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# REGIONAL NEWS

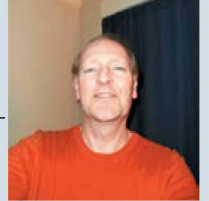
## CANADA

### Editorial

Dear Readers: Happy 2023! Several people recently enquired about my **New Year's resolutions**. Google Trends underscores this time-honoured tradition's perennial popularity. A chart going back to 2004 shows a pronounced saw-tooth pattern in the way people seek guidance on their goals: each year, a sharp late-season spike in searches is immediately followed by an abrupt drop-off.

It's common knowledge that our resolutions often fizzle out like a comet and produce fleeting results at best, so one might ask: Are we perhaps too focused on expecting a quick payoff rather than going for steady, incremental ("boring") progress? My old Webster's dictionary provides an interesting take, defining "a resolution" as "*The quality of not allowing difficulties or opposition to affect one's purpose*".

Perhaps the secret to lasting success is to strive patiently for this resolute quality first, thus building a stronger foundation for goal-setting success? In any event, I wish you a wonderful, healthy, and successful year! [avs@telus.net](mailto:avs@telus.net)



ANDREW VON STUERMER  
REGIONAL EDITOR

### Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir Association

Dear Kamerade and Friends:

I announce with great sadness that our dear friend and long-time Kamerad **Jerry Paravicini** passed away on Saturday, October 8, 2022.



Jerry will be missed not only by his family but by everyone who knew and met him. May he rest in peace! We would like to extend our deepest condolences and sincere sympathy to his wife Debra Cairns, and to family.

Jerry was a member of the Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir (ESMC) for 28 years. He held various positions within the Choir Executive, among them several years as President. Under Jerry's leadership, the ESMC made great progress and became well known, not only within the Edmonton Choral family, but also within the North American Swiss Choral community. Jerry took part in many Choir trips - in the Province of Alberta, throughout Canada and the US, and on multiple excursions to Switzerland, the final one in 2016. Jerry's last major project for the ESMC was taking on the task of putting together and completing the ESMC archives. We're grateful for all his hard and detailed work on this major project!

Jerry loved to sing, and he shared his gift and talent with many people. I vividly remember him singing at my youngest daughter's wedding in August 2019. A Celebration of Life for Jerry was held on Saturday, October 22, 2022 at the St. Albert Evangelical Church in St. Albert, AB. Please keep Jerry and his family in your thoughts and prayers! Warmest regards

HANS VOEGELI

We also enjoyed happy events:

On December 11, our Choir gave a multi-lingual Christmas concert at the St. Vital Church in Beaumont, AB. We were fortunate to have guest performers, such as the Vocal Trio Zemlia singing Ukrainian carols, and Ali Berube - Thomas and Ann Huwiler's granddaughter - playing the violin. Our assistant director Irena provided such great piano support to the violin, one could have assumed the two of them have been practicing together for years. A thank-you to the volunteers of the Catholic Women's League and to the Knights of Columbus for providing refreshments after the concert!

Our next concert was on December 13 at the Rutherford Heights Retirement Residence. The people didn't know us and were delighted with our unexpectedly vibrant performance. One resident summed it up with watery eyes: "*This was the best Christmas, ever!*"

Our last concert of the season was held on December 16 at the Tegler Terrace Retirement Residence. The residents knew what to expect from us, as we have many times had the opportunity to bring some Christmas cheer to them before the pandemic. They again loved our music selection. Afterwards, our Choir enjoyed an afterglow at the nearby Italia Mia.



For information about our events and on how to join us, please visit [www.esmca.ca](http://www.esmca.ca).

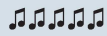
"Like" us on Facebook "Edmonton Swiss Men's Choir", or enter our name into YouTube to watch and listen to one of our many performances.

PETER THUT



Vancouver Swiss Choir

### 2022 Christmas Concert Featuring the Vancouver Swiss Choir and Guest Performers



On November 26, 2022, the Vancouver Swiss Choir (VSC) and guest performers invited to a multifaceted and varied Christmas concert at the All Saints Anglican Church in Burnaby, BC (Metro Vancouver).

Hosted by MC Andrea Stolte, the capacity-crowd event featured a number of solo as well as joint performances by the Vancouver Swiss Choir, the Vancouver Gaelic Choir, the Valley Girls yodel duet, and the Vancouver Wind Ensemble.

For the first time since before the pandemic, everyone was able to head to the church basement after the concert to mingle, enjoy various snacks / baked goods and beverages, purchase home-made breads including Zopf, and take part in a raffle for a dozen or so gift baskets.

ROLF A. BRULHART



The Vancouver Swiss Choir performing at Burnaby's All Saints Anglican Church



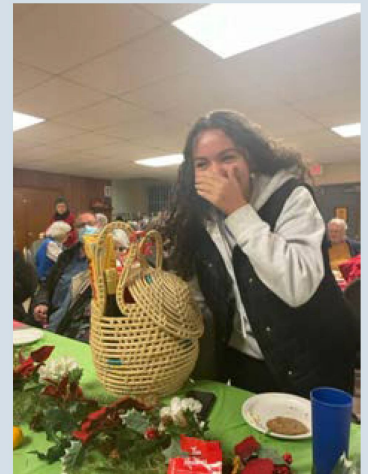
The Vancouver Gaelic Choir in action



The Valley Girls yodel duet



A joint performance by the Vancouver Swiss Choir and the Vancouver Gaelic Choir



A happy raffle winner

#### 🎵 A Warm WELCOME to New Choir Members (2022) 🎵

VSC members, President Andrea Flukiger, and Musical Director Dubravko Pajalic are delighted to welcome the following new members who joined the Vancouver Swiss Choir in 2022:

- ❖ Rotraut Bender
- ❖ Barbara Carscadden
- ❖ Berta Senn
- ❖ Martje Hartmann
- ❖ Hans and Cora Schupp
- ❖ Roswitha Laakmann
- ❖ Shane Taylor

🎵 Interested in the Vancouver Swiss Choir? Contact Rolf Brulhart at [rbrulhart@hotmail.com](mailto:rbrulhart@hotmail.com) with your questions! 🎵



The Vancouver Wind Ensemble taking the stage





To embrace world peace  
with music ...

On **September 21, 2023** - the International Day of Peace - this major event will take place on many stages around the world. The event is based on an idea by Swiss musician and project initiator Helena Röööli.

On this day, choirs around the world will perform *The Peacemakers*, a composition for choir and orchestra by Karl Jenkins. Based on the different time zones, the words of peace in this musical work will resound around the globe uninterrupted for 24 hours.

*Give peace a voice!* With this idea and unique message of peace, the organisers are hoping to send out a signal for worldwide solidarity and human dignity, an issue more relevant and urgent than ever!

At the concert in Switzerland, Lea Suter – the activist peacemaker and UN peace representative – will demonstrate her experience in the field. Her impressive portraits of current peacemakers from war zones will accompany the concert and strengthen the musical appeal for the global search for peace. «*An appeal to all of us, wherever we are, to contribute to an uncompromising desire for peace and a 'never-again-war' attitude*». (Lea Suter – [www.peaceprints.ch](http://www.peaceprints.ch))

The association **TimeDate** (<https://timedate.ch>) - headquartered in Lucerne, Switzerland - is responsible for organising this unique world-wide musical event. Globally, we are looking for enthusiastic choirs, supportive sponsors, and creative contributors, who, through music, would like to strengthen positive peace efforts throughout the world. **We are looking for you!**

■ To contact us, please email [info@timedate.ch](mailto:info@timedate.ch).

## Swiss Canadian Mountain Range Association (Metro Vancouver)

After a warm and pleasant summer and fall, we got our share of snow. Weather aside, we had a very successful and accident-free shooting season. The annual Schützenfest was very well attended with visitors coming from Switzerland, Los Angeles, and Vancouver Island.

The grand finale for our outdoor shooting season was the Sausshoot at the end of October - good participation and lots of fun, and every shooter took home a cut of meat. To end the day, we all enjoyed a delicious Bernerplatte for dinner. A big thank-you to all the volunteers!

Unfortunately, the Jass tournament had to be cancelled; hopefully, someone will come forward and help organise this event in 2023.

The Samichlaus Party was held on December 4. 17 children were

## Matterhorn Swiss Club (Montreal)

For our final event of 2022, we spent an interesting November morning touring the Montreal Aviation Museum in Ste-Anne-de-Bellevue. We were divided into two groups and led through the exhibits by excellent volunteer guides. The displays included civil and military aircrafts, as well as artifacts. We had a good turnout of members, some bringing their children and grandchildren. This was followed by a nice lunch at L'Academie in Pointe-Claire.

Our 2023 AGM will be held early in the year; members will be advised when and where the meeting will take place.

The Matterhorn Club will be celebrating its **70th anniversary in 2023**, and a special outing to commemorate this event is being planned! Information will be sent out to members once details have been finalised.

Until then, we hope that everyone stays safe and healthy.

New members are always welcome!

WALTER SPIRIG  
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privileged to visit with Santa. The craft table was very busy, and all ages had the pleasure of doing some crafts under Sandy's guidance. A good time was had by all. Glühwein and hot chocolate warmed our insides, and wonderful baked goods and snacks filled our tummies. A big thank-you to Santa and his helpers!

Please check our website [www.scmra.ca](http://www.scmra.ca) for photos from these events.

We would like to keep the old traditions going and hope that many Swiss and their friends will come and visit us at our beautiful Chalet to socialise and perhaps even join us for a game of Jass.

I wish you all a very successful and prosperous 2023!

MARLIES BAUMANN



## People - Meet Jacqueline Banz (Author of "PhilosophHer Thoughts")

**Jacqueline, congratulations on your first book *PhilosophHer Thoughts* – a Peek into a Stoic Woman's Diary! You were born and raised in Switzerland and moved to Vancouver 12 years ago. Your diary entries and poems are in English. Do you think in English?**

Yes, by now, after 12 years of living in Vancouver, I actually do.

**The title sounds intriguing. What is the book about and how did it come to be?**

It's a peek into my personal diary since January 2021. Every evening, I reflect on the day in a philosophical way. The heading on each page is tied to what happened that day, what I witnessed or heard, what got me thinking. Sometimes, I also write poems.

The goal of writing a page a day was initially meant as a discipline to help me write a non-fiction book. In the fall of 2022, I realised my diary entries should make up the actual book, not the other content. Working on the main book often felt like a chore while writing the daily one-pagers was something I wanted to do. I enjoy the reflective, meditative aspects of the writing process, and I'm always curious to see where my train of thoughts leads. Life is about enjoying the journey. That's why it felt right to publish "PhilosophHer Thoughts" as my first book.

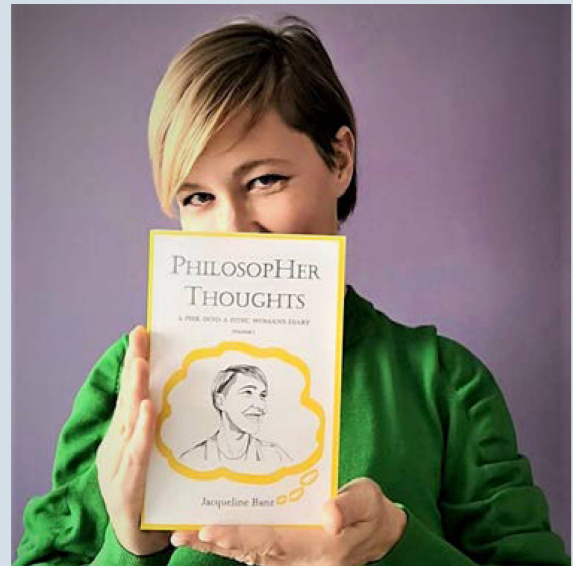
My diary often addresses societal norms and our Western lifestyle, which is very driven. In an attempt to get to where we want to be - which usually isn't where we are right now - we're always chasing the next goal. I'm starting to question that way of living.

**Is Stoicism how you try to tame your monkey mind?**

Stoicism is one way, yes, as is trying to live in the present. I try to tame my monkey mind by writing about my thoughts; this allows me to pause and reflect and consider various perspectives. It's the thoughts of past events - or the anticipation of a (dream) future - that causes us stress. Most stress isn't caused by an event itself, but rather by our reactions to a situation. Stoics strive to avoid labelling events or emotions as good or bad; they simply acknowledge their presence from an observant, less ego-driven perspective. Before reacting to something, we can choose to pause for a second; and we can choose to apply the four virtues of the Stoics (courage, temperance, wisdom, and justice) to any given situation (even those beyond our control).

**Have you always had that mindset?**

Well, I'm a constant work in progress and a lifelong learner. Living in the present is one of the hardest things you can do, as is pushing your ego aside when confronted with challenges. There will never be a day where I have it all figured out. And as I change and grow, my ways of thinking also change.



I've always been a believer that things happen for a reason. If something I desire doesn't appear, I see it as a sign it wasn't meant to be at that particular time, perhaps because the Universe has something different in store for me. If something I perceive as "unfortunate" occurs, I believe I will realise in hindsight it was a life lesson that helped me advance.

I believe that hand-written "Orders to the Universe" help in manifestation. A perfect example is how I received a Canadian work visa. In 1997, I spent 6 months in Vancouver and always wanted to come back here, but the high tuition fees for foreign students prevented me from getting my degree in Canada. Instead, I embraced the benefits of a Swiss university degree, though I still couldn't let go of the thought of living in Vancouver again.

After flying to the Paralympics Games in 2010, I got hooked on Vancouver once again, and my vacation turned into a job hunt marathon. Knocking on the doors of Swiss companies, I let them know about my goal of living and working in Vancouver. Despite their willingness to help, nothing came from that networking effort just yet. I didn't give up, though. Once back in Switzerland, I did what I always do when wanting to manifest something - issue a hand-written "Order to the Universe", stating exactly what I wish for and by when: to be living and working in Vancouver by May 1, 2011.

In order to be in Canada by that date, I quit a job I loved in Switzerland in January 2011, even though my networking efforts for Vancouver employment had not yet been fruitful. I simply trusted things would work out if they were meant to be. Surely enough, a few weeks later, three Vancouver Swiss connections informed me about a job opening that might be a door opener. Long story short, I applied, got the job, and arrived in Canada on May 1, 2011, a work visa (received the day before my scheduled flight) in hand. The Universe had delivered my order right on (Swiss) time!

( Continued on page V )

## People - Meet Jacqueline Banz (Author of "PhilosopHer Thoughts")

(Continued from page IV)

**Your Swiss connections in Vancouver helped you achieve your dream!**

Yes! I'm very grateful for the support of these kind Swiss souls; were it not for them, who knows where I might be today. The Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce provided valuable connections that not only led to my first Canadian job with a Swiss company, but also to my current job, also with a Swiss-owned business. It was therefore gratifying to be able to contribute to the Chamber as an Admin, Board member, and in my current role as Advisor.

On multiple occasions, I have also been able to give back by helping other Swiss (and Canadians) find jobs in Vancouver or establish (business) connections – a great feeling!

**How might your book help our readers?**

I believe there is a benefit to addressing philosophical and thought-provoking questions. Too often, we fail to ask ourselves what exactly brings us joy and makes us content. I hope my texts will prompt readers to appreciate the little things in their everyday lives, encourage them to live in the now, and do more of what they love, together with the people they love.

## Swiss Club Thames Valley

I am writing this during a blizzard that has shut down much of Southwestern Ontario.

On November 5, we held our AGM in Milverton. Urs Egli, Brigitte Bieri, Kathi Hostettler, and Paul Muller have retired from the Board of Directors; we would like to wish them well.

We welcome Hansueli Sturzenegger, Egon Schumacher, Fredi Leutenegger, Charlotte Elgi, and Christine Heimpel to the Board.

On November 16, the Swiss Farmer Band gave a concert in Listowel.

On December 4, Santa visited and checked up on who had been naughty or nice. While waiting for the man of the season, the children sang Christmas carols. They then received a bag of treats from Santa. Cookies and juice were served.

We have **revamped our website**. Please check it out at <https://swissclubtv.wixsite.com/swiss-club-thames-va>.

We would like to wish everyone a very prosperous New Year!

CHRISTINE HEIMPEL

## PHILOSOPHER THOUGHTS

### MAKE-UP

I wonder who decided that women should be wearing make-up to appear more attractive, while it isn't deemed to be more attractive for men. I like the look of long eye lashes on men, so why don't they highlight their eyes?

Or, on the contrary: Why don't we all show our true face? Sooner or later that make-up's gonna come off anyways, so why pretend first, only to reveal the true self later?

The word itself consists of two words, that indicate something's made up, meaning, not real. When you make something up, you're basically lying.

Why not just impress someone with kindness, character, intellect, vision, creativity, integrity and many other attributes that 'make up' a good human being?

Why is it the high heels, sexy dress and make-up that gets the attention? Well, I guess I just answered that: It's to get the attention. But in today's world, where that's the norm, maybe you'll stand out more if you show your real you right away!?

Where can people find out more?

"PhilosopHer Thoughts" is available on all Amazon marketplaces, or you can visit <https://jacquelinebanz.my.canva.site>.

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Swiss Club Toronto Theatre Group

**Theateraufführung 2023**

**„ In Himmel wänd alli “**

Lustspiel in drei Akten von Andreas Kessner

Dialektbearbeitung: Fritz Klein

The play is in Swiss-German and will be performed by the Toronto Theatre Group at the following locations:

- **Wellesley:** Sunday, April 16, 2023, at 1:00 pm.  
Rec. Complex / Community Centre, 1000 Maple St.
- **Toronto:** Saturday, April 22, 2023, at 2:00 pm.  
Latvian Canadian Centre, 4 Credit Union Drv.  
Contact: Maggie Hess at (905) 508 - 8014  
Email: [walter.brunner@sympatico.ca](mailto:walter.brunner@sympatico.ca)

After the COVID induced break, the Theatre Group is looking forward to once again seeing you at one of the performances. We hope to make it an exciting event for everyone!

For more details, please contact your local Swiss club representative. For reservations in Toronto, please call or email Maggie Hess or Walter Brunner.

With apologies to our fans in Ottawa, we decided not to travel to Ottawa for a performance.

WALTER BRUNNER



Pre-COVID, a scene from the play "Im Meischter sini Geischer"



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**FÉDÉRATION DES SOCIÉTÉS SUISSES DE L'EST DU CANADA**  
**FEDERATION OF SWISS SOCIETIES IN EASTERN CANADA**

Compatriotes et Ami(e)s de la Communauté Suisse,

Nous réitérons nos vœux pour une Nouvelle Année 2023. Nous souhaitons à toutes et à tous de la joie, du bonheur, beaucoup de santé et l'espoir d'un monde meilleur.

Notre assemblée générale annuelle, ce 11 février, réunira l'actuel comité avec les président.e.s et plusieurs représentant.e.s de clubs et société suisse de la province de Québec, d'ex-président.e.s de la Fédération des Sociétés Suisses de l'Est du Canada. Ainsi que notre délégué à l'OSE et des représentants du Consulat de Suisse à Montréal.

Il y sera, en outre, question d'élection pour de nouveaux membres au comité. Nous recherchons donc quelques candidats actifs. Et il y a toujours le poste de la présidence qui reste à combler.

Le comité se réunit quelque fois pour l'organisation de la Fête Nationale Suisse. Ceci inclut l'élaboration du programme annuel avec recherche de commanditaires, recherche de prix pour la tombola, choix des fournisseurs et commandes, contrats divers, organisation du travail et des bénévoles, etc., etc...

Sans oublier la partie **MUSIQUE** de la Fête. Il y a toujours au moins un groupe de chanteurs/musiciens qui nous arrivent directement de la Suisse. Nous venons d'apprendre que le groupe Écho des Orçons que nous attendions pour 2023 sera dans l'impossibilité de participer à notre Fête.

Nous sommes donc à la recherche d'un petit groupe suisse, folklorique, avec de l'entrain, si possible multilingue. La Fête Suisse aura lieu le samedi 29 juillet. Urgent pour 2023, doit se régler en début d'année. Mais aussi nécessaire pour le futur. Votre collaboration serait grandement appréciée.

Pour quiconque intéressé au comité et / ou de l'information pour un groupe musical, svp communiquer avec nous à [fedesuisse@gmail.com](mailto:fedesuisse@gmail.com).

Continuez à visiter notre site internet [www.fedesuisse.com](http://www.fedesuisse.com) et à nous suivre sur Facebook [www.facebook.com/Fedesuisse](https://www.facebook.com/Fedesuisse).

Dear Swiss Community; Dear Friends:

We would like to reaffirm our well-wishes for the New Year. We wish everyone joy, happiness, good health, and the hope for a better world.

At our AGM on February 11, members of the current committee will meet with the presidents and several representatives of Swiss clubs and societies of the province of Quebec, the former presidents of the Federation of Swiss Societies in Eastern Canada, our OSA delegate, and with representatives of the Swiss Consulate in Montreal.

Among other items, the election of new committee members will be on the agenda. We are looking for a few active candidates. Furthermore, the position of President still remains to be filled.

The committee meets from time to time to plan for the Swiss National Day celebrations. Developing the annual programme includes the search for sponsors, sourcing tombola prizes, selecting suppliers and placing orders, signing various contracts, organising the work and the volunteers, and so on and so forth.

Let's not forget the **MUSICAL** aspect of the event. At least one group of singers / musicians always comes directly from Switzerland. We have however been informed that the group Echo des Orçons - which was expected to visit in 2023 - will not be able to participate in our National Day festivities.

We are therefore looking for a small, spirited (and ideally multilingual) Swiss folklore band. The Swiss National Day 2023 will take place on Saturday, July 29. This is an urgent issue for 2023 and must be resolved near the beginning of the year. But it's also necessary for the future. Your collaboration would be greatly appreciated!

For anyone interested in the committee and / or with information about a suitable band, please contact us at [fedesuisse@gmail.com](mailto:fedesuisse@gmail.com).

Continue to visit our website [www.fedesuisse.com](http://www.fedesuisse.com) and follow us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/Fedesuisse](https://www.facebook.com/Fedesuisse).

VOTRE COMITÉ 2022

YOUR 2022 COMMITTEE



## Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce (Western Canada)

### The Congress of the Swiss Abroad in the Spirit of Democracy

Every year in August, the Organisation of the Swiss Abroad (OSA) organises a three-day congress for the Swiss abroad, an event popular with those interested in the mobility of the Fifth Switzerland.

In 2022, the congress took place in beautiful Lugano, where some 400 participants met fellow Swiss from all over the world, listened to exciting speeches, learned about current events in Switzerland, talked about their own experiences, and met interesting personalities from Swiss business and politics.

Within the OSA, Canada is represented by six elected Council Members (see below), whose mission it is to:

**Inform:** Keep the Swiss abroad informed and in touch with current affairs and politics in Switzerland;

**Network:** Offer services to strengthen the bond among the Swiss abroad, and between the Swiss public and its expatriate community;

**Represent:** Support and defend the interests of Swiss citizens living abroad before the Swiss authorities and public;

**Advise:** Offer free, up-to-date advice on issues related to emigration, living abroad, and returning to Switzerland.

Read more about OSA Canada at <https://www.osa-canada.org/about>.



OSA Canada Council Members 2021 – 2025. From left to right: Sam Oettli, Antoine Belaieff, Suzanne Schürmann, Johann Roduit, Thomas Arn, and Philippe Magnenat.  
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**Thomas Arn** and **Johann Roduit** are Directors at the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce and OSA Canada Council Members for 2021–2025. Both participated in the 2022 congress. We interviewed them about the congress and about their roles within the OSA.

#### How did you experience participating in the Congress of the Swiss Abroad?

"As a first time participant, it was very exciting to attend the congress. There was a good vibe, and I really enjoyed the event." – Thomas Arn

"It was a great experience. There are many challenges regarding how Swiss citizens abroad can fully participate in the democratic process. As delegates, we continue to lobby to improve the voting system from abroad, to ensure we can have better banking services, and to strengthen the possibility for the Swiss abroad to access the voluntary old-age / disability pension." – Johann Roduit

#### What was your main objective in participating in the event?

"My main objective was to start understanding the whole organisation better and to see how all the parts and pieces fit together (Swiss Community / Congress / Council / Executive, etc)." – Thomas Arn

"I'm particularly interested in promoting our Swiss cultural heritage abroad. I think our heritage does not stop at the geographical borders of Switzerland. On the contrary, Swiss immigrants have been influential all over the world and have left many artifacts (even chalets!) that should be preserved. This has not been thought of much in Switzerland, but I'm thrilled that "Culture" will be the theme of next year's congress. It will be an opportunity to think deeper about these questions and opportunities." – Johann Roduit

#### What was the highlight of these three days for you?

"The highlight was certainly meeting delegates from all over the world – a rich experience based on all these different stories. It renewed my interest in politics and showed me that active participation is important." – Thomas Arn

"It was tremendously enriching to meet with Swiss people from all over the world, and to see how we can work together to make the lives of Swiss citizens abroad better." – Johann Roduit

#### Did you have a special task during the event as an OSA Delegate?

"There was no task assigned to me personally. I finally wanted to meet all five Canadian delegates in person, and as many other delegates as possible. There was also time to connect with the media, Swiss politicians (National- / Ständerat), and with team members from the office in Berne." – Thomas Arn

"No special task. Just being a voice for the Swiss living in Western Canada." – Johann Roduit

#### What would you like to accomplish as an OSA Delegate?

"I would like to stay in touch with the different delegates, liaise with the Swiss in Canada who want to stay in touch, support them if there are questions / concerns / ideas, and connect them with the proper channels. Furthermore, I want to work on the mission and the Canadian priorities as per above to move the needle in the right direction." – Thomas Arn

"I would like to ensure that "official" Switzerland starts to think about what it means to protect and promote the Swiss cultural heritage found outside the geographical borders of our country." – Johann Roduit