

NEWSLETTER JULY 2025
EUROPEAN COMMUNITY OF HISTORIC GUILDS
ORDER OF THE HOLY SEBASTIANUS

The summer of 2025 has already arrived, and in just a few weeks, we'll be gathering again in Balve. Many people from Region 3 have registered.

The shooting season is in full swing. We'd like to share some special and wonderful moments from the past quarter with you through this newsletter.

The E.G.S. also made a wonderful trip to Rome, and we welcome six new Knights from Region 3: Peter Blom, Henri Hoffmans, Richard Huynen, Henk Tabbers, Margriet Tabbers-Ackermans, and Leendert Noordzij. Congratulations on your membership in the Order of Saint Sebastian. We look forward to a wonderful collaboration within the E.G.S.



Furthermore, we will ensure that you receive the invitation to the Region 3 Knights' Meeting on November 15th **(please note the date has changed)** soon, and we hope you enjoy reading this newsletter.

We'd like to keep you informed every quarter with the latest news from the various federations, the E.G.S., and the Order. If you have a news item you'd like to share, please email it to Steven. The deadline for submissions for the next newsletter is September 24, 2025.

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Flag Tribute to Henny Hoppenbrouwers

On April 27, 2025, Henny Hoppenbrouwers was surprised with a beautiful Flag Tribute ceremony organized by his own guild, Sint Joris, in collaboration with the Kring Baronie en Markiezaat.

With a radiant sun in the sky, many guild brothers and sisters from home and abroad gathered in Rijsbergen. We gathered Henny in a procession from home and took him to a beautiful lawn near the guild hall.

There, Henny was presented with a beautiful Flag Tribute and celebrated with beautiful speeches in gratitude for his tremendous service to the guild system. This afternoon, Region 2 (Austria) presented Henny with the Grand Cross of Merit in Gold.

Henny, we will always think of you with all our hearts. In this difficult time, you are not alone. We are with you in our thoughts. With love, memories, and deep admiration for your strength and courage. You touched us with who you are: your warmth, your humor, your resilience. These will stay with us, no matter what happens. We hope you are surrounded by peace, love, and the people you love. And that you feel how much you mean to us. Thank you for letting us be a part of your life. You will always be in our hearts.

Henny passed away on July 17th.



King's Day in Doetinchem...

..a promotional opportunity for the Schutters and Guilds of Gelderland.

On Saturday, April 26th, our royal couple, Willem-Alexander and Maxima, came to Doetinchem with their royal entourage. And we, the Gelderland Schuttersfederatie St. Hubertus, were there, of course. As the Gelderland federation, we were able to show the royal couple in five minutes what some of our traditions entail.

After many meetings and discussions, we ultimately decided to invite the royal couples from the Achterhoek shooting club and the Montferland shooting club to a grandstand to watch the bird shooting, which took place on a specially prepared bird.

The bird was an electronic one, where at the press of a button, its head, wings, tail, and ultimately its torso would drop down. This was because a real gun was absolutely not allowed during the demonstration. Understandable, but it still presented a challenge for us. In collaboration with the CIVON innovation center in Ulft, the bird was finally created.

After a beautiful royal photo was taken with the King and Queen and all our shooting club royal couples, Their Royal Highnesses watched the bird shooting. Lots had been drawn in advance who would ultimately "shoot" the body.

The competition was ultimately between the clubs of the municipality of Doetinchem.

After the bird had fallen, King Willem-Alexander was asked to place the sash on the new shooting club king, for that day, Pieter Tomesen, of the St. Martinus shooting club from Dichteren. You can imagine that this was a great honor for this king.



After the royal family shook everyone's hand and thanked them for their performance, they continued their route through the beautiful city of Doetinchem. As the Gelderland shooting federation, we are incredibly proud to have hosted this demonstration, which was also well received by the many thousands of spectators. As a thank you from the municipality of Doetinchem, everyone who contributed to this event was invited to come to Doetinchem again on Monday, May 26th, to raise a glass to this very successful day. It was unforgettable.



A Day Full of Pride and Tradition at the Children's OLS

Today we thoroughly enjoyed attending the Children's OLS, a festive day filled with Limburg pride, culture, and youthful energy. From the moment we stepped onto the grounds, the atmosphere was special: cheerful children's voices, colorful uniforms, and proud parents and supporters gathered to cheer on the young shooters.

The Children's OLS is more than a competition—it's an experience. We were impressed by the discipline and enthusiasm with which the children participated in the various events. From the opening ceremony to the parade, it was clear that they had practiced with great dedication. The tension during the shooting was palpable, but team spirit prevailed. Every shot was met with applause or words of encouragement, whether it hit the target or not.

What particularly touched us was how proud the children were of their group. You could see it in their demeanor, their smiles, and the way they supported each other. It's wonderful to see such a centuries-old tradition being passed on to the next generation in a way they both understand and enjoy.

We went home with a warm feeling. The Kinder OLS shows that tradition and the future can go hand in hand.

Best wishes, Steven & Linda



Impressive E.G.S. Trip to Rome: Audience with the Pope and Eucharistic Celebration in St. Peter's

In a rare moment of tradition, solidarity, and faith, no fewer than 250 marksmen from across Europe gathered this week in the heart of the Catholic world: Rome. The international shooting company delegation had the special honor of attending an audience with Pope Leo, followed later that week by an impressive Eucharistic celebration in St. Peter's Basilica.

The trip was organized by the European Community of Historical Guilds and the Order of Saint Sebastian, in collaboration with a travel agency specializing in pilgrimages. The trip was dedicated to brotherhood, European unity, and the deep historical bond between the shooting companies and the Catholic Church. With colorful uniforms, banners, and musical accompaniment, the marksmen attracted considerable attention in the Eternal City.

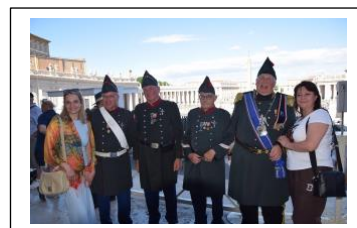
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The Eucharistic celebration in St. Peter's Basilica, led by Bishop Koch from Berlin, was a profound spiritual highlight of the trip. Accompanied by a choir from Salzburg and in the presence of marksmen from the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Austria, and Poland, among others, the faith resounded – united under the vault of the largest church in the world.

Furthermore, all the marksmen gathered in the Basilica of St. Sebastian Outside the Walls of Rome on the Appian Way for a magnificent investiture, where we welcomed six new Knights from Region 3 into the Order of St. Sebastian. Hearty congratulations to Peter Blom, Henri Hoffmans, Richard Huynen, Henk Tabbers, Margriet Tabbers-Ackermans, and Leendert Noordzij on this special milestone.

As the final highlight of this extraordinary trip, all the marksmen gathered in a beautiful city garden for a communal dinner. The dinner was enhanced by two bands from Austria and Germany. For the participating marksmen, it was an unforgettable experience. Being here with brothers and sisters from all over Europe and standing before the Pope is something they will cherish for the rest of their lives.

The trip to Rome emphasizes how marksmanship, rooted in centuries-old tradition, can still bridge the gap between peoples, generations, and faith communities today.



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