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REGIONAL NEWS

CANADA

Editorial

Both 2015 and 2016 are two years with quite a few anniversary celebrations of Swiss organisations across Canada. Some of them are:

The Edmonton's Swiss Men's Choir celebrated their 35th anniversary in November 2015 at their yearly Winzerfest performance, this year in grand style with musicians of the local symphony.

The Yodel Club Heimattreu in Calgary has an upcoming 40th anniversary. The announcement of and invitation to their gala event in April 2016 you will find on page five.

The Montagna Singers in Ottawa also celebrated their 40th year together with a big event at the Metzgete in November 2015.

The Vernon Swiss Club commemorated its 60th anniversary with Alphorn, Liedertafel and a dinner-dance swing band event in October last year.

Not to forget the oldest of all Swiss Societies in Canada, the Swiss National Society in Montreal, which duly celebrated its 140th anniversary with a memorable dinner event in November 2014!

Congratulations to all of you!



SILVIA SCHOCH, EDITOR
AND OSA DELEGATE
FOR WESTERN CANADA

Western Canada Elects Second OSA Delegate



Richard Schwendener

Congratulations to Mr. Richard Schwendener of Vanderhoof, BC!

Richard was unanimously elected Delegate Western Canada of the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) by the Swiss Presidents at the Presidents Conference on November 14, 2015 in Edmonton, AB. Together with Ms. Silvia Schoch, Western Canada is thus once again represented by two Delegates.

Richard and Marianne Schwendener immigrated to Canada in 1993. The former Swiss bank employee is an avid outdoors man who built his own cabin in the Queen Charlotte Islands.

Richard is looking forward to connecting with the Swiss abroad and representing the Swiss Community in Western Canada. He is planning to attend the OSA conference in Switzerland in April 2016 where he is expected to be elected into the Council of the Organisation of the Swiss abroad, the supreme organ of OSA.

Richard can be reached at 250-567-5005 or via email at rschwendener@hwy16.com. For more information on the services of OSA, please go to <http://aso.ch/en>.

SILVIA SCHOCH

Swiss Presidents Conference of Western Canada

On November 14, 2015, twenty-seven Swiss Presidents and other official Swiss Organisation representatives met at the conference location of the Hotel Château LaCombe, perched atop a high ridge, affording a beautiful view over a frosty Edmonton, AB.

The 12th Conference of Swiss Presidents in Western Canada was opened by Mr. Karl Strickler, President of the Swiss Edmonton Society, and Mr. Hans Voegeli, President of the Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir. Both these Societies were host organizations for this gathering. Facilitated by Nick Siegenthaler, Vice-President, Edmonton Swiss Society, conference participants shared insight into their Swiss Society and exchanged common findings, concerns and solutions.

Ambassador of Switzerland to Canada, Dr. Beat Nobs gave the key note address on the current state and future direction of bilateral relations between Canada and Switzerland.

Mr. Peter Zimmerli, Delegate for the Swiss abroad, Consular Directorate, Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, Bern, outlined the task of the Consular Directorate and the New Swiss Act of Citizens and Institutions abroad.

SILVIA SCHOCH



Edmonton: Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir Celebrates 35 Years

Tickets for our choir's 35th year celebration sold out even earlier than other years. The hall was beautifully decorated with a bevy of floral offerings and we invited a small orchestra of symphony musicians to accompany us on some of our songs. Audience and choir enjoyed the effect greatly.



At the outset of the program, the singers of Pro Coro honored us with two songs directed by Swiss conductor Michael Zaugg: the Scottish ballad *Loch Lomand*, followed by a joyous rendition of the American pop classic *Mr. Sandman*. A very successful combination as the enthusiastic applause indicated! Thank you, Pro Coro, for this wonderful gift.

We were very honored by the personal attendance and an address by the Ambassador of Switzerland to Canada, Dr. Beat Nobs. It was a delight to welcome the Ambassador, who was accompanied by Dr. Irene Knöpfel Nobs.

It was also a great pleasure to welcome our chef and former member Peter Johner. He and co-chef Maxine Zakordonsky cooked a wonderful meal for audience and performers.

End of November, we followed Maestro Michael Zaugg's invitation to participate at the Pro Coro concert *I see Fire*. We performed

Vater Unser and *Cardientscha*, both songs by Swiss composers and had the pleasure of joining Pro Coro for several well known songs such as *Danny Boy* and others. This was our first collaboration with Pro Coro and we are looking forward to more.

Christmas season is about reaching out for us to seniors and the general public with our Advent/Christmas music. A yearly tradition, we start singing at the Rotary Club Christmas Carol Fest, followed by the Christmas concert at St. Vital Catholic church. Other concerts were at senior residents and extensive care facilities in Edmonton, ending with a joint concert with our music director's elementary school choir in St. Albert and a presentation in the rotunda of the Alberta Legislature. If there are any male singers interested to join us or to check our calendar of events, please connect with us through our website at www.esmca.ca.

DAVE LEIGH

Victoria Swiss Society: The Sound of Switzerland Concert

The idea for the fundraising concert was born many months ago and came to fruition with great success on October 3, 2015.

The Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir singers, Victoria Accordionists, Leikarringen dancers, three alphorn players, an opera singer and two emcees performed with heart and soul in front of a full audience at Alix Goolden Hall. The alphorn players started the concert with a traditional alp prayer and there couldn't have been a more impressive opening to a performance brimming with highlights! The final *Wir fahren mit der SBB* was sung in German by all choirs, waltzed to by the dancers, and joined in by the audience. A truly



memorable event. Many thanks to all performers and especially the Edmonton Men's Choir for their generous support! SILVIA SCHOCH



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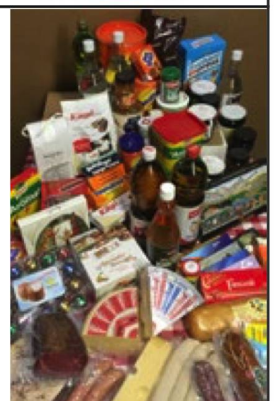


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We ended the year on December 6th with a Samichlaus Party for young and old. The children did crafts, baked Grättibaenz and had a great time. The

fondue in November was a great success. We are seeing increased interest from non-members for that function, and this year we extended the invitation to members of the community league. We are striking a great relationship with the league: mutual support by way of using their facility, and their members joining our events, learning about Swiss people and culture.

Thanks to some significant organizing assistance of Ms. Silvia Schoch and support from the Consul General's office, we were pleased

McLeod Lake, B.C.: "Come on, Ring those Bells!"



My husband, Werner Schlachter, moved from Frenkendorf, BL, to Mackenzie, BC in August 1988 where we met on Halloween night. The rest, as they say, is history. Werner fulfilled his dream of becoming a trapper and our family lived several years in the wilderness. In 1993, we moved to McLeod Lake, north of Prince

George, and Werner built us a log home. It was here that he related the Swiss custom of Samichlaus on December 6th and we decided to start this tradition in our little community. The first year we made "Grättimaa" but we didn't go bell ringing, which Werner calls "ilüütä". In the following years, we decided to visit some of our friends and neighbors. We baked "Grättimanna" and put them in bags with unshelled peanuts, a few hard candies and a Japanese orange. We'd light a lantern, dress up for the cold and snow, take the bells and visit our neighbors. When we started the tradition, the two youngest sons were still at home and they would go with us. Last year, my niece and her husband were visiting and came along. We are a spread-out community and always have an extra bag along. By now, we are expected visitors and our friends are usually waiting for us with a hot drink.

DIANE SCHLACHTER

to host the Western Canadian Presidents Conference on November 14th. Ambassador Dr. Nobs from Ottawa, Consul General Mr. Strausak and Consul Mrs. Thomas from Vancouver were in attendance along with Delegate for the Swiss Abroad, Mr. Zimmerli from Switzerland and Honorary Consul Mr. Bayer from Calgary. It was a full day of informative presentations, conversation and collaboration. A common thread among the clubs is the challenge of an aging membership and keeping the societies vibrant through future generation Swiss. The meeting was planned to coincide with the Winzerfest of the Edmonton Swiss Mens Choir in the evening, and meeting attendees were hosted at the event by the Consul General. As it was the Choir's 35th anniversary, it was a truly special performance.

Our next get-together will be the AGM in March. All Executive positions are open for nominations, and we look forward to welcoming new people and their ideas to make our club even stronger. The AGM will be at the Eastwood Community League with a light supper after. Time and date will be announced in the next newsletter. T. CLOUSTON

CURRENT VACANCY AT THE CONSULATE GENERAL OF SWITZERLAND IN TORONTO-

The Consulate General of Switzerland in Montreal hereby informs the Swiss community in Ontario that Mrs. Kathy Utigard, our Honorary Consul in Toronto, resigned from her position last October. The Consulate in Toronto will therefore remain vacant until further notice.

During this temporary situation, duties normally looked after by the Honorary Consul, such as the representation of the Consul General at various political, cultural, scientific, economic and commercial events, will be ensured by the Consulate General in Montreal. The Representation in Montreal will also provide direct support to Swiss nationals in situations of emergency. Swiss citizens requiring consular services must continue to contact the Consulate General in Montreal.

The Consulate General takes this opportunity to thank Mrs. Kathy Utigard for her services and will inform the community as soon as her replacement will be nominated.

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Saskatoon: Swiss Club Saskatoon

We had a great turnout for the National Day party held August 1st, 2015 at the public park in Warman SK. Fifty-two members and guests enjoyed an excellent meal of sausages, buns, salads and dessert under a somewhat indecisive sky. A few drops of rain fell just as we started our meal, but we persevered and were rewarded shortly afterwards with a beautiful sky and warm weather to finish off our evening. The children ran around and played together well; it was a joy to see.

The AGM was held on October 25th at Mano's Restaurant. The new Executive is the same as the previous as all were pronounced acclaimed to their positions. It was agreed that our June BBQ will not be held this year, due to low attendance and/or bad weather in previous years.

Our Santa evening was held on December 4th at McClure United Church. We enjoyed platters of cold cuts, cheeses, salad and lots of delicious desserts, as well as Rosa Nievergelt's homemade buns. Approximately 51 members attended including 16 children. This kept Santa very busy when he stopped in to hand out bags of goodies to the youngsters, as well as judging the coloring contest. We were en-



tertained on the piano by Hannah Buchmann who had just learned to play Jingle Bells. It was great to see the families (many of our tables were made up of three generations), as well as some new members.

Dates for our next two events, the Raclette luncheon and the Jass tournament will be announced in our next newsletter. These events are usually held between February and April at the host's convenience, as they are held in members' homes. For information about our club and events, please contact us at swiss-clubsaskatoon@hotmail.com or call telephone 306-665-6039.

ELISABETH EILINGER

Vernon: Vernon Swiss Club Celebrates 60 Years

On Saturday, October 3rd 2015, members, friends and guests gathered at the Schubert Center in Vernon for an evening of fun and celebration. The event was sold out. Thank you to everybody for participating in this special celebration.

Tanja Hasler did an excellent job performing the duties of Master of Ceremonies. Our guest of honor, Consul General of Switzerland, Urs Strausak and his wife Martina Feil very generously donated a welcome drink to each guest. What a great way to start off the evening.

After the members of the board received recognition for their hard work in past years, current president Lilly Senn was presented with a beautiful planter from President Susie Kaul of the Kelowna Liedertafel Choir. The founding members and past Presidents were given accolades for their efforts in establishing the Interior Swiss Club in 1955.

Rory Fader started the musical portion of the evening with an Alphon melody, followed by the sensational sounds of the Kelowna Liedertafel Choir under his direction. As always the band Route 66 provided lots of excellent dancing music, keeping the dance floor busy all evening. The Kelowna Liedertafel choir invited the audience to sing the final song together: "So ein Tag so wunderschön wie heute, so ein Tag, der sollte nie vergehn." The Interior Swiss Club would like to acknowledge and thank: Consul General of Switzerland Urs Strausak; the Management of the Schubert Centre; Bella Stella Cheese, Owners Igor and Irma Ruffa and Peter Johner, Chocolatier, for their generous sup-

port to our club. Last but not least, we like to thank our photographer Gaby Steiger. Also thanks to our webmaster Kurt Zwingli for posting the report and pictures on the website www.interiorsswissclub.ca. A large group met at the O'Keefe Ranch for brunch on Sunday morning, enjoying each other's company, and not wanting the party to end.

ELISABETH NYFELER, SHEILA DOMINO, HEIDI HAPPELO



Consul General Urs V. Strausak and Martina Feil, left
Vernon Swiss Club President Lilly Senn and Hansruedi Senn, right

Guelph: Swiss Canadian Club

Are you in the Guelph area?

And do you have an interest in Swiss culture and Swiss activities?

If so, then come and join the Guelph Swiss Canadian Club! We hold several events throughout the year, including indoor and outdoor activities for young and old.

In the upcoming months we will have our annual wine and cheese party, soaking up the sun with an outdoor activity, splashing the summer away at the annual summer barbeque and much more.

We look forward to seeing you at our upcoming events! To receive updates, please email us at our new email address swisscanadianclubguelph@gmail.com or visit our face book page *Swiss Canadian Club Guelph*.

RINA THOMA



Calgary: Yodel Club Heimattreu Celebrates its 40th Anniversary

When we started the choir in 1976, many of us were new immigrants and still struggling communicating in our new language. Case in point was my initial beer purchase at Safeway which did not turn out too well as I came back with "Root beer" instead of a Canadian brewed "Feldschlössli Bier". So it was not surprising that Swiss immigrants got together on weekends, played the favored card game, sang or conversed in our familiar dialects. Some formed friendships, some did not; it did not matter, as we were family nevertheless.

It was at one of these gatherings at the Chestermere Lake Community Hall (I think it was a "Metzgete"), that the seven founders had the idea, and also the voices, to form a Yodel Club. Given our circumstances, it had to be named "Heimattreu"! So it was Peter Stapfer in Bass, Fritz Wagner in Tenor, Arthur Bachmann in Tenor, Ruedi Peterer in Bass, Arnold Rutzer in Tenor as well as Hans Bossert and I as Yodelers that were setting the foundation.

Arthur Bachmann and Arnold Rutzer were taken from us too early, but their contribution to our choir being able to celebrate its 40 year Anniversary is very much recognized. Now we find ourselves in the envious position of having three young accomplished yodelers, Renata Parent, Maria Zumbuehl and Sonja Weidmann in our midst. Together with Philipp Borer, our newest young member, the new generation is starting to get traction. We are grateful for their youthful enthusiasm, commitment and confidence.

For detailed information on our upcoming 40th Anniversary celebration, please see the poster.

KLAUS ZAHND



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Montreal: Montreal Swiss Jass Club

Members meet between September and April on the last Friday of the month at the Haus der Heimat in Dorval. We always have a lot of fun and there is a steady good turnout. At the playoffs each May, prizes are awarded to the top scorers, and at the December Jass, members contribute to the Christmas gift table.

Our December Jass on the 11th, the fourth in a series of eight, was a great success with 37 players attending.

Mrs. Vera Maeder, in great form, won the event. Congratulations!

Thank you all for your contributions to the Christmas gift table, and I wish all

our members and their families a Happy New Year!

Our next Jass evenings are: February 26, March 25, April 29, followed by the playoffs in May 2016.

To join the next Jass or for more information, please call Herbert Stoll (514) 453-0748.

HERBERT STOLL



SFR1: Auslandschweizer Radio Interview with Rolf Brühlhart, Vancouver

In der Schweizer Radio Sendung "Die fünfte Schweiz" erzählen Schweizerinnen und Schweizer aus ihrem Leben im Ausland. Die Sendung ist jeden Sonntag um 2:30 Uhr Lokazeit auf SFR1 zu hören.



Mit Humor, gutem Wissen, praktischem Sinn und in schönstem Luzerner Schwiizerdütsch beantwortet Rolf Brühlhart die Fragen des Interviewers Mike La Marr: wie er 1976 nach Kanada kam; was seine Beziehung heute - vierzig Jahre später - zur Schweiz und zu Kanada prägt; und wir hören wie er im Stegreif mit einem schönen Jodel abschliesst.

Ein charmantes Interview, in welchem einige der geäußerten Gedanken sicherlich von einigen Kandischen Auslandschweizern mit nachvollzogen werden können. Das zehn minütige Interview kann auf dem folgenden SFR1 Blogspot abgehört werden: <http://www.srf.ch/sendungen/die-fuenfte-schweiz/rolf-bruelhart-ein-waehler-aus-kanada>

SILVIA SCHOCH

Toronto: Swiss Club Toronto-Theatre Group

"Kei Regel ohni Usnahm"

Lustspiel in drei Akten von Cornelia Amstutz
The play is in **Swiss German** and performed by the Theatre Group from Toronto at the following dates and locations:



Moorefield, Sunday, April 3, at 1:30 pm

Cathy Staehli, cstaehli@hotmail.ca

Ottawa, Saturday, April 9, at 7 pm

contact your local Swiss Club

Toronto, Sunday April 24, at 2 pm

Estonian House, 958 Broadview Ave.
Maggie Hess (905) 508-8014 or email:

In Toronto we will have a single performance on Sunday afternoon. There will be drinks, lunch and Nussgipfel available. We are looking forward to seeing you at one of our performances. For more details, please call your local Swiss Group Representative, Maggie Hess or Walter Brunner at (905) 508-8014.

LETTE
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Ottawa: Ottawa Valley Swiss Club

December 6th, after the Seniors Luncheon featuring Christmas fare of Europe, the afternoon was dedicated to children and the traditional Christmas celebration. They all participated in games, crafts and the talent show with the help of Santa's elves. Later, while waiting for Santa, everybody joined in to sing Christmas carols. Happy faces welcomed Samichlaus and Schmutzli who brought gifts for the children.

Upcoming events in 2016

January 29:

Annual General Meeting

April 9:

German Swiss Theatre Night

April 16:

Montagna Singers Spring Dance

June: Annual Golf Tournament-

Monthly: luncheons by the Swiss Seniors Club

For information or to contact us, please visit our website www.ottawavalleysswissclub.ca.

HELEN NATTERER

**halloswiss.ch:** Plattform touristischer Angebote von Deutsch sprechenden Auslandschweizern aus aller Welt

Die Webseite halloswiss.ch gibt deutschsprachigen Tourismusprodukten aus aller Welt eine elektronische Plattform in der Schweiz. Auf dem Portal können Auslandschweizer, Österreicher und Deutsche ihre touristischen Angebote präsentieren: Unterkünfte, Tourguides, Restaurants, Mietfahrzeuge und weitere Angebote durch Auslandschweizer oder Reise-Guides mit Bindung zur Schweiz. Viele Schweizer schätzen Insidertipps in deutscher Sprache in den Ferien, weiss Iwan Berger, Inhaber der Reisebüro Hauger in Altdorf/UR und Grün-

der von halloswiss. Die touristischen Anbieter aus aller Welt laden ihr Produkt nach der Registrierung selbst auf das Portal. Nach der halbjährigen Einführungsphase kostet sie die Präsenz CHF69 pro Jahr. Der Kunde bucht direkt vor Ort, halloswiss.ch ist finanziell nicht beteiligt und haftet auch nicht. "Allerdings werden die Produkte vor der Veröffentlichung von uns auf Seriosität geprüft," merkt Iwan Berger an. Es gibt bereits etwa zwanzig Anbieter aus Kanada, welche auf dem Portal aufgeschaltet sind.

SILVIA SCHOCH

Professor Andreas Warburton: Exploring the Frontiers of Knowledge

How did the Universe start? What is it made of? The Big Bang should have created equal amounts of matter and antimatter. So why is there far more matter than antimatter in the Universe? These are some of the questions that physicists at CERN, the world's largest particle physics laboratory in Geneva, Switzerland, are seeking answers to by studying the components of matter and the forces that hold them together.



Dr. Andreas Warburton is Associate Professor, Department of Physics at McGill University. He is here shown at CERN in Geneva, Switzerland

These questions have long fascinated Dr. Andreas Warburton, Associate Professor, Department of Physics, at McGill University.

Undecided which area of physics to pursue after completing his undergraduate degree at University of Victoria, it was young student Andreas' good fortune that he was accepted into one of the coveted summer internships at CERN. Unable to apply as a Canadian citizen since Canada had no formal association with CERN, Andreas submitted his application under his Swiss and UK citizenships. The time spent at CERN in lectures by some of the world's best scientists were a turning point for him. He took up graduate work in particle physics at the University of Toronto and never looked back.

After a postdoctoral fellowship at Cornell University, and while working on the ATLAS experiment at CERN, Dr Warburton co-authored as lead editor the first publication describing a search for new physics from the CERN Large Hadron Collider. Out of the six major LHC experimental collaborations totaling approximately 10,000 physicists, this ATLAS publication constitutes the first documentation of humankind's recently ex-

tended physics reach at the higher collision energies, probing the nature of the Universe within the first second following the Big Bang.

From 2007-2013, Dr. Warburton led Canadian research involvement in the international Collider Detector at Fermilab (CDF) collaboration at the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory near Chicago, IL. This team of graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and professors worked on studies of quarks and fundamental forces, eventually joining the hunt for the elusive Higgs boson particle. In 2012, Dr. Warburton's Canadian CDF team contributed to first evidence of the Higgs boson, shortly before the definitive European discovery made at CERN, and where Dr. Warburton was co-author as a member of the ATLAS Collaboration. The CERN Higgs particle discovery enabled—and was cited in—the Nobel Prize in Physics awarded to theorists Higgs and Englert in 2013.

"I'm not in the game to become famous" says Dr. Warburton. "Collaboration leaders

often become famous, but important science is less and less individually driven. There is no question that now, to make progress, science needs to work in a collaborative way. In any discovery, there are often hundreds and hundreds of people involved, sometimes over years." The modest scientist who has an extensive number of articles to his credit, is also physics coordinator for the ATLAS-Canada collaboration, and national Director of Student Affairs for the Canadian Association of Physicists.

While CERN continues to lead on the energy frontier, Dr. Warburton has also joined the Belle II Collaboration, which, with more than 400 international physicists and engineers working near Tokyo, Japan, will soon explore the sensitivity frontier. Complementary to CERN's program, the recording of large data samples of billions of particle collisions enables searches for very subtle deviations from theoretical predictions and is of great interest to him. "High-rate collision factory particle production like this is bread and butter research in physics," he smiles. "Trying to understand what these new particles are is very interesting and lots of studies are going on in this field. It's humbling, but also energizing to realize that only five per cent of our Universe is visible matter, ordinary matter; matter we're made of. Everything we know and understand is only in these five per cent. He continues "there is strong evidence that twenty-seven per cent of the Universe is dark matter, something that has mass but does not interact with light. We don't know what

it is. The rest is dark energy, and we don't understand that either." The physicist smiles even more broadly and adds a little wistfully: "If we find out what dark matter is in my lifetime I will be very, very happy!"

Despite his international research involvement, Dr. Warburton considers teaching graduate and undergraduate level students important part of his work. Supervising three PhD and MSc students, he also teaches an undergraduate introductory course on experimental methods that all physics students at McGill take.

Staying in touch with reality and doing an ever improved job of informing the public is important to the scientist: "In the particle

world it is more difficult to see immediately the potential applications which can be revolutionary. We have to do more and better outreach, telling our story about what's actually happening at subatomic levels," he stresses. "We have an obligation to share our work with the

public. The technology that comes from science is helping our world in myriad applications now and will do so in the future".

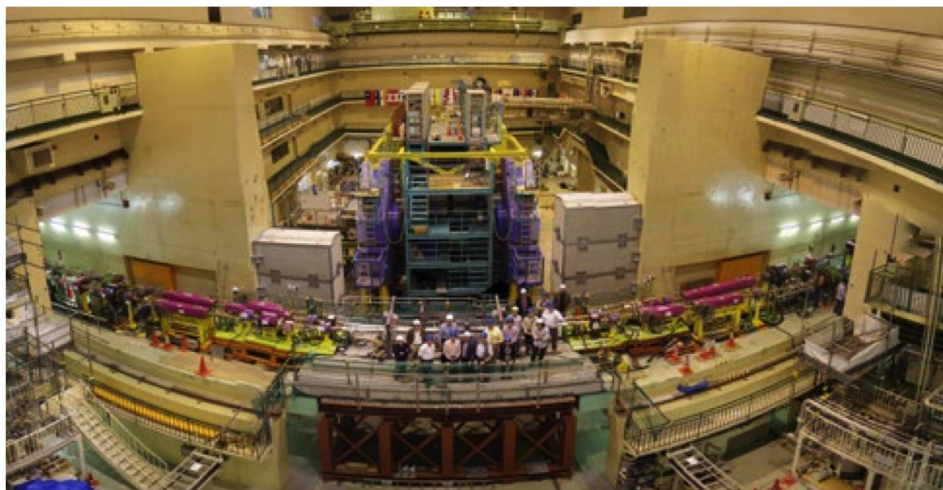
Raised in Victoria, BC, with younger brothers Mark and Rolf, Andreas spoke Schwiizerdütsch from early on and spent Kindergarten in Switzerland. Summer holidays were spent with the Swiss grandparents, with a couple of weeks in the UK with the British grandparents. Andreas was fascinated with Switzerland. He still remembers his grandfather's military uniform and how his uncle would take out his service rifle for him to play with on the lawn on sunny Sunday afternoons, while people were walking by, saying Grüezi.

Married to Dr. Mira Johri, Professor of Public Health at University of Montreal, the couple recently travelled to rural India where Mira works on a front line public health project funded by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. While in northern India, the couple visited an elementary school in a mountain village they support. Andreas gave a lecture using a pomegranate to illustrate the Higgs

boson and stones from the Ganges River to represent other particles, explaining the known workings of the Universe. "It was totally exciting to engage these kids," and he adds how thrilled he was with the rapt attention and infectious enthusiasm of these students.

This fall, the couple will take a sabbatical. Not to rest, but to further their passions: Mira will work on a global alliance project for vaccines in Geneva and India, while Andreas continues his work at CERN and Belle II in Japan.

SILVIA SCHOCH



Belle II collaboration review scientists standing where the matter and antimatter will collide



Dr. Warburton lectures particle physics in his socks in rural India