



**2023 Election to the Board of Directors
Candidates**

Current SGC Board Members:

President:	Andrea MacLeod (Regina)
Past President:	Mervin Weiss (Saskatoon)
Vice-President:	Jessica Forster (Saskatoon)
Treasurer:	Victoria Oppenlander (Regina)
Secretary:	Ilona Beck (Rouleau)
Directors:	Andreas Denz (Warman) Gerald Freyer (Indian Head) Verena Gramiak (Saskatoon) Theresa Kliem (Saskatoon) Stephanie Schaefer (Riceton)

List of Candidates:

Vice-President:	Andreas Denz (Warman)
Secretary:	Ilona Beck (Rouleau)
Directors:	Kendra Koerting (Saskatoon) Stephanie Schaefer (Riceton)

Biographies

Vice-President Position

Andreas Denz

He was born and raised in Biberach an der Riss in Swabia, Baden-Württemberg, Germany. In June 2010 he and his wife Viktoria moved to Warman, Saskatchewan. In 2011 he worked for the Saskatchewan German Council as the Interim Executive Director during the maternity leave of Sabine Doebel-Atchison. During this time, he gained extensive and profound insight into the work of the SGC and the Board of Directors. His solid academic education and his vocational banking training as well as extensive professional experience in business administration and finance in conjunction with a high proficiency in customer service and computer applications makes him the ideal candidate as a Director of the Board.

It took him and his wife several years to get settled and organized into their new life. As one of the first LINC 7 graduates (Language training from the Government of Canada for Newcomers) he is fluent in the English language. In 2015 he started his own business in construction / roof sealing and since 2016 he has been an active member of the KulturGarten group in Saskatoon. Andreas has a solid knowledge of the German culture and traditions, and contributes his creativity, ideas, and skills to the group for the successful festivals the group is organizing. He will be a great asset to the carrying out of the SGC mandate and the Board of Directors.

Secretary (2-year position)

Ilona Beck

Ilona Beck was born and raised close to Augsburg, Germany. She finished her school years and Abitur in Dillingen/Donau and left the University of Munich with a MSc Degree in Nutrition and Dietetics. After working at the University hospital in Ulm/Donau she met her husband Gregor and decided to move to Saskatchewan. In Rouleau, SK they started a grain farm operation and raised three children on the farm. Once the children grew older Ilona went back to her profession. Since 2008 Ilona worked as nutritionist and marketing manager at CanMar Foods Ltd. in Regina until she retired in December 2021.

Ilona stayed connected to Germany, her family, and friends in Germany all her life. Her children were raised in the German language and the family language remains German. German as a language and German culture was close to heart from the beginning.

Over the past thirty years Ilona was heavily invested and involved in German cultural and language groups on a regional, provincial, and national level and she will bring a wide range of experience to the board.

In 1987-96 she worked as a teacher at the Regina German Language School, mainly teaching credit classes German 10/20/30 and was active as the coordinator of the German language school for over 15 years. At the same time Ilona got involved with the SATG - Saskatchewan Association of Teachers

of German where she served as the president for four years and then stayed on as treasurer for additional six years. During this time Ilona was asked to serve on the executive board of the CATG Canadian Association of Teachers of German where she held the position of secretary for two terms. In addition, she became a board member with the KVDS Kanadischer Verband Deutscher Sprachschulen, serving as the secretary for several terms.

In 2006 Ilona joined the SGC in a director position and served as the president of SGC from 2008- 2014.

After two years in the past president role Ilona took a pause and left the active board life for several years. As one of the founding members of the Regina German Film Club, the Regina German Christkindl Market and the Lesekreis, Ilona stayed involved and connected to the local German cultural groups up to this day.

All these years Ilona's focus was on keeping strong connections to the Germany of today and bringing contemporary elements to cultural groups in Saskatchewan. Maintaining traditions is important for many member groups in Saskatchewan, however we can only grow and develop as a cultural organization if adopt contemporary elements and live in the present. Culture is not a static medium but is living and growing and a reflection of current times and events.

Director Position (3 positions) *(2 two-year position will be elected, 1 position will remain vacant)*

Kendra Koerting

Hallöchen, my name is Kendra Körting. I was born and raised in Saskatoon amongst a heritage of German and Ukrainian great-grandparents. My introduction to the German language began in 2005 as a Bedford Road Collegiate high school student when I made friends with a German exchange student named "Kevin Körting". In 2011, my German language journey continued when Kevin visited Canada again on a vacation. He asked to stay at my house for a few days during his visit; a few days turned into a few weeks, and we have been together ever since, marrying in 2021.

In my recent career, I have worked at the University of Saskatchewan® Vet College, launched the Indigenous cleaning products company Nîkîhk™, and currently work as an Operations Manager at a Net-Zero and Passive House design and consulting firm, Vereco™.

In preparation for our move to Germany in 2015, I enrolled at the German Language School's beginners' class in Saskatoon. We happily lived in Cottbus, Brandenburg, where the immersion helped improve my communication and understanding of the German language and culture.

Since returning to Canada, I regularly participate in the adult-advanced conversational class. I enjoy the opportunity to borrow books, movies, and German entertainment items from the GLS and Public Library. In my spare time, I enjoy drawing, biking, hiking, and spending time with our dog "Cotti" – who was affectionately named from our time living in Cottbus. My husband and I are also avid travelers – with trips to Germany, England, Poland, Hawaii, Las Vegas, and Montana already completed in 2023; with plans for Alaska, Vancouver Island, and Seattle this fall in our 1979 campervan.

My husband's family is still living in Ratzeburg, Germany; we look forward to visiting them at least once a year. We would love to return to living in Germany again in the future; until then, we enjoy a self-made tradition of "Deutsche Sonntag." Our Sundays consist of speaking, reading, or watching programs which are exclusively in German, including our favorite "Deutsche Klangfabrik" program on CFCR.

As an advocate for life-long learning and contributing to a strong community, my husband and I enjoy regularly volunteering with our King George Community Association, as well as donating to local environmental and health-organization charities.

Thank you for taking the time to review my biography. I would appreciate the opportunity to further contribute to the SGC to support the German language and community which hold such a meaningful place in my family.

Stephanie Schaefer

I was born in Donaueschingen, Baden Württemberg, in south western Germany. Here I attended the Wirtschaftsgymnasium (High school of Economics). I have a degree as Buchhändlerin / Einzelhandelskauffrau (Bookseller and Librarian). After this apprenticeship I wanted to see more of the world and traveled to several countries and continents which led me to Riceton, Saskatchewan. Here I met my husband Andreas who was a farmer at the time. Falling in love with him and the Saskatchewan people and open landscapes, I decided to stay, and we both have been running a grain farm for the past 27 years.

In 2016, Andreas and I became Canadian citizens and now hold dual citizenship.

We have two children, Phillip and Nicole, who have already left the nest working and studying in Saskatoon. Both were students at the Regina German Language School "Das Schulhaus" where they graduated with the DSD1 exam (German Language Diploma 1).

Growing up in the Black Forest region traditions like St. Martin Lantern walks, Christkindlmarkets and Fastnacht (carnival), to name a few, were always a big part of my family's life. I believe that holding onto these traditions in an authentic way will help them survive and thrive in our fast-paced lives. One major part in achieving this is to make sure that the German language continues to be taught through credit classes in high schools, language program in heritage language school and universities. Language is the key to any culture!

Cultures & countries constantly evolve, as do teaching and learning methods. To keep up with these changes we need to continue the great advocacy work the SGC has been doing and maintain a healthy relationship with Germany.

In the past 27 years I have served on several boards, including Milestone School Community Board, Riceton Recreation Community Board, Gray 4-H Club, Multilingual Association of Regina and last, but not least Das Schulhaus - Regina German Language School Inc.