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**Subject:** Economic Development Groundbreaking: Kronotex USA  
**Location:** Swiss Krono, 1251 Osborn Road, Barnwell, SC  
**When:** 7/13/2016 11:00:00 AM - 12:00:00 PM  
**Attachments:** ATT32100  
ATT74237  
ATT46450  
ATT07871  
ATT80946  
ATT76445  
ATT37628  
ATT48858  
ATT69023

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**APPROVED BY:** NH on 4/5

**EVENT:** Swiss Krono USA Groundbreaking

**DATE:** July 13, 2016

**TIME:** 11:00 AM

**LOCATION:** Swiss Krono, 1251 Osborn Road, Barnwell, S.C.

**PARKING:** The Governor will have reserved parking at the main entrance and Zeb Portanova, President of Swiss Krono USA and Norm Voss (board member) will be there to greet the Governor when she arrives.

**PURPOSE:** To welcome the Swiss Krono executives from Switzerland, and celebrate their groundbreaking (expansion) in Barnwell County.

**LOCATION SET-UP:** There will be an air conditioned tent with a stage, podium and seating. Staging diagram below.

**STAFF:** Abby and KV

**ON-SITE LOCATION CONTACT:** Jeff Martin office 803.541.3466; cell 803.571.5254

**PROJECT NAME:** HDF

**COMPANY NAME:** Swiss Krono USA

**PROJECT MANAGER:** Ted Campbell, cell 803-413-6779 (Ted will be attending the event)

**CITY AND COUNTY:** Barnwell County

**JOB NUMBER AND INVESTMENT NUMBER:** 105 jobs / \$230 million  
Today the company employs 171 people in Barnwell County.

**SEATED ON STAGE/AT TABLE:** From left to right (staging diagram below)

- David Kenner, Chairman of Barnwell County Council
- Lonnie Hosey, House of Representatives
- Nikki Haley
- Ines Kaindle [Ee-ness Kind-el], Chairwoman of Swiss Krono Group
- Zeb Portanova [Port-an-ova], President and CEO of Swiss Krono USA
- Brad Hutto, State Senator
- Danny Black, President and CEO of Southern Carolina Alliance

**KEY COMPANY PERSONS:**

- Ines Kaindle [Ee-ness Kind-el], Chairwoman of Swiss Krono Group
- Zeb Portanova [Port-an-ova], President and CEO of Swiss Krono USA
- Norm Voss, former President and CEO of Swiss Krono USA – current member of Board of Directors
- Robert Dichiara [Da-sheer-uh], Vice President and CFO of Swiss Krono USA
- Travis Bass, Executive Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Swiss Krono USA
- Wedig Graf Grote [Vee-dig Grow-t ], VP of Operations for Swiss Krono USA
- Jeff Martin, Human Resources Director for Swiss Krono USA
- Chris Billue [Ba-lu], VP of Supply Chain for Swiss Krono USA

**NOTABLE CONFIRMED ATTENDEES:**

- Lonnie Hosey, House of Representatives
- Brad Hutto, State Senator
- David Kenner, Chairman, Barnwell County Council

**GIFT:** Framed brass plate to be given to Ines Kaindle, Chairwoman of Swiss Krono after the Governor's remarks.

**PRESS:** Yes

**PUBLIC:** Yes

**ACCESS TO EMPLOYEES:** All 171 employees will be in attendance and sitting at round tables in the tent.

**INTRODUCED BY:** Danny Black, President and CEO of Southern Carolina Alliance

**LENGTH OF SPEAKING:** 5 minutes

**LINE-BY-LINE:**

11:00 AM	Governor arrives
11:01-11:15 AM	Private meeting with Governor Haley and Ines Kaindle, Chairwoman of Swiss Krono Group – Main Conference Room
11:15 AM	Walk to tent to begin ceremony
11:17 AM	Ceremony begins - Master of Ceremony, Danny Black, Southern Carolina Alliance
11:18 AM	Welcome - David Kenner, Chairman, Barnwell County Council
11:20 AM	Invocation - Lonnie Hosey, House of Representatives South Carolina
11:22 AM	Remarks - The Honorable Brad Hutto, State Senator
11:25 AM	Introduction - Danny Black, SCA to introduce Zeb Portanova
11:28 AM	Remarks - Zeb Portanova, President and CEO, Swiss Krono (USA) And Introduces - Ms. Kaindle
11:34 AM	Remarks - Ines Kaindle
11:37 AM	Introduction - Danny Black, President and CEO, Southern Carolina Alliance
11:40 AM	Remarks - The Honorable Nikki Haley
11:45 AM	Announcement of Time Capsule - Mr. Portanova
11:47 AM	Groundbreaking Photos

**HISTORY OF COMMUNICATION:** The Governor has met Norm Voss, former President and CEO of Swiss Krono. Mr. Voss is now a member of the Swiss Krono USA Board of Directors.

**Note:** An old family friend of the Governor, Mr. Tony Bunch (a Swiss Krono retiree) will be in attendance if she would like to speak to him.

**COMPANY OVERVIEW:** Swiss Krono began in Menznau, Switzerland in 1966, by an Austrian entrepreneur Ernst Kaindl. In 2016, the company celebrated its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

### **DESCRIPTION OF BUSINESS**

- The Swiss Krono Group headquartered in Lucerne, Switzerland has become one of the world's leading companies in the wood products industry. It is a leading producer of wood-based products with approximately 5,000 employees. Products are manufactured in 11 plants in eight countries.
- The group's products include wood panels such as oriented strand board used in construction, medium density fiber board (MDF) used in furniture and laminate flooring made with high density fiber board (HDF).
- Members of the Kaindl family operate several large wood products companies, including Kronospan USA, which has a plant in Alabama producing MDF and HDF.

### **SOUTH CAROLINA OPERATIONS**

- Swiss Krono USA LLC (formerly Kronotex USA) is located in Barnwell County and is a subsidiary of Swiss Krono Group. Swiss Krono USA opened in 2005 and has 171 employees (per Jim Martin, HR Director 7/1/2016). The project announced in 2000, but construction was delayed due to a sluggish economy. Zeb Portanova became President and CEO February 1, 2016. Norman Voss, interim CEO since March 2014 will remain with the company as a Member of the Board of Directors.
- In addition to manufacturing, Swiss Krono USA's operation in Barnwell is the company's U.S. headquarters and includes marketing, design, sales and customer service.
- The facility runs three production lines 24 hours a day – 7 days a week and creates flooring in a variety of styles, shapes, finishes, textures, locking systems and thickness. The company sells its product to furniture, cabinet, fixture, door and other wood based manufacturers.
- In 2011, Swiss Krono USA received GREENGUARD Indoor Air Quality Certification for its laminate flooring – meaning Swiss Krono USA's product lines meet strict indoor air quality emissions criteria of LEED, Collaborative for High Performance Schools (CHPS), the Green Guide for Health Care and are recognized by a list of healthy building programs.
- In 2015, the company announced a \$230 million expansion allowing the Barnwell location to produce 300,000 cubic meters of HDF per year. The expansion project will increase the company's annual laminate flooring capacity by an additional 8 million square meters.
- The Barnwell facility has announced three expansions since opening in 2005: Dec. 2015 - \$230 million investment, creating 105 new jobs; May 2014 - \$29.5 million investment, creating 28 new jobs; and September 2010 - \$45 million investment, creating 40 new jobs.

**COMPANY BRAGGING POINTS:** The HDF plant was the idea of Norm Voss 16 years ago and his persistence was what has made this event possible. Swiss Krono controls about 20% of the global laminate flooring market. This summer represents the 50th Anniversary for Swiss Krono dating back to Menznau, Switzerland.

### **SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS:**

- It's another great day in South Carolina!
- Today, we come together to celebrate a loyal member of the South Carolina family – Swiss Krono USA.
- In 2000, this global company established its first distribution operations in the U.S., and in 2005, they opened this manufacturing facility in Barnwell.
- Since that time, we have been pleased to see them grow and prosper within our borders.

- So, It's exciting to be here as the ground is broken on yet another expansion of Swiss Krono's operations here in Barnwell County!
- With products sold in more than 90 countries, we're proud that an industry giant like Swiss Krono calls South Carolina home.
- To Swiss Krono leadership, we recognize that this new \$230 million investment is an enormous commitment to South Carolina and to the people of Barnwell.
- The creation of these 105 jobs is incredible news because it means that more than 100 additional families will be supported.
- Once completed, this expansion will increase Swiss Krono's Barnwell County workforce to 275 employees!
- Recognizing Swiss Krono's commitment to this community and to our state, I want to reiterate that we will continue to have your back and support you as you keep growing and succeeding here.
- In recent years, South Carolina has come into its own and has transformed into an advanced manufacturing powerhouse that the world has no choice but to pay attention to.
- We've become a great investment partner for European countries, leading the United States in foreign direct investment on a per capita basis.
- In fact, nearly one-third of all jobs announced in the past four years have been a result of foreign direct investment.
- Switzerland alone has 35 companies here in South Carolina, employing a total workforce of nearly 5,000 people.
- This expansion will only build on Switzerland's already significant footprint here.
- Furthermore, Swiss Krono's success here is yet another testament to our loyal, committed workforce that gets it done here in South Carolina.
- Because of the reputation they've built, our state truly does sell itself.
- To Swiss Krono, we couldn't be happier that you continue to believe in South Carolina and the exceptional community leadership here in Barnwell County.
- Thank you for placing your trust in us, and I personally look forward to continuing this tremendously successful partnership with you.
- Thank you and God bless.

## **BIOS:**

### **Ines Kaindl**

#### **Chairwoman of Swiss Krono Group**

Ines Kaindl is the Chairwoman of the Swiss Krono Group, based in Lucerne, Switzerland. The family was created by her father, Mr. Ernst Kaindl, in 1966 in Menznau, Switzerland.

Swiss Krono currently has operations in Poland, Germany, the Ukraine, Russia, France, Hungary, and the USA. They sell laminate flooring to over 90 countries and control approximately 20% of the global laminate market share.

Mrs. Kaindl received her MBA from the Stern Business School at NYU. She is married to Georg Benes. Both Ines and Georg will be at the groundbreaking.

**Norm Voss****Member of the Swiss Krono USA Board of Directors**

Mr. Voss is the former President and CEO of Swiss Krono USA 2000-2012 and Interim CEO 2014-2015. Voss was the first employee hired by Swiss Krono USA, on February 1, 2000.

Mr. Voss has forty eight years of experience in the composite wood panel industry with Champion International, US Plywood, Georgia Pacific and the Swiss Krono Group.

**Zeb Portanova****President and CEO of Swiss Krono USA**

Zeb Portanova has held numerous leadership roles throughout nonprofit and for profit companies, and currently serves as President and CEO of Swiss KRONO USA, one of the largest laminate flooring manufacturers in the world, a subsidiary of Swiss KRONO Holdings. Prior to joining Swiss KRONO, Portanova held sales and marketing positions at Eli Lilly and Company, most recently serving as a Lean Six Sigma Black Belt.

Mr. Portanova serves on numerous boards of directors, including the Alumni Council at Duke's Fuqua School of Business, the Nicholas H. Noyes Jr. Memorial Foundation, Mavuno (focusing on economic development in the Congo), and as Past-President of the Harvard Club of Indiana. Portanova also serves as a member of the Young President's Organization (YPO) and a board member of the Southern Carolina Regional Development Alliance. Past board service includes the Boys and Girls Clubs and Chairman of the Board for Habitat for Humanity.

Portanova has an MBA from the Fuqua School of Business at Duke University, a Master of Public Policy from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University, and a bachelor's degree from the University of Florida. He is a Crossfit enthusiast, five time Tough Mudder participant, and Shodan (black belt) in Shotokan Karate.

Portanova is married with two daughters, and an English bulldog named Rosco P. Coletrain.

**Robert Dichiarà****Vice President and CFO of Swiss Krono USA**

Mr. Dichiarà has 31 years of experience in the forest products industry. He worked for 19 years at Georgia-Pacific in Atlanta and 11 years with Swiss Krono.

Dichiarà has a Bachelor's of Professional Accountancy from Mississippi State University and he is a licensed CPA in the state of Georgia.

**Travis Bass****Executive Vice President of Sales and Marketing, Swiss Krono USA**

Mr. Bass has been with Swiss Krono USA since August, 2000. He also holds the office of corporate secretary.

Bass is from Lynchburg, Virginia and has a business degree from Washington and Lee University.

Bass has spent the majority of his career in the forest products industry, and lives in Pawley's Island, SC.

**Wedig Graf Grote****Vice President of Operations for Swiss Krono USA**

Mr. Grote, has been the Vice President of Operations since arriving two years ago from the parent organization, Swiss Krono Group. Grote holds both Bachelor's and Master's degrees of Forest Science and Forest Ecology.

Prior to moving to the US, Wedig held positions in Marketing and Sales Strategy for the corporate headquarters in Switzerland, and was the Plant Manager at an operation in the Ukraine.

Grote and his wife Valerie are homeowners in Aiken, and proud parents of a baby boy that is a US citizen.

**Jeff Martin**

**Human Resources Director for Swiss Krono USA**

Mr. Martin has been with Swiss Krono USA, since September 2004. Martin is the original and only HR professional since the inception of the Barnwell operation. Martin has 40 years of HR experience in the manufacturing industries, and holds a Bachelor's of Business Administration with a major in Industrial and Labor Relations.

**Chris Billue****Vice President of Supply Chain for Swiss Krono USA**

Mr. Billue began working at Swiss Krono USA as the Plant Accountant in 2005, and was promoted to Corporate Analyst in 2006. Billue was named Controller of Swiss Krono in 2007, and was moved into a Supply Chain role because of his organizational skills, and ability to analyze data.

Mr. Billue holds a Bachelor's of Business Administration from USC Aiken and a Master's of Accountancy from USC.

Prior to working for Swiss Krono, Billue worked in public accounting and is a Certified Public Accountant (CPA).

Billue is a South Carolina native.

**STAGE DIAGRAM:****TIME CAPSULE LETTER:**

The Governor sent a letter to be included in the time capsule. The letter was mailed to Kay Maxwell last week. Text included below.

July 13, 2016

Ms. Ines Kaendl  
President  
Krono Holding AG  
SWISS KRONO  
810 Technology Drive  
Barnwell, South Carolina 29812

Dear Ms. Kaendl,

It's a great day in South Carolina as SWISS KRONO breaks ground on its new plant in Barnwell. Since the initial investment fifteen years ago, the company has experienced remarkable success that has been a driving force behind its considerable expansion and significant impact on the area. We are proud to have SWISS KRONO as a valued member of Team South Carolina and to celebrate this outstanding milestone in the company's continuing growth and development.

On behalf of the people of South Carolina, thank you for giving our state so many reasons to smile! We wish you the best going forward. God bless.

My very best,

Nikki R. Haley

NRH/kt