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# REGIONAL NEWS

## CANADA

### Editorial

Welcome! The arrival of the 2020s marks the beginning of a brand-new decade. In a rush of enthusiasm, some in the press are already calling it the "Roaring 20s"! Rooted in facts or simply a case of wishful thinking? I don't know, but

here's a thought: Could a serious case of unbridled optimism create a beautiful self-fulfilling prophecy? On that happy note, enjoy reading about the latest happenings in the (very active) Swiss community in Canada. [avs@telus.net](mailto:avs@telus.net)



ANDREW VON STUERMER,  
REGIONAL EDITOR,  
CANADA

### Swiss Club of Manitoba

Following the traditional fondue parties, we held our 2019 AGM in March at the Phoenix Community Center in Headingley, MB. It was mostly business as usual, but we had to accept with regrets - and many thanks for his years of service - the resignation of Board member Roger Bohren. We elected two new directors, Kristina Schlup and Andrew Frey. Welcome aboard! We also decided to have only one August 1st celebration, at the Frey's place on the outskirts of Winnipeg. The August 1st evening was well attended with everyone enjoying numerous traditional activities, as well as a great bonfire and fireworks!



It was nice to see more people attend, and to have the West and East at the same get-together. The Swiss Club of Manitoba still has a small membership, and sometimes participation at our activities can be disappointing. Let's keep promoting the Club - along with its Swiss culture and traditions - to our friends and neighbours!

### Swiss Club Manitoba - Upcoming Events 2020

February 9	Fondue for the East, Steinbach
February 16	Fondue for the West, Parkview in Brandon
March 15	2020 AGM, Headingley.

Remember, everyone is welcome!

For more information, don't hesitate to contact Francois Carrard, President, at 204-720-1265, or email [fcarrard1@gmail.com](mailto:fcarrard1@gmail.com). Stay in touch on our Facebook page "Swiss Club of Manitoba". Have a great year!

FRANCOIS CARRARD

### Wildrose Yodel Club (Central Alberta)

Since our last submission a few years ago, the Wildrose Yodel Club has attended a number of exciting events, such as the triennial NASSA Sängerfest in New Glarus, Wisconsin and Toledo, Ohio. At the Swiss National Yodeling Festival 2017 in Brig-Glis, we had the special honour of being the official "Guest from Abroad", and the jurors awarded us a "good" rating for our presentation of the competition song. Swiss National Television and a number of other media channels accompanied us to the majestic mountain peak Eggishorn for a TV shoot. This was combined with a sponsored Wine and Dine event at high altitude.



Closer to home, our annual Spring Fest in Rimbev, AB on the first Saturday in May has been an ongoing success with a usual sellout crowd. Last year's Harvest Concert in Innisfail, AB was also a pleaser for all in attendance.

### Wildrose Yodel Club - Upcoming Events 2020

May 2	Spring Fest
June 25 – 28	A fun time at the Swissfest 2020, Pasadena, CA
August 1	Swiss National Day celebrations, Forshee Hall near Bentley, AB. August 1 falls on a Saturday; we invite Swiss folks from near and far to join us. Because this is a long weekend in Alberta, campers may park on the grounds overnight for a small fee.

Watch for future updates in this magazine, or on our website [www.salranch-tours.com/wildrose-yodel-club](http://www.salranch-tours.com/wildrose-yodel-club).

FRED SALVISBERG

## Swiss Club Thames Valley

Five planned events in less than three months provided ample opportunities to mingle with friends this past fall. On September 21, 2019, it was standing room only at the Swiss Folk Evening in Milverton, where our own Schweizer Jodlerfreunde joined voices with a guest choir from Biel-Benken, BL. Well done, Schweizer Jodlerfreunde!

Our AGM on November 2 was a rather intimate affair, as attendance was down noticeably. Nevertheless, the fondue was delicious and the business part short and efficient. Sonja Gutknecht and Pia Hächler resigned from the Board and were replaced by Marianne Trachsel and Hansueli Sturzenegger.



## Swiss Club Saskatoon

Our October 2019 AGM resulted in two new faces on the Executive: Riel Castro-Zunti replaces Emil Eigenmann as Vice President, and Barbara Wingeier replaces Rosa Nievergelt as Social Convenor. After many years of service - for which we thank them cordially - Emil and Rosa had decided not to run for re-election. Georg Nievergelt was acclaimed as Treasurer, and Christine Ens as Secretary. As current President, I had not submitted my name for re-election, but since no one else received a nomination, I accepted the position for one final season - so start thinking about who wants to be President next year!

Our Santa evening was held on December 6 at McClure United Church. Members enjoyed a wonderful potluck of cold cuts, cheese, veggies, buns, salads, and scrumptious desserts. Only five children were registered for Santa's visit. We held a children's raffle; the table was loaded with prizes, many of which went home with grandparents for grandchildren unable to attend due to conflicting schedules.

Our next event - to be held sometime in February or March - will be a raclette luncheon, hosted by Heinz and Evi Buchmann. We will announce the exact date in our next newsletter.

Due to declining attendance, there will be no Jass event in 2020. We decided at the AGM that if members want to have an impromptu Jass night, a quick email inviting them over would suffice.

On November 16, the Swiss Farmer Band invited everyone to their annual Fall Concert and Dance! It was a delightful event with a wonderful variety of musical numbers, tasty food, great raffle prizes, and lots of dancing.

Although an Adventsfeier with a special guest from the North Pole was scheduled for December 1, Santa was so worried about people driving on very icy roads that he cancelled his visit, sending apologies to all the disappointed children (and adults).

2019 Club activities ended on December 14 with a Swiss Advent concert in Listowel. With beautiful Christmas music, the Swiss Choir Thames Valley - together with their guests, the Schweizer Jodlerfreunde and the Swiss Farmer Band - put everyone in the spirit of the season.

Best wishes to all of you for a happy and healthy 2020!

### Swiss Club Thames Valley - Upcoming Events 2020

February 21 / 22

Metzgete

April 19

Theatre.

PIA HÄCHLER

If you're not already on our contact list and would like to receive information about upcoming events, please contact the Club at [swissclubsaskatoon@hotmail.com](mailto:swissclubsaskatoon@hotmail.com), or call / text me at 1 - 306 - 260 - 8030. New members are always welcome; membership is free for the first year!

ELISABETH EILINGER, PRESIDENT, SWISS CLUB SASKATOON



DEPUIS PLUS DE 50 ANS, CERTAINS DES PLUS GRANDS GROUPES EUROPÉENS, DE MÊME QUE DE NOMBREUSES PME, ONT COMPTÉ SUR LETTE AU CANADA POUR LEUR OFFRIR DES COMPÉTENCES DU PLUS HAUT NIVEAU ET UNE APPROCHE PRATIQUE À LA RÉSOLUTION DE LEURS PROBLÈMES.

#### CONTACTEZ BERNARD LETTE À

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## Réunir la communauté suisse de Toronto

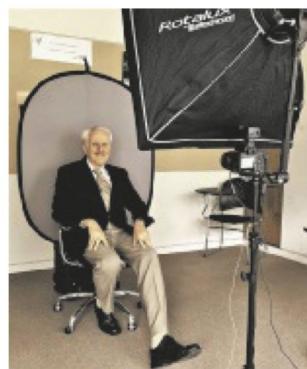
Du 7 au 11 octobre 2019, le Consulat général de Suisse à Montréal a organisé les « Journées consulaires » à Toronto. Les citoyens suisses de la province de l'Ontario ont eu l'opportunité de renouveler leurs documents d'identité au centre-ville de Toronto, dans les locaux de l'Alliance Française. Ce que près de 200 compatriotes ravis ont fait en prenant rendez-vous avec notre unité consulaire de biométrie mobile.

C'était l'occasion d'inviter la communauté suisse du Grand-Toronto pour un cocktail et une projection de film. Cet événement a réuni le 8 octobre 2019 quelques 110 convives qui ont partagé un moment convivial avec l'équipe consulaire. Le cocktail a été inauguré par le discours du Consul Giancarlo Paduano-Heller et les échanges qui ont suivi furent aussi chaleureux que sympathiques.

Les Suisses récemment naturalisés ainsi que les jeunes concitoyens qui fêtaient leur majorité cette année étaient les invités d'honneur de notre événement. Une réception était prévue spécialement pour eux avec une présentation des droits et obligations des citoyens suisses et une discussion ouverte. Plus tard

dans la soirée, le film « *Vitus* » de Fredi Murer a été particulièrement apprécié par nos compatriotes. L'histoire aussi amusante qu'émouvante d'un jeune enfant prodige et de son grand-père a fait retentir quelques rires dans la salle obscure. Et c'est le cœur rempli d'une chaleur helvétique ravivée que nos invités sont rentrés chez eux.

CONSULAT GÉNÉRAL DE SUISSE À MONTRÉAL



## Meeting up with Toronto's Swiss Community

In October 2019, the Consulate General of Switzerland in Montreal organized the Swiss Consular Days in Toronto. Swiss citizens in Ontario had the opportunity to renew their identity documents at the Alliance Française using our mobile biometrics unit. We welcomed almost 200 citizens.

The Consulate's visit presented an ideal opportunity to invite the Swiss community of the Greater Toronto Area to a cocktail reception, as well as to a movie screening. 110 guests enjoyed a pleasant evening with our Consular team, with Consul Giancarlo Paduano-Heller delivering the welcoming speech.

Newly naturalized and young Swiss citizens who reached their age of majority in 2019 were the guests of honour at a reception planned specifically for them.

“*Vitus*”, an amusing and heartwarming film by Fredi Murer, told the story of a young prodigy and his grandfather.

CONSULATE GENERAL OF SWITZERLAND IN MONTREAL

## ETUDIANT - HOCKEYEUR

Si vous êtes un jeune Suisse du Canada à la veille d'obtenir son diplôme de maturité et que, parallèlement, vous pratiquez avec enthousiasme le hockey sur glace, cette annonce peut vous intéresser. Créé en 1965 par quelques étudiants, le HC Université Neuchâtel joue actuellement en 1ère ligue (2ème division amateurs) et aimerait intégrer dans son équipe quelques joueurs suisses venant du Canada et souhaitant poursuivre leurs études en Suisse. Pour plus de détails sur le club, prière de consulter son site [www.hcuni.ch](http://www.hcuni.ch).

L'entraîneur canado-suisse du HC Uni, Marc Gaudreault, peut aussi vous apporter quelques informations supplémentaires sur la vie du club: [marc.gaudreault@hcuni.ch](mailto:marc.gaudreault@hcuni.ch). Il y a lieu de souligner que le HC Uni connaît une longue tradition d'accueil de joueurs en provenance de l'étranger. Par ailleurs, les championnats suisses universitaires de hockey sur glace ont régulièrement lieu à Neuchâtel. L'Université de Neuchâtel compte près de 4'000 étudiants et 4 facultés: lettres et sciences humaines, sciences, droit et sciences économiques. Elle est francophone, ce qui n'exclut pas que certains cours soient donnés en anglais. Elle est située à proximité immédiate des patinoires de la ville, mais aussi d'un lac permettant la pratique de multiples activités sportives.

Pour les étudiants suisses, les taxes universitaires ne s'élèvent qu'à près de 1'000 francs par an. Les inscriptions pour le semestre automne / hiver 2020 - 21 sont ouvertes jusqu'au 30 avril 2020, mais il est conseillé aux étudiants venant de l'étranger de s'y prendre au moins un mois plus tôt.

Renseignements complémentaires sur le site [www.unine.ch](http://www.unine.ch) et à l'adresse e-mail [contact@unine.ch](mailto:contact@unine.ch).

## Ottawa Valley Swiss Club

At our 2019 Seniors' Luncheon and Children's Christmas Party, the Montagna Singers enchanted with Christmas songs in French, German, and Italian. The children decorated gingerbread figures and made centrepieces; many entered the talent show, singing Christmas songs, reciting poems, or playing the piano. After the arrival of Samichlaus (and his mischievous sidekick, Schmutzli), the kids received gifts and Grittibänz. Earlier in the Fall, the Montagna Singers hosted an evening of food, music, and dance. The November Metzgete featured Swiss and Canadian seasonal delicacies, and the Montagna Singers choir performed traditional songs.



## Matterhorn Swiss Club (Montreal)

In August 2019, about 40 members and guests attended our annual summer picnic, enjoying grilled sausages, salads, and the ever popular Nussgipfel. A thank-you to Juerg and Myrtha Hollinger for hosting us at their home! In November, over 30 members came to our informal fall meeting at the Pasta Andrea restaurant in Lachine, QC. Guest speaker Dr. Joe Schwarcz - Director of the McGill Office for Science & Society - entertained us with magic tricks and science-related facts.



### Ottawa Valley Swiss Club - Upcoming Events 2020

January 31 (Friday) OVSC Annual General Meeting  
 April 4 (Saturday) Toronto Theatre Group Play  
 April 25 (Saturday) Spring Dance  
 July 26 (Sunday) August 1st Celebrations  
 November 7 (Saturday) Metzgete.

For more information, visit [www.ottawavalleyswissclub.ca](http://www.ottawavalleyswissclub.ca), or contact [info@ottawaswissclub.ca](mailto:info@ottawaswissclub.ca).

OLIVIA CRAFT

Our AGM will take place in late February or early March (details to follow). For our late spring / early summer family outing, we plan to visit the Aviation Museum in Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue. The Club holds about 5 well-attended events or outings per year. New members are always welcome. For further information, see the Matterhorn Club section on the Federation website [www.fedesuisse.com](http://www.fedesuisse.com).

WALTER SPIRIG, PRESIDENT, 514 - 694 - 3718

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## Canadysli Toronto Guggemusig Band

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March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2020 at 18:00h  
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## HOCKEY IN SWITZERLAND

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## Swiss Club Toronto Theatre Group

## Theateraufführung 2020

## „In Himmel wänd alli“

Lustspiel in drei Akten von Andreas Kessner

Dialektbearbeitung: Fritz Klein

The play is in Swiss-German and will be performed by the Toronto Theatre Group at the following locations:

- Ottawa: Saturday, April 4, 2020, at 7:00 pm  
Contact: Daniel Stripinis at (613) 875 - 5988
- Wellesley: Sunday, April 19, 2020, at 1:00 pm  
Rec. Complex / Community Centre, 1000 Maple St.  
Contact: Urs Egli at (519) 595 - 2456  
Email: [aliceegli@yahoo.ca](mailto:aliceegli@yahoo.ca)
- Toronto: Sunday, May 3, 2020, at 2:00 pm  
Latvian Canadian Centre, 4 Credit Union Drv.  
Contact: Maggie Hess at (905) 508 - 8014  
Email: [walter.brunner@sympatico.ca](mailto:walter.brunner@sympatico.ca)

The Theatre Group is looking forward to seeing you at one of the performances! For more details, please contact your local Swiss Club Representative, or call Maggie Hess or Walter Brunner at (905) 508 - 8014.



Above: Scenes from last year's play - "Im Meischter sini Geischter"

WALTER BRUNNER

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## Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir Association

The Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir (ESMC) celebrated the 2019 Winzerfest with the theme "Ticino" on Saturday, November 9, at St. Basil's Cultural Centre in Edmonton, Alberta. The 331 guests very much enjoyed our Italian music repertoire which was enhanced by an Italian opera interlude by our guest performer, Ms. Jodi Penner.

Jodi Penner is one of two winners of the Scholarship Programme that bears the name of our honorary member Erwin Baumann. For many years, Erwin was the Honourary Consul of Switzerland in Edmonton, and he was the Choir's 1st President and a significant driving force in the formation and operation of our Choir.

The second winner of this scholarship was Mr. Ian Bannerman. Ian sent his regrets; he was out of town.

It is always a great honour for our Choir when ProCoro Canada's Artistic Director - Maestro Michael Zaugg - is in the audience.

We held our 2019 AGM on Friday, November 15. The Executive for 2020: Hans Voegeli, President; Ron Marcinkoski, Vice President; Roland Allenbach, Treasurer; Directors: John Willms, Martin Staub, and Chriss Varvis (alternate Director: Andreas Schloo); and Peter Thut, Secretary.

In 2019, we welcomed five new members to our Men's Club (choir). The Advent season is always a busy time, and 2019 was no exception - we had the opportunity to share some Christmas cheer, with eight concerts at healthcare facilities, seniors' residences, and churches.

Unfortunately, not all occasions were happy: We lost our long-time "Kamerad", 2nd-Tenor singer, honorary member for life, partner in the Executive, and most successful recruiter of new members. John Neilson was also the father of our Choir's Mission Statement. He was a very generous man who shared his time, talents, wisdom, and resources with all of us. He was a mentor and role model. His generosity, initiative, creativity, innovative ideas, and more will live on in the successes of our Choir. We'll remember him every time we sing. A memorial service was held on December 14 at Trinity United Church in Edmonton, followed by a reception at the Royal Glenora Club.

### ESMC - Tentative Plans 2020

May 2 (Saturday a.m.) Annual Run or Walk for Music, Edmonton

May 24 (Sunday) Annual Spring Concert, Trinity Lutheran Church, Edmonton, 3:00 pm

June 25 - 28 Swissfest2020, United Swiss Singing Societies of the Pacific Coast, Pasadena, CA. Details at <http://swissfest2020.com>.

## North American Swiss Singing Alliance



### Come to Edmonton in June 2021!

#### Come as a Singer

If you're a member of NASSA, the North American Swiss Singing Alliance;

With the United Swiss Singing Society of the Pacific Coast (we can adjudicate your choir, if you would like);

From outside North America: You can sing in the Grand Concert - if space allows it - or as a member of the audience. We also plan to have Swiss singers performing in and around Edmonton during "Swiss Week".

#### Come as a Partner

Enjoy the festivities and the beautiful river city of Edmonton, known as the "festival city", and gateway to the Canadian Rocky Mountains.

#### Come as a Lover of Swiss Music and Culture

Where is [Edmonton](#) and how do I get there? Edmonton is a city of about one million in the province of Alberta (next to British Columbia) in Western Canada with international airport, rail, bus, and major highway connections.

Where will I stay in Edmonton? We've blocked a large number of rooms at [Chateau Lacombe](#) near the festival site. You may also choose from a variety of other accommodations. Contact Fred Salvisberg.

Where can I get more information about registration, sponsorship, travel, etc.? Contact Karl Strickler, Georg Josi, or Fred Salvisberg at [www.nassa2021.ca](http://www.nassa2021.ca) or [Facebook: Nassa Festival Edmonton 2021](#).

Periodic information updates are available on our website. Contact [info@nassa2021.com](mailto:info@nassa2021.com) to get on our mailing list.



Hans Voegeli and Martin Staub presenting the Erwin Baumann Scholarship Award to Jodi Penner

For information on how to join us, visit [www.esmca.ca](http://www.esmca.ca). Also, like us on Facebook "Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir", or watch / listen to our performances on YouTube.

PETER THUT

## Edmonton Swiss Society

### Anniversary Fondue Night

2019 marked the Edmonton Swiss Society's (ESS) 60th anniversary; we used the occasion of our annual Swiss Fondue Night to celebrate this milestone in style! The sold-out event attracted well over 100 guests. Andreas Rufer - our new Consul General who recently arrived in Vancouver - made this his first official visit to Alberta. Silvia Schoch - Executive Member of the OSA and successful travel blogger - and our good friend - the Honourary Consul Andreas Bayer from Calgary - were also able to join us for the celebration.

The guest of honour was our very own Paul Ehrler, the last surviving founding member of the ESS. What a privilege to have a member like Paul, active in the Club for 60 years! ESS President Nick Siegenthaler interviewed Paul to learn a bit about the circumstances back in 1959, when a group of young Swiss immigrants decided to start a formal club, so that they could get together to celebrate Swiss customs and culture, right here in Edmonton, Alberta.

The Consul General made a surprise announcement regarding a new Swiss citizen - Irina Siegenthaler, our President's wife. To a round of "Hopp Schwiiz" cheers from the audience, Andreas Rufer presented Irina with her citizenship papers. Our alphorn player Nail Gorman rounded out the event, delighting the crowd with some of the most archetypical Swiss music.

### ESS Samichlaus

In early December 2019, the Edmonton Swiss Society held another one of its beloved events - the ESS Samichlaus, an afternoon to celebrate this typical Swiss custom. From modest beginnings six years ago with only 5 children, the ESS Samichlaus has grown to become the key event for our youngest guests; it now draws between 30 and 40 kids.

Everybody loves and enjoys making, decorating, and baking Grittibänz, and typical Swiss Christmas cookies, such as Mailänderli and Spitzbueben. We also set up tables for the kids to make various crafts (assisted by our volunteers). The highlight - of course - was after Samichlaus arrived and all the kids got a chance to tell him how well-behaved they had been, hoping to receive one of the much-loved Samichlaus-Säckli.



Having gone through quite a transformation over the past years, our Club is now thriving. It has attracted new members and young(er) families, and many of our feature events sell out year after year!

We want to thank all our volunteers for their help and wish everyone a happy and successful New Year!

NICK SIEGENTHALER

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## Swiss Canadian Mountain Range Association (Metro Vancouver)

Our 2019 outdoor shooting season ended with the traditional Saushoot - lots of fun and serious competition at the same time: two shooters scored the maximum of 50 points, and the winner had to be determined on a "Nachdoppel". At supper-time, we were served the ever-so-delicious Metzgete. A thank-you to all our volunteers - without you, we would not have had such a successful year!

Until March 1, shooting activities will take place inside the Chalet, at the 10m range, which is open every Sunday from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm. Our 10m Schützenfest (with pistols, small-bore, and crossbow) will take place on March 8. Everyone is welcome to participate in this event!

I wish you all the best! We're looking forward to another successful year. No doubt we will see a lot of serious practising, as in June 2020, a large group will head to Switzerland for the Eidgenössische Schützenfest in Lucerne. For programme changes, please check our website [www.scmra.ca](http://www.scmra.ca).

MARLIES BAUMANN

## Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce (Western Canada)

It has become a Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce (SCCC) tradition to end the year with a pre-Christmas Reception and Fundraiser. In 2019, this event took place on November 26 at the RBC Royal Bank on Georgia Street in downtown Vancouver. More than 80 people followed the invitation of the Chamber to celebrate the beginning of the holiday season.

SCCC President Vince Sciamanna officially opened the event with a short welcoming speech. Andreas Rufer - the new Consul General of Switzerland in Vancouver - was then introduced through a Q&A session led by SCCC Board Director Fabian Lemann. Attendees gained interesting insights into Andreas' personal life, career, and his goals for the next four years, which include making Switzerland more visible in Western Canada.

A silent auction is part of every SCCC pre-Christmas reception. Thanks to generous donations from our members and sponsors, more than 60 gifts were offered this year. Among them was one particular

item of special interest, donated by Atlin Mountain Inn: a 0.40 CT round cut diamond, one of only 50 Snap Lake Diamond Mine Specials sold as the mine closed in December 2015.

Following the silent auction, we held a live auction moderated by Joey Kenward from Sportsnet650, as well as by Fabian Lemann.

We would like to thank the more than 50 silent auction sponsors, who made such a great variety of prize items available. Furthermore, we would like to thank RBC for hosting us, Parallel49 for providing the beer, and the St Hubertus & Oak Bay Estate Winery for offering the wine.

Thank you all for attending this event, bidding so generously, and for your ongoing support of the Chamber. We really appreciate it! Check out more event pictures on the SCCC gallery at [www.swisscanadianchamber.com/events/photo-gallery](http://www.swisscanadianchamber.com/events/photo-gallery).

SWISS CANADIAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE (WESTERN CANADA)



Left to right: Johann Roduit (SCCC Director), Heiko Riese (SCCC Director), Fabian Lemann (SCCC Director), Andreas Rufer (Consul General of Switzerland in Vancouver), Chris Abel (SCCC Director), Vince Sciamanna (SCCC President), and Marcel Studer (SCCC Director)