

A special Swiss sister

No history of the Alpine Village's annual Alpenfest celebration would be complete without mentioning Gaylord's sister city, Pontresina, Switzerland.

Beginning their 25th year of sisterhood in 1989, the two communities have grown close over the years.

Delegations of Gaylord residents have visited the city in the Swiss Alps in 1975 and 1985 and delegation of five persons from Pontresina was in Gaylord in May to present an Alpine mountain stone to the people of Gaylord.

The presentation of the stone, which now sits at the corner of West Main Street and South Otsego Avenue on the lawn of the County - City Building, is the latest in a series of international friendship gestures between the two towns.

The inscription on the stone reads "To the citizens of our sister city Gaylord, Michigan. From the citizens of Pontresina, Switzerland. Friendship, like Alpine Stone, last forever."

Pontresina is a tourist community of about 1,800 people.

Over 90 percent of the population of the 850 - year - old city is employed by the tourist industry.

Other gifts between the two cities have included the horns of an Ibex, a rare animal found only in Switzerland. The horns required governmental approval to be taken to Gaylord from the country.

In return, Gaylord has given to



Stone from Pontresina on County-City Building lawn

Pontresina a wood carved replica of the Alpine Village skyline, a statue of Herr Gessler, and an American flag which had flown over the White House.

As the sister cities tighten their ties to each other, Rotary clubs in the two cities will begin an annual exchange of high school students this summer.

"We hope the exchange program will not only be beneficial to the students educationally, but that some of the students who travel to Pontresina will eventually become leaders in the community that will want to see our relationship continue," said Harold Elgas, longtime supporter of the sister city program.

This Page Courtesy Of

InsuranCenter of Alpena

111 East Chisholm Alpena 517-356-2167