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REGIONAL NEWS

UNITED STATES

Editorial

Dear Readers,

I wish you a healthy, happy, and successful 2018!

Last year and unfortunately continuing this year has affected a lot of people with natural disasters. Many of them will be putting their lives back together for a long time. I want to wish them strength in their endeavour. As a reminder, you'll find a telling story on page 3.

On another sad note, I found out late that the former editor of this newsletter, Wal Baur, has passed away last year after a difficult fight with cancer. She will be remembered as a courageous and inspiring person.

On page 2 you'll find a brief overview of the responsibilities of the OSA (Organization of the Swiss Abroad) and the CSA (Council of the Swiss

Abroad). I want to remind you of their importance for us Swiss abroad. You will find a list of the current delegates for the United States. I will feature them in more details starting in this and continuing in the coming issues. These delegates are our voice in Switzerland on issues critical to us.

On that subject, I'd like to give thanks and appreciation to a past member of the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA) who has dedicated much time and effort in representing us Swiss abroad in Switzerland. Suzanne J. Violet served for 23 years and has been involved with many issues as you can read below.

I'd also like to draw your attention to the last page of this issue for the 'Call for Heirs' ads.

DORIS BERNATH CUNNINGHAM
EDITOR

Florida: Suzanne J. Violet Retires as Delegate for the CSA



Suzanne has served as a delegate for the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA) since 1994. She was elected to the Executive Board as the first woman and held the first seat representing Swiss living overseas that same year. All the other Board members were from Europe. She served as Vice President of the Executive Board from 2013 to 2017. In the 23 years that she represented us Swiss living abroad, she has

been engaged in many very important issues. Following are a couple of examples of her involvement in her own words:

"I remember several big issues where I was contacted by Swiss citizens living in the United States and consequently took their problems, thoughts, and issues to Bern and told the Council and the Executive Board these stories."

"We were fighting for keeping the voluntary AHV/IV for the Swiss living abroad. I had contacted Swiss Clubs in my district in the South East of the United States and asked the presidents to ask around among the members of their Swiss Clubs if somebody would be impacted if it got cancelled. Several women came forward. I spoke with them personally and asked them to write me a letter about their case. Then I took the letters to the Executive Board meeting. We were collecting letters from all over the world and did not give up. Finally, Bundesrätin Ruth Dreifuss agreed that the Swiss living overseas could continue to pay voluntary into the AHV/IV under certain conditions. The Swiss living in Europe no longer have this opportunity."

"Questions how to vote came up occasionally and then about 13 years ago when Swiss banks were closing bank accounts of Swiss citizens living abroad especially in the US, the phone kept ringing and ringing. And again, at every Executive Board meeting I was reporting what I heard from my compatriots. It was an ongoing issue and we

kept pushing and pushing the Swiss government to take action. It looks like that there is finally a solution coming in the near future."

Suzanne was born and raised in Switzerland. After a successful career in Switzerland and extensive traveling around the world visiting all five continents, she decided to settle in Cocoa Beach, Florida. There, she started her first company, The Swiss Link Inc., an international consulting firm that concentrated in the export of American goods to Europe in addition to construction, interior decorating, and remodeling. Subsequently, Suzanne founded her brokerage firm S. Violet International Business Brokers which specializes in selling business investments. Understanding the importance of listening to her clients' needs as well as the magnitude of the confidentiality involved, Suzanne focuses on finding each of her clients the right business and guides them through the whole purchasing process. From 2007 to 2017, she was also the general manager of a local boutique hotel with six clay tennis courts that needed remodeling.

As a member of the Cocoa Rotary since 1992, Suzanne has volunteered for many community events. She was a member of the Space Coast Tiger Bay Club and was among the founders of the Swiss American Chamber of Commerce, Florida Chapter. She was a board member of the Healthy Start Coalition of Brevard and its president for one term. In 2002 Suzanne was the president of the Florida Business Brokers Association, Central Florida Chapter and a member of the State Board. Suzanne served for 10 years on the board of her condo association in various functions to build up the neighborhood after a management company had run it into the ground. For four years she was the president of the Swiss Club of Central Florida.

We thank Suzanne for all her efforts on our behalf and wish her a well deserved "retirement" from one position while she's continuing to concentrate her efforts on her business at S. Violet International Business Brokers (www.svioletinternational.com).

DORIS BERNATH CUNNINGHAM

Fifth Switzerland: OSA and CSA Responsibilities

Ten percent of all Swiss nationals live outside Switzerland (Fifth Switzerland).

Connecting the five Switzerlands is the mission of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) information and communication department. Using effective communication means, the department is in direct contact with the large public of the Fifth Switzerland, the official Swiss representations abroad, the various Swiss clubs and societies throughout the world, as well as the Swiss media and the members of the Swiss Parliament.

Serving the interests of the community of the Swiss Abroad is of utmost importance. It is the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA), supreme organ of the OSA, which assumes this task. The CSA is largely composed of delegates chosen from among the Swiss Abroad. The Swiss federal authorities recognize the CSA as the official voice of the "Fifth Switzerland". Thanks to the parliamentary group of the Swiss Abroad, which comprises almost 100 parliamentarians, the OSA has a direct link to the Swiss federal parliament. The greatest achievements of the CSA include the implementation of the Swiss Abroad Act and the introduction of postal voting for the Swiss Abroad. The OSA is currently engaged in political lobbying to introduce e-voting for the Swiss Abroad. The OSA also encourages its fellow citizens abroad to register to vote so that they can participate in political debates and have a voice in Switzerland.

WWW.ASO.CH

Member of the Executive Board of the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA): David Mörker



David Mörker has been a member of the Council of the Swiss Abroad since 2009. He was elected to the Organization of the Swiss Abroad's Executive Board in 2017 for a four-year term. In his role as an Executive Board Member, he is committed to looking after the interests of his fellow Swiss living in the Americas and beyond! He wants you to let him know how he may serve you.

David grew up in the vicinity of Bern. He informed his mother when he was six years old that he would emigrate to the US. When he was 20, he went to study in Cambridge, England, and later Paris, France. Then, in his early twenties, he journeyed to the US, traveling from San Francisco to New York in three weeks. Two years after that, he took the plunge to obtain a Bachelor of Science in Business Administration east of Dallas, concluding his studies with an MBA from an acclaimed niche program in Florida.

Moving to the larger home area of his wife-to-be just west of Minneapolis, David enjoyed increasing leadership roles as a SAP consultant and project manager at KPMG Consulting. He joined Novartis as Senior Business Integration Manager to implement SAP and to integrate an acquired strategic nutrition business into Nestlé culminating in the appointment to the executive leadership team to provide thought leadership and hands-on guidance at the intersection of strategy, technology and innovation.

After the birth of their son, the Mörker family joined the Swiss-American community in Minnetonka, Minnesota. David was elected

Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA): US Delegates and Territories

Franz V. Boos franzvboos@gmail.com	IL, IN, KY, MI, OH, WI, WV
Max Haechler swissconsul@aol.com 480-945-0000	AZ (except Tucson area), ID, MT, NV, UT, WY
Nathan Kunz nathkunz@gmail.com 904-802-2140	AL, FL, GA, MS, NC, SC, TN, Cayman Islands
Jean-Pierre Mittaz jpmittaz@msn.com 617-510-0334	MA, ME, NH, RI, VT
David W. MÖerker moerker@aso.ch 763-639-8705	IA, KS, MD, MN, MO, NE, SD
Tom P. Neidecker tompn1@att.net	AR, AZ (Tucson area), CO, LA, NM, OK, TX
Jeannette Seifert-Wittmer seifertwittmer@gmail.com 917-660-5211	CT, DC, DE, MD, NJ, NY, PA, VA, Puerto Rico, Bermuda, U.S. Virgin Islands
Franco Zimmerli francozimmerli@msn.com	AK, CA, HI, OR, WA, Northern Mariana Islands, Guam

president of the Twin Cities Swiss American Association which has since grown to over 400 active members. His family's passion is boating in summer and traveling to Florida in winter.

MOERKER@ASO.CH

Member of the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA): Jeannette Seifert-Wittmer



Jeannette is serving as the Delegate for the New York Tri-State area for the term of office from 2017 to 2021.

She is a native of Kreuzlingen/Thurgau, and fluent in German, English, and French. In 1998, she won the Green Card through the Diversity Immigrant Visa Program and moved to New York City, a place she loved from the very first day of her arrival.

Jeannette obtained an Associate Degree in Business Administration and a BA in Textile Management at the Swiss Textile Management School in Zurich. After working several years in the textile industry, she held several communications, marketing and project/event management positions in subsidiaries of the former Swissair Group.

In 2002, Jeannette joined Swiss Re and her responsibilities ranged

from internal communications consultant, webmaster/instructor, to event and project management. Currently, she is responsible for the Swiss Re Foundation programs in the Americas.

Jeannette joined the Swiss Society of New York as an officer in 2006 and served as the Head of the Swiss Ball from 2007-2011, besides organizing many other events. In 2012, she was elected director of the board and president of the Swiss Society. She successfully elevated the overall image of the Swiss Ball, added other events and through her marketing and fundraising efforts put the Swiss Society on solid financial footing. Jeannette was also leading the development and implementation of a new website. After 4-1/2 years of a successful presidency, Jeannette decided to continue her involvement as a member of the board in a non-executive, advisory role.

Jeannette's interests are vast, ranging from cooking, wine, art, culture, music, ballroom dancing, skiing, scuba diving, traveling to spiritual philosophy and healing. She lives with her husband Marc and their cat BeeBee in Murray Hill/Manhattan.

SEIFERTWITTMER@GMAIL.COM

Florida: Swiss American Club of Miami

September 4th, 2017 – everyone started to prepare for hurricane Irma: stocking up on food, batteries, water, etc.

September 5th – Miami Dade county announced that Irma is a category 5 storm moving in the direction of South Florida and listed the areas which had to evacuate. Our neighbors who have been living here for many years decided to stay, however, some had hotel room reservation close to the airport of Miami just in case. We put everything that could fly away inside. We waited in line at the gas stations which had still gas left with the police controlling the situation. Traffic was horrible, and everyone started to get anxious.

September 6th – more preparing and shopping. In the evening the Swiss American Club had their monthly “Stammtisch”. Plans on how to survive were shared: some wanted to leave but had no gas; one



person could not get a car rented; one board member had decided to stay. A lot of people were leaving and at one stage I asked myself the same thing, but we decided to stay because we are in an elevated zone and a Hospital is in walking distance.

September 7th – we saw that the eye of the storm moved west which was a relief, but Miami Dade informed that zones A, B and C still had to evacuate. More people left by car, plane or moved into a hotel. By now no more hotel rooms were available in the greater Miami area.

September 8th – “die Ruhe vor dem Sturm” (the calm before the storm). Everything was closed because everyone was getting ready or had left, except for the Hospital ER which was packed with people who got hurt preparing their houses for the storm.

September 9th – our area experienced a pre-storm at 5:00 am; one branch of a tree fell on a car close to us. At this stage we bonded with our neighbors and we shared time, food and drinks.

September 10th – at 9:00 am the real storm started with wind and gusts up to 96 mph in our area; some parts of the city like Brickell were



flooded. At 11:20 am power was out and at 4:00 pm we left the house for a quick check on the damage. Trees had fallen everywhere, and it felt so spooky with debris left and right. There were

warnings on the radio to stay inside because of tornados and gusts.

September 11th – 9:00 am we started cleaning up. We got electricity back at 10:30 am thanks to the Hospital nearby.

There was a curfew every night until September 13th. The scary part was not being able to leave for any emergencies. No traffic was possible. We always had telephone and internet connection, but some people did not. Boredom started and the Jass cards were a blessing!

We called the elderly members of the Swiss Club in Miami to find out if they were ok. We found out that Karl Ochsendorf who came to the US in 1956 and has been a Swiss Club member for over 60 years was put in the hospital on September 12th. His breathing was labored due to water in his lungs, and the hot weather conditions inside his house (no A/C) made it worse. He was very happy to see Astrid Artho and myself at the hospital. His daughter-in-law had been looking after Loti and Karl and stayed with them during the hurricane.

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Florida: Swiss American Club of Sarasota

Seven members of the Swiss American Club of Sarasota were engaged volunteers assisting the Swiss team members in the World Rowing Championships held during a 5-day period in September 2017. It was



Moritz Inderbinnen, volunteer, with Swiss team member Michael Schmid



Romina Groves, volunteer, with Swiss team

a large local event and we were pleased to be able to assist the local officials in its very successful completion. Another example of the full integration of this Swiss Club in local events.

In a week of great rowing conditions, over 900 athletes raced at the beautiful new rowing venue at Nathan Benderson Park. Twenty-nine countries headed home with World Championship medals. Italy left as the best overall nation. The Italians won nine medals, three of them gold. Their gold medals came in the lightweight women's quadruple sculls, lightweight men's four and men's pair.



For the women's single sculls, Switzerland took its first ever World Champion title in this boat class when Jeannine Gmelin won gold.



"It has been a fantastic week and congratulations to you, the athletes. You have inspired us, and we are all very proud of you," FISA President Jean-Christophe Rolland said at the close of the regatta. "To stage such a huge event requires a tremendous amount of work. Thank you to the organizing committee. You have delivered a fantastic World Rowing Championships."

CANDACE WEHBE, VICE PRESIDENT
WWW.SWISSAMERICANCLUBSARASOTA.ORG
FACEBOOK/SWISS AMERICAN CLUB OF SARASOTA

Florida: Swiss American Club of Miami

The Swiss American Club of Miami held the Christmas brunch at the Hotel Colonnade in Coral Gables on December 3rd. Over 90



Board members from L to R:
Bea Schmid,
Mariana Mercedes Wachter,
Roland Bandelier,
Nicole Unternaehrer,
Astrid Artho,
Urs Brunner

participants enjoyed the festive event. Our guest of honor was Peter Zimmerli, the newly appointed Consul General of Switzerland in Atlanta. A big thank you to Peter Zimmerli for visiting us in Miami.



After the meal we all got up and sang Christmas songs until Santa arrived! The kids were fascinated and chatted with Santa while receiving a gift and their parents taking pictures. Once the party was to end, nobody wanted to leave. Everyone had a great time. The game room was a success for the kids as well as for the adults.



On October 11, 2017, we celebrated Lotti Ochsendorf's 90th Birthday. Karl

and Lotti arrived in 1956 on board the S.S. "MAASDAM" - Holland-America Line. They have been involved with the Swiss Club in Miami for over 60 years. Lotti was the treasurer for many years. We are thankful for her services and like to extend our appreciation to Lotti and Karl for their membership through all these years.



BEA SCHMIED, PRESIDENT
ASTRID ARTHO, SECRETARY
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Colorado: Swiss Society of Denver

Six-year-old Elin Martin has become the youngest member of her family to join the Swiss Society of Denver, and become insured by NASA.

She is the great-great granddaughter of Jakob Schmid and Rosa Anderegg Schmid. Jakob, age 20, and Rosa, age 16, came to America in 1909. They did not know each other at the time, but met and were married in 1912. Jakob, from Ebnat-Kappel of St. Gallen, was later joined by his brother Arnold. Rosa, from Meiringen, had lost her family in Switzerland, and came here alone to join friends in Buffalo, NY. The entire family moved to Denver because of the lure of the mountains, reminding them of home and the great climate.

Both Jakob and Arnold joined the Swiss Society of Denver along with their spouses, Rosa and Lillian, who joined the Swiss Ladies Club. Together with other founding families, the Schmid's helped create the club and the spirit of community that survives to this day. For this family, the Denver Swiss club has been a cornerstone of their Swiss heritage.

Elin's grandmother, Dianna Kremheller, has been a member for years along with her cousin Gladys Schmid. Dianna was one of the



Adrian, Dianna, Asher, Elin

Swiss Dancers in the 70's, and along with her cousin has attended many meetings over the years. Elin and her brother, Asher, age 10, also a member, love to travel and have been to Europe. Elin and Asher look forward to their first visit to Switzerland to see family and are very proud of their Swiss ancestry.

RENEE WHITE, TRUSTEE
JANDRWHITE@GMAIL.COM

Oklahoma: Swiss Club of Oklahoma

On September 29th, 2017, the Swiss Club of Oklahoma welcomed the Accordion Orchestra from Aesch/BL and the Jodler Group Schlossbränneli from Moeriken/AG for a highly cherished performance in Tulsa Oklahoma. The group of 40 musicians and singers received an enthusiastic standing ovation from approximately 200 members of both the Swiss Club of Oklahoma and the German



American Society of Tulsa. We thank GAST for allowing us to use their facility. After performing the national anthems of the United States of America and Switzerland, both groups

performed beautiful pieces of traditional Swiss folklore music as well as lively band productions which inspired some joyful dancing amongst a few folks. Following the concert, the Swiss Club members



were able to mingle with the Swiss performers with food and drinks and for some good friendship. The event was very well received by all whom attended. We hope to see them all again!

ANDRE SIEGENTHALER, PRESIDENT
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Arizona: Arizona Swiss Society

The Arizona Swiss Society held its annual Christmas/Holiday Party on December 10 at the Paradise Valley Country Club in warm and sunny Phoenix. The event was the best in years. We have many people to thank. First Max and Elsbeth Haechler who were our hosts at the



Helene Block (Membership Chair),
John Thornton (President),
Max Haechler (Swiss Foundation
President)

Paradise Valley Country Club. Then Susan Oake and Kurt Schittli who coordinated the event, took reservations, organized stockings for smaller kids, a few gifts for older kids (including one who is 99), and arranged the craft table. We thank Helene Block who personally quilted table decoration runners for each table which went

home with their lucky winners. Thanks to Helene and David Campbell for managing the reception desk. Finally, president John Thornton performed a magic act for kids and adults featuring a floating table.



Yvonne Zaugg, Erik Livesay (with cast signed by Santa), Carol, Evan and Eva Livesay

We also took in a donation for the Arizona Swiss Foundation which has awarded almost \$49,000 since 1999 in higher education scholarships to Arizona students of Swiss ancestry. Hope 2018 is full of continued enjoyment of Swiss traditions, culture, and friendships here in the Valley of the Sun.

JOHN THORNTON, PRESIDENT
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Delaware Valley: New Helvetic Society of Philadelphia

The New Helvetic Society of Philadelphia has organized an Annual Christmas Fondue Party since 1978. This year the event was attended by 191 members, including their families and friends. The first snow fall of the season added to the spirit of the holidays and brought even more warmth to the hearts of all the attendees. Santa Claus showed



up just in time to bring smiles on the faces of the children and brought along traditional goody bags. The event was first started by Helen Philips in her house back in 1978 and has been growing ever since. This year a raffle was organized by the board members of The Swiss Benevolent Society and funds were raised to benefit college education and other programs. After enjoying the appetizers and delicious Fondue, the attendees indulged in a variety

of finger-licking-good deserts. The event ended with singing of Christmas and holiday hymns and greetings.



To find out more about the activities of the New Helvetic Society (NHS) and The Swiss Benevolent Society (SBS), (Philadelphia Chapters), please visit our websites: www.myswissclub.org and www.sbsphiladelphia.org

DAVE SINGH, NHS BOARD MEMBER
WWW.MYSWISSCLUB.ORG

Georgia: Savannah Swiss Club

We are a newly founded Swiss club in Savannah, GA and would like to connect with fellow Swiss in the region (Macon, Charleston, Brunswick, etc.). Our first event was held August 1st but we would like to meet for other social events so the next generation can grow up with Swiss culture and traditions. You can connect with our group on Facebook under "Savannah Swiss Club" or reach out to Patrik and Christine Rosenast or Niels Fröhlicher via savswissclub@gmail.com.



SAVSWISSCLUB@GMAIL.COM
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New York: Swiss Benevolent Society of New York



From L to R:
Christine Hubacher,
Executive Director SBS;
Elise Feuerstein Karras
& Mary Jo Motyka,
Social workers at SBS;
André Schaller,
Ambassador and Consul
General New York

The Swiss Benevolent Society of New York celebrated its 171st annual holiday party on December 13, 2017, at the Vanderbilt Suites in the MetLife Building in New York. Over 130 members and guests attended the luncheon event. It was a festive occasion which featured live music performed by cellist Julian Mueller and the Alan Chaubert Jazz Trio. Attendees enjoyed an entertaining slideshow of the year's highlights and were introduced to Ambassador André Schaller's "Swiss Touch Campaign - Pairing Tradition with Innovation".

CHRISTINA YILDIZ
CYILDIZ@SBSNY.ORG
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Louisiana: Swiss American Society of New Orleans

Some of the members enjoying a Christmas brunch at the Ormond Plantation.



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Texas: Swiss Community of Texas

For our Christmas 2017 celebration, we had lunch at the Smokey Rose restaurant in Dallas. Afterwards, we went to the Dallas Arboretum across the street to see the “12 Days of Christmas” gazebos, visited



with Santa Claus and experimented with wind and water in the “Children’s Adventure Garden”. We had a lot of fun!

MARIE-LOUISE NORTON, PRESIDENT
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Locarno, Switzerland: Search for Heirs

In an estate matter filed with the Court in Vallemaggia, the Swiss authorities are looking for information about the following people, hailed from Canton Ticino, District of Maggia, who arrived in the U.S.A. and subsequently moved to California (except Benedetto Costantino RIANDA, who presumably stayed in Canton Ticino):

Giovanni Francesco RIANDA, born on October 9, 1853, died on March 10, 1929, son of Maria Catterina born LEONI and Giovan Antonio RIANDA;

Adele GIACOMAZZI, born RIANDA, born on December 7, 1887, died on June 11, 1956, daughter of Rosalia born BIANCHINI and Giovanni Francesco RIANDA;

Eugenio RIANDA, born on February 12, 1894, died on September 25, 1968, son of Rosalia born BIANCHINI and Giovanni Francesco RIANDA;

Benedetto Costantino RIANDA, born on November 8, 1862, died on January 1, 1917, son of Maria Catterina born LEONI and Giovan Antonio RIANDA;

Giuseppe (Joe) Donato RIANDA, born on June 8, 1864, died on August 8, 1929, son of Maria Catterina born LEONI and Giovan Antonio RIANDA.

The existence of any descendants of these people must be established by official documents.

Descendants are herewith requested to contact the undersigned office within one year:

Studio Legale e Notarile
Avv. Dr. Carla Speziali & Partner
Carla Speziali, Attorney at Law
Piazza Grande 3
Palazzo La Posta
Casella Postale 439
6601 Locarno (TI), Switzerland

Locarno, Switzerland: Search for Heirs

In an estate matter filed with the Court in Vallemaggia, the Swiss authorities are looking for information about the following people, hailed from Canton Ticino, District of Maggia, who arrived in the U.S.A. and subsequently moved to California:

Giovan Antonio Tranquillo RIANDA, born on July 16, 1856, died on March 24, 1935, son of Agnese born LEONI and Giovan Antonio RIANDA;

Basilio Pasquale RIANDA, born on April 4, 1863, died on March 10, 1934, son of Agnese born LEONI and Giovan Antonio RIANDA;

Antonio Abramo RIANDA, born on September 18, 1865, died on April 2, 1956, son of Agnese born LEONI and Giovan Antonio RIANDA;

The following people presumably stayed in Canton Ticino:

Maria Maddalena RIANDA, born on June 13, 1881, died on December 11, 1956, daughter of Maddalena Virginia Giuditta born RIANDA and Giovan Antonio RIANDA;

Oliva Ernesta RIANDA, born on August 29, 1883, died on June 23, 1946, daughter of Maddalena Virginia Giuditta born RIANDA and Giovan Antonio RIANDA.

They are all Enrico Venanzio RIANDA's brothers and sisters, born on November 22, 1869, died on May 24, 1958, son of Agnese born LEONI and Giovan Antonio RIANDA.

The existence of any descendants of these people must be established by official documents.

Descendants are herewith requested to contact the undersigned office within one year:

Studio Legale e Notarile
Avv. Dr. Carla Speziali & Partner
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REGIONAL NEWS 2018:

Number	Deadline USA	On Website	Mailed from CH	Arrival in US
1/2018	December 20, 2017	January 22, 2018	January 31, 2018	approx. 2nd week of February
2/2018	February 13, 2018	March 21, 2018	March 29, 2018	approx. 2nd week of April
3/2018	April 17, 2018	May 22, 2018	May 28, 2018	approx. 2nd week of June
4/2018	NO REGIONAL NEWS			
5/2018	August 14, 2018	September 21, 2018	September 29, 2018	approx. 2nd week of October
6/2018	NO REGIONAL NEWS			