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onwards, followed by "Gemütlichem Beisammensein"

Cost: \$12.00

Sunday 5th June

9:30am - Final of the Cowbell Competition, Bowling, Steinstossen and cards

12:30pm - Lunch

2pm - Annual General Meeting followed by afternoon tea

6:30pm Happy Hour

7:30pm dinner will be served

Cost: \$30.00

We would like to encourage as many members, friends and families to attend the event. It will also be an opportunity to interact with our ambassador who would like to actively participate in discussions and issues of interest to members.

For catering purposes please register and make payment to your local club secretary. Members of the Swiss Society without club affiliations, please register your name with the secretary.

Wellington Swiss Club,

24 Fitzherbert Street,

Alicetown

Lower Hutt 5010.

We look forward to your support

3rd July: Extraordinary AGM

The committee of the Wellington Swiss Club invites you to an Extraordinary AGM on Sunday 3rd July 2011 at 2pm at the Club house (21 Moores Valley Road). Refreshments will be provided.

After more than 10 years of strong governance, the president and vice president of the Wellington Swiss Club have decided to step aside. The proposed positions are required to be filled at the AGM and therefore we encourage everybody to come along to show their support.

This is also a unique opportunity for members to participate more actively in the future of our Club and continue to contribute to the history of our over 50 year old Swiss Club.

We look forward to seeing you on Sunday 3rd July.

Odile Stotzer

Thanks everyone who filled this in to assist your Swiss Abroad representatives to speak more knowledgeably for you.

We got 49 responses - 31 written, and 18 from the on-line version of the survey. (Thanks Ignaz for your help in making the on-line version.) As well as publishing it through Helvetia, we used the "Events" part of the SwissCommunity.org website to invite people to go to the on-line survey. If you've not explored that website yet, it's really worth a visit.

So what have you told us? Of the people who replied, 37 were registered to vote, and 12 not. Of those who are *not* registered, it's largely because they feel it's not relevant to them now, and they're too distant to be able, or entitled, to vote. Of those who *are* registered, 86% always (32%) or often (54%) vote. Their decision whether to vote or not is based largely on whether they have enough information, followed by how strongly they feel about an issue. Several people commented that they don't vote on financial matters because they don't pay taxes, so should not dictate how they're spent.

Voters get information mostly from the voting papers (95%) followed evenly by reading/watching Swiss media over the internet (newspapers, TV programmes etc), reading Swiss Review, and conversations with friends and family. Not surprisingly, more people who answered the survey on line also get their information that way.

We also asked how you felt about the things Swiss Abroad are lobbying on.

1. Creation of a law for the Swiss Abroad. Swiss people abroad need a reliable legislative foundation that puts into practice the mandate of the constitution.

This had least support (57%), and with more people unsure or indifferent (38%)

2. It should be made easier to use the political rights from abroad (e-voting, participation in the election of the Ständerat).

64% support; 32% unsure or indifferent.

3. Promotion of international mobility of the Swiss (agreements to free movement, reduction of obstacles).

74% support, 23% unsure or indifferent

4. Adequate consular services (sufficient numbers of consulates, increase in e-government).

66% support. 6% opposed this - from comments it appears because people consider we're already well-enough served.

5. Extension of communication with the Fifth Switzerland (Swiss Review, swissinfo, Swiss Community).

The most supported item: 87% support.

6. Giving increased status and importance to the Council of the Swiss Abroad (Auslandschweizerrat) as the representative of the Fifth Switzerland.

72% support, 26% unsure or indifferent.

7. Strengthening/Extension of the international presence of Switzerland.

72% support, 26% unsure or indifferent.

Mani Züst will be taking this information to the Swiss Abroad Conference in Lugano in August. He thanks you for your input. Democracy relies on it!

Carolyn Lane