



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



Chili Cook-off and Fasching Party

German-American Chili Cook-Off and Fasching party, Friday, February 6, 5:00 p.m., at Seaman's Lodge

[Doesn't that look good?! Imagine 5 different chili varieties! --and corn bread, crisp green salad, and cold beer!!]

We need volunteers to enter the Cook-off. We also need members to come and enjoy the eats and judge the different chili. Those wishing to enter should email Karen at herrmann@colfaxnet.com so we can plan accordingly. Any type of chili can be entered, with beans, without, with meat, or veggie. We will have prizes for the winners. The chili should be prepared at home and brought in a slow cooker or a pot that we can keep warm on the stove. You might want to bring copies of your recipe for anyone interested. *[Paul will bring his famous corn bread. We need salad, too!]*

Can we celebrate Fasching at the same time? Of course! If you have a costume or a mask, bring it, wear it, show it off, and we will have a fine prize for the best costume. You could even win two prizes if you make the best chili and also wear the best costume!!

If you aren't bringing chili, please bring a salad, appetizer, or dessert!

Important Reminder: Club Dues

2026 Dues are due and payable on January 1 and past due on March 1, 2026. Please mail your check for **\$40** 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

Dear Members, Happy New Year ! We hope you are all off to a good 2026 start. However, this is the finish of the Club's 2025 season with our Chili Cookoff Event in February and our Annual Business Meeting in March. This Annual Business Meeting will be extremely important this year and we need EVERY Member to attend because the Club has reached a critical existential point and we need everyone to voice their opinion and vote on how the Club survives the future. We are just finishing a very successful year with events happening in ten of the twelve months, with many of them new to the Club. All were well attended and much positive feedback was received. Like everything else, the Club's expenses increased this year with more use of Seamans Lodge and added expenses for some of the events. If the Membership wishes to have similar future seasons, our current financial situation would only allow the Club to continue for one more year. At the Annual Meeting the Board will be presenting the 2025 EOY financial report and presenting options for ways to keep the Club alive, and your vote will be very important.

In addition to the Club's financial review, the Annual Meeting is also the establishment of the 2026 Board of Directors by vote of the Membership. This year there will be the election for a new President, a new Vice President, an incumbent/new Secretary, an incumbent/new Treasurer, a new Program Director and a new Membership Director. These positions are required by the Clubs By-Laws and the Club cannot continue without these positions filled. Please let me know for which position I can add your name to the 2026 ballot. You can contact me [Ron Shaffer, current President] at shaffam@outlook.com.

Please note, the 2026 dues are now due. Only paid up Members can vote at the Annual Meeting so get your dues into Lou Ann asap!



Activities

Conversational German -- NEW APPROACH!

Servus! We are taking a new direction in the Conversational German Group! Some Club members have expressed an interest in getting together and chatting in full-immersion German. We'll ask at the next Club meeting who is on board and what time and day works best for all concerned. Then, plan on meeting at Christa Benson's place at 10078 Grinding Rock Dr. Grass Valley. Her schedule is flexible. If you're interested in German conversation, call Christa at 530-913-1836.



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. We're group-reading our next book, *Momo* by Michael Ende. Now would be an excellent time to join the class! 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

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 4 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



On January 8th the Happy Wanderers decided to check out the American River. We parked at a trailhead in Auburn off of Maidu Avenue. As reported by Mark Wetherbee, the road was indeed not muddy and we were able to hike down to China Bar. The water is fast and plentiful this time of year, best to stay away from the edge.

We hiked back up a bit and found a lovely lunch spot, complete with tables and a spectacular view of the river heading west. Then part of the group hiked down to another bar. If one continued on the trail they would eventually meet up with Folsom Lake, and it is quite a few miles to the dam. We took a slightly different path back to the cars and headed home.

Sue



On January 22, a contingent of Happy Wanderers (at left; Sue Vogt shot the photo) hiked the Daugherty Hill Wildlife Area, Yuba Narrows Unit near Black Swan area down beyond Smartsville. It is said that the Black Swan area is a popular bird watching spot. In January?

Upcoming Events

Be on the lookout for...

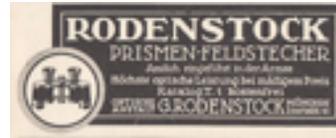
This Month:

- Feb-02: Intermediate Language Class, see p. 3
- Feb-06: Club Meeting: Chili Cook-off and Fasching
- Feb-10: Board of Directors Zoom meeting, see p. 7
- Feb-16: Intermediate Language Class, see p. 3
- Happy Wanderer's hikes will be announced ad hoc.

Plans for 2026:

- March 13: Annual General Meeting
and Language Group Sing-Along
- June 6: Annual Summer Picnic
- July 4: Independence Day Parade

More plans in the works!!



January Birthdays

- | | |
|--------|-------------------|
| Feb-1 | Phillip Missimore |
| Feb-6 | Rudy Darling |
| Feb-7 | Marc Wetherbee |
| Feb-7 | JD Gardemeyer |
| Feb-28 | Christa Benson |

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



Gute Besserung

Niemand? Sehr gut.



Valentine's Day: Alles Liebe zum Valentinstag! The Valentine's Day tradition was brought to Germany by the Americans and British after World War 2. It has celebrated mostly by young adult Germans, rather than children. Some older Germans believe that the holiday was invented by the flower industry, but in fact, the holiday dates back to Roman times, in a yearly pagan ritual called "Lupercalia" that took place in middle February. The Germans associate Valentine's Day with pigs, which are considered symbols of luck in love. Here's a cute plush toy pair of pigs kissing. Very suggestive!



US Military Bases in Germany

Current events include the prospect of the United States' acquiring Greenland, either militarily or by purchase. Greenland is a territory of Denmark, a founding member state of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO, established in 1949. Article 5 of the NATO charter says that an attack on Greenland is an attack on all NATO members. An attack from the US military would abrogate the NATO treaty to which the US is a party. Some pundits say that such military adventurism would shatter the NATO alliance. That alliance, and the presence of nuclear-armed US military installations in western Europe, mostly Germany, have deterred Russian territorial ambitions, at least in NATO member countries, during the Cold War and until present.

The map at right shows foreign military facilities in Germany. If the NATO alliance were to dissolve, what would be the effect on these many military bases? Would they close? The number of US troops stationed in Germany today is approximately 35,000, fewer considerably from a maximum of 250,000 before the collapse of the Soviet Union and German reunification. Would those troops re-deploy? Ripple effect: The bases provide employment for thousands of German civilians in nearby cities. Local populations have become accustomed to their American visitors, and the Americans have assimilated as much as could be expected during a 3-year tour of duty. However, the primary reason for Germans' accepting the presence of US troops is the ongoing deterrent to the Russians, not so much for invading Germany as for invading buffer states such as Poland and Romania. Some civilians have expressed *Angst* because of the presence of nuclear weapons in their back yards, but the Germans know which side their *Zweiback* is buttered on. They endure the nukes to deter the Russians.

At the time of this writing, the NATO alliance is not in danger, because President Trump abruptly backed away from his threats to invade Greenland militarily. However, damage has been done to the sentiments of long time European NATO allies.



Teutonic Technology: Miele Professional DE



You might already recognize the Miele brand, because they manufacture a line of contemporary Eurostyle kitchen appliances that are sold in the USA. In addition to appliances for the home, Miele also makes a line of commercial/Professional appliances, such as illustrated below. The dishwasher at left is the consumer version, model G5056SCVi, retailing at \$1,449. On the right is the Professional version, model PFD404U, retailing at \$6,720. What do you get for the extra money? Well, the Pro version is designed for such as care



facilities, nursery schools, or customers with special hygiene requirements. It can wash and dry 380 dinner plates in one hour, squeaky clean, allowing for quick re-use of the dishes. It uses a final rinse temperature near boiling, 185°F, and a special automatic door system to prevent you from becoming scalded by the hot water. The touch screen control panel could be considered no-nonsense. So, maybe you could purchase one of these units if you expect a large gathering for Christmas or Thanksgiving. What was that price, again?



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: VACANT	
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, February 10, 2026, 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”

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



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P.O. Box 571
Graff Valley, CA 95945

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