

# Regional news : United States

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# REGIONAL NEWS UNITED STATES

## Editorial

### Dear Readers in the United States



First let me wish all of you a Happy and Healthy New Year! Here in Los Angeles, we did it in style. One of our friends heard and saw the "Philharmonic Brass Band Zürich – Generell 5" while on a trip to Switzerland. He was so thrilled by their performance, that he immediately invited them to come and play at the New Year's Eve

party at the Swiss Park and offered to pay the plane tickets. Well, it was worth it and we all had a great evening. In order to save the band some money, my husband and I (mostly I!!!) invited two couples and the twelve months old baby Alina to stay at our house. During their short stay, all the musicians found some time for sight seeing and the ladies literally raided a nearby outlet mall. It felt like they wanted to single-handedly restart the American economy!


On the last day, the men even found time for an alphorn concert in our backyard. Did you know that alphorns don't mind getting wet?



It seems that Swiss are all closet writers! We have again four book reviews – three of the authors are women. And Hans Rey has a photo album of his exploits all over the world. You should be familiar with him by now as we also published an article about his foundation that brings bicycles to underprivileged people in Africa and Asia. Swiss Review # 1 – thanks to you – is again interesting and should have something for everybody. So, enjoy!

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## Washington Olympic Swiss Club

9195

On November 27, 2012, the Olympic Swiss Club met for an early Christmas Celebration.



We had Fondue, Salad, Veggies, and Apples, followed by a home made Black Forest Cake and nicely prepared bags with Swiss Christmas cookies – Mailänderli, Zimtsterne, Änisbrötli and Brunsl. The small group enjoyed the afternoon and each other's company.

Of course, we did finish the gathering with some Christmas songs. The Olympic Swiss Club was formed in February 2003.

We meet 2 to 4 times a year.

For more information, contact

ELISABETH HEGYI AND ANNALIS SCHUTZMAN

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## California Advent in Basel and Harmonie in LA

I found myself unexpectedly spending a week in my hometown of Basel at the beginning of December due to family business that needed my attention. While it was not easy squeezing some time out of the busy pre-holiday season, I thoroughly enjoyed a glimpse of a traditional Advent in Basel. My first full day began with a magical dusting of snow that reminded me how far I was from balmy California. It set the perfect tone for visiting the Christmas market in the center of town and enjoying the displays of handcrafted and typically European decorations. I added a couple of glittering advent calendars to my growing collection and strolled under the illuminated trees outside the cathedral. From a retired ferryboat that housed a nativity scene to



The Swiss Singing Society Harmonie under the direction of Rodger Whitten, on stage at Swiss Park during their Christmas Concert

Photo: Theresa Lehmann

the edible treats enjoyed by families gathered around open fire pits, the escape from the commercial aspects of the season was most welcome. Shared meals and board games with family and friends rounded out this sentimental interlude. The snow that fell 10 cm (4") deep during my last night in Basel made it hard to leave. I treated myself to a leisurely early-morning walk around the neighborhood of my youth and caught on

camera a little boy sledding where my siblings and I used to glide down the same hill every time snow fell. How harmless this little mound looks to my adult eyes!

After a long but smooth flight home I found myself at the Swiss Park on the very next day: first to assist with the kids' crafts during the Matterhorn Samichlaus party and then for the annual Harmonie Christmas concert and dinner. Sitting in

the hushed dark of the hall among a capacity audience proved that the Swiss here still know how to escape the craziness of holiday preparations for a musical treat. The combination of festive singing, trumpet accompaniment and Alphorn playing made me appreciate the ability of the Swiss-American community to transform our new home with a perfect blend of both cultures. How wonderful to feel thoroughly at home on two continents. Thank you, Harmonie, for making my return from Switzerland feel just right. As is often the case after crossing the distance between the U.S. and Switzerland in just a few hours, I find myself wondering if my trip was real or just a fanciful respite from my busy life here in California.

ISABELLE MEYER

PRESIDENT, UNITED SWISS

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*New York*

*The Success Story of Swiss Foreign Direct Investment in the United States*

Switzerland may be smaller than the US but it plays an important role in the US economy. In 2010, Switzerland was the number one US foreign investor, topping countries like the UK, Japan, France and Germany. The recently published 2012 report on Swiss Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) in the US reveals that Switzerland's cumulative investment reached \$212 billion this

year and that Swiss affiliates support 430,600 jobs across all 50 states. Swiss companies have invested more in Research & Development than any other country; while other highly concentrated investment areas included the Financial and Manufacturing sectors. Additionally, the average salary paid to employees of Swiss companies tops the salaries of those employed by other foreign-owned companies operating in America. On November 27, 2012, the Consulate General of Switzerland in New York partnered with the Graduate School of Business at

Fordham University and the Swiss-American Chamber of Commerce (SACC) to host an event centered on "The Success Story of Swiss FDI in the US". SACC CEO Martin Naville presented the 2012 report, which was followed by a lively panel discussion



The panelists, from left to right: Martin Naville, CEO SACC; Eric Smith, CEO Swiss Re Americas; Tazeem Pasha, Manager, Global Business Attraction, SelectUSA, US Department of Commerce; Professor David Gautschi, Dean of the Fordham Graduate School of Business

with Eric Smith, CEO of Swiss Re Americas, Tazeem Pasha, Manager of Global Business Attraction at the US Department of Commerce, and Fordham Business School's Dean David Gautschi as the moderator. The panelists shared their points of view on reasons they believe there's a large amount of Swiss investment in the US, in addition to explaining various factors that contribute to the success of Switzerland's economy. They also emphasized the current challenges Swiss businesses face, such as increased US regulations introduced through the implementation of the Dodd-Frank Act. Throughout the evening, the discussion broadened

to include other countries and, in particular, how China is rising to compete with the US as the biggest FDI recipient worldwide. To conclude the discussion, the panel offered remarks on how the US could ensure it remains attractive for FDI in the future and the audience was invited to participate in a Question & Answer session.

Swiss FDI is predicted to play an increasingly important role in America. For more information on the 2012 report on Swiss FDI in the US, visit:

<http://bit.ly/swissFDI>

MICHAEL VETTIGER

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Photos: Consulate General of Switzerland in New York



Martin Naville, CEO SACC during his presentation



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## A Life of Mountain Bike Adventures

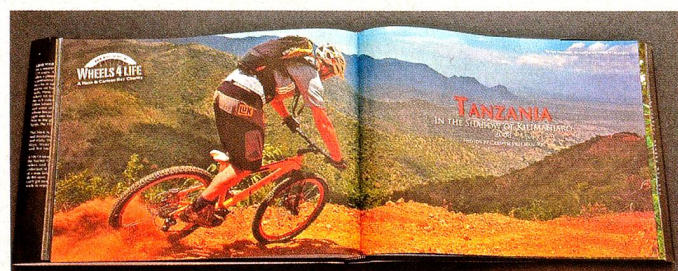
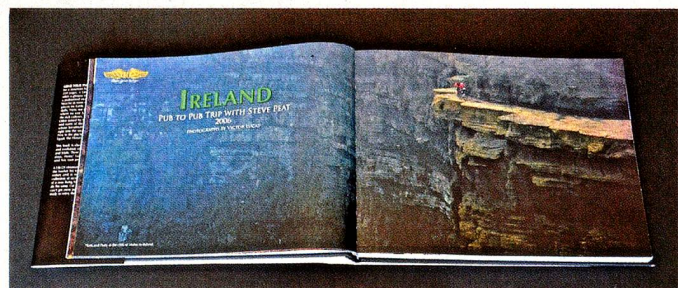
By Hans Rey

25 Years of Riding the World, a photo essay, offering a detailed glimpse into Hans Rey's career as a professional mountain biker and icon, riding his bicycles in some of the most beautiful and remote places on Earth.

Grab your passport and join Swiss citizen Hans Rey for a mountain bike journey around the world in 224 illustrious pages, reliving the history and evolution of mountain biking, freeriding, and trials. A Life of Mountain Bike Adventures could become the bucket list for discerning and adventurous riders and it may invoke wanderlust. From Machu Picchu in Peru to the glaciers of the Alps, the Pyramids of Egypt, the Himalayas, to the Jungles of Borneo, experience the adventure first hand as Hans along with fellow world-renowned cyclists and photographers explore and ride places where no one has before; meanwhile, showcasing the rich cultures, and wonderful people along the way.

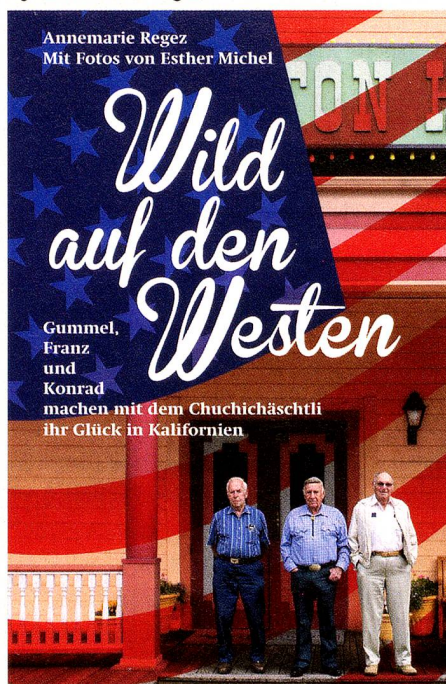
This collection of incredible destinations is the result of a man living his dream and inspiring others to do the same. Get ready to be tempted, and if you can't get away just now, sit back, relax, and enjoy the world of Hans Rey in pictures.

The book is available for \$39.95 plus S&H at fine bike shops, through QBP distribution or can be ordered online at [www.hansrey.com](http://www.hansrey.com).



## "Wild auf den Westen"

By Annemarie Regez



In the 19th century a big part of the Swiss population was living in such misery that people emigrated to far away places like the US or Canada to escape famine and financial crisis. That was not the case for Franz Auf der Maur, Konrad Rickenbach and Franz Schmidig. These three men from the Canton of Schwyz decided to leave Switzerland for good without any knowledge of the English language. They were men of modest

means. Inspired by Karl May and Jack London novels they were up for the big adventure.

They settled outside of San Francisco and lived the American Dream, working their way up to great wealth. Sometimes the road was quite rocky. Was it a coincidence that their plant produced kitchen cabinets or "Chuchichäschтли" - the Swiss tongue twister par excellence? The story of their lives describes big achievements as well as devastating moments - it is a story of a friendship that lasts to the present day. Wild auf den Westen - Gummel, Franz und Konrad machen mit dem Chuchichäschтли ihr Glück in Kalifornien.

Mit Fotos von Esther Michel

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## What if Butterflies were Messengers of God?

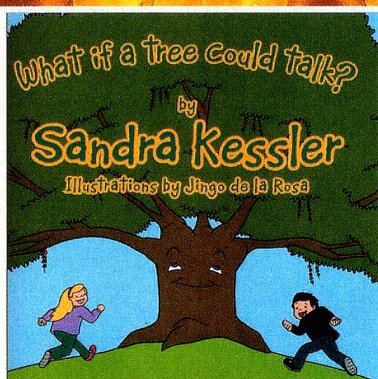
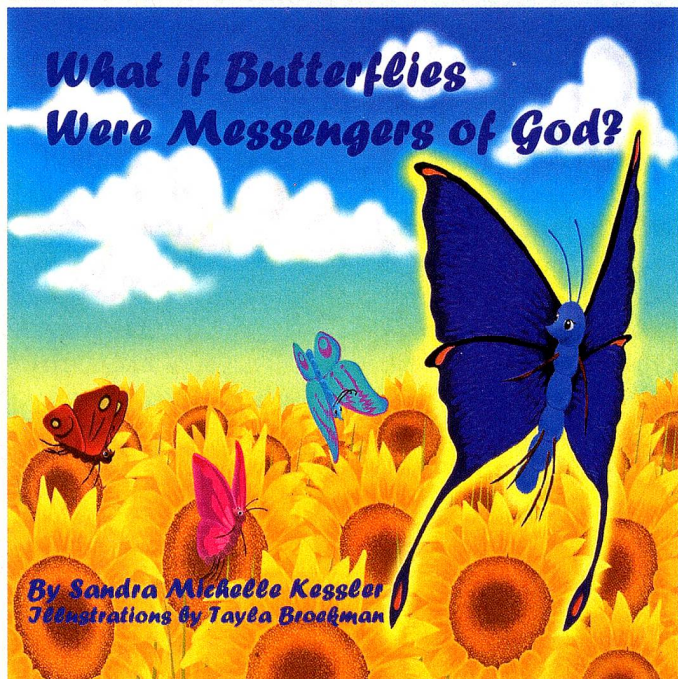
By Sandra Michelle Kessler

Illustrations by Tayla Brockman

Sandra Michelle Kessler, a mom, teacher and mental health counselor, currently lives in Jacksonville, Florida with her husband and their six-year-old son Sean. Sandra grew up in Switzerland, where an appreciation for nature is instilled in every child..... even the young at heart.

Xutterfly, the sapphire blue butterfly, was the epitome of grace and wisdom. This sapphire blue butterfly literally lit the way for many of her friends. What her friends did not know about Xutterfly, was that she carried a big secret that was to be revealed to the other butterflies when they proved ready to be the bearers of such an important message...Xutterfly carried the secret of light.

The book is available at Amazon.com



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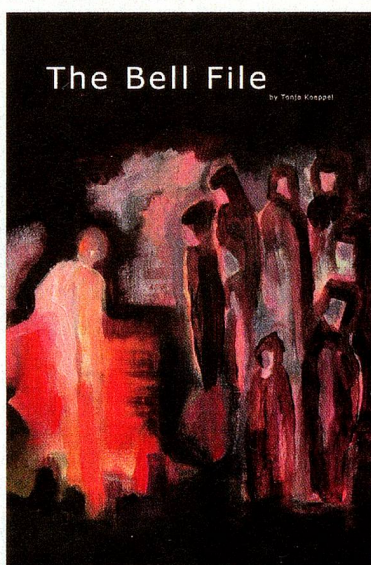
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## The Bell File

By Tonja Koepfel

The author was born and educated in Switzerland where she worked as a science writer for leading newspapers and magazines. After moving to the US with her family, she spent a short time as a research chemist, and then taught chemistry at a college in New Jersey for many years. In addition to her degree in organic chemistry from the Swiss Federal

Institute of Technology, she has a PhD in the history of science from the University of Pennsylvania. In her retirement, she returned to her first avocation, writing. When she moved to Houston, Texas, she enrolled in the Novel Writing program at Rice University, including the advanced seminar, which helped her make the transition from scientist to fiction writer. The Bell File is her third published novel, after Astral Twin and Secrets of Adamant House.



All through the ages, brilliant minds have agonized over the question of human destiny when life, as we know it, expires. Many cultures believe in reincarnation, an idea that has always been controversial in the West. However, recent studies are trying to take a scientific approach to the concept of death as the final event in a person's existence and view it rather as a stage of transition in a cycle of life and death. This novel makes a daring attempt to unravel the

mystery of Melissa Bell, who is torn between reason and belief. When she agrees to undergo regressive hypnosis, she reveals a secret, which deeply disturbs Burton Armstrong, her psychiatrist. The case of Melissa Bell becomes a challenge to his expertise and to his professional integrity, when he decides to hide from her what she told him under hypnosis and sends her to Rheticon, an old town in Switzerland, to discover the origin of her bizarre memories. Who is Melissa Bell?

The book is available on Amazon.com

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**Ein Prosit - Maybe not 100 % Swiss folklore**



**A very dedicated Highland sister cities organization**



**The visitors from Switzerland and Vice Consul Schweizer from Chicago were warmly received in Highland**

were the founders of Helvetia in Southern Illinois, where they arrived 175 years ago. Reason enough for a big celebration in early October 2012. The name of the town was later changed from Helvetia to Highland, but the Swiss history remains present in

this town of 10,000 inhabitants, many of whom are proud of their heritage and remain connected to Switzerland one way or another. Visitors from Sursee and the surrounding

region joined the three-day celebration, among them a practicing Swiss doctor, a journalist of a local newspaper and the mayor of Sursee, Mr. Ruedi Amrein, who has become close friends with the mayor of Highland, Mr. Joseph Michaelis. Also present was a former Swiss diplomat, who has become honorary citizen of the "Swiss town" in Illinois.

It was wonderful to see how the Swiss visitors were warmly welcomed and befriended by their American host families. Numerous connections were made dur-

ing the weekend and they will certainly live on. Highlight of the festivities was the big parade, in which the visitors from Switzerland and the Vice Consul from Chicago had the honor to participate and wave at the cheering crowd. Highland is an innovative community with a traditional spirit, as their slogan states.

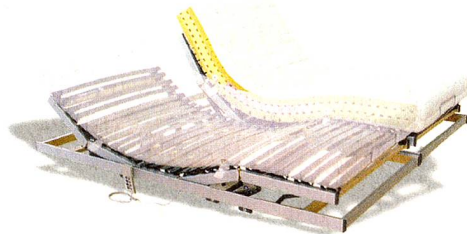
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CONSULATE GENERAL OF

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## Oklahoma Switzerland meets Tulsa Youth

Kids' World is an International Festival organized by the Tulsa Global Alliance, which takes place over three days every other year. The intent is to increase tolerance and apprecia-

educational organizations, to ethnic and cultural groups from around the world, unite with the common purpose of providing a safe, friendly environment to learn about people and cultures from faraway places. After several months of planning, the day of truth came on



The life-sized Swiss cow attracts a pint-sized admirer

tion of all cultures by creating an entertaining and educational children's event. It provides the Greater Tulsa region schools and families with a unique place to imagine, discover, and explore other cultures of the world. Sixty various exhibitors, ranging from local businesses and

at Kids' World in the Exchange Center in Tulsa. The Honorary Swiss Consul of Oklahoma, Rico Buchli, sponsored the Swiss booth. The topic presented to the visiting crowd was "Cheese Making". The main attraction was a life-size cow in front of an alpine scene overlooking the



The organizing Committee did a great job

Alps, photographed by René Imark. A rack with six cowbells was placed next to the cow and drew a crowd of all ages. The cheese-making process was explained through interactive pre-

provided handouts, brochures, maps, postcards, and information sheets. Special Swiss stickers made by Toby Mueller, a Swiss Club member, were very popular with the many kids.

sentations on a television, along with posters hanging from the back wall. In addition, numerous pictures of and facts about Switzer-



The neatly decorated Swiss Booth

land were exhibited on a large Swiss map. The entire booth was constructed of a wood frame built by Ariane and Richard Tattershall, and a green velvet backdrop decorated with the flags of the Swiss cantons, donated by Anna and André Siegenthaler, gave the booth its final touch. Swiss Tourism in New York, the Consulate General of Switzerland in Atlanta, and Alp & Dell Cheese Store in Monroe, Wisconsin graciously

The Swiss booth at Kids' World was a great success as it welcomed over 9,000 school children accompanied by teachers and adults. They will most certainly remember visiting Switzerland. Sincere thanks go to all the various Swiss Club members who helped in making this memorable event happen.

ANDRÉ SIEGENTHALER  
PRESIDENT SWISS CLUB OF OKLAHOMA  
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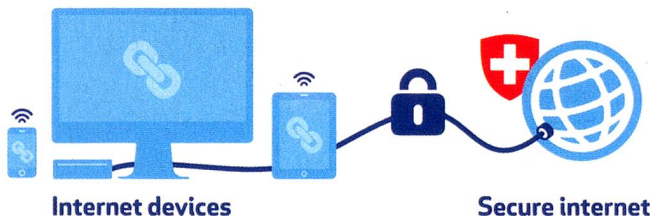
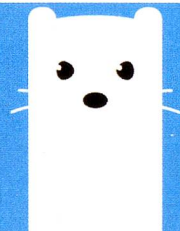
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## Nevada Oktoberfest

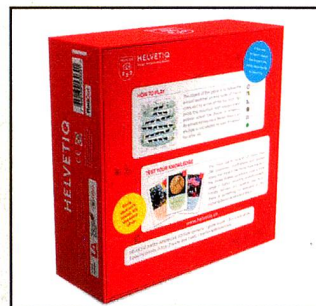
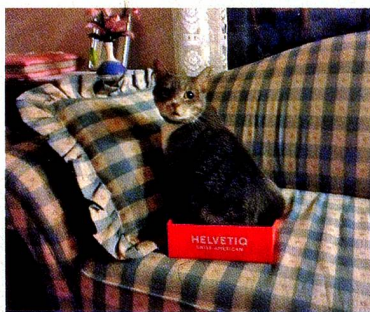
The Swiss Club of Northern Nevada had a fun filled afternoon at the Washoe Lake Park with sauerkraut, ham and kielbasa, potato salad, pretzels & more. Plenty of beer, wine and soda for the kids. Dessert and coffee to end the day. The horse buggy rides were great fun. The piñata was a special treat for the children. The grown-ups had a raffle. Everybody was in great spirit with the music of an "oompah band" playing.

OSI BRAGGER  
PRESIDENT, SWISS CLUB OF NORTHERN NEVADA  
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