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## NEWSLETTER 6 March/April 2011



# Spring is in the air !

**Spring in the air....and again...**

**“new life” in Agora too!**

On the weekend of 26 march Nikkie and Veerle (on holiday in USA together with husband Dirk) were extremely happy to be present at the double charter of AC 1 Seattle, AC 2 Detroit and the installation of the Agora USA national Board !

What a fulfilled, warmhearted and well organized weekend it was!



## WELCOME AGORA CLUB USA !



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**26-03-2011 : CHARTER AC 1 SEATTLE – CHARTER AC 2 DETROIT  
INSTALLATION NATIONAL BOARD AGORA CLUB USA**

**Nikkie and Veerle report**

*Sleepless in Seattle !*

What a truly amazing time we had during the charter weekend in Seattle ! And no...there was hardly any time for sleep, but who wanted to, with such a terrific programme!!

I was homehosted by my cousin Kelly (here with cousin Debbie)



And Dirk and I were homehosted by the sweeeetest couple Joanne and Jerry ! Thank you dear friends, you gave us an unforgettable stay!



The whole weekend was organized splendidly with on Friday a visit to the bay where we learned quite a lot about the earliest settlers in the old trading post "Fort Nisqually", and from there to the modern times in the fabulous

**MUSEUM OF GLASS**

with impressive contemporary glass art.



Friday night all of us met up at Kelly's and Gerry's place for a very cozy walking dinner, with lots of ooooooh's and aaaaah's when we were reunited with 'old' friends from way back in Ladies'Circle while enjoying a delicious buffet of dishes made by the Agora



mmm! AC USA Cake!



With Uma and Vandana, a friend from Ladies'Circle days





Saturday was wet and windy, but we forgot all about the weather on the crazy "Duck tour" : we were driven around Seattle in a vintage amphibious car...which even went ON the water of the bay! Our "captain" was absolutely hilarious and made sure we added a few (laughing) wrinkles by the end of the tour!



We could recover from that experience on the "Space needle" which was built in 1962 for the world exhibition in the centre of Seattle : a fab tower, 184 meters high, with a spectacular observation deck. Did you know that some world known brands started in Seattle : Starbucks coffee, Amazon.com, Microsoft (yes! Bill gates lives in Seattle!) and Boeing, which flight museum we visited in the afternoon.

And then it was time to start yet another famous brand: **AGORA** 😊 !



Anca Nastasa representing President AC 2 Detroit and Kelly President AC 1 Seattle

The Charter evening was so very special and Nikkie had the absolute honour to charter the 2 brand new USA Agora clubs Seattle 1 and Detroit 2 and the National Board with Nikkie's cousin Kelly Geisler as the very first National President of Agora Club USA!



Kelly and husband Gerry

Unfortunately Agora Detroit's president-to-be Mirela Luchian could not be present due to serious health problems, but her task was gracefully taken over by Anca Nastasa, a Detroit member.



Veerle and Nikkie with National President AC USA Kelly Geisler

Debbie Davidson, Vice President of AC Seattle, did a terrific job as "master of protocol" and guided us through the ceremony with some beautiful texts. Here are 2 of them:

Martin Luther King said :  
*"Everybody can be great, because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and your verb agree to serve....You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love."*



Marian Wright Edelman an American activist for the rights of children once said :  
"Service is the rent we pay for living."

It is clear that Agora USA's members hearts are on the right place, and very focused on the role they can play in their help to society. Congratulations!

They also promised to work hard in developing Agora throughout America...and it all starts in the family : Nikkie's aunt Theresa is a member of Agora Club Seattle No 1, as well and her cousin Debbie from Wisconsin (who came to Seattle for the Charter) who was so impressed that she asked to be inducted with a promise to start an Agora Club there!!  
So how special is that!!!!

**Thank you so much ladies of Agora Club USA for your superb warmth and hospitality.**

*Nikkie and Veerle*



## PRESIDENT AGORA USA KELLY REPORTS



As many of you may know by now, Nikkie Grewar is my cousin. So it was with such joy we watched events unfold before us that seemed to be guided and timed to perfection around our USA chartering event!

What an honor to have Nikkie travel from S. Africa to handle the official chartering along with Veerle De Jonge from Belgium!

The ladies of Agora USA thoroughly enjoyed their Charter Weekend and the wonderful memories that were made! To be a part of this wonderful organization has become even more real to all of us now that we have met and experienced the worldwide friendships! We received so many cards, banners, and emails of congratulations, encouragement and welcome from so many Agora clubs worldwide! Thank you so much for taking the time and effort and making us feel the friendships from afar!

Here are some of the comments from the ladies of Agora Club USA about Agora and the charter weekend :

**JOANNE**

I would never have had the opportunity to meet such wonderful people if it hadn't been for Agora. It was our privilege to have Dirk and Veerle with us from Belgium. They were absolutely delightful. We now have two new friends for life!!! How sweet is that? Events like these are priceless. Thank you Agora and Kelly for your encouragement, time, effort and love for those in Friendship.

Our tour guide on the Duck Tour was great and I enjoyed learning more history of Seattle. Who would have guessed we had so many Starbucks? Uff Duh! Wonderful to meet our guests from all over the World. So interesting and fun!

**KAY**

It was really nice to see Veerle again after Iceland and to get together with everybody. Agora is a great way for us to still stay in touch with Ladies Circle members as we mature!!

**VANDANA**



**PATTI** - I had a great first impression of Agora at Debra's house and it was reinforced during the charter weekend. All the women are generous and fun people that I hope I'll have the opportunity to spend more time with. I loved the whole weekend and have told all my friends about it!

**DEBRA** - Connecting with sisters from other countries was an awesome experience. The event really brought to light that we are a small part of a large group, and it is great to get insight outside of our own organization into the bigger picture.

**DEBBIE D.** - It was such an honor to MC the Agora USA Charter Ceremony. It was the most rewarding experience I've had since retiring. The warmth I experienced from those in attendance made me extremely proud to be associated with Agora International. Friendships and serving others – that's the life I want too! Special thanks to Kelly for being an awesome leader.

I think the goals of Agora are reasonable, honorable and sincere. It was lovely meeting people from other countries and cultures. What a wonderful time we had meeting new friends and seeing sites that we take for granted! I thoroughly enjoyed it! It was made especially memorable to have my niece Nikkie chartering our Seattle club!

**THERESA**



**DEBBIE C.** I really appreciated the friendship amongst the women from different countries and knowing that there was the passion for bringing positive changes to the world we share! I am happy to now be a member of the Seattle Agora Chapter! Very impressed how the Seattle chapter coordinated the event! So honored to be part of Agora and thrilled to have shared this with my cousin Nikkie!

The charter week-end made me believe that "It is a small world" and ladies around the world are caring and wanting to make the world a better and more connected place. Agora is a wonderful way to connect the world.

**MARINA** - I know that you did an outstanding job of making sure that the time the ladies spent here in Tacoma/Seattle would be remembered forever. Even though I was not part of most of the fun stuff, I had really great time meeting and getting to know the ladies at the home party and at the official ceremony. Awesome and thank you for all your efforts everyone!

**KAREN**



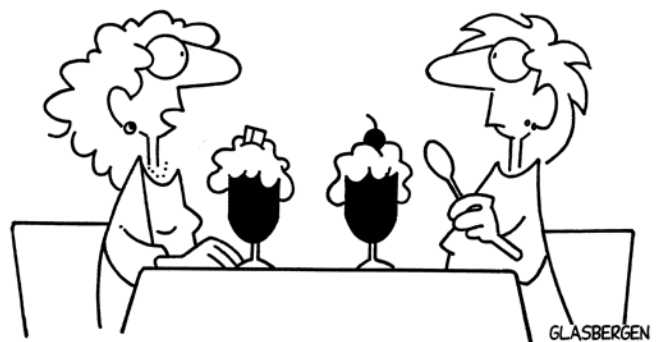
So as you can see by the comments from the ladies, the moments and memories made are to be treasured and cherished by all! We look forward to continued friendships and hopeful meetings worldwide. Although we may be far in distance we are so very close at heart!

Always in friendship ~Kelly Geisler  
Agora Club USA

# Laughter in the air :)



"I have metal fillings in my teeth. My refrigerator magnets keep pulling me into the kitchen. That's why I can't lose weight!"



"If you put a crouton on your sundae instead of a cherry, it counts as a salad."



# Extension in the air!

## CHARTERS IN AC TANGENT GERMANY

Elisabeth reports

**16-02-2011 : CHARTER AC TANGENT 107 LÜBECK – BAD SCHWARTAU**



Only 4 – but full of enthusiasm!  
They start with some special  
“tangent sweets”, a lot of laughter  
and good ideas for a “life in  
friendship” and with new horizons.

**13-03-2011 : CHARTER AC TANGENT 5 NORDENHAM**

15 ladies meet in an old mill, with  
sunshine and in good temper for a “breakfast  
foundation” according to the new president’s  
motto: *“Growing together in Friendship”*.



**09-04-2011 : CHARTER AC TANGENT 41 AMMERLAND**

Club President Daniela welcomed all  
guests & friends to the „Ammerland  
Foundation Party“ with her motto:  
*„Pure Joy of Life“!*

Godmother Maryline of AC Leman 1  
(French speaking) held a wonderful  
and warm hearted speech in GERMAN!





# CHARTER IN FRANCE

19-03-2011 : CHARTER AC AVESNES-FOURMIES (FRANCE)

Daniëlle reports



Saturday, 19th of March was a day to remember for the North of France ! Nicole Charlot, area 1 president was together with the National President Micheline Vuillaume so proud to charter the n° 43 Agora Club Avesnes-Fourmies. I arrived in the early afternoon in a beautiful little theatre were the youngsters and the national board were working on the last details of the ceremony.

Eleven ladies were eagerly waiting to join our association, and were happily surprised when they saw so many guests arriving. A lot of Agora Clubs were present, from all over France. Did you know that Isabelle Séguinot even came from Hyères, the south of France to be present at this event.... what a friendship!

Micheline opened the ceremony and Carole Charlot the local Vice-President was protocol lady, a job that she did with the right flair and a lot of funny notes... I also would like to point out that the 4 national clubs were represented, Ladies' Circle, Round Table and 41.....it was so great to experience the togetherness of our different associations.

This sunny Saturday afternoon was special to me as I really experienced a joyful, sympathique charter held spontaneously and in a real spirit of friendship.



GREAT JOB GIRLS !!!

*Daniëlle Gardin*

IPP. Agora Club International



## 02-04-2011 : CHARTER AGORA CLUB 13 VAL DE MEUSE (BELGIUM)

### *Veerle reports*

Namur is a beautiful and picturesque medieval city at the confluence of the river Meuse and Sambre in the South of Belgium.



A first Agora Club (AC 3 Namur) was already founded in 1998, and there must be something in the air there, because on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of April, on one of the first lovely and warm spring days, a second club was chartered :

Agora Club 13 Val de Meuse.

It was very special for me to be present at this charter, since many of the members, and especially President Pascaline Deckers are friends from our Ladies' Circle years.

Pascaline Deckers and her protocol ladies conducted a most perfect, cosy and warm-hearted charter ceremony, followed by a drink with delicious hors-d'oeuvres, all prepared by the 13 members! (13 clearly is a lucky number in Namur!)



President Pascaline, ACI President Danielle, AC Belgium President Rita and President Godmother Club Jocelyne

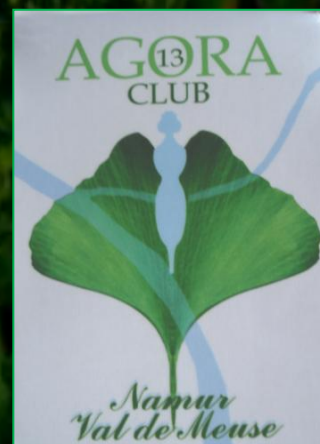


The very elegant ladies of AC 13 together with the National Board of AC Belgium

The dinner that followed lasted till the early hours of the next day...it is clear that Agora Club 13 is very young at heart!

Congratulations dear ladies, and welcome to the ever bigger growing Agora Family!

*Veerle xx*  
ACI secretary







Pssst ! My Easterbunny ears heard of some more charters in the rabbitpipeline!

# Future charters in the air !

## Extension in Belgium : AC 14 Roeselare-Rodenbach i.f.

### Mimi De Maere, AC Belgium's VP reports

On Tuesday 8th March I drove in a good mood direction Oekene (Roeselare) where I was expected for an exploratory meeting.

After driving about 1 hour I arrived at my destination and Ingrid Ediers, a very charming lady, gave me a warm welcome. Last year she was National Secretary and now, together with many friends she will join hands to found the new Agora Club Roeselare-Rodenbach.

And yes - I was well prepared for my task! Not only had I brought a map full of interesting information in order to answer all kind of questions. I also had in addition the support of 2 valuable ladies within our organization : Anne-Marie Delsaerdt, founding President of Agora Belgium and Danielle Gardin, Past National and Immediate Past International President.

We started the info-session with a refreshing appetizer. After a most inspiring evening we were proud to see that no less than 22 ladies would join the Agora-family. It is so fine to realize that Agora Belgium keeps on growing; on 02/4 we will be present to witness how Agora Club 13 Namur Val-de-Meuse will be chartered and in the meantime Louvain and Arlon are impatiently waiting to join us too.

### No wonder I can only conclude with 'Long Live Agora!!'

Your very pleased National Vice President of AC Belgium

*Mimi*



Ingrid and Françoise



Mimi



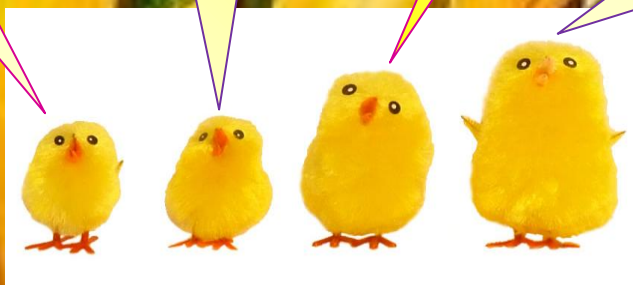
Anne Marie, Mimi and Danielle

Some more Clubs in Tangent Germany are planning their charters too!

O! O! And iiiiiii heajd that Agoja officially stajts in Morocco !

Weeeely??? Waaaw thatsj sjooool cool!

Thatsj not all ! Alsjo ladies in Dakar in Senegal are interesjted!





# Another NEW AGORA COUNTRY in the air!!

## AGORA CLUB MOROCCO

### OFFICIALLY STARTS UP IN CASABLANCA

Agora Club gets another stronghold on the African continent!  
After South Africa and Zambia, also Morocco plans the Charter of their first Club :  
Agora Club N°1 Casablanca !

Here is an extract of their application letter the ACI Board received early April :

*"...The initiative to create in preview an Agora-Casablanca club in Morocco is motivated by the international fame of your Club, our wish to strengthen a strong, long-lasting friendship, based on cultural and social exchanges as well as the understanding and solidarity values recommended by your Club.*

*Our first meeting was held on March 25th, 2011. We asserted our will to take part nationally and internationally in this movement ..."*

The ACI Board is extremely happy with their decision to join. Their sisters in Ladies' Circle Morocco have proven to be extremely motivated and engaged in local community projects.

Welcome Agora Club 1 Casablanca i.f. !!



The founding Board and some members: Anissa Mekouar (Vice president), Lamia Hassani (member), Fatema Maher (Founding President), Souad El Alaoui (treasurer), Hanane Jassifi (member), Nadia Chraibi (secretary)



# Article Nikkie in 'The Hinge' (Magazine 41 Club Intl)

## **AGORA CLUB AND TANGENT** AN INTERNATIONAL STORY

Dear friends,

Thinking about this article and how to convey to you all the essence of what Agora Club International stands for today, takes me back to a moment in October 2010 that epitomizes it all for me: It was at the welcome desk of the Agora Club International Conference in Tallinn/Estonia where a group of ladies *circled* together and introduced themselves.

In this group was myself Nikkie from Agora Club (AC) South Africa, Yifat from AC Israel, Elisabeth from Tangent Germany, Donata from AC Italy, Dora from AC Romania, Jutta from Tangent Germany, Nicole from AC Switzerland, Micheline from AC France and Veerle from AC Belgium.

After introducing ourselves we looked at each other and all felt the same...it was a moment that sent shivers down our spines, because we all sensed the uniqueness of that moment.

This is what the Agora and Tangent merging is all about: finding friends again from way back when we were in Circle – across borders – across countries – across clubs.

Indeed it was one of the biggest achievements of Agora Club International last year to welcome Tangent on board.

Our incoming ACI President is Elisabeth from Tangent Germany, proving without a doubt that this merger does work, and has proven to be a healthy development for the future.

Agora Club and Tangent together form a dynamic and energetic base where past circlers and friends will be able to keep on meeting and nourishing their international friendships.

For all of us, for all past circlers and friends: Open your arms for changes, but don't lose your identity.

*Nikkie Grewar*

President Agora Club International



# TALES FROM THE JUNGLE

## Veerle's Tale

Every 2 years, my Club organizes a huge event : a fashion show where our members, partners and (grand-)children walk the catwalk as models for our different local shops. Oh, I admit : since we also show lingerie, we ask young and firm professional "fillies" to do that for us ☺

As you can imagine, the preparations for such a big event took a lot of our spare time: venues, stage rental, catering, chairs, hairdressers, make-up artists, insurance, photographers, press contacts etc etc. Hundreds of small things! But every time we also look forward to our "catwalk class": a professional model teaches us how to walk, to turn, to walk in formations etc : FUN FUN FUN ! I can assure you: for days you "do your walk", even when you go grocery shopping! (tummy in, shoulders down, straight back!)

The evening came and went, and left our whole group with a very accomplished feeling : again it was a huge success with near to 900 guests!

Again we can finance some very valuable community projects.

We can start planning for 2013!

*Veerle*



Members



Daughters



Grand children!



Our sons and partners



Our "Young fillies"



and the "mature fillies" from my club ☺



## Nikkie's Tale



What a busy and awesome few weeks!

The highlights for me were the wonderful Charter of Agora Club USA and most importantly **the birth of my very first grandchild AMY!**

These two great events coincided with each other and I was very fortunate to be able to meet Amy in person in Vancouver - Canada where my daughter Leigh-Anne and her husband emigrated to in January.

**Welcome little Amy to the world.  
Born 13 March 2011**

Then other wonderful news is that my daughter Lyndell and her partner Michael are also expecting a baby, due in October. How wonderful!

So I am doubly blessed this year!

*Nikkie*

## Elisabeth's Tales March

### Skiing • Clouds & Sun • Fun Jungle Report March 2011



#### **"Hidden" ... behind helmet & sunglasses!**

Skiing is my most favourite hobby since my childhood which I like and enjoy every year; now round about 45 years. I would miss it if I can't do any longer!

This year we had double fun because of mostly fine weather and well prepared ski pistes.

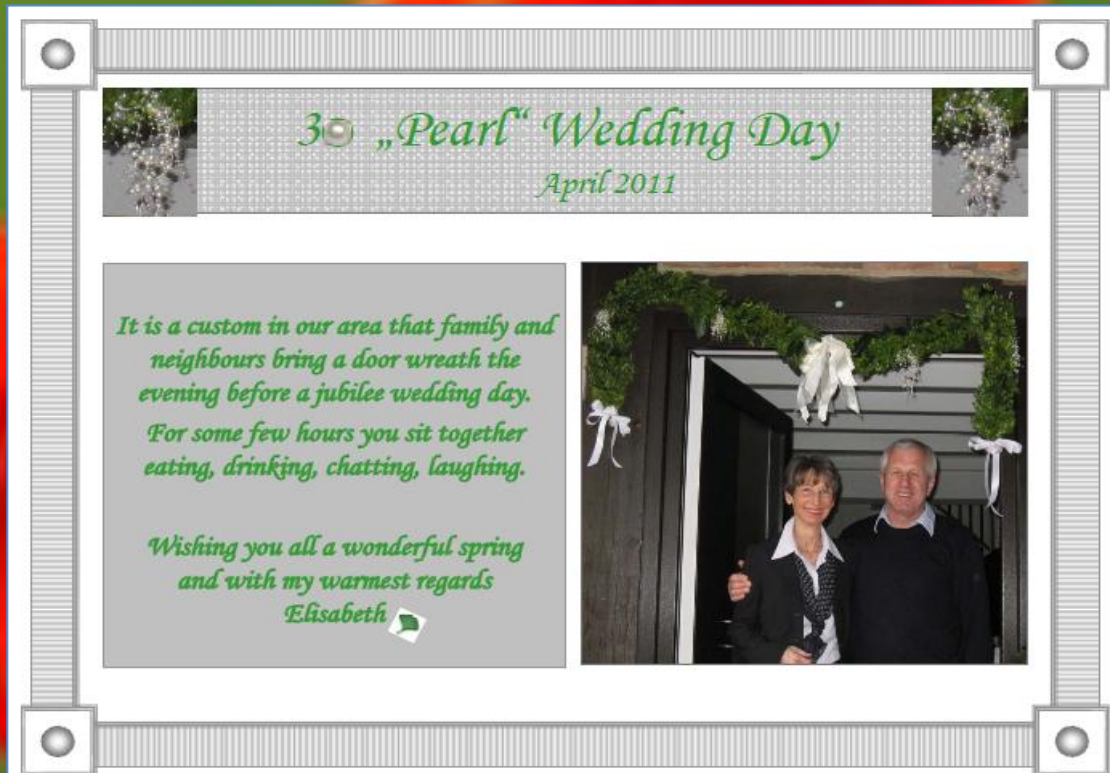
We „raced“ down the hills together with our children, our daughter's fiancé (daughter in law and grandchild must still learn...) and a couple of our club. We had **WONDERFUL** days!!



*Elisabeth*



## Elisabeth's Tales April



AC Krayot from Agora Israel sent in this picture of one of their activities : flower arrangements made of ...vegetables!

There is no limit to the creativity of Agora ladies! ...maybe an idea for your festive Easter table?



Dearest friends,

I hope you enjoyed this 6th newsletter. For some more pictures : have a look at our [facebook page : Agora Club international](#)

Soon I will send you the REGISTRATION FORM FOR THE AGORA INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE IN CESENA ITALY. (you can also download it from our website)

The Italian ladies are working hard to make this an unforgettable conference for us all....so take some time to look through the form and REGISTER for what is sure to be a GREAT CONFERENCE WEEKEND!

I do hope we will all meet there in October and have some fun under the Italian sun!

In name of the whole ACI Board : Happy Easter !

Lots of love,

*Veerle*

HAPPY  
EASTER