



## Annual General Meeting – April 29, 2009 The William Tell Restaurant, Vancouver, BC

### President's Report AGM 2009

On behalf of the board of directors of the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce (British Columbia) Incorporated, I would like to present to you a short report of last year's activities of our chamber.

Our members, at our April 29, 2008 AGM, elected a board of eleven directors with the mandate to strengthen and expand the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce in British Columbia and Alberta.

Thanks to considerable support of our directors, and intense engagement of Consul General of Switzerland, Walter Deplazes as well as Erich Amgwerd, I am pleased to announce that 2008 and the start of 2009 were filled with a variety of traditional chamber events and the introduction of several new ones, 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 assistance of our board members, generous sponsors, donors, individuals as well as corporate members.

On **June 12**, a business breakfast "**Your International Management Gateway to Europe**" presented by Location Promotion Switzerland and Partners was held in Calgary, where a distinguished group of Swiss and American delegates discussed the opportunities provided by Switzerland as an access point for North American businesses entering the European market. The introduction was made by **Andreas Bayer**, SCCC Director and Honorary Consul of Switzerland in Calgary.

The following day on **June 13**, an identical business meeting was presented in Vancouver by the BC Chamber of Commerce, together with the Consulate General of Switzerland in Vancouver and Location Promotion Switzerland and Partners.

SCCC members and their guests were invited to join an exhilarating journey through **The Alps** during a special free preview of this breathtaking new film at the **OMNIMAX on June 17**. The event was supported by Presence Switzerland, the Consul General of Switzerland, Mr. Walter Deplazes and Mr. Marcus Dell, a local mountaineer who has climbed extensively in North and South America and in the Himalaya.

The Board of Directors of the SCCC met with His Excellency Dr. Werner Baumann, Ambassador of Switzerland to Canada on **June 23**. SCCC members were invited to propose / suggest business related questions regarding "Canada ~ Switzerland" which the Board could relay to the Ambassador.

On **June 24**, the third **Networking Dinner & Drinks** event took place at the William Tell Restaurant.

A special event welcoming Louis Palmer from Switzerland and his **SolarTaxi** at the launch of his North America tour was organized by the Consulate General of Switzerland at the Science World and attended by several members of the SCCC on **July 3**.

On **July 9**, we enjoyed the wonderful **Summer Night reception** and fundraising event hosted by the gracious Consul General of Switzerland Walter Deplazes and his spouse Siegrid at their residence. We received generous donations (in excess of \$4,000) and contributions enabling the SCCC to grow financial reserves for future chamber activities. This event was organized by Erich Amgwerd, Maria Rajanayagam and Octavio Rodriguez.

The annual **Swiss National Day** celebration on **August 2** was organized at the chalet 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.



We returned to the **William Tell Restaurant** for our fourth **Networking Dinner & Drinks** event on **September 4**.

On **October 2**, SCCC members and the general public were invited to attend a film featuring the Swiss Architects, Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron, designers of the Beijing "Birds Nest", at the Vancouver International Film Festival, coordination with the Consulate General of Switzerland in Vancouver through our SCCC Director, Maria Rajanayagam.

The **Swiss Academics Evening** was hosted at the Residence of the Consul General of Switzerland, Mr. Walter Deplazes, in the evening of **October 22**.

On **October 29**, we saw the debut of a **Gourmet workshop**, organized by SCCC Member, Daniela Amaudruz-Poletti and coordinated by our Director, Maria Rajanayagam. The wine tasting and food pairing was orchestrated by SCCC Corporate Member, Philippe Doebeli, owner of the William Tell Restaurant.

On **November 21** a book reading by SCCC member, Bernadette Calonego materialized at the Vancouver Library.

On **January 22, 2009**, we welcomed a special guest from Ottawa, **Mr. Paul Dubé**, Canada's first Taxpayers' Ombudsman on his first official visit to Vancouver. Accompanied by Ms. Rox-Anne D'Aoust and Christopher Bozik, Mr. Dubé informed our membership and guests on his innovative and welcome new mandate during dinner at the William Tell Restaurant.

On **February 19**, we hosted a dinner at the William Tell Restaurant featuring Mr. **Werner Augsburg**, Chef de Mission Switzerland, who was briefing the audience on the role of Switzerland in the Olympics 2010 in Vancouver.

A luncheon seminar exploring valuable trade, investment, science and technology opportunities between **Canada and the EFTA** countries: Switzerland, Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein, was held on **March 4** at the Simon Fraser University (downtown). It was organized by the Regional Office of the Trade Commissioner Service and the Consulate General of Switzerland. Representatives from the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, EFTA Ambassadors, including **His Excellency Dr. Werner Baumann** and Senior Trade Commissioners based in the EFTA capitals attended this seminar. They were also joined by **Dr. Guido Barsuglia**, Deputy Regional Chief North America, Swiss State Secretariat for Economic Affairs, Berne and CEOs of different companies.

On **March 20**, in celebration of the International Day of the Francophonie 2009, the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs Switzerland in collaboration with the Consulate General of Switzerland in Vancouver presented "**Romands de vie**" featuring three artists, three worlds, a unique show to the special delight of francophones, francophiles and music lovers.

On **April 1**, our Directors, Dierk Ullrich & Maria Rajanayagam organized a Business Breakfast Meeting with guest speakers Ken Veldman from the 2010 Commerce Centre and Betty MacLeod, VP of Business Development from RBC. The topic for the event was Exploring 2010 Games-related business opportunities for you and your business.

On **April 26**, our Chamber members were invited to a complimentary brunch at the Bridges Restaurant (new Olympic house of Switzerland) for a public viewing of the preliminary round of the **International Ice Hockey Federation World Championship 2009** between Switzerland and Germany. The event was organized and hosted by the Consulate Generals of Switzerland and Germany.

After the official part of our AGM, we look forward to sharing with you the plans of our Chamber for the next 12 months.



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Before I close, I would like to express special thanks to:

1. The Swiss Consulate General in Vancouver, which provided tremendous support, particularly through Consul General Mr. Walter Deplazes,
2. Bank Vontobel AG, Representative Office in Vancouver, for sponsoring the administrative office, resources and financial contributions to the Chamber for the past five consecutive years,
3. Borden Ladner Gervais for offering their premises for our Board Meetings and administering our company records through Corporate Secretary and Board Member, Sean Muggah,
4. Erich Amgwerd, Andreas Bayer, Thomas Bissig, Darren Downs, Dr. Benno Nigg, Sean Muggah, Maria Rajanayagam, Octavio Rodriguez, Vince Sciamanna and Dierk Ullrich for their dedication to the chamber,
5. Rick Wagner for his advice and support,
6. Our auditor, Beat Joel, who has once again provided his services in auditing our chambers financials,
7. Our Corporate Member Phillip Doebeli, restaurateur extraordinaire for his hospitality and care,
8. 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.

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