

# Bavarians entertain Rotarians

□ Visitors are part of group study exchange program

By **JOHNSKIPPER**  
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**MASON CITY** — Five visitors from Bavaria told of their beer, their festivals, their mansions and their rich history at a lively meeting of the Mason City Noon Rotary Club Monday.

They are in Iowa as part of a Group Study Exchange Program.



The group is led by Horst Dänzer, a retired electrical engineer. Others are Dominik Blanckenstein, an engineer in the mobile telephone industry; Ralf Waller, a business manager for an organization involved in everything from breweries to a bio-gas plant; Judith Staber, a veterinarian; and Christian Strasser, an attorney and law professor.

Dänzer kidded the Mason City Rotarians, telling them beer is served at the Rotary meetings in Bavaria.

Noting that the Mason City club members sing during their meetings, he laughed and said, "We often sing *after* ours."

Dänzer said Bavaria has about 12 million people and is about the size of Missouri.

Blanckenstein joked about beer drinking in his native land. Showing a slide of an Oktoberfest celebration, he said "This picture was taken in the morning because in the evening, everyone is crazy and dancing on tables."

Waller, the overseer of a brewery, said one festival in Bavaria lasts 12 days. "It's no fun for the fathers because the money flows for 12 days, too," he said.

Waller said waitresses serving beer in beer gardens travel from one festival to another during the Summer months and make enough money in wages and tips to live on for the rest of the year.

Staber, the veterinarian, said one difference between her country and America is that far more attention is paid to ani-mal rights in Bavaria than in America.

Another observation: "People on the West Coast seem to be snobbier than people in Iowa."

The group will stay in Mason City until Wednesday, when it will head for Decorah and Cedar Rapids, the ninth and 10th stops on its Iowa tour.

Waller described a recent fishing trip in Iowa.

"We had an amazing time just sitting in a boat for several hours. We didn't catch any fish, but we had a few beers."

The "exchange" will be completed in June when a team of Rotarians from northern Iowa will visit Bavaria.

Reach John Skipper at 421-0537 or  
[john.skipper@gäabegazette.com](mailto:john.skipper@gäabegazette.com)