



SWISS SOCIETY BANGKOK

c/o Embassy of Switzerland, G.P.O. Box 821, Bangkok 10501, Thailand

SSB Newsletter September 2018

Dear members of the Swiss Society Bangkok,



In this newsletter you will find more information about our past and future events. From now on you will get this newsletter four times a year to be informed about what's going on in the Swiss Society Bangkok.

Regularly on the agenda is our **GetTogether** which takes place every 3rd Tuesday at the Swiss Restaurant Chesa. The GetTogether always includes a short talk by a guest speaker and of course delicious food. On this note we would like to thank the Chesa team for sponsoring the dinner of the speaker and being such wonderful hosts. With up to 40 attendees each time the GetTogether is one of our most popular events, also often frequented by younger members of the Swiss Society.

Other highlights of our program of the last few months were a visit at the **Ronda factory** and the **Swiss National Day** which was attended by more than 400 guests. Ambassador **Ivo Sieber** and his wife **Gracita** were kindly opening the doors of their residence for this event which took place in their wonderful garden. Many thanks for that!

We would also like to extend our gratitude to **Andy Rellstab** who invited the members of the Swiss Society to the **EPIC Pool Party** at the Marriott Hotel.

For this year we have more events in store for you: From 15th to the 18th of November you have the opportunity to

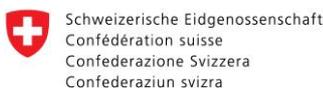
take part in the **Elephant Breakfast at Surin**. 26 of our members have already signed up for this 4 day trip which is organized by **Marc Werder** and local members of Surin following the invitation of **Kurt Amstad**. Please join us for the **traditional Raclette dinner** on 24th of November at the Swiss Embassy. The Bangkok Air Catering will make this event a culinary highlight. The **Christmas Brunch** on the 9th of December will take place in the Brasserie 9 with a special kids program organized by the Kindergarden Team of the Swiss School. The 5th **Jass Tournament** will take place on the 15th of December.

For **2019** we have more exciting events for you ready. We prepare a trip to the **vineries in Khao Yai**, as requested during the last AGM. And more brain food is offered in February with a lecture given by **Marc Faber** (Mr. Doom) about the financial dealings in the world and in Asia. Our next **AGM** will take place in March.

You find more details about all these events and more information about the Swiss Society Bangkok and its partner organizations as well as the Swiss Thai Chamber of Commerce (STCC), the Thai-Austrian Society (TAS) and the Thai Deutsche Gesellschaft (TDG), Swiss School etc. on our Website www.sbb.or.th, the "**Clubdesk Info**" and on Facebook under "**Swiss Society Bangkok**".

I am looking forward to many more shared moments.

André Graber
(President SSB)



Embassy of Switzerland in Thailand





Our Events and GetTogethers

June 12th: Company visit at RONDA

The members of the Swiss Society Bangkok and the Swiss Thai Chamber of Commerce used the opportunity to get an insight into the precise clock work in the Ronda factory in Thailand.



Managing director **Khun Kanchit Satarug** guided the visitors through the factory, explaining its work and products. RONDA Thailand manufactures mechanical and electronic components and assembles them. Then they are shipped to Hong Kong for the worldwide distribution to customers.

Besides simple parts, RONDA Thailand is producing several very complex parts for watches, including stop watch functions, dual day, week and month indications, etc. These parts are sold to many famous watchmaking brands around the world.



The tour around the three-story factory was organized in three groups; Senior Technical Department Manager **Peter Schuepbach** provided the tour in English, Senior Department Manager **Michael Seinige** guided the German speaking group and **Khun Khanchai** conducted a tour in Thai language.

Mr. Schuepbach and Mr. Seinige, both of them Swiss nationals, have been working at RONDA Thailand for more than 20 years.

The visitors were impressed by the size of one production hall in which approximately 270 workers, mainly women, were working in silence and concentration. To my surprise they didn't use any special glasses or microscopes but managed to assemble even the tiniest parts by eye sight and hand.



Unusual in Europa but very common in Thailand are the extensive social benefits RONDA offers to their 750 employees in this plant. Besides the salary, the insurance and the pension scheme, the staff is offered subsidise canteen food, free working uniform and free shuttle transport to the company and back home.

June 19th: Get Together: Do I need Health Insurance?

Thomas Gerber elaborated on Health Insurance for Expats in Thailand. He started with an explanation about what is on the market and what are the differences between the European and Anglo-Saxon systems. He explained the pros and cons of different insurances for younger and older people and expats and how different insurance companies can be changed. On a different note Thomas highlighted the problems of profit-oriented private hospitals.



July 6th: Pub Tour



Also this year the traditional Pub tour was joined by a small group of Pub fans, guided by our Pub-expert **Stefan Kuhn**. The tour started at the Robin Hood (Soi 33) ...how it proceeded, how long and with how many beers?...it shall remain the mystery of a few, probably slightly intoxicated members...



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July 17th Get Together: Basic Computer Security – Andreas Mikes:

It's not surprising that in today's times of cyber-crime this event by Andreas Mikes attracted many interested listeners. Andreas led us into the worlds of viruses, worms, clouds and VPNs, and explained in a well understood terminology how to secure passwords.



August 4th: National Day

It's one of the highlights of the year as the numbers show: This year 412 guests, there of 39 kids and 15 teenagers, were celebrating the 727th Swiss National Day in the premises of the Swiss Embassy in Bangkok. They enjoyed the Bratwürste, Kartoffelsalat and the professional service of 35 crew members of the **Bangkok Air Catering**. It was a pleasure to see that all generations were present.

Karin Wenger, Master of Ceremony, led through the evening. Our president, **Andre Graber**, welcomed the



Consul **Wilfried Schnider** and his team as well as to the Board of SSB for the organization of this event. Last but not least he gave a big "thank you" to the generous sponsors of the Tombola **Swiss, Bangkok Airways, Bumrungrad Hospital, Bangkok Air Catering** and others.

True to the Credo of the Managing Director of BAC **Linus Knobel** "when it says 'Swiss' on the packaging, then it's "Swiss" inside", the imported famous sausages from Switzerland (from Muotathal) were perfectly grilled.

Since the buffet was rich of many choices, the lines of people waiting for their sausages, salads, bread and spreads, cheese and a variety of cakes, Apfelchüechli and crème brûlée were long. But gladly it got sweetened not only by food but also by the live music of **Mauro Monti** and his trio as well as the wonderful company of the many guests.



guests, particularly the honorary member **Isabelle Meyer** and the former President **Markus Ruprecht** as well as the legendary **LIZZI** from Hua Hin. He expressed our gratitude to the Swiss Ambassador **Ivo Sieber** and his wife **Gracita** for their hospitality. He extended a big thank-you to our

Later in the evening 70 attractive prizes were raffled. The numbers were distributed with the single use wristbands to the participants. Under the control of Wilfried Schnider and Pim Morasilp, Karin Wenger and some kids were drawing the numbers of the winners. The final drawing of the main winners was anticipated in silence.



1st price: Voucher THB 30'000 for flight BKK to Zurich from Swiss: **Mayuree Rudin**

2nd price: Flight BKK to Phu Quoc (Vietnam) with Bangkok Airway for 2 Pax, 2 nights in Hotel Intercontinental Phu Quoc: **Christoph Chevalait**

3rd price: Flight BKK to Male (Maldives) with Bangkok Airways for 2 Pax, 2 nights in Hotel Summerset Male (bei Otto): **Alexander Frenkel**

4th price: Voucher for a Check-up in the Bumrungrad Hospital Bangkok: **Roger Jegerlehner**





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We thank you for participating in this great party!



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August 21st: Get Together: Stanley Fitzner

As son of an ambassador our member Stan grew up in many places around the world. Twice he went to RIS Swiss Section in Bangkok and he studied in Switzerland. With 3 passports he is flexible to live and work in many countries, and he selected Bangkok where he works as graphic designer.

Due to health reasons the climate of Thailand played an important role in selecting this place to starting his career. But there are many more reasons which make Thailand an attractive place for starting a business as a young European entrepreneur as Stan explained in his talk.



August 25th: 4th Jass Tournament



Again and again our Jass tournaments draws players from all over the city! On the 4th tournament 16 players competed among each other in the Suite of the Rembrandt Hotel. The game was followed by a great Mexican dinner. The winners were:



1. Markus, 2. Marc, 3 Stefan and Karin best lady player.

September 18th: Get Together Wilfried Schnider



and their friends listened to our Consul **Wilfried Schnider**. At the Embassy of Switzerland in Bangkok are currently 11'000 Swiss citizens registered and approximately a similar number of not registered Swiss spend regularly the win-

ter months in Thailand. Switzerland is an attractive tourist destination for Thai nationals and the Embassy issues over 40'000 visa per year. With a smile Wilfried told us that the Swiss Confederation bought in 1957 the land (at the time rice fields) for around THB 1300 / sqwa. to build the Embassy of Switzerland

After an interesting Q&A we enjoyed nice food from Chesa – thanks to **Thomas & René** and his team.

September 29th: Epic Pool Party at the Marriott Hotel

An afternoon of booze, dance and music at the Epic Pool Party at the Marriott Hotel in Bangkok.





ASO Auslandschweizer Organisation ASR Kongress 10th Aug..2018 in Visp

The "**Auslandschweizererrat**" (Council of the Swiss Abroad) met on 10th August for the 2nd time this year and over 70 of the 120 delegates participated.



Among many other matters the following subjects were discussed respectively informed:

Banks: all the political motions and inputs concerning the right of Swiss Abroad to maintain a bank account at reasonable

conditions in Switzerland were denied, either by the "**Nationalrat**" or "**Ständerat**". Until now only the Bank of Geneva partnered with ASO and offers acceptable conditions.

e-voting: while most people agree that e-voting would be a progress and ease the participation of the 170'000 Swiss Abroad who registered their voting rights to participate at national and (partly) cantonal voting and elections, some conservative groups, among others the SVP, unfortunately oppose that and try to prevent this change. ASO is launching a petition to force the Bundesrat to make e-voting possible until 2021 see more on www.aso.ch.

"Ergänzungsleistungen" EL: In order to be entitled to receive EL if in poverty, some political groups try to implement a 10 year waiting period for anybody returning to Switzerland, and hereby are discriminating Swiss Abroad coming back to CH to have the same rights as Swiss who never leave Switzerland. The political discussion is ongoing.

Double Nationality: Some political parties (SVP) want to end the right to have 2 Nationalities. Also in this matter

the Swiss Abroad shall engage and actively participate in the political arena in CH in order to fight against this tendency. 10th

Swiss Revue: This Magazine is distributed to all Swiss Abroad free of charge. The main cost is the printing and postal shipping to each Swiss living abroad. Only few have opted to receive it electronically. Please register for your electronic version to help save cost. Link www.aso.ch

Health insurances: many Swiss abroad face problems when trying to enter local health insurances abroad. Either they are not entitled to join the local compulsory insurance system as foreigner, or they are rejected by private health insurers due to high age or preexisting conditions. Suggestions such as remaining in the Swiss compulsory insurance system are blocked or rejected, as this "is against the "**Krankenversicherungsgesetz**". More efforts will be undertaken to find a solution.

ASO: currently the "**Auslandschweizer Organisation**" is (according their "**Stiftungsrecht**") the umbrella organization of all the Swiss Societies abroad. However, ASO is representing the interests of all Swiss living abroad, not only the members of the many societies (PS: in many countries the organized Swiss constitute only a single digit of the community, such as in Thailand: 12'000 Swiss, but all the 5 clubs have approx. 700 members = ca. 6%. In order to be representative for all Swiss abroad, the change of the bylaws, election of country delegates etc. is under discussion. New strategies will be ready hopefully until 2021 when the next council will be elected.

The conference can be watched online as video:

<https://www.aso.ch/de/angebote/auslandschweizer-kongress/kongress2018/livestream-1531311453>

Thomas Gerber,
treasurer@ssb.or.th, ASR Delegierter Bangkok

Coming Events

November 15 th -18 th	Elefant Breakfast Surin – Kurt Amstad / Marc Werder
November 20 th	GetTogether: Einblicke in den Social Media Tschungel – Regula Schmidhauser-
November 24 th	Raclette Event at the Embassy
December 9 th	Christmas Brunch with visit of Santa Clause – Brasserie 9
December 15 th	Jass Tournament – Brasserie 9
December 18 th	Get Together: RIS Swiss Section - Extension, <i>Knut Sierotzki</i>
January 22 nd 2019	Get Together Swiss Start-up Company MisterLoo, <i>Andreas Wanner, Dominik Schuler</i> △ fourth Tuesday △
February 8 th /9 th /10 th 2019	Wine Harvest Festival in Khao Yai (Wine Dinner at Granmonte und PB-Valley)
February 21 st 2019	Where Are We Going, Where Have We Been: <i>Marc Fabre (Mr. Doom)</i> – J.W. Mariott, Soi 2
February 26 th 2019	Get Together: Topic tba △ fourth Tuesday △
March 13 th 2019	AGM 2019
March 29 th 2019	Get Together in Pattaya