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August Events

By Tamala Malerk

EDITOR'S PICKS

It's the last full month of summer and we've got eight events for everyone to enjoy this wonderful weather. Always remember to check an event's website before traveling.



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Koblenz Summer Festival and Rhine in Flames

Aug. 11-13, Koblenz

200 bands from different genres span seven days for three days. During this festival, you can catch fireworks in the skies of Spay and Koblenz with "Rhine in Flames."



Hamburg Summer DOM Jul. 21- Aug. 20, Hamburg

The largest folk festival in the north has returned for the summer. Enjoy rides, food, games and more. Wednesdays are family days (with discounted prices) and Fridays are for fireworks.



©MELKOM

Museumsuferfest

(Museum Embankment Festival)

Aug. 25-27, Frankfurt am Main

Local museums are presenting special programs this weekend along with art, culture, food, drinks and music for you to enjoy along the river. There are also several stage productions occurring.



Folk am Neckar Festival Aug. 4-5, Neckarelz

Folk music from all over the world is coming to Germany for two days. Celtic, folk-rock, classic, bluegrass and contemporary folk music will grace the stage. Beer on tap and camping opportunities are available.



Gourmet Festival Düsseldorf Aug. 25-27, Düsseldorf

Bring a refined pallet and your appetite. More than 200 exhibitions from "upscale gastronomy" will bring high-quality, unusual and rare delicacies for you to try.



Garden Festival Corvey Aug. 4-6, Hoexter

Enjoy three days of children's programs, fairy tales, lectures, workshops, a fashion show, music, food, theater groups and shopping at the bazaar. Music from a variety of African nations will be represented at this event.



DINOWORLD All month long, Berlin

All across Tierpark Berlin, you will find life-size dinosaurs that move and make sounds. Along with the dinosaurs is an educational exhibit that teaches you about their way of life. If you cannot make it this month, the dinos will be there through October.



Open Air Filmfest Aug. 10-14, Weiterstadt

Since 1977, this film festival has been bringing entertainment to the Hesse area with the first fest lasting one day and playing to a three-person audience. Now, the festival spans five days, attracts filmmakers from dozens of countries and hundreds of films are shown.

Tell Your Story!

Editor's Pick Call Out:

Did you attend one of previous Editor's Picks events? We want to hear all about it! Please share something memorable about your experience in about 50-70 words and you could be featured here. Send your submissions to contentteam@stripes.com. ■



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PHOTO of the month

St. Peter's Cathedral in Trier is a mighty Romanesque monolith in the ancient and walkable city center. Many relics and magnificent facades crowd the echoing nave and its bedecked chapel offshoots. Of the eight archbishops buried in the cathedral, one archbishop-elect Richard von Greiffenklau zu Vollrads plays a role in this month's conflict-filled feature story. It's hard to believe that today's peaceful Trier has such a tumultuous history, but when it has been here since the Romans left their mark, it is easy to understand what they saw in the lush rolling hills that are still busy today cultivating wine grapes.

Photo by Karen Kearby.

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Neunkirchen

By Tamala Malerk

Located 40 minutes west of Kaiserslautern is Neunkirchen, Saarland's second largest city after Saarbrücken. The name translates to "nine churches" and there you can find three Catholic and six Protestant churches. It is also believed that the name derives from the phrase, "An der neuen Kirche" which translates to "by the new church." If seeing historical churches isn't your thing, there is so much more you can do in Neunkirchen.

Go to the zoo: I first discovered the Neunkirchen Zoo when I decided to brave 10 degree weather to check out their on-site Christmas market. The weather is much more favorable for a visit now. There are over 700 animals on-site, with 120 different animal species spread across 20 hectares. The zoo has been in the area since 1926. Feed the giraffes and meerkats and catch the twice-daily falcon flights. There is a variety of food selections on-site: burgers, waffles, crepes, coffee, regional cuisine and more.



Get in some shopping: Bring your credit cards and euros and get ready to shop until you drop at the largest shopping center in Saarland, the Saarpark-Center. There are 115 specialty stores for you to peruse across 35,000 square meters. While there, see if you can spot Sammy Spencer Freiherr von Shoppinghausen, their meerkat mascot. There are 13 different food spots, so there is something for every appetite. The mall is open Monday-Saturday, and their next shopping Sunday is Oct. 29.

Visit history: World War II and history buffs will want to make their way to the Spitzbunker Neunkirchen. This bunker was used as protection during World War II. Up to 600 people could find shelter here according to tracesofwar.com when the town was bombed.



Go back to the city's iron roots with a tour of Altes HüttenAreal where you can tour the old factory and iron works.

Catch a football game: Cheer on Borussia-Neunkirchen as they take on their opponent of the week. They have players of all ages on the field, with youth, men's and women's teams.

Enjoy the great outdoors: Do some fishing or people-watching at the Bliespromenade. On Aug. 3, catch the last concert of the City Musiksommer 2023 series at the promenade. Continue to enjoy the sunny weather at Hüttenpark. Throughout the park, you can see hints of its industrial past with old machine parts scattered about. What was once an industrial wasteland is now a haven for children's playgrounds, walking areas and open-air events.

Grab a bite to eat: No matter how you choose to spend your day in Neunkirchen,

you will definitely get hungry at some point. Stumm's Brauhaus promises to bring you some great local fare. There is home-brewed beer, Moselle wine, bread from the local bakery and game from the Oberthal Hunting Ground. They also serve German classics such as Flammkuchen and Käsespätzle. You can eat here Monday through Saturday for lunch and dinner. For those into Italian food, Neunkirchen has Pinneria Villa Medici featuring a variety of pasta and pinsa (not pizza) dishes. ■

Fun fact: The difference between pinsa and pizza is the resting time, shape (oval rather than circle) and dough ingredients. Pinsa dough can rest up to 120 hours before preparation according to essen-und-trinken.de.



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Battling Cities

By Erica Fowler



f Germany's estimated 25,000 castles, most of them have stories of violent clashes motivated by divergences over politics, religion and resources. The thick stone walls may have long crumbled, hidden in the woods. Some lucky structures may have been re-mortared and preserved to protect the artifacts within. These estates have been adopted by private owners, maintained by the community that grew up around it or retained by the lines of nobility that managed to hold on to their ancestral castle. Being in Europe, I'm glad to have access to an endless list of these time capsules that are so fascinating to visit.

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Landstuhl's Berg Nanstein

A newcomer to the Kaiserslautern Military Community (KMC) will quickly notice the red-hued ruin of Burg Nanstein above Landstuhl. It is a worth a visit to see the many architectural additions over the years, enjoy the view and have a good meal at the tavern beside it. But the story of the rebellious knight Franz von Sickingen is arguably the most intriguing part of Nanstein's story. Von Sickingen had been an ally of the Reformation and provided refuge for theologians of the movement, even offering Martin Luther asylum. In a bid to improve the condition of knights, he set his sights on the secularization of power and his target was Richard, the Archbishop-Elector of Trier.

During a series of attacks in 1523 called the Knights' Revolt, von Sickingen attempted to overtake Trier, one of the oldest cities in Germany. He and his allies were forced to fall back, and von Sickingen fled to Nanstein which suffered bombardment from the Elector's supporters. He was buried under the rubble of a cannon blast and died of his injuries days later. The castle was so gravely damaged, that its impressive battery tower lay in ruins. Berg Nanstein had later glory days with repairs and palatial editions by von Sickingen's descendants but was again pummeled by Elector-Princes during the Thirty Years' War and then by French troops in 1689. If you look at the stonework up close, you can still see the differences in stone size, mortar and colors where various repairs have been made after assaults.



Heidelberg Castle

The city of Heidelberg is charming and impressive all at once, but what is now an idyllic university-filled community was the scene of some of the deepest fissures in European history. In the 17th century, the beginning of the Thirty Years War played out when the owner of Heidelberg Castle, Frederick V of the Palatinate, reluctantly accepted the crown of Bohemia. He was a Protestant amid a mighty religious reckoning between several European ruling parties. His short reign leading Bohemia ended with his battlefield defeat in 1620, hence his title as the Winter King. Heidelberg Castle was left undefended and was captured by the Catholic Holy Roman Emperor Ferdinand II's forces. A further onslaught from the French during the Palatinate War of Succession in 1688 destroyed the fortifications because the French King Louis XIV wanted to eliminate resistance in this region. The mark of this conflict remains to this day in the gaping holes along the skyline of the structure, its windows a ghostly frame of its formerly unblemished grandeur.



The most powerful political entity in Renaissance Europe was the Holy Roman Empire, which was comprised of much of Germany, and parts of France, Austria, Switzerland and Italy. It lasted from the crowning of Charlemagne in the Middle Ages to the dissolution of the throne in the Napoleonic era. You may have heard of prince-electors throughout European history, who selected the next emperor for a millennium.





Reichsburg Cochem

The magnificent Cochem Castle today crowns a vineyard-covered hilltop, overlooking a bend in the Moselle River. It was built as a customs castle, or “zollburg” to secure and monitor the river and surrounding area bustling with trades crafters and travelers. Most of what you see today is a 19th-century Gothic revival creation, but the foundations are the remains of a medieval defensive castle. The Palatinate War of Succession brought about the castle’s undoing in 1689 as part of the French campaign to bring the Palatinate to its knees. The French set the castle aflame and then blew it apart. The castle ruins later found luck in the 19th century in the form of the steel and iron magnate Louis Ravené, who extensively renovated it as his summer residence. It is now a must-see in one of the most beautiful Moselle River towns.



Hohenzollern Castle

This comparatively young and intact castle is actually the third iteration of this symbol of Prussian and southern German power. The first castle was obliterated after nearly a year of ongoing attacks in 1423 by the Swabian League. The Württemberg counts took the castle during the Thirty Years’ War, and the Austrian Hapsburgs followed. It then flipped ownership between the French and Austrians until it was left to the ravages of time in the late 18th century. The only surviving part of the castle from this time is St. Michael’s Chapel, which was expanded in the 19th century when King (then Crown Prince) Friedrich Wilhelm IV of Prussia decided the castle should be rebuilt as a glorious Hohenzollern ancestral seat. Wide paths along the castle provide beautiful vistas, a beer garden serves refreshments and glittering displays of royal trappings are shared with visitors. This includes Frederick the Great’s extensive collection of fancy tobacco boxes, of which he was said to own around 300. One tobacco box on display supposedly saved his life on the battlefield because it deflected a bullet from within his jacket, which is also on display. After touring the many rooms, this third version of the castle doesn’t only look like it’s ready for a fight on the outside, but it is protecting a whole other level of magnificence on the inside. Luckily its fighting days full of siege and smoke are behind it, but it does make for a great story. ■





Volunteering with KMC Adopt Don't Shop

By Tamala Malerk

Volunteering can be such a fulfilling activity. This year we are highlighting a new organization or event for those who are looking to learn more about the services and resources available to them as well as for those who are looking to give back to the community.

This month, we are featuring **KMC Adopt Don't Shop**. I had the pleasure of speaking with the foster coordinator and dog trainer, Ronda Smith, and current foster dog mom, Autumn S.



SCAN TO CONNECT
ON FACEBOOK



Ronda has been with KMC Adopt Don't Shop for a year and a half. She often prefers animals to people, is currently in school for vet medicine and just wants to give back to the animals.

Ronda stressed that fostering and adopting are not for everyone. Animals can be a huge commitment; however, fostering can be a way to figure out if you are ready to adopt. If you choose to adopt, there is a rigorous five-part process to ensure that the situation is ideal for both the family and the animal involving applications, interviews and meet-and-greets. Ronda is passionate about connecting animals with families and by the end of the interview she asked me, "Have you ever thought about a cat?"

If you love animals but cannot make the commitment to foster or adopt, Ronda explained there are plenty of other ways to volunteer and help with the animals. Caring for them is expensive. There are veterinarian costs, boarding, feeding, training and more. You can donate items for fundraisers, contribute monetarily or simply bid on raffle items. They need people to help with the re-homing process and to transport the animals to adoptive and foster homes. You can do something as simple as sharing animals up for adoption on your social pages.

Ronda also connected me with Autumn, a foster mom who wanted to share her story. As Autumn adjusted her computer's camera, the biggest,



most lovable-looking boy invaded the picture. I'm sure Autumn was saying something, but I must admit, my focus immediately switched to this giant. She noticed fairly quickly and stated, "This is Sega" and then turned to him and said, "Sit, we are going to an interview."

Autumn and her spouse PCS'ed to the Kaiserslautern area with their husky, Moku. Unfortunately, Moku had a sudden seizure in December 2022 and passed away. Autumn had fostered a few dogs while Moku was alive, but Moku struggled with adapting to other male dogs. After he passed, Autumn decided that she was ready to take on a greater foster challenge and in came Sega. He is a 120-pound Turkish Kangle, a breed of herd protection dogs.

Sega came with many warnings: "He was aggressive and reactive." He had already been rehomed six or seven times. The family before Autumn and her spouse had him only three days before calling and saying that someone needed to pick him up the next day. While she was telling me this, Sega was in the background rolling around in the sunbeam peeking through their window.

Autumn wasn't sure what to expect when Sega showed up at her house in the backseat of someone's car with no lead or muzzle and warnings of being people and dog aggressive. Autumn simply reached in, and he came right out. For three months, Sega has been training to work on reactivity. He does really well with training, but he is still protective of "his" people and "his" house. When I asked her if he was on track to become a "foster fail," she said that while they love Sega, he really needs a ranch and something to protect because he is going stir-crazy in a house.

When asked about the rewarding aspects of volunteering, Autumn said, "Sega brought us a ton of comfort...and gave us something to do (after the loss of Moku). He needed us." KMC Adopt Don't Shop works hard to align the right animal with the right family. As someone who works hard to coordinate people and animals, Ronda loves "seeing how happy and comfortable the animals are in their new homes."

While I only spoke with Ronda and Autumn, there are many who ensure these animals are safe and happy. Ronda wanted to make sure they were mentioned:

"I just want to thank the founders of KMC Adopt Don't Shop, Amy and Brendon Bale, as well as all the hard-working ladies who put in so much time helping these fur babies and our foster families who help support us in finding furever homes. I appreciate Kindsbach Sunshine Farm for lending us a helping hand when needed with fur babies, especially dog training. Thank you Amy, Caroline, Jennifer, Léonie, Mariana and Melissa! Y'all are awesome. Thank you to our past volunteers and thank you to our future volunteers as well. We could not do this without you."

If you are interested in learning more about fostering, adopting, helping with transportation and re-homing, fundraising or donating to KMC Adopt Don't Shop, reach out to Ronda at kmccadoptdontshop@gmail.com, or go to their Instagram page [instagram.com/kmccadoptdontshop](https://www.instagram.com/kmccadoptdontshop). ■



DOG *(and People)* FRIENDLY *Popsicles*

Adapted by Tamala Malerk

It is HOT out there and what better way to cool off than a frozen treat for you and your favorite four-legged furry friend?

Here is what you need for most of these recipes:

1. Silicone popsicle mold, ice cube tray or small paper cups
2. Blender or food processor
3. Unsweetened plain yogurt
4. Popsicle sticks or carrot sticks (optional)

Berryful Popsicle

- ¼ cup blueberries, pureed
- ¼ cup strawberries, pureed
- ½ cup plain yogurt

Apple Honey Popsicle

- ⅓ cup unsweetened apple sauce
- 2 tablespoons Xylitol-free* peanut butter
- 2 tablespoons honey
- ½ cup plain yogurt
- ¼ cup blueberries, pureed (optional)

Pumpkin Popsicle

- ½ cup pumpkin puree
- ½ cup plain yogurt
- 1 tablespoon Xylitol-free peanut butter
- ¼ cup bananas, pureed

Dairy-Free Frozen Fruit Popsicle

- ¼ cup bananas, pureed
- ½ cup seedless watermelon, pureed
- ½ cup pineapple chunks, pureed
- Splash of coconut milk (optional)

Sweet Potato Popsicle

- ¼ cup sweet potato, pureed
- ½ cup plain yogurt
- ¼ cup bananas, pureed
- 1 tablespoon Xylitol-free peanut butter



For each recipe:

Blend ingredients together, pour into molds, add optional wooden or carrot sticks and freeze until solid (can be roughly four to five hours). Remove from molds, or peel off paper cups, and treat your dog and yourself!

Recipes adapted from The Dog Bakery, Dog Tipper, Rover and Food with Feeling.

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2023 ADJUSTMENT & VA COMPENSATION

Combined VA Rating	2023 VA Disability Pay Rate	2022 VA Disability Pay Rate
10%	\$199	\$153
20%	\$328	\$302
30%	\$507	\$467
40%	\$731	\$673
50%	\$1,041	\$958
60%	\$1,320	\$1,214
70%	\$1,663	\$1,530
80%	\$1,932	\$1,778
90%	\$2,172	\$1,998
100%	\$3,622	\$3,332



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****REGISTRATION OPENS AT 1000 ON 31 JULY****

COST: \$75

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- Current Immunization Record
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For an account, email: 86FSS.RYP@us.af.mil

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