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Constant companion

The great thing about magazines is that you can take them with you everywhere: the bus, the garden, the dentist's waiting room and even the bath. "Swiss Review", with its diverse range of articles, is a constant companion for me and one I would not want to be without. I sincerely hope we Swiss abroad continue to receive it in its current form and I am already looking forward to the next edition.

MARGI-MARIA DAHM, MÜNSTER, GERMANY



from Florida, whose words left a very bad taste behind. I even wondered if it was a genuine letter.

The bottom line is that whatever our views we all live on one planet and ultimately all depend on one another for our survival. This will become increasingly clear in the years ahead as climate changes prise us out of our western comfort zones.

I hope Mr Krieg will grow to become more aware of this, despite his doubtless comparatively privileged vantage point, before he again sweepingly surmises that 3rd world nations must be "lazy and stupid". Perhaps he should travel more, at least away from the shores of Xenophobia and Ignorance. Such views really do contribute to giving Switzerland a negative reputation abroad and make me feel quite sad and ashamed to be Swiss.

ESTHER A. AUSTIN, MANCHESTER, GREAT BRITAIN

Keep up the good work

I am an avid reader of "Swiss Review". As a Swiss citizen who has lived abroad for many years (UK, USA, Japan and now 10 years in Canada) I look forward to every edition.

As President of the Swiss Canadian Chamber of Commerce (SCCC) in Toronto, I organised the opening event Euro Soccer 2008. As a football fan, I particularly enjoyed the interview with Umberto Barberis in the April edition.

Keep up the good work and many thanks for the interesting news.

ERNST NOTZ, TORONTO, CANADA

A damp outlook

I feel compelled to respond to the letter by Adrian H. Krieg. I would in no way describe myself as left-wing, but to label "Swiss Review" a "propaganda tool for the political left and multiculturalism" is well wide of the mark. Clearly, anyone who does not hold his evidently beloved Mr Blocher in high esteem is deemed to be leftist. That would also include part of the SVP. Mr Krieg (interesting that his name means "war") clearly wages war on anyone holding a different opinion to his own, and to call third-world countries lazy and stupid is nonsensical in every respect. However, it is futile trying to explain something to someone whose view of the world has been dampened a little by life in Florida.

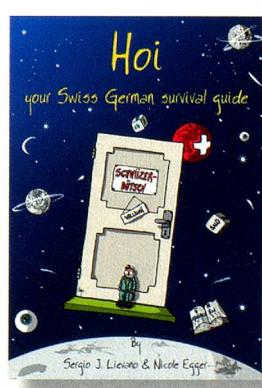
HEINZ LYNER, PRAGUE
CZECH REPUBLIC

Bad taste

I was so delighted to receive my June issue of "Swiss Review". That is, until I came upon the letter from A H Krieg

Why do so few French-Swiss speak Swiss German when they studied High German at school? An important yet obvious question. Some might say that Swiss German is a spoken rather than a written language which is alive and evolving, and they would be right. However, there has never been a light-hearted, educational dictionary to assist not only learners whose mother tongue is French but also English and German native speakers. Paradoxically, the solution to this problem came about as a result of a meeting in Zurich between Anglo-Columbian illustrator Sergio J. Lievano and German teacher Nicole Egger. The expatriate found he could not apply what he had learned in his High German course in everyday life, so he learned Swiss German directly with his teacher. This collaboration inspired the creation of an original English-Swiss German dictionary, which is remarkable because of its attractive layout and educational illustrations. Sergio J. Lievano works as a caricaturist for the "Zürcher Oberländer" and the "Anzeiger von Uster" newspapers, so humour is a key feature. As translator Laurent Droz puts it: "The "Hoi" dictionary is an easy and entertaining way of immersing yourself in Swiss German." It provides a number of strategies and methods for bridging the gap between High German and Swiss German. As an appetiser, it contains an introduction to Swiss German, its history, geography and regional characteristics. From "the history of the dialects" to "why the Swiss Germans don't like speaking German", "Hoi! – your Swiss German survival guide" covers all practical aspects of immersing yourself in the country of singer Mani Matter. It provides a basic vocabulary of 2,000 words and phrases needed for everyday situations under different headings: chatting, invitations, love, finding the right word at the right time, at work, on the telephone, e-mail and SMS messaging, correspondence, the media, eating and drinking, health, the body, emotions, emergencies, the police, shopping, clothes, money and banking, transport, directions, in the countryside, leisure activities, the family, babies, the elderly, at home, neighbours and the authorities, numbers, toilets, education, colours, animals, the weather and the temperature, etc. "Hoi! – your Swiss German survival guide" also includes Swiss German slang, Swiss sayings and a 1,500-word dictionary. "To hear" is no longer "hören" but "losä". Readers will find that Swiss German expressions are often funny and rather musical. A person who is a little snobbish is called "Schikki-Mikki".

ALAIN WEY



"Hoi! – your Swiss German survival guide", N. Egger & S. Lievano, Bergli Books, 2005.
"Hoi! Et après... Manuel de survie en suisse allemand", Nicole Egger & Sergio J. Lievano, traduction Laurent Droz, Bergli Books, 2008.
"Hoi Zäme – Schweizerdeutsch leicht gemacht", N. Egger & S. Lievano, Bergli Books, 2006.
www.bergli.ch