

Zeitschrift: Swiss review : the magazine for the Swiss abroad
Herausgeber: Organisation of the Swiss Abroad
Band: 28 (2001)
Heft: 5

Rubrik: Mosaic

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Out in the Green is out:

The largest open air music festival in Switzerland, Out in the Green in Frauenfeld, has been axed. The organisers have filed for bankruptcy. The Paléo Festival in Nyon now takes over as the largest open-air rock festival. Staged for the 26th time this year, it now attracts over 200 000 visitors.

PEOPLE

Samuel Brawand, former mountain guide and politician, died on 11 July at the age of 103 in his home community of Grindelwald in the Bernese Oberland. As a mountaineer he was part of the 1921 expedition which climbed the Eiger via the Mittellegi ridge for the first time. As a politician he was elected to the Bernese cantonal council in 1947, where he snatched the Building Department away from Jura representative Georges Moeckli, sparking off the "Jura Affair". From 1935 to 1947 and 1955 to 1967 he was a SP National Councillor and from 1962 to 1968 Director of the Berne-Lötschberg-Simplon railway (BLS).



Thomas Borer, Swiss ambassador to Berlin, was awarded the honorary title of "Knight of Frivolity" by the Aix-la-Chapelle carnival association for the humour and humanity he displays in his office.

Pietro Veglio (57) from the Ticino has been appointed the successor to Matthias Meyer as Swiss Executive Director of the World Bank from 1 April 2002.

The Public Transport Association has created an independent, neutral Ombudsman office. Former National Councillors **Rose-Marie Ducrot** (for Western Switzerland),

Cornelia Füeg (for German-speaking Switzerland) and former State Councillor **Renzo Respini** (for Italian-speaking Switzerland) have been appointed as contact persons for public transport passengers.



Naturalised Swiss, violinist and conductor **Tibor Varga** celebrated his 80th birthday on

4 July. The day before saw the opening in Valais of the 38th music festival which bears his name and is a platform for many talented young performers. The Hungarian-born musician fled from his home country in 1947 and has lived in Grimsuat/VS since 1966.

Following the election of a new party president in the person of State Councillor **Philipp Stähelin** (TG), the Christian Democratic Party (CVP) of Switzerland has now appointed a new General Secretary: **Reto Nause**, a young politician who made a name for himself primarily during the electoral campaign in his home canton of Aargau.

The world's largest solar ship

The world's largest solar ship was officially inaugurated in Biel/Bienne at the beginning of July, and made its maiden voyage on Lake Biel. The catamaran, named MobiCat, is a solar-powered passenger ship for navigating internal waters. The 33 meter long and 11 meter broad ship can transport up to 250 persons at a cruising speed of 15 km/h. The power is supplied by sophisticated solar modules mounted on the roof. The solar-powered ship is not used on normal Lake Biel routes but can be rented for special corporate events. MobiCat is part of the Expo.02 fleet. The development and construction

costs of CHF 2 million were paid for by private sponsors and by the Federal Office for Energy.

Journalist/Buchautor

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SNIPPETS

WAGE STATISTICS: Office workers' salaries have increased by less than one percent since 1998, while last year alone those of upper management rose by between 11% to 21%. These are the findings of the Swiss Office Workers Association (SKV).

BILATERALS ROUND 2: In July Switzerland and the European Union began a new round of negotiations for the bilateral accords. This time the focus is on new areas such as the prevention of customs fraud, statistics, environment and genetically modified foods.

JOB SHEDDING AT ABB: The Swiss-Swedish ABB Group has announced that it is to cut its world-wide workforce of 160,000 by 12,000. The reason given was difficult market conditions. In the first half of 2001 ABB reported a 76% drop in net income, while incoming orders shrank by 7% within the space of a year.

MAJOR ORDERS: The Berne-based Ascom Group has won two major orders in Milan and Berlin: for ticket vending machines for the public transport authority in the German capital, and for a new ticketing system in Milan.

FRANCOPHONY: Switzerland won three bronze medals at the fourth "Jeux de la Francophonie" in Ottawa: two for judo and one for women's beach volleyball (demonstration discipline). In a move to increase the promotion of francophony, Switzerland is considering bidding for the 2009 Francophone Games.

DIVORCES: Last year only half as many divorces were registered as in 1999. There

Point of View

"Do you know why a Swiss Federal Councillor doesn't need a bodyguard? Because here everyone knows that attacking a leading politician will not change a thing."

Former Federal Councillor Otto Stich in the "Weltwoche"

OSA flag at half mast



As elsewhere, nothing has been the same in Switzerland since 11 September. On that day, what was previously the stuff of Hollywood action films became a reality that beggared belief. All radio and TV stations abandoned their regular schedules, and Switzerland held its collective breath. The attacks on the USA shook us to the core.

In Berne, the flag in front of the Secretariat for the Swiss Abroad is flying at half mast. Painted on one man's jacket in Zurich was the message "We are all Americans". We are all vulnerable and all fear for world peace.

As Swiss Review went to press, the number of Swiss who died in the attacks was unknown. But a great many Swiss have lost relatives, friends and colleagues in this horrific act of terror, and many have also suffered material losses. We are profoundly saddened by what has happened. Staff of the Swiss Abroad Organisation are very close to their compatriots around the world, not only in their work but also in spirit. We extend our deepest sympathy and condolences to all who have suffered grief and loss as a result of these unfathomable events

Dr. Georg Stucky
President of the Swiss Abroad Organisation

are two reasons for this: firstly the major rise in divorces in 1999 ahead of the new divorce law, and secondly, due to the lengthy process, a drop in the number of divorces finalised in 2000. Neither the 20 809 divorces in 1999 nor the 10 511 registered in 2000 are therefore truly representative.

EXPENSIVE CARS: Last year 315,398 new cars were purchased in Switzerland. While this is 0.8% fewer than in 1999, more than CHF 11 billion was paid for the new cars, representing an average price of CHF 35,000 per vehicle.

ELEVENTH: Switzerland ranks eleventh on the UN Index of Human Development. The index is based on life expectancy, schooling, literacy and per capita income. Switzerland has moved up two places thanks to an improvement in income. Norway tops the rankings.

CONSCRIPTION MARATHON: 226 young Swiss recruits have begun the first all-in-one military service in Payerne and Moudon. They will complete their entire tour of duty in one 10-month block.



GOLD, BRONZE, GOLD: Swiss women performed brilliantly at the world orienteering championships in Tampere (Finland). Swiss Abroad Vroni König-Salmi won gold for short distance, while Simone Luder won bronze in the same race and gold for the classic distance.

Translated from the German by N. Chisholm

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Photos: Keystone