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It's that time of the year again when the migratory Swiss leave New Zealand and fly (or is it flee?) to the northern hemisphere, and we are left behind, with half our friends gone.

Daylight saving has gone, too. The first few days always make me feel very virtuous: Ah, I'm up early, the day has an extra hour. But after a week or so, all is gone again, and I resign myself to winter and try and see the positive side of it.

I like the autumn colours of my Virginian creeper: It turns bright red and stays that way for quite a while - until a violent Southerly brings it to an end. This year my lemon tree tries to please me by doing autumn colours, too, turning all yellow. I hope the special fertilizer can remind it of its true nature, and it will come up with bright green leaves again.

The chrysanthemums are out, and the St Michaelsmas daisies. I love their rich, deep colours, and they keep very well in a vase and smell of autumn and earth.

And what else to brighten up winter? In Switzerland we had Christmas to look forward to in autumn, but here we have to create our own fun. So how about having 'a project'?

One of my projects is to invite friends once a week for a meal. With my limited cooking skills it will mainly be Raclette and Fondue and Sauerkraut (out of a jar or a tin, bought at the supermarket). It will still be good fun, I hope.

Another project will be to read or re-read my books; the fire going, a pot of tea handy, the cat purring - what could be better? Who would want to be in Switzerland, where it is hot and crowded?

I have a few more projects, and I guess the winter will be over before they all have come off the ground; I'll let you know in spring!

*Trudi*

Mini liebe Mitglieder, es isch so wit, das mer wider dörfe a üsi Swiss Society Generalversammlig däische, mit bsungerem Inträsse natürlech a Usscheidigskampf im Kaponga Swiss Colosseum zwüsche ?????????? u Wellington; früezitigi Buechig isch natürlech scho wichtig für e guete Platz.

My Dear compatriots, every year the Swiss Society AGM offers a unique opportunity for you and your families to have a say in the future direction of our Swiss Society in New Zealand. Your input is important for our growing Swiss Community. It is particularly important to see new faces and hear new ideas and share your vision for a contemporary Swiss Society.

The Swiss Society AGM will be held in Kaponga, at the foot of Mount Taranaki on the weekend of 5-6 June 2010. This is a prime opportunity to meet not only members from the other local Swiss clubs in the country, but also to participate in our sporting competition (at least the two winning clubs from the semi-finalist events). Vocal support from everybody is always welcome. Obviously I am showing some bias as the Wellington Swiss club won the semi-finals and would no doubt appreciate lots of moral support and fans.

To all the Swiss Society members who come to the AGM in Kaponga: Have a safe journey - and see you there!

*Roland*

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