



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 Event: Friday, July 4 Independence Day Parade

The Grass Valley Independence Day parade will be held on Friday, July 4, 2025, starting at 10:00 am. It is part of the larger Grass Valley 4th of July Celebration organized by the Greater Grass Valley Chamber and Grass Valley Downtown Association. The parade starts at the corner of South Auburn and West Main Streets, winding through Mill Street and ending at Condon Park. Our **Gold Country German-American Club** has a chalet float that we can enter in to the parade. It's clean, the tail lights work, and the trailer hitch has been repaired. What we need now are PARTICIPANTS, and that's where you come in! Ron Shaffer sent out an email on June 12 to ask who will participate, but the response has been underwhelming. If you haven't emailed Ron, yet, please do so at shaffam@outlook.com by June 27. We'll make the decision then to join the parade if we have enough members to cover all the duties.



In 2019, before the Pandemic, we marched in the Grass Valley Fourth of July Parade and it was a royal hoot! Let's do it again!

Notes from the Board

Dear GCGAC Members, our annual Picnic was held at Condon Park and all participants had a great time. Thanks to the Hettrichs for once again cooking the brots and to Kristina Wetherbee for once again running the games. Also thanks to Karen Herrmann for arranging the live music for the day. Now that summer has arrived, many members head out for many other events, so we will not have a formal August Club meeting. Our next event will be our annual Oktoberfest in September.

Welcome to Jerry Greif, our newest GCGAC member.

The Club still needs someone to replace our retiring Membership Committee Chairperson. This is an important role we need filled and consists of handling the existing membership stats as well as handling new memberships by providing the forms and processing them through the Board. It is not a difficult job but an important one. If you can help out and join the Club management please contact Ron Shaffer..

Thanks and a have a great summer !



Happy Wanderers at Rucker Lake on May 22, 2025.



Happy geese on Rucker Lake on May 22, 2025.

Next month, we'll publish a report about Dennis Naumann's ongoing work at Heidelberg Lodge, near Soda Springs, and a review of how Nature Friends, the Muir Woods, and the Heidelberg Lodge relate to our own Club and our history. The tiny photo at right shows Dennis operating heavy equipment as part of renovation work at Heidelberg Lodge. Stay tuned!



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 group-reading a new book, *Dunkelnacht* by Kirsten Boie. We're past the halfway point; jump in, 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 July 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.



Our dancer group is up to 5 couples and now is the time to join if you're interested! We're teaching some beginning dances and reviewing older ones. Practices are on hiatus at the moment. We will start up again as soon as we find a day/time that everyone can practice. Please contact Kristina Wetherbee, (916) 955-2878, for more information.

HAPPY WANDERERS' HIKING GROUP

Our hikes are scheduled to be the second and fourth Thursdays of the month, BUT SOMEBODY DONE MESSED UP, and we hiked on the first and third Thursdays instead.

Six of us hiked on June 5th on the trail to Canyon Creek, which is on the north side of the North Fork of the Yuba River. It goes for 3.5 miles until it reaches the confluence of the Yuba and Canyon Creek. Mostly through wooded areas, the temperature was comfortable and many wildflowers made themselves pleasantly present. Three of us made it to the end of the trail and the other three stopped a bit short, not wanting to do the last steep bit. An ice cream bar in North San Juan is always pleasant for the return trip.

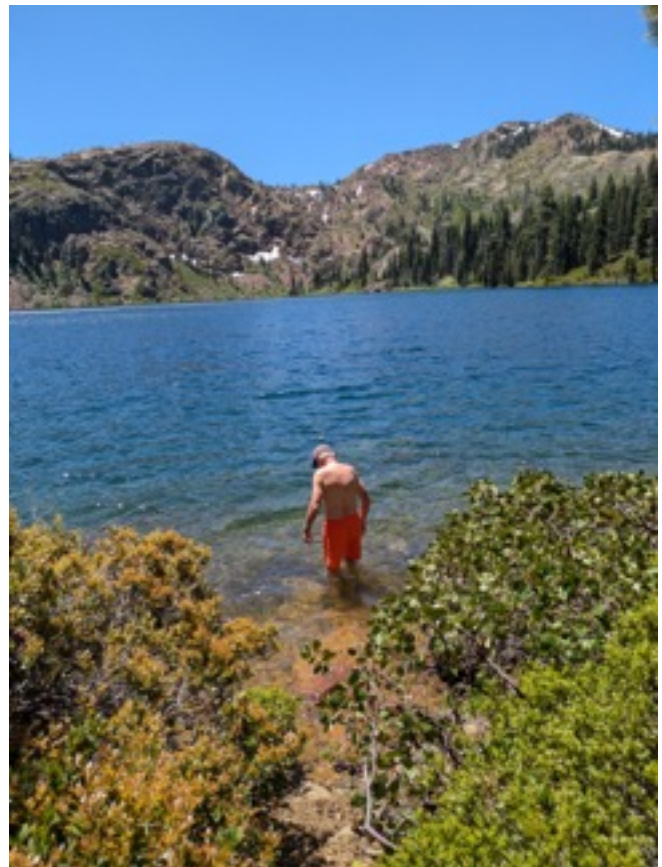


We had ten intrepid hikers on Juneteenth. We parked just below the Lindsey Lakes campground, hiked through the small campground and up to the lakes. We made a counter clockwise loop around the Lindsay Lakes, and a big hill, and ended up hiking along the western shore of Culbertson Lake to the dam. Tom Dyer found a pleasant, if somewhat windy, spot to swim. We returned along an old road, through fields of yellow blooming mules ears and back to the cars.

Sue



The Map. Follow the dotted line.



Tom Dyer making goose bumps. See p.2.

Upcoming Events

Be on the lookout for...

This Month:

- Jul-04: Independence Day Parade, see p. 1
- Jul-10: Happy Wanderer's hike, see p. 4.
- Jul-14: Intermediate Language Class, see p. 3
- Jul-24: Happy Wanderer's hike, see p. 4.
- Jul-28: Intermediate Language Class, see p. 3



July Birthdays

Jul 15	Susan Vogt
Jul 21	Dennis Schuetzle

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

Tentative Plans for 2025:

September: Oktoberfest
November: Advent wreathmaking
December: Holiday Dinner

More plans in the works!!



Gute Besserung

Niemand?

Kieler Woche

About halfway between Hamburg and Denmark is the city of Kiel, on the coast of the Danish Straits between the Baltic and North Seas. Held here every year since 1887 is the Kiel Regatta, in the last week of June, known as *Kieler Woche*, Kiel Week. Sailing craft of every size and type, from foil sails to catamarans to full-sized yachts, more than 2,000 ships and 5,000 sailors, compete in this festival. With 3.5 million visitors, it is the largest sailing event in the world, and possibly the largest festival of any kind in Europe.



Max Stern and Hartz Mountain



You might remember certain television programs that aired in the 1960's and '70's that were sponsored by Hartz Mountain pet care products. Since that time, the corporation has shortened their

brand name to "Hartz", as shown above. Originally, the Hartz Mountain brand referred to the Harz Mountains in Germany, shown on the map at right. What is the connection? Is a German-American involved? Yes.

In 1926, in Fulde, Hesse, Germany, somewhat near the Harz Mountains, lived **Max Stern**. He was born to a Jewish family. That year, when he was 26 years old, Max decided to escape religious prejudice and the ravages of World War One in Germany by emigrating to the USA. He was practically penniless, but a friend who was a pet store owner who owed Stern a debt paid Stern not in money, but in the form of 5,000 live, singing canaries.

Stern took the canaries aboard ship with him to New York. Without knowing English, Stern managed to sell the canaries to a department store in Manhattan. Buoyed by his success, he then set up a business of importing singing canaries from Germany. By 1932, his stable of canary customers included Sears, Woolworth's, Macy's, and others. That year, he was the single largest importer of "livestock" to the USA, and he astutely decided to expand his business to include packaged bird food to care for the birds he had imported. Thus, the Hartz Mountain pet care products corporation was formed.

By 1959, Stern's son, Leonard, joined the company, which had expanded to include tropical fish and goldfish care products. A few years later, they expanded to dog and cat care products, including the now-familiar Hartz flea and tick collar. By 1980, the Hartz company sold its products in over 40,000 outlets in the US and Canada. Max Stern died in 1982, but the company continues to thrive under his son's leadership. Another German-American immigrant success story!

During his lifetime, Max Stern became a leading Jewish philanthropist, helping many charitable organizations in both the US and Israel. He also founded the Stern College for Women, an undergraduate liberal arts and sciences college as part of the Yeshiva University in New York, which is associated with Modern Orthodox Judaism. Stern was a leader of the Yeshiva University for 41 years.

What about those Harz Mountains in Germany? They are located in the northern Germany highlands, called so because they have the highest elevation for that region. The tallest peak in the Harz mountains is called The Brocken and it is 3,477 feet. Consider that in our own area, the Banner Mountain Lookout is at 3,902 feet. Like our foothills here, the Harz region was previously dominated by the mining industry. Also similar is that today, major industries are forest products and tourism.



Teutonic Technology

Two stories about scientific discoveries happening in Germany:

Nummer Eins (1): At the *Technische Universität München*, Technical University at Munich (TUM), scientists have discovered a way to dramatically improve the performance of rechargeable batteries. Today's lithium-ion batteries have some problems: They are flammable, can go into thermal runaway, and require careful recharging procedures that add time to the recharge cycle. Researchers at TUM developed a new battery material made from lithium, antimony, and scandium. The new battery has a much higher conductivity (lower internal resistance) that allows lithium ions to move 30 percent faster than in present batteries. This makes them more efficient and allows faster charging times and better thermal stability.

Nummer Zwei (2): Are you familiar with what are called "Forever" chemicals? These are the PFAS (per- and PolyFluoroAlkyl Substances) of which Teflon® non-stick cookware and Gore-Tex® outdoor apparel are examples. These are useful and durable products, but the chemical bonds between fluorine and carbon in these substances are so extremely strong that they don't bio-degrade, ever. Microscopic particles of PFAS have found their way into our drinking water, food chain, and our bodies, where they cause harm. A team of chemists led by Professor Matthias Wagner at the Goethe University in Frankfurt, Germany have developed a catalyst that can break the carbon-fluorine bonds in seconds at room temperature, rendering the "forever" chemicals "non-forever." The process presently uses lithium metal to provide electrons for the reaction, but the team is pursuing a method using electrical current to accomplish the goal more efficiently.

Hooray for German scientists!!

GCGAC Board of Directors

Officers (Elected -- 5 votes):

President: Ron Shaffer	(323) 797-6656
Vice President: Linda Shaffer	(714) 315-5754
Secretary: Renate Hettrich	(650) 207-3681
Treasurer: Lou Ann Schwartz	(530) 432-0690
Program: Karen Herrmann	(530) 615-6766

Directors (Appointed):

Membership: Susan Vogt	(530) 432-0594
Dance: Kristina Wetherbee	(916) 955-2878
Happy Wanderers: VACANT	
Newsletter: Paul Trethewey	(530) 265-0763
Publicity: VACANT	
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, August 12, 2025, 6:30 p.m.

by

Zoom Conference Call

GCGAC Committee Chairs (appointed, non-voting)

Refreshments: Volunteers	
Get Well & Sunshine: VACANT	
Kaffee & Kuchen: VACANT	
Inter-Club Liaison: VACANT	
Webmaster: Paul Trethewey	(530) 265-0763
Property: Dennis Naumann	(530) 477-1622
Historian: Chrysan Silence	(909) 496-8776
Facebook: Kristina Wetherbee	(916) 955-2878

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"

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