



Mitteilungen

A publication of the
Sacramento Turn Verein
German-American Cultural Center - Library

Volume XXV, No. 2

April, May, June 2026

Old and New Easter Traditions in Germany

Contributed by Ingeborg Carpenter

The Easter Bunny can be found all over Germany. The custom of searching for eggs and small gifts at Easter—which are said to have been hidden by the Easter Bunny—has been practiced in Germany since the 17th century. But there are also many other customs. Some are old, but many new ones have also been introduced.

In Franconia, there are Easter fountains. However, the tradition of decorating fountains with Easter eggs didn't begin until the early 20th century and originated in Franconian Switzerland in Bavaria. It is believed that the picturesque hilly region wanted to attract tourists in this way. Bieberbach in Franconia boasts the largest Easter fountain in the world.



Bieberbach Osterbrunnen (Photo: bayern-online.de)

Every year on Good Friday, a community play reenacting the Passion of Christ takes place in



Passion of Christ in Bensheim, Hesse (Photo: Ernst Lotz)

Bensheim, Hesse. Thousands of spectators gather to watch the procession through the city center to the market square. The tradition was introduced by migrant workers from southern Italy.



Burning Easter Wheels (Photo: Wikimedia/Nifoto)

continued on page 2

The Sacramento Turn Verein's German-American Cultural Center is dedicated to preserving the same proud German heritage that was instrumental in the founding of the Sacramento Turn Verein in 1854.

The Sacramento Turn Verein, a member of the German-American Heritage Foundation in Washington, DC, meets in the old "Turner Hall," at 3349 J Street in Sacramento where its German-American library is housed. Visitors are welcome.

In Lügde, North Rhine-Westphalia, people love burning the Easter wheels. Originally, it was a pagan Germanic custom to send burning wooden wheels rolling down the hill to welcome spring. Today, it is a tradition in Lügde on Easter Sunday. The Easter wheels are made of oak and stuffed with straw. The first wheel is lit with a firecracker and pushed down the hill. Five more follow.

It is a tradition in Germany to decorate trees and bouquets with painted Easter eggs. But the now-famous Easter egg trees in Saalfeld, Thuringia, take this custom to a whole new level. Thousands of hand-blown and painted Easter eggs adorn the trees there. A family from Saalfeld started this tradition, and now the town keeps it alive because the trees delight many visitors.



Photo: AndrewPoison, in Wikipedia auf Deutsch

In Saxony, an old Sorbian custom is widely practiced in the Catholic region of Upper Lusatia. Here, men ride through the Sorbian villages on festively decorated horses to proclaim the good news of Christ's resurrection, followed by many onlookers.



Sorbian village riders (Photo: Mitteldeutscher Rundfunk)

In Hamburg they like Easter bonfires. Lighting a bonfire at Easter is a tradition almost everywhere in Germany. This custom, which originally had pagan roots and celebrates the rebirth of nature, was adopted by Christians. But particularly large Easter bonfires are lit on the banks of the Elbe river in Hamburg's Blankenese district.



Osterfeuer in Hamburg (Photo: Jan-Kruse www.segel-foto.de)

Mitteilungen

Quarterly newsletter of the Sacramento Turn Verein's
German-American Cultural Center - Library
3349 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95816

German-American Cultural Center - Library OFFICERS:

President: Susan Pelz **Vice-President:** Charles Ritchie
Secretary: Rosemary Naves **Treasurer:** Peter Peterson
Publicity: Linda Schneider **Programs:** Committee
Membership: Richard Caldwell **Librarian:** Uli Pelz
Historian: Helga Hecht
STV Representative: Pat Rogers

EDITORIAL STAFF

Ingeborg Carpenter, Susan Pelz, Markus Geissler

Volume XXV, No. 2

Frohe Ostern!

Happy Easter!



Hear ye! Hear ye! A big celebration! Buy your tickets now!

On Saturday, April 25, 2026 we will celebrate a very special birthday!

Our wonderful Turn Verein building will be 100 years old.

To celebrate this special milestone, we will follow tradition
and hold an Anniversary Ball on that day.

- ❖ From 1 pm to 4 pm we will hold an open house for our neighbors, friends, and the curious.
- ❖ At 5 pm the celebration will become an exclusive event for Turn Verein members and section members and their special guests. You will be able to investigate the building from 5 pm to 6 pm. Sections are going to host exhibit areas featuring special section-specific drinks and finger foods.
- ❖ At 6 pm we will sit down for an elegant dinner in the beautifully decorated hall, enjoy a drink at the hosted bar, and partake in a special birthday cake before listening to the story about our building.
- ❖ After dinner, we will dance the night away to the sound of a live big band. Wear your 1920's outfit or your best cocktail attire. A wine glass to help commemorate the 100th anniversary of our building will be yours to keep.

Buy your tickets now! \$100 for a 100th birthday party.

For tickets contact:

Katie Muir: 916-862-5088 kmuir1994@gmail.com

Ingeborg Carpenter: 916-893-1052 stvmagistra@gmail.com

Le Cervin: Matterhorn, where it all began...

Part 3

Chris Carey, GACC–Library and main STV member, introduced readers to the wonder of mountains and mountaineering, in particular the legendary Matterhorn mountain in Switzerland. In Part 3 of this adventure, Carey takes our readers along to the top and the various milestones along the way.

Contributed by Chris Carey

After meeting with the guides and inquiring as to prices and logistics, they were satisfied by my own background and experience in mountain climbing techniques and a date was made to go up. The cost, at the time (1984), was about SFr 500 for guide and services (Ten years later the cost is more than twice that for the same experience--inflation!). In the event of someone wanting to go up who has never climbed before, but who is otherwise in excellent condition, a practice climb or two is usually arranged first on a nearby peak such as the Breithorn or the Riffelhorn. Once the guides are satisfied as to the ability of the prospective climber (lacking evidence of previous experience in the mountains), an ascent is scheduled for the Matterhorn itself--weather permitting, although conditions are invariably good most of the time during the standard climbing season.

Several days later, the time for my date with this peak of my childhood dreams was at hand. We left in the evening of the day immediately preceding the ascent, taking the Luftseilbahn (cable car) from Zermatt to the upper terminal at the Schwarzsee; from there, carrying climbing packs and ropes we hiked the final thousand feet to the Swiss Alpine Club hut known as the *Hörnlihütte* (situated at 3260

meters). There we spent the night after enjoying a hearty meal and some camaraderie with others and their guides, also en route the next day. Sleep, due to excitement, was of course near impossible, at least for me!

At 4 AM sharp my guide was up, getting his gear together. I had no trouble awakening since I hadn't slept a wink the entire night--a combination of excitement and the usual difficulty many have getting any sleep at high altitude the first day or so of a mountain ascent. We had a quick breakfast of muesli and instant oatmeal and were soon out on the ridge above the hut, trying to get ahead of the other groups who were a bit slower or larger than ours, so as to free ourselves of the exaggerated but quite realistic concern over rock fall.

The views by now were stunning, as they are in fact even from the Hörnlihütte itself. The air was cold and crisp and the deeply azure skies were absolutely crystal clear, despite the early hour. We made good time up the 45-degree ridge, since hand and foot holds are excellent and both of us were in top shape. Within several hours we had made it all the way up to the *Solvayhütte*, or *Solvaybiwak*, a high-altitude mountain refuge at 13,210 feet which is small but provides excellent emergency accommodations for anyone unfortunate enough to need them. After a rest there for food, water and some sober gazing at the seemingly sheer drop on all sides of the *Solvayhütte*'s doorway, we were back up at it again. It bizarrely occurred to me that one had to be careful about taking a trip out of the hut to relieve one's self at night, since the doorstep of the hut is about the size of a large postage stamp! Heading up once more, the route veered briefly out onto the East Face as the route zagged higher to the permanent snowfield that covers the *Dachel*, or 'roof' (this is where Whymper's ill-fated first ascent party experienced disaster, in 1865). Below us, the other



Hörnlihütte (Photo by Swiss Alpine Club)

groups were still struggling up and having no one ahead of us conveyed a great sense of satisfaction that whatever rock fall occurred would be minimal and not man-instigated.



Solvaybiwak (Photo by Swiss Alpine Club)

Finally, the skies were starting to get quite light. Despite the spectacular views available, great care required strict attention to the task at hand: not slipping. Unclipping from a section of fixed rope attached to one of the more extravagant sections of exposed rock, we tracked up the drifts of the Dachel's icy snowfield using crampons and ice axes to the final summit ridge.

The sense one has at this point of being perched absurdly high up in the sky, with the ground falling away on all sides, is quite breathtaking to say the very least and beggars the imagination. I paused, just short of what is known as the South Summit (slightly lower than the North Summit) to reflect on the drama which eternally embroiled Whymper and his fellow Victorian climbers in historic climbing speculation on that fateful day in June, back in 1865. Having read a great deal about all this some years before, I could vividly imagine what it must have felt like for them. It left me with a chilled sense of awe and wonder, as I mused on what they had accomplished with little more than their determination and the primitive gear and clothing of that time.

Then it was on to the North, or 'true' Summit, which is at the far end of a rocky spine fraught with icy patches, in the perpetually frozen crannies of the summit rocks. The true high point of the Matterhorn is adorned with a filigreed iron summit

cross, in the style of all the well frequented Alpine summits. The cross commemorates the lives of all those who have been killed attempting to do what we had successfully done and is a product of the deeply devout beliefs of the very Catholic people who live in the high alpine hamlets of this region.

It took a few minutes for the realisation of what I had done began to fully sink in. I had made it to the top of the Matterhorn, finally. I had achieved the summit of my life-long goal: *Angels 146* (or 14,600 feet), as an air traffic controller would term the altitude in aviation parlance--Angels 146 on the doorstep of Heaven. It was indeed 'heaven' to me, and as the first party to make the ascent that beautiful day, we had a bit more peace and quiet in which to appreciate the singular beauty that this high and historic vantage offers than those following would have. It was amusing to think about how frequently I had routinely been this high in an aircraft; but what a different feeling it was to be here with both feet firmly planted on the earth! Soon, the summit would be crowded and noisy as all the dozens who were now struggling up the route finally reached their objective. I was alone with my thoughts for a while, then, but soon it was time to grab a few photographs of my guide and myself and head back down before the gaggle of tyro tourists burst upon us and shattered the rare and beautiful mood of the legendary place.

The descent was just as demanding as the ascent, owing to the fact that different muscle groups are used going down. Further, according to statistics, it is on the descent that most mountaineering accidents occur, due to fatigue and a somewhat lessened state of critical focus (this was the case on Whymper's successful first ascent!). Now the concern for rock fall was again fresh, as we passed group after group following the track towards the top of the mountain. Finally, however, we reached the Solvayhütte where we paused again, and then continued on down to the Hörnlihütte, where we had lunch on the hut's scenically splendid deck.

Above us climbers were visible all along the ridge, and it made one pause to ponder just how routine the ascent of this once impregnable mountain fortress

continued on page 6

Remember when...??

Do you remember when and where this was?
Do you recognize any of the people in the photo?
Tell us via email at gacclibrarystv@gmail.com.



Did you remember?



unknown couple on the left;
Karl and Henrietta Mindermann;
Brigitte Thomas (Henrietta's sister)

Le Cervin: Matterhorn, continued from page 5

had become. Finally, I folded up my tiny Zeiss Trinovid binoculars and we trudged back down the path to the Schwarzsee Luftseilbahn terminal for the ride down to Zermatt, which was waiting for us at an elevation of 5315 feet AMSL below the Matterhorn massif.

It had been--if I may be excused the pun--one of the peak experiences of my life, and certainly a memorable one. One of the great goals of my life had been attained. If I ever had a 'bucket list', this certainly would have been item #1 at its top! To ineptly paraphrase Neil Armstrong's immortal words as he set foot for the first time on the surface of the moon, *'It may be a small step for mankind, but was a giant step for this man.'*

What had started many years ago, with a book written by Jack Kerouac about the self-discovery of the post-Beat generation, had culminated in my finally fulfilling a personally enriching dream that had remained an important part of my whole life up to this point. A figurative milestone in my life had been reached. It was, to me, an accomplishment of no small personal meaning.

The rest of my stay in Zermatt was less arduous but no less enriching, as there is so much to see in

this historic little Alpine recreation area that the remaining days pass all too quickly. Such sights as the Alpine Museum, the English (Anglican) Church, the quaintly fascinating graveyard in which many famous (and not so famous) climbers have been laid to rest over the years, and the frenetic night-life with underground discos and tourist watering-holes--all were enjoyable and memorable experiences. The spirited sense of good feeling and pleasure that the Zermatt area inspires is unique and invigorating--even if you don't aspire to scale its adjacent Alpine peaks.

But nothing... *nothing*... can begin to compare with the silent glory of standing up there on the roof of the world, listening to the chill wind keen with whispered stories of climbers long gone, and relishing that moment of personal triumph, which for me shall remain long in my memory: standing there on the doorstep of heaven at *Angels 146*...



Celebrating *Fasching* at the Sacramento Turn Verein

On a recent Saturday at the Turner Hall, German Language School students, along with some of their teachers, siblings, and parents, dressed up in costume for *Fasching*, or *Karneval*, which is observed in various regions of Germany and is rooted in the same pre-Lenten traditions as Mardi Gras.



FOR MORE INFO CONTACT:
DIRECTOR@STV-GERMANLANGUAGESCHOOL.ORG



GERMAN LANGUAGE SCHOOL
STV - SPRING 2026
COOKING CLASS



[HTTPS://WWW.STV-GERMANLANGUAGESCHOOL.ORG/](https://www.stv-germanlanguageschool.org/)

SPRING COOKING CLASS

Join us for a fun and delicious German Cooking Class!

Learn how to prepare traditional German dishes and enjoy cooking together in a joyful atmosphere.

Possible dishes include:

Baking German Bread, Schnitzel, Spätzle, Flammkuchen, Pretzels with Obatzda, and classic desserts like Apfelstrudel.

All cooking levels welcome!

Dates and registration details coming soon.

Guten Appetit



A Section of the Sacramento Turn Verein
 3349 J Street, Sacramento CA 95816
www.stv-germanlanguageschool.org
director@stv-germanlanguageschool.org



“Devoted to the Promotion and Teaching of the German Language”

Tentative Schedule - Adult Classes - Summer 2026
 June 6th - June 27th

Class	Day/Time	Dates	Place
Beginners Conversation (Level A1)	Tuesday 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	June 2 - June 23	Lodge Hall / hybrid
Elementary Conversation (Level A2)	Monday 6:00 PM - 7:30 PM	June 1 - June 22	Lodge Hall / hybrid
Intermediate Conversation (Level B)	Tuesday 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	June 2 - June 23	Schule / hybrid
Advanced Conversation (Level C)	Monday 7:00 PM - 8:30 PM	June 1 - June 22	Schule / hybrid

The Sacramento Turn Verein (STV) opens to students 15 minutes prior to class. Students must leave the STV at the end of each class, no later than the teacher. For hybrid classes the teacher will send a Zoom link, so students can log on to the class from their home computer/ phone. Please contact the teachers for Zoom links.

Tuition for adult summer classes is \$90 for 6 hours of instruction. Fees are due on enrollment and are non-refundable. If enrollment does not meet the minimum number of four students per class, we will attempt to consolidate classes, change the class time, or- as a last resort - we may be forced to cancel the class for the session.

Please register for classes online.

Students can register online with a credit card approximately two weeks before classes start. For more information, please visit our website <https://www.stv-germanlanguageschool.org/shop/>

Please contact the teacher before classes start to receive Zoom link, if needed.

REGISTERING EARLY ONLINE makes for smooth and efficient scheduling and enrollment procedures.

THANK YOU!



A Section of the Sacramento Turn Verein
 3349 J Street, Sacramento CA 95816
www.stv-germanlanguageschool.org
director@stv-germanlanguageschool.org



“Devoted to the Promotion and Teaching of the German Language”

Tentative Schedule - Youth Program - Summer 2026

June 6th - June 27th

Class	Day/Time	Dates	Place
Krabbelgruppe (ages 0-3)	Saturday 9:15 AM - 9:45 AM	June 6 - June 27	In Person
Young children (ages 4-7)	Saturday 09:45 AM - 10:30 AM	June 6 - June 27	In Person
Children's class (ages 8-12)	Saturday 12:00 PM - 01:00 PM	June 6 - June 27	In Person
Heritage Speakers Online only	Wednesday Level 1: 4:30 PM - 5:30 PM Level 2: 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM	June 3 - June 27	Zoom
Heritage Speakers In-person (Sat) + online (Wed) Group 1 – Level A2	Wednesday 4:30 PM - 5:30 PM Saturday 10:30 AM - 11:30 AM	June 3 - June 27	In Person
Heritage Speakers In-person (Sat) + online (Wed) Group 2 – Level B1	Wednesday 5:30 PM - 6:30 PM Saturday 10:30 AM - 12:00 PM	June 3 - June 27	In Person
Krabbelgruppe (ages 0-3)	Saturday 9:15 AM - 9:45 AM	June 6 - June 27	In Person

Heritage Speakers: We are continuing with online instructions for Wednesdays. On Saturday in-person classes are offered at the Turnverein for all heritage speakers. The time is being used for fun projects, hands-on activities, and games in accordance with the topics of the Wednesday classes. Children can choose to participate only online on Wednesdays or sign up for two classes a week = online classes on Wednesday and in-person Saturday classes.

Children's classes: Children's German classes are offered in-person only for 0–3-year-olds and 4–7-year-olds, and for the 8–12-year-olds in person participation is preferred – hybrid is possible. Tuition (4 weeks) for the Krabbelgruppe is \$40 per child. Tuition for the Young Children class (4-7) is \$50 per child and for the Children's class (8-12) tuition is \$55 for **4 weeks**.

The Heritage Speaker class Group 1 (level A2) is \$85 (Wednesdays + Saturdays), and the Heritage Speakers class for Group 2 (level B1) is \$106 (Wednesdays + Saturdays). ONLINE ONLY Fees: Heritage Speaker Group 1 is \$40; Heritage Speaker Group 2 is \$40. Fees are due on enrollment and are non-refundable. The minimum number of students per class is four. **Please contact the teacher before classes start to receive Zoom link - if needed.**

Please register online. Our website is <http://stv-germanlanguageschool.org> . **Thank you!**

What is Going on at the Turn Verein?



Information about the officers and meetings of the STV and its Sections is listed below. Please contact your particular Section for current information on meeting dates and times, and visit www.sacramentoturnverein.com for details about events, room rentals, and general information. Check your email for the reminder to pay your 2026 membership dues.



SACRAMENTO TURN VEREIN (Main Club)

Membership Meetings (Ruhstaller Room):
Jun-Aug: First Wednesday, 19:00
STV Executive Board & Trustee Meetings
Jun-Aug: Third Wednesday, 19:00
President: Freddie Diringer; Trustees:
Ingeborg Carpenter, Gery Frankenstein, Walt Zacharias
Contact: www.sacramentoturnverein.com
Webmaster: Eric Guenzler, ericguenzler@gmail.com
Rental Coordinator: Brandy Curry, 916-442-7380 x494;
stv_rentals@sacramentoturnverein.com

STV Actives

Membership Meeting: Fourth Thursday, 19:00, STV
President: Dean Wright
Contact: stvactivespresident@gmail.com
Plan ahead: 2026 Christkindlmarkt will be on Dec 5-6.

STV Alpentänzer Schuhplattler

Membership Meetings: Check calendar at
www.alpentanzer.com
Dance Practices: seasonally Thursdays, 18:30,
STV Banquet Hall
Band Practices: Check calendar at
www.alpentanzer.com
President: Lila Wallrich
Contact: contactus@alpentanzer.com

STV German-American Cultural Center- Library (GACC-L)

Membership Meeting: Second Thursday, 19:00,
STV Library
Special Events: Third Friday of most months, 19:00,
STV Library
Open Hours: Saturdays, 9:00 to 13:00 (Tuesdays by
arrangement)
President: Susie Pelz
Contact: susipelz@yahoo.com

STV Handball-Racquetball

Court Games: Monday through Friday, 16:00
Membership Meeting: Second Thursday, 18:00,
Holzkiste
President: Dan Hagan
Contact: Visit <https://stvhandball.weebly.com>

STV Harmonie

Meetings: Fourth Tuesday, 11:00-13:00, Die Schule
The Harmonie and the Alpentanzkapelle have joined forces in bringing music and singing to the many events that are part of the cultural fabric of the Sacramento Turn Verein. We are a friendly and welcoming group, and all are invited to join us. No previous musical experience necessary.
President: Gaby Schoff
Contact: gabischoff@hotmail.com

STV Soccer

Membership Meeting: 2nd Wednesday, 18:00,
Trophy Room
President: Kevin Poveda
Contact: kevin.a.poveda@gmail.com
2025 STV Soccer Crab Feed on February 15; for tickets contact kevin.a.poveda@gmail.com

STV German Language School

Adult & Youth Classes meet in person at the STV, some with Zoom
View schedule in this newsletter or online at www.stv-germanlanguageschool.org.
Membership Meeting: First Thursday, 19:30,
Die Schule
Executive Board Meeting: Third Thursday, 19:30,
Die Schule
President: Emily Via; GLS Co-Directors: Tina Bruno & Sonja El-Heliebi Wissink
Contact: Visit www.stv-germanlanguageschool.org
Co-Directors:
Tina Bruno: gls.stv.tina@gmail.com
Sonja El-Heliebi Wissink: gls.stv.sonja@gmail.com

Side-by-Side Story Poem

Der Frühling hat sich eingestellt

Der Frühling hat sich eingestellt;
Wohlan, wer will ihn sehn?
Der muss mit mir ins freie Feld,
Ins grüne Feld nun gehn.

Er hielt im Walde sich versteckt,
Dass niemand ihn mehr sah;
Ein Vöglein hat ihn aufgeweckt;
Jetzt ist er wieder da.

Jetzt ist der Frühling wieder da!
Ihm, folgt, wohin er geht,
Nur lauter Freude, fern und nah,
Und lauter Spiel und Lied.

Und allen hat er, groß und klein,
Was Schönes mitgebracht,
Und sollt's auch nur ein Sträußchen sein,
Er hat an uns gedacht.

Drum frisch hinaus ins freie Feld
ins grüne Feld hinaus
Der Frühling hat sich eingestellt
wer bliebe da zu Haus?

Spring has arrived

Spring has arrived!
Well then, who wants to see?
You must come to the open field,
To the green field now with me.

It hid itself in the forest,
So that no one could see it anymore;
A little bird woke it up;
Now it is back again.

Now spring is back again!
Wherever it goes,
There is nothing but joy, far and near,
And nothing but games and songs.

And it has brought something beautiful
For everyone, big and small,
And even if it is only a small bouquet,
It has thought of us.

So let's go out into the open fields,
Out into the green fields.
Spring has arrived,
Who would stay at home?

Hoffmann von Fallersleben

Translated by Ingeborg Carpenter

Weisheiten

**Auch aus Steinen, die einem in den Weg gelegt werden,
kann man Schönes bauen.**

Even from stones placed in one's path, one can build something beautiful.

Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), German polymath and writer

Sacramento Turn Verein
German-American Cultural Center - Library
3349 J Street
Sacramento, CA 95816

First Class
U.S. Postage
PAID
Sacramento, CA
Permit No. 1315

Komm mit zum Turn Verein!

Upcoming German-American Cultural Center - Library Special Events:

Wiener Kaffeehaus on Sunday, May 17th

Please visit our website at www.sacramentoturnverein.com for details.

Upcoming STV Events:

STV Bockbierfest on Saturday, April 18th

100th Anniversary Gala on Saturday, April 25th

STV German Language School Maifest on Sunday, May 31st

Please visit our website at www.sacramentoturnverein.com for details.

Keep up with Sacramento Turn Verein events at www.sacramentoturnverein.com.

Want to learn more about German traditions and ways of life? You can help keep such memories alive by joining and participating in the activities of the German-American Cultural Center - Library.

Membership is only \$20 per year. To join, send your check for \$20, payable to "GACC-L" to

GACC-Library, Sacramento Turn Verein, 3349 J Street, Sacramento, CA 95816.

We meet at 7:00 p.m. on the second Thursday of each month in the Turn Verein Library.

Welcome! Join us!

GERMAN-AMERICAN CULTURAL CENTER - LIBRARY

Library Hours: Saturdays 9:00 AM - 1:00 PM, and Tuesdays by arrangement

Telephone: 916-442-7360; Email: gacclibrarystv@gmail.com

Web: <http://sacramentoturnverein.com/turn-verein-sections/cultural-centerlibrary/>