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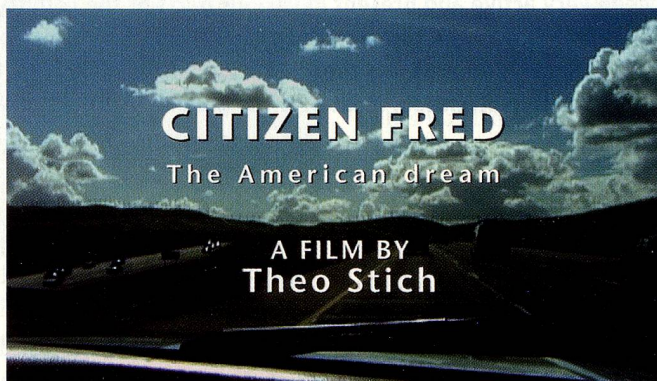
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CALIFORNIA

# Citizen Fred

Theo Stich apparently tells a simple tale: A 19 year old farmhand called Franz Ferdinand Ruckli, now age 75, from Meggen, Canton Lucerne, moves in late 1949 to work on his uncle's farm in California. He swiftly embraces the new ways, delights in the advanced technologies and, being frugal, soon buys his dream car. Yet the Empire he has joined in mind and body takes hold of his destiny: Though not a citizen, he is drafted, swiftly trained in warfare, and sent to war as an infantryman, allegedly only to take part in a "police action", that is, to safeguard the established order, since by 1950 the World War II alliance between the American-led West and the Soviet Russia-led



East had collapsed. Under the latter aegis North Korean troops had invaded the American-controlled Korean South in order to unite the country under its Soviet-like political system. A bloody war in which Fred must fight on the frontline leaves an indelible, if hidden mark

on him. The troops of the West advance all the way to Manchuria's border then are driven back by massive Chinese forces until an armistice basically reestablishes the country's division.

On his return Fred Ruckli marries a fellow Swiss from Canton Graubünden, drives for decades a produce truck in the San Francisco region, is devoted to his family, buys a home and later also a vacation cottage in the mountains. He visits his old home, retraces its layout, and proudly if tastefully displays his American-ness. Returned home to California he gradually adjusts to his wife's debilitating stroke that leaves her without speech and memory.

With a fine hand Theo Stich features how Fred Ruckli has absorbed American surface egalitari-

anism that hides well defined hierarchies based on wealth, origin, and race, yet is starkly expressed in a person's area of residence, type of car, and club membership. Although this Swiss American remains apolitical, he accepts the claim that American troops are simply used to defend democracy and implement the country's mission as policeman of the world. Without intruding and throughout the film Theo Stich lets expressive faces tell the story he intends to convey. He skillfully uses official film footage to show how private lives are inseparably enmeshed in the manipulation of power on the world stage. With impeccable tact and marvelous nuance Theo Stich's film draws a portrait of a proud Swiss American that is beautiful, honest, and suggestive.

Leo Schelbert

**This film was chosen by Pro Helvetia for the series "Encounters of the Swiss Kind" as part of the "Swiss Roots" promotion. In the US, the first presentation will take place on November 9, the day before Veteran's day at the Swiss Embassy in Washington.**

**For public screenings of the film please refer to director Theo Stich.**

**A DVD is available containing two versions: NTSC format for the US with comments and subtitles in English and PAL format for Europe in German. Price, including postage, for private use only: \$ 50.00. DVD's can be ordered directly from LUMENFILM, Theo Stich, Ottikerstr. 10, CH-8006 Zürich or at [www.lumenfilm.ch](http://www.lumenfilm.ch).**

**Next Regional News:**

- # 1/2007 - Copy deadline: Dec. 7, 06  
Mailing date: Jan. 25, 07
- # 2/2007 - Copy deadline: Febr. 22, 07  
Mailing date: April 4, 07

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# Second Half of Swiss Roots: "Behind every successful event – you find strong partners"

In the past months swiss roots has been very active and present in various parts of the country. While the format and presentation of every project was quite unique there was one common denominator: the spirit of the local partners and associations. Without these very motivated and eager local partners the events would certainly have been of different character and would not have attracted the same positive attention. Most of these partners worked on a voluntary basis, motivated by their personal interest in Switzerland.



Opening of the exhibition "The Sister Republics" in Philadelphia

The event series picked-up again in June with a "big bang", the exportation of the Swiss Federal Charter, the original "Bundesbrief" of 1291 with the purpose of showcasing it at the National Constitution Center in Philadelphia. Swiss roots presented this special exhibition entitled "The Sister Republics: The Swiss Confederation and the

United States of America".

As the curator of "The Sister Republics", Mr. Karl Niederer, explains "The title of this exhibit intentionally revived a historic term found in the diplomatic correspondence of Benjamin Franklin during the American Revolution,

in letters received from Bernese native Johann Valltravers. The term remained in common use for the next century and a half, when Switzerland and the U.S. shared a special bond of kinship - being the only republics on earth. "

Just a few days later, swiss roots participated in an experience of different nature, the inspiring

Saengerfest 2006 held in Toledo, Ohio. Passionate singers from all over North America united to compete in a variety of choirs. Hundreds of music enthusiasts joined to sing together, sing for each other and enjoy the culture of yo-

deling and performing in choirs. It was a celebration of the tradition of folkloristic entertainment, and the enthusiasm was very contagious – in fact, Ambassador Loretan was fully integrated into the program and sang the hymn of

## Facts & Figures:

(Dated July 28, 2006)

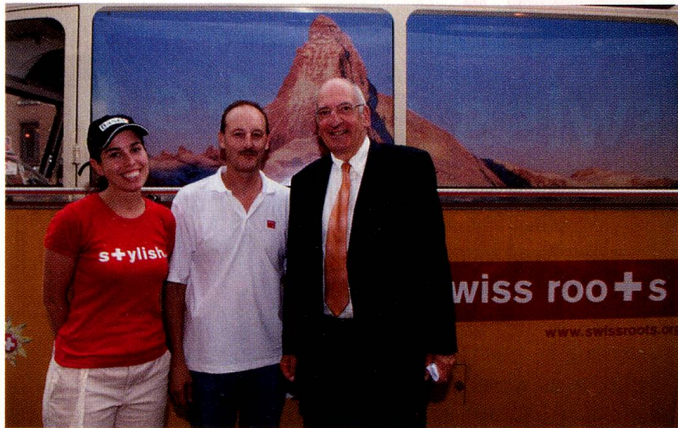
- 64 events were organized
- more than 40,000 people attended
- more than 18,000 people signed up for Newsletter
- more than 10,000 T-shirts and 200,000 printed marketing materials have been distributed
- average of 20,000 people visited the swiss roots website every month
- overall number of media reports in the US: 126:
- 74 % of the reports were online on sites such as CBS Sportsline, ESPN and assorted local online media, with a total of 1.5 billion monthly hits.
- 19 % of the reports were print-media coverage (USA Today, ESPN Magazine, Los Angeles Times and Washington Post) with a total circulation of more than 5 million
- 5 % of the reports were on television, 2% on radio (local and private stations)
- overall number of media reports in CH: 613
- 57 % of the report were in print media (NZZ, Tages-Anzeiger, Blick, Corriere del Ticino, Le Matin, Le Temps and others) with a total circulation of more than 700,000
- 38 % of the reports were online (Blick online, swissinfo, le temps.ch, espace.ch, Tagesanzeiger.ch) with a total of 2 million readers
- 3 % of the reports were on television (SF1, TSR, TSI and local TV stations like Tele Tell and Tele Züri), 2 % on radio (public and private radio stations)



The Regelchörli from Switzerland was very successful at the Sängerfest in Toledo/Ohio

swiss roots

www.swissroots.org



**Ellis Island 1st of August celebration. From right to left: Federal Councilor Couchepin, Swiss Postal Bus Driver Fredy Böni and Project Manager Rosina Colazzo-Franzese**

Gruyère "Lyoba".

On the occasion of this year's Swiss National Day a big celebration was orchestrated for New York and the Tri-State-Area. This time, an extraordinary location was selected. New Yorkers and visitors met up on "Ellis Island" coinciding with the opening of the Swiss immigration exhibition "Small Number - Big Impact".

Tell Festival": A festival, where the Tell play is performed in German and in English. Alongside these plays, which are traditionally held on idyllic grounds much resembling the original Rütli, additional festivities were organized for all ages at the center of town. The towns charming chalets and its open-hearted citizens are a must if you haven't yet experienced them.



**At the Wilhelm Tell Festival in New Glarus, Wisconsin: Congresswoman Baldwin and Ambassador Loretan inaugurate the Swiss Roots Tree**

The overall entertainment program was manifold and underlined by the presence of Federal Councilor Couchepin and a performance by U.S. singer/songwriter Jewel Kilcher, which audience and media appreciated alike.

Swiss roots spent Labor Day weekend in New Glarus, Wisconsin participating in the local "Wilhelm

Two weeks later and once again in Green County, Wisconsin, Swiss roots participated in the Cheese Days of Monroe, where an impressive crowd of 100,000 visitors attended in the cheese extravaganza. A variety of activities including a ball in authentic Swiss costumes (Trachten) as well as an outstanding parade through town were

some of the highlights. Family-fun and traditions were brought together, reflecting very much, what Swiss roots' is about.

The "fil rouge" throughout these activities was the postal bus, which Swiss roots brought to the U.S. to accompany the events and linking the various states together. The postal bus and its local patron, Alfred Böni, were received everywhere with arms wide open. When the postal bus had to leave again for Switzerland in October, Swiss roots was sorry to see it depart.

On a different level, the website [www.swissroots.org](http://www.swissroots.org) has also contributed strongly to connecting people and events and in-turn events also helped to generate significant traffic on the website and inspired readers to become writers and to actively participate.

Overall it was astounding to experience how many Swiss and Americans interested in Switzerland were excited to discuss their origin. Some of them brought along original documents, letters and pictures of their forefathers to the events, hoping to find the last pieces of an unfinished puzzle, feeling the need to learn where they came from. Maybe they were inspired by the saying "You don't know where you are going, until you know where you come from."

Over the course of a year, Swiss roots has made an enormous endeavor to bring so



**No need to introduce the main characters of the Wilhelm Tell Festival in New Glarus!**

many activities around the country under one common denominator. During the many events that were organized friendships have been made, people have bonded across state lines or country lines for that matter, and most importantly, how we value our heritage and how it influences the focus of our future have been redefined for some of us.

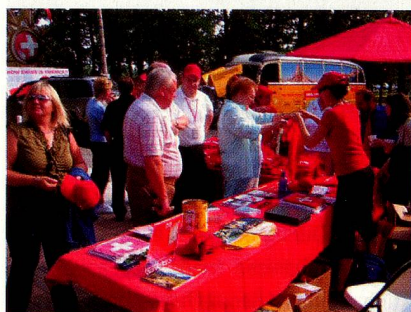
As Federal Councilor Couchepin



**Jewel Kilcher, Singer / Songwriter performed at Ellis Island**



Swiss Roots Postal Bus tours Manhattan



Swiss Roots T-Shirt are a sell-out

has put it so eloquently during the National Day Celebrations:

"We want swiss roots to be a sustainable project. So there are plans for 2007 to maintain the important presence of Switzerland

swiss roots + s

www.swissroots.org



Christoph Grieder, Music Therapist/Yodel teacher, touring with the postal bus

in the United States by launching interesting new activities in the fields of education, research and innovation. I intend to give them my full support."

Text: Rosina Colazzo-Franzese

Event Planner Swiss Roots  
rosina.colazzo-franzese@eda.admin.ch

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# Switzerland is The Fourth Largest Recipient of U.S. Direct Investments Worldwide!



in Switzerland, but Switzerland ranks as the 7<sup>th</sup> largest investor in the U.S., creating some 500,000 jobs.

"Many of the Fortune 1000 companies have activities in Switzerland," states André Guedel, Program Director of Location Switzerland's North America Office in New York. "In terms of U.S. FDI abroad,

Switzerland still holds its amazing 4<sup>th</sup> place of all FDI recipients worldwide, ahead of Germany and Japan."

Mario Brossi, Senior Representative of Loca-

Global ranking of cities with a high quality of life

City	Ranking 2005	Score (NY=100)
<b>Geneva</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>106.5</b>
<b>Zurich</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>106.5</b>
Vancouver	3	106
Vienna	3	106
Frankfurt	5	105.5
Munich	5	105.5
Dusseldorf	5	105.5
Auckland	8	105
<b>Berne</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>105</b>
Copenhagen	8	105
Sydney	8	105

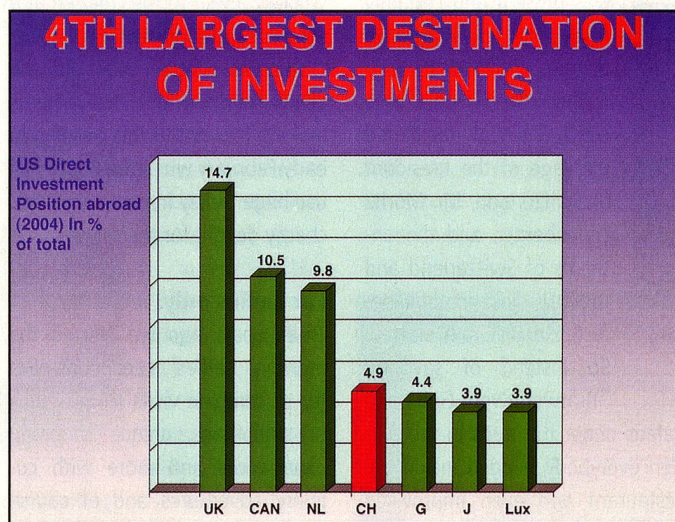
Source: Mercer Human Resource Consulting, Worldwide Quality of Life Survey 2005

While Ireland's success in attracting U.S. companies is widely known, Switzerland's success story is equally interesting but less known. What few people in the U.S. and even fewer in Switzerland realize is that Switzerland has become one of the leading recipients of U.S. direct investment.

In 2005, U.S. companies were responsible for 41 new investments and 19 significant expansions in Switzerland, adding high-quality jobs to the Swiss economy. These new implementations include companies such as Avanade, IBM, Stryker, Hercules, ReGen Biologics, O-I, Cisco, VeriSign, Eaton, Kennametal, Isolagen and many more. In the past several years, Switzerland has particularly become a center for EMEA (European, Middle Eastern and African) headquarters of North American Companies.

According to the Swiss American Chamber of Commerce, the important value of the 680 U.S. companies in Switzerland is providing 68'000 high-quality jobs to the Swiss economy and approximately five percent of GDP and an over-proportional contribution to growth.

From another perspective, not only is the U.S. the largest investor



**Identifying and attracting potential investors to Switzerland is a team effort involving federal as well as several regional agencies and private sector companies.**

**The mission of Location Switzerland, the Swiss foreign investment agency is to promote foreign direct investments to Switzerland and to help companies start operations there. Location Switzerland has offices in Europe, Asia and in its main market, North America.**

**The following cantonal/regional investment promotion agencies are represented in North America: Development Economic Western Switzerland (DEWS), Greater Zurich Area (GZA), Basel, Berne, Geneva and Fribourg.**

**In addition, specialized law, accounting and tax firms such as KPMG, Deloitte, PWC and E+Y work with potential investors.**

**Other important partners are the Embassies and Consulates, the Swiss Houses and the Swiss Business Hubs.**

**For more information on Location Switzerland and its partners or to get on our mailing list for our newsletter, visit [www.locationswitzerland.com](http://www.locationswitzerland.com) or call us at (212) 599 5700 ext 1034**

tion Switzerland in Washington, adds that reasons why the country is such an attractive place for U.S. companies include a U.S. style business environment, liberal labor laws, a competitive tax regime, safety and quality of life.

Activities performed by many North American companies in Switzerland include:

- High margin manufacturing such as medical, micro mechanical and electronic devices and watches
- Development and management of intellectual property including pharmaceuticals, biotech and nanotechnology
- Centralized management operations, such as HQ's or supply chain management
- Branding of quality products and services.

André Guedel  
Program Director  
Location:Switzerland  
[andre.guedel@eda.admin.ch](mailto:andre.guedel@eda.admin.ch) ■



## GEORGIA

## Swiss American Society, Atlanta

### Members and Guests celebrate their swissroots

This year's National Day Celebration was not only a birthday party for Switzerland but also an event to promote the swissroots campaign, co-sponsored by the Swiss Consulate.

Members of the Swiss American Society were invited to bring their American friends with a connection to Switzerland as guests of the Consulate.



**Hans Broder Sr. and his large family, keeping Swiss traditions alive**

SAS vice president and MC for the day Rene Welti welcomed some 240 people on the beautifully decorated grounds of a Duluth restaurant. While enjoying the traditional aperitif with Swiss wine and cheese we were treated to live Alphorn music (Gary Bang, VA, and Jim Ghighi, SC), "Fahnen-schwinger"/flag throwing (Erwin Buerlimann, VA). Enrico Gamma, former Club President, introduced "Schwingen"/Swiss wrestling to the attendees who witnessed the two volunteers Simon Mettler and Karl Broder actually do a number of the traditional moves. The Schwinger Hosen were donated by the Appenzeller Schwinger Verein.

The Swiss Consul General Mr. Ulrich Hunn presented the goals and ideas of swissroots. He then introduced Hans Broder Sr. and his family as a perfect example of immigrants keeping their Swiss roots

alive while serving the society of their chosen country.

Hans Broder was honored with a commendation by the Governor of Georgia, Sonny Perdue, for his significant involvement in helping the Swiss community in Georgia for more than 50 years, and for his leading role in the founding of the Swiss American Society of Atlanta.

The majority of Hans Broder's family of 8 children, 22 grandchildren and 6 great-grand children was present and certainly made for an impressive picture.

The official part was concluded with the taped message of the President of Switzerland, Mr. Moritz Leuenberger, and the anthems of Switzerland and the US - just in time before the BIG rain started. So instead of savoring "Bratwurst vom Grill" and

salads under the trees in the garden everybody headed inside the restaurant and even improvised seating in the hallway. Nobody seemed to mind, and local accordion player Jake Herzog continued to entertain the crowd with Swiss music.

To the dismay of the children the "Lampion" procession had to be cancelled, but everybody was treated to a gift bag with a variety of information about Switzerland and the swiss roots campaign.

### What else happens in the Swiss American Society?

By the time you read this article we will be looking back on a Sunday Family Picnic in the Park and to a "Bündner-Obig" in the Kennesaw restaurant Summers' Street. Chef and owner Josef Vondra will cook "Bündner Gerstensuppe" (barley soup) and "Capuns" (sorry, there

is no English word for this delicacy from Graubünden!). This continues a tradition to highlight Swiss regions - we started last year with a "Serata Ticinese" - by serving culinary specialties, enjoying typical music and sharing what we know about the culture, history and geography of the featured area.

We will be busy preparing for another highlight in the SAS, the Christmas Party, and make the last arrangement with Samichlaus who will pay a visit to the children at a separate outdoor event.

Another staple event is the yearly Fondue Night. Everybody is looking forward to this evening in early February when the Board will use huge turkey fryers to cook this cheesy delight for the crowds.

### For Ladies only!

Three years ago we started the monthly Ladies' Luncheons. We try to combine visits to museums or exhibitions, unique shopping experiences and more with culinary adventures and of course making and meeting friends. On the program so far were tours through the High Museum of Art, the Carter Center, the Chocolate exhibition, brunches at members' homes, a picnic at the Botanical Garden as well as visits to restaurants of all ethnicities. As a special treat we were invited to a barbecue at the Consular Residence by Marie-Claire Hunn, the wife of the new Swiss Consul General in

Atlanta. Usually a group of 6 to 12 ladies shares the fun, sometimes accompanied by the Club's youngest members in strollers.



**Karl Broder, left, and Simon Mettler introduced "Schwingen"/Swiss wrestling to the attendees**

A report of the various activities and an outlook of planned events will be given at the General Assembly, to be held in March. Suggestions from our members are certainly welcome, and the Board is constantly looking for new people in the crew. To me the involvement with the Club has proven to be a very rewarding experience. Not only did I get to know people with all kind of interesting stories, but I also got to explore Atlanta and its surroundings. So give it a try!

*Helen Freiermuth, President  
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OKLAHOMA

# Swiss Club of Oklahoma

On Saturday May 20, 2006 some 40 members of the Swiss Club of Oklahoma said farewell to our

cluding a special farewell Swiss torte for our guests. Patricia Hodel had done an excellent job organizing this event which all participants praised to have been one of the best gatherings for many years.

Consul Armin Meile addressed the Swiss group informing about the closure of the Consulate General in Houston and

the transfer of all files to the Atlanta representation and thanked the members of the Swiss Club of Oklahoma for their active participation in its events. He outlined the importance that the Swiss abroad should maintain and enjoy the camaraderie and good relationships



**Swiss Torte honoring Consul Armin Meile**

among each other to strengthen the living of Swiss values in a foreign environment. The Swiss Club of Oklahoma thanked Armin Meile and his wife Rosine for showing their sup-

port in coming a few times to Oklahoma during their stay in Houston.

The Swiss Club of Oklahoma embraces about 30 families living in Oklahoma (mostly in the surroundings of Tulsa and Oklahoma City), South Kansas and West Arkansas and meets in spring for the famous Swiss Fondue

party, in summer at the Picnic at Lake Gibson respectively mostly in Tulsa for the Swiss National Day event, in fall usually at a surprise place to discover Oklahoma and then finally towards year end to celebrate a Christmas Brunch. Monthly the Jass fanatics meet on a Friday night in Tulsa to play our



**Consul Armin Meile speaks to the Swiss of Oklahoma**

Swiss national game.

New members are always welcome to the Swiss Club of Oklahoma.

*Andre Siegenthaler*  
President,  
Swiss Club of Oklahoma  
Sigi21@cox.net



## Swiss Picnic at Lake Gibson

Consul Armin Meile and his wife Rosine at the occasion of the traditional Picnic at Sequoyah State Park on the shore of Lake Gibson about one hour South of Tulsa. Attending were members from Oklahoma and especially also our Swiss friends from West Arkan-

sas. Many children enjoyed the event playing games and discovering the warm water of Lake Gibson. Since the burn ban had been lifted the menu did include great bratwurst on the open grill, many typical Swiss salads and deserts in-

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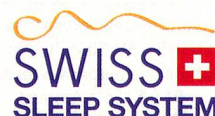
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TENNESSEE

# Swiss Celebration held in Gruetli-Laager, Tennessee was largest ever.

On July 29<sup>th</sup> the largest crowd ever to attend a Swiss heritage celebration in Tennessee took place at an old Swiss Colony farm in the rural Tennessee village of Gruetli-Laager.

Close to a thousand people braved foul weather and drove many miles to hear a genuine

Swiss alphorn band. The Grundy County Swiss Historical Society has put on an annual Swiss heritage celebration for over thirty years and has had many successful events, but this one was by far the largest. This years event was enhanced by a generous gift

from the Swiss Consul General Ulrich Hunn of Atlanta whose office paid the expense for the five piece Swiss band to come to Tennessee from New Glarus, Wisconsin. Needless to say the alphorn music and atmosphere of the old farm made a very attractive background for the Celebration. Plans are already underway to repeat an equally exciting Celebration next year.

More can be learned about the Society's efforts to restore this old Swiss farm and the Swiss Celebration activities at [www.swiss-historicalsociety.org](http://www.swiss-historicalsociety.org).



**L to R: Julie Baggenstoss, John Baggenstoss, President of the Grundy Co. Swiss Historical Society and Dr. Clopper Almon who authored a book on the colony.**



**Old barn on the farm that will be the Society focus for a new roof in the coming year, with the Canton flags of Switzerland on display.**

To provide more history of the Swiss Colony at Gruetli-Laager, the Society has published a 200 page book (\$16 including postage) about the founding of this Tennessee Swiss Colony. Books may be ordered from John Baggenstoss, President, Grundy County Swiss Historical Society 723 Dogwood Drive, Monteagle, TN 37356



**The three members of the Tony Zraggen Alphorn Band of New Glarus, Wisconsin delighted the audience**

*Text: John Baggenstoss*

*jbaggenstoss@yahoo.com*

*Pictures: David Lowrie.*

*More pictures available online at [www.LowriePix.com](http://www.LowriePix.com)*



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# Santa Claus (Samichlaus, December 6, Evening)

One of the stories in Ellen Carney's book "From Here ... to There ... An Illustrated Memoir of a Swiss Childhood"



Santa in Switzerland was not a fixture in department stores where children could sit on his lap and recite their wishes into his ear.

Our Santa appeared on December 6, not on a reindeer-drawn sled, but on foot or on a bicycle (the war was on and gasoline for cars was reserved for more important missions). He came to visit children whose parents had hired him as a kind of scout for the "Christchindli" who would visit later, on December 24, to herald the start of the Christmas celebration.

It took a multitude of Santas to visit so many children. Some Santas had advertised themselves in want-ads as "child-loving", others as "authoritarian" and "awe-inspiring." Somehow, though, they all followed the same script. Instead of coming down the chim-

ney (we had no fireplaces) they stomped up the mostly wooden stairs of the apartment building in heavy shoes and knocked threateningly on the hall door. There our parents, mom mostly, received them, handed them goodies and divulged secrets about our department, while we kids quaked behind the closed living room door, rehearsing little verses which we were expected to recite before Santa opened his sack to distribute "his" bounty.

In his usually red suit, Santa always made a theatrical entrance into the living room. He hardly ever sat down. So towering over us he questioned us with his basso voice about our behaviour in the past year. If we happened to forget a "sin", he was quick to remind us, having been prompted by a parent. We were instructed to be

truthful since he would report to the Christmas angel who would then adjust our wish list commen-

a gingerbread Santa cookie with his colorful picture pasted on top. The shares went according to how

surate wit how we stacked up in his estimation. We had placed this wish list between the slats of the closed window shutters some night prior to Santa's visit, so that the angel could fly by and collect it. Of course, the list had always vanished when we checked the next morning.

After our confession and recital of the poem, and after he had lectured us according to instructions, it was time to receive his beneficence, nuts, mandarins, a candy bar and certainly

## "From Here ... to There ..."

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Jacob Baur

good we had been. Woe to the out of control child: He or she was threatened to be stuck, head first, into the very sack from which Santa had produced his gifts; they would then be taken downstairs where Schmutzli, the wild and dark helper was waiting with Santa's donkey (supposedly). Schmutzli would throw the bag over the donkey and together with Santa take the child to Santa's cabin deep in the woods, to stay until it learned to behave appropriately. While this threat was never carried out, it was a terrifying behavior modifier and certainly made one shake with fright the following year in anticipation of Santa's visit.

As a last gesture, before his departure, Santa might have handed the parents a Fitze, a switch, which became a fixture behind a mirror as an intimidating reminder to behave or have a sore behind. I was especially frightened by Santa even though theoretically I had nothing to fear. I often forgot my lines or jumbled them – even though I knew my haul would be larger than my brother's, which of course made me very popular with him. But why should it not? While I fretted before and after Santa's visit, he and his gang of friends were out deflating as many Santa bicycle tires as they could locate.



If this doesn't bring back memories, what will?

Yet, miraculously he was always at home at the right time for Santa and flawlessly recited a verse like:

Santa Niggi Näggi  
Hinderem Ofе schtecki  
Gimmer Nuss und Birre  
Dänn chummi wieder füre.

Santa Nicki Nack  
Behind the oven I am hiding  
Gimme nuts and a pear  
Then I'll reappear!

My brother probably secretly enjoyed the suffering of his 4-year-old sister who still believed in the Easter bunny. But if we had offered Santa a glass of milk and a plate

of cookies, he might have been a friendlier visitor, rather than one we were relieved to see disappear.

And I am still puzzled as to the real identity of the Christchild. Especially now that my daughter quizzes me. Is the Christ child Baby Jesus as the name implies—but then why has he been turned into an angel flying around, collecting wish lists? And has become in most imaginations a female, to

boot? Of course this Christchild disappears from the horizon just like the Easter rabbit at a certain stage of a child's life. Therefore, no further explanation may be required. Subsequently the birth of Christ is celebrated in age-old pagan fashion of exchanging gifts to celebrate winter solstice – while singing Christian carols.

*Text and paintings:*  
Ellen Carney

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## WASHINGTON

## Swiss Roots in High Places at Microsoft

In June this year Bill Gates announced he was going to concentrate fully on his charity foundations with his wife Melinda and handing the reins of the computer giant's day-to-day operations to three men: CEO Steve Ballmer,

the University's Literary Magazine. Ballmer continued studies at Stanford University's School of Business. Down the Hall at Harvard Campus also lived fellow sophomore Bill Gates and their meeting seemed to be destined for the

Through the years Ballmer made his mark at Microsoft with his own brand of energetic leadership and has been described as focused, dynamic, passionate, hard-charging, funny, and ebullient.

But Steve Ballmer is not the

As Sr. Director of Government Engagements Giorgio Vanzini is in charge of contracts with governments around the world and lends support when they need a deeper engagement related to security, interoperability, but also education and local economic development. Vanzini and his team will provide programmatic cooperation and will stand by until a solution is established and implemented.

Vanzini remains loyal to his roots in Zurich, enjoys conversing in "Schwyzerdütsch" and at Christmas time distributes Sprüngli chocolates to his staff. Ballmer, on the other hand, still has an aunt in Switzerland whom he visits from time to time.

When Steve Ballmer stated that Microsoft operating system "Windows" was available in every language, Giorgio Vanzini quickly interjected that Switzerland's Rätö-Romansh language was missing. Ballmer agreed to create Windows in Romansh. Quickly, a citizen of the Grisons, Chur was flown in and the rest of the translation was done with the assistance of the Liga Rumantscha. We will soon know what the translation of "Keyboard", "Mouse" and "File open" are in Rätö-Romansh. In addition, Windows Rätö-Romansh add-ons are offered free of charge.

As far as Bill Gates is concerned, he travels every year to Switzerland for the World Economic Forum in Davos. He states that there is no place in the entire world where you can meet important people in politics, business, industry, science, and leading organizations in such an informal setting.

*Doris Ritzi* ■



**Both, CEO Steve Ballmer, right, and Giorgio Vanzini, Sr. Director of Government Engagements hail from Switzerland. While it was Ballmer's father who emigrated to the US, Vanzini was born in Opfikon, Canton Zurich.**

strategist Craig Mundie and software architect Ray Ozzie, the latter two reporting to Steve Ballmer.

Well, you may not know it, but Steve Ballmer's roots originate in Biel/ Bienne where his father hails from. Frederic Henry Ballmer Sr. immigrated to the United States at the age of 26 where his career led him to the position of Manager at Ford Motor Company.

Steve Ballmer was born March 1956 near Detroit and graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in Mathematics and Economics from Harvard University. He also worked at Harvard's Crimson Newspaper and

future. But Ballmer first worked for two years at Procter & Gamble as an Assistant Product Manager before joining Microsoft in 1980.

At Microsoft he worked himself quickly through the ranks, and headed positions including operations in systems development, sales and support. In 1998 he was promoted to President to run the day-to-day responsibilities of the corporation. In 2000 he was elected CEO. Ballmer, together with Bill Gates and the company's other technical leaders, focus on Microsoft's innovation and leadership for its businesses.

only Swiss at Microsoft. There is also Giorgio Vanzini, Senior Director of Government Engagements, Public Sector. Giorgio Vanzini grew up in Zurich of an Italian father and an Austrian mother. He went to school in Opfikon, graduated from the Commercial College Zurich, and later worked for various software firms. In his early teens he became a Swiss citizen. At age 30, he immigrated to the United States and accumulated valuable experience in various high tech firms. Microsoft became aware of his vast experience and hired him in 1994.