



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

February 2 Meeting: Fasching and Glühwein

At Seaman's Lodge, Nevada City. Doors open at 5 pm. Fasching music and decorations. Hot spiced wine (Glühwein) in Feuerzangenbowle. Please bring appetizers and desserts.



Here's a little background on "Feuerzangenbowle":

It means the special mulled wine that is served in Germany during Christmas, New Year's, and other cold weather times, like February! *Feuer* means "fire"; *Zangen* are "tongs"; and *Bowle* means not "bowl", but "punch!" (The "w" is silent -- unusual for a German word!) So, it means "Fire tongs punch." The tongs in this case are the rack that suspends a cone of compacted sugar called a *Zucker Hut* ("Sugar hat") above a pot of hot mulled wine, as shown at left. The sugar is soaked with hot rum, and the rum is set aflame. As the alcohol burns, the sugar melts and drips into the mulled wine, lending a caramelized sugar taste to the concoction. Watching the blue flames in a darkened room is part of this pleasant ritual.

Another ritual at this time of year is **Fasching**. Fasching is similar to Mardi Gras in that it represents the last chance to have a wild party before the forty days of fasting, self reflection, abstinence, piety, repentance, and preparation for Easter, known as Lent. In Germany, Fasching is celebrated by wearing elaborate costumes and facemasks, having street parties, dancing, and in some cities such as Köln, rather large parades on the Monday before Ash Wednesday (which marks the beginning of Lent). In recent years, the parades have featured satirical parade floats depicting political figures in three-dimensional, paper-mache political cartoons. We won't be doing that for our Fasching party, but you can dress up and wear a mask if you want to. In pagan times, the masks were meant to frighten away the ghosts of darkness and winter. Might help; couldn't hurt.

Notes from the Board

Board Notes for February 2024

The most pressing matter is the coming election of club officers for 2024 at the general membership meeting on March 1st. As of this date, January 21st, one new nomination for Program Director has been submitted. Three of the current officers have voluntarily nominated themselves for their current offices. In order to insure the continued viability of the club, greater member participation is needed on the Board of Directors. The elected offices and their responsibilities as defined in the By-Laws are:

PRESIDENT: Presides at Membership, Executive Committee, and Board of Directors meetings. The President oversees the general functions of the organization.

VICE-PRESIDENT: Assists the President in coordinating the general functions of the organization and assumes the functions of the President in his/her absence.

SECRETARY: Records all minutes of meetings and handles all correspondence. The Secretary will read minutes at all membership and board meetings. The Secretary will send a copy of all minutes to the officers of the club before the next scheduled meeting.

TREASURER: Is responsible for the financial business of the club, has custody of all funds and presents financial statements at each Board meeting or as otherwise requested by the Board. The Treasurer shall ensure that all required government forms and tax returns are timely and accurately filed.

PROGRAM DIRECTOR: Is responsible for the coordination and oversight of programs at regular membership meetings and special events. Each program will have its own chairperson and working committee.

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.

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

Important Reminder: Club Dues

2024 Dues were due and payable on January 1 and past due on March 1, 2024. Annual dues are currently set at \$30. Please mail your check 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 is greatly appreciated.

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 February 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.

Free to a good home:
Lederhosen and shirt.
Worn by beloved
colleague. Size 36.
Contact Karen: (530)
615-6766.



Obituary



Gottfried 'Fred' Herrmann 1936-2024



Gottfried 'Fred' Herrmann passed away this week in Grass Valley. He was 87, and died Saturday, Jan 6th after a battle with bone cancer. He was surrounded by Karen and family.

The burial ceremony will be private. However, a public memorial will be held in early spring to celebrate his life.

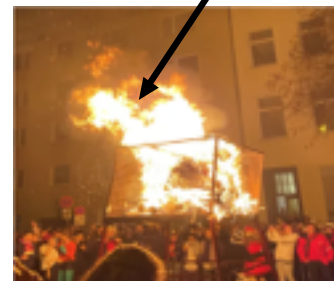
Fred lived a long incredible life. Growing up in war-time East Germany, fleeing, and attending tree-nursery apprentice school made the prospects of coming to the USA a dream and a chance at a new life. Karen, an au-pair from Denmark, caught his eye and heart and they had a peaceful, prosperous, loving marriage of 57 years. Two daughters were born and later a grandchild. Fred and Karen lived in Los Altos for 25 years and made many life-long friends there, along with lots of big camping trips and weekends at the 20-acre apple farm. Together they found a love of country-western dancing, a 40-year favorite pastime.

Retirement in Grass Valley was a happy time, a dream come true where he could play, drive his tractor on the beautiful piece of land that kept him fit and content. World travel and camping trips were enjoyed. He was an inspiration in the community, best known for leading the German Club hiking group for 18 years. He was a plantsman, a great dancer, a devoted husband, and a loving family man. He made so many people happy and will be dearly missed by everyone who was lucky enough to know him.

"He who feasts every day feasts no day." Apparently, the folks in Köln, Germany don't understand this old saying. From the calendar at right, they are planning to hold parades for four consecutive days, interspersed with drinking, dancing, and revelry to excess. At the end of the Carnival is ritual called "Nubbelverbrennung" which means "the burning of the Nubbel(s)." Nubbels are straw-filled puppets that are incinerated in effigy on the night before Ash Wednesday. Each Nubbel represents the sins and shameful deeds that have been committed during Carnival by the party-goers -- a kind of scapegoat to absorb blame -- and it is ceremoniously carried in a procession to what resembles a public execution where it is indicted and set afire.

Köln Karneval Events Calendar -- February 2024							
Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Beyond
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	~40 days
Weiberfastnacht "Women's Carnival"; Street Carnivals Begin	Carnival Friday Parades	Geisterzug ("Ghost Parade")	School Parades and Veedelszüge ("Local Parades")	The famous Rose Monday Parade 1 million visitors in Köln!	Violet Tuesday night: Nubbel burning (effigy)	Ash Wednesday Lent begins.	Lent until Easter, March 31.

The Nubbelverbrennung ceremony is a spectacle, as shown here, and it marks a definite end to Carnival, literally in a blaze of glory.



Upcoming Events

Be on the lookout for...

This Month:

- February-2: Regular Club Meeting, see p. 1
- February-5: Intermediate Language Class, see p. 5
- February-8: Possible Happy Wanderer's Hike, TBA
- February 13: Board of Directors' Meeting, see p. 7
- February-19: Intermediate Language Class, see p. 5
- February-22: Possible Happy Wanderer's Hike, TBA

Tentative Plans for 2024:

- March-1: Club Election of New Officers



February Birthdays

February 1	Phillip Missimore
February 6	Rudy Darling
February 7	Marc Wetherbee
February 9	Tom Stone
February 10	Joan Hardy
February 26	Donald Novak
February 28	Christa Benson

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



Valentine's Day was brought to Germany by the American Army while occupying the country after World War 2. For the holiday, German florists sell over 1,000 tons of flowers. Sixteen percent of all Germans believe that Valentine's Day is an invention of the flower industry. Remember to include the image of a pig in your valentine message, too.



Gute Besserung

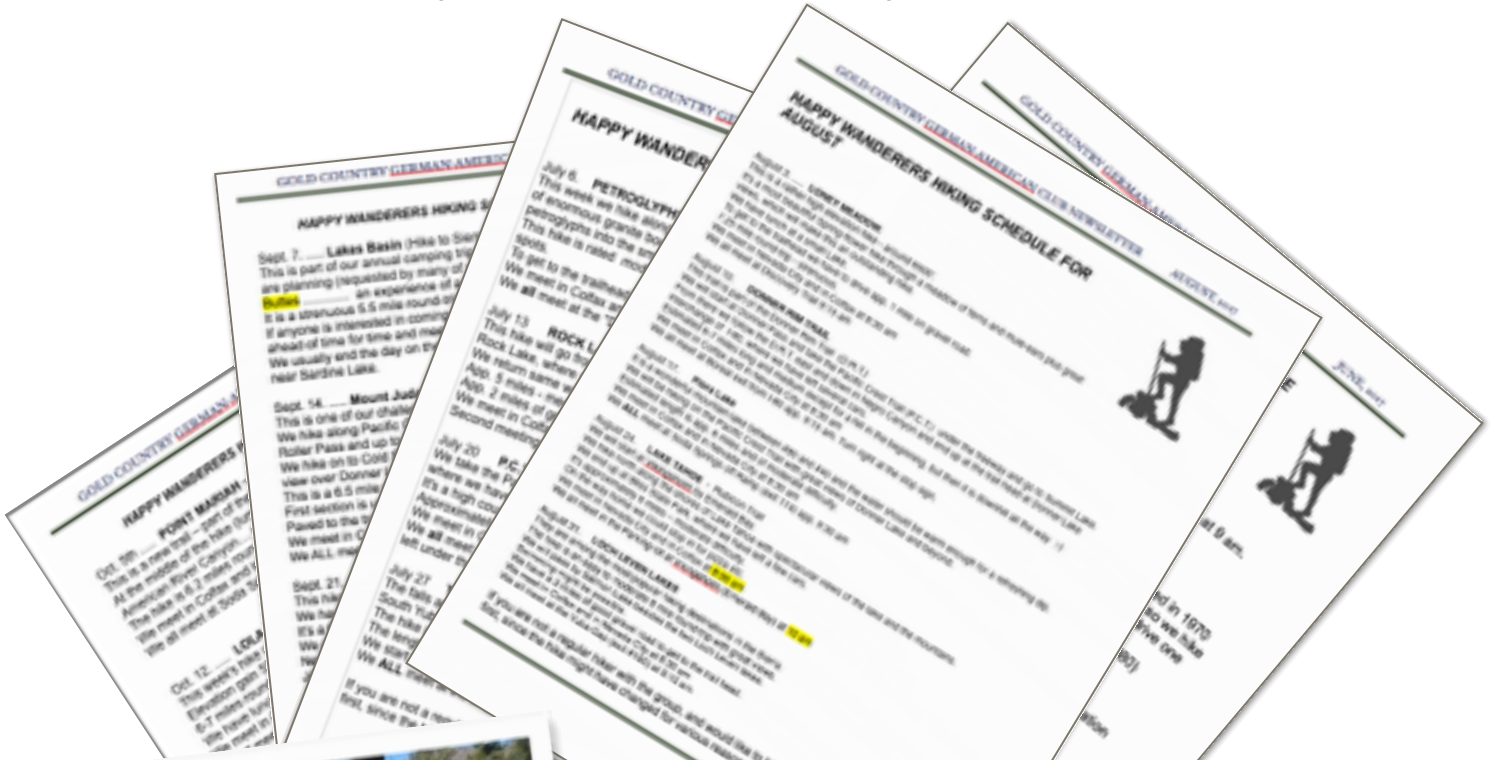
Karen Herrmann

A **Happy Wanderer's** Report from Leslie Lambeth: "Linda Terrell and I hiked the Down & Up and along the river a ways. It was a beautiful day and not too cold or windy. We started an hour later to let it warm up. Condition of trail was ok - just a few puddles." Sue Vogt adds, "This hike was at the Cronin Ranch south of Cool. Everyone else was **sick** [hence we put this item under the doctor] or didn't want to go so far afield."



HAPPY WANDERERS' HIKING GROUP

The photo at left shows Bill Nickerl and Fred Herrmann on a hike many years ago when Bill was the Happy Wanderers' leader. Bill had worked for the Bureau of Land Management and knew the best hiking trails, although in the form of a "verbal tradition." Fred documented Bill's knowledge in writing. The result is a beautiful, lasting legacy of more than thirty concise hike venue descriptions, such as published in the GCGAC newsletter during the hiking months as shown below from summer, 2017. Karen Herrmann typed the texts for Fred, and she is the keeper of the original text files (Phone: 530-615-6766). Many descriptions were copied to Carol Yoder in 2020, who forwarded the Tribal Knowledge to our current hike leader, Sue Vogt, in 2022.



Bill and Fred



Carol Yoder



Sue Vogt

German Dog Breed: Poodle!



When we think of breeds of dogs that were developed in Germany, we typically recall such as Weimaraner, Dachshund, Doberman Pinscher, German Shepherd, Schnauzer, Spitz, Rottweiler... Hardly anybody views the Poodle as German; they assume it's French. Not necessarily! The German verb "puddeln" means "to splash" or "to puddle," which relates to the "Pudel" dogs' having been bred in 17th century Germany to retrieve game fowl from water. Poodles are athletic and love to swim. They have thick, curly hair that if left to grow, becomes matted like human "dreadlocks" and thereby requires grooming by their owners. Originally, the familiar "poodle clip" haircut had a purpose: By cutting the hair short over most of the body, the poodle was prevented from being weighed down by its own hair while swimming to retrieve a bird or a hunter's arrow that had missed its mark. The hair was left long at joints and to protect vital organs, and apparently left long at the feet to provide better

propulsion in the water. The well-groomed poodle pictured above is a "Standard," full-sized variety weighing from 44 to 71 lbs. "Miniature" and "Toy" poodle varieties have been developed as pets and circus performers. The French word for poodle is "Caniche," and the breed is enormously popular in France. However, that doesn't mean the French invented them. The Germans did.

Another breed of dog you wouldn't expect to be German is the Great Dane. Aren't they from Denmark? Nein.

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, February 13, 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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