

## EDITOR'S CORNER

Back in 1976 *Heritage of the Great Plains* devoted an entire issue to articles dealing with the theme "The Volga Germans."

Among immigrant groups on the Great Plains the Germans are perhaps treated with the most ambivalence. Why? Perhaps the reason, or a large part of it, lies in the memories left by a pair of world wars. Certainly the German speakers in Plains settlements stopped using their native tongue in public as a result of the xenophobic hysteria so characteristic of the World War I era.

Yet strong traces of the German heritage remain throughout the region. Only this past semester one of my students told me that just a year ago the Mass was still being said in German out in Liebenthal, Kansas, legendary site of early Volga German settlement.

Now, 18 years since *Heritage's* German theme issue we are pleased to present another organized along similar lines. We are indeed fortunate that Managing Editor Julie Johnson prevailed upon William Keel to guest edit this issue of the journal. Chair of the Department of Germanic Languages and Literature at the University of Kansas, William Keel is uniquely qualified to bring a high degree of expertise to the subject. His own scholarly emphasis is reflected in the articles contained between these covers, each of which deals with aspects of the German language as it came to be used on the Great Plains.

All of us at the Center for Great Plains Studies hope you will gain some insight into the enduring ethnic heritage of the region through this contribution of William Keel and authors Christopher Johnson, Gabriele Lunte, and John McCabe-Juhnke.

Ron McCoy  
Editor