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Dear Members,

Another year went by and we are one year away from celebrating our 150th Anniversary.

Our society enjoyed another successful year including surpassing the 100 member goal. We presently have 108 members.

We all will miss Tony Ranjo who passed away on July 08, 2008. He became our 100th member during the annual meeting in spring.

Our business year started with a board meeting in February. Our Vice-President Frank Muggler conducted the meeting to finalize arrangements for the annual meeting and approve documents to be included in the annual report. Other meetings were held in March, May, October and December. Alfred and Sandy Knup continued offering their home for all this meetings. We very much appreciate their hospitality.

The society gathered for the annual meeting on Saturday, March 29th. Based on the positive feedback from the previous year we again enjoyed great food and entertainment at the Cannstatter Volksfest Verein in Philadelphia. Michael Skweir on the Accordion and the Jacqueline Smith Group entertained a pleasant crowd of 53. All directors were re-elected and all reports were approved.

I again had the opportunity to be part of the Scholarship meeting with the SBS in New York. The committee processed 64 applications during its session. The fund distributed grants to students including 13 recipients living in the State of Pennsylvania.

I again encourage all parents and students to visit the web site www.swissbenevolentny.com to get more information on the scholarship fund and download the application form. Grant requests are normally due by the end of March.

Our society's largest contribution again went towards the Pellegrini scholarship fund. We also supported needy Swiss families and donated funds to several non-profit organizations.

Due to the positive feedback on the meeting location the board again decided for a repeat at the **Cannstatter Volksfest Verein** for our annual meeting, scheduled for **Saturday, March 28, 2009**.

Well, 2010 is only one year away and we need all your ideas, suggestions and help to prepare for the 150th Anniversary celebration. Contact any of our board members; we want you to be part of the organizing committee.

In closing I extend a heartfelt Thank-You to all Directors of the Board for their continued support and I wish you all a very Happy, Healthy and Prosperous 2009.

Dolf Herger, President