



Gold Country German American Club



P. O. Box 571, Grass Valley, CA 95945

Promoting German Culture and Stronger German-American Ties in Northern California

www.goldcountrygermanamericanclub.org

Next Meeting: The next Club general membership meeting will be on Friday, February 2, 2024, 4:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., at Seaman's Lodge. The theme for the meeting will be **Fasching**.

Einen guten Rutsch ins neue Jahr!

Here's our ski-jumper, fearlessly flying into the air! A good slide into the new year is implied, and it matters not what the skier's outcome was a few seconds later when he landed on the ground again. We like to think his landing was not like Vinko Bogataj, the Slovenian "agony of defeat" skier we all saw on "ABC's Wide World of Sports." Visualize success! Bring on 2024!



There are many traditional activities during the twelve days of *Raubnächte* surrounding the winter solstice and New Year's Eve (*Silvester*) in Germany. Some of these traditions date back to Teutonic times, but there is a modern tradition that, since 1972, has been enjoyed in German households every New Year's Eve. It is the watching of a short British comedy sketch, filmed in 1963, named *Dinner for One*. The show is virtually unknown outside of Germany, but it holds the *Guinness* record for being the most frequently repeated TV show in history. To see this charming and hilarious skit yourself, go to this YouTube site: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=To8g9XxAdXs>

Important Reminder: Club Dues

2024 Dues are due and payable on January 1 and past due on March 1, 2024. Please mail your check for \$30 made out to GCGAC to P.O. Box 571, Grass Valley, CA 95945, or pay in person at our next membership meeting in February. Your prompt attention would be greatly appreciated.

Notes from the Board

As the holidays get into full swing, the activities of the Club and the Board of Directors wind down. It was gratifying to see a good turn-out at the Club Christmas party on December 1st. The next Board of Directors meeting will be on January 8th, and next Club general meeting will be held February 2nd. More details are noted later in this newsletter.

The election of club officers for 2024 will be held on March 1st. To meet the notification requirements in the club By-Laws, nominations must be submitted by January 31, 2024. Nominations may be submitted to my email address, noted below. You can nominate yourself!

On behalf of the Board of Directors, I wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Respectfully,
Mike Silence
President
silenced@alumni.csusb.edu



Brave souls singing German-language Christmas songs at the Club's Christmas dinner party: Kristina Wetherbee, Karen Clark, Dennis Naumann, Paul Trethewey, Susanne Bader, Pastor Christian Schweter, and Sabine Schweter. Pastor Christian encouraged audience participation.



The Christmas tree was not as opulent as the ones from Fred and Karen Herrmann's property in years past, but it served well.

Activities



German Language Classes

Interested in learning German? There is **only one** (as indicated by Herr Erhobenem Zeigefinger at left) place in Nevada County to take classes, and that is RIGHT HERE at the Gold Country German-American Club!

Classes are FREE with club membership.

The Beginning level class is on hiatus.

The Intermediate Class is taught by Erica Meier. The class is about 100 pages into another German murder mystery novel, *Blutiger Verrat* by Dörte Jensen; It's always a good time to jump on board, if you're interested! The study of mind-bending German grammar is ongoing; Party food and social lubricant make it easier.

Intermediate class sessions take place in person at various class members' homes.

For more information, call Erica at (619) 335-6499

Conversational German Group

Servus! The Conversational German Class is taking January off. Normally they meet from 2 p.m. until 4 p.m. at Christa Benson's place on second Wednesday of the month at 10078 Grinding Rock Dr. Grass Valley. If you're interested in German conversation, call Christa at 530-913-1836.

Kristina Wetherbee needs **photos** to paste on the club's Facebook page! Please contact her with any GCGAC-related photos such as recent hikes, holiday parties, friends, anything she might use.

Also,

We are still looking for a place where we could **practice** German folk **dancing** twice per month.

The best accordionist in a 50-mile radius, Patsy Hannebrink with spouse Ben provided music for the Christmas dinner.



German Food



This map shows regional delicacies in Germany. Example: Bremer Klagen is a type of Stollen bread from Bremen that is typically eaten during the Christmas holiday season. There it is, in the northwest part of the map!



Paul Trethewey loading up a plate.



Kathryn Schoensee-Finn with a loaded plate at the Club's annual Christmas holiday dinner.

Upcoming Events

Be on the lookout for...

This Month:

January-8: Intermediate Language Class, see p. 5

January 9: Board of Directors' Meeting, see p. 7

January-11: Possible Happy Wanderer's Hike, TBA

January-22: Intermediate Language Class, see p. 5

January-25: Possible Happy Wanderer's Hike, TBA

Tentative Plans for 2024:

February-2: First Club meeting of 2024 at Seaman's Lodge, Fasching!



January Birthdays

January 25 Hank Stoffel

Tune to KNCO Radio AM 830, weekdays at 7:50 a.m. to hear your birthday greeting from GCGAC!



Gute Besserung

Fred Herrmann
Karen Herrmann



January 6, 2024 is ***Dreikönigstag***, Three Kings' Day, in Germany. It commemorates the arrival of the Three Kings (Magi) in Bethlehem to present gifts to the baby Jesus. In the German states of Baden-Württemberg, Bavaria, and Saxony-Anhalt, *Dreikönigstag* is observed as a public holiday marking the end of the Christmas season and the beginning of Epiphany on the church calendar. The Christmas markets close, and people take down their decorations. There is also a feast associated with this holiday, and in some parts of the country, children dress up as the three kings and go door to door singing carols and collecting money for charity. There are also traditional foods for the occasion, including "king cakes" or *Königskuchen*, and *Bockbier*.



HAPPY WANDERERS' HIKING GROUP

First, this note from Susan Vogt:

Yes, we will resume hiking in January and will return to our pattern of happily wandering on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays.

The hikes will be in the lower elevations while the days at this time of year are short and cold.

Stay tuned, Sue

Modern Snowshoes

Remember how snow shoes *used to* look? The snow shoes at right, made by MSR®, bear little resemblance to tennis racquets. The principle of snowshoes is that they distribute one's weight over a larger area on the snow's surface, preventing or at least limiting the wearer's sinking into deep snow while hiking. How large that surface area needs to be to "float" on the snow's surface is a function of the weight borne by the shoes (i.e., the wearer and everything he carries) and the softness of the snow hiked upon. Accordingly, snowshoes come in various sizes: 22, 25, and 30 inches long (from MSR). Optional "tails" are available to make the shoes even longer. Why not simply use the longest snowshoes available? Because smaller snow shoes are lighter in weight and less awkward to use. The snowshoes shown here have steel crampons and notched side edges to prevent sliding on icy surfaces. They also feature heel lifts that can be flipped into position to angle the front of the snowshoe upward and thereby relieve calf strain on steep uphill climbs. Rotating bindings pivot fore and aft near the ball of the foot to allow a natural stride, and as can be seen, an opening in the decking material allows the toe to pass through with another steel crampon attached to the binding, for more traction. Exquisite design doesn't come cheap, though. These "Lightning Ascent" model snowshoes from MSR® list at about \$390. Less fancy snowshoes are available for those of us who only need to hike to the mailbox after a blizzard. Those cheaper units are typically made of plastic composites or EVA foam.



To try out snowshoeing, you could rent some at such as Tahoe Dave's for about \$35 per day (includes boots). If you do that, be sure to take along food and drink on your outing, because snowshoeing burns 400-1000 calories per hour.

Teutonic Technology: The Sachtler Fluid-Head Tripod

'Tis the season for taking home movies, whether by traditional video cameras or by video cameras built into smart phones. In either case, amateur videographers strive to maintain smooth and steady scene shooting, and this is often pursued by mounting the camera on a tripod. However, on ordinary tripods, if the camera is panned or tilted, there is a distracting "bounce" at the end of the pan or tilt. To avoid this bounce, professional film makers use a tripod with a so-called fluid head. This mechanism contains a viscous fluid that critically damps the motion of the camera. The fluid-head tripod was invented in the late 1940's by O'Connor Engineering Labs, but the Sachtler company in Germany made several improvements over the original design. In 1958, Wendelin Sachtler and Heinrich Wolf developed a gyroscopically-stabilized fluid head to more easily execute pans and tilts. By 1978, Sachtler patented a permanently-sealed damping system that improved resistance to external factors. In 1991, Sachtler received an Academy Award for the advancement of the motion picture industry brought about by its range of fluid heads. In 2003, Sachtler acquired O'Connor Engineering, the original fluid-head inventor. Since that time, the company has made improvements in its design of tripods and has received more awards from industry groups. There is a very good chance that any movie or television program you see has been produced using a Sachtler camera support system.



GCGAC Board of Directors

Officers (Elected -- 5 votes):

| | |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| President: Mike Silence | (909) 496-6468 |
| Vice President: Kristina Wetherbee | (916) 955-2878 |
| Secretary: Ron Shaffer | (714) 315-5754 |
| Treasurer: Lou Ann Schwartz | (530) 432-0690 |
| Program: John Hettrich | (650) 207-3681 |

Directors (Appointed):

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Membership: Susan Vogt | (530) 432-0594 |
| Dance: Kristina Wetherbee | (916) 955-2878 |
| Happy Wanderers: TBD | |
| Newsletter: Paul Trethewey | (530) 265-0763 |
| Publicity: to be filled | |
| German Language: | |
| Conversational: Christa Benson | (530) 913-1836 |
| Intermediate: Erica Meier | (619) 335-6499 |
| Beginning: Susanne Bader | (510) 282-0721 |

The next Board of Directors meeting will be held on :

Tuesday, January 9, 2024, 6:30 p.m.
by
Zoom Conference Call

GCGAC Committee Chairs (appointed, non-voting)

Refreshments: Volunteers

Get Well & Sunshine:

Christel Denzler (916) 409-5413

Kaffee & Kuchen: TBD

Inter-Club Liaison: Hank Stoffel (530) 269-3137

Webmaster: Paul Trethewey (530) 265-0763

Property: Dennis Naumann (530) 477-1622

Historian: Chrysan Silence (909) 496-8776

Facebook Team: Kristina Wetherbee (916) 955-2878

& Elany Prusa (530) 432-8736

Be sure to check out the official club web page! It has all kinds of interesting stuff, including photo galleries, links, and prior newsletters. It's located at:

www.goldcountrygermanamericanclub.org



Gold Country German-American Club is a Member of the German-American Heritage Foundation of the USA®
719 Sixth St., NW, Washington, D.C. 20001

"Representing Americans of German Speaking Heritage"

Ph: 866-868-8422 (toll free) email: info@gahmusa.org web: www.gahmusa.org

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