



# EXCELSIOR GERMAN CENTER

Oakland, December 18, 2021

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## Frohe Weihnachten!

Another year is coming to an end, and first get-togethers are finally taking place (see above: EGC Adventsfeier, on Dec. 5). By now, most of you will have received your booster shots and the health experts have come to the conclusion that those will protect us significantly. So, with some remaining pre-cautions, we can continue preparations for our upcoming New Year's concert, and other events to come. Of course, we are cautiously watching the new Omicron variant situation. We will decide on December 28 if we can go ahead with the in-person New Year's concert, or if we will need to "only" have a professional recording done. In any case, you will get to enjoy this popular event.

Please remember: For any future events which will take place on the Altenheim property, only persons which show proof of full vaccination will be allowed to attend. For indoor activities mask wearing is also mandatory for now. Therefore, you may see some activities relocated into the beautiful Prior Hall Garden (for example a Champagne reception after the New Year's concert).

2021 brought us the return of an Adventsfeier, in-person (or pick up) St. Martin's goose dinner, an Autumn Film Festival (25<sup>th</sup> year of Berlin and Beyond) and now, hopefully, an in-person New Year's concert, to welcome 2022. Presently, we plan to go back to in-person board meetings in January, organize a Karnevalsparty in early February and an in-person membership meeting in March. Next, the Kabarett, possibly a Liedernachmittag and the Maifest may come back, too. That said, we will watch any change in the virus variant situation, and react by cancelling any or all events if necessary.

Right now, OTV, the Berkeley Loge and UGAS-EB are meeting again in the Excelsior building, and we expect some German language classes to return,

too. The new EGC book club is growing (meeting Saturday mornings from 10am to noon), the EGC radio show is as popular as ever, our members' page on the EGC website is frequently updated with reports, pictures and videos, and more EGC activities for members and friends are planned. We are trying our best to offer activities, and opportunities to come together safely.

Our connections to different German rooted organizations are bearing fruit: When the Goethe Institute had to vacate their exhibition and meeting space on Bush Street in SF, we inherited a number of furniture and electronics from them. That in turn enabled us to provide urgently needed chairs and tables to BAKS plus, the German language school of the Bay Area Kinderstube in Albany. We had gotten the tables from GSEB, the Saturday school who moved from our Excelsior building to Emeryville in late summer. Our ongoing Christmas sale, with German Christmas cookies, chocolates and Stollen, is this year benefitting the umbrella organization of the Saturday schools, GASANC. Last year we gave the profit to UGAS-EB. Our customers, however, come from all different areas of our German communities. Together we are much more efficient than all by ourselves!

A new addition of our members' page ([www.excelsiorcenter.org](http://www.excelsiorcenter.org)) will be a report on the first North-American "Jugend debattiert" contest which EGC supported and a student from GSEB won (out of originally over 2000 participants, from the USA, Mexico and Canada). In case you forgot, the member's page password is "D3utschm4chtSp4ss!" (use all symbols between the "). Also, don't miss the Weihnachtsmusik on the EGC radio show (Sundays, from 9am to 11am, on 1450 AM KEST San Francisco).

On behalf of the whole Board of Directors I wish you and your family, neighbors and friends, Frohe Weihnachten, a belated Happy Hannukah, and a healthy, successful and more event-friendly New Year 2022!

Looking forward to meeting you soon!



(Petra Specht, President of the Excelsior German Center at the Altenheim)

### **Der Stern**

Hätt' einer auch fast mehr Verstand  
als wie die drei Weisen aus Morgenland  
und ließe sich dünken, er wäre wohl nie  
dem Sternlein nachgereist, wie sie;  
dennoch, wenn nun das Weihnachtsfest  
seine Lichtlein wonniglich scheinen lässt,  
fällt auch auf sein verständig Gesicht,  
er mag es merken oder nicht,  
ein freundlicher Strahl  
des Wundersternes von dazumal.

Wilhelm Busch (1832-1908)

