German-Canadian Benevolent Society of BC
Deutsch-Kanadisches Hilfswerk von BC



HAUSPOST

November 2026

INVITATION TO OUR FREE ANNUAL CHRISTMAS FEST

November 21 from 11:00 AM to 3:00 PM

Join us for a festive afternoon filled with classic German holiday treats, including potato salad, sausages, and Sauerkraut. Enjoy coffee and cake, a variety of beverages, and of course our famous Glühwein.

ONLINE AUCTION

Our popular online auction will go live on Friday, November 6, 2026.



GLÜHWEIN

Taste the flavor of German Christmas Markets by enjoying our house-made mulled wine.

CHRISTMAS FEST 1 | DEAR MEMBERS & FRIENDS 2 | OUTREACH & AGM 3 | FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN & BOUQUET & OAK LEAVES 4

DEAR MEMBERS & FRIENDS

Dear Members and Friends,

What a milestone season it has been at the German-Canadian Benevolent Society of BC! Our residents are now well settled at Dogwood Lodge and Central City Lodge. It has been eight months since the moves, and both sites truly feel like home. That's thanks to our dedicated staff, wonderful volunteers and caring families.

It was a joy to celebrate Oktoberfest together on October 17. The music, the food and the smiles on our residents' faces reminded us all why this community is so special. Two days later, on October 19, we marked Care Aide Day. My heartfelt thanks go to our care aides, who make every day better for the people we serve.

At Harrison Drive, the transformation is remarkable. Demolition of the old building was completed in August, right on schedule. Crews are now well into excavation and shoring for the foundation of our new home. That clears the way to install the tower crane and begin pouring foundations this fall. The structure will start rising in the new year. We remain on track to welcome residents into our brand-new 178-suite home, purpose-built around our Comfortzeit® care model, in fall 2029.

Of course, a project of this size depends on the generosity of our community. Every gift, large or small, helps build a home that will care for our community for generations to come.

Please also mark your calendar for our annual Christmas Fest and online auction on November 21st. It's one of the highlights of our year, and we would love to see you there.

Thank you, as always, for your friendship, your generosity and your continued support. Wishing you a peaceful and joyous Christmas Season, health and happiness in the New year.



Warmest Regards,

Michael Neumann
Chief Executive Officer

OUTREACH EVENTS

Liebe Freunde und Mitglieder,

wir freuen uns, Ihnen unser Outreach-Programm für die kommenden Monate vorstellen zu dürfen. Wir laden Sie herzlich ein, an unseren gemütlichen Nachmittagen teilzunehmen und schöne Stunden in guter Gesellschaft mit Kaffee und Kuchen zu verbringen.

Samstag, 14. November **Worte, die bewegen**



Freuen Sie sich auf zwei spannende Lebensgeschichten, gefolgt von Märchen, Balladen und Gedichten aus verschiedenen Epochen. Mit einer Prise Humor und Ihrer aktiven Beteiligung wird es ein abwechslungsreicher Nachmittag.

Samstag, 12. Dezember **Adventsfeier**



Am 12. Dezember feiern wir wie jedes Jahr gemeinsam die Adventszeit – die Zeit der Vorbereitung auf Weihnachten. Auch in diesem Jahr dürfen wir uns auf die Geigenklänge von Margitta Krebs' Schülern freuen.

Wir laden Sie herzlich ein, mit uns die Adventszeit zu beginnen. Wer möchte, kann gerne weihnachtliches Gebäck mitbringen.

Ausblick 2027



*Für unsere Kunstliebhaber haben wir am **16. Januar** einen Dokumentarfilm über das faszinierende Leben und Werk des Künstlers Lyonel Feininger geplant.*

*Am **30. Januar** widmen wir uns der Fitness im Alter. Freuen Sie sich auf einen Nachmittag voller hilfreicher Tipps und praktischer Übungen rund um Balance, Beweglichkeit und Körperwahrnehmung. Carola von Hahn ist ausgebildete Krankengymnastin im Ruhestand und unterrichtet heute Fitnesskurse für Seniorinnen und Senioren im Kerrisdale Community Centre.*

Programmänderungen vorbehalten.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Society's 61st Annual General Meeting took place on June 29, 2026, with 27 members in attendance. President Rudolf Kischer welcomed attendees, introduced the board, and thanked Alex Sayn-Wittgenstein and Ulf von Dehn for their service as they both concluded their term. Jessi Lally, auditor MNP, presented the financial statements for the year ending March 31, 2026, reporting a surplus.

UPDATE FROM OUR FUNDRAISING CAMPAIGN

Lark Projects Supports the Future of the German-Canadian Care Home

The German-Canadian Benevolent Society is delighted to recognize Lark Projects Ltd. for a generous $10,000 gift in support of the redevelopment of the German-Canadian Care Home. This contribution represents an important investment in the future of our Home and in the quality of life of the seniors who will live there.

As the construction partner bringing our new Care Home to life, Lark already plays an integral role in this once-in-a-generation project. Their decision to also support the campaign philanthropically demonstrates a commitment that extends beyond bricks and mortar. It reflects a shared belief that the new Home should not simply be a modern building, but an exceptional place where seniors can live with dignity, comfort, connection and a true sense of home.

Lark's $10,000 contribution will support the areas of greatest need within the campaign, helping the Society fund the enhancements that will make the new Care Home truly special. The gift has been made as a charitable contribution, with Lark Projects Ltd. recognized publicly for its support.

We extend our sincere thanks to Kirk Fisher, Jack Bray and the entire Lark Projects team for their generosity, partnership and belief in our vision. Their support is helping us build more than a new Care Home—it is helping us create a home our residents, families and German-Canadian community can be proud of for generations to come.

BOARD MEMBERS

Rudolf Kischer	President
Richard Wittstock	Vice President
Mark Sulzberger	Treasurer
Carola von Hahn	Director
Lillian Simon	Director
Petra Kuret	Director
Dr. Robert Shaw	Director
Michael Neumann	CEO

OAK LEAVES

Donations of $1,000 or more are recognized with an Oak Leaf on our Donor Wall.

- **In Memory of Christina Fodor**
- **In Memory of Christel Frankenberger**
- **Tae Helgeth 2026**
- **Anonymous**

BOUQUET

We would like to express our deepest gratitude to all the staff at the German-Canadian Care Home for their attentive care of my father. The German-Canadian Care Home has truly been his home for the last two and a half years, and we are grateful he was so well looked after. — Family Member

ONLINE AUCTION

See "How to participate" on www.gcch.ca.

CONTACT: Susanne Freitag, Coordinator Community Engagement, society@gcch.ca, (604) 713-6562

Interview with Sonja Keymer

Sonja's Legacy of Friendship and Care

For Sonja Keymer, the German-Canadian Care Home has always represented far more than a building. It is a place of friendship, belonging, and community—a place where people care for one another and where German heritage continues to be celebrated across generations.

Born in Berlin in 1928, Sonja was one of six children. She remembers a very different city, where there were few cars and children played freely in the streets. After leaving Germany in 1951, her journey eventually brought her to Canada, where she built a remarkable career at GF Strong Rehabilitation Centre. There, she dedicated many years to working with children with cerebral palsy, helping them and their families navigate life's challenges with compassion, patience, and hope. Caring for others has always been at the heart of who she is.

When she retired at 60, Sonja embraced another of her lifelong passions—nature. Whether hiking through British Columbia's forests and mountains or spending time outdoors with friends, she found joy and peace in the natural world. She also treasures what she affectionately calls her "global friends"—people from many different countries, including Sweden, where she once lived and whose language she still speaks today.



It was one of those friends, Greta, a nurse in North Vancouver, who first introduced Sonja to the German-Canadian Care Home. She was one of the first members of the Society and quickly found another community to cherish. Whether attending outreach events, keeping up with the Society's activities, or baking her famous Stollen to help raise funds, Sonja has always found meaningful ways to contribute.

Interview with Sonja Keymer

"When I first came to Canada, there were very few care homes," Sonja reflects. "The German-Canadian Care Home was something special. It gave our community a place where people could feel at home."

Today, inspired by the redevelopment of the new German-Canadian Care Home, Sonja has chosen to leave a gift in her estate to the German-Canadian Benevolent Society. She believes deeply in the future of the Home and wants to ensure that generations of older adults will continue to receive exceptional care in a place where they feel safe, respected, and connected.
"I know my gift will be used wisely," she says. "The new Care Home will make such a difference for so many people."

After a lifetime spent caring for children, nurturing friendships across cultures, and finding joy in the beauty of nature, Sonja's final gift is one of hope. Her legacy will help create a home where compassion, dignity, and community continue to flourish for generations to come.