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Congratulations

My wife and I greatly appreciate receiving "Swiss Review". Congratulations! Keep up the good work – and do urge the FDFA to continue funding you sufficiently! The FDFA first got rid of swissinfo and the short-wave radio programme. Now they want to deprive their most loyal Swiss subjects abroad of the quarterly "Swiss Review".

The Swiss abroad are Switzerland's best ambassadors internationally, but they need to be kept informed in order to act accordingly! Switzerland's unique historic political culture (including its model fiscal system) needs to be continuously "explained", especially in Brussels and Strasbourg.

D. SCHAUBACHER, BELGIUM

Online version is enough

In the October edition we read that the FDFA suggested only delivering the printed "Swiss Review" to Swiss expatriates who really want to receive the magazine. This request seems justifiable to us given the tight funds because in most cases the information is two or three months old. In any case, many Swiss expatriates read the "NZZ" or the "Tagesanzeiger", either online or as a foreign edition.

As far as we are concerned, we could easily do without the printed version of "Swiss Review"; an Internet edition would be more than enough for us.

H. MANO SOLINSKI, USA

Outstanding

I would just like to thank you for publishing "Swiss Review". Not only is the quality of the journalism outstanding, I also find the information and tips very useful. Thank you!

M. VIOOTTI, BY E-MAIL

Electronic Review

As a loyal reader of the Review, which I like very much, I am convinced that we have nothing to lose in viewing the magazine in electronic format, even though we can access large quantities of information about Switzerland online and on TSR. We only stand to benefit from this because, as well as saving considerable amounts of paper, the use of which is harmful to the environment, and ink, which is more harmful still, readers can view "Swiss Review" on the day that it is published.

J.-P. COSTATINI, SPAIN

Don't take away "Swiss Review"

I was very sorry to learn that we may no longer receive "Swiss Review" in the post. I'm 31 years old, I'm married, I'm a mother and I've been self-employed in the south of France for 5 years, having lived in France for 11 years. Apart from a holiday each year to Switzerland and phone calls with family members, the paper version of "Swiss Review" is my only link with Swiss current affairs. I find this very interesting but, due to a lack of time, it's much easier for me to read "Swiss Review" at home while I'm having a break. Although I work on the Internet, I do not like reading about current affairs online and I never do it. The reception for radio stations is poor and the TV news on TV5 is broadcast too late.

Don't take away "Swiss Review". I'm not old, and I am computer-literate, but it's the only way for me to follow current affairs in Switzerland.

Y. JABBOUR, FRANCE

So SWEET ZERLAND. Amusing, well researched and richly illustrated, this book, "So Sweet Zerland", pays tribute to emblematic Swiss brands, symbols, legendary places and the great figures of our nation. This first volume reveals fifty Swiss stories that are part of the country's collective memory. It is a mine of information. We learn, for instance, that the pens and stationery of Caran d'Ache take their name from a French caricaturist of Russian origin (1859–1909) who was admired by the businessman Arnold Schweizer. We also discover that velcro was invented by an engineer from the Canton of Vaud in 1941 and patented in Switzerland in 1951. Did you know that Biella's "classeur federal" office stationery is celebrating its 100th birthday this year? Or that it took the name "federal" because it has been supplying the departments of the Swiss administration since 1908? This publication is full of anecdotes. We learn about the origins and history of the Bally shoe company, the yellow post buses, Cardinal beer, Cenovis pâté, Cremo dairy products, Freitag bags, Gerber fondue, Gruyère cheese, Mary-long cigarettes and Logitech IT accessories. Not to mention Mövenpick ice cream, Nestlé, Rivella soft drinks, Ovomaltine, Swatch watches, Ricola and Sugus sweets, Victorinox Swiss knives, Voltaren anti-inflammatory ointment, Toblerone chocolate and Rolex watches.

The book also covers prominent Swiss figures, such as Roger Federer, Stephan Eicher, the furniture designer Teo Jacob and, of course, William Tell. It takes a look at the Saint Bernard, the bears of Berne, Lucerne's Pont de la Chapelle (XIV century), the Pilatus aircraft, the station clocks of the Swiss Railways (SBB) created in 1951, the Knie circus, Geneva's water jet, which has been flowing since 1891, the Grande Dixence dam, the Swiss flag, which took on its definitive design in 1889, Cervin and Alinghi. The book has already been published in English and will be available in German by Easter 2009. A second volume in French is due to come out at the end of 2009. Of course, choosing fifty Swiss stories meant taking a selective approach and, according to the Franco-Swiss author Xavier Casile, avoiding direct competition for brands in a particular sector. The book, which is a hundred pages long, is an excellent way of quickly discovering what Switzerland has to offer in terms of creativity. As a foretaste, an interview with the singer Stephan Eicher gets to the heart of the matter. A fondue lover, the artist recalls the sweet tastes of his childhood, such as Tam Tam desserts, Ragusa chocolate and the famous Sugus sweets. Finally, he also touches on Switzerland's image abroad based on his travels

with humour and a sense of irony. He says: "It's like someone who is top of the class, but is then discovered to have cheated in their exams like everyone else."

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"So Sweet Zerland" by Xavier Casile, Editions Good Heidi Production, Geneva, 2008. www.goodheidiproduction.ch