



Annual General Meeting – Wednesday, March 30, 2011 Borden Ladner Gervais LLP, Vancouver, BC

President's Report AGM 2011

On behalf of the board of directors of our Chamber, I am delighted to present to you a report of last year's activities.

At our May 27, 2010 AGM, our members elected a board of nine 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 our Chamber organized or participated in the following events during 2010 and spring 2011.

After **GLOBE 2010**, the Consulate General of Switzerland and our Chamber joined forces and were awarded a mandate from Cleantech Switzerland to assess business development opportunities for Swiss Cleantech companies in British Columbia. This **Report „Cleantech Intelligence and Opportunities in British Columbia“**, written by various Directors, members and experts, was distributed to several companies and academic organizations. The report was updated in December and some companies and interested people got back to the Chamber seeking support for expanding existing or starting new business here in B.C. Special thanks go to Cesar Oboni, Oboni Riskope Associates Inc., Richard Sones and Claes Fredriksson for their valuable input, and to the other authors Stefan Aepli, Bernhard Gafner, Walter Deplazes, Andreas Bayer and of course Florian Gabriel and Vince Sciamanna.

Our Chamber continues to be very active in the Cleantech sector which includes:

- Liaison with leaders in the Cleantech industry, various government entities and academia
- Research in the clean technology market in British Columbia and Alberta
- Preparation of a trade mission to Switzerland in connection with waste to energy and waste water treatment
- Various forthcoming industry related speaker events

On **June 29**, once again the annual **Summer Night fundraising reception** was hosted by the former Honorary Director Walter Deplazes and his spouse Siegrid at their residence. The event was a great success with more than 110 attendees. Our guests were spoiled with nice wines, delicious amuse bouche, Nespresso coffee and Lindt chocolates. We received generous donations from many sponsors and netted \$3,100 which are being used for Chamber business development. Special thanks go to our gracious hosts past Consul General of Switzerland Walter & Siegrid Deplazes, the event organizers Octavio Rodriguez, Daniela Nathanael and Melissa Lo, the accordion players Bruno Lampart and Rose Menzi and the numerous sponsors and successful bidders.

The members of the Swiss Canadian Mountain Range Association and the Swiss Society organized the traditional **Swiss National Day** celebration on **July 31** at which the SCCC again participated. This evening was a great opportunity for SCCC members to network and enjoy this celebration.

Louis Palmer, who visited Vancouver in July 2008 with his SolarTaxi, returned to Lotus Land on **November 12**. This time he teamed up in a group of three Zero Emission Vehicles to launch their North American leg for a journey around the globe. Their trip started on August 16, 2010 in Geneva with electric vehicles for the longest and greenest race of all times "the **ZERO Race**". The participants from Switzerland, Germany and Australia introduced their vehicles here in Vancouver. Representatives of the press and many interested people attended this successful event which was organized by Mr. Hans-Peter Willi, Deputy Consul General of Switzerland. Our past Consul General Mr. Walter Deplazes was proud to host this event and promote an innovative and clean Switzerland.

This years' **Pre-Xmas Cocktail reception on November 30** was again held at Borden Ladner Gervais and included delicious wines, gourmet charcuterie and fine cheese. Proceeds from this event were donated to the Covenant House in Vancouver.

On **December 12** several member organizations of the Swiss Society, the Consulate General of Switzerland and our Chamber organized an appreciation Lunch in honour of the Doebeli Family, the owners and



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

operators of the **William Tell Restaurant** from 1964-2010. Various people expressed their thanks to them and the Doebeli Family was presented with a plaque in recognition of their outstanding contribution and services during the past 46 years.

Our last event on **December 14, 2010** was held in the offices of AMG Global Research Inc. to bid **farewell** to our Honorary Board Member and Consul General of Switzerland, **Mr. Walter Deplazes and his spouse Siegrid**. In three and a half years, Walter Deplazes built a legacy of how a Consul General can successfully orchestrate leadership, support and Swiss pride. His relentless engagement enabled also our Chamber to grow significantly and transform into a true business organization.

On **January 20, 2011** to celebrate the breakthrough of the Gotthard tunnel "Alptransit" and to increase awareness about this achievement, the Chamber organized an event with focus on the **Gotthard Railway Tunnel** construction and other British Columbia tunnel projects. An audience of almost 50 guests manifested strong interest for this presentation. The lecturer of the day, Mr. Dean Brox, P. Eng., Senior Project Manager - Tunnels Associate at Hatch Mott MacDonald conducted a detailed and very interesting presentation enhanced by unique pictures. The consensus among attendees was overwhelmingly positive. At the Luncheon auction, our president was the successful bidder for a Striated Gneiss (Swiss rock) from the Gotthard tunnel. The relevant auction proceeds once again were donated to the Covenant House in Vancouver. With a topic so popular and interesting, we are now contemplating to duplicate this event also in Calgary and will inform you in due course.

Our Chamber also **promoted** several events of other organizations.

Change of presidency

Upon assuming the Chamber's Presidency four years ago the question whether or not the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce in Vancouver should cease to exist was being considered seriously as paid up membership had dropped to 39 and event activity was very slow. With the selection of a new vibrant Board and the implementation of new operational and marketing strategies such as change of membership classes, different event planning, significant changes to the webpage, and last but not least a focus on the environmental industry with renewed attendance at GLOBE 2008 and 2010 we were able to attract increased interest.

During these past four years, our membership has tripled to 114 and so did our financial resources to presently CAD 75,000. We have a strong and committed new Board, a close relationship with the Consulate General of Switzerland and several business organizations in Switzerland and Canada.

Our geographical expansion into Alberta should furthermore provide for additional opportunities.

I am confident that my successor and the new Board will grow membership to 150 and increase the financial reserves to CAD 100,000 within the next two years. Being the president of the Chamber has been an onerous task but provided me with an opportunity to "give back" to the Community without any remuneration or other financial compensation. As our By-Laws limit, the post of president to 4 years, I suggest passing on this responsibility to Vince Sciamanna who we expect to be appointed by our Directors during the next board meeting. Vince has been an executive of the Swiss based company Garaventa in Canada. I am convinced that he will lead the SCCC with great success and I hope you all will provide Vince with support and loyalty in the years to come.

While many board members and advisors have been supportive, I wish to especially recognize and express appreciation and thanks to 4 individuals who have gone way beyond their call of duty.

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

Sean Muggah, our Corporate Secretary, has provided tremendous support in legal as well as structural matters.

Erich Amgwerd, the host of our communications platform and SCCC webmaster.

Vince Sciamanna, our Vice President who has shown enormous initiative particularly in the Cleantech sector.



I also would like to recognize and express thanks to:

1. All other Board Members, namely Stefan Aepli, Andreas Bayer, Darren Downs, Pierre Duflon, Roy Klassen and Octavio Rodriguez for their dedication to the Chamber,
2. Erich Amgwerd, Thomas Bissig and Rick Wagner and for their advice and support,
3. AMG Global Research Inc., for allocating free office space and infrastructure to the SCCC for the entire year,
4. Borden Ladner Gervais for offering their premises and refreshments for our board meetings and special events and for administering our company records,
5. The Swiss Consulate General in Vancouver which provided the administrative office space for several months and to their staff for ongoing support,
6. Garaventa Lift Group for providing office space in Surrey to our past intern Emanuele Leoni and valuable support with other interns,
7. Our auditor, Beat Joehl, who has once again provided his expertise in auditing our chamber's financials,
8. Adrian Amgwerd, who has provided guidance in the purchasing and installation of our Chamber laptop and Chamber phones,
9. Emanuele Leoni, our intern for three months, who has provided an important new communication tool for the SCCC, the SCCC-Blog,
10. Florian Gabriel, Trade Commissioner of the Swiss Business Hub Canada, for his cooperation and great work in the Cleantech sector,
11. Our Project Coordinator Luzia Fontana for supporting the SCCC in all administrative duties and in organizing various events and activities,
12. And last but not least, special thanks go to you our members for your unwavering support in maintaining a dynamic and successful Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce in British Columbia and Alberta.

This concludes the President's 2010/2011 report.

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