



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

Important Club Meeting Friday, March 6 Please attend!

It's not an overstatement to say this meeting is crucial for the survival of the Gold Country German-American Club. We need to elect a new Board of Directors to see the club through what may be a metamorphosis into something new and beautiful. So, in addition to the usual fun, food, drink, and entertainment (see below), we are holding our yearly election of officers. For that purpose, we need to have a quorum to vote for the new Board of Directors and approve By-Laws. Please attend! Your vote matters. Also, please consider elevating your participation level in the club by becoming a new, creative Board member. We need you! Also, please bring appetizers or desserts to share with your fellow members.

Place: Seaman's Lodge in Nevada City.

Time: 5:00 p.m., March 6, 2026

Language Group Sing-Along

If you come to our March 2026 meeting, we (in the language group) promise to put you in **Good Spirits — or as the Germans say, *Gute Laune!***

It's all about good mood, good humor, and good company. We'll share the meaning, teach the song, and even show you the dance!

Come ready to smile... You might leave singing!

At right is a still image from the currently popular youtube video showing how do to the ***Gute Laune*** routine. Check out the video in preparation:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ijv09v7kpl&list=RD_Ijv09v7kpl&start_radio=1



Notes from the Board

Dear Members, Our March Annual Business Meeting is very important this year. The discussion this year will be about the survival and future of the GCGAC. Please attend and add your ideas and votes.

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!

Ron Shaffer



Remembering our Chili Cook-off and Fasching Party:



For the Chili Cook-off, there were five entries in the chow line. They were all "so different from one another!" Corn bread and salad cleansed the palate. Club members voted for their favorites, and then we held the Fasching costume competition. Results --->



Larry White took first prize for people's choice in the chili department.



Kristina Wetherbee won best Fasching costume.

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



The February 12 hike was led by Kirsten Hebert and Kathleen Kelly. Kirsten writes the following description:

We tried a new hike today in the Spenceville Wildlife Area. It is called South Pittman Trail. It ended up being just over 4 miles. It was a beautiful warm day. It goes thru groves of oaks and open country. Very few wildflowers, but beautiful shades of green and lots of grazing cows. The day was clear enough to see the Sutter Buttes in the distance.

The hikers: Me, Jeanne, Ron, Paulette, Leslie, Kathleen and Linda T.
Take Care, Kirsten



Photos by Kirsten Hebert

Upcoming Events

Be on the lookout for...

This Month:

- Mar-02: Intermediate Language Class, see p. 3
- Mar-06: Club General Meeting
and Language Group Sing-Along
- Mar-10: Board of Directors Zoom meeting, see p. 7
- Mar-16: Intermediate Language Class, see p. 3
- Happy Wanderer's hikes will be announced ad hoc.

Plans for 2026:

- June 6: Annual Summer Picnic
- July 4: Independence Day Parade

More plans in the works!!



March Birthdays

- | | |
|--------|-----------------|
| Mar-10 | Karen Herrmann |
| Mar-11 | LouAnn Schwartz |
| Mar-20 | Sabine Schweter |
| Mar-21 | Rebecca Claus |
| Mar-25 | Thomas Spol |

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



Gute Besserung

Niemand? Sehr gut.



Veronika, a Brown Swiss cow living in Austria, has become the first documented case of a bovine learning to use a tool. Veronika is a pet, but her owner did not teach her this "trick": She learned to use a scrub brush to scratch an itchy spot on her back entirely on her own. Up until this event, it was thought that outside of humans, the only animals that could learn to use tools were chimpanzees. Veronika does well, especially considering she does not have opposable thumbs!



Unsere Leute

Auf Wiedersehen, Mark Schilleman!



Mark was active in our German language class. This photo is from 2013, when Rebecca Claus was *unsere Lehrerin*.

Prior to 2013, Mark served the Club as President and then as Activities Director. As shown in the photos below, he played the part of the Burgermeister in the beer keg tapping ceremony for Oktoberfest, and he was avidly active in the Alpine Dancers group.



Mark was a club member for many years. In 2017, he decided to relocate to Wisconsin, ostensibly to help settle his family's estate there, and also to find lower cost of living than California. The Club gave him a certificate of appreciation and a beer stein for his service, and he had trouble fighting back the tears for this photo. He became an honorary lifetime Club member from then on.



The Club member shown applauding and playing the part of the Braumeister was Stefan Arth.



Kristina Wetherbee and Mark Schilleman, dance partners.



The photo above is likely the last photo of Mark, taken with his friend Cindy Moyer in Wisconsin, before he passed away on June 22, 2025, at the age of 67.

German Culture: Stoßlüften

Stoßlüften is something that people in German-speaking countries do to refresh the air in their houses or apartments. "Stoßlüften" means "Shock ventilation," and it consists of opening the windows in their dwellings, wide open, letting the cross-ventilated air flow through to exchange inside air for outside air, which is presumed to be of better quality than the inside air. It is jokingly called (in English) "House burping." Does this happen in the cold of winter or if it's raining outside? Yes, for at least three minutes, several times daily. Properly executed Stoßlüften replaces the whole room's air quickly without cooling down the structure of the building. Even in the winter, walls and furniture retain their heat during the air exchange. Some advantages of performing "shock ventilation": (1) Prevention of moisture buildup and mold, (2) Removal of stale air heavy with drowsiness-inducing carbon dioxide boosts one's mental alertness and concentration. Stoßlüften is part of the German way of living, philosophy, and tradition. Rental agreements between tenants and landlords often specify that Stoßlüften be performed daily. The German Federal Environment Agency (*Umweltbundesamt*) endorses Stoßlüften to prevent mold and maintain healthy indoor air quality, especially in kitchens and showers where moisture can build up. And, in many workplaces, there are "ventilation officers" who monitor the time of day and announce when office spaces are to be ventilated. When that happens, turn off the furnace, put on a jacket, open the casement windows, and embrace the moment!



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, March 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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