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# REGIONAL NEWS

## UNITED STATES

### Editorial

Dear Readers,

I received a lot of submissions for 1st of August celebrations. Trying to fit them all on these few pages was quite a challenge, and I had to do some editing and unfortunately had to leave out a lot of great photos.

This coming October is an important election year in Switzerland and anybody who is registered to vote, can participate (<https://www.eda.admin.ch/dam/countries/eda-all/de/asg-gesuch-ausuebung-politische-rechte-mehrsprachig.pdf>)

In view of the 2019 federal elections, the Organisation of the

Swiss Abroad (OSA) has submitted an election manifesto to the political parties which was adopted by the Council of the Swiss Abroad during its meeting on August 16, 2019: in German ([https://aso.ch/files/webcontent/direction/Wahlen\\_2019/ASO\\_Wahlmanifest\\_2019.pdf](https://aso.ch/files/webcontent/direction/Wahlen_2019/ASO_Wahlmanifest_2019.pdf)) or French (<https://www.swisscommunity.org/en/news/live-stream-osa-congress-16-18-august-2019>). More info on the elections at <https://www.aso.ch/en/politics/federal-elections-2019>

The deadline for the January 2020 issue is December 26.  
I wish you all a wonderful and safe fall and Christmas season.

DORIS BERNATH CUNNINGHAM, EDITOR

### Links to Videos Featuring Swiss Clubs in the U.S.

[https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/expat\\_swiss-in-denver-usa-worry-about-changes-at-home/45177918](https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/expat_swiss-in-denver-usa-worry-about-changes-at-home/45177918)

[https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/-swiontour\\_swiss-in-boston-discuss-value-of-being-heard-in-bern/45122772](https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/-swiontour_swiss-in-boston-discuss-value-of-being-heard-in-bern/45122772)

[https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/-swiontour\\_swiss-in-minnesota-call-for-compromise-and-e-voting/45123936](https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/-swiontour_swiss-in-minnesota-call-for-compromise-and-e-voting/45123936)

<https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/the-swiss-living-in-minneapolis-minnesota/45089172>

<https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/swiss-abroad-50-years-of-swiss-american-friendship-in-denver-colorado/45063062>

[https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/swiss-in-the-us--part-4-of-4\\_the-swiss-who--love-that-dirty-water-/45094158](https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/swiss-in-the-us--part-4-of-4_the-swiss-who--love-that-dirty-water-/45094158)

### New Jersey: Swiss Form Club in Retirement Community

We are ten Swiss ranging from the mid-seventies to the early nineties who have "found" each other and have formed a club at Cedar Crest Continuing Care Village in northern New Jersey. We meet once a month for lunch and reminisce about our lives in Switzerland. This is how we celebrated the First of August.



SOPHIE FLATZ MURRAY

### Call for Heirs

The Court of Locarno-Campagna (Swiss authority) are looking for information about the following person:

**Ernesta (nickname Ernestina) CORDA**, from Vogorno (Switzerland), last residence in Tenero-Contra (Switzerland), born January 11th, 1924, daughter of Bartolomeo Valentino and Maria Rosa born Corda, deceased in Locarno (Switzerland) January 23th, 2018.

Anyone who can give information regarding Ernesta (Ernestina) CORDA, her possible descendants or heirs is requested to contact the Court of Locarno-Campagna by June 30th, 2020.

After this date the heredity will be given to the heirs who are noted.

Court of Locarno-Campagna, Via della Pace 6, 6600 Locarno (Switzerland)

### Call for Heirs

The Court of Locarno-Campagna (Swiss authority) are looking for information about the following person:

**Arturo Giovanni FORNERA**, from Losone (Switzerland), last residence in the USA, born January 9th, 1903, son of Vittorio and Chiarina Franconi, last news on February 10th, 1950.

Anyone who can give information regarding Arturo Giovanni FORNERA, his possible descendants or heirs is requested to contact the Court of Locarno-Campagna by July 30th, 2020.

Court of Locarno-Campagna, Via della Pace 6, 6600 Locarno (Switzerland)



## Montreux, Switzerland: 97th Congress of the Swiss Abroad

400 Swiss from all over the world met in Montreux from August 16 – 18 on the occasion of the 97th Congress of the Swiss Abroad. As part of the topic "Which World for Tomorrow?" the conferees discussed the major challenges of future society and how we can deal with them and find solutions and answers yet today.

The proceedings in Montreux began with a day-long marathon session of the Executive Board of the Organization of the Swiss Abroad (OSA). The main focus of the meeting was to fine tune and to sign-off on the content of the fall session of the Council of the Swiss Abroad which met the next day.

Following the opening speech by OSA President Remo Gysin, key personalities from seven of the political parties represented in the Federal Parliament spoke and later expounded on their views during a roundtable discussion. The discussions revolved around electronic voting, Switzerland's relationship with the EU and the banking issue.

Federal Councilor Ignazio Cassis spoke on behalf of the government and pointed out: "Since 1916, the OSA has been committed to the Swiss abroad, and the Congress of the Swiss Abroad, which it organizes, is known for its distinctive choice of themes... With an eye on the world of tomorrow, it is more important than ever in the face of the current realities."

In her concluding remarks, OSA Director Ariane Rustichelli pointed out that "even if there are uncertainties about the world that the next generation expects, we should still think about solutions and answers today and implement them. The world is changing rapidly and we are already being confronted with the reality of tomorrow."

As Swiss nationals residing in the United States of America, what world do we envision for us and our children? This year marks an election year in Switzerland. What are our expectations of our Swiss federal politicians?

With the National Council elections and the first round of elections for the Council of States taking place on October 20, 2019, it is up to each one of us to cast our individual and collective votes for those candidates who represent and who fight for our unique needs as Swiss living overseas. All Swiss abroad who are registered on an electoral roll may elect their National Councilors. In some cantons, they may also vote for their members on the Council of States.

Please note: Swiss abroad who are not registered on the voting and electoral roll must complete an "Application to Exercise Political Rights" to be able to participate in elections and voting in Switzerland. The form can be obtained from and submitted to the Swiss embassy or consulate at which prospective voters are registered.

[https://www.eda.admin.ch/dam/countries/eda-all/de/asg-gesuch-ausuebung-politische-rechte\\_mehrsprachig.pdf](https://www.eda.admin.ch/dam/countries/eda-all/de/asg-gesuch-ausuebung-politische-rechte_mehrsprachig.pdf)

Please mark your calendars: The 98th Congress of Swiss Abroad will take place in Lugano from August 21 – 23, 2020. The main topic will be on the theme of "Challenges for our Democracy."

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM ASO.CH

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## Florida: Swiss Club of Central Florida's 30th Anniversary

It seems like only yesterday when a group of approximately fifty Swiss and friends of Switzerland met at an Orlando hotel back in January of 1989. Full of enthusiasm, they conducted the first business meeting of our club and decided on a name, the dues which have remained the same, appointed a Board of Directors, and adopted our bylaws. There was a great sense of belonging in the room.

Thirty years later, our goals and mission have not changed. We continue to preserve the memories of our beautiful homeland as well as promote our heritage for future generations. In fact, our newest member of the Swiss Club was born just a few months ago, with two more Swiss babies on the way this year!

On July 28, approximately 110 Swiss Club members enjoyed dancing and listening to the music of the Dan Witucki Band, the highlight being a duet with Alphorns. Our chefs prepared delicious bratwursts followed by a special birthday cake. Every year, our children and adults look forward to the traditional Lampion parade and Tombola surprises, and this year was no exception. It was a special day that we will always remember!

We will be gathering again on October 6 to enjoy our annual Fondue event. For more information, please check out our website: [www.swissccfl.org](http://www.swissccfl.org)

LESLIE GAIBROIS SKILLMAN  
VICE-PRESIDENT  
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**Louisiana:** Swiss American Society of New Orleans (SASNOLA)

We were honored to be one of the "Swiss Abroad Clubs" asked to participate in a roundtable discussion on issues that are important to the Swiss expats in preparation for upcoming parliamentary elections this October. SwissInfo reporter, Susan Misicka, along with Michele Andina, videographer/camera man extraordinaire graced us with a visit during the July 5 weekend. Prior to their arrival, Robert Stickney, our club president, had sent them a great deal of our club history and the connections it had to New Orleans. Our weekend with them kicked off with a dinner at Gabrielle, a favorite local neighborhood restaurant. After enjoying a delicious, relaxing meal and great conversation, we took Susan and Michele on a "short night" tour of the older parts of the city. On Saturday morning, they met with our resident historian, former Honorary Consul and SASNOLA President, and longest reigning member, John Geyser, for a walking and Swiss connections tour of our beloved city. After a full morning of sightseeing, the three of them arrived at Gulf Coast Bank & Trust, where the roundtable discussions and individual interviews were taking place. It was an interesting discussion session (see <https://www.swissinfo.ch/eng/swiss-abroad-oldest-swiss-american-club-is-in-new-orleans/45077658>). Once the filming was over, we gave them an afternoon driving tour of The Garden District, Uptown, The University section, The Fly, behind Audubon Park for a view of the Mississippi River, and then out to the lakefront to see lake Pontchartrain and the 25 mile long Causeway Bridge, the world's longest continuous bridge over water.

We celebrated the Swiss National Day on August 11 at the new location of The Deutsches Haus. Members enjoyed traditional German fare of warm pretzels, brats, flammkuchen, and American style pizza. Petite fours and chocolate brownies from Swiss Confectioners of New Orleans were gobbled up for dessert. Just as she does every year, Helen Sparacello added her homemade apricot tart to the feast. Ann Inderbitzen, our Director at Large, and her husband, Rolf, set up soccer



goals outside for the children and any adult who chose to brave the heat. The Swiss flag proudly took its place amongst the Swiss bunting, plates, napkins and the abundance of red and white worn by members. Once again, President Stickney tried to stump the group with a game of Swiss trivia, but this group really knows their stuff. John Geiser, Eric and Marie

Ravussin all tied for first place, Ann Inderbitzen and Nicole Luder came in tied for a very close second. As the party was winding down, everyone gathered to watch the wonderful speech given by President Mauer. It was a terrific celebration.

JEAN STICKNEY  
SECRETARY

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**New York:** The New York Swiss Gymnastic Society celebrated its 135th Anniversary (1884-2019)

We chose a lovely, bucolic area in the Hudson Valley near Rhinebeck, NY, to hold our festivities on August 11. It was a perfect day and the ambiance couldn't have been any better.

A tent was raised on beautifully tailored fields between massive spruce and eastern cedar trees; a magnificent setting indeed. All tables were decorated in high style and with fresh cut flowers. Behind the tent, hand-written notes in books going back as far as 1906 were displayed in a small exhibit and our original, now frail Swiss Turnverein flag was laid out carefully on the ground. The history of our society, which was compiled in the 125th year celebration book, drew vivid interest.

Chef Daniel Gendron from the unique restaurant "The Tasting Room" surprised us with an astonishing assortment of delicious hors d'oeuvres followed by a scrumptious brunch. Musical entertainment



was provided by Otto Stierli and his lead guitarist George Policello. Their vast repertoire had music for every taste. The Swiss songs and other melodies got the thunderous applause they deserved. Over the years we have gradually progressed into a society with traditional Swiss customs with emphasis on nature and several social events. The Jass Championship in April is a well-attended affair, and our spring and fall outings include a walk up to the cliffs of the Minnewaska State Park Preserve for an unforgettable view. Our Christmas party in early December is another great occasion to celebrate with members and friends of the club.

Now we are looking ahead to our next milestone five years down the road. For more info contact [nyswissgs@gmail.com](mailto:nyswissgs@gmail.com)

NEW YORK SWISS GYMNASIIC SOCIETY (NYSGS)

**Arizona:** Tucson Swiss Club

The Tucson Swiss Club celebrated Switzerland's 728th birthday on Mt Lemmon which is located less than an hour from Tucson. Located in the Coronado National forest it towers 9,159 feet and is a great spot to get away from Southern Arizona's summer heat. The Tucson Swiss Club promotes friendship within the Swiss community of Southern Arizona. It is a multi-lingual social club welcoming people of Swiss heritage and those with an interest in Switzerland. Out of town visitors to Tucson who share our love for Switzerland are always welcome at our events.

EDDY SCHAEFER  
[TUCSONSWISSCLUB@GMAIL.COM](mailto:TUCSONSWISSCLUB@GMAIL.COM)  
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## Minnesota: Twin Cities Swiss American Association (TCSAA)

For many years now, the Trechsel family has hosted our August 1st celebration at their home in Rockford, MN. Their estate is the perfect location for our celebration. Brats, Cervelats, a bonfire and Alphorn music provided the ambiance for celebrating the birthday of our home country of Switzerland.

Around 90 members came to enjoy the day with other compatriots and friends. Several new members stated that it was a great event, and they hope to attend many more of them. Our experienced crew (Phil Zeller, Rene Vanoni, Andre Wanzenried and Pius Hollenstein) grilled the brats and cervelats to perfection, and together with home baked bread prepared by some of our members (Andrew Johnson, Michele Kunz, Andrea Bischofberger, Eva Hytti and Debora Gross), made this event a success. Many members had side dishes and typical Swiss desserts to share.

Following the meal, we listened to the speech of Ueli Maurer, the current President of the Swiss Confederation and sang the Swiss national anthem in German, French and Italian. Of course, our traditional tombola could not be skipped. The Lösli were sold within a short time, and some members learned not to wait too long to buy some! All of the prizes were claimed, and after the drawing, some exchanging of prizes took place since some adults got children's prizes and vice versa!

After everyone chipped in with the clean-up, it was time to light the bonfire. The history of Swiss bonfires, mainly on hills and other elevated spots, commemorates the expulsion of foreign bailiffs in the fourteenth century, the news of which was spread in that manner in those days. Our fire was built ahead of time by our expert bonfire crew, and this year's fire was one of the best to be enjoyed by everybody. That marked the end of our wonderful celebration.

I'm sure next year will bring us another great event.

MARKUS HOESLI  
BOARD MEMBER TCSAA  
WWW.SWISSCLUBMN.ORG

## Vermont: Swiss Club Vermont

59 Swiss and friends of Switzerland joined our informal gathering to honor the Swiss national holiday on August 3rd in Wilmington, Vermont. As in the years before, we were invited to enjoy the beautiful grounds and pond on Pierre Cattin's property. Thank you, Pierre!

After an initial spell of rain, the weather gods were kind and delighted us with a sunny afternoon. As with all of our gatherings, food was plentiful and delicious. Besides the traditional raclette, bratwurst and cervelat, our retired pastry chef Rudi Veraguth surprised us with two sheets of divine "cremeschnitten" (napoleons). Two other talented bakers delighted us with freshly baked "Gipfeli" (croissants) and loafs of crusty bread. Many homemade salads and other dishes were shared, including my favorite Linzertorte.

Mike Kaelin with his accordion entertained us with Swiss traditional tunes and his yodels eventually enticed some of us to sing along. After all the culinary enticements, a game of bag tossing provided an opportunity for some exercise. Sinking the bag into the board opening proved to be more difficult than anticipated.

We all gathered at the pond for a group picture and our new president, Maggie McGlynn, shared a few thoughts and invited us to spread the word that we welcome new Swiss Club members at any time. Our next event will be our traditional Raclette Spring party (early May) in Waitsfield VT. See you there!



Check out our website: [www.swissclubvt.com](http://www.swissclubvt.com)

DANIEL LENEL  
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## Georgia: Savannah Swiss Club

We had a great turn out at our 1st of August party here in Savannah. Everyone young and old had a wonderful time with excellent food and all the great people. If you are interested in joining, please get in

touch with us at [savswissclub@gmail.com](mailto:savswissclub@gmail.com)



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### Texas: Swiss American Society of Houston

The Swiss American Society of Houston celebrated the Swiss National Day with its members and friends of Switzerland. The date is inspired by the Federal Charter (Bundesbrief) of 1291 which is considered one of Switzerland's most important founding documents.

The fantastic event was held at the Alliance Française with volunteers decorating the main hall with Swiss flags, Swiss colors, flowers, candles, and flags of the cantons. In keeping tradition to celebrate the Swiss National Day everywhere in the world, and to enjoy this year's festivity, members and volunteers cooked bratwursts on the grill and everybody brought delicious side dishes. Scrumptious Apfel Strudels completed the big finale!

Honorary Consul of Switzerland, John Bernhard, made a speech to welcome Swiss and friends of Switzerland emphasizing the close relationship between the US and Switzerland. John Bernhard further thanked the Swiss American Society of Houston for their involvement of promoting Switzerland's culture, tradition, history, and values. The Honorary Consul applauded Lilian Tade, our president, and the Board of Directors for their zeal and hard work to make this day a joyful one.



Attendees listened to the annual message from Swiss President, Ueli Maurer, and sung both Swiss and American anthems, with member Marc Robert accompanying the Swiss national anthem on the piano. The crowd was delighted to hear our long standing member, Dolores Bauman, play the accordion!

LINA CORINTH  
VP COMMUNICATION/RELATIONS  
WWW.SWISSAMERICANSOCIETY.ORG

### Pennsylvania: Swiss Club of Delaware Valley (NHS)

The Swiss Club of Delaware Valley (NHS) celebrated the Swiss National Day at Holcombe-Jimison Farmstead Museum in Lambertville, NJ. The event was attended by 130 members including their friends and families. In addition to food and music, the attendees enjoyed the games of bean bag toss, bottle fishing, Jass, and the tractor rides on the green museum grounds under the beautiful blue sky. The children also enjoyed exploring various museum artifacts from the past including machinery invented by Swiss from the nearby town of Titusville. After listening to a message from the Swiss President to the Swiss Abroad, the celebrations concluded with a Lampion parade, bon fire, Alphorn playing and singing of the Swiss National anthem and the Swiss folklore.

To find out more about the activities of Swiss Club of Delaware Valley, please check out our website [www.myswissclub.org](http://www.myswissclub.org) and enjoy the pictures from some of our events throughout the year. Also, check out the activities of the Swiss Benevolent Society at [www.sbsphiladelphia.org](http://www.sbsphiladelphia.org).

DAVE SINGH  
NHS BOARD MEMBER  
REC-SECRETARY@MYSWISSCLUB.ORG

### Delaware: Swiss-American All-Rounder Ends 20 plus Years of Service to Switzerland



Mario Brossi, the Honorary Swiss Consul in Delaware, retired at the end of June after having spearheaded various undertakings for Switzerland over the years. In the late nineties, Brossi led the first foreign investment team in North America for the Ministry of the Economy. The program at the time was named

"Location Switzerland, the fore-runner of today's Switzerland Global Enterprise." He and his team were based at the Swiss Consulate in New York where they pioneered efforts to put "Switzerland on the map" for North American investors, following the initial wave of American investments after the Second World War.

A decade or so later, Brossi moved to the Swiss Embassy in Washington, DC, where he added to his duties by becoming the Senior Advisor for Congressional Affairs. The "Swiss Caucus" was started with a dozen or so members in the US House of Representatives, most of whom attributed their membership to having "Swiss Roots" or to having personal memories of travel to the country, or representing a Congressional District with a substantial presence of Swiss companies. The modest sized caucus has grown today to include 55 members of both the House and Senate becoming one of the larger national caucuses in the Congress.

In tandem with his investment and political activities, Brossi also helped launch the "Tell Award," the eponymous prize awarded annually to persons and companies who based on their achievements and activities have helped to celebrate and expand the bilateral relationship between the two "Sister Republics." The award has been given since 2004 and has been received by top foreign investors like Google, Procter & Gamble as well as individual leaders and entrepreneurs, including Swiss astronauts, White House chefs, and Ambassadors. Originally only celebrated in the US, the prize is also now awarded in Japan and most recently in the Ukraine.

Brossi was saluted for his varied contributions at a Farewell luncheon attended by friends and colleagues and hosted by Swiss Ambassador Martin Dahinden in June of this year at the Swiss Embassy in Washington, DC. Brossi will be returning to his family home in Bethesda, Maryland, with his wife Sharron and daughter Jordan.





## Florida: Swiss American Club of SW Florida

To celebrate our National Holiday, 39 members and guests gathered mid afternoon on August 1 at the Commons Club at The Brooks, a private beach club in Bonita Beach, located directly on the Gulf of Mexico. We were able to use this outstanding facility thanks to the fact that one of our members is also a member of this beach club. The board members arrived early to set up the tables and flags. Unfortunately, just when the celebration was about to start, a heavy thunderstorm with lots of rain came our way. This did not negatively impact our mood at all. After the Apéro, club president Maria von Atzigen welcomed our special guest, Mr. Ferdinand Kurt, Honorary Consul, who drove over from Miami just for this event. Mr. Kurt introduced himself and offered his support and help if someone had any special requests or issues. Although the two grill masters had to stand in the rain because the grill area was not covered, the OLMA style Bratwursts tasted excellent. While enjoying the various desserts which were brought by some of those present, we watched and listened to the traditional 1st of August video speech for the Swiss Abroad presented by Federal Council Ueli Maurer, the President of Switzerland for 2019. Naturally, the Swiss National Anthem was played, and we all sang along as good as we could. Besides celebrating Switzerland's birthday, the event was also a good opportunity for everybody to catch up and to meet a new member of our club. It was definitely another National Holiday celebration to remember and, of course, as the party drew to an end, the sun came out and we enjoyed a beautiful sunset. Thanks to everybody who helped to make this a very successful event.

For more information on our club, please visit us at [www.swissamericanclub.com](http://www.swissamericanclub.com)

JOE HUBER  
SECRETARY  
[WWW.SWISSAMERICANCLUB.COM](http://WWW.SWISSAMERICANCLUB.COM)

## Arizona: Arizona Swiss Club

We had record attendance at our 1st of August party held at the Arizona American-Italian Club. We had a great time on the Italian-themed quiz, I handed out a prize to a special 50th anniversary of the moon landing trivia question (a special Swiss invention that Armstrong and Aldrin brought up) won by Philippe. We watched President Maurer's address to the Swiss abroad and nostalgic videos of the Postauto Horn, and of course Schweizer Milch advertisements.

Congratulations to those super smart folks who won first and second in the annual quiz and to those talented athletic folks who won the bocce ball tournament.

Our next event is the Swiss Fall Fest on October 12 at the Golden Eagle Park in Fountain Hills. This will be a special event!!! We expect to introduce our new Honorary Consul of Switzerland in Phoenix, Dr. Werner Bonadurer and his lovely spouse Irène.

Again, thanks to all who made this First of August party the best, and best attended, in recent memory! Hopp Schwiiz at a spritely 728 years old.

JOHN THORNTON, PRESIDENT  
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## Pennsylvania: Swiss Family Makes \$1 Million Gift to Philadelphia's Smith Memorial Playground and Playhouse

Michael & Emmy Lou Pieper To Be Honored at October Groundbreaking Ceremony

Smith Memorial Playground and Playhouse is honored to announce that the Pieper family of Switzerland has bestowed upon them an unprecedented one-million-dollar donation for their Preserving Play campaign.

The extraordinary gift, which is the largest Smith has ever received from a single private donor, will aid in funding renovations of the 16,000 square foot playhouse on the "Avenue of Play" in East Fairmount Park. It assures the resources needed to preserve and upgrade its physical assets to be able to continue providing free services to children for many decades to come.

Smith helped pioneer the national playground movement and continues to serve as a model for the importance of play for children's physical health and emotional development. Today, Smith continues to champion the cause of free play for children. Smith is a vital resource to the community, serving an annual audience of nearly 200,000 children and adults, drawn from every neighborhood in Philadelphia, as well as regional, national, and international locations.

Michael Pieper is the owner and CEO of the Artemis Group, a Swiss-based multinational company which owns the Franke Group.



Together with his wife Emmy Lou, Mr. Pieper lived from 1978 until 1983 in Philadelphia where he studied at The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania and initially worked for the Philadelphia National Bank and then for a private equity company. During this time, Philadelphia provided him many opportunities for a successful future and, additionally, Mr. Pieper made many friends who helped him in his

career. This time was very inspiring and important for his personal and professional life. With this donation, Mr. Pieper would like to give back to Philadelphia and its citizens.

Smith will acknowledge this milestone through a special event to take place in Philadelphia, where Mr. Pieper's vision to grow his business first took root. In further recognition, events in Smith's historic facilities will take place in the "Pieper Family/Franke Group Switzerland Center for Play".

"Children are the future of our world, and causes that support environmental education and sustainability are at the core of our philanthropic values. We are thrilled to be able to further the wonderful work that Smith has been doing for the last 100 years, to ensure that generations to come will be able to play, learn and grow at Smith," said Michael Pieper.

The Smith Memorial Playground & Playhouse will close later this summer for renovations to begin. A groundbreaking ceremony, honoring the Piepers and announcing plans for the new nature-based urban preschool, is set for October 26, 2019.

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### Oklahoma: Swiss Club of Oklahoma

Another big family reunion of a Swiss family who emigrated to the USA as of late 1800 was held July 28th at the El Reno County Fairgrounds Building. The Zweischer and Girard families who have intermarried since then have been meeting there since 1967. A few more than 100 people attended this year. Members came from California, Washington, Texas, Arkansas, Kansas, Colorado and Oklahoma.

Dr. Rico Buchli, Honorary Swiss Consul of Oklahoma his wife, Beatrice and daughter, Sheree also attended. He serves on the Oklahoma Governor's International Committee and has been instrumental in the Sister Cities Organization in Edmond where the Swiss Consulate is located. He was accompanied by

Andre Siegenthaler, President of the Swiss Club of Oklahoma, and his wife Anna brought best regards and wishes from the Club's membership. He encouraged the Zweischer and Girard families to join the Swiss Club and also encouraged anyone who has not traveled to Switzerland to do so. It looks like that there are some plans to go in 2020 to visit their hometowns of Jegenstorf (Zweischer) and Biel



(Girard). Beatrice and Anna shared traditional Swiss dishes with the families and Rico donated the hand carved Swiss walking stick made by Ernie Loganbill. It will be displayed at all future family reunions along with the treasured Swiss cowbells and stained glass from Switzerland.

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### Northern California: Aelpler Gruppe Swiss Club

The Aelpler Gruppe Swiss Club hosted their annual Swiss National Day Celebration on August 3rd organized by the United Swiss Societies of Northern California. Swiss and friends of Swiss came to celebrate Switzerland's anniversary of independence, to eat Swiss food, and to listen and dance to Swiss and German music. The festival also gave children a chance to wrestle Swiss style, participate in a Swiss Flag



parade, and see Bernese Mountain dogs in action. The Swiss Park had a kid's zone with fun games and activities along with a bounce house. Exhibits featured a Swiss Heritage booth and the San Francisco Swiss Consul. The Aelpler Gruppe held their Tombola to the delight of adults and children alike. The Swiss National Day celebration was held in the beautiful picnic grounds at Swiss Park in Newark, California.

The San Francisco Bay Area Consul General gave the 1st of August address to all those in attendance during the afternoon. The Aelpler Gruppe's Swiss National Day celebration concluded with a raffle of many donated prizes.

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### Florida: Swiss Club Miami

Greetings from the Swiss Club Miami. Trust you all had a great summer. The Swiss Club Miami celebrated the 728th anniversary of Switzerland at Fritz & Franz in Coral Gables August 4th. The highlight of the event, which always attracts a lot of people, was the "Tombola". The Loesli (raffle tickets) sold in no time. It appeared that some come every year just for these!! The second highlight was the Lampion



parade for the children which was so cute. Big tears started to flow when one of the lampion's candle blew out; but that was fixed in no time. Lots of newcomers came and of course our long time members for 60 years, Claire and

Hans Baumann, and our spinning champion Pierrette Bettex came.

The event was a big success with 172 guest attending. A big Thank You goes to our main sponsors Dufry, UBS, Fidelity Dealer, and Lindt as well as the support from the Consulate in Atlanta among others who donated gifts. Thanks to our volunteers Olga Riedi for taking photos, Alexis Cardenas and Thomas Schmied selling the Loesli and Alessandra Antistel selling the Pro Patria batches. A huge thank you to our outstanding board members Astrid Artho, Mariana Wachter, Roland Bandelier, Patrick Luthy, Christian Gschwind and Marco Naegeli.

Looking forward seeing you at the 2020 Swiss National Celebration in Miami!

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## Florida: Swiss American Club of Sarasota

Summer is a quiet time for the Club as many of our members leave for their homes up north or for Switzerland. Members of the Board held their last meeting on May 5th. One of the items on the agenda was an effort, spearheaded by Board members, Charlotte Hull and Nelly Camardo, to have Rapperswil-Jona join the Sarasota Sister Community. The mission of the Sister Cities Association of Sarasota, Inc. (SCAS) is to foster international relationships between Sarasota and cities that have similar interests by creating exchanges in areas of culture, education, tourism, business and government. SCAS's objective is to develop respect, understanding, and cooperation through citizen diplomacy. Members meet and host international visitors, providing a gateway to an international network of cultural and economic opportunities.

We celebrated our Swiss Independence Day on August 1st with a dinner at the Venice Yacht Club. The event was well attended, considering many of our members are not yet back in town. We had the privilege of hosting Dr. Daniel Schaufelberger, President of the Swiss Society of NY. Dr. Schaufelberger is a part-time resident of Sarasota and was a guest of our President, Primo Bader. He was kind enough to address the guests and offer a moment of levity with a gift of a bucket of Ricola (empty by night end). Good food and great company with spirited entertainment by Arun topped off a perfect evening.

Our season will launch officially on October 6 with the popular picnic at the Oscar Scherer State Park.

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## New York: Swiss Benevolent Society of New York

We celebrated the Swiss National Day on August 1st with a lunch at Cucina & Co restaurant at 200 Park Avenue in New York. 45 guests enjoyed the special Swiss food served: Veal Emincé Zurichoise, Bratwurst with onion sauce, Raclette, Spätzli and Rösti.



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## New York: Swiss Society of New York

Over a thousand guests attended this year's Swiss National Day celebration in New York on July 27th. This year, the event was brought back into Manhattan and took place at the Boat Basin Cafe, overlooking the Hudson River. The celebration was organized by the Swiss Society of New York (SSNY) in partnership with the Consulate General of Switzerland, and generously supported by numerous sponsors. We thank the dozens of dedicated volunteers from various Swiss organizations, including the Swiss Benevolent Society, the Swiss Ski Club, the Swiss Soccer Club, and Swiss Tourism, for their hard work to make this event possible. Attendees enjoyed Swiss "Gemuetlichkeit", music by DJ Taxi and the Linus Wyrsh NYC Sextet with Gizem Gokoglu, Raclette (on a hot summer day), and drinks to cool off. For our younger guests, the German School of New York organized a children's corner with games and face painting. Our new Consul General of Switzerland to New York, Ambassador Markus Boerlin, gave a warm welcome to everyone and included key messages from the official address of Mr. Ueli Maurer, Bundespräsident of Switzerland. Ambassador Boerlin's remarks on diversity and integration earned him an extra round of applause from the audience. The event was a big success and we hope to see you again next year, this time on August 1st! If you would like to learn more about the SSNY, please contact Hans Raez (Hans@SwissSociety.org) or Jeff Paul at (Jeff@SwissSociety.org), respectively.

DANIEL SCHAUFELBERGER, PRESIDENT SSNY

## California: Monterey County Swiss-American Club

The Monterey County Swiss-American Club celebrated their annual picnic on the grounds of the Swiss Rifle Club in Gonzales, CA, on August 18. Among a large gathering of all alumni of Gonzales High School were Dorothy Baumann, 99, front row, left, Wilma Bassetti, 92, to her right, with son David behind her, and Irene Coffey, 88, to the right of Wilma. A juicy steak and chicken lunch cooked by Swiss Rifle Club members was followed by a raffle and silent auction of prizes for young and old. A local band performed popular songs interspersed with traditional Swiss accordion music by Art Nicola.



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