

# THE SWISS AMERICAN

Official Publication of the NORTH AMERICAN SWISS ALLIANCE

Volume 136

May, 2016

## Discover Switzerland

A Few Reasons Why You Should Head to the Swiss Alps This Summer:

*The air is crisp ~ The scenery is beyond compare ~ Hotel prices are considerably lower*

**Gstaad** hosts plenty of events come summer, and this year is no different: Sport enthusiasts can enjoy the Swiss Open Gstaad tennis tournament or the Polo Gold Cup. If spectacular panoramic views is more to your liking, take a cable car and head to Glacier 3000 for lunch. Those desiring aerial views may book a hot-air balloon alpine ride in the morning or consider paragliding as an option. However your day is spent you won't want to miss the Fondueland Gstaad, where you get to enjoy fondue as a picnic meal.

**St. Moritz** (the most exclusive of resorts) is known for its vast hiking trails, kite surfing lessons, scenic helicopter rides. Art lovers will enjoy the Vito Schnabel Gallery and the annual Art Masters fair. Evening brings the highest blue notes to the village for over a month (July-August) with the Festival da Jazz.

**Verbier**, located in the canton of Valais, is renowned for its hiking trails & mountain biking adventures for those desiring outdoor activities. Fans of classical music will enjoy the Verbier Festival - 17 days of classical music in the heart of the Alps (July 22-August 7, 2016) featuring some of the most talented classical musicians in the world. And equestrian lovers will feel at home at the Jumping International de Verbier.

**Zermatt** is a lovely resort where only electric vehicles are allowed to prevent pollution from obscuring the Matterhorn which may be the most photographed mountain in the world (it is also used as the logo for the Toblerone chocolate bar). While the Matterhorn is somewhat of an obsession for mountain climbers, Zermatt offers many walking trails. Visitors can enjoy the area by foot or board the mountain train to the peak of Gornergrat, one of the most stunning panoramas, where more than 20 of Switzerland's alpine peaks are visible. For those who yearn to ski, Zermatt is infamous for its summer skiing, where you can hit the slopes wearing (almost) nothing thanks to the mix of the summer sun and the glaciers' high altitudes.



**Crans-Montana** is the destination of choice for golf enthusiasts as it is home to Golf Club Crans-Sur-Sierre, a four-course institution and host of one of Europe's biggest and most prestigious tournaments: the Omega European Masters, beginning in September.



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**Geneva: The city of 187 different countries**

Geneva is the most international city in the world with more than 40% of residents coming from outside Switzerland. Geneva attracts people from around the world for its economic opportunity, lakeside beauty and Mont Blanc views. And, it's home to more international organizations than any other place in the world, including the Red Cross and the United Nations.

As the second largest city in Switzerland situated on the banks of Lake Geneva, it is home to many cultural, historical and natural attractions while also being the hub of banking, technology and tourism. Did you know the World Wide Web was created in a laboratory in Geneva?

Geneva is a cosmopolitan city with flair, charm and sophistication to spare, and, it would seem a very efficient road system – it brags of having the shortest commuting time of any major city in the world. Geneva is also included on many "Best Places To Live" lists each year.

There is never a shortage of things to do in Geneva as the city has a history that dates back more than four thousand years. There are monuments, many museums and dazzling architecture to take in, not to mention the many gardens and botanic sites throughout the green city where nature walks and marvelous views abound. The city, divided by the Rhone River, is split into the Left and Right Banks. The Old Town can be found on the Left Bank, which has plenty of bars and trendy restaurants, and is close to the luxury shops on La Rue Du Rhone, including the famous Swiss watch stores. The Right Bank's lively Les Paquis neighborhood is close to the main train station and also home to the red light district. It always has lively nightlife.

According to a 2015 study, Geneva is the third most expensive city in the world, after New York and Zurich. But, Geneva has also one of the highest pay scales, providing workers with great salaries and great benefits.

**PRIVACY POLICY**

The Gramm-Leach Bliley Act was instituted in 1999 and became effective November, 2000 to protect the confidentiality and the security of consumer information. The act requires initial and annual privacy notices. These notices can be of a general nature such as this one posted in this newspaper. The notice will also be available in the office of the North American Swiss Alliance in North Olmsted, Ohio and to all our members who request one by mail.

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**PUBLIC INFORMATION** means information that is lawfully available to the general public from Federal, State, or Local government records, widely distributed media, or disclosures to the general public, that are required to be made by Federal, State, or Local law.

**NON-PUBLIC INFORMATION** means identifiable financial and medical information. It also means any list, description, or other grouping of individuals and publicly available information pertaining to them.

We are a fraternal benefit society that has always been committed to protecting the privacy of its members. There are no affiliated financial instructions or third party non-affiliates which have access to your non-public personal information, except pursuant to your authorization. We **never** sell lists of names and addresses of our members to any vendor of goods or services.

Our policy of protecting the privacy of public and non-public information extends to our former insured that no longer have any coverage with us.

*Alois Amstutz, President*

## European Championships in Artistic Gymnastics

From May 25 - June 5, 2016 one of the biggest international top-class sport events will take place at the Post Finance-Arena in Berne, Switzerland: The European Championships in Artistic Gymnastics 2016.

This competition will be the last big test for the European gymnasts before the Olympic Games 2016 in Rio, Brazil. Excitement is guaranteed as the top athletes perform and compete for the medals.



Pommel horse - A solid apparatus 115 centimeters high with two handles, or pommels, on top that men in artistic gymnastics use for a series of maneuvers defined by complex hand placements and body positions while holding themselves above the apparatus.

## Swiss Turner from Milwaukee on Track to Become Olympian

*Submitted by Patricia Ciocarelli, Milwaukee*

Marvin Kimble, nicknamed "Marvo," is on track to become the third Olympian from the Swiss Turners Gymnastics Academy of Milwaukee. He follows in the footsteps of twins Paul and Morgan Hamm. His coach, Andrei Kan, also coached the Hamm brothers.



Still rings - Two parallel rings 50cm apart, suspended from a cable and straps and held, one in each hand, for a series of exercises in men's artistic gymnastics particularly requiring stillness of the body; also called the "rings".

Marvin was a member of the Swiss Turners Men's Team that won the U. S. National Gymnastics competition for an unprecedented three years in succession. As a member of the 2015 world championship team, Marvin retained his spot on the United States Men's National Team through the P&G Gymnastics

Championships in Hartford, Connecticut in June of last year. The top fifteen finishers at the P&G Championships advance to the U. S. Olympic trials June 24 and 26 in St. Louis.

Marvin moved to Colorado Springs, Colorado, eleven months ago to train at the U. S. Olympic Training Center.

On March 20, 2016, the United States captured top honors in the meet between the United States, Canada and China. Kimble won three gold medals – pommel horse, parallel bars and still rings. It is unusual for an elite gymnast to excel at both still rings and pommel horse due to the fact that still rings requires much muscle ability while that makes pommel horse difficult to maneuver your arms behind you. Marvin has proven his ability to handle big moments on the international stage.

Swiss Turners of Milwaukee are very proud of Marvin and will be hoping to see him become elevated to the Olympian stage when Rio de Janeiro hosts the XXXI Summer Olympics.



## 51st ANNUAL GERMAN-AMERICAN FESTIVAL

In 1966, representatives of seven German and Swiss societies met to discuss the possibility of having a "Continental Day" to bring together those of German and Swiss heritage. The result of these discussions was a two-day event: the original German-American Festival. The first German American Festival was held at Raceway Park on August 27-28, 1966. It remained there until 1974. Subsequent festivals were held at the Lucas County Recreation Center until 1986. Finally in 1987, the Festival was moved to its current home, Oak Shade Grove.

You are invited to celebrate the **51st German-American Festival**, the Toledo area's Oldest, Largest and Greatest Ethnic Festival, **August 26, 27, 28, 2016**: Oak Shade Grove, 3624 Seamon Road, Oregon, Ohio.

*On February 9, 2016, long-time Festival Chairman Tim Pecsénye passed away. Tim was the rock and the leader of this event and seemed to handle whatever problems arose without fanfare. We will be sorely missed, but not forgotten. Rest in peace, Tim.*

The 2016 Festival Chairman is Jack Renz who stepped up to the enormous job of coordinating this event. Enjoy yourself with the ever present Gemütlichkeit felt throughout the Fest. Be sure to bring your friends. There are acres of activities, tons of delicious German and Swiss foods complimented with an assortment of German and American beers and wine. There will be schnitzel sandwiches, perfectly cooked chicken, pork and ham, grilled German and Swiss sausages of all kinds, sweet corn, Sauerkraut, Swiss cheeses, our famous German Potato Pancakes, Roasted Almonds and a large variety of baked goods. In addition to the music and dancing, be sure to take in the activities including, but not limited to, Glockenspiel, Swiss Steinstossen, Pretzel Eating Contest, Swiss Cheese Eating Contest, Masskrugstemmen, Hummel Contest, & Baking Contest. There is something exciting for visitors of all ages to enjoy.

### Fun Facts regarding Food & Beverages consumed at the Festival:

6,000 ears of sweet corn	50 cases of German wines
3,350 chicken halves	250 cases of progressive adult beverages
350 hot dogs	44 cases liqueurs and spirits
300 gallons of Sauerkraut	7,400 bottles of soda pop
4,800 dinner rolls	4,000 bottles of water
10,500 hot dog and sausage buns	Over 450 slices of hand made cakes
2 tons of handmade German potato salad	230 slices of miscellaneous cakes
660 smoked "Old World" style Frankfurters	200 Lebkuchen hand decorated hearts
9,500 various Bratwurst	600 mini Strudels
500 Bratwurst patties	2,240 hand made cookies
5,000 smoked sausages	330 brownies
500 Käsewurst	425 loaves of bread (sold as "to go")
1,500 smoked pork shanks	Over 650 pounds of assorted cheeses
500 servings of Leberkäs (veal loaf)	700 pounds of assorted deli meats
1,900 servings of Schnitzel for sandwiches	420 apple fritters
5,000 pairs of Landjäger	180 apple dumplings
6,000 regular pretzels	250 loaves of apple fritter bread & coffee cakes
960 specialty pretzels	Over 6,000 scoops of ice cream
18 gallons of cheese for pretzels	720 cream puffs
1,500 whole kosher pickles	5,000 funnel cakes
750 pounds of Sauerkraut balls	1,700 servings of candied, roasted almonds
50,000 hand-made potato pancakes (over 1-1/2 tons of potatoes)	250 pounds of popcorn
1,100 kegs of light and imported beers	2 tons of hand-cut Pommes Frites – French Fries
180 cases of German beers	Over 17 tons of ice
	Over 1,200 cups of coffee

## Spotlight on Cleveland . . .

Congratulations to Cleveland Swiss Society member Bailey Markowski on being awarded the High Y Award sponsored by the YMCA Greater Cleveland.



Markowski was selected for exemplifying the YMCA's core values of caring, honesty, respect, responsibility and faith, on a regular basis on the court, in the classroom, and in her community.

She is a Parma High senior with a 4.6 grade-point average, is a member of the National Honor Society Student Council, and is an AP scholar with honors awarded from the college board. She is a youth basketball volunteer and helps provide meals to the homeless with St. Peters United Church of Christ.

Aside from excelling in academics and basketball, Markowski is active in soap box derby racing. Congratulations to Bailey for finishing 2<sup>nd</sup> in the 2015 NDR Championship for AA Masters.

The National Derby Rallies, Inc. (NDR) is a soap box derby association organized in 1977 for the purpose of fostering individual development in youths through a structured program of soap box derby-type racing and related activities. The program was designed to give families involved in gravity powered, amateur-built race cars, and numerous opportunities to race throughout the year. Racers travel from across the nation for a week of racing fun and a chance to win the title of "NDR National Champion."

*Bailey Markowski is the granddaughter of Alliance Director Jan Markowski.*

## United Swiss Society of Cleveland invites you . . .

The tradition continues. The **United Swiss Society of Cleveland** will hold its annual Swiss Independence Day Celebration on Monday, August 1, 2016 from 4 to 9 pm at a NEW LOCATION with great parking and amities: Metro Parks Keystone Picnic Area at West Creek Reservation in Parma, Ohio (off W. Ridgewood Drive just west of Broadview Road). Festivities, including transitional Swiss Music, a few games of Jass, door prizes, and crafts for the children. Once again, Grillmaster (and N.A.S.A. Director!) Jan Markowski will prepare, bratwurst, Italian sausage and hot dogs! There will be side dishes and strudel to top off the meal. Food will be served at 6 pm. Reservation deadline is July 20, 2016. For more information on this year's event, or to purchase tickets, please contact Patricia Vitek (440-582-3728).



Remember the  
Grütli Pact of 1291  
as you celebrate

**Swiss National Day**  
**August 1, 2016**

### Clara's Swiss Apple Custard Pie

Bowl #1: Combine 4 eggs (beaten), 1 tsp vanilla extract,  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup evaporated milk or half & half.

Bowl #2: Combine  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup sugar, 1 tsp cinnamon, 1 T flour, 3 medium apples, peeled, cored, finely diced.

Mix contents of Bowl #1 & Bowl #2. Pour into 9" deep dish pie shell and bake one hour at 375 degrees. Cover crust edges to prevent over-browning.

*Submitted by Laura Vassallo,  
Cleveland Swiss Ladies*

*Our deepest sympathy is extended to the family and friends of our deceased members. May they rest in peace.*

1/19/15	PEARL MANDANIELLO	Age 85	Central Branch
6/26/15	ELMER W. SCHOTT	Age 91	E. Bernstadt Schweizer Verein
7/19/15	CATHERINE CAPREZ	Age 91	Akron Swiss Society
8/3/15	ANITA K. CALLSEN	Age 75	Milwaukee Swiss American Fraternal
8/14/15	MARY JEANNETTE FLAUHAUS	Age 93	Columbus Helvetia Beneficial Society
8/22/15	BRUCE ABBEY	Age 90	Canton Men's Society
8/29/15	LLOYD ALEXANDER	Age 86	Columbus Helvetia Beneficial Society
8/29/15	JON E. BRUBAKER	Age 75	Toledo Swiss Society
8/29/15	RICHARD KOHLER	Age 74	Milwaukee Swiss American Fraternal
9/13/15	TOK YE VOLLERT	Age 83	Akron Swiss Society
9/25/15	MARTI STONER	Age 91	Canton Ladies' Society
9/29/15	DEBRA HECKLINGER	Age 65	Canton Ladies' Society
11/16/15	MARIAM E. WAGNER	Age 93	Canton Ladies' Society
12/10/15	MARIA M. DOMMEN	Age 85	San Francisco Helvetia
1/4/16	MARILYN E. HAAS	Age 75	Central Branch
1/6/16	ROBERT B. BROCKWAY	Age 68	Toledo Swiss Society
1/27/16	EMILY PEYER	Age 92	Central Branch
2/14/16	FRANZ ROLLI	Age 77	Central Branch
2/29/16	ANDRE B. BUEHLER	Age 88	Cleveland Swiss Society
2/29/16	ERWIN WULLSCHLEGER	Age 91	Cleveland Swiss Society
3/10/16	JOHN PRESSLEIN	Age 80	Milwaukee Swiss American Fraternal
3/17/16	ERNEST AMMON, JR.	Age 91	Central Branch
3/31/16	JOSEPH HOLLO	Age 86	Toledo Swiss Society



## The Swiss tradition is much more than a simple yodel-ay-ee-oooo

Did you know the Swiss tradition of yodeling started as a way to bring cows together in what shepherders called kuhreihen, or “line of cows”?

With their snow-capped peaks and lush, rolling foothills, the Swiss Alps might be one of the most beautiful mountain ranges in the world. Besides its beauty and quiet landscape, it is also the ideal setting for a much louder pursuit—yodeling!

Some mountain peaks top out at more than 14,500 feet which means echoes easily bounce off their rocky faces and reverberate back across the valley floor. Thanks to this optimal acoustic landscape, shepherders began to yodel to herd their livestock and communicate across pastures.

These days, you're more likely to hear yodeling in taverns and on the radio than in the countryside. But many Swiss people are

doing their part to keep this essential piece of their country's heritage alive.

Stephan Schuepbach is a conductor for two yodeling groups, Chörli Beinwil/Freiamt and Jodlerclub Echo vom Lindenberg Uezwil and has been so for 30 some years... since he was 17 years old. He believes if you can sing, you can yodel. The art of yodeling involves quickly toggling between the vocal and chest registers to make a sound that goes from high to low to high with distinct breaks between notes. Practice makes perfect and Schuepbach says it's not an impossible skill.

An interesting fact that many listeners don't realize is that those prolonged oooooohs and uuuuuuuhs usually tell a story, often about nature, love, or folk tales that link back to Switzerland. Lyrics to “yodel songs” which became popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, are typically in French or Swiss German.

## Swiss World Records, etc.

### **The world's longest stairway is in Switzerland**

With all those mountains, does it surprise you that the world's longest stairway is located in Switzerland? Mt. Niesen in the Bernese Alps is often called Switzerland's pyramid. Its triangular shape is so iconic, more than 200 athletes have made it a point to climb its stairs once a year. The best way to the top is the 'stairway to heaven'. Only 11,674 steps and 1,723 metres separate the bottom from the top. The Guinness Book of World Records lists the Niesen as having the world's longest stairway.

### **The Swiss pulled off the biggest alphorn concert in history abroad**

In 2015, in parallel with the EXPO 2015 world fair in Milan, the Swiss Yodeling Association senior members convinced 420 Swiss alphorn players to hop on a train to Milan – and bring their alphorns along. Once set up on the square in front of the cathedral, the sound of these 420 wind instruments blew the audience away. Most importantly, the concert earned the Swiss a place in the Guinness Book of World Records.

### **The world's fittest senior citizen lives near Zurich**

Switzerland is far out in front when it comes to the life expectancy of its residents, with an average lifespan of 81 years for men. Dr. Charles Eugster, a retired British dentist and Swiss resident who has long beaten the longevity statistics. At the ripe old age of 96, Eugster is the world's fittest senior citizen. In 2015, he smashed the 200 meter indoor world record for his age group. Compared to the world's fastest man, Usain Bolt, the sprint took him only about three times longer: 55.48 seconds (Eugster) vs. 19.55 seconds (Bolt). To keep in shape, Eugster works out daily. He started at the age of 80 and his regular sports include wakeboarding, rowing, boxing and, of course, running.

### **Swiss inventions that changed the world include the zip, Velcro®, and cellophane**

The Americans might have had the idea, but the Swiss perfected what we know today as the zip fastening. The original 'pre-zip' was

patented in the US in 1851. It required two corresponding rows of hooks to be lined up in order for them to be fastened with a pull. Hardly the easy on/easy off zip that we know and love. In 1923, Martin Winterhalter was approached by an American who held the patent on the latest version of the 'pre-zip'. Winterhalter saw room for improvement, zippily investing 10,000 francs to acquire the patent. By 1925, he had perfected the technology and the 'coil zip' was born – the interlocking tooth design that is still in use today.

You could say that the Swiss like things to stick. Does it surprise you that Velcro® was invented, patented and registered in Switzerland? Hunting in the Jura mountains, a Swiss engineer noticed that certain seeds were attaching themselves to his clothes, as well as to his dog –and they were nigh on impossible to remove. On closer inspection, these 'burrs' seemed to have tiny hooks, attaching them tightly to fibres and hair. With help from friends in the weaving industry, Georges de Mestral managed to replicate this 'hook and loop' fastening method in an invention. He named it velcro, from the French velour and crochet (velvet and hook).

And to wrap things up...cellophane! A good glass of wine can often be called upon to get the creative juices flowing, but for Swiss chemist Jacques E. Brandenberger, it was the wine pouring out of the glass that sparked the imagination. Inspired by seeing wine spill onto a tablecloth, he decided to invent a material that could repel liquids rather than absorb them. He started by spraying waterproof coating onto fabrics, but they became stiff and unusable, and the clear coating peeled off. Cue Brandenberger's next idea – seeing how easily the clear, waterproof coating separated from the fabric, he decided to explore the possibilities of this new substance. He dedicated the next 12 years to perfecting its construction and consistency, and manufactured a machine to produce the film. He named it cellophane, from cellulose and diaphane (French for transparent), and gave us a brand new, hygienic way of sealing leftovers for tomorrow.



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### **Switzerland will soon boast the world's longest rail tunnel**

When the new Gotthard rail tunnel opens on June 1, 2016, Switzerland will be all over the news. At 57 km in length, the tunnel will be the longest of its kind in the world. The project will have taken 17 years, up to 700 employees working on the project at the same time, and 28.2 million tons of displaced rock from the initial blast to completion. The total cost to date: roughly \$10.3 billion. While the tunnel's opening is a triumph, the sheer length of its gestation time shows the degree of commitment and money that major infrastructure works require.

At a length of 35.5 miles, the new Gotthard Base Tunnel burrows deep beneath the mountains to connect Switzerland's German- and Italian-speaking regions, ultimately linking the Swiss lowlands with the North Italian plain. It exceeds the length of its longest predecessor, Japan's Seikan Tunnel, by a little over three kilometers (1.9 miles). Running at up to 8,000 feet below mountain peaks at times, it also runs deeper below ground level than any other tunnel yet built. So great is the amount of rock and rubble created by the excavation—over 28 million tons—that steep artificial hills have been created in the valleys at the tunnel's mouth.

### **Did you know Switzerland produces just over half the food it consumes?**

With the help of Swiss food policies and historical influences, local Swiss products are well promoted and protected. This helps to make it easy to eat local 12 months out of the year in Switzerland. But it's not just their temperate climate and lack of long transport routes that allow the Swiss to enjoy local products. It's about a strong historical and cultural influence as well as an ongoing political push, making local foods a priority. Swiss people have a particular sense of pride when it comes to their local food products and producers

**Swiss German Word:** nüsse (English: to sneeze; German: niessen; French: éternuer; Italian: starnutire; Romansch: starnidada) As we enjoy the end of Spring and the beginning of summer, it's time for seasonal allergies (nüsse!) but at least warmer temperatures have arrived. ☺