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- Woodford State Bank
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"Cheese Is Our Culture" tm

Culture, Curds, and Cheesey Chatter



December, 2020

A Publication of the National Historic Cheesemaking Center



National Historic Cheesemaking Center

Celebrating 25 Years

Sketch by Ken Klassey

*We Want to Wish You
A Very Merry Christmas
and
A Happy and Healthy
New Year*

*We Want to "Thank You"
For Your Participation
In Helping To
Preserve and Present
Our Cheesemaking
History and Heritage!*

*Your Time, Talent, Energy, and Support
Is Deeply Appreciated!*

Merry Christmas!

REMINDER DATES

The Center is closed for season!

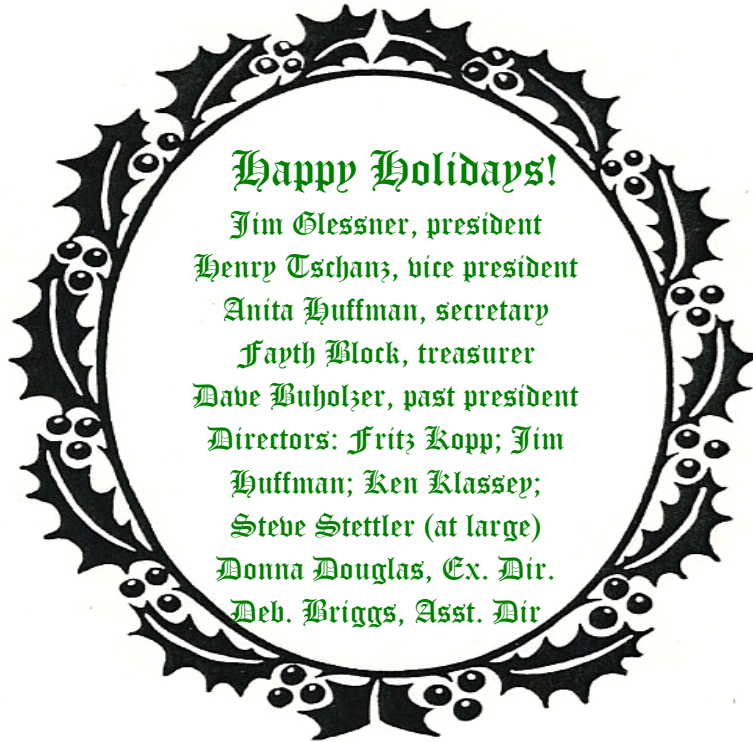
No meeting of members in December!

And a blessed and safe, healthy New Year



Volume 13, Issue 12

Thanks to Colony Brands Inc. for the printing of Culture



A HUGE thank you to our 2020 valued business members, listed here:

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To be listed here, donate a business membership!

Stirring the kettle,

With President Jim



(Editor's Note: The following letter was received from a visitor to the Center. The names have been redacted for privacy concerns, since both are VIP's from a metropolitan area. The donation referred to was very LARGE! We seldom get missives like this but it surely makes all of our efforts worthwhile!)

Dear Mr. Glessner

I wanted to thank you so very much for the personal tour of the National Historic Cheesemaking Center on Sept. 25, 2020. I anticipated the trip weeks before (*****), and I had arrived, and I have to say the trip and the tour were both fascinating. I knew that making cheese was a “process” but had no idea until my visit. History is AMAZING!!!! Especially in the cheese world.

Thank you also for the wonderful lunch. Of course, I could not pass up having a grilled cheese sandwich for lunch, being in cheese country. I also must acknowledge the superb piece of Swiss cheese that was offered on our tour by one of the cheesemakers. Honestly, that piece of cheese was the smoothest piece of cheese I have ever had. It was delightful! I wish I could have had more or purchased some! I think of that cheese daily. And now, knowing the process of making cheese, it makes it that much more memorable.

Meeting you and Donna were, of course, the highlights of the day. I cannot thank you enough for your kindness, for your book, the tour, and lunch. It was an excellent “cheesy day” all around.

I wish you much success with the Cheese Center, and will remember your kindness always. I hope the attached donation will help the Cheese Center a bit during this very trying time in our world of a pandemic and closers. We all have a role to play to keep our history going, especially when it involves cheese.

Keep on smiling and sharing cheese culture with the world. One can never have enough cheese!

Santa is grounded

The tradition goes on, thanks to Green County elves

Greetings everyone!

Steve Stettler's annual escapade continues

I was messing around my garage on a Sunday afternoon and my old buddy Bernard showed up!! He was kind of quiet and said he could use a shot of Apple Pie; it has been a while. We were laughing about all the times we have had and then he laid it on me.

Mrs. Claus has grounded Santa and doesn't want him to leave the North Pole with all the stuff going on in the world, and she hasn't allowed anyone into the North Pole to visit. So, Santa sent Bernard to see what other options he could come up with to keep Christmas alive and a happy time for all the children and families.

Well there is another little problem, Rudolph is grounded also, as he is getting a little older, so whoever does the run would get stuck with the B team reindeer and Cletus would be the head reindeer. Bernard said he would come and help as he would quarantine, along with the reindeer, before going back to the Pole.

Bernard gets Santa on the Christmas Phone and Santa tells us he can only grant Christmas Magic for 8 hours and then we would be on our own, he thought we should easily be done in 8 hours. We, or I, have no clue on the route and Bernard?? Man, this could get bad.

I told Bernard, I have an idea and we would need to possibly alter the sleigh. I have this plan on how we can do two houses at the same time in the towns and cities and could cut down on time.

Bernard showed up at the factory with the sleigh and we took it over to the Steinmann boys, at L and S. I asked the boys if it would be possible to put their side puller on the sleigh. They asked why on earth would we need that. I told them the issue with Santa and I had this plan.

So, you are all wondering what the plan is? The Plan, I would have to take one of the Steinmann's, Corey or Aaron, to run the side puller with Bernard. As one of them lowered Bernard down the chimney with gifts, I would do the two next houses as I would go roof to roof, hopefully with Santa's magic and deliver gifts.

Aaron insisted he be Santa, as I guess that was always on his bucket list. He would teach Bernard how to run the side puller. Corey thought if I was that good, they could do two houses and I could catch up to them on the second house. Oh boy!

We get the side puller installed on the sleigh, check the automatic Santa route control, but on the test run the sleigh would hang to the right, which would make for some hard landings. The boys balanced the batteries and the puller out and everything looked great. Bernard said he better get back and quarantine to keep everyone safe.

Christmas Eve, Bernard and Cletus showed up at the factory with the sleigh bearing a full load of gifts. I had to put on the magic suit Santa had sent. Aaron, no idea where he found a Santa suit, showed up with Corey and had on a pretty good-looking Santa suit.

Bernard says” It’s time to leave!” We all look like masked bandits, masks, beards, quite a sight! Aaron, I guess (cause he has a UTV), thought he should take the reins of the sleigh??

(Talk about taking over my story !!) HE YELLS,” On Cletus, on Pusher, on Sneezzy....., it’s the reindeer B team. Hell, I don’t know, you get the picture. We take off into the night.

I have to say, the plan was going really good, Bernard even said” I can’t believe it is working out really well.” (We might have messed up a few packages!) I would deliver two, maybe three houses, Aaron would deliver one, two, even three houses, if they were easy to deliver. Let’s not talk about China!

Santa called Bernard, as he was watching our progress and said we were getting close to the eight hours, but we should make it.” Good Job!”

We were on our last run of the night, three houses to go. Aaron drops down the chimney and I take off to the first house, all good, second house drop down the chimney.



Oh crap, it Is my daughter’s house and Rocky, THE DOG, doesn’t recognize me. I also think the magic might be starting to wear off. I run to the chimney and he bites my boot. I shake the boot off and shimmied out of the chimney. I ran across the roof and jumped. “Oh man, I ain’t going to make it!”” Oh, that’s a rib!”, as I hit the edge of the roof and am hanging there off the roof yelling at Bernard.

Well, come to find out, Bernard tells me Aaron’s stuck in the chimney as his pant leg is caught on the damper. I yell, “Leave him hang, throw me a rope!” Too late, I fall in the bushes, ”Ooph, that felt good!”. Aaron rips his pant leg to get free of the damper and makes it out of the chimney.

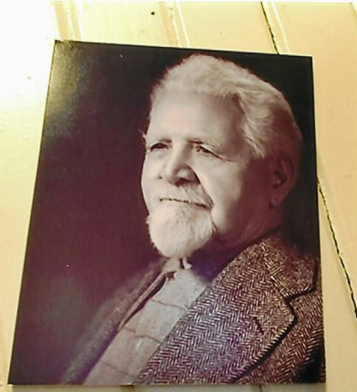
NOW, they take off from the roof, circle around and lower the side puller. REALLY!!!! “Jump on!” Aaron yells. Bernard starts raising me up and Cletus takes off. (B team reindeer, remember)

Soo, here’s the picture, the moon, the reindeer, the sleigh, two Characters and me hanging in the wind off the puller. You get it. Then Aaron yells, “Hooo, Hooo, Hooo!” Have you ever watched Christmas Story??? It sounded just like it. How embarrassing, must have been on his bucket list!!!

Have a Very Merry Christmas from The Stettler’s and The Steinmann’s!

With a heavy heart we have to send a shout out to the Steinmann family! A good cheese-maker and a good man has moved on to a better place. RIP Ernie Steinmann!

God Bless.



Carl MARTY Sr. (Swiss immigrant) In 1915, Mr. Marty built a large Swiss cheese factory in Monroe having a capacity to cure and store 1,000 wheels of Swiss cheese.



Celebrating 25 Years

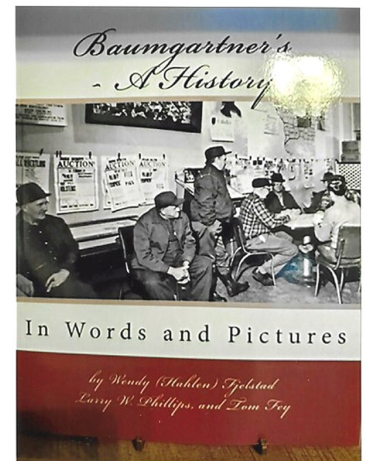
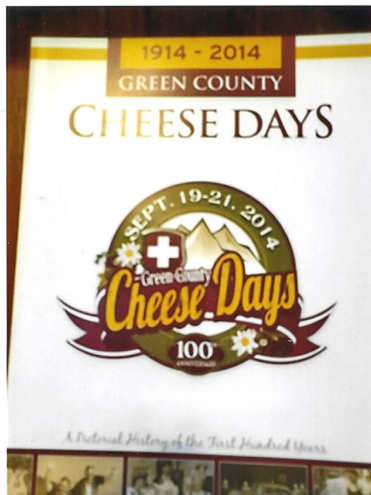


~1995 - 2020~





2020 Season "Successful and Short"





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Hi, My name is Gabriel from Indonesia. I stumbled upon an Obituary article : I just want to confirm, if this is the same Mr. Busker that I met in the museum in 2013?

(Recently)

I was in WFH when suddenly began thinking about my visit to the museum and then I looked up David's contact if I could find any, find the obituary instead.

We met David just once, it's an accidental visit to the museum. We were filling gas across the street after driving from Louisiana and curious about the museum, so we went in. David met us, took us around and practically we became well acquainted in the matter of an hour and that's what always we remember about the museum.

My thoughts and prayers are with David's family. And we'll celebrate our lovely short encounter.

Stay safe, stay healthy too Gabriel



Remembering Ernie-stereotype traditional cheesemaker!

Written by Mark Steinmann, Brian Steinmann and Steve Stettler

Ernie Steinmann was the cheesemaker everyone has stereotyped as the traditional cheesemaker in the Monroe area! A son of Swiss immigrants and is believed to be a third-generation cheesemaker. He was very handy, became a cheesemaker, worked his way into his own cheese factory and made Swiss Cheese. From the exterior, a stern fellow that had and was true to his principles. Had a smile second to none and a laugh to go with it.

He made cheese and raised a family at Pleasant Valley Cheese Co-op, Winslow Ill., from 1947 to 1985. Never missing a day's work, he was true to his trade.

Steinmann ran around 15,000 pounds of milk a day, making seven to eight Swiss kettles a day. Can milk was hauled in by farmers and Ernie had two can trucks on milk routes. Going to bulk milk around 1964, Ernie helped his farmers buy bulk tanks with the understanding he could take payments from their checks when possible.

In 1985 Ernie and Joyce decided the factory needed too much investment to meet the needs of industry. They closed the plant in Winslow, but kept the patrons and hauled and sold their milk to another plant. Making sure their patrons had a market. In 1987, Ernie and Joyce made some life changes and retired, finding markets for the remaining milk.

My first encounter with Ernie was at the Dorman Cheese Company in either 1984 or 85. I had a meeting scheduled and obviously it was after Ernie, as he and his son Randy were in the quality managers office.

I hear, as everyone else in the office, "I have made good cheese my whole life and now you are going to run tests on it, to see if it is any good. This is bull---t!" He came out of the office and looked at me and, through his serious look, said, "You're young Stettler!" I said yes, and he replied, "Good luck, this business is changing."



From left: Bob and Ernie Steinmann, Steve Stettler

Now in referring to what was going on in the industry, everyone was starting to run coliform tests on all product. This was a big change for everyone in sanitation and product handling as in the past only moistures and PH's were really being run.

You have to respect a man like Ernie. You can take the man out of cheesemaking, but you can't take cheesemaking out of the heart.

Ernie always enjoyed talking about cheesemaking and showed up at cheesemaking day, when he could. Ernie, like any cheesemaker, would have to stick his hand in the kettle.

Cheese days were always a blast talking with Ernie and his brother Bob at the fairgrounds, as it was always a must for them to be on the retired cheesemakers float. The last Cheese Days we had, it was a little tougher for Ernie to get down off the float, but he was smiling and would not have it any other way. That's what a proud cheesemaker feels he has to do, when the town is celebrating cheesemaking.

Continued on Page 10

Ernie and Joyce, lost two sons. Randy, passed first and Larry passed later. This may have changed Ernie a little, as any parent that would lose a son or daughter. He once told me that he had to live with the comfort that when his day came, he would be with his boys!

At the end, behind the stern and steadfast cheesemaker, Ernie Steinmann was a bighearted man with a lot of pride!

In writing this with his sons, Mark and Brian, two things really hit me. His love and respect for his farmers. He would make sure his farmers would be OK, at the expense of possibly costing him more than his share. And the famous quote I have heard over the years! Ernie, sitting in the warm room with his boys said,

” Boys look around, this cellar is full of A’s, nothing but money in here!” That’s one confident and proud cheesemaker.

Traveling, seeing some of the world, tinkering with projects he loved to tinker with and watching his grandchildren grow. At 94, one can say he has had a pretty full life! Gone, but will never be forgotten, God be with you, Ernie Steinmann!

His own cheese!

A 2/19/1937 Monroe Evening Times article shared Will Dunwiddie's explanation of how holes get into Swiss cheese. When asked his stock answer was, It all depends on how sharp-nosed the wife of the cheesemaker is. The sharper the nose, the smaller the holes.

Dunwiddie (city clerk at the time) told this story about Jacob Regez, one of the pioneers of the foreign-type cheese industry in Wisconsin. Regez often extolled how "marvelous and delectable" imported cheese was and how much more he preferred it to the domestic product.

On one trip to New York he "spent much time in finding what he thought was the very best imported cheese on the market." He carefully brought it back home with him and invited only his choicest and closest friends to have a taste. When everyone had arrived he carefully opened the much-prized cheese.

Finally, when all the fancy wrappings were removed, there was the mark of his own cheese factory. He had bought some of his own cheese!"

PLEASE CLIP FOR REFERENCE

▪ National Historic Cheesemaking Center

▪ P O Box 516

▪ Monroe, Wisconsin 53566

▪ Website: www.nationalhistoriccheesemakingcenter.org

▪ Email address: info@greencountywelcomecenter.org

▪ YouTube: Seek National Historic Cheesemaking Center Channel

Phone: 608-325-4636

Fax: 608-325-4647





NATIONAL HISTORIC CHEESEMAKING CENTER, INC.

2021

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FORM

The National Historic Cheesemaking Center, Inc. is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of information and artifacts about the history of cheesemaking in America, extending back to the "old world."

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The National Historic Cheesemaking Center is a tribute to those who have gone before...and is dedicated to the hard work and sacrifices of all those in the dairy industry who have made this area of southern Wisconsin and northern Illinois internationally famous.

The unique center recalls the rich heritage of the area and is illustrative of the lively cheese industry which still flourishes today.

*.....Recalling an era that was,
And will never be again!*



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