

Most of the mail received from readers is favorable, but sometimes there are complaints. A recent letter from two women travellers complained about the lecherous proprietor of an Italian *pensione* that had been recommended by a male researcher.

"One of the changes we've made over the years has been more of a consciousness of women travelling alone," said Assistant Editor of *Let's Go Europe*, Chris Billy.

Other changes revolve around the increased costs of travelling in Europe. The *Let's Go* staff says that it's still possible for the budget conscious to travel in Europe, despite the fact that travel costs have skyrocketed.

"Europe isn't considered such a 'bargain basement' anymore, but people shouldn't be going there just because it's cheap," said McCord. "When I figure my expenditures, I always think of it as a matter of time spent in a place versus the amount of money I'm spending. I think anyone would prefer to give up a private bathroom if it meant adding another day to your trip. Good planning is the key."

"Now that Europe isn't so cheap, it's important that people determine their style of travel before going over there," advises Haverty, who spent the summer researching in the more expensive Scandinavian countries and Germany.

"Camping is still cheap, even free in most parts of Scandinavia, where *pensions* are expensive. But in Italy, *pensiones* are cheaper. If you know how you want to travel, and you're willing to sacrifice some comforts, you can make the trip last longer."

She also recommends Mark Twain's *Innocents Abroad* as pre-departure reading for young travelers.

Knowing a bit of the language is important, too, says Haverty. "On this trip I sensed more impatience with people who made no effort to speak the language. You'll probably be able to find someone who speaks English, but always ask first, and never assume."

The nature of the publication means that there are always problems, particularly when a country being researched is in a political upheaval. The student researcher in Poland last summer had problems travelling, and postal strikes hindered reports getting back to the States in time for publication. In Rumania, one researcher's report was confiscated at the local post office.

Researchers head for their assigned countries in mid-May, and in July the first reports filter into the HSA offices. The editing and organizing process then begins, and the pace picks up until the frantic week before the publisher's deadline in early September.

"You should have seen it," said one researcher of last summer's preparations. "There were people here around the clock, working, bodies on the floor asleep... it was pretty incredible."

No sooner are the *Let's Go 1982* guides on the bookstore shelves than work begins on *Let's Go 1983*, between term papers and mid-year exams.

Students sometimes have a hard time juggling schoolwork around their *Let's Go* schedules, and the HSA office always has at least one person who must leave to write a paper that's due the next day. But the researcher's position appears to be the perfect summer job. Roundtrip airfare is paid for by HSA, and researchers receive a salary while they're travelling.

Linda Haverty sets the record straight: for all the excitement, there is hard work, frustration, and occasional depression.

"It's really a strenuous job!" she says. "We should have had to lift weights to get in shape for it. I went to Italy for a few weeks before coming back... after all that travelling, I really needed a vacation!"

Carnival in Trinidad

BY DEBORAH LEVIN

Imagine a national newspaper whose headlines read "ETHEL, TUN-TUN IN FIGHT TO finish" or "NO ICE FOR CARNIVAL." Imagine a

television station, the only one for an entire country, broadcasting its carnival events live. And just in case you've missed any of the day's events, the 6 o'clock news is likely to present "highlights" of carnival for the entire 30-minute broadcast. This is at a time when El Salvador is on the verge of exploding, Polish workers call for strikes daily, and... well who knows what else is happening. This is Trinidad and this is carnival. If anything else is going on in the world—who cares?

Trinidad, a nation roughly the size of Delaware, is located 10 miles off the east coast of Venezuela. Sticky hot during the Carnival months, the country looks more like an impoverished South American ghetto than a resort paradise. The capital city of Port-of-Spain, crowded with people, cars and dogs, is host to the second largest street celebration in the world, surpassed only by the Brazilian festival in Rio. Just about all of Trinidad's million-plus people participate; a quarter of them outfit themselves in brilliant costumes, some of which require nearly a year to design and construct. In a country where phones seldom work, roads aren't serviceable, and people are accused of being inherently lazy, Trinidadians suddenly prove they are hard-working, efficient and productive when it comes to something they care about. It takes enormous effort to make a good carnival, and carnival in Trinidad is as good as it gets. No violent incidents were reported in 1981, compared to seven deaths in Rio de Janeiro.

It is the music of "Mas" (Carnival) that makes Trinidad's event unique. It provides rhythm and people play with the energy and enthusiasm that seems like celebrating a victory. Carnival music is planned, rehearsed and labored over. Steel bands—whose members number up to 100—are now among the most successful aspect of the carnival. What started out as banging on garbage pail lids and empty cans has grown into a sophisticated, sensitive sound. Some ensembles bolster their songlists with European classical pieces.

Carnival occurs during the two days before Lent, but the buildup to Mas starts in September when early "fetes" (parties) begin. By December, calypso music replaces all other forms. The first official event planned by the Carnival Development Committee is scheduled by January. On any given night there are dozens of "fetes" going on. It's a 24-hour public orgy that takes place day after day after day... and it's all subsidized by the government!

The Plunt Festival of Sweinheim

BY KEITH WALLAN

The sightseer looking for a little extra local flavor in the grand tradition of Iron Age Germany would do well not to miss the quaint *Plunt Festival of Sweinheim*.

At the beginning of the festival, which comes ten nights after the last potato of the season has been dug, the children of Sweinheim dress up like twigs and rocks, and wake their parents at four in the morning by running into the bedroom with burning brooms held in their mouths.

After the parents have extinguished the brooms with their Oofils, or asbestos quilts, the Breakfast for Plunt may begin. A large pot of Sweetgrunt, or potato pudding, is prepared by the mother while the children stand in the sink balancing firewood on their heads. The father is busy at this time making the traditional Schlapp, or dung wreath, for the family's doorway. When the sweetgrunt is ready it is dumped in a pile on the floor, and the whole family enjoys fighting for all they can stuff in their faces, the same way their ancestors did over a thousand years ago.

When the Sweetgrunt has been finished, the family enters their cellar carrying several gaily decorated Pissaks, or goat bladders, filled with small magnets, old buttons, and bits of string. It is the ancient belief that this mystical combination will give free nose jobs to the Ugly of Sweinheim—but only if it is kept in a dark, loud place. Thus,

the family locks the cellar doors and dances in the dark while making fessooopos, or loud, deplorable noises.

While the family units are performing the root cellar dance, the bachelors and street scrubbers of Sweinheim (all unmarried females over 18 are tradition-bound to be the street scrubbers of Sweinheim) begin the Ritual of the Folding Chairs. The ritual of the Folding Chairs was once celebrated as the Arthschlitt, or the beheading of the cleft-palate babies, until more civilized Sweinheimians petitioned to have it changed in 1799 to the unfolding and arrangement of Sweinheim's impressive collection of folding metal chairs. The tradition-conscious Unmarried Sweinheimians still hold on to the old ways, however, and usually manage to behead some symbolic inanimate object. One year it was the town's civil defense siren. Another time they used forty pounds of black powder to blow the spire off a neighboring village's cathedral.

It is now midday, and time for the Reaffirmation of the Plunt. There is a large stone structure in the middle of the village square which measures ten meters by ten meters at the base, is ten meters high, and has no measurement at the top because nobody ever bothered to get a ladder. This structure is said to contain the Plunt. The entire population of Sweinheim dresses like the person next door and forms a triangle around the stones while chanting the time-honored words: "Gat zipher Schtukinme shurt." Historians have roughly translated this as meaning "My trousers seem to have become entangled in my shirt," but this is a matter of heated debate in academic circles.

When the Reaffirmation of the Plunt is complete, the village runs backward through the streets to a large meadow by the river Oo. They then begin pulling up large handfuls of grass for the construction of the Thing, or thing. The Thing is made up entirely of the wet meadow grasses, and moulded to resemble Jerry Ford's football helmet. The youth of Sweinheim are put in charge of guarding the Thing and throwing anyone who means it harm into the nearby river Oo.

The sun is beginning to disappear behind the mountains as the rest of the village leave the youth with the Thing and fill their underclothing with bits of dry tree bark for the Zupidztunt, or uncomfortable walk, back to the village. Once there, they will take their places on the assembled Folding Metal Chairs and spend the night dancing and sucking Schlingers, or oversize pop-sicles of potato schnapps, until they fall down.

Summerfest

BY BONNY CHRISTINA CELINE

It's no secret that Milwaukee, Wisconsin is not considered one of the nation's major music markets, and it isn't—354 days each year. But for eleven days in early summer (twelve in 1982), Milwaukee's beautiful lakefront becomes Summerfest. And Summerfest offers more music, food and fun than any other single place from east coast to west.

Summerfest began in 1967 as a summer festival designed to cool off the hot scene of urban disorder that disrupted most large cities in the Sixties. But in the fifteen years that followed, Summerfest has become a not-for-profit civic-sponsored organization and Wisconsin's major summer tourist attraction. The reason for its continuing popularity is simple: it offers eight stages of musical talent (plus a children's stage) for twelve hours every day of the event, all going consecutively. It also offers food served up by some of Milwaukee's finer restaurants (not mere fair food), as well as Mr. Summerfest, weight-lifting contests, fishing contests, a children's art contest, and enough non-musical activities to amuse everyone, from children through senior citizens.

Most Milwaukeeans consider Summerfest to be the most important event of their summer season (800,000 people passed through its gates during its run in 1981). For one thing, it is amazingly in-

expensive. The \$5 gate admission fee entitles the fairgoer to enter the manicured grounds and enjoy a choice of musical entertainment with no additional charge. (Of course, food and other concessions are not included.)

The Summerfest grounds are more like a garden than a fairground—minimal cement, maximum greenery. A cool evening breeze drifts off Lake Michigan. You may decide to start the evening with some quieter, acoustic music, so you head for the TV-6 sponsored Folk Stage, and spend some time listening to national acts like Tom Paxton, Robin & Linda Williams or Gamble Rogers or perhaps Milwaukee-based talent like Bill Camplin, Gil Plotkin or the Early Sisters.

Suddenly you're hungry, a stop at Montreal's, perhaps, for Mexican food, and dessert at Shorewood Village Bakery. Perhaps just a wine cooler with a slice of lemon? You pass by Pabst-sponsored International Stage and catch a few songs from someone like Chubby Checker or Rick Nelson & the Stone Canyon Band.

There is little sound carry-over from the other stages. Eight different music presentations on 50 acres of lakefront land would seem to be excessive, but the engineers who designed the sound systems planned for that, and sound leakage is not a problem.

At the Dance Pavillion, many couples dance to swing music under the cheery, yellow-and-white tent. The bartenders serving at the wine counter are wearing old-fashioned white shirts and arm garters. The Tommy Dorsey Band is playing. One of the nicest things about Summerfest is that it is *not* for young people only. It is the intention of Entertainment Director Bob Babisch to provide quality musical entertainment for all ages.

On the Schlitz Country Stage you may be treated to Roseanne Cash and her excellent Nashville band. Time to drink some beer (or wine coolers, if you prefer) and then walk over to the Comedy-Variety Stage and check out comedians like Pat Paulsen and Joe Piscopo (or hear the space rock tunes of Milwaukee's own Snopek).

By now, you want rock & roll. The Rock Stage is at one end of the grounds and the Main Stage (tonight featuring the Marshall Tucker Band) is opposite. Can you see Billy Squier on the Rock Stage and still catch some of the Tucker Band's set? Sure. Just hop on the Sky Glider and get whisked above the grounds, from end to end, for just \$1.

It's pretty crowded at the Tucker show—the Main Stage has a seating capacity of 18,000—but you manage to squeeze in and catch the encores. Over at the Miller Jazz Stage, artists like Pat Metheny cast a low key spell.

General Manger Kris Martinsek feels that the high quality of entertainment, food and vendors will keep Summerfest several quality steps above its imitators. "We're very lucky to have this lakefront," she says, "and we want the Festival to remain in keeping with the original intent. But we will continue to offer safety and beauty, too." Ms. Martinsek turns to the community for their help—for example, when the Dance Pavilion was built in 1981, the Festival asked students at the Milwaukee Trade and Technical Institute to hand-forged the graceful wrought-iron archway crowning its entrance.

In 1982, Summerfest will run from June 24 through July 5 (one extra day because of the July 4th holiday). The entertainment line-up is not confirmed until the beginning of June so that the Festival can get the pick of the current-on-the-road music crop.

"There is nothing like Summerfest," says Festival President Rod Lanser. "Milwaukee is very proud of it. And you have to admit that the price is right. For about 35¢ per listening hour, there is no finer entertainment bargain anywhere."

There is a mailing list for brochures at SUMMERFEST, 200 N. Harbor Drive, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202 (414/273-2680). Tickets can be purchased in advance for only \$4, and are \$5 per day at the gate once the festival opens.

Housing and camping information can be obtained by writing the Greater Milwaukee Visitors & Convention Center, 756 N. Milwaukee Street, Milwaukee, Wisconsin 53202 (414/273-722).