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REGIONAL NEWS

UNITED STATES

Dear Readers,

Just a reminder that the Organization of the Swiss Abroad/OSA (Auslandschweizer Organisation/ASO) and the Swiss Review were integrated into the new www.SwissCommunity.org website. You can access or subscribe to the digital edition of the Swiss Review or sign up for the SwissCommunity Newsletter. You also find a link to SWIswissinfo.ch where you can find or sign up for daily reports from Switzerland on the topics of politics, the economy, culture, society, science, and direct democracy.

On March 10th, an online discussion took place with four current delegates of the CSA in the U.S. (Jeanette Seifert-Widmer, David W. Mörker, Jean-Pierre Mittaz, Franco Zimmerli) to learn how the Council operates, what it tries to achieve, and how it can give a voice to the diverse community of Swiss citizens in the U.S. The town hall event was organized by the PS/SP Switzerland International Section Antenne USA. It was created in 2021 as a progressive platform representing the diversity and interests of the Swiss



community living in the U.S. It seeks to strengthen the ties of the “5th Switzerland” through a fruitful dialogue on current issues and to provide forums of discussion between members of the Swiss Community in the U.S. and their elected representatives to the Council of the Swiss Abroad (CSA). The next online town hall event will take place on April 16th. For more information go to www.facebook.com/antenneusa or email antenne.usa@spschweiz.ch

The next Swiss Review will be published online on June 7th, 2021. The deadline for submission of articles for the USA insert is May 2nd.

I wish you a safe and healthy spring season.

DORIS BERNATH CUNNINGHAM, EDITOR

2020 in Review & Outlook for 2021

Dear fellow Swiss living in the US,
2020 was dominated by Covid-19 worldwide. The global pandemic has challenged us all and will continue to do so in 2021. Despite hopes of vaccination, much is still shrouded in uncertainty. However, the Corona crisis already shows the importance of health protection and a functioning health system with sufficient hospital capacities. The public service and government action are gaining in importance in research and health, in distribution issues and in the support and rescue of economic enterprises.

There is no need to explain globalization to Swiss expatriates. But suddenly, you along with the Organization of the Swiss Abroad were challenged by a previously unknown dimension of globalization. Rapid changes were required. The Congress 2020 as well as the popular winter and summer camps for our youth had to be cancelled. Meetings of the Executive Board and the Council of the Swiss Abroad were held virtually, and reduced work hours and remote work were introduced at the head office in Bern.

Despite all the emergency measures, the annual objectives of the Organization of the Swiss Abroad were met and the multi-year project of merging our three websites: ASO, Swiss Review and

SwissCommunity was also successfully completed by the end of the year. This and other milestones could only be achieved thanks to the great commitment of all employees as well as the support of the Council of the Swiss Abroad and the many partners.

Much remains to be done. We are currently wondering how many Swiss abroad are suffering from the pandemic and what the organization may contribute to their protection. Once again it becomes apparent how restrictive the residence principle is and how important bilateral agreements are.

Furthermore, we continue to advocate the reintroduction of e-voting and, thus the need to strengthen our democracy. Switzerland cannot afford to disenfranchise scores of Swiss abroad due to the disparity of postal systems across the globe. Many a time, voting and election materials arrive too close to an election, rendering the voice of many eligible voters nil and void.

We are starting the new year with verve and momentum and will continue to do our utmost to look after the needs and interests of our compatriots residing in the US: You'll never walk alone.

In your service,

THE EXECUTIVE BOARD & ADMINISTRATION
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Oregon: Helvetia-Alpengluehn Singing Society Portland



Like many other Swiss Choirs in the United States, Portland's Helvetia-Alpengluehn Singing Society is currently on hiatus due to the Corona virus pandemic. This is a perfect time to look back at our beginnings.

If you have been to Portland, Oregon, you cannot help but notice the twelve bridges spanning the Willamette River which flows through the center of town. What you might not know is that when the first Swiss choir in Portland was formed (the oldest on the West Coast), there were no bridges and some members had to travel by boat to get to rehearsal! The year was 1886, when a group of Swiss immigrants formed the Swiss Male Chorus of Portland, Oregon with a dairyman from Hohfluh, Switzerland, as director. About a year after their formation, the first bridge was built across the Willamette River linking East and West Portland. A horse-drawn rig cost 15 cents, a



Choir president Teresa Grossen-Brandt (L) and Helvetia-Alpengluehn Librarian Shelby Aeppli-Imholt (R)



Choir president Teresa Grossen-Brandt is pictured among the kitchen crew (2nd from left)

changed to the Helvetia Sanger Club. The club was later instrumental in forming the United Swiss Singing Societies of the Pacific Coast. In 1939 they had another name change to the Helvetia Male Chorus. Soon, in 1941 the Swiss Ladies Alpengluehn Chorus was formed with 12 charter members. In February of 1968, the Helvetia Male chorus and the Swiss Ladies Alpengluehn Chorus joined to become the current Helvetia-Alpengluehn Singing Society. A grand two-day 100-year anniversary event was held in 1986.

This year, 2021, marks 135 years of Swiss singing here in Portland, Oregon. We look forward to the day when we can once again join in song to celebrate our Swiss heritage in the traditions so long ago formed in our ancestral homeland and right here at home.

<https://www.facebook.com/Helvetia-Alpengluehn-367786119964825/>

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Call for Heirs

The Court of Locarno-Campagna (Swiss authority) is looking of information about heirs of:

GASPARE BRAVO, declared missing since December 31st, 1897 and

MARTINO BRAVO, born in 1837, son of Gaspare Bravo, emigrated first to the USA, then to Australia, and after to the USA (California), declared missing since December 31st, 1917.

Anyone who can give information regarding Gaspare Bravo and Martino Bravo, his eventually descendants or heirs is requested ton contact the Court of Locarno-Campagna by February 28th, 2022.

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

Court of Locarno-Campagna, Piazza Grande 16B, 6601 Locarno (Switzerland)

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Minnesota: Twin Cities Swiss American Association (TCSAA)

The TCSAA during the second year of Covid-19

Who could have imagined that we would not have any in-person events for over a year? This pandemic has certainly had a huge influence on our organization. Because of that, we have taken on responsibility for our members and have not sponsored any in-person activities. However, that does not mean that we have stopped socializing. The following is a compilation of activities we have continued to offer.

To be in contact with our members, we have the TCSAA eNews, a mailing list. Currently we have 251 subscribers, and we use it regularly to inform the recipients about the plans of the club and other information that is of interest to Swiss abroad.

Just like the cheese sale that we held in November, we will continue our tradition of selling sausages in anticipation of summer. Given the current situation, it is great to have a Swiss Bratwurst or a Swiss Cervelat from the grill. We thank our treasurer, Markus Gaelli, for continuing to organize the sale for many years. Many members have taken the opportunity to order their cheese through the club.



We don't know when we will have our next in-person event. As we see more and more people being vaccinated, we are hopeful that we might be able to host some this year. Because we had to cancel so many events, the Board of Directors made the decision to make membership free of charge for another year.

Our President David Moerker continues to be very active holding the board together and making sure that our membership is informed. Periodically, he composes an eNews article which is very much appreciated by our members. The TCSAA is very fortunate to have a such passionate president, especially given the fact that we need to keep being interested and informed. So, the TCSAA is alive and well.

Our next event will be the Annual General Meeting June. Who knows what form it will take? Maybe in-person, maybe virtual... stay tuned!

Happy spring to all.

MARKUS HOESLI, VICE PRESIDENT
WWW.TCSAA.US

Florida: Swiss American Club of SW Florida

In early January, the Board had decided to hold our Annual Meeting via e-mail. The option of doing virtually was discussed but we thought it might be too complicated to get everybody online given the time difference because our snowbird members from overseas were not able to come to Florida this year.

Since two of our Board Members, namely our President Maria von Atzigen and Beatrice Traub, Director/Events, had decided to step down from their functions due to health reasons, we needed to have an election. On behalf of the entire Board and the Club, I would like to take this opportunity to thank both of them for their hard work over the last few years. We are looking forward to acknowledging their contribution to the well-being of our Club in a much more personal and formal way at the next official gathering of the Club which is hopefully not too far way.

The Board proposed the following members for election, re-election, and nomination:

Joe Huber (President), Hans Wenger (Vice President), Urs Brunner (Secretary), Gemma Huber (Treasurer), Ursula Nussbaum (Director/Events), Lily Kraft (Director/Events), and Maria von Atzigen (Honorary Membership). We used a "negative consent" format for the election meaning that only those who were against the election of the aforementioned had to respond. Since this was not the case, the election/nomination became official on March 14.

The new Board will convene in the near future to – among other things – discuss the possibility of future events. Based on the rollout of the vaccine, we are hopeful that having a few gatherings and official events later this year will be realistic, particularly the 1st of August celebration.

We also welcome two new members: Victor Felszegi and Josie Velasco. We hope that they will be joined by more folks this year.

To learn more about our club, please visit us at
www.swissamericanclub.com.

JOE HUBER, PRESIDENT
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Southern California: Swiss-French Group of San Diego Christmas 2020 in Switzerland

This past year required changing routines and canceling yearly summer travel plans to Switzerland. One of our member's hope to go to Switzerland in 2020 were dashed three times before he finally got on a flight on December 10 for a three-week visit. And what a wonderful time he had with his daughters and grand-children. Thanks to his postings on Facebook we were able to vicariously experience Christmas in Switzerland with him. First of all, let it be known, I feel that Werner, our adopted Swiss-German member, who has lived most of his life in the French part of Switzerland, was born under a lucky star. So many things could have become more difficult during his vacation but they didn't. First of all, he landed in Geneva on December 11th in a snowstorm just a couple of days before the authorities declared a ten-day quarantine period for new arrivals to Switzerland starting December 14th. That meant he was free to move around and spend time with his family near Vevey (VD) and Bulle (FR), and on top of that he had a true Swiss snowy winter wonderland. He and his family stayed safely among themselves and didn't socialize much but went on scenic outings which included a hike in Gantersch (BE) and snowshoeing in the Lac Léman and the Gruyère areas. He even got back on ice skates for the first time in thirty-five years at Les Paccots (FR) and lived to boast about it. Swiss culinary specialties were high on the list of vacation priorities: fondue, raclette, filets de perches, papet vaudois, roesti, and even some game, all with good Swiss wines, made the stay emotionally complete and satisfying.

By the end of December, Werner was on his way home to San Diego and his wife, Line, for New Year's Eve. At this point his usual good fortune faltered. His flight included a stop-over in Amsterdam and at 5 AM when he checked in at the airport in Zurich, he learned the Dutch government had just started to require a negative Covid-19 test to enter the country, even for transit passengers. He joined the sixty or so other travelers directed to take a Covid test at the airport. It meant staying in Zurich over New Year's Eve, in limbo, wondering if the test would come back negative or positive. His lucky star shone brightly and he resumed his trip home to his wife with the added solace of a negative Covid-19 result. It was a close call that ended with an extra carefree day to stroll through Zurich's picturesque old town. Always positive, Werner commented that wearing a face mask for the entire twenty-hour plane ride wasn't that bothersome.

At home in San Diego shifts and changes in longstanding Christmas traditions were more dramatic for our founders, Joe and Clementine, than for the rest of us. Their children made sure Covid-19 safety and distancing were at the forefront of their holiday plans with their elderly parents. Their daughter and her young son unable to properly quarantine opted not travel to San Diego. Their son came with his family but stayed in a motor-home at another location. He and his family visited during the day always at a safe distance. Their concern was such that they set two separate, properly distanced tables on the covered patio for their Christmas meal. In the end, the whole family far and near, in typical pandemic fashion, had their family Christmas reunion via Zoom.

Werner, always thoughtful and generous, was eager to share his Swiss experience with us. At our first outdoor picnic this January, in

true Santa Claus fashion, he unloaded a big bag full of Swiss goodies from his trip. He brought us Kirsch, Leckerlis, chocolate Bâtons au Kirsch, chocolate bars, tubes of Thomy mustard and two Swiss flags to clearly mark our table and location where ever we go.

We welcome new members. If you are interested in joining our French speaking group please contact Brigitte Noel at brigitte-noel@cox.net



Lucky member Werner got to spend Christmas in Switzerland



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Massachusetts: Swiss Society of Boston

In this time of fear, uncertainty, and confusion, having experiences that are consistent, unifying and bring joy are ever more crucial. This year, the board of the Swiss Society of Boston agreed we should continue our tradition of Samichlaus visiting the children and our members so we might come together and experience a joyous occasion.

This traditional event has been held by the Swiss Society For decades and it's something the children as well as parents look forward to (as does Samichlaus I'm told)

Because of our Covid requirements on limiting gatherings and our desire to keep our members safe, we decided to have Samichlaus visit via a Zoom meeting.

Prior to the date, we sent out an email and we gave the families instructions on how to connect and also how to prepare and cook traditional Swiss Mailänderli cookies that we could share and display during our virtual get together. While the children and other parents displayed their creations and reminisced, Samichlaus was busy off-camera preparing to greet the children. At the designated time, Swiss bells began to ring and Samichlaus appeared to personally greet and say hello to each of the children (who were wearing name tags) and wish them special joy and good tidings for the year ahead.

We had members on the call from as far away as California, so this was a very unique way for us to gather with our members far and wide. Considering the obstacles, this was an entertaining way to spend an hour together and continue a time-honored tradition even though we were far apart.

Here is to hoping that this December we will be able to come together and celebrate this special occasion hand in hand and face to face.



THOMAS (SAMICHLAUS) LIENHARD, PRESIDENT
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Florida: Swiss American Club of Sarasota

This past year has been one of the most challenging, if not the singularly most challenging in the history of our Club. Even though we have tried to keep our community engaged, the odds have been against us. The pandemic just took over, leaving a feeling of uncertainty and negativity. January, February, and March were uneventful with everyone probably busy trying to get in line for the vaccine ... the ever-fleeting vaccine that is promising immunity from this awful virus.

This year we will be celebrating the Club's Golden Anniversary - 50 years of the Swiss-American Club of Sarasota. And what is more appropriate than showcasing the longest active member.

Among the many interesting and engaging personalities that make up our Club, Margrit Sturm-Messenheimer stands out as not only the longest active member but also as a woman of great intellect and amazing personality.



Margrit Messenheimer

"I have been a member since May 1st, 1982", she states proudly, "and from 1995-1999 I served as the Treasurer and 'phone person'..."

Back then we did not have email, and the Club had only about 50 members. But that is not all Margrit will be remembered for ... Oh, those brownies!!! Margrit baked delicious brownies which she brought to every picnic and passed them around. A picnic wouldn't have been complete without them, they were expected!

Margrit was born in Zurich (Kreis 6) as the older of two siblings. In school she earned the nickname of 'Stürmli', maybe because she was always a force to be reckoned with. Her sister Helen lives in Vancouver(BC), Canada. The two sisters enjoy visiting each other, a tradition that has come to an unwelcome stop because of the pandemic. "I am looking forward to resuming life as it was. I had a great life", notes Margrit

She had a fulfilling career as a Flavor Chemist in the fields of food and beverage, tobacco, and medications. Her career spanned 36 years and took her to her first job abroad in London (UK). She met her future husband in Rhodes in a study group. The courtship lasted through 1968 when Margrit Sturm married Cliff Messenheimer, an American of German ancestry. The wedding took place in Zurich. Together they moved to Washington (DC), then Princeton (NJ), Lake Placid (FL), and Bradenton (FL). In 2004, the Messenheimers made their final move to Sarasota. Cliff passed away in 2009. They had been married 41 years.

Community service has been a great part of Margrit's life. For many years she volunteered for the Blind & Visually impaired where she is still involved today, though to a lesser extent. Her hobbies are lunches with friends, playing Bridge, and attending social events at The Glenridge (where she resides) and the Swiss-American Club.

IMELDA EGG, VP COMMUNICATIONS
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Florida: Swiss Club Miami

General Assembly

On Wednesday, February 3rd, the Swiss Club Miami had their Annual General Meeting at Fritz & Franz Bierhaus in Coral Gables outside on the Plaza and over 21 people participated. It was a cool night for Miamians, and we could just cope with the temperature in the 70's. Everyone followed the Covid code for Coral Gables and masks were worn except while eating.



The new board members Christina and Julia have been elected and the others have been re-elected. Ferdinand Kurt, the Honorary Consul, welcomed everyone and gave an update on the consular section. Rene Riedi, the new President of the Swiss American Chamber of Commerce Florida Chapter, announced the upcoming events of the Chamber.

A big thank you goes to all the Board members of the Swiss Club Miami who during this time of the pandemic, continue to still keep the Club exciting for current and new members, shall this now be through virtual events or with our outside activities. Another Thank You goes to Romy and Kan Lancaster who donated a huge cow bell and a 'Hornussen' board to the Club. Our Golf Pro Oliver Gilmartin has already an idea to use it in forthcoming Golf Tournament: "The Swiss Hole" – one player has to jingle the bell while the others are teeing off and the Hornussen board will be used as a putter!!! Love it already... The evening ended with a Zurich Gschneetzlets and Roesti which leaves me to say we all miss our trips to Switzerland!!



Shark Valley Bicycle Tour

On this perfect sunny Sunday morning February 7th, 30 Swiss Club Miami members gathered for our unique Shark Valley bicycle ride. The trail is 13.5 miles long and the wind was blowing strong on the way to the lookout tower half way through the park. The Shark Valley park reopened after two months closure due to record high water in the Everglades. Alligators were posing to have a picture taken and



some of the first-time visitors were skeptical if bicycling that close to the alligators is safe..... No incidence has ever happened at the Shark Valley with alligators, but a crocodile had to be removed from the site since he was very territorial. Everyone raved about the event and a



snack was served after everyone returned. See you all next year!!

On a side note: According to the Park Ranger the Burmese Pythons are invading the Everglades and endanger the native wildlife. Classes are offered to hunt the Python and a reward will be paid, however, the



ranger mentioned – it's not the hunting which is difficult, it's to find them!

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Philippe Pierroz: 'Quand des Valaisans colonisaient le Wisconsin'

For much of the history of the United States, the role of the Swiss immigrants has been reduced to that of a bit player. The traditional history books usually follow immigration patterns along linguistic lines, and the Swiss immigrants did not follow these linguistic lines.

Therefore, the Swiss Romand, the Swiss Germans, and Swiss Italians often get labeled as either French, Germans, or Italians when they arrived in the United States.

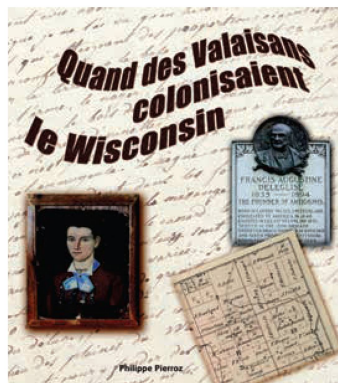
Over the past twenty years, there has been a concerted effort to separate the Swiss from the traditional linguistic groupings, and see them for who they are. The majority of the published works focused on the early Swiss-Germans in South Carolina or North Carolina, the mid-west settlements around St. Louis or even the Swiss Italians in California.

Wisconsin, with New Glarus as the core, has been the obvious focus of excellent historical scholarship. But in that same region, the French speaking Swiss immigrants in Wisconsin have largely been forgotten. *Quand des Valaisans colonisaient le Wisconsin* by Philippe Pierroz succeeds in bringing these French-speaking Swiss to the forefront.

This work sprung out of genealogical research, but it is not a typical family history book. Pierroz managed to avoid the trappings of that genre, and skillfully located the immigration of Swiss from Canton Valais into the larger historical perspective. Not only is the book exceptionally researched, but it is very readable with pictures, graphs, maps, and charts on almost every page. The amount of work needed to create all of this additional information greatly enhanced the work.

The book starts with its first part where Pierroz traces the Valaisans from their former homes to Wisconsin. Using personal letters, maps, deeds, passenger manifests, emigration announcements, and political cartoons, just to name a few, this portion of the work moved along quickly and set the stage for the rest of the book.

Part two focuses on the life of these immigrants and their descendants in Wisconsin. Page 36 shows a map where the majority of the Valaisans settled, mostly in the eastern part of the state along Lake Michigan and along both shores of Green Bay. This map, which labels the locations of where each family settled in which Wisconsin county is a major asset to the book. One interesting thing to note, according to the map, there were Valaisans who settled in Green County, home of the Glarners who settled New Glarus and the surrounding towns. This further shows the disparate nature of Swiss immigration. When a nation, held together by a single language, had



settlers immigrate to the United States, they would often group together. These groups of Swiss immigrants, appear to have had limited contact. For someone who researches Swiss History, this is understandable. In Switzerland, the Cantons were more important to the individuals than the Confederation as a whole. Further

study about the interactions between the Swiss of different languages in Wisconsin would prove useful. The next portion of the book covered occupations of the settlers, the role of the Valaisans in the Civil War especially their participation in the famous Iron Brigade from Wisconsin. Pierroz touched on the interactions with the Valaisans and the various Native American groups in Wisconsin and how those relationships developed.

Part three contains a selection of important people in the Valaisan immigrant community. Most prominent among those selected was François Augustin Deléglise, a town founder, Civil War soldier and POW, eventual State Legislator. His role in the success and integration of the colonists into Wisconsin is very important.

Part four is a lengthy and incredibly documented family history. Although the internet has enabled this type of research to become easier, these records, exceptionally organized, make the book worth its price. Despite the intensive documentation, charts and primary sources used, Pierroz managed to keep this section readable. Many life sketches are included, for example on page 182. August Jerome is no longer just a name, the image of him with a baseball team that he played on with him identified, brought him alive. Multiple appendices, dealing with locations, names, births and emigration dates round out the work.

Quand des Valaisans colonisaient le Wisconsin is a solid addition to any person interested in Swiss-American History, the history of early Wisconsin, or the history of Fifth Switzerland. The drawback is that it is only available in the French language for the time being. As a result of that, the scope might be limited in the United States, but a future translation into English could correct that.

BOOK REVIEW BY ROBERT SHERWOOD, GEORGIA MILITARY COLLEGE
SWISS AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY REVIEW: VOL. 56 : NO. 3 , ARTICLE 7
BYU SCHOLARSARCHIVE @2021

To purchase the book and/or obtain more details on the genealogical data Philippe Pierroz found, please contact him at philippe.pierroz@mycable.ch

Below is an excerpt of an example of the genealogical tables in the fourth part of the book of the family of Joseph Ambroise Mathey (the cells in grey are emigrants born in Valais. For persons buried outside of Wisconsin, only the name of the state is indicated). Independently of the book, these genealogical charts could be useful to Americans looking for their Swiss roots or trying to contact cousins in Switzerland.

noms	mariage	sépulture
Mathey Joseph Ambroise 1785-ap1870 Landry Hélène 1790-ap1860	1809	
Mathey Joseph Elie 1809-1890 Tissières Marie Catherine 1804- av1880	1829	Michigan Michigan
• Mathey Joseph Jérôme 1830-1900 ∞ m1 Ott Jane (All) 1837-1874 ∞ m2 Vandeburgh-Hope Mary Ann 1829-1892 ∞ m3 Morgan-Peterson Elizabeth 1857-1931	1859/1875/ 1897	Merrillan Vausau
Mathey Sarah Jane "Sadie" 1861-1923 ∞ m1 Craig Floyd Arthur (Eco) 1858-1909 ∞ m2 Fitch Charles 1876-	1882/	Merrillan
Mathey Francis E. 1865-1892		Merrillan
Mathey Charles J. 1867-1941 ∞ Baker Maria 1867-1940	1894	Vausau

Florida: Lucrezia Bieler, Artist

“Transforming” is how Lucrezia Bieler describes her method: taking simple paper and turning it into strikingly complex and intricate designs using only a pair of scissors. She trained as a scientific illustrator but taught herself the art of paper cutting, which has a long history in Zurich, where she grew up and went to school. Now she lives



Ocotillo [2017; hand-cut black paper mounted on matt board, 60cm x 100cm, © Lucrezia Bieler]

in Tallahassee, Florida, and turns the natural world around her - rattlesnakes, alligators, foxes, herons, rabbits, birds, insects, and flowers - into dramatic compositions that she hopes offer a deeper meaning. “My work is focused on themes that discuss the balance of nature and how nature touches our souls. I cut paper with scissors because to me the material and the production process reflect the delicacy and also the fragility of nature. The process of scissors cutting (Scherenschnitt) is like woodcutting or sculpting, in that you start with a blank resource and create the art by cutting parts of it away. All of my cuttings are cut out of a single sheet of paper; that means that the remaining design is still one piece of paper. I am able to cut lines that are no thicker than a thread. This allows smallest details that help to construct pictures within pictures. The final art piece is glued onto white paper. I glue the paper only at selected places. This adds depth because the unglued parts are not flush with the matting board. I use these subtle depth differences also to guide the eye of the viewer over the artwork and have the image cast shadows.” For more information on Lucrezia Bieler's work and exhibitions, please visit:

www.bieler-beerli.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/lubieler/>

Email: bielerartist@gmail.com



Lucrezia Bieler's work 'Balance' was chosen for the permanent collection of the Leigh Yawkey Woodson Art Museum. They organize the yearly International Birds in Art Exhibit.

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