



EXCELSIOR GERMAN CENTER

Piedmont, February 6, 2025

1699 Excelsior Avenue
Oakland CA 94602
Tel: 510.530.4013
www.excelsiorcenter.org

Board of Directors

President
Petra Specht

Vice President
Petra Kübler

Secretary
Hannelore Avalos

Treasurer
Karl Pfeiffer

Members
Marlene Feuerstraeter
Nancy Grabow
Thomas Kronemeyer
Hilde Lorentz
Anthony J. Schaller

Dear EGC members,

A new year has begun, and we are already in the middle of exciting organizations! On March 31, 2025, we have completed 135 years, originally as the "Old People's Home" in Oakland, then as the Altenheim Association and we are now known throughout the larger Bay Area and beyond as the Excelsior German Center at the Altenheim in Oakland. Please mark your calendars, we will have an **anniversary event on March 22nd**. Details to come soon.

Our spring **membership meeting** with board of directors' election will be on **Sunday, March 2nd, at 2pm, in the Community Hall**. With this letter you'll find information from our nomination committee. We hope that many of you will attend, so we can have a quorum to elect new board members, admit new members and discuss how we should proceed in future. We will report on our work as officers and with our committees and are looking forward to getting your input. Also, it's always fun to mingle with all of you afterwards.

Unfortunately, I must also report today about a break-in into our Excelsior building, at the end of last year. Unknown intruders entered our building through a fire door on the top floor, stole a bunch of household items, lots of cleaning supplies and alcoholic beverages, and vandalized the building. Also, OTV was affected. They had stored a historic banner from the Pacific Saengerbund in the room for the sheet music, and it was stolen. Likely, this was the most valuable item the thieves took. We temporarily secured the building, filed a report with Oakland police and cleaned up, but chances are low that we can recover anything.

For the future, we will

- replace two fire doors (we work with Eden Housing on it)
- install an alarm system, likely with our own camera system
- review and improve our locking procedures.

We will not file an insurance claim as the monetary loss is not too significant and it is already very difficult to keep property insurance. A claim will likely result in another insurance cancellation. More infos will follow on March 2nd.

But now back to more positive news: For this summer we are looking forward to a collaboration with the Deutscher Musikverein of San Francisco. We will welcome the **Gersthofener Blasharmoniker** for a visit, from **Aug. 25 to Sept. 6**. The orchestra is visiting us from Bavaria, and we will organize multiple concerts including one at our Altenheim and one at the bandshell of the Golden Gate Park. We will keep you updated on the program as it evolves. Soon, we will ask for host families as we intend to pair our guests with families in our German Bay Area community. This is a unique opportunity to make new friends while also practicing your German language skills.

Looking ahead, the next German Day is planned for end of September 2026 (we only have this very large event every two years) and we are working with the San Francisco – Kiel sister city organization to bring a Shanty Choir from Kiel to the Bay Area at that time. Last, not least, we just heard that a new German Saturday school may open its doors in 2026, located close to Chico. I will keep you updated as these projects develop.

Hoping to see you all on March 2nd, at our membership meeting,

Pa — 8

(Petra Specht, president of the Excelsior German Center at the Altnheim)

psspecht@sbcglobal.net 510-652-3911



Excelsior German Center events in 2024:

In addition to celebrating our annual events New Year's concert, Maifest and Christmas market we had a spectacular German Day at the Golden Gate Park in September, started annual EGC anniversary events with recognition of our volunteers, enjoyed some smaller get togethers and the spring and fall Berlin and Beyond Film Festivals, and attended events of befriended organizations (Laternenfest at BAKS, UGAS Banquet, Jugend Debattiert Finals and more). The names of our long-time board members Michael Willis and Baerbel Steensen were added to the Wohltäter-Wand.

