



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

Close Call! River Colfax Fire In Chicago Park Herrmanns' House Spared



To paraphrase Louis Pasteur, "**Fate favors the prepared!**" And so it was with Fred and Karen Herrmann's house and property during the devastating River fire that swept through Chicago Park on August 4, 2021. The Herrmanns' property is where we held the club's summer picnic -- We all know the place! -- and we know that in addition to the fire-wise preparations the Herrmanns made, there is a large pond on their property (photo at left shows pond partially drained by fire trucks) that assuredly tipped the balance in favor of the stalwart firefighters.

Story continued on page 4...

Oktoberfest 2021

We're moving forward fearlessly with our Oktoberfest plans this year! Mark your calendars, but stay tuned for any last-minute changes!

Date and time: **Saturday, September 25, 2021**, doors open at 4:00 p.m.

Place: Seaman's Lodge, Nevada City, CA



Reminder: The **Papa Oom-Pah-Pah Band** will **play at our Oktoberfest!** We will have words to songs projected on a screen so you can sing along with the German music. Fun!

Bring on Oktoberfest!!



Here they are again, in the news:

BIONTECH



Many members of our club received the Pfizer vaccination, and this might be comforting to some folks: As of the date of this writing, it has been reported that the COVID-19 vaccine developed by BioNTech and Pfizer, which was fast track interim-approved and deployed on an emergency basis, is likely to be *formally* approved (after the fact) by the US Food and Drug Administration during the week of August 23. Maybe this approval will encourage some as-yet unvaccinated members of the community to get vaccinated. In our club, the vaccination rate is over 90%, but currently, in Nevada County, the vaccination rate has plateaued at about 59% of the eligible population at large. So, it's no surprise that Nevada County also has the second-highest per capita covid-19 case rate of any county in California. Health officials tell us that the vaccine protects against the Delta Variant, or at least minimizes its virulence if it does break through. Trust the science, but know that there are always surprises. Our health officials are learning as the pandemic drags on -- It is as though they are flying in an airplane that they are still in the process of building.

Have you noticed how many times in this issue of the GCGAC Newsletter an image of a body of water has appeared?

We are suffering through a drought. These photos of ponds and lakes are like pin-ups for sex-deprived soldiers, or beautiful pictures of food for famine victims.

HAPPY WANDERERS' HIKING GROUP



Tom, Sue, Karen, Ron, Carol, and Tom gathering at the Rood Center parking lot.



Here's the same group, later that day, on the trail. Carol is behind the camera.

UPCOMING THURSDAY HIKES AND LEADERS

Our trip leaders will send out more details the week before the hike including meetup locations. At that time, you will have the opportunity to sign up for the hike. RSVPs are required.

**August 26: Rubicon Trail (Emerald Bay to DL Bliss SP) -
Karen Clark & Tom Dyer, Trip Leaders**

**Sept. 7-10 Lakes Basin Region / Sierra Buttes -
Karen and Fred Herrmann, Trip Leaders**

Others to be announced!

Close Call!, continued...



Many areas had been doused with pink fire retardant.



Fred surveying former grassland now blackened by the fire.

Karen Herrmann wrote the following narrative about when the River Colfax fire came to their property:

*Last Wednesday the 4th, about half an hour after we first saw the smoke plume, did we get the warning to be ready to evacuate. Fred rushed down getting the camper on the truck. (His plan was to do that the following day). I grabbed (half-dazed) clothes, papers jewelry and food plus a bit more in the V.W. About half hour later, did we get the message from "codeRED": **LEAVE NOW!** I drove down to Fred and yelled we gotta leave NOW.*

We drove to the fairground, but they sent us to the high-school up on Ridge Road. Then we got a call from dancer-friends Larry/Loralee, to come to their house about 2 miles in on Allison Rd near the North Star mine. Here we stayed 3 days and 2 nights and had water. electricity, could take showers and all.

Saturday evening our neighbor heard that they could come back home and so did we but only in the V.W.; it was getting dark. We slept in our own bed in the darkness armed with flashlight.

Next morning we walked outside and everything was red from the fire retardant. Fire trucks and police etc. all over. As we walked the little road to the back of the forest on the hill we were greeted with EVERYTHING on the ground being black and not a bush was left. Everything gone, everything black. However we had limbed up all trees over the years, and almost nothing but grass back there. The crown of all the trees are still there untouched by the fire. There were fire hoses all over leading down to the pond, where a pump had been activated it seemed like. Also there were hand dug fire-breaks all over with one side of it BLACK and the other side untouched. The grass-fire stopped right there!

Four of our closest neighbors along the dirt-road next to our property Clydesdale Rd. were not quite so lucky, their main houses were saved, but several big sheds, granny units etc. were burned, gone, everything black. Many houses farther down Clydesdale towards the Bear River lost everything, and there were quite a few houses there. This includes the person we get eggs from. EVERYTHING for him is gone including 7 goats. 2 cats and numerous chickens. Out on Mt.Olive Rd. we can see 3 regular houses burned to the ground.

The little "Mom-Pop" Store out by 174 had their backyard burned and the fire continued along the highway down towards the Bear River.

We hope that the first rain will wash off all the red retardant and the new grass will start growing come Springtime. For us, it seems the nightmare is gone, but for many of our neighbors it's just beginning.

Since the fire, Fred and Karen's land line telephone has been down and won't be repaired for several weeks. They can be reached on their cell phone, 530-615-6766.

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.

A Beginning level class will start in September under the direction of Susanne Bader and will take place at her cozy house in Grass Valley.

The Intermediate Class is taught by Erica Meier. The class is underway reading a German murder mystery novel, *Blutige Affäre* by Dörte Jensen, and studying some mind-bending German grammar. Intermediate students assemble in person at various class members' homes, now that members have become vaccinated.

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

Conversational German Group

Greetings! The Conversational German Class will meet Tuesday, Sept. 8 at 2 p.m. until 4 p.m. at 10078 Grinding Rock Dr. Grass Valley. Call me if interested to join the group at 530-913-1836. See you at 2 p.m. Aug. 10th. -- Christa.

Happy Wanderers' Destination: Penner Lake!



Photos by Carol Yoder.



Club President and Hike Leader Ron Shaffer kicked his boots off to relax.



Tom Stone taking a refreshing dip in Penner Lake. Was the water cold, Tom?

Upcoming Events

This Month:

September 6, 2021: Intermediate Language Class, see p.5.
 September 7-10, 2021: Happy Wanderers' yearly outing at Lakes Basin. See p. 4.
 September 8, 2021: Conversational German, see p. 5.
 September 8, 2021: Board of Directors' Meeting, see p. 7
 September 20, 2021: Intermediate Language Class, see p.5.
 September 25, 2021: OKTOBERFEST

Tentative Plans for the Year:

German-American Day November 5
 Holiday Dinner December 3.
 All at Seaman's Lodge!



September Birthdays

September 10	Anneliese Welch
September 17	Laurenz Dehondt
September 21	John Muff
September 22	Margot Schulze
September 30	Dave Costa

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



Gute Besserung

Theresa Arth

Hirschman Pond

The hiking trail near this pond might be familiar to some members of the Happy Wanderers. It's a short and easy hike very near to Nevada City. But, did you know that the pond and trail are named for **Leb Hirschman**, a German-Jewish gold miner from Bavaria? During the gold rush, Hirschman carved out what is currently the pond with environmentally disastrous hydraulic mining, similar but on a smaller scale to that done at Malakoff Diggins. The erosion was nothing to be proud of, and toxic chemicals from mining still pollute the pond, but over the years it turned out pretty. Just don't eat the fish.



Which Army Had The Better Helmets?



German Stahlhelm Helmet



American M1 Helmet

The jury is still out regarding who had the superior helmet. It can be argued that the Stahlhelm with its distinctive rear flare did a better job of protecting the back of the soldier's neck from falling shrapnel. It was made of very hard silicon alloy steel that could withstand a 9mm bullet. The American helmet actually consisted of a steel shell with a phenolic liner. When the liner was removed, the steel shell could be used as a wash basin or a cook pot. The German helmet had integral and non-removable suspension, so it was not suitable as a container of liquids. One thing is clear: Both helmets are instantly recognizable. You can tell whose side is who without even seeing the rest of the uniform.

GCGAC Board of Directors

Officers (Elected -- 5 votes):

President: Ron Shaffer	323-797-6656
Vice President: Mike Silence	530-477-6659
Secretary: David Moss	432-2236
Treasurer: Lou Ann Schwartz	432-0690
Program: John Hettrich	(650) 207-3681

Directors (Appointed):

Membership: Susan Vogt	432-0594
Dance: Dave Moss	432-2236
Happy Wanderers: Carol Yoder	530-210-0215
Newsletter: Paul Trethewey	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 :

Wednesday, September 8, 2021, 4:00 p.m. at
Bret Harte Inn, Grass Valley, CA, or by
Zoom Conference Call

GCGAC Committee Chairs (appointed, non-voting)

Refreshments: Volunteers

Get Well & Sunshine:

Christel Denzler 878-0504
Annaliese Grasshof (916) 783-5411

Kaffee & Kuchen: TBD

Inter-Club Liaison: Hank Stoffel 269-3137

Webmaster: Paul Trethewey 265-0763

Property: Dennis Naumann 477-1622

Historian: Kristina Wetherbee 432-9941

Facebook Team: Kristina (above)
& 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

Newsletter printed at: Walker's Office Supplies, 791 Maltman Drive., Grass Valley, CA 95945 530-273-2283



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

First Class Mail
Please Forward



Gold Country German-American Club
P.O. Box 571
Grass Valley, CA 95945