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THE “WALDESRAUSCHEN”

Calendar

PUBLISHED BY VEREINIGUNG ERZGEBIRGE
VOL MMXXVI, JANUARY 2026, No. 1

THIS MONTH:

January 1

Club Closed for
New Years Day

January 2

Club Open

January 8

Country Line Dancing
Lesson

January 9

Sports Meeting

January 10

Live Music in the
Clubhouse
– Side Hustle Band

January 11

Monthly Brunch

January 21

Wednesday Night Dinner

January 25

Membership Meeting
and Elections

January 30

Youth Soccer Banquet

January 31

Feuerzangenbowle Night

President's Message – January 2026

Dear Members of VE,

On behalf of the Executive Board and myself, I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas Holiday and wish you all a Happy and Healthy 2026! I want to offer a heartfelt thank you to our Officers, Trustees, and Directors who made 2025 another successful Club year. A special thank you to our Sports Committee, and all the coaches and volunteers for their continued support of our Club; I am especially looking forward to the new turf fields we are getting ready to break ground on. Without member support our Oktoberfest, Christkindlmarkt, and other events cannot take place. I am especially proud of our continued commitment to maintaining our Erzgebirge roots. The visit by Thalheim over the summer and the recent “Ambassador of the Erzgebirge” award were exceptional achievements in the history of VE.

Please continue to patronize our Club, whether in the Ratskeller on a Friday night, our monthly Brunch, or one of our many events. Membership makes our Club the special place it is. Hoping to see all Active members at the upcoming membership meeting and election of officers this month!

Philip Gabel / President

BOARD NOMINATIONS FOR 2026 GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING and ELECTION of OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS for 2026

Sunday, January 25th at 2:00pm Sharp!

Admittance to meeting only upon presentation of a valid 2025/2026 Active Membership Card

NOMINATIONS FOR 2025 ARE:

President Phil Gabel
Vice President Steve Feuchter
Corresponding Secretary Linda Haywood
Recording Secretary Ken Haywood
Financial Secretary Andrea Feuchter
Treasurer Peter Hansen

TRUSTEES: Helga Bast Monika Bernhardt Charles Butz, Jr

DIRECTORS: Markus Bernhardt Steve Carey James Herman Dave Jones
Paul Joyce Bob Koob Tom Kehan Jim McCullough Rob Oldfield
Scott Rieber Eric Roby Mark Toroniewski

WEEKLY UPDATES

If you are not getting the weekly update email, please let the Club office know. This is the best way to keep you up to date about any last-minute updates to VE including Club news, events, soccer games, dinner specials, and job opportunities.

Any Active member who is interested in running for a position on the Board of Directors must contact one of the members of the Nominating Committee prior to the January Board Meeting, which is Tuesday, January 20th. NO NOMINATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED IN THE BOARD MEETING! Please contact Mark Toroniewski at marktoro10@verizon.net.

Additional nominees, who are not listed above, may appear on the ballot slip at the General Membership meeting. To be elected to the Executive Board, the nominee must be an Active Member and present at the meeting the day of the election, unless he/she has been properly excused in writing. The letter must be in the hands of the Corresponding Secretary, Linda Haywood, prior to the General Membership meeting.

The voting membership meeting is Sunday, January 25, 2026, at 2:00 pm. If your membership number starts with an “A”, please join us for this meeting. Don’t forget to bring your current 2025/2026 membership card which is required for entrance.

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2025/2026 BRUNCH SCHEDULE

Our fabulous Sunday Brunches continue! Enjoy a delicious meal at the Club! An omelet station and all your breakfast and lunch favorites will be available. **Reservations required in advance.**

Sunday, January 11, 2026; 10am - 2pm

Sunday, February 8, 2026; 10am - 2pm • Sunday, March 8, 2026; 10am - 2pm

* * * * *

KITCHEN OFFERINGS

• **Monthly Wednesday Night Dinners:** We are offering a monthly Wednesday Night dinner in our large dining room with different items monthly. Our next date is **January 21st**. Please come out to the Club with your family and friends.

Our **January 21st** Menu is listed below. Members \$13 / Non-members \$16

- Rouladen with two sides
- Chicken Schnitzel with two sides
- Fried Shrimp with two sides
- Chicken fingers and French fries (\$12 member / \$15 non-members)

• **Friday Night Dinners:** In addition to traditional bar food, we will be offering a dinner special every Friday night in the Ratskeller. Price is \$13.00.

- 1/2 Roast Pork Loin served with Spätzle and red cabbage
- 1/9 Beef Stroganoff over Egg Noodles
- 1/16 Chicken Parmesan over Pasta with a side salad
- 1/23 Shrimp Pot Pie
- 1/31 Pork Schnitzel with Spätzle and Vegetables

Parties and events are booked out into 2026 already. Please consider holding your events with us!

* * * * *

FEUERZANGENBOWLE NIGHT

The Entertainment Committee invites you to our Feuerzangenbowle Night on Saturday, January 31st with the show starting at 7pm in the Ratskeller. There will be an ala carte food menu from 5:30 to 8:30pm and drinks for purchase along with this special drink. We look forward to seeing you there.

* * * * *

RATSKELLER WINTER HOURS

The winter months are typically a slow time in the Ratskeller, essentially due to the lack of home soccer games. To control costs while maintaining essential services to our membership, the House Committee has affected the following Saturday Ratskeller hours during January, February, and March (unless there is a special event and until soccer starts again).

Saturday Ratskeller Winter Hours: 2:00pm to closing.

* * * * *

*** *Glück Auf, Botschafter des Erzgebirges* ***

Several weeks ago, a group of VE members traveled to Germany and made a three day stop in the Erzgebirge to receive a special award on behalf of the Club. The "Ambassador of the Erzgebirge" award is a prestigious award given in recognition of VE's commitment to maintaining ties with the Erzgebirge. Of the 500,000 people living in the area, only 164 awards have been given to date. After being treated to children's choir dressed in traditional mining clothes, the group was assembled on stage in Schneeberg before over 6,000 people, for the ceremony. Swearing an oath to the Erzgebirge, the Club was presented with the award. The event was given full media coverage and appeared in two newspapers the day after. The following day the group were guests of the town of Thalheim. After a reception in their town hall, and a tour of their Heritage Museum, the group reconnected with our friends there and spent the afternoon listening to accordion music, a nice meal and drinks, and a tour of a local mine. Being allowed to experience their hospitality and renewing our friendship with those folks was one of the highlights of the visit. Special thanks need to be given to our friend from Aue Jens Karluß, Thalheim mayor Nico Dittman, and Schneeberg mayor Ingo Seifert, all of whom are strong supporters of the Vereinigung Erzgebirge. A more detailed recap of this trip will be given at the January Membership meeting.

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HAPPY NEW YEAR, EVERYBODY!

DID YOU KNOW?

A *Schwibbogen* is a decorative candleholder from the Erzgebirge. The first metal *Schwibbogen* was made in 1740 in Johanngeorgenstadt. The early candle arches consisted of a single forged piece of black metal which could be painted. The number of candles varies with the size of the arc, the original design holding eleven.

The name *Schwibbogen* is from the Middle High German *swiboge*, "to hover". The development of the *Schwibbogen* arch is closely related to the mining traditions of the Erzgebirge. It most likely developed as a candle holder made from metal for the Christmas shift (*Mettenschicht*), a common dinner celebrated by miners, the mining foreman (*Steiger*) and the smith who had been responsible for the mining tools throughout the year. It bears symbols commonly associated with the life and wishes of the miners.

The most famous design was created in 1937 for a show in Schwarzenberg. It depicted the three main sources of income of the people in the region in the 18th and 19th century. Thus the *Schwibbogen* showed apart from some traditional symbols; two miners, a wood carver, a bobbin lace maker, a Christmas Tree, two miner's hammers, two crossed swords, and an angel. The light symbolizes the longing of the miners who didn't see the daylight in winter for weeks, sometimes due to their long working hours below the surface.

Especially in the Erzgebirge the windows of the houses in villages and towns feature a lit candle arch—usually with the traditional designs or at least local scenes. The town of Seiffen is particularly noted for its production of *Schwibbogen* in its craft shops.



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VE SCHOLARSHIP NEWS

The VE Memorial Scholarship Committee is pleased to offer scholarships this year to high school seniors who will continue their education at a college, university, or technical school. Parents or legal guardians of the applicant must be current members. Requests for the scholarship application should be emailed to veclub@verizon.net. The deadline for submitting completed applications is March 1, 2026. Scholarships will be awarded at the April Quarterly Membership meeting.

Anyone wishing to donate to the scholarship fund honoring someone special, a special occasion or in memory of a loved one is asked to note that the donation is for the "VE Scholarship Fund" and the name of the person honored when sent to the Club office. Donations will ensure the future of the program for many years.

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Welcome to Our Club!

Welcome to our new members who joined our Club in December 2025. We hope you will enjoy our facilities and have many happy and memorable hours at VE.

Transfer to Active: Tim Washam
Active: Anthony Bombas
Passive: Dan Colbeth, Bonnie Fetzer, Michael Giglio, Paulo Isidro, Andrew Whetham, Mark Wible, and Donald Williams

We are always looking to increase our VE Club membership. Please refer friends and family to join our Club.

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IN MEMORIAM

The Board of Directors extends our deepest sympathy to the families of the following members who left us:

Helmut Boehm, who passed away on June 10, 2024, joined VE in 1989, a 35-year member.
Helen Thomas, who passed away on November 28, 2025, joined VE in 1996, a 29-year member.
Mathias Birgel, who passed away on December 14, 2025, joined VE in 1978, a 47-year member.

Ruhe in Frieden

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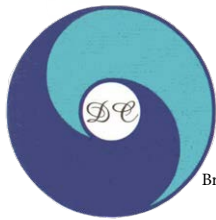


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VE LADIES AUXILIARY

Happy New Year to all members and friends! Our next Bingo Party will be on Wednesday, January 28th. We will be starting earlier for our Bingo Party. Doors will open at 10:30am and Bingo play starts at 12 Noon. Bingo is \$7 and includes one Bingo card for 12 games, Danish, coffee, tea or soda. Sandwiches are always available at our self-service window. Come join us on the last Wednesday of each month for fun, laughter and friendship with great prizes and raffles as we keep this tradition going that our founding ladies established 90 years ago. We look forward to a great 2026 for our Ladies Auxiliary. For any questions, please call 267-408-4439.

Janet Welsch Lynch, President, Ladies Auxiliary

SOCCER NEWS

As our teams are on a well-deserved winter break, we would like to reflect on a terrific 2025. Across all ages from our Mighty Mites to our Majors we saw success at league and state levels, promoted the VE Soccer family in a positive fashion, and grew our program with the largest number of players in our history.

After a delay due to wet weather and snow, the conversion of two grass fields to synthetic fields begins shortly. This is the most significant expansion in our soccer history and positions us to grow in terms of numbers and quality for years to come. In cooperation with the Club's Board, we see this as an opportunity to strengthen the Club both as a magnet for youth soccer and as a financial vehicle to strengthen the restaurant and bar business since the turf will allow for year-round usage. Lastly, thank you to all the volunteers who make our program happen. We are one of the last programs around that do not pay their coaches or demand high fees from our players; we are committed to continue that tradition. Please support our teams by coming out to games, purchasing VE Soccer items when they are available, or donating to our field project.

2026 promises to be a great year for VE Soccer (and it's a World Cup year too)!!

Steve Feuchter / VE Soccer Chairman

ENTERTAINMENT NEWS

Country Line Dancing Lessons

Shot Gun Jenny will be providing Country Line Dance Lessons in the Club's large dining room.

Our next lesson night will be on Thursday, January 8th from 6:30-9:30pm. Cost is \$10 in advance or \$15 at the door. Tickets can be purchased at the Ratskeller or online. Hee Haw!!

Indoor Music Concert

We are moving our concert series to the inside of the club in January, February, and March. There is no cover charge and food and drink is always available. Our first live band is **SIDE HUSTLE** on **Saturday, January 10th** from 7:00 to 10:00pm. Come on out and hear some great American and British Classic Rock and Roll!

In addition to a lot of Club-wide events, the Entertainment Committee is actively organizing events on a frequent basis. More information will be forthcoming in the coming Calendars. Please stop by the Club and enjoy the company of friends and family and have some fun.

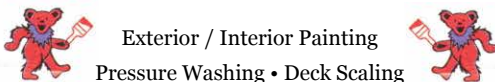
THANK YOU!

The VE Club extends heartfelt thanks to everyone who donated gifts and gift cards for our annual Toy Drive. Your generosity brought immense joy to Bethanna, who shared that "the children will be so happy." We truly appreciate your kindness and support. Vielen Danke!

The House Committee asks that parents monitor their children while in the kid's playroom in the Ratskeller and the Garden Room and would appreciate it if the rooms were cleaned up and free of trash after being used. Thank you.

As a reminder, we are a Membership Club, and it is your responsibility to validate your membership when ordering / purchasing alcoholic beverages—even if you have been a long-time member. This practice is not to be an annoyance to you but is a requirement of the PA Liquor Control Board who governs our private Club status. If you are bringing guests in, you may purchase the alcohol for them (anyone 21 and over) after you show your membership card. Non-members are not permitted to purchase any alcohol from our bartenders unless they are attending a contracted event. Food purchase is open to members and non-members. All our bartenders will be asking to see your Membership cards. Our membership year runs from June 1st to May 31st.

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