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# REGIONAL NEWS UNITED STATES

## Editorial

### Dear Readers in the United States



The 28<sup>th</sup> Pacific Coast Swiss Singing and Yodeling Festival will take place in Tacoma WA from July 10 to 13. My husband and I are very much looking forward to this event, which only takes place once every three years. It is an ideal occasion to see "old" friends again and hear the latest

news and probably some gossip! Check out the article in this Swiss Review and visit the web-site at [www.swiss-sangerfest-tacoma-2014.org](http://www.swiss-sangerfest-tacoma-2014.org).

At the last minute I received an inquiry to publish the below request for a survey. As I think this is important, I cut my editorial to bare bones! I wish you a pleasant summer - and see you in autumn.

WAL BAUR

walbaur@gmail.com

### Please help with this survey

The Political Science Department of the University of Lucerne is currently conducting an Internet based survey of the Swiss residing in the United States. The project, and the accompanying survey, will be the first attempt of its kind to ascertain the links the Swiss abroad maintain with Switzerland. The empirical insights will help scholars understand and deal with the challenges and opportunities that are associated with migration and globalization.

The survey can be completed online by clicking on the following link: <https://evaluation.unilu.ch/evasys/online.php?p=citizen>.

The survey covers topics such as citizenship and identification, and tries to establish whether, and how, links with the home and resident country are combined. It will be available on-line until the end of July, at least.

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North Carolina

Swiss Society of  
Charlotte

The Raclette evening on February 22<sup>nd</sup> was attended by about 80 people and held at the Sardis Swim and Racquet Club in Charlotte, followed by the "Old Timer's" Raclette on March 2<sup>nd</sup> at the house of our Honorary Consul, Heinz Roth. A thank you goes here to all the volunteers and helpers for both events, your support and input is always greatly appreciated.

April 26<sup>th</sup> saw a few of us participating in the Annual World Parade & Festival at Freedom Park in Charlotte. We shared a tent with our friends from the Alemannia Society, displayed Swiss items and the younger generation walked in the parade; which was a nice touch. The family picnic in June took again place at the Colonel Beatty Park in Charlotte and young and old had a good time, enjoyed the food, the company and camaraderie.

For further information on our events and activities, please visit us on our Website: [www.swisscharlotte.com](http://www.swisscharlotte.com).

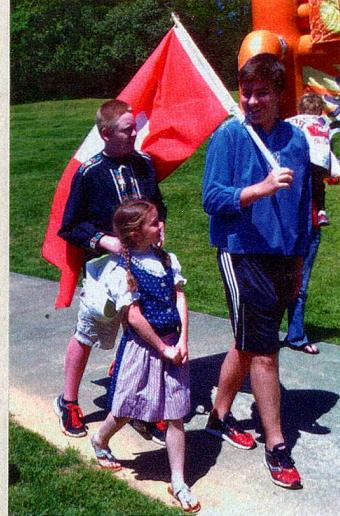
We are looking forward to seeing you at one of our activities and would like to hear from you.

On behalf of the Board of the Swiss Society of Charlotte

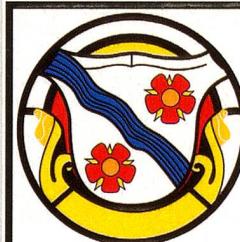
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picture by Roger Boschung



The next generation at the world parade



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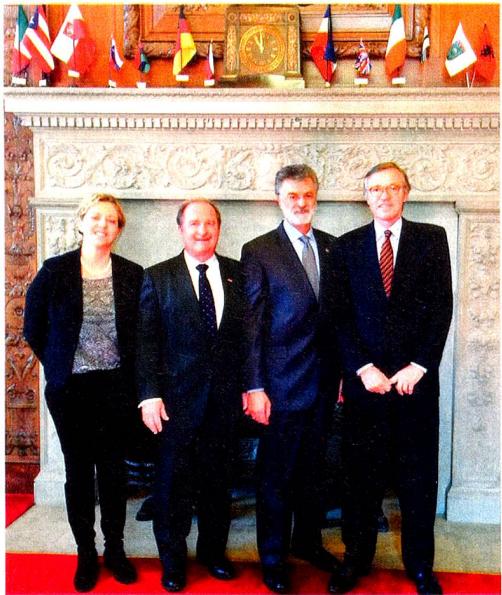
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## New York

### The Consulate General reaches out to the new States in its Consular Jurisdiction

Since December 2013, the States of Ohio, Michigan, Wisconsin, Minnesota, North and South Dakota are part of the jurisdiction of the



In Cleveland, from left to right: Simona Regazzoni Kwenda, Consulate General in New York, Hans A. Kessler, Honorary Consul Cleveland, Frank G. Jackson, Mayor of Cleveland, Ambassador François Barras, Consulate General in New York.

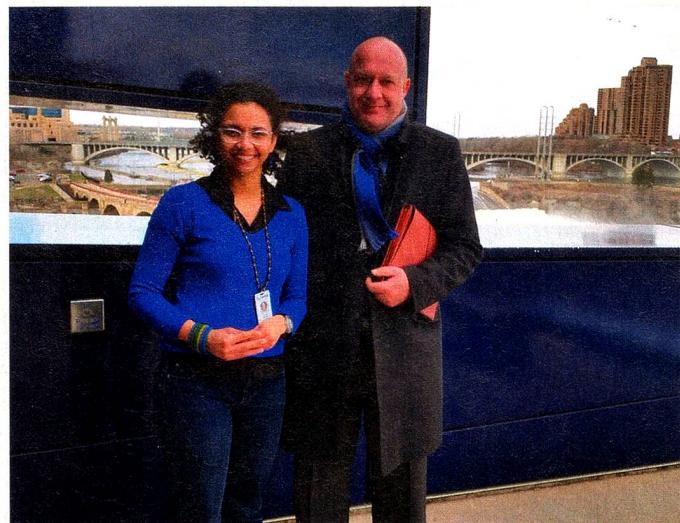
Consulate General of Switzerland in New York.

Although social media allows us to reach Swiss across the United States, our personal connections with our citizens are important. Face-to-face meetings and events enable us to strengthen our ties and relationships with the Swiss community.

It is with this spirit in mind that a small delegation from the Consulate General in New York lead by Ambassador Barras travelled to Cleveland and Detroit last April. Similarly we visited Wisconsin and Minnesota in June to meet with compatriots, friends of Switzerland and local officials. It was great to initiate the dialogue between the Consulate General in New York and the newly joined states.

All trips have been possible thank to the organizational support of our Honorary Consuls in Cleveland, Detroit and Minneapolis.

On the occasion of the Minneapolis/St. Paul International Film Festi-



Ms. Patricia Mitchell at the Guthrie Theater in Minneapolis with Thomas Schneider, Consulate General of Switzerland

Picture © Dr. Sabine Engel at the Guthrie Theater

val, Consul Thomas Schneider, Head of the Culture and Education Department, scheduled a trip to the Twin Cities. He engaged with representatives of the University of Minnesota, the Walker Art Center, the Guthrie Theater, and the film festival. Meeting with these contacts was made possible thanks to the excellent relations our Consulate General in Chicago established in years past.

CONSULATE GENERAL OF SWITZERLAND IN NEW YORK  
nycver@eda.admin.ch



Mr. Bob Lutz, Swiss American automotive executive and Ambassador François Barras, Consul General of Switzerland in New York

## Illinois

### Goodbye from Chicago

Due to a recent reorganization of the network of Swiss official representations abroad, the Consulate General of Switzerland in Chicago closes permanently on June 30<sup>th</sup> 2014. The consular district which included twelve States in the Midwest of the United States has been split between the Embassy of Switzerland in Washington D.C. and the Consulate General of Switzerland in New York. In addition, an Honorary Consul will be appointed in Chicago shortly.

The staff of the Consulate General of Switzerland in Chicago would like to express a warm good-bye to all Swiss citizens in its consular district. It was our pleasure to serve you all these years.

CONSULATE GENERAL OF SWITZERLAND IN CHICAGO



Consul General Martin Bierenz (third from left) and members of his team at the Consulate General of Switzerland in Chicago



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## *Suisses Romands : C'est pour vous!*

### *120 secondes: When Swiss News merges with fun*

As an expatriate, are you finding that keeping up with Swiss news through traditional media has been dry and intellectual? Could you be missing the local flavor, the small talk, the day-to-day community ambiance and insights? Try „120 secondes“!

In 2009, two young men working for Couleur 3, a radio station specializing in popular music, created „120 secondes“, a daily program aired at morning rush hour and, since 2011, on the Internet as well. It consists of a short mock interview by a young naive and

well-meaning journalist, Vincent Veillon, of one of twenty or so characters created by the talented and versatile actor Vincent Kucholl. The interview addresses a current news topic relevant to Swiss people, though not limited to Switzerland. Examples include immigration, the efficacy of the Swiss army, global warming,

Vincent Kucholl as Stève Berclaz, the ruthless developer from Valais who also plays in a metal music band and Vincent Veillon as the young naive and well meaning journalist.

Photo Keystone

the Patrouille des glaciers, and the Paléo or Montreux music festivals. The mock protagonists interviewed are usually representative of various geographic parts of Switzerland, and Vincent Kucholl brilliantly gives them life using the regional specific verbal intonation and flavor. The strength of „120 secondes“ is its concise daily analysis of news and complex societal issues through a fresh, funny, satirical and culturally specific approach. But the true genius of the program is that while the characters are often quite politically incorrect and use at times very crude language, they are never hurtful. This explains why no sphere of Swiss society is angered by being a target of „120 secondes“. In fact, the Swiss army provided space at an army base for a clip, and one was even filmed at the Palais Fédéral in Berne. The success of „120 secondes“ is so phenomenal that when the two Vincents decided to go on tour in 2013 with a show called „120 secondes présente la Suisse“, tickets sold out within a half hour.

Just released were news that „120 secondes“ will leave the radio in mid-June 2014, to become „26 minutes“, a weekly news hour TV show on the RTSR (Radio Télévision Suisse Romande), and on the web. The Vincents also plan additional touring, with a show in Paris called „La Suisse expliquée aux pauvres Français“. Luckily for loyal audiences, a DVD compilation of „120 secondes“ is available through the RTS website ([rts.ch](http://rts.ch)) as are 500 individual clips, also on YouTube, Dailymotion, and Facebook. While the fun daily news analysis will be greatly missed, all are eagerly waiting to discover the Vincents' next creations, which will undoubtedly be witty and entertaining. Can't wait!

MICHÈLE HALPERN  
[mhalmd@yahoo.com](mailto:mhalmd@yahoo.com)

### *Valaisans du Monde – Walliser in aller Welt*

In 2015 it will be 200 years since the Canton of Valais joined the Swiss Confederation. This event will be duly celebrated, with the main event being on August 7, 2015. The association "Valaisans du Monde – Walliser in aller Welt" has been charged to find a representative in each continent, to be an Ambassador representing the Valaisans abroad at the festivities.

#### **Conditions:**

Are you originally from the Valais?

Are you a descendant of a family who emigrated in the 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century?

Will you be abroad in 2015 to celebrate the bicentennial?

Are you in your daily life an original Valaisan?

If you can answer some of these questions with yes, you may be a candidate. Swiss TV will come towards the end of 2014 to make a short film with you, which will then be shown during the celebration.

Are you motivated? If yes, send a letter and submission with your info at the latest by Sunday, June 22, 2014 (midnight, Swiss time) to: [fddm@fddm.vs.ch](mailto:fddm@fddm.vs.ch).

Do you have questions? Ask them by sending an e-mail to: [info@valaisans.com](mailto:info@valaisans.com).

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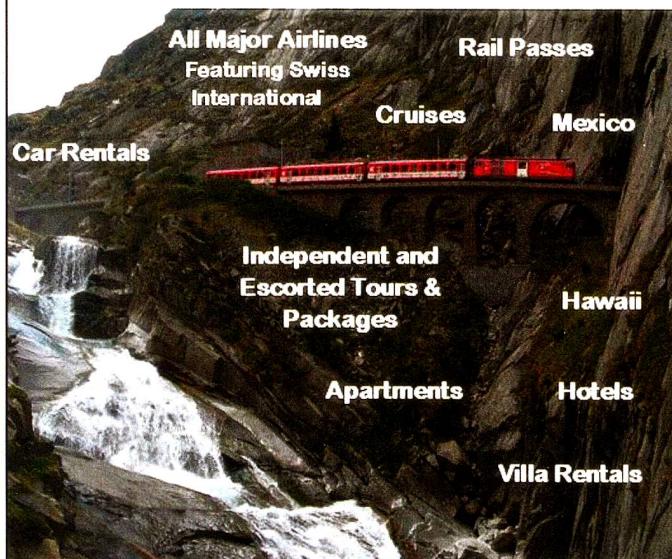
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## Washington Ixia Tile Tacoma

Shortly after moving to Washington State, Swiss-born and raised artist Claudia Riedener taught herself to create ceramic



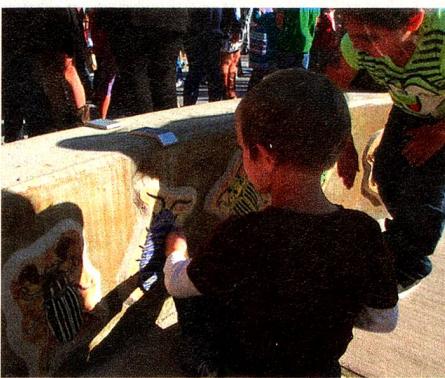
art tile installations. Claudia and her husband bought a hundred year old craftsman home in beautiful Tacoma, Washington and set about restoring it. The addition of a 1970's fireplace in the living room was an eyesore and needed the touch of a ceramic artist. And so the idea of making ceramic art tiles came to be. That was fifteen years ago. Having grown up on a small farm near St. Gallen, working with mud comes naturally to Riedener. Her work is often inspired by her background in horticulture. After moving to the United States in the early 90's, Riedener lived in Chicago for six years and worked at the Chicago Botanic Garden before moving west to



Tacoma. She now creates ceramic sweet pea vines around door surrounds, bull kelp swirling on bathrooms walls and wisteria winding around fireplaces. Sculpted oysters, Dungeness crab and parsley appear on kitchen backsplashes. Besides creating functional practical art for the home, Riedener also installs public ceramic art murals. A commissioned mural at the South Tacoma Public Library includes carved historic buildings and touchable sculpted native plants installed low so that children can reach and feel the work with their hands. The Washington State Arts Commission hired the artist for an outdoor installation at an elementary school in Moses Lake, WA. Riedener sculpted



a series of endemic insects and native flowers. She molded, slip-cast and hand-glazed hundreds of them and installed them around the exterior of the building so that grade students can explore and learn about insects in their environment. At McCarver Peace Park in Tacoma, Riedener carved book spines in stoneware for an outdoor reader's circle. In ceramic tile she inscribed a poem by the local Poet Laureate about a young girl lost too soon. In this park she also installed a series of tall stone-



ware sunflowers, poppies and lilies on the entry pillars and vegetables by the children's garden gate. You can also find her work along the WaterWalk at Point Ruston, a new housing development along the picturesque waterfront of Tacoma. Riedener installed a Hops Arbor with ceramic hops leaves and pods. The arbor looks out over the Puyallup Valley to Mt Rainier. The arbor reminds viewers that the valley used to be known for large scale hops farming.

About her work Riedener says: "My ceramic murals are touchable art – sometimes reflective of light and shiny smooth, sometimes matte and a bit rough under the fingers. They absorb the heat

of the sun or feel cool when it rains. I enjoy combining all these elements. My work is affected directly by my love for nature, community and history. I think of my installations as portals that transport viewers to a new experience. Color is an important element of my work, as are the intimate and tangible

signs of art made by hand. It invites people to touch and explore. Engagement with the community I live in is a crucial part of who I am. I like to find the odd and strange things that have happened to a place; I am always interested in learning more about the flora and fauna of the area. My murals are a translation of what I learn of a community and they endeavor to introduce the story to passersby."



Riedener's work appears in the Lark book '500 Tiles' and in the Lark Studio Series 'Art Tiles'. Check our her web-site at: [www.ixiatile.com](http://www.ixiatile.com) [www.facebook.com/pages/Ixia-Tile-Tacoma/](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Ixia-Tile-Tacoma/) 125787760825456

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## Washington

### 28th Pacific Coast Swiss Singing & Yodeling Festival

July 10 - 13 in Tacoma, Washington

The Swiss Sportmen's Club of Tacoma and its Männerchor Edelweiss will host the United Swiss Singing Societies of the Pacific Coast's Sängerfest at the Hotel Murano in Tacoma and the Swiss Park in Bonney Lake in July. Beside the nine member choirs of the USSSPC, the festival will feature the yodel group Chörli from Beinwil, Switzerland, and the Quartet Family Weingart from Konolfingen, Switzerland as well as the Wildrose Yodel Club and the Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir from Alberta, Canada.

The festival kicks off with a reception banquet on Thursday and features the Grand Concert of over 200 singers in the Pavilion of the Hotel Murano on Friday. Festivities continue at the Swiss Park in Bonney Lake on Saturday featuring performances by the thirteen groups represented as well as yodels by special guest performers. Concluding the event on Sunday at the Hotel Murano will be the traditional Grand Banquet complete with flag march and awarding of the 2017 festival to the next host club.

A detailed schedule as well as event order forms can be found on the festival's website:

[www.swiss-sangerfest-tacoma-2014.org](http://www.swiss-sangerfest-tacoma-2014.org)

Wildrose Yodel Club

Männerchor Edelweiss - Your Hosts

Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir

Chörli - Beinwil, SZ

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Konolfingen, SZ

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## Florida

### Swiss American Club of SW Florida

#### January

To ring in the New Year, the club organized a Sunday Brunch on the Sanibel Princess in Fort Meyers. Once again the weather was perfect: sunny but not too hot. A total of 65 people went on board. Soon everyone was seated and the captain revved up the engine for the two-hour journey through the Sanibel sound and along the island. The guests were called to the buffet table by table, and by the time the last people got up to help themselves to the food, the first group went back either for seconds or dessert.

President Peter Zahner welcomed everybody and introduced six new members and four guests. After the boat had docked and the people were back on "solid ground," most everyone gathered at the pool-side bar for one more refreshing drink before going home.

#### February

One of the most successful parties of the club is the annual Fondue dinner. The invitations were barely out when reservations had to be closed due to space limitation at the Bonita Bay Estero Park. Sixty lucky members found their way to the pavilion, and soon the place was abuzz with lively conversation. The wine was flowing, and the aromas of wine and cheese cooking wafted about the place. People were encouraged to find a



seat, and the fondue was served. President Peter Zahner

thanked the organizers, particularly Ursula Heierli, who was in charge. And then our friend Roland brought out his "music box" and proceeded to entertain with lively Swiss music. Soon, Peter Zahner interrupted him with the announcement that Christine and Urs Naegelin were celebrating their fortieth wedding anniversary. A member serenaded them with his clarinet and they got a round of applause. The music continued and quite a few people took to the floor to "dance down" all the good food and wine.

#### March

Once again the Palmetto-Pine Country Club in Cape Coral was the venue for the club's annual meeting. Upon arrival, the participants were offered a glass of wine and were greeted by the hostess for the evening, Ursula Heierli. After some time for socializing, President Peter Zahner opened the meeting. He worked



his way swiftly through the agenda, beginning with the in-

troduction of the night's guests and the members of the board. The minutes of last year's annual meeting, the treasurer's and the audit reports were approved, and the happenings of the past year were recapped. The annual dues remained unchanged (\$30 for singles and \$40 for couples and families with children under 18). Since all members of the board had agreed to serve another year, no elections were necessary.

After the adjournment of the official part of the evening, participants were treated to a delicious three-course meal and more socializing. Thank you, Ursula, for organizing another successful annual event.

#### April

A stone's throw from La Piñata Restaurant where our members



enjoyed a Mexican lunch is the Naples Botanical Garden. This 170-acre tropical paradise features designs from some of the finest landscape architects in the world. The grounds are divided into several gardens and are unique because there are many exhibits from other countries. In addition, there was a Lego display featured. My favorite were the green water lily pads consisting of several thousand Lego blocks.

#### May

Two Punta Gorda events were offered: a golf tournament and a nature boat journey on the Peace River, both organized by our Vice-President, Hans Wenger. Twenty-four members and guests boarded the boat, ready for an exciting excursion, while eleven golfers took off in the other direction. The weather looked pretty good even though the forecast had been sort of questionable. Soon the boat journey began. Two volunteers from a local nature center explained the importance of this large body of water for the environment and its inhabitants, both people and wild life. In the "olden days" the river was used for transportation of goods; now it serves as the source of drinking water and is home to many birds and fish. A couple of showers along the way had people scrambling for shelter on the lower deck, but did not dampen the enthusiasm. Once back on land everyone made their way to Harpoon Harry's Restaurant at Fisherman's Village, where soon they were joined by the golfers, who had also had a small dose of rain during their game. While cocktails were being consumed, Hans Wenger announced the list of winners of the afternoon's game. Then the participants enjoyed a nice dinner and soon dispersed to make their way home.

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## Book Review:

### Alberix the Celt

By Albert Noyer



In the spring of 58 B.C.E., the Celtic tribe of Helvetii, then settled in present day west-central

Switzerland and pressured by Germanic tribes from across the Rhine, voted to migrate to lands in Gaul near the Atlantic Ocean. Julius Caesar opposed their passage through his Roman province and defeated an army several times larger than his legions. Caesar made Gaul part of Rome's growing empire; a Gallo-Roman culture formed the matrix of much of modern European civilization. That long ago Helvetian decision was a factor in ending Celtic tribal dominance in Europe, yet the Roman conquest assured that when the devastating barbarian invasions erupted in the third to sixth centuries, those tribes eventually

would become Latinized. This novel personalizes the Celtic struggle against Caesar by those Gallic tribesmen that opposed him, those in support of Rome, and legion commanders who believed that bringing *Romanitas* – Latin civilization – to the known world was the sacred destiny of Rome. Book 1: Weep the Long Sorrow – When Germanic warriors raid his village, Alberix, son of a clan chieftain, escapes with his mother and uncles and an aged druid priest. His father is killed, so the family flees to a village where his aunt married the chief. When Caesar bridges the Rhine

to impress Germanic tribes with Roman power, Alberix is lured across to a remote village to help train the chief's warriors in Roman tactics. He intrigues the chief's feisty daughter; after she seduces Alberix, he agrees to take her to his civilized village, yet panics and escapes alone. Caesar offers Alberix a leadership role in a conquered Gaul, but questions his "Celticness," Alberix hears of a rebel Gallic leader named Vercingetorix. Will he now attempt to find him in Gaul?

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