

# Regional news : United States

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# REGIONAL NEWS

## UNITED STATES

Dear Readers,

I share the sentiment from Jean Stickney from Louisiana: "Knowing that things can always be worse, but hoping there's nowhere to go but up from last year". We're all longing for getting together again and sharing in person. Going forward, let's make an effort to concentrate on the good and positive.

### Beacons of Hope in 2021

Dear fellow Swiss,

Some refer to the current pandemic situation as a "new normal." Are we truly entering into a "new normal" or will this pandemic eventually pass, allowing us to return to what we deem "normal?"

As we look out for one another by embracing some short-term limitations out of concern and love for those most vulnerable, let's, at the same time, plan ahead to a time when these challenges shall have past.

Let's ask ourselves: What can each one of us contribute to help and assist in encouraging our fellow Swiss and friends of Switzerland alike, whether on the local, regional and/or global level?

What can we, as part of the Swiss-American community, do to instill a sense of safety and soundness in those we come into contact with?

Let's embrace and exhibit an unwavering resolve to help each other find a path out of this global challenge.

The Organization of the Swiss Abroad stands at the ready to join us internationally mobile Swiss shoulder-to-shoulder as we navigate our way out of this pandemic.

Its rich service offerings include a retooled website ([www.swisscommunity.org/en](http://www.swisscommunity.org/en)) which provides an intuitive means to search for and to access pertinent information in regards to living abroad, emigration and return migration, voting and co-determination as well as various offers and events.

May I invite you to join me in being beacons of hope to our fellow Swiss here in the United States and beyond! Wishing each one of us a promising 2021 filled with soundness, happiness and laughter!

Please let me or any U.S. delegate know how we may be of assistance in this quest!

In your service,

Your fellow mobile Swiss,

David

DAVID W. MÖRKER  
EXECUTIVE BOARD MEMBER, ORGANIZATION OF THE SWISS ABROAD  
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The next Swiss Review will be published online on April 12, 2021. The deadline for submission of articles for the USA insert is March 7.

I wish you a safe and healthy winter season.

DORIS BERNATH CUNNINGHAM, EDITOR

### Auslandschweizerrat New Term Coming up for Delegates to Serve for the Swiss Living Abroad

The Parliament for the Swiss Living Abroad (Auslandschweizerrat) will start a new term beginning in August 2021 until August 2025.

We are looking for new Delegates who are willing to serve on the US Delegation who has eight seats.

The following requirements apply to all candidates :

- Must be a Swiss Citizen
- At least 18 years of age
- Fluent in one National language German or French (in Sprache und Schrift, écrit et parler).
- Registered with the Consulate General of Switzerland in that Region where the candidate lives.
- Registered at the Consulate General for voting at our National elections in Switzerland.
- Integrated in the local Swiss Community and a member of the local Swiss Club who has to support the candidacy and write a referral letter for the candidate.
- Being able to fly to Switzerland once or twice a year and attend the "Ratssitzung" in person and pay for the trip and lodging in Switzerland.

Candidates who are interested to serve as a Delegate for the Swiss living abroad and fulfill the mentioned criteria please submit your resume and a write up why you would like to join the "Auslandschweizerrat" to our nominating chair Suzanne J. Violet. Her email address is [sviolet@earthlink.net](mailto:sviolet@earthlink.net) or call her if you have any questions at 321-543-5021. Suzanne will be happy to answer any questions you might have. (Suzanne is a former Member of the Executive Board of the Parliament for the Swiss Abroad and was the first woman who got elected decades ago to serve on the Executive Board. When she retired in 2017 there were four women on the Executive Board! Progress has been made!)

Candidates who qualify please submit your resume, a write up, and a letter of recommendation from a Swiss Club to Suzanne J. Violet before March 31st, 2021.

**Louisiana:** Swiss American Society of New Orleans (SASNOLA)

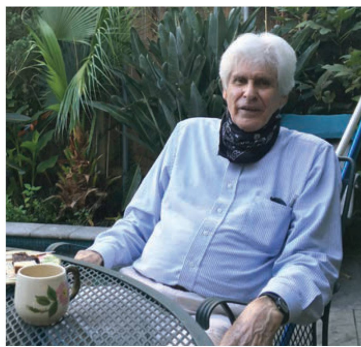
It is with sadness we report that Liselotte Jegge Comeaux, "Lottie" passed away on October 28, 2020. Lotte was a long-time active member of the Swiss American Society of New Orleans. Due to Covid restrictions memorial arrangements have been postponed. Lottie had been living in Slidell, LA for the last two years. Sweet Lottie, she will be missed!

A virtual meeting of the SASNOLA board was held via ZOOM on Monday evening, December 14, 2020, just as all our gatherings and meetings have been since the shutdowns began in April. Plans were discussed on how to move forward with holiday celebrations and our upcoming annual January meeting and elections. It was decided, unanimously, that it would be best to continue to hold events virtually on the ZOOM platform. In years past members gathered for a festive Holiday Brunch prior to Christmas. Since this was not possible this year, we decided to host a virtual New Year's Eve event instead.

In the meantime, SASNOLA members have shared some of the ways they have spent this year and ways they are celebrating this holiday season:

Honorary Consul Of Switzerland in New Orleans, Alexandra Mora writes:

"Giselle and I have had small gatherings. Our family is in NY, so we were not able to visit, but we sent lots of messages. Because it's been



John Geiser III having coffee at Honorary Consul Mora's home

small, we decided to celebrate Christmas a little differently by exchanging small gifts leading up to Christmas, and cooking dinner for each other. For Christmas I also joined the zoom call organized by the Texas Swiss Clubs. It was very nice. They called on me to give a toast for New Orleans. My predecessor, John Geiser, is at an assisted living facility near

me, so we've gotten together a few times in my garden for coffee. That was quite enjoyable. For our New Year's Eve Swiss Club toast, he will come over since he does not have an iPhone to zoom with."

Member Eric Ravussin, PhD, writes:

"As Editor in Chief of the scientific Journal Obesity, I want just to share our editorial to be published in the January issue of the Journal - 2020: It Was Quite a Year!" [Ryan - 2021 - Obesity - Wiley Online Library](#)

Member/SASNOLA Secretary Jean Stickney writes:

"Traditionally we hold a large feast at our home for Thanksgiving shared with family, friends and any stragglers we befriend throughout the year. This year it was just going to be our immediate family, which would have been 8 adults plus our 3 young grandchildren. As Thanksgiving approached, that number dwindled to 6 as some family members were exposed to Covid and quarantined out of caution. With family members from three different households we decided, out of extreme caution, to set two tables inside and one outside on the porch. Although we certainly missed our large group of friends and family,

we were thankful to be able to get together in some capacity and enjoy a delicious meal.



Stickney/Murphy Christmas Eve  
Top row: Robbie Stickney, Cidney Christie, Brendan Murphy, Smith Stickney (holding) Charlotte (Charlie) Murphy, Jean Stickney, Robert Stickney, Rachel Stickney  
Second row: Jack Murphy (being held by) Sarah Murphy, Jean Murphy

Christmas Eve is traditionally a big Open House at the Stickney Home, but not this year. With the immediate family all free from exposure, we succeeded in having a beautiful, intimate Reveillon



Jean and Charlotte (Charlie) Murphy having the cheese course before dessert



Dinner for 11. Although I missed our big party, seeing friends and extended family, I must say I really loved cooking and hosting this intimate dinner for my husband, children, their significant others, and my grandchildren. It was a lovely evening."

On Thursday, December 31, 2020, we held a virtual New Year's Eve party, starting at 4:50 pm so that our toast coincided with midnight in Switzerland, 5:00 pm our time, the creative suggestion of Ann Inderbitzen, our Director At Large. We chatted until the 10 second countdown approached. At midnight we exchanged "Happy New Year" wishes. President Schwarzenbach kicked things off with a toast. Having just turned midnight in Switzerland, some members had to leave our call as their families, still living in Switzerland, were calling to share good wishes with their loved ones here in Louisiana. The remaining members shared toasts, personal holiday stories and the hopes that we could all get together, in person, again very soon.

Best wishes to Everyone for a healthy, happy 2021.

Happy New Year!

JEAN STICKNEY, SECRETARY  
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**Minnesota:** Twin Cities Swiss American Association (TCSAA)

The TCSAA in the time of Covid.



With the current situation we are in, the board of the TCSAA continues to search for ways to connect with our members. That means some activities are completely virtual, but others may vary. We have a weekly virtual Happy Hour on Zoom that allows members to connect with each other.

Every fall, the TCSAA and the St. Paul Swiss Benevolent Society get together for a joint event. This year, we had planned a virtual cooking event, but unfortunately, this event had to be canceled. One of our members is a retired chef. Over the years, we have attended some of his demonstrations and this year was no exception. He always shows how easy it is to create a good Swiss dish such as Zurich Style Gschnetzeltes (using pork tenderloin). His recipes are always enjoyed by his audience. We look forward to the next time we can watch our local Swiss chef and get some ideas for Swiss food.

One of the classic activities in the fall is the Swiss cheese sale. This year, in order to avoid direct contact between the members, we organized a drive-through pick up which worked very well. Since we didn't want to handle the cheese and cut it up in smaller quantities, we decided to sell the cheese only in whole wheels or full blocks. As a result, we didn't sell as much as last year, but our members were still able to order authentic Swiss cheese.

Another annual event is the Samichlaus day which many of us remember fondly. The TCSAA hosted the first "Christmas with Santa Claus on Zoom". Several families signed up and everybody was excited to see our Santa. Santa told a nice Christmas story before talking to each child who participated. Some of the children were talkative, others were shy, but that's the normal reaction when Santa is talking. It was a very nice online event and we even had a family viewing from Switzerland and smiling as they were able to see their grandson. Thank you, Santa, for your virtual visit.




As we welcome 2021, we continue to plan many of our usual events, but we won't know when gatherings in person will be possible again. One thing we do know is that our events won't be the same as in the past, so the TCSAA will have to make some adjustments.

Please check out our website ([www.tscaa.us](http://www.tscaa.us)) for upcoming events.

MARKUS HOESLI, VICE PRESIDENT  
[WWW.TCSAA.US](http://WWW.TCSAA.US)

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**Florida:** Swiss American Club of Sarasota

To say that this year has been a challenge for our club, is an understatement. The Board has been trying to find ways to stay in touch with the members and that hasn't been an easy task. The daily reports on Covid-19 exacerbate the fear in the already nervous community and any attempt at organizing even small dinners have been futile. On December 14, we succeeded in organizing a small group and we came together to celebrate the Christmas Holiday with a dinner at Roessler's Restaurant. This venue was picked for a second time because it allowed the attendees to feel safe, as the restaurant was opened exclusively for our group. The mood was festive and for a brief moment the struggles of the year were forgotten. Jeanette LaVoy, a classical singer and pianist, provided the entertainment and towards the end of the evening, the members joined in and sang Christmas carols. As on previous occasions, Chef Klaus Roessler was a gracious host and offered a flawless menu, executed to perfection. The evening ended on a positive and hopeful note.



Members Sylva Kanderl & René Jubin



Members Rosmarie VanDoren & Margaret Renner



Board President Nelly Camardo & Board Member René Purro

Also, last May, it was decided to start a monthly newsletter to stay connected with our members. Each Board member contributes an article, a recipe for a dish or a cocktail. We email the newsletter on the 1st day of each month and it has been met with great success. This will continue until the Club resumes its regular activities and possibly beyond.

We now embark in a new year, hopeful that 2021 will bring a quick resolution to this pandemic and that soon we will be able to resume the person to person contact that has been absent last year.

We wish all members of the Swiss Clubs in the United States, a Happy New Year; may 2021 be a year full of Hope, Peace and Serenity and most especially Good Health.

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**Washington, D.C.:** Swiss Club of Washington D.C.

The Swiss Club of Washington DC hosted its first ever Virtual Grättibänz baking on December 6, 2020. The Grättibänz dough was



either picked up at The Swiss Bakery in Springfield Virginia or made at home. Swiss Club Board member Alexandra Phillips led the step-by-step instructions for modeling the Grättibänz, and then displayed her know-

how to make porcupines and other cool shapes. We also received a surprise visit from Samichlaus. The children were prepared for Samichlaus and shared their poems and songs with the group. It was a wonderful afternoon of being together virtually.



Looking forward to 2021!

LYNN FELDPAUSCH ZIPF  
 PRESIDENT  
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**Texas:** Swiss-American Society of Houston

To say that this past year has been quite a challenge seems redundant, but just like it often happens, during time of crises it has also given us the opportunity to reflect, learn, grow, and change.

Looking back, I am proud of everything that the Swiss-American Society of Houston accomplished this past year:

In April, we held our first ever virtual board meeting followed by many more in this format only, throughout the year.

We held monthly virtual Happy Hours and Coffees which gave us the opportunity to see each other in an informal setting from the comfort of our own homes.

In September, we started and held our first monthly virtual “Cook



Along” class, followed by several more, featuring predominantly traditional Swiss recipes. The classes were guided by our Board Member and professional chef Debra Pletscher and we opened them up to members of the Swiss Community of Texas which gave us the chance to introduce our society to other Swiss in and outside the Houston area.

Most recently, our Holiday Party/Drive Thru, like our Swiss National Day Celebration on August 1st, was extremely well attended as we gifted a much appreciated and locally baked stollen to all members who attended. On this occasion we also held a raffle with prizes generously donated by Switzerland Tourism in New York, the Swiss-American Society of Houston and its board members.

In December we were also able to partner with the Swiss Community of Texas for a Joint Virtual Holiday Celebration which allowed us to connect and make new friends with other Swiss in Texas and the South East.

Throughout the year we also had some highlights such as one of our members, Mrs. Tonja Koeppel, celebrating her centennial birthday on October 2nd but also some sad moments as we had to say a sorrowful goodbye to two of our dear members who unexpectedly left us. Mr. Kurt Lieber passed away on November 12th, and Mrs. Tonia Nakhla on November 22nd.

**Florida:** Swiss American Club of SW Florida

After a long break, the board members met in early October to discuss the possibility and dates of future events. It was decided to send out a survey to all members in order to hear their opinion. A little more than 40% of all members responded and the “verdict” was very clear: All (100%) of the survey responders were in favor of the Club NOT scheduling/organizing any events/gatherings until the current crisis situation is “under control”, e.g. the availability of an effective vaccine without major side effects. This is a very clear mandate which the board will follow. Quite a few were supporting the idea, though, for spontaneous gatherings in small groups. The board informed the members that such get-togethers would have to be organized amongst those interested members directly without any involvement from the club itself. One event that we must have – as per our by-laws – is the Annual Meeting. The board will decide shortly whether this will take place via e-mail or virtually.

Unfortunately, these reports from our Club are getting shorter and shorter but we really have nothing else to say other than wishing everybody a belated, very happy and – first and foremost – healthy New Year. One would think it can only be better than 2020!

To learn more about our club, please visit us at [www.swissamericanclub.com](http://www.swissamericanclub.com), new members are always welcome.

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

2020 was not the year we expected, and it definitely meant we had to be resilient and do things differently. 2021 will undoubtedly start off in a similar fashion, however the new released vaccines are giving us hope that we will get back to more in-person programs this coming year.



MAURA FERRERO-BARONI, PRESIDENT  
[WWW.SWISSAMERICANHOUSTON.ORG](http://WWW.SWISSAMERICANHOUSTON.ORG)

**Florida:** Swiss Club Miami

Our Christmas event which was planned to be held outside this year ended up being canceled, but we had a few great Stammtisch meet ups at the outside plaza of Fritz & Franz. A big thank you goes to Poshi and to Lindt for their donations for a little giveaway! Everyone enjoyed it so much to meet and catching up!

Our Stammtisch at Fritz & Franz



On Sunday, August 23, 2020 we had our 2nd socially distanced Car Rally/Treasure Hunt this year at the Historic Redland Tropical Trail. An unforgettable tour taking us to places to which most of the participants had never been before (including me living in Miami for 10 years). A big thank you goes to Nicole Unternaehrer who was the mastermind of the event, even though she was in Switzerland; she is an expert in Rallies now! Our first stop was Cauley Square Historic Railroad Village which is a hidden gem in Miami. Founded in 1903, this charming village features classic chalets, gardens, shops, eateries and events. Another stop was the 'RF Orchid garden' and the comments of our members when they entered was: 'WOW, how beautiful'. If you adore orchids, you owe it to yourself to visit this surprising rural

enclave in the Redland. Another stop was the the Bird/Mary Heinlein Fruit & Spice Park where the first school in that area was built in 1903. The tropical botanical garden is the only kind in the United States. The tropical climate of the 37-acre botanical garden and park contains over 500 varieties of fruit, vegetables, spices and herbs. At the end of the Rally we had a picnic, and the winners got some prizes.



Stop at the RF Orchid Garden during our 2nd socially distanced Car Rally/Treasure Hunt this year at the Historic Redland Tropical Trail

**Golf Lovers!**

Please mark your calendar and join us for the 2nd Swiss Miami Golf Open on Saturday May 1st, 2021. This event will take place at the beautiful Crandon Golf Course at Key Biscayne and it's organized by the Swiss Club Miami & the Swiss American Chamber of Commerce Florida Chapter(SACCF). A fun day full of golf and more is planned on this Saturday morning.

BEA SCHMIED, PRESIDENT  
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**Arizona:** Arizona Swiss Society

The Arizona Swiss Society has been active these past few months, though our festivities have been moved online. The events have been the most fun one could possibly have on Zoom. We've held our Swiss Fall Fest (our Oktoberfest), August First party and lastly our annual Christmas party, held on December 20. Zoom festivities have been organized and M.C.'d by past president John Thornton. Our Christmas party opened with meet and greet for one-half hour, then we showed a video montage by Jason Price of our Swiss Society Samichlaus (a close



resemblance to president Anthony Haechler) who had delivered custom Arizona Swiss Society stockings to kids young and old in the Phoenix metro region. President Haechler then described the stockings' contents which were specifically Swiss this year with tangerines, chocolate and peanuts but also included a stuffed Bernese Mountain

dog, a Swissair 747 model and a few other goodies. We then had a spectacular visit from Santa who joined us from the North Pole and was able to speak personally with each child via the spotlight function, one of the great discoveries of meeting virtually. Santa was



uniquely sensitive and gentle with the children whose dialogs were delightful and the highlight of the afternoon.



We then showed a video montage by John Thornton of three performances by our Swiss Society kids who played Christmas music on the guitar, the piano and the recorder from both the U.S. and Switzerland. John Thornton then performed a magical presentation in which he predicted where a volunteer would randomly find themselves on a schematic of the Zurich Christmas market. Our M.C. then launched into a game of Jeopardy with three contestants online who vied for Christmas prizes. The Jeopardy questions were all about Swiss Christmas categories of Holiday Dates, Santa Claus in Switzerland, Swiss Christmas Traditions, and Christmas Food. An example of our Jeopardy answers and questions was "Little Dirty One" and "Who is Schmutzli." Selina Schuh won by a landslide. Finally, Jason Price and his son Matys (with the magic of a green screen and dressed in full ski gear) appeared live from a Swiss ski lift to award Swiss cookie prizes for best costume and best background. It was all interactive and the most fun one could have virtually. We look forward to actual warm embraces ahead.

ANTHONY P. HAECHLER, PRESIDENT  
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**Northern California:** Peninsula Swiss Club

Grüezi! The Peninsula Swiss Club in the San Francisco Bay Area was established in 1961 as a social club to all friends of Switzerland. We are a very family-oriented club where we promote Swiss heritage, food, language, and culture.

The last physical event was Fondue back in February 2020 and since had to cancel our in-person events. Our first virtual event in November 2020 was our General Meeting where we conducted our club business and enjoyed music, an on line game, and some breakout rooms for more intimate conversations. It was well received. We plan on doing more virtual events in the future.

We were able to do a socially distanced Samichlaus experience. Following our local guidelines, we tried to do a drive through 'Säckli'



pickup which turned into a front door distanced drop off. The families were happy we were able to do something to keep the Christmas/Samichlaus season alive!!

We look forward into 2021 when we will be able to come together again with our Swiss community.

ERICH SONNBERGER, PRESIDENT  
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## Gabriela Martina - 'Dinner with my Neighbor' Cookbook

### **DINNER WITH MY NEIGHBOR**

A 100-RECIPE COOKBOOK  
For virtual dinners

Created during 100 days of COVID-19, Spring 2020



Gabriela Martina is a Swiss musician living in Boston. She grew up in Lucerne and learned to yodel from childhood. She studied music in Boston, and her music style has developed into jazz, blues, etc. without giving up on her yodeling background.

"Hi everyone,

It goes without saying that the year 2020 has been difficult for pretty much all of us in one way or the other. I truly hope that you and your beloved ones are healthy, safe, and well.

*Dinner with My Neighbor* came out of an emergency situation during COVID-19 in March 2020. I decided to reach out to friends, family members, and neighbors with some possible cooking ideas since I love to cook. I felt it was important to share a nice meal as well as an enriching social experience with them. The idea of *Dinner with My Neighbor* is that we can still remain social, even during such a difficult time of social distancing.

*Dinner with My Neighbor* includes 100 recipes and shared dinners with over 100 guests from over 30 countries all over the world! Each recipe has also a video on line that I've created during these 100 days. Check out 'Dinner with My Neighbor' videos on line in order to find them!

This book is dedicated to all the hard-working, truthful, and loving people I had the huge pleasure of sharing a meal with during the beginning of COVID-19 in 2020."

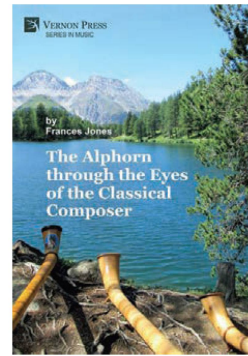
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<https://www.gabrielamartina.com/dinnerwithmyneighbor>

## 'The Alphorn through the Eyes of the Classical Composer' by Frances Jones



'The Alphorn through the Eyes of the Classical Composer' by Frances Jones is the first and definitive book to be written about the alphorn in English. It has been written with English-speaking readers in mind, as it examines the extensive interest of primarily non-Swiss composers, writers and artists in the alphorn as a symbol of the Alps, the influence and significance of the alphorn in culture, literature and the arts across the globe, and the ways in

which the instrument has been specifically utilized by the Swiss as the iconic representation of their country.

This book also explores the use of the musical language of the alphorn call, to ascertain why and how such references as those of Berlioz or Beethoven can convey so much meaning. Dr Jones seeks out what it is that a composer brings into the concert hall, the theatre, the opera house, the church, or the drawing room by such a quotation, to what heritage they are referring, and upon what basis there are grounds for an assumption that such a reference will be understood by an audience.

The book, which will be of interest to researchers in Swiss cultural studies and ethnomusicology, builds on Dr Jones's research and PhD thesis. The six chapters deal with a variety of topics, including a basic introduction to the alphorn and an exploration of the promotion of the instrument as the symbol of Switzerland, as well as the reasons behind symbolic references to alphorn motifs by European and British composers in concert repertoire, jazz and film.

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