

# Our Story

## A Celebration of Faith, Heritage and Community

This magnificent Weihnachtspyramide (vine-ocks-peer-uh-meed-ah), or Christmas Pyramid, stands as a symbol of Ferdinand's deep faith and German roots—a heartfelt tribute to those who built this town in the hills of Southern Indiana.

Along with including the traditional top and bottom tiers of a Christmas pyramid, our pyramid includes tiers representing Ferdinand's rich history.

Experience the magic from early November through Epiphany (Jan. 6) and share in the joy of the season!

## Lower Tier

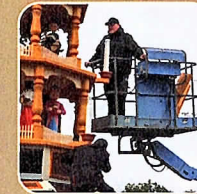
The Nativity scene glows with Baby Jesus wrapped in a swaddling cloth as his loving mother and father, Mary and Joseph, watch over. A shepherd with his sheep and three wise men have come to find their newborn king—the heart of Christmas and the reminder of love and hope.



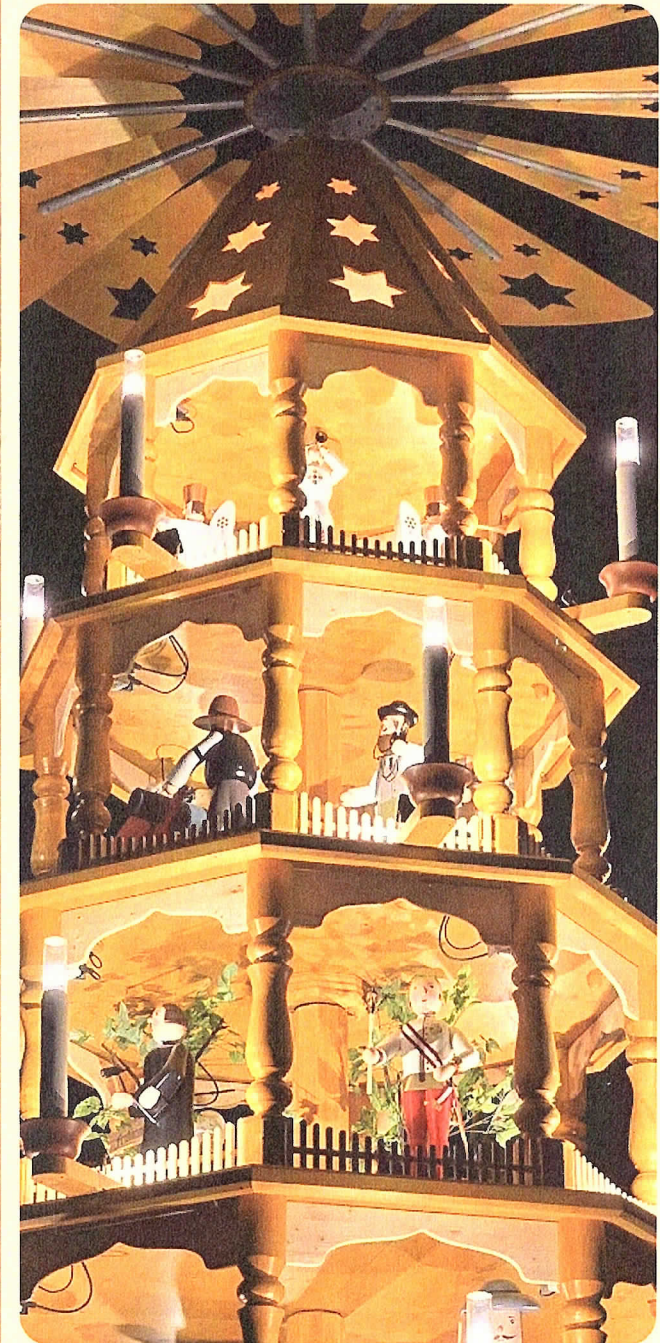
# A Gift from Germany

Handcrafted by Erzgebirgische Holzkuntz Gahlenz, this 34-foot wooden masterpiece brings the old-world artistry of Germany's Erzgebirge region to life.

Tabletop Christmas pyramids began there in the 1500s when miners turned to woodworking, creating spinning towers that told Bible stories and inspired the first Christmas trees. The tradition of small, tabletop pyramids has now expanded into large, outdoor replicas for all to enjoy during the Christmas season!



## Ferdinand WEIHNACHTSPYRAMIDE *Established 2025*



# Second Tier

Honoring Ferdinand's Founders

## Fr. Joseph Kundek

Ferdinand's founder (est. 1840), a missionary priest from Croatia, shown nailing a clapboard sign to a tree with the word FERDINAND



## Emperor Ferdinand I of Austria

Financial supporter of Fr. Kundek's mission, devoted patron of German immigrants, and our town's namesake



## Sr. Mary Benedicta Berns

First prioress of the Monastery Immaculate Conception and leader in establishing schooling in Ferdinand



## Fr. Eberhard Stadler

Early pastor devoted to religious expansion shown standing by a chair, in honor of Clem Lange, founder of Best Home Furnishings, a prominent, early business in Ferdinand



Our community continues to be inspired by their leadership and faith!

# Third Tier

Celebrating Everyday Pioneers

From timber to trade and mills to breweries, these pioneers shaped the foundation of life in Ferdinand.



## Logger

Plentiful lumber led to logging, woodworking, and carpentry.

## Farmer

Early settlers cultivated our strong farming community by planting corn and vegetables on the newly cleared land.



## John G. Beckmann

Pioneer merchant traveled to Troy using a wheelbarrow to fetch coffee and sugar

Dr. Matthias Kempf  
Ferdinand's first able surgeon and practitioner of medicine



## Saloon Owner

Breweries and saloons sprang up as more settlers arrived. August Barth Saloon and Ruhkamp Brewery were prominent establishments.



# Fourth Tier

A Message of Joy

## The Angel

At the pinnacle, angels rejoice, sounding trumpets to celebrate the birth of Christ and proclaim "Peace on Earth!"



May the light of this pyramid remind us all that small beginnings, nurtured by faith, community, and love, can grow into something truly magnificent.



Project sponsored by the Ferdinand Tourism Commission