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REGIONAL NEWS

SOUTHERN AFRICA

Editorial



Dear readers,

I drafted the very first editorial in the first issue of the Swiss Review 2012 in German because this is my mother tongue. Due to a critical response from one reader and the fact that English is the main language in Southern Africa, I have decided in future to present the editorial only in English.

According to the guidelines of the Swiss Review, future articles can be written either in English, French or German, because not everyone's mother tongue is English. Official messages from the Embassy and the Consulate, however, will always be communicated in English.

With this in mind, I look forward to all your posts, be they in English, French or German. Please write to me if you have something to report that would be of interest to the Swiss living in Southern Africa: gisela@afri cantwisttravel.com. I look forward to your contribution!

GISELA PIERCEY

EDITOR OF SWISS REVIEW SOUTHERN AFRICA

Namibia: New Swiss

Honorary Consul General

Congratulation to Mr. Urs Gamma, the new Swiss Honorary Consul General for Namibia, who has been nominated by the Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs in Berne and has received the approval by the Government of the Republic of Namibia on 17 January 2012.

Mr. Gamma is the owner of the Restaurant Gathemann in Windhoek. The Embassy of Switzerland in Pretoria and the Consulate General of Switzerland in Cape Town welcome Mr. Gamma as a new member of the Swiss consular network and wish him lots of success in his new function.

Mr. Gamma succeeds to Consul General Kurt Neuenschwander, who held this function from 1996 until the end of 2011. The Embassy and the Consulate General take the opportunity to thank

Mr. Neuenschwander for his continued support and cooperation he has offered during his term and send him the best wishes for his future. The new address of the Swiss representation in Namibia is: Consulate General of Switzerland, Independance Avenue 175, Gathemann Building, P.O. Box 9245 Windhoek, Tël./Fax + 264 61 22 38 53, Cell + 264 81 650 70 75, windhoek@honrep.ch, www.eda.admin.ch/capetown

For registrations, passports, civil matters and legalizations contact directly the Consulate General of Switzerland in Cape Town. Tel. +27 21 400 75 00, Fax +27 21 418 36 88, cap.vertretung@eda.admin.ch, www.eda.admin.ch/capetown

Consular meetings of the Regional Consular Centre Pretoria and the Consulate General in Cape Town

As part of the development of their services towards

Swiss citizens the Regional Consular Centre of the Embassy in Pretoria and the Consulate General in Cape Town are organizing consular meetings in their respective consular districts throughout the year 2012.

A Swiss consular representative or team will be available at the following places and dates:

Mauritius (Quatre Bornes) 7.-9. May; Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa (Durban) (SA) 4.-6. June; Namibia (Windhoek) 26.-28 June; Zimbabwe (Harare) 30. July - 1. August; Angola (Luanda) 11.-14. September; Malawi (Lilongwe) 15.-16. October; Zambia (Lusaka) 7.-9. November.

Swiss citizens will have the opportunity, amongst other things, to apply for a Swiss passport without having to personally travel to Pretoria or Cape Town. Please use this opportunity to make direct contact with a representative of the Regional Consular Centre or the Consulate General. You can, of course also raise other matters that may be of concern to you and at the same time register or update your contact details. If you wish to order a new passport you have to present yourself personally at the meeting due to biometric data that is required for the new passports. Please check if and for how long your current Swiss passport is valid.

The first visit already took place in February in Gaborone, Botswana.

Closer to the indicated dates all Swiss citizens registered in the state or province mentioned will receive a letter from the Embassy or the Consulate General with detailed information about the venue. It is therefore important that you register your current e-mail address and/or your

postal address. You can do that by sending a e-mail to: southernafrica@eda.admin.ch or for the Swiss citizens living in Namibia to: cap.vertretung@eda.admin.ch.

The Consular team looks forward to the opportunity to meeting you personally in your respective country of residence.

Contact details:

Regional Consular Centre in Pretoria:

E-mail: southernafrica@eda.admin.ch
Tel. +27 (0)12 452 06 61
Fax +27 (0)12 346 26 05

Consulate General in Cape Town:

E-mail: cap.vertretung@eda.admin.ch
Tel. +27 (0)21 400 75 00
Fax +27 (0)21 418 36 88

Election of October 2011 and Auslandschweizer performance

The general election in Switzerland took place on 23 October, and some 135'000 Auslandschweizer world-wide were registered to vote.

75 Auslandschweizer world-wide stood for election. They did this in 6 individual candidatures on inland political party lists, and 69 candidates on 14 separate political party Auslandschweizer lists in a total of 10 cantons. Regrettably none of these 75 Auslandschweizer managed to achieve election. This is not surprising, as with the present system, where Auslandschweizer votes are spread across 26 possible cantons from which these Auslandschweizer come and, where they are registered. It is practically impossible for any Auslandschweizer candidate to garner enough votes to make any meaningful showing against inland candidates.

Your delegates have been saying this at Ausland-

schweizerrat meetings ever since the Auslandschweizer were eligible to vote and to stand as candidates in 1992. If one gives the Auslandschweizer the vote, then it must be a vote that has a realistic chance of also being elected should one consent to being a candidate. Auslandschweizer are not merely to be regarded as party political list fillers, where the only significant benefit accrues to the party whose list is inserted into the ballot envelope.

Of the 75 Ausland-schweizer candidates, 4 were from South Africa, all having been nominated by the International Division of the SVP, whose President is our own ASR Delegate Rolf Schudel. Rolf has stood as a candidate at every general election during the past decade in a number of different cantons without success, and no-one knows better than he, what a hopelessly unfortunate "losing situation" faces a prospective Auslandschweizer candidate.

The 4 South African candidates were: Rolf Schudel 232 votes in Canton Basel-Stadt, Mario Valli 448 votes in Canton Schwyz, Josef Züger 536 votes in Canton Schwyz, Walter Müller 1022 votes in Canton Zürich.

For this reason your two delegates will be taking a strong stand in the next 2 years, as the ASR continues the dialogue with the parliamentary groups and the EDA, regarding the proposed new Auslandschweizergesetz, which is supposed to centralize, strengthen and suitably entrench rights and privileges, as well as obligations and duties for the Auslandschweizer.

It is the considered opinion of your delegates, that it requires at least the

formation of a 27th canton, called "Fünfte Schweiz" canton, where, as in all other cantons, there will be an election of 2 Ständeräte, and a number of Nationalräte based on the number of Swiss Abroad. Only that way can the situation between the Inland- and Auslandschweizer be described as fair. We look forward to, and invite your feedback and opinions in this very important matter.

PETER MÜLLER

Call for possible candidates for election as delegates

Our term of office as your elected delegates has reached the mid-term mark, with elections for a new term starting August 2013 for a 4 year period till July 2017, being less than 2 years away.

This is an appeal to all Swiss in Southern Africa, who feel that they might like to get involved in representing the region at the Auslandschweizerrat (ASR), to consider a possible candidature. You should be in a position to organise your schedule in such a way that you need to visit Europe or Switzerland in March and August every year during your 4 year term. This is necessary as you have to pay for your fare to and from the meetings yourself, so a combination of an ASR visit with business or holiday needs, makes it worthwhile and affordable.

If you, as a delegate, attend a meeting, you get CHF100 as a contribution to your Swiss transport costs and possible parking expenses. All other expenses such as accommodation and food, other than lunch during the meeting, are at your own expense. The undersigned suggests that should you be interested, you try to attend one of the next meetings in

March in Bern, or in August in Lausanne, where you would be able to experience first hand whether such a representative duty interests you.

Some of the interesting items which occupied your delegates over the past two years include:

Profile of the Swiss in Southern Africa as at 31.12.2010:

There were 10'590 registered Swiss as at the 31.12.2010 in the 10 countries in the consular districts of Pretoria and Cape Town. Of these, some 66% or 7022 are Dual-Nationals, with the balance of 3568 persons or approximately 34% being Swiss only. The breakdown between genders and proportion of children is as follows: Females number 4841 (approximately 46%), Males 3964 (approximately 37%) and Children 1785 (17%).

The 10 countries comprising Southern Africa serviced from South Africa with their Swiss populations are:

South Africa 9071 Swiss; Angola 85 Swiss; Mauritius 600 Swiss; Botswana 58 Swiss; Namibia 320 Swiss; Swaziland 39 Swiss; Zimbabwe 284 Swiss; Malawi 25 Swiss; Zambia 99 Swiss; Lesotho 9 Swiss; Mozambique, with 152 Swiss, also gets our copy of the Swiss Review, but does not get serviced by South Africa.

AHV/IV problems encountered by Swiss abroad

Hardly a month passes when we do not get queries regarding the Swiss AHV/IV Scheme. Many elderly Swiss

in Southern Africa are extremely grateful for the monthly pay-out which this scheme contributes to their monthly income. Should you have any queries, your first port of call should be your nearest Consulate or Embassy.

Should this not be possible, contact the undersigned, who will contact the experts at the ASO in Bern or the Ausgleichskasse in Geneva on your behalf.

Your delegates wish you a happy Easter, and look forward to feedback and any queries you may have.

Peter Muller email sargro@bluewin.ch or telephone +41 62 8932 906 or fax +41 62 8932 907

Expat Guide for Johannesburg **Living in Johannesburg has become much easier for foreigners: They can turn to the Expat-Living.info Guide to Johannesburg.**

Written by Swiss author Barbara Brühwiler ("Boerewors und Chardonnay – Ein Jahr in Südafrika"), this Guide helps expats in providing them with lots of practical advice, and it even includes personal consulting. The Expat-Living.info Guide to Johannesburg consists of 20 chapters that deal with subjects people need to be in the know in order to plan their international transition (like visa and residence, prices, accommodation, education, accompanying children, moving), when they just arrived (like safety and health, getting around, financial services, communication, domestic employees) and in the first years of living in Johannesburg (like making



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friends, hobbies and leisure, going out, house maintenance).

The information provided by this Guide is impressive; in the chapter about domestic employees, for instance, they not only give an introduction to the legal situation, but also provide a sample work contract, and the author shares pages of very useful hints and tips on how to become a successful employer.

Unique and extremely helpful is the personal consulting service that is part of the Guide: clients can send their questions via email to the author. "We call it the Friend-in-Town-Service: because it's like having a friend in Johannesburg", says Brühwiler.

We recommend this guide to expats and their employers, who care for their employees, alike. It makes settling down in Johannesburg so much easier and more pleasurable.

The Expat-Living.info Guide is exclusively available from www.expats-living.info <<http://www.expats-living.info>>



Swiss Club Info

JOHANNESBURG:

Swiss Society Helvetia, 31 Moerdyk Ave, Vorna Valley, Midrand, Chairman: Mario Valli, 082 451 8040; office: Debora Lanz, T/F 0118053039, C 0826516152, office@swissclubjhb.co.za, www.swissclubjhb.co.za, Swiss Country Club Rest. «The Courier», Wolfgang Wollauz, T/F 0118053040, C 0825610063, Tue-Sat 11-21h30 Rest./kitchen, 11-24h Bar, Sun 10-17h, T/F 011 805 3040, C 082561 0063, www.dining-out.co.za «The Courier»

Our 1st of August Celebrations will be held on Sunday 29th of July
Our Clubs of Society: Afro Gugge, Amicale Suisse Romande, Boccia, Skittling Club. Associated Groups: Swiss Choir, Swiss Rifle Club, Swiss Golf, G.S.N.A Senior Swiss Circle meets every 2nd Saturday of the month for Lunch. Swiss Ladies meet every 4th Thursday of the month for lunch. Please call Debbie at 011 805 3039 if you like to join.

PRETORIA:

Swiss Society Alpina, Hans-Georg Bosch, President, T 0123478310, C 0825510222, swissclub.pta@hbosch.com Biffy van Rooyen, Secretary, swissclub.pta@hbosch.com

CAPE TOWN:

Swiss Social&Sports Club, Nick Eppenberger, Nicky Rodrigues T 0722185759, membership secretary: eppenberger@telkomsa.net, www.swissclub.co.za Browse www.swissclub.co.za for forthcoming events

SWISS CLUB NATAL:

Hanspeter Graber, T/F 031 568 2457, C 083 262 6107, hansg@saol.com; Philippe Lanz, Secretary, pl@swisscontact.co.za, C 082 4932673

JASS EVENINGS: Westville Country Club, Link Rd, Westville (first road on the left when travelling from the Pavilion exit towards Westville). As before the Jass evening takes place every second Friday evening of the month 18.00 for dinner. 19.00 start Jassen: 13/4, 11/5, 8/6, 13/7, 10/8, 14/9, 12/10, 9/11, 14/12 (Price Jassen). SPORT TARGET SHOOTING: Dave Nicol Shooting Range, Nottingham Road, KZN Midland starting at 10h00: 28/4, 26/5, 30/6, 28/7, 25/8, 22/9: Interclub JHB, CPTN, SCN, Carabiniers, 27/10, 24/11, 8/12. Detailed program available from Philippe Lanz.

OTHER EVENTS: Sunday 15/4 Midlander Bus Tour, 20/5 Beach Breakfast, 24/6 Sharks Board Presentation and Braai, 29/7 Swiss National Day, 18/8 Cheese Fondue Evening, 21/10 Green Bowling, 16-18/11 High Over Nature Weekend Heli-Heli, 2/12 Year End Function, 20/1/2013 Ten Pin Bowling, 16/02 Culture Evening (Swiss Filmabend), 10/3 AGM.

PORT ELIZABETH:

John Diener, President, PO Box 5608, Walmer 6065, T 0413792421, the_dieners@bluewin.ch; comm.member Mark Krebsler C 0823281098, T w 0413671422

SWISS CLUB FAR NORTH:

President: Michael Holford, C 0832293787, stfwater@mweb.co.za, Private Bag X2465, Makhado 0920, Secretary: Suzanne Holford-Salchli Suzanne.holford@gmail.com

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Club Suisse de Maurice, Secrétariat: Aloïs Fürer, Comet Street 19, Roches Brunes, Beau-Bassin, T 466-2014 fureralois@intnet.mu

IMPRESSUM

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Peter Müller T +41 62 893 2906, F +41 62 893 2907, sargro@bluewin.ch, P.O.Box 123, CH-5103 Wildegg; **Rolf B. Schudel**, T +27 11 452 2716, C +27 82 574 9883, rolfbschudel@rolfbschudel.ch, Beukes Avenue 49, 1609 Edenvale, Johannesburg; 1, Via al Piana 7, 6988 CH-Ponte Tresa, (0)79 394 53 59.

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