



# EXCELSIOR GERMAN CENTER

Oakland, February 8, 2021

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## 2021 is here!

We have a new government in the United States and COVID infection numbers are finally coming down. It is certainly not yet the time to proclaim “normalcy”, but it is the time to taking a deep breath, focusing on vaccination programs, and – maybe – making some first plans for late EGC summer activities. Maybe, let’s see how we can further progress.

### Board of Directors

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Petra Specht

Vice President  
Anthony J. Schaller

Secretary  
Hannelore Avalos

Treasurer  
Hilde Lorentz

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Marlene Feuerstraeter  
Otti Kiraly  
Petra Kübler  
Bärbel Steensen  
Michael E. Willis

Last year we focused on assisting the German language programs, during the extended shelter-in-place period which made online education necessary. We reached out to the musicians who enriched us for many years, and offered a small monetary token of appreciation., We doubled our support for the Meals-on-Wheels program in our area and we started to write up the Altheim Association’s transition period into the Excelsior German Center.

Now, it is time to listen to the many cultural clubs, choirs and orchestras, the Nature Friends, the Hermann Sons Lodges, the St. Matthew’s community, theater groups and historical organizations. For some of them restarting may be quite difficult, with unique hurdles in front of them. And, we ourselves need to think about when and with which event the EGC wants to get back into its business. There are still many months ahead of us in which we will have to keep our health routines in place, yet any future event will need to be properly planned, and likely some extra precautions will have to be taken, so that we will keep everyone safe and healthy.

Let’s talk a bit more about EGC’s business: Last year you approved the budget for 2021, with 74 members approving, one not, five abstained. For the nomination / election committee you elected John Binder, Barbara Clement and Christiane Frederickson as members, who will join the already appointed Karl Pfeiffer and Michael Willis. Thank you for your strong ongoing support, it’s very much appreciated.

Our spring membership meeting cannot be held in person. Therefore, the board of directors will send out a report by March 14, again. Hopefully it will be for the last time. Candidates for board positions will shortly introduce themselves in writing, and we will provide reports from committees, our finances and plans for the near future. In these times when in person meetings are not possible it is all the more important to provide as much transparency as possible to all our members. If you have any questions or comments, please feel free to contact us, independent of report periods, for any issues you may have. The email address [board@excelsiorcenter.org](mailto:board@excelsiorcenter.org) reaches all nine board members.

Our first New Year's concert video was appreciated, many thanks go to Otti Kiraly for the overall organization, Tony Schaller for the recordings and putting the video together and Birgit Steensen for writing the program. We are now exploring options of streaming other movies on the VIMEO platform, as a substitute for an EGC movie Sunday event. Please, also mark your calendar for the 25<sup>th</sup> Berlin and Beyond Film Festival which will take place between April 28 and May 4. More information will be distributed as soon as it becomes available, it will likely be a combination of online events and "car theater" movie shows.

Tragically, we have lost two members at the end of 2020: lifetime member Marianne Eberle, and Gerhard Hinse. We will miss them dearly.

Please, stay safe, obey the health protocols of your respective county's health agency, and get vaccinated when possible. Another few months, and we should be able to meet again. The whole board of directors is looking forward to this time. Also, if you want to chat via phone or zoom, let us know, we will arrange it.

Bis bald, Ihre / Eure

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Petra Specht', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

(Petra Specht, President of the Excelsior German Center)

PS For those who speak German: Ein Gedicht von Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, eigentlich passend zum kommenden Valentinstag, hat in COVID Zeiten eine ganz eigene Bedeutung bekommen. Die letzte Strophe lautet:

Ich bin bei dir, du seist auch noch so ferne,  
Du bist mir nah!  
Die Sonne sinkt, bald leuchten mir die Sterne.  
O wärst du da!

