



December 2015

Dear Members,

On behalf of our Directors I wish you all a very Happy, Prosperous and Healthy New Year.

The 2015 started out with our society joining the Swiss Roots Society which is the backbone for the Swiss Center of North America in New Glarus, Wisconsin. <http://www.swissrootssociety.org>. This action was taken with the goal to continue our contribution as a sustaining member in years to come. I encourage you to visit their website and support the center's mission to preserve and celebrate the Swiss heritage and culture.

The members were informed about the passing of our longtime member Mr. Frank Weaver, who passed away on January 22, 2015.

During February I had sent a letter to a few members soliciting for new board members. We had lost 4 directors due to resignations (2 in late 2014) and were without a treasurer and recording secretary. We were fortunate to see that Karl Niederer, Alexander Zbinden, Sophia Jutzi-Beris and Paul Zurcher offered to be placed on our nomination list.

The 2015 Annual Meeting had an attendance of 47 members and guests. We were honored with the presence of our Honorary Consul, Mrs. Christine Pfister. All officers presented their reports. Auditor Mr. Albert Imesch recommended to approve the financial report. All 4 nominees were elected. Karl Niederer offered to support the society as Recording Secretary and Alexander Zbinden took on the responsibility as treasurer. Director Luciano Mueller presented another fund raising challenge and urged attendees to support his continued effort to keep the societies finances in good shape. Annual dues were kept at \$5.00 for individual membership and a Life Membership can be attained with a \$50.00 payment.

Thank-You letters, acknowledging their services, were mailed to departing directors Mr. Alfred Knup Jr., Ms. Dorie Harper, Mr. Alfred Kessi and Mrs. Liang Schweizer.

Our society again benefitted from Annuity Contracts by Mrs. Friedel U. Volz, who passed away on July 26, 2014 in San Jose. We checked with several of our senior members, but none recognized the name. We were surprised to receive another donation of \$29,279 to our general fund. No contact could be established with the Volz family, but a letter of recognition was mailed to Mrs. Carol Brilla, who was listed as a friend of the deceased.

Thanks to Luciano Mueller's Challenge our contributions grew an additional \$1,575.00 for the year. Mr. Mueller also proposed to budget an annual sum of \$1000.00 towards the First of August emblems and lampions. Our society will continue this tradition and coordinate this contribution with the New Helvetic Society.

Our directors, during the May meeting, budgeted a contribution of \$20,000 towards the Pellegrini Scholarship Fund managed by the SBS in New York <http://www.sbsny.org>. Fourteen students residing in the PA, NJ and DE area were awarded grants totaling \$45,300.00 towards their college education. Sixty-nine applications were submitted to the Scholarship Committee, which again did a great job to process them in a timely fashion.

The October and December board meetings were dedicated to evaluate our investment strategy. Our portfolio had a drastic decrease in the third quarter and all directors were urged to search and present alternative investment options. The treasurer offered drafting some Investment Guidelines that could be discussed and adapted in the new fiscal year. A few directors suggested transferring our investment to another advisor, but a decision was made to hold any immediate action until the approval of the new guidelines. It was suggested to form an Investment Committee that would discuss and propose future investment actions.

We were saddened to hear of the passing of our longtime member Mr. Anton Sidler, who passed away on November 15, 2015.

The Annual Business Meeting is scheduled for **Saturday, March 19, 2016** at the Cannstatter Volksfest Verein.

In closing I extend a heartfelt Thank-You to all Directors and Members for their continued support and hope to see many of you at the Annual Meeting.

Dolf Herger, President