



**On September 28, 2007 German community of the Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast led by Brigadier General Josef Heinrichs, Chief of Staff HQ MNC NE, put a lot of effort and organized riotous celebration of Oktoberfest. As a result, about 400 participants – members of the Headquarters Multinational Corps Northeast, their families and honourable guests – gathered at the Baltic Barracks in order to have a good fun and follow Bavarian tradition.**

Beautifully decorated gym in blue and white, the symbolic colours of Bavaria, welcomed the guests. This unique atmosphere was enhanced thanks to a brass band – the German Army Military Band 14 from Neubrandenburg, which made a guest appearance, and a soloist who continued to entertain the company.

Officially Oktoberfest was opened when our Brigadier General Josef Heinrichs tapped the keg of beer. A Bavarian shout 'O'zapft is!' shall be used to announce this. Only then the guests could try traditional Bavarian food – white sausages, grilled chicken and many others, the taste of which was enriched by 'compulsory' beer.

The confenancier of the ceremony was LtCol Helmut Foag – a real Bavarian even though he was not wearing traditional leather trousers, but, as he explained, this tradition is rather kept by visitors of Oktoberfest than born Bavarians. The exception may be the area of Munich whose

inhabitants often have traditional Bavarian clothes: for men – leather trousers and a kind of jacket or vest, usually decorated, and a white shirt; for women – so-called 'Dirndl', which is a dress with some ornaments.

Oktoberfest turned out not to be a 'static' party, quite the opposite, there was a lot of dancing and having fun during numerous competitions. A lot of men and surprisingly women tried to show their strength and hit with a hammer. Not strength, but endurance was crucial in the competition of holding full beer mugs, whereas team cooperation was useful while sawing.

### Roots of Oktoberfest

Oktoberfest dates back to 1810 when a marriage of crown prince Ludwig (later Bavarian King Ludwig I) with princess Therese von Sachsen-Hildburghausen was celebrated. Since the Bavarian community was invited to participate and the festival turned out to be success, similar event was organized the following year. Thereby the celebration of Oktoberfest was established. And today it is one of the world's biggest and most famous festivals in the world gathering millions of visitors not only from Germany.

Among numerous traditions of Oktoberfest, which naturally evolved over time, there is an opening march through the streets of Munich with wagons driven by horses and decorated with flowers, music bands, and groups wearing traditional costumes. There is also fairs, marry-go-rounds, and big tents of former 7 big Munich breweries.

Even though our Corps' Oktoberfest was not organized on such a large scale like the original in Munich, probably all that took part in this year's celebration, and definitely those who could not come, are looking forward to attending the next Oktoberfest.

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