

# Regional news : Canada

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# REGIONAL NEWS

## CANADA



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Consulat général de Suisse à Montréal  
Consulate General of Switzerland in Montreal

### Le romanche présenté au Canada par le rappeur grison SNOOK

À l'initiative du Consulat général de Suisse à Montréal, l'artiste **Gino Clavuot, alias SNOOK**, a fait rayonner notre 4e langue nationale dans le cadre de la semaine internationale de la langue romanche «**Emna rumantscha**», à travers une vidéo émouvante, basée sur un concept élaboré conjointement. Le rappeur vous y fait voyager dans une Suisse aux paysages à couper le souffle, moderne et multi-culturelle.

- Découvrez à quel point les Grisons et le romanche sont cool – visionnez la vidéo ici: <https://youtu.be/VJPwg1ps4NA>.

### Romansh brought to Canada by Graubünden's rapper SNOOK

Thanks to the Consulate General of Switzerland in Montreal's initiative and a jointly developed concept, performer **Gino Clavuot - alias SNOOK** - promotes our 4th national language with a poignant video that highlights "Emna rumantscha", international Romansh language week this year. The rapper's clip provides a journey through a breathtaking, modern, and multicultural Switzerland.

- Watch the video and discover just how cool Graubünden and the Romansh language are: <https://youtu.be/VJPwg1ps4NA>.



Snook © Tanja N. Maikoff | Infographie © DFAE



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
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Consulate General of Switzerland in Vancouver

### Position of Honorary Consul of Switzerland

based in Calgary or Edmonton

Due to retirement of the current Honorary Consul, the Consulate General of Switzerland in Vancouver is seeking qualified candidates interested in taking on the position of Honorary Consul of Switzerland for Alberta, based in Calgary or Edmonton, starting 1 January 2023.

#### Mandate:

The Honorary Consul is the local representative in the Province of Alberta of the Consulate General of Switzerland in Vancouver, BC.

#### Functions:

The Honorary Consul acts as a liaison to the local authorities and business, scientific and cultural circles as well as the Swiss expatriate community. He/she will:

- Represent and promote the image of Switzerland and its reputation and inform the Consulate General in Vancouver of opportunities for the development of relations in the fields of business, science, education and culture
- Build and maintain useful and harmonious ties with local authorities and the business community as well as with scientific, cultural, academic and media circles
- Provide support and assistance to the Consulate General in Vancouver in the event of official visits and with consular matters

#### Profile:

You are a Swiss or Canadian national with close links to Switzerland. Your professional activities are compatible with the requirements of an Honorary Consul. You maintain an established and extensive network of contacts in the fields of business, science, education, culture and local political authorities. You participate in the activities of the Swiss community and speak at least one Swiss national language.

You are interested in taking on the position for a minimum of four years (please be aware that according to Swiss regulations, retirement age is 65 years). You are able to provide the necessary business infrastructure (office space, telephone/computer, administrative services, etc.) in order to carry out your official duties.

Interested parties are kindly invited to submit their application (including a detailed curriculum vitae and a letter of motivation in PDF format) by Friday 6 May 2022 to [vancouver@eda.admin.ch](mailto:vancouver@eda.admin.ch)

For any additional inquiries, please contact Consul General Andreas Rufer, Tel: +1 604 661 25 30

## In Memory of Rosa Zumbrunn (January 4, 1918 - January 7, 2022)

Rosa was born in Wittinsburg, Baselbiet on January 4, 1918. She grew up with five siblings, two of them older than her.

Her dad died at age 41 from meningitis. Her mom found out she was pregnant with her 6th child only after her husband had died. Rosa's mom had to sell the farm, and they moved to Frenkendorf where she raised all the kids by herself. It was important to Rosa's mom that each child learn a trade - Rosa chose to become a dressmaker.

In August 1940, Rosa married Fritz Bollier Sr. and lived in Basel for 16 years until they took over the family home in Frenkendorf. Rosa's first child Pia was born on March 5, 1942. On April 5, 1944, Pia died of diphtheria. Just six days later, on April 11, Rosa's son Fritz was born.

During the difficult times after losing her daughter, Rosa's husband worked in the military during World War II, spending a lot of time away at the Swiss borders. In her free time, Rosa actively participated in the Damenriege and was involved in the Civil Protection Service.

When her son Fritz was 17 years old, Rosa separated from her husband. In 1967, Fritz immigrated to Canada. Although she visited Fritz often there, she very much missed her only son and decided to follow him to Canada. In 1975, at age 57, Rosa made the big move to Vancouver, living with Fritz and his wife Rita for the first 8 months. She then settled in the West End on Jervis Street and later moved to Beach Avenue where she lived for many years. For the first several years, Rosa worked in her son's optical business. In the 1980s, she managed the Swiss Club Restaurant Wiistübli.

In order to remain independent, Rosa bought herself a car, driving to many places where there was a party, including to Swiss gatherings, such as the annual Swiss National Day celebrations, Jass tournaments, and the Metzgete at the Rifle Range in Coquitlam.

At Grümpel-Turniers, she always helped at the Gastwirtschaft; during Fasnacht, she played her own instrument using Pfannedeckel she had brought along to play in the Guggemusig. Many of us, including young Swiss who came to Canada, met Rosa during these times. She was fondly nicknamed "D'Mamme" or "Tante Rosa".

Rosa was very much involved in Swiss activities and was a Chörli member for many years. Because of her distinctive voice, her position



in the choir was always in the last row, on the left side amongst the male singers.

Another one of Rosa's passions was playing Zwickle and Jasse on a regular basis. In her "free time", she knitted many pairs of socks for her friends. This was her preferred activity while watching her favourite TV shows in the evenings.

Rosa was always very well dressed and had a great hair style. It was very important to her to dress fashionably for any occasion. Anyone who knew Rosa and spent time with her appreciated her unique sense of humour and shared many a laugh with her. Her favourite saying was "*Läng mers Gwehr*", and when she pounded on the table, this indicated she was having a great time. Rosa knew many jokes - once she started telling

one, many more followed, some innocent, some dirty ...

Rosa's life was not always fun and games. On April 8, 2003, Fritz passed away at age 59. Despite this tragedy, Rosa remained positive and very active until her early nineties.

Rosa had an extensive network of friends who assisted her in various ways. Many took her shopping, others accompanied her to doctors' appointments to help with translation, or drove her to Sunday Services. Additional activities included attending Swiss gatherings with Rosa, or driving her to the casino for a fun evening.

In 2014, she moved to Chalmers Lodge, an Assisted Living Centre for seniors. Rosa remained independent until she fractured her hip which required hospitalisation for several weeks. Once a suitable space became available at the German Canadian Care Home, this was her new home until she was relocated to the Finnish Home in 2019.

After her hip fracture, Rosa was wheelchair-bound, never regaining her mobility to walk. This lady, once so lively and bursting with energy, had slowed down considerably.

A huge thank-you to Rosa's companions Elena, Mila, and Marilou for their dedication and patience in caring for her like their own mother. During the pandemic, these ladies were able to continue visiting Rosa while family and friends were not allowed to visit.

Rosa was the last survivor among her siblings. She is survived by many loving nieces and nephews, and their families in Switzerland.

## Swiss Heritage in Western Canada - Edelweiss Village in Golden, British Columbia

**Sometimes, you find a jewel where you least expect it!**

Off the beaten track in south-eastern BC, near the Kootenay town of Golden, you might unwittingly stumble across a place currently making headlines: *Edelweiss Village*.

While the name is perhaps a little cliché, it is in fact a real-life former Swiss colony. What prompted Swiss immigrants to settle at this particular location? Shedding some light on the question is a sign in town stating that Golden is the “*Home of the famous Swiss guides*”.



© Eddie Leigan - RE/MAX of Golden

Delving into their history, we discover that from 1899 to 1954, the Canadian Pacific Railway (CPR) employed mountain guides, hiring Swiss guides exclusively. The CPR envisioned turning the Canadian Rockies into a (mountaineering) tourism destination. In contrast to the Swiss Alps, this area still abounded with unclimbed (and often unnamed) peaks, perfect for luring travelers in search of new adventures and first ascents.

To achieve their lofty tourism goal, the CPR needed some help, and they turned to the Swiss. A promotional CPR ad referred to the grandeur of the Rockies as “*Fifty Switzerlands in One*”, and it promised travelers that “*Swiss guides are to be found at all mountain hotels*”. Clearly, Switzerland and its mountain guides had a rock solid reputation that preceded them!

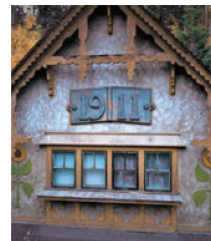
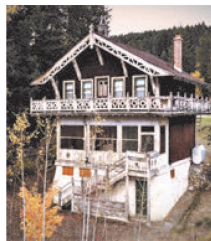
Today, over a dozen peaks in the Canadian Rockies carry the names of former Swiss guides, a testament to their achievements and enviable safety record. In fact, the Swiss guides came to be regarded not only as influential pioneers, they were also highly instrumental in shaping Western Canada’s “mountain culture” for many decades.

Golden is an ideal starting point for mountaineering expeditions - the town is surrounded by the Columbia and Rocky Mountains, and it is centrally located in relative proximity to no less than six Canadian National Parks: Banff, Glacier, Jasper, Kootenay, Mount Revelstoke, and Yoho.



Edelweiss Village - Aerial View  
© Eddie Leigan - RE/MAX of Golden

A closer look at Golden’s *Edelweiss Village* reveals a cluster of six picturesque chalets built in a pseudo-Swiss architectural style.



Edelweiss Village Homes  
© Eddie Leigan - RE/MAX of Golden

The *Village* dates back to 1910 - 1912 and owes its existence to an arduous, impossibly far, and time-consuming “commute” (in an era before mass air travel). Initially, the guides were hired on a seasonal basis, traveling to Canada each spring and returning to Switzerland in the fall. This arrangement had drawbacks for both parties - the guides were separated from their families for much of the year, and the CPR worried the guides might not return. Having the CPR build permanent

housing for the Swiss allowed the guides to relocate their families to the *Village* in Golden and dispense with the yearly commute.



Edelweiss Village - Interior Views  
© Eddie Leigan - RE/MAX of Golden

**Having discovered a gem, one does not want to risk losing it!**

Unfortunately, at the present moment there is a gnawing uncertainty about the *Village*’s future. The historic homes of these pioneering Swiss mountain guides sit empty and are on the market. So what now, *Edelweiss*?

This is where a preservation / conservation effort spearheaded by Johann Roduit and Ilona Spaar comes in. Roduit is a recently elected Swiss delegate for Western Canada on the Council of the Swiss Abroad; Spaar is a historian and author of *Swiss Guides: Shaping Mountain Culture in Western Canada* (© 2010 by the Consulate General of Switzerland in Vancouver), a fascinating read.

Looking for ways to ensure the *Village*’s survival for many years to come, Roduit and Spaar have embarked on a **Saving Swiss Edelweiss Village** campaign and six-step action plan that has been gathering steam.



Here are two ways you can **follow** and **support** this comprehensive effort:

- Visit the very detailed campaign website at <https://www.swissvillage.ca>;
- Check out their Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/swissedelweiss-village>.

A.V.STUERMER

## Swiss Club Saskatoon

Due to ongoing high COVID numbers in Saskatchewan, we decided not to hold our raclette luncheon which is usually scheduled for March / April. Even though all COVID restrictions were lifted on March 1, 2022, we deem it unsafe to hold an indoor event in close quarters.

We are currently planning two outdoor summer events:

- A late June BBQ at the acreage of Elisabeth and Kaspar Wirz;
- A Bundesfeier (1st of August) celebration in either late July or early August at the acreage of Dora and Max Hug.

Exact dates and times of these activities are still in the planning stages, but information will be sent out to members in a newsletter closer to the events.

If you are not on our contact list and would like to receive information about our Club, please contact us at [swissclubsaskatoon@hotmail.com](mailto:swissclubsaskatoon@hotmail.com), or call / text me at 1 - 306 - 260 - 8030.

New members are always welcome, and membership is free for the first year.

Even though our name is Swiss Club Saskatoon, we welcome Swiss from anywhere in Saskatchewan.

ELISABETH EILINGER, PRESIDENT, SWISS CLUB SASKATOON



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## Matterhorn Swiss Club (Montreal)

Greetings from the Matterhorn Swiss Club in Montreal!

As I submit this report at the end of February 2022, we still have been unable to hold any activities. As COVID restrictions are currently being lifted, we plan to hold our AGM in the spring and combine it with a seasonal lunch at a family-friendly location. At this time, we are in the early planning stages, and members will be advised when we have some news.

Under normal circumstances, our yearly activities usually consist of four or five events, as follows:

- February or early March: Annual General Meeting and a dinner;
- June: A visit to a place of interest - either local or out of town - followed by a good dinner;
- Mid-August: A barbecue picnic at a member's home;
- Fall: Sometimes, we hold an outing followed by a nice meal;
- November: An informal meeting / get-together at a nice restaurant;
- In addition, about 25 of our members usually volunteer at the Swiss National Day celebrations at Mont Sutton. This event is currently scheduled to be held this year.

Until we can meet again, we hope that everyone stays safe and healthy. New members are always welcome!

WALTER SPIRIG, PRESIDENT, 514 - 694 - 3718

## HOCKEY IN SWITZERLAND

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Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir Association

## Nick Lees: Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir President Hans Voegeli Makes Plans to Gallop into the End of the Pandemic

The following text is a reprint of Nick Lees' article on Hans Voegeli, President of the Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir Association. The article with the above title appeared in the Edmonton Journal on January 16, 2022. Note that the pictures were not part of the write-up; they were added here for visual appeal and context.

A hopeful sign COVID-19 driven by the highly infectious Omicron variant might be nearing its peak locally is learning Hans Voegeli is riding his horses again and yodeling his favourite Swiss-German song. "I usually ride at least three times each week, but I didn't ride for several weeks during our awful sub-zero spell," said Swiss-born Voegeli, who lives on an acreage near Sherwood Park.

"But our Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir is considering rehearsals again for a future concert and I have been warming up my voice by riding my two horses and singing *Kamerade*. *Kamerade* means friends and the song has such a wonderful, warm melody, we declared it our choir's theme song."

Voegeli has been president of the Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir since 2005 and has led it to several competition wins in the U.S. and Switzerland. "I have tried to resign from the choir several times, but members insisted I continue, saying 'just one more year?'" said Voegeli.

"It might be a men's choir, but it should be noted the director, who has led the choir for 35 years of its 42-year history, is a woman, the congenial Elizabeth Anderson."

"Hans is the ultimate classy gentleman," says Anderson. "He's highly organized, efficient, gentle and polite. You might say he's typically Swiss."



Voegeli's smiling face is well known to many Edmontonians. After working for CP Hotels in Calgary and the Four Seasons Hotels in Montreal, Calgary, and Edmonton, he welcomed guests as manager of some of Edmonton's favourite former restaurants, such as Walden's, Bocalino, Chef's Table, and Trumps.

"In 1992, I became manager of the Chateau Lacombe's La Ronde revolving restaurant," he said. "I still make an appearance there now and again if required."

Kurt Blesi joined the choir one year after it was formed and said Voegeli is an excellent leader and is positive about the choir's future. "We lost some members for assorted reasons recently and Hans has encouraged everyone to bring younger people forward to join us," said Blesi. "His leadership may have something to do with his being a former Swiss army officer."

Voegeli's love of horses began when he was an infant. "My grandfather was in the horse business and drove a stagecoach over the Swiss mountains," he said. "My father took over the business, which included riding stables and supplying horse-drawn carriages for weddings, movies, tourists, and to pull sleighs in mountain resorts."

His father also supplied horses to the Swiss army mountain troops, and it was Voegeli's love of horses that saw him serve his compulsory army service with the cavalry. "Most of Switzerland is mountainous terrain and normal temperatures in the Alps can often be 25 degrees below zero in winter," said Voegeli.

(Article continued on page VII)



## Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir Association

(Article continued from page VI)

“Trucks would generally be useless, but horses and mules can withstand the temperatures and are capable of carrying up to 220 pounds of equipment over the mountains and through deep snow.” Knowing they would be traded, Voegeli said it was hard to become affectionate with horses when he was young. While his brother now runs the family horse business, Voegeli said he now has a close friendship with his two horses here, both of which turn 25 years old this year.

“Zarek is the grey warmblood and Spike is part warmblood with a bit of Arabian blood in him,” said Voegeli. “They are cousins. Both have thick coats and are considered outside horses. But I brought them both inside when it was alarmingly cold and gave each a blanket.”

Voegeli has two riding ambitions when COVID-19 is definitely under control. He hopes to bring back this summer a Lake Louise trail ride that was held for more than 20 years, while also hoping to return to Virginia on a fox-hunting trip.

“I last visited Switzerland in 2019 and old cavalry friends who had ridden previously on our trail rides here are pushing me to organize one last such ride,” said Voegeli.

“I am also regularly in contact with my old friend Jim Fitzgibbon, one of the first general managers of the former Four Seasons Hotel when it opened in Edmonton in the late 1970s. Jim is keen to go fox hunting in Virginia and I would again like to join him. It’s a different style of riding than a Rocky Mountain trail ride. But it is just as much fun and exciting. We have to do the things we love as long as we are fit and able.”



NICK LEES  
EDMONTON JOURNAL  
JANUARY 16, 2022  
[NLEES@POSTMEDIA.COM](mailto:NLEES@POSTMEDIA.COM)

## Swiss Game Giveaway - Beerli Schweiz

Enter a draw for a chance to win a Beerli Schweiz Swiss Cross Peg Solitaire game (see video at [www.beerlischweiz.com](http://www.beerlischweiz.com))!

Email [avs@telus.net](mailto:avs@telus.net) to participate. Only one entry per person.

Entries must be received no later than midnight on April 30, 2022.

The winner will be chosen by the luck of the draw on May 1, 2022 and must consent to their name and address being forwarded to Beerli Schweiz. The game will then be shipped directly from Switzerland (no fees for the winner). Good luck!

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## Beatrice Schreiber Honours Dr. Hans-Georg Buschmann on his 100th Birthday

Wiesbaden in Central Germany is 4,990 miles from Vancouver. Beatrice Schreiber left a piece of her heart behind when she moved to Deep Cove in 1995 with her husband and daughter. Her brothers and their families still live there, and both her parents are buried there. Schreiber especially feels a connection to her father, the late Dr. Hans-Georg Buschmann, who inspired her with his ability to remake himself - not just once, but twice - especially when he applied to Mainz University as their first “senior student” and graduated at age 68!

When 2022 arrived, a full century after her father was born in 1922 in Weimar, Thuringia, Schreiber felt it was the perfect time to highlight the three different lives her father ended up living. Even after his death in 2008, Schreiber still feels his presence and influence in her life.

Buschmann was officially recruited into the Navy in February 1940. The war had already begun in September 1939. After successfully finishing his training, Buschmann was assigned to a submarine rather than to a ship. This was a high-risk placement: the German U-Boat Command lost 632 submarines and 28,000 men during the 5-year Battle of the Atlantic, which represented a 75% casualty rate. While others his age were finishing high school and starting university, he spent his days on diving submarines that were being targeted thanks to new technologies, such as radar and sonar.

When his submarine U-187 under the command of Ralph Muennich was damaged and sank in 1943, Buschmann was sent to Canada as a British prisoner of war. His first camp in Quebec was an idyllic existence, which ended in February 1945, when 250 prisoners, including Buschmann, were sent further west to a little camp in the Kananaskis Valley, on the eastern slopes of the Canadian Rockies in Alberta. By March 1947, they started to release the prisoners. On May 1, 1947, Buschmann achieved his ultimate dream: freedom. The long-time prisoners of war in Canada experienced culture shock when they were finally able to return home to a war-torn, heavily bombed Germany.

Shortly after arriving back in Germany, Adam Opel AG headquarters in Rüsselsheim was looking for assistants. Buschmann sent in his resume and reference letters and was asked to come in for an interview. He was hired on March 22, 1951, and his next life began. At first, Buschmann worked directly under Otto Lehmann, the exclusive territory manager for Southern Germany. Opel traces its roots back to 1862 to sewing machine manufacturer Adam Opel in Rüsselsheim. Opel AG began manufacturing bicycles in 1886 and produced their first automobile in 1899. In March 1929, General Motors bought 80% of the company, increasing this to 100% in 1931. After heavy allied bombing during World War II, 47% of the area around the factory was destroyed. Former Opel employees rebuilt the Rüsselsheim plant, and by 1946, they were back in production. After a few years, Buschmann worked as an exclusive territory manager for all of Germany. By the time he celebrated his 25-year anniversary with the Adam Opel AG, he was



ready for a new goal - too much bureaucracy; too many conflicting personalities. He continued in his job for another five years. After 30 years of hard work and hands-on education, Buschmann handed in his resignation. It was time for his third life to begin. On April 1, 1981, exactly one day after his 30-year career at Adam Opel had ended, Buschmann was sitting in a lecture hall as the first senior student at Mainz University.

July 7, 1989 was Buschmann's final bittersweet day as a PhD student at the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz. His dissertation on *The North Cemetery of Wiesbaden and its past History – the Burial Customs and Rites – Monuments & Tombs* was the culmination of 17 semesters of hard work. Years of immersing himself in the analysis of art pieces, giving presentations and writing research papers, honing his research, communication, and analytical abilities, while also learning about artistic techniques and historic eras and cultures from around the world.

Buschmann could never have done it without the help of his wife Gerdi. His two sons Ruediger and Volker also supported their father by purchasing a historical gravesite in the North Cemetery of Wiesbaden, and by spending time and money cleaning it up. His son-in-law Stefan Schreiber, along with daughter Beatrice, opened the Bel Art Kunstverlag and hired Buschmann as their Art Director. They had a very close family bond that still exists today.

The Schreibers then made the decision to move to Canada where they founded the Bel Art Gallery in Vancouver, BC in 1995. Beatrice immediately joined the German Canadian Business Association and has now been their President for many years. She has also been President of the German Canadian Heritage Plaza, a member of the Serendipity (Business) Group, and she still plans events and promotes cultural, educational, and business interests in Western Canada. In 2015, Beatrice was awarded the *Federal Cross of Merit*, handed out for special achievements in the political, economic, cultural, intellectual, or honorary fields. Whenever Beatrice sees this cross, she thinks of her father and his influence on her life.

ELKE PORTER, WESTCOAST GERMAN NEWS