birthday beer downtown San Antonio with Berlin friend, Jody (Rodriquez) Larson '86.

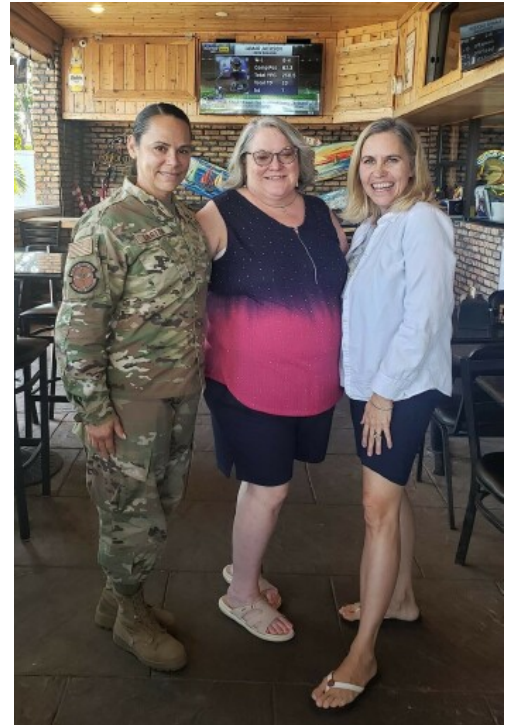


Jody and Marc Abrams '86 celebrating.....

Wendy Stiver '90 visits fellow classmate Catheryn Alex Hamilton '90 in Tulsa, OK....upon her release from ICU. March 5, 2023



Lauraann: Picture taken on 2/22. It's been 35 years almost to the day I last saw Kerry. We went to Madi Gras together while stationed at Keesler AFB, MS. This pic was taken outside of Patrick AFB, Melbourne, FL. (L to R: Kerry Lastra '84, Lauraann (Chapman) Ohman '85 & Lisa (Glisson) Gould '85



Rob Ahrens '87 is with Devin Ferguson '87 on "Allure of the Seas" cruise. Feb 28th



BERLIN BRATS have their very own 'RIP'



Lance Srp '88
and his wife
Lisa



Berlin Bear....Richard Jernigan '79 FOUND!
(in....Glacier National Park, Montana!).



Thank you David Hunter '81 (L) (and wife) for coming all the way from Idaho to visit me! David is one of my best friends who went to BAHS with me in the late 70s!!! It's only been 46 years since we've seen each other!!! Love you my brother!!!!
David Pilson '81



Class of '85 Besties!!! Lisa (Glisson) Gould
& Lauraann (Chapman) Ohman

MORE BRAT GET-TOGETHERS



Ol'Berlin buddy. Played football together and shared many memories from 28 years ago. Some things never change. Friends from the mid 80s to current. Hanging in Spartan, South Carolina for the night.

By: Marc Abrams '86

Tim Snow '85 and Marc Abrams '86
 "...is that Apfelcorn in them glasses?"



Above left and right are pics of Joy (Campolo) Turner '88; Shellie (Lamb) Iossa '89; Cillia (Batchelor) Lang '89; Keri (Cutting) Mullis '89, from a girl's trip to Charlotte this past December. Joy with Mary (Houston) Perry '87 from a January visit to Hawaii (bottom right).

Throwback memory:

These gals are all turning 57 this year (2023 edited).....shhh! Don't tell !!!!

Rediscover your memory

Mar 10, 2006 • 15 years ago



Top pic L to R: Rose (Hanson) Neel '84, Jessica (Jacalone) Killpatrick '84, Peggy Van Gorder '84 and Sylvia Alexander '84

17 years ago they celebrated their 40th birthday at a WV spa!!!

Toblerone:

Oh no: Swiss rules mean chocolate bar has to drop the famous “Matterhorn” from its packaging



Rules about "Swissness" dictate some products cannot use national symbols if not exclusively made in the country!

By Beth Timmins, BBC News

Toblerone is to remove the Matterhorn mountain peak from its packaging when some of the chocolate's production is moved from Switzerland to Slovakia.

The pyramid-shaped bar, which mirrors the Alpine peak, will undergo a labeling revamp and include its founder's signature, its maker said. US firm Mondelez said the image of the 4,478m (14,692 ft) mountain will be replaced by a more generic summit.

Strict rules have applied about "Swissness" since 2017.

They state that national symbols are not allowed to be used to promote milk-based products that are not made exclusively in Switzerland. For other raw foodstuffs the threshold is at least 80%.

The Matterhorn's jagged silhouette was first used on the chocolate's packaging in 1970.



In a statement to the BBC, Mondelez said it was moving some production outside of the country to "respond to increased demand worldwide and to grow our Toblerone brand for the future".

It said its new packaging would include a "distinctive new Toblerone typeface and logo that draw further inspiration from the Toblerone archives and the inclusion of our founder, Tobler's signature".

Toblerone, the mountain-shaped chocolate made from Swiss milk with honey and almond nougat, first went on sale in 1908 in Bern, the capital city of Switzerland.

But it was not until 1970 that the Matterhorn's jagged silhouette debuted on its packaging, with the Bernese bear and eagle featuring before then, according to the Toblerone website.

Mondelez said Bern was an "important part of our history and will continue to be so for the future".

In 2016 Toblerone courted controversy by changing the design of the chocolate bar to space out the distinctive triangular chunks in a bid to keep down costs. After much criticism the company reverted to the original shape two years later.

Und plötzlich macht alles Sinn:



(Suddenly it "all" makes sense!)



BLödes Kuh

Kaiser Wilhelm Church (1895)...Bombed 1943...Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church (1957)

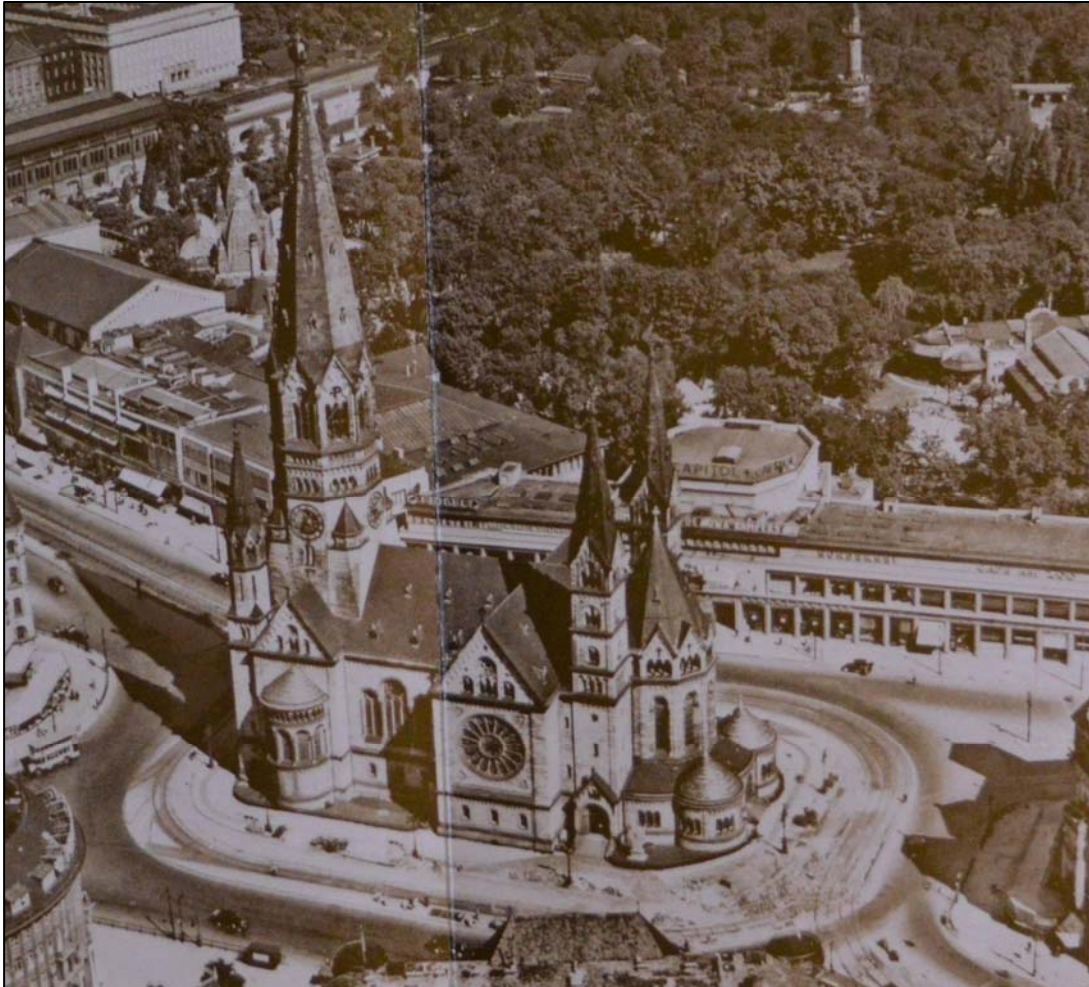
Reposted: Berlin City Weekly

German King Friedrich Ludwig William I was born on March 22, 1797, in Berlin, Prussia. He was crowned King of Prussia on January 01, 1871. He was the first German king as well as the first Head of State of a united Germany. He ruled with his Minister President Otto von Bismarck of Prussia achieving the unification of Germany and the establishment of the German Empire. He died on March 09, 1888, in Berlin, German Empire.

The center that was growing up between Charlottenburg, Wilmersdorf and Schöneberg to the west of the city needed a new house of worship. So these cities had a mission to organize and initiate a campaign to construct one. German King Wilhelm II strongly supported this campaign.

At the beginning of 1890, he started a fundraising campaign for the Kaiser Wilhelm church. On June 28, 1890, An Architectural competition for Kaiser Wilhelm church was announced. Architect Franz Heinrich Schwechten won the competition. On March 22, 1891, the birthday of German King Wilhelm I, they laid the first foundation Stone for the church.

On September 01, 1895, the church was consecrated a day before Sedan Day. Sedan Day was when Germans celebrated Prussia's victory over France in 1870.

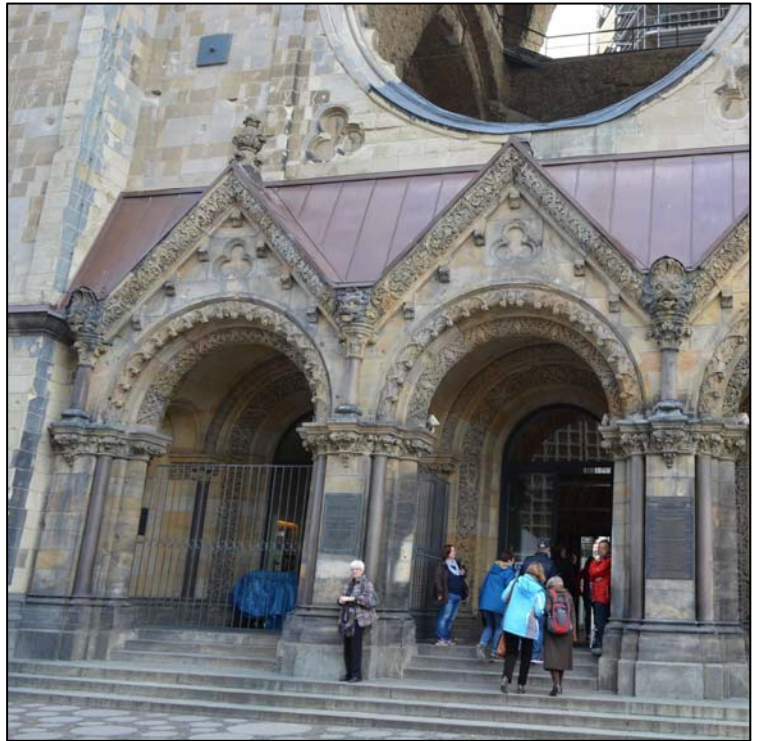


On February 22, 1906, the Church entrance was consecrated, and the Silver wedding anniversary of Wilhelm II and his wife Augusta Victoria was celebrated.

On November 23, 1943, an Allied Bombing raid destroyed the church!



In 1957, popular protests stopped the demolition of churches!



Right pic - (the church entrance was consecrated in 1906 as noted on previous page)

Left pic - The Church gained a new name after the bombing in '43: "Kaiser Wilhelm Memorial Church." German people wanted the next generation not to forget what war can destroy!

GIVE PEACE A CHANCE AND NOT WAR!

Stars & Stripes – archive photo reprinted March 1st, 2023:

Berlin, October 1961:

American airmen from the RAF Wethersfield football team, sightseeing while in town for a game against the **Berlin Bears**, toe a line marking the border between East and West as they view the Berlin Wall from the Friedrichstrasse.



You're Only A Berlin Expert If You've Done These 15 Things

Berlin is a bohemian metropolis, welcoming visitors with its signature blend of ever-present history, creative style and vibrant culture. It's a city in constant flux, where discovering every corner of its multifaceted identity can feel like an impossible task. While this might be true, if you've done these 15 things, you're on your way to being a bona fide Berlin expert.

Had beers at a Späti

The old adage that beer is cheaper than water in Germany is not only true, it also makes beer the drink of choice in the German capital. Luckily on almost every corner *Spätis* or late shops provide the goods, at infamously low prices. If you want to have a real Berlin night out, pick up some Berliner Pilsner for less than €2 (USD\$2.35), some beer nuts and hang out on the picnic style tables at the front of your local *Späti*.



People enjoying beers outside a Berlin *späti* | © Horst JENS / Flickr

A tasty and authentic Döner kebab | © FreeToUseSounds / Pixabay

Eaten a Döner Kebab

Berliners love their Döner Kebabs, with around 950 kebabs eaten every day. Head to areas with strong Turkish influences, like Neukölln or Kreuzberg and tuck into this beloved fast food treat. Vegans and vegetarians don't have to miss out either, and can opt for an equally tasty falafel or halloumi Kebab instead.



Been rejected from Berghain

Let's be honest, this happens to everyone in Berlin at least once, even the coolest techno scenesters. It's the nature of the club and there is something quiet unifying about experiencing the ego-crushing 'no' from the bouncers and long lonely walk past the on looking line. You'll never be smug about your Berghain track record, or stare down the poor dejected souls again after going through the experience yourself.



The long line at Berghain in Berlin | © Michael Mayer / Flickr

Tried your local Currywurst

Currywurst is a local delicacy that has to be tried in Berlin. The curry-ketchup and sausage combo is delicious, simple and best enjoyed at a small, no-frills, local food stall. In summer or winter, Berliners gather outside at the small standing tables to enjoy their beloved local dish.

Currywurst and fries at Bergmann Curry / © / Flickr



Gone wild swimming in a Berlin lake

Summer in Berlin can be swelteringly hot, and Berliners have long known the perfect remedy: escape the capital for some wild swimming! The city is surrounded by hundreds of lakes, from the popular, easy-to-reach ones, to the out-of-the-way, lesser-known spots. You haven't experienced a summer in Berlin without heading out to the lakes.

Ventured to one of the abandoned sights

Similar to the Berlin Wall, many of the city's left-over and abandoned sights are rife with history. Urban explorers have captured and highlighted the affecting beauty of these sights, and now that venturing out to well-known spots such as Teufelsberg can be done with relative ease and safety, exploring them is a must when in Berlin.



A view of the Teufelsberg towers up close | © Victor Bergmann / Flickr

Crowded into a photo automat for a group selfie

Nestled next to clubs, lining local streets and hidden in unlikely locations, Berlin's photo automats are an easy-to-miss, beloved-by-locals icon. No night out in the German capital is quite complete until you and your friends all pile into the cramped booth to take a group selfie with the old-school analogue photo booths.



Couple kissing outside a photo automat in Berlin | © Sascha Kohlmann / Flickr

Got wild on May Day

May Day is a truly unique Berlin experience. Combining the city's flair for partying and politics, the day is a singular mix of dancing in parks, protesting on the streets and letting your inner punk run wild for a day. Being in the city to celebrate May Day is something every Berlin expert needs to experience at least once.



May Day crowd in Görlitzer park | © valakirka / Flickr

Spent a day on Museum Island

Berlin's Museum Island is home to five amazing museums, boasting world-renowned collections. Art lovers, culture buffs and anyone looking to explore the magnificently polished side of Berlin, needs to spend a day wandering Museum Island.

Berlin Museum Island is an important cultural hub | © chas B / Flickr



Wandered through the Holocaust Memorial

Impactful, important and understated, the Memorial of the Murdered Jews of Europe is a must-see in Berlin. When you're there remember to be respectful though, or you might end up being part of a viral art project.

Holocaust Memorial in Mitte, Berlin | © pcdazero / Pixabay | © pcdazero / Pixabay

Attended a weird art show

Berlin's creative bounds truly know no limits, meaning that art can be found in the most unlikely places. You haven't fully experienced the diverse art scene until you've attended a weird, wonderful and über-local art show.

Berlin's cool and underground RAWE collective | © logoline11 / Pixabay

**Immersed yourself in the city's history**

Germany arguably has one of the most tumultuous histories of the 20th century, and with Berlin at its centre, the country has evolved and survived through decades of change. There are plenty of ways to better understand Berlin's history, from exploring the city's world-class and informative museums to

reading about German history or immersing yourself in the language and culture. In doing so you'll not only learn more about its past, but also what has propelled the Berlin to be the city it is today.

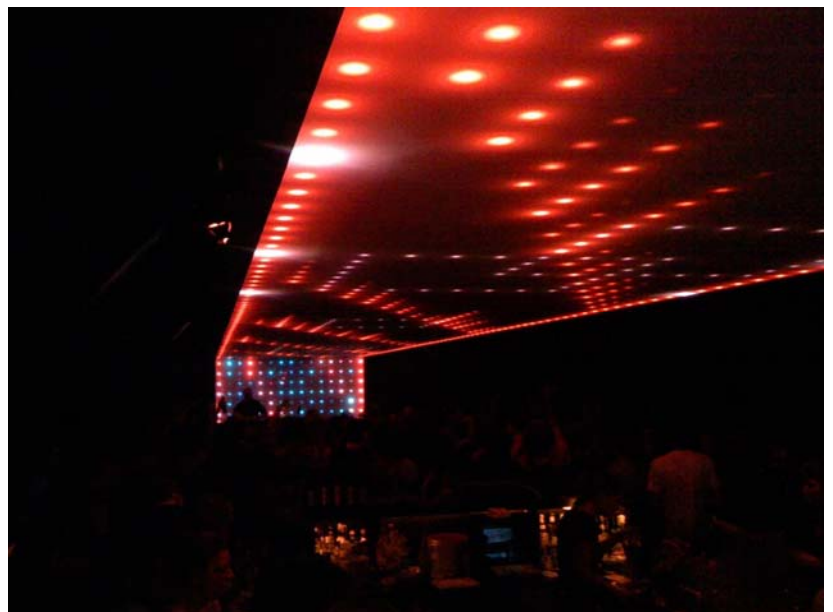


The Topography of Terror, with the Berlin Wall in the background | © Kevin Rutherford / WikiCommons

Danced until sunrise

It's a well-known fact that Berliners know how to party, and as the city boasts some of the best nightlife in Europe, you'd be hard-pressed to find someone who has never danced 'til dawn. Whether you're a techno-fiend, soul lover, or live music fanatic, the city will certainly have a wild and wonderful party for you.

Watergate infamous dance floor | © cyphunk ./Flickr



Explored Berlin's diverse neighborhoods

While some Berliners might pick a cool spot and stay there, the best way to really know the city is to explore all its diverse neighborhoods. Each offering their own vibe and charm, taking your time to hunt down hidden gems across Berlin's twelve boroughs means you'll discover everything the city has to offer.

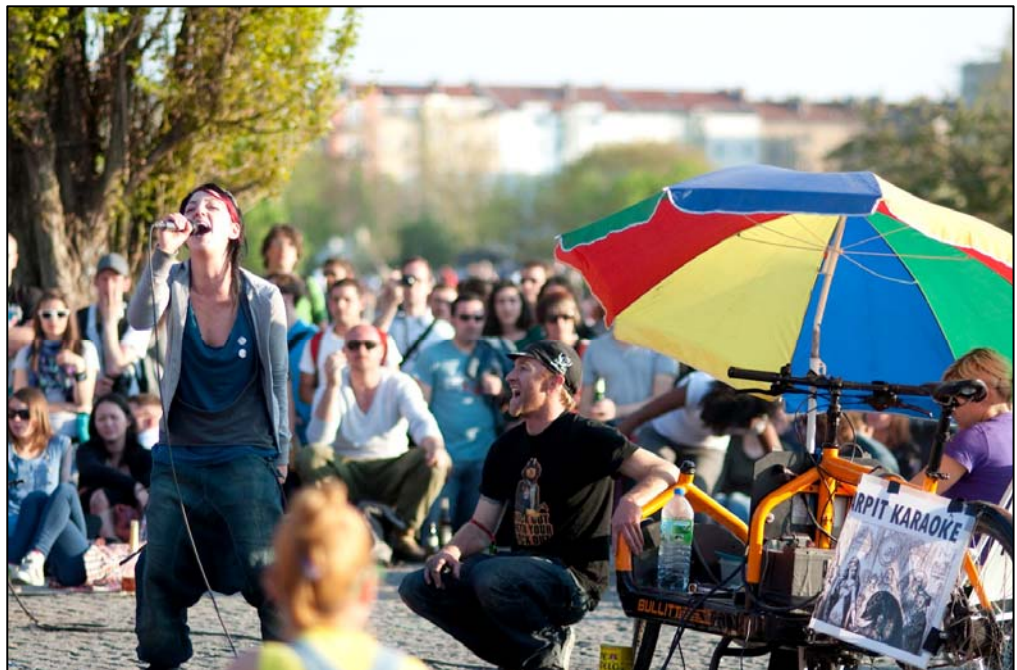


*Friedrichshain
neighborhood in Berlin
| Kacie Loura / ©
Culture Trip*

Enjoyed karaoke at Mauerpark

Probably one of the most infectious of Berlin experiences, Bearpit karaoke at the Mauerpark amphitheatre is something truly unique. When the weather is warm, there's no better place to head on a Sunday than to Mauerpark to be serenaded by daring tourists and locals at the weekly jam session. Pack some beers, huddle into the crowded amphitheatre and prepare to cheer and sing along with the brave singers.

*Mauerpark's weekly karaoke
sessions | © sfreimark / Flickr*



Continued from page 5

After about three or four weeks we started getting our own fan mail, mostly from Berliners who wanted to hear more of the kinds of things we were playing. Eddie Cochran, Gene Vincent, Ritchie Valens and lots of Buddy Holly. Since the music was sent to AFN Berlin from California, we tended to get a lot of West Coast artists on the transcriptions and it was usually new artists that hadn't been heard of yet. We were way ahead of the curve on playing new music along with those great oldies that hadn't been played for a couple of years. I was creating a format that didn't exist anywhere on the radio at that time.

We didn't find out until later about how many East Germans were listening. That wasn't something we thought about, honestly, the shadow audience of people trapped in the Soviet sector of East Berlin. But they were there. The next summer, August 1962, after the Wall went up, we even got a request wrapped around a rock, thrown over the wall, and addressed to AFN Berlin.

During the summer of 1961, AFN Berlin was our second home. To this day it seems unreal to me that they would allow three 15 to 16-year-olds to have the run of the place. We finished up our first season of the "Teen Beat" in August of 1961, just around the same time as the Wall was being built to divide the city in half.

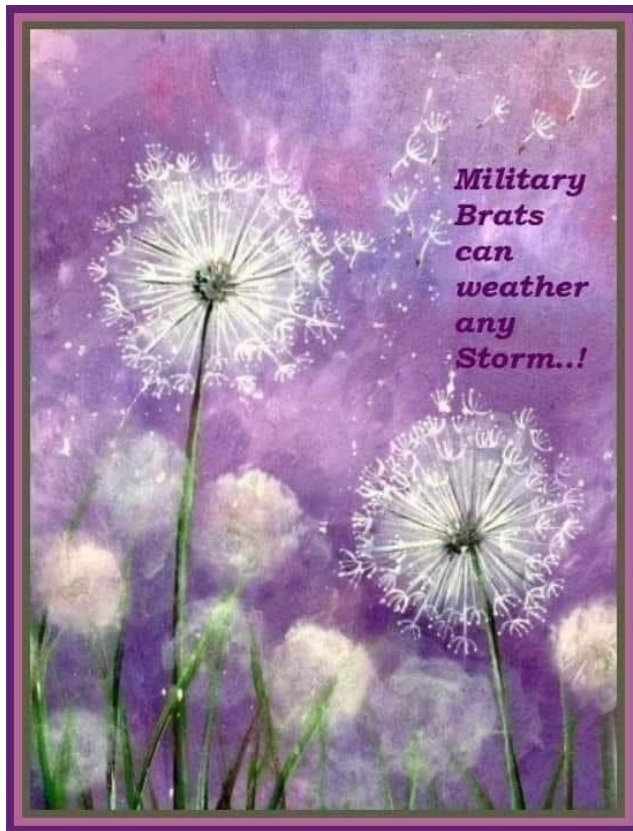
I continued to frequent the station to peruse the record library occasionally during the winter of '61 - '62. The next summer, we did a show called "Accent on Youth," announcing events happening in the school and the AYA teen club and played a lot of records. Our new producer was a young PFC who later went to work for Dick Clark.

With the Wall going up, a lot of celebrities wanted to see it, and stopped in at the station to do promos for their new record or movie or just to talk to the deejays. Ed Sullivan brought his whole company to Berlin in October of '61 to tape two shows that would be shown in the U.S.. Louis Armstrong was the headliner on one of those shows, and Shari Lewis and Connie Francis were part of the other. Connie made an appearance at our teen club and a German teen idol named Peter Krause made an appearance on the Sullivan show that was recorded at our teen club.

The experience that I had doing "Teen Beat" and "Accent on Youth" was probably the most memorable one of my life. Many friendships were cemented, and I still listen to several tapes of both shows. I became a disc jockey for real during the '80s and '90s after chasing the dream most of my life.



The broadcast team for "Accent on Youth." Jim is second from right.



Upcoming Events

2023 Regionals:

Regionals TBD

Yr end w/b: Dec 1st-2nd
Denver Christkindl Markt

DODDS & AOSHS Reunion
12-16 July 2023
Omaha, NE

OSB Gathering (Reunion)
19-22 Oct. 2023
San Antonio, TX

Next Reunion

Possible Dec 5-7, 2024 Berlin
Reunion w/4-6 day add-on to
Berlin, Dresden, Nurnberg,
& Munich Christkindl Marks.

TBD

Contact Information



Berlin Brats Alumni Association

Jeri (Polansky) Glass '72, Director

41910 N. Crooked Stick Road

Anthem, AZ 85086

telephone: 623•764•1105

email: BerlinBrats@gmail.com

website: www.berlinbrats.org



Find us on Facebook @

“Berlin Brats Alumni Association”
(the official fan page site)

“Berlin American High School (BAHS)”
(an open group chat page)

Newsletter Brat: Carl Fenstermacher '73

Early '60s Site

By invitation only

Contact Jim Branson '64

jbranson01@hotmail.com

for an invite

American Overseas School Historical Society

Linda L. Connelly, President

email: overseasschools@aoshs.org

website: www.aoshs.org

Overseas Brats

Joe Condrill, President

email: joeosbpres1955@gmail.com

website: www.overseasbrats.com

Communication Brat:

Peter Stein '80

pstein80@msn.com

WebBrat:

Carl Fenstermacher '73

WebBrat@BerlinBrats.org