



Annual General Meeting – May 27, 2010 The William Tell Restaurant, Vancouver, BC

President's Report AGM 2010

On behalf of the board of directors of the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce (British Columbia) Incorporated, I am pleased to present to you a report of our Chamber's activities during the past 13 months.

Our members, at our April 29, 2009 AGM, elected a board of eleven directors with a mandate to strengthen and expand the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce in British Columbia and Alberta.

I am pleased to report that 2009 and the start of 2010 were packed with a record of activities, which enabled our organization to adapt to changing times as well as respond to requests of our membership.

We organized/participated in the following events with the help of our board members, volunteers and generous sponsors.

The **Swiss Academics Evening** took place on **May 22, 2009** at the Residence of the Consul General of Switzerland, Mr. Walter Deplazes and was also attended by some of our Board Members.

The annual **Summer Night fundraising reception**, once again was hosted by the Consul General of Switzerland Walter Deplazes and his spouse Siegrid at their residence on **June 3**. The event, which was organized by several Directors of the Chamber and the Consular office, was a huge success with well over 150 attendees. Donations from over 20 different companies, with a retail value of just over \$10,000 netted approx. \$6,000 which were dedicated to future Chamber business development. A special treat offered by the host was a musical interlude by traditional Swiss Alphorn players.

The annual **Swiss National Day** celebration on **August 1** was organized by members of the Swiss Canadian Mountain Range Association and the Swiss Society. It provided a great opportunity for SCCC members to attend, network and enjoy this traditional event.

On **September 8**, a delegation of 93 young individuals from Switzerland participated at the **Worldskills** Event in Calgary, Alberta. Following the event, the delegation arrived in Vancouver and met with a Director of the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce (BC & AB), as well as Swiss Consul General, Mr. Walter Deplazes for a private dinner function. Switzerland ranked #2 in this challenging and interesting competition for apprentice from around the world.

From **September 14 through September 18, 2009** our Swiss Consul General introduced Swiss culture to our city. Traditional Swiss Alphorn musicians performed for 30 minutes in various locations, accompanied by two people in traditional Swiss costumes who handed out famous Lindt & Sprüngli chocolates. The purpose of this event was to promote Swiss traditions and culture, and also served to highlight Swiss presence in Vancouver.

The Chamber held its 7th Networking Dinner & Drinks series on **September 29** at the Bridges Restaurant. This Olympic themed event organized by Maria Rajanayagam and sponsored by RBC Royal Bank featured a presentation on "**How to get around in 2010**" during the Winter Olympics.

On **October 21**, new members who joined the Chamber in 2009 were invited to a **welcome dinner** at the residence of Swiss Consul General, Walter Deplazes and Siegrid Deplazes.



On **November 24**, the Consul General of Switzerland in Vancouver hosted a **Raclette evening** at the Bridges Restaurant, dedicated as House of Switzerland Canada 2010 in Vancouver. Part of that evening also featured the Climate Trail Exhibition, which was already shown at UBC as well as SFU.

To kick-off the holiday season, Sean Muggah of Borden Ladner Gervais LLP sponsored a **pre-Christmas cocktail reception** on **November 26** with Swiss wines, gourmet charcuterie and fine cheeses.

From **Nov. 25 to Dec. 11**, the Consulate General of Switzerland showcased an interactive display on climate change at various locations in Vancouver. The “**Climate Trail**” display featured Swiss contributions to addressing the challenges of climate change, and provided both visual and written information. Experts from Switzerland and B.C. addressed research and development as well as barriers and opportunities in a number of areas for clean energy such as hydroelectricity, waste-to-energy and geothermal energy. The Chamber provided a \$1'000 contribution in support of these events. Delegates from the SCCC attended various functions to represent the chamber.

On **January 12**, Diane Kunic from Dexter Associates Realty and Darren Downs from Ernst & Young sponsored the first event in 2010 in cooperation with the Italian Chamber of Commerce. **Everything you need to know about the future Harmonized Sales Tax (HST)** was featured at the Bridges Restaurant with guest speaker Ken Ghag from Ernst & Young.

On **February 5, 2010**, the Winter Olympics 2010 **Houses of Switzerland Canada** officially opened their doors. **Bridges Restaurant in Vancouver** and **Mountain Club in Whistler**.

One day prior to the Olympic Games Opening, the **President of the Swiss Confederation, Ms. Doris Leuthard** hosted a private function to which several representatives of the Board and some members were invited.

On **February 12** our Chamber organized an **OSEC Zurich** sponsored meeting for **Metro Vancouver** Government Officials and Executives to meet and explore business development in the environmental and technological industry. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between the Vancouver Economic Development Commission of the City of Vancouver and OSEC, Zurich.

Switzerland Trade and Investment Promotion in collaboration with the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce organized a reception with representatives from the Swiss Academia, Swiss business and the Swiss Government. This exclusive reception on **Sports Innovation** was held on **February 15** at the Bridges Restaurant. Attendees learned about Switzerland's significant contribution to sports technology and innovation.

On **February 25 and 26**, the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce organized several meetings for a **delegation from the Canton and the City of Geneva**, which are considering to host the Winter Olympic Games in 2022. This visit paved the way for economic business development between BC and the French-speaking part of Switzerland.

On **March 24, 2010**, a luncheon was held featuring presentations of various Swiss cleantech and environmental companies that have developed cutting edge technologies and methodologies. On **March 25, 2010**, a reception was held and featured the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between two leading environmental organizations, SVUT Switzerland and BCEIA Canada. Together they will further explore cooperation in the field of environmental technology and related matters. These two events featured great networking opportunities with various associations and companies.

The biennial **Globe 2010** conference, an event dedicated to the environment, took place at the Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre between **March 24 - 26, 2010**. Our Chamber in coordination with the Swiss Consulate General, OSEC Zurich, Trade Promotion in Chicago and Cleantech Switzerland sourced 13 Swiss environmental companies to exhibit their products in the Swiss Pavilion of 1,200 sq. ft. Serious business development leads could be initiated between Canadian and Swiss organizations.



Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce (B.C.) Inc.

790 – 999 Canada Place, Vancouver BC Canada V6C 3E1

T: 604 688-7947 F: 604 687-7945

www.swisscanadianchamber.com
chamber@swissccc.com

Historically, the Chamber President holds the flag of the SCCC and endeavours to motivate board members, advisors and volunteers to help grow this organization which now can be considered a “real Chamber”, rather than a businessmen’s club.

3 years ago, membership was less than one third of today and consideration to dissolve the SCCC was given. Today, we have almost 100 members, mostly businesses, considerable financial means – reserves increased from \$24,491 to now \$64,000. We now have established close contact to Canadian and Swiss businesses and Governments and are ready to offer the full services of a Chamber.

While many board members have been supportive in achieving this goal, I wish to recognize and express appreciation and thanks to 3 individuals who have gone way beyond their call of duty.

Walter Deplazes, our Swiss Consul General and Honorary Director of our Board has demonstrated unprecedented initiative and leadership and never failed in supporting the SCCC if and when needed.

Erich Amgwerd, our Director of Communications has spent endless hours in developing and maintaining a new SCCC webpage and newsletter. During my frequent business trips, Erich has never failed to take over and coordinate the many tasks of the President. Erich will not stand for re-election but volunteers to offer support as an advisor to our Chamber.

Vince Sciamanna, our Director of Networking has significantly increased his involvement which included the organizing of several events during the Olympic Games, as well as Globe 2010 and now is spearheading a Cleantech Switzerland project to develop business between companies in our geographic region and Switzerland.

This concludes the President’s 2009/2010 report.

Thomas Amgwerd
President
Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce (British Columbia) Inc.