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the quarterly publication of the
Swiss Society Bangkok

swisseecho+

SUMMER SEASON issue

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from the
PRESIDENT

Ganz zuerst will ich allen für das Vertrauen danken, das Sie dem Vorstand und mir mit der Wiederwahl ausgesprochen haben.

Je tiens à remercier spécialement les membres du comité qui viennent de le quitter. Dr Philip Balankura' a été pendant de nombreuses années membre du comité et a, pendant les années 1998 et 1999, présidé la SSB. Nous avons tous beaucoup aimés toutes les sorties que lui et son épouse ont organisés, le rallye, les promenades à Ayuthia et les grandes festivités lors du 1er août. La proposition de Albin Rufner, de nommer Dr Philipe Membre d'Honneur a été merveilleusement bien accueilli.

Dank gebührt aber auch Esther Kaufmann. Auch Sie hat während vielen Jahren dem SSB Vorstand gedient, hat viele, viele Stunden und Abende geopfert. Für ihr Engagement, für ihren Fleiss und ihre Kompetenz danken der Vorstand und ich Esther recht herzlich.

Gerne will ich auch die neuen Vorstandmitglieder willkommen heissen: Monsieur Pierre Wyss-Chodat était le président du Grand Conseil du canton de Genève. C'est un Monsieur compétent qui sait de quoi il parle. Pierre Wyss s'est proposé spontanément, une chose rare dans notre société, un fait qui indique qu'il est prêt de travailler pour la SSB.

Neu im Vorstand ein dritter Wyss, Daniel. Bei vielen ist er bekannt, er arbeitet bei der Zürich Versicherung die, wie sicher die meisten wissen, unser Heft auf ihre Kosten gestaltet und druckt. Wir sind der Zürich Versicherung dankbar, dass sie ihn als Vorstandmitglied vorgeschlagen hat. Ich freue mich auf die Zusammenarbeit mit den beiden Neuen!

Die Anlässe in diesem Jahr werden sich im selben Rahmen halten wie 2000. Das Programm ist in diesem Heft publiziert. Ich mache bei dieser Gelegenheit nochmals auf den Familien-Stamm aufmerksam. Er findet nun am 3. Donnerstag jeden Monats statt. Wir freuen uns, wenn sich jeweils viele SSB Mitglieder im Restaurant Chesa, 5 Sukhumvit 20, treffen.

Wir wurden angefragt, warum auch Nichtmitglieder das ECHO erhalten. Dies wurde vor zwei Jahren so beschlossen, soll doch die Zeitschrift doch ein Band zwischen den vielen Expats knüpfen und allen die Möglichkeit geben, an Anlässen der SSB teilzunehmen. Unsere Botschaft verschickt das Heft, somit kann auch mit Adressen der Schweizer Bürger in Thailand kein Missbrauch getrieben werden. Bei dieser Gelegenheit danke ich seiner Exzellenz unserem Botschafter, seiner Gemahlin und dem Personal der Botschaft für die ständige Unterstützung, die sie uns Gastarbeitern bieten.

Nun wünsche ich allen ein gutes 2544, beginnt doch das neue Jahr in Thailand erst mit dem Songkran.

Sincerely yours,
MARKUS RUPRECHT
President
Swiss Echo Bangkok

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Dear Friends and Compatriots

I welcome all attendants and herewith open our Annual General Meeting. I particularly welcome all new members, being a lively structure we are subject to continuous change. The SSB wants to provide a large forum in which new members can find new friends, support if necessary and perhaps even feel sheltered.

If not everything works out as planned then this is because we as human beings are less than perfect. Our events and publications are of different kind and popularity. What some may dislike is appreciated by others; resulting in impressive fluctuations of participants at the various events of between 6 to almost 250 persons. In this connection, I would like to inform you that if somebody signs up for an event but eventually does not show up we are forced to charge the costs incurred and pre-paid by the SSB, such as for hotels and travel agencies. We appreciate your understanding.



This year we created a "Family Stamm" which takes place every second Friday of each month at the Restaurant Chesa. Calling it "Family Stamm", we wanted to show that wives and children are most welcome as well. We hope that this monthly event will become a meeting place where ideas will be born, where the relationship with the Committee can be built, a place also where may be expressed what one or the other member may dislike and where perhaps also new Committee Members can be found. May be a Friday is

not the ideal day. You will find a list where you may choose the day you would prefer.

It has always been our aim to present a balance sheet being as equalized as possible. Events should be self-financing or may even result in a small deficit. I believe, we have mostly achieved this target; all events had been offered at the lowest possible prices. The turnouts on 1st August, and the Raclette and Santa Claus events have proved that we are on the right track. Taking this opportunity, I would like to express my sincere thanks to companies and individuals that supported us not only for the 1st August celebration but also on other occasions like "Family Stamm" (Zurich Insurance) and Santa Claus/Christmas Dinner (Queens Park Hotel, Swissair).

In this context, I would also like to mention our publication ECHO and cordially thank our two main sponsors, Zurich Insurance, laying out and printing the magazine, as well as Swissair, who with their advertisement contribute a lot to the expenses. Unfortunately, a couple of errors occurred in the last edition. The subject autumn, autumn



NATIONAL DAY

leaves was illustrated beautifully, however suffered. Moreover, a number of spelling detected, one or two names had been the pictures mostly show Committee Being a major sponsor of the SSB, Zurich Insurance agrees to be represented with a member on the Committee who would proofread texts, check photos and layout and possibly make corrections before printing. We are most happy with this agreement and like to thank Mr. Odermatt from Zurich Insurance to nominate an employee.



its legibility errors were not switched and Members.

Once again, I would like to point out that we highly appreciate any contribution. Swiss small and medium enterprises (also restaurants) are most welcome to introduce themselves in the ECHO. Do not underestimate your abilities, send us your proposals; this may turn out to be a good marketing tool.



At last year's AGM 100'000 Baht were approved for the SALA in Lausanne and for social projects. The Lausanne project could be realized without us, each 25'000 Baht were donated to a school and for health care for children of prisoners. Another each 25'000 Baht have been earmarked for Sparrow Home and a school in Naan Province. But waiting still for answers from those organizations the two donations are temporary suspended for the moment. Other proposals for donations may still come from you.

I have enjoyed the constructive criticism and dedicated work of the Committee Members as well as the support of Thomas Gerber. One Committee Member who is ultimately responsible usually organizes each event. Our Committee Meetings on the first Wednesday of every month are hard work and I really appreciate the contribution of time and effort of each Committee Member.



I would also like to thank all those members who supported us on the 1st August and other events.

(Now in French) Before concluding my report I would like to express my thanks to H.E., our Ambassador and his wife, Madame Freymond. By saying our Ambassador, I mean that this is certainly the appropriate term. Madame and Monsieur Freymond are entirely at the disposal of the Swiss communities in Thailand, Cambodia, Laos and Burma. We are very grateful and thank them warmly in the name of all of us.

Dear friends, I wish all of you a very pleasant evening.

MARKUS RUPRECHT

Santa-Claus Christmas Brunch

by Esther Kaufman

The Swiss Society Bangkok invited the Families to celebrate "Samichlaus" in a Swiss-Style with a Brunch at the Imperial Queens-Park Hotel. 40 adults and 30 children enjoyed the excellent food with "Grifibaenz" bread and delicious Christmas cookies.

The children were visited by Santa Claus Willy and later entertained by the professional Clown "Eddi" from UK. The children enjoyed the program very much and made new friends among each other. A special thank to Swissair who sponsored the "Samichlaus-bag's" and Mr. Brian Sinclair who organized them to be flown in from Switzerland.

Also many thanks to Mr. Bruno Huber (General Manager) and Mr. Markus Strieby of the Imperial Queens-Park Hotel who sponsored the Clown and helped us in many ways to make this event so special.



RACLETTE ABEND

by Ilona Saxer

Der beliebte Raclette-Abend, wie jedes Jahr im November, war wiederum ein toller Anlass. Auch während eines warmen Abends genoss jedermann den feinen, schmelzenden Käse aus der Schweiz.

Der Vorstand und die Mitglieder der Swiss Society, wie auch die Gäste, möchten der Schweizer Botschaft, im speziellen Herrn Botschafter und Madame Freymond, recht herzlich fuer ihre grosszügige Gastfreundschaft danken.

Wenn auch der Käse etwas zu weich war, haben die Thai-Köche eine gute Leistung vollbracht. Einen schönen Dank an das ganze Team vom Hotel Amari Watgate.

Dieser Abend fiel ja mit dem thailändischen "Loy Krathong-Festival" zusammen. Zur Freude von Gross und Klein baute die Botschaft einen Zugang zum nebenan legenden Klang. Mit der Hoffnung auf eine glückliche Zukunft konnte somit, wer wollte, die Sünden und widerfahrenes Pech in einem Krathong-Schiffchen davongleiten lassen.

So hoffen wir, den nächsten Raclette-Schmaus wiederum unterhanspruchnahme des schönen Gartens der Schweizer Botschaft organisieren zu dürfen.



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PRESALE of the RED CROSS BAZAAR 2000

This charity event took place once again at the Residence of the Ambassador of Switzerland in Bangkok on November 18, 2000. After this event was introduced to the public a few years ago, it has in the meantime become an important bazaar where everybody may purchase interesting and high quality consumer goods.

On November 18, 2000, over 5000 visitors and guests met at the Swiss Embassy for a fun day. Swiss companies and companies representing Swiss products displayed their merchandise at forty different booths. It was a unique opportunity to purchase quality Swiss products at bargain prices. At the restaurant and the cafeteria, almost every visitor stopped by to enjoy various specialities from the four corners of Switzerland. The Swiss chefs

of different First class Hotels and Restaurants in Bangkok prepared the delicious Swiss food. Swiss beer and wine, as well as music performances by a local Swiss group, "the Flow", contributed to the overwhelming success of this event.

The benefit of the Presale of the Red Cross Bazaar 2000 is this year again donated to the Thai Red Cross Society as well as to NGO's in Thailand, Cambodia, Myanmar and Laos.

In the year 2001, the Presale of the Red Cross Bazaar is planned to take place on November 24. Remember the date, we are again committed to organise one of the most interesting and friendly charity event in town, where everybody is welcomed.



by Rudolf Wyss



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CRAZY CHICKEN

Exhibition Alberto Heer



We have invited all of you to visit the exposition of paintings from Alberto Heer. The Embassy of Switzerland and the President of the SSB was helping to set the exposition up and to publish it. Unfortunately we had almost no attendance of SSB members, except at the vernissage. I felt quite sorry that Swiss obviously couldn't be motivated by culture, but only with Shooting, Raclette and R?sti. However television and Press have noticed the event, Alberto Heer had a good press, his oeuvre was showed at Television Channel 3 and likes to thank us donating a painting to the SSB, what might be a first main prize for 1st of August.

Ann Astrid Roos, the supervisor of the exhibition lived then in many different countries: in Brazil, in India, in Egypt. She did like all these countries, but finally fell in love with Thailand. She states: "Thai people are friendly and open-minded, they let you plenty of room for new ideas." In Thailand Ann Astrid Roos met Alberto Heer, a most unorthodox Gold Smith, Farmer, Designer and Artist. Motivating each other they decided to organize an exhibition showing Alberto's Paintings and some of his Jewellery Designs. The Amari Watergate Hotel supports the project and opened its doors for an exhibition.

Alberto Heer, the artist was born 1942, during the 2nd World War in Winterthur. His father was a well known Watchmaker and Jewellery Trader. Being the only son of the family he was motivated by his parents to become a Gold Smith. Alberto's overwhelmed fantasy and ideas made him an excellent artisan. After living some years abroad, in Jamaica, he agreed to go back to Switzerland, to take over his father's business. With always plenty of ideas his Jewellery "Myline" became quite famous, but he was much more an artist than a businessman.

Alberto Heer's business brought him to Thailand as well. He started to love the charming country more and more, applied for a resident permit, decided to settle down and start a new chapter of his life. During his whole life, Alberto was painting. When working in Switzerland his time was limited. In Thailand he rediscovered his strong vocation to paint. Being always out of common way his paintings had to be as unusual as he. His chickens and cocks become human, humans become chickens and cocks.

Alberto is a fighter, he might be a late brother of Don Quixote, el Hombre de la Mancha. He is incommoding, not easy to go, destructive and constructive, he is fascinating in his life and in his work. The style of Alberto's paintings is somewhere between surrealism and na?f, he is not copying, he's searching once more his own way.

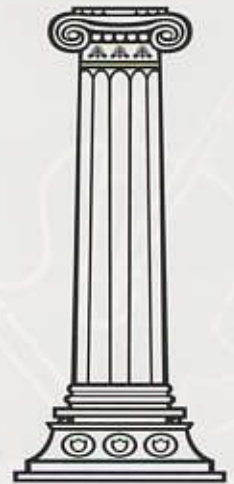
ASO

ausland schweizer organization

Die ASO kümmert sich um Belange von Schweizer Bürgern, die im Ausland leben.

Die Legislative ist das Auslandschweizer Parlament, das einmal im Jahr, in der Regel im August tagt. An dieser Session können Bedürfnisse und Wünsche von Auslandschweizern vorgetragen werden, die dann vom ASO Sekretariat (Exekutive) weiter verfolgt, ausgearbeitet und dem offiziellen Parlament vorgetragen werden. So kümmert sich die ASO um Schweizer Schulen im Ausland, um die freiwillige AHV und um viele andere Belange der im Ausland lebenden Schweizer.

Vor 5 Jahren wurde ich zum Delegierten gewählt - es fand sich damals kurzfristig niemand Anderes, der SSB hatte gerade eine Krise überwunden. In meiner Funktion besuchte ich einmal das Sekretariat und zweimal die Session.



Leider kann die ASO die Delegierten finanziell in keiner Art und Weise unterstützen. Reise und Hotelkosten gehen zu Lasten der/des Delegierten. Sitzungsgelder werden keine bezahlt. Ich begreife, dass keine Reiskosten erstattet werden können, habe aber wenig Verständnis dafür, dass überhaupt keine Unkosten erstattet werden. Die Aufgabe ist wichtig, die Anliegen der Auslandschweizer müssen Parlament und Regierung vorgebracht werden können. Ich bin deshalb Frau Regine Maeder ausserordentlich dankbar, dass sie bereit ist, das Amt zu übernehmen. Es wäre auch gut, wenn wir eine/n Stellvertreter/in anmelden könnten. Wenn Sie sich berufen fühlen, wenden Sie sich bitte an Frau Maeder, die Adresse finden Sie in diesem Heft. An den Anlässen wird vorwiegend deutsch und französisch gesprochen. Während der Sitzungen wird simultan dt/fr/it übersetzt.

Die SSB organisiert jedes Jahr Lager Ferien und Lager für Junge, mehr Information finden Sie in diesem Heft.



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YOUNG SWISS LIVING ABROAD

Sonderwoche an der Schweizer-Schule

Vom 27.01.-01.02.01 fand an der DsSB für die 12. Klasse eine Sonderwoche zum Thema Drogen und HIV statt. Im Rahmen dieser Sonderwoche besuchten die Schüler der 12. Klasse gemeinsam mit ihrer Klassenlehrerin Frau Hohnke und ihrem Philosophielehrer Herrn Mittelstadt zwei in Thailand sehr bekannte Klosteranlagen: Wat Thamkrabok und Wat Phra Baat Nam Phu. Wat Thamkrabok ist ein wegen seiner erfolgreichen Drogentherapie weltweit bekanntes Kloster, in dem Drogensüchtige aus aller Welt behandelt werden. Zahlreiche Artikel wurden im In- und Ausland über das Kloster und seine Therapie veröffentlicht. Sollten Sie noch nichts über diese Einrichtung gehört haben, schauen Sie doch einfach mal in die Homepage der DsSB. (www.dssb.th.com) Dort finden Sie unter den Schülerlinks eine, während dieser Sonderwoche von der 12. Klasse entworfene Web-Site zum Wat Thamkrabok.

Demselben Mönchsorden gehört auch Wat Phra Baat Nam Phuan an, in dem AIDS-Kranke ihre letzte Zuflucht finden können.....

Wat Phra Baat Nam Phu

by Tanja Weber and Nina Keary

This temple is led by the same order as Wat Thamkrabok and is a sister-organisation. Here also live around 150 monks. The difference between Wat Thamkrabok and Wat Phra Baat Nam Phu is that in the last mentioned the monks take in people who are infected with HIV. This organization was only established in 1992. Their goal isn't to cure the patients from their disease but to accompany and comfort them on their last voyage. The infected people come here to die and are warmly welcomed without having to pay anything, although sometimes infected people, who come to Wat Phra Baat Nam Phu have

to be sent away because there isn't enough space for the average of ten people that come to seek help every day. Like Wat Thamkrabok, this organisation depends very much on donations for food and clothes, but also medical equipment like medicine or beds.

Patients who are still able to walk live in small rooms which they share with two to three other patients or with family members that are also infected. Patients that are in a worse condition lie in a room together so they can be supervised by the nurses at any time. Besides the nurses, volunteers from all over the world come here to help out. The volunteers most of the time come from the Netherlands but also from Germany. Their job persists of changing the patients' diapers if they are not able to walk anymore and clean their wounds so they feel less pain. Every morning they also have to give herbal massages to the patients which is supposed to relax their muscles. Some of the patients also have to be fed. The nurses and volunteers are glad to be of service to a suffering person and just hold their hand when they need it. But during their work with the HIV-positives the nurses and volunteers still usually wear gloves and masks, so the risk of infecting themselves is minimised. The volunteers aren't payed anything and come here in their holidays.

When a patient dies he is burned in the presence of his family and his ashes are kept for his family to take them home, although it often appears that a family brings their infected member here and never comes to visit and doesn't attend their relatives funeral. Right now about 200 patients live in the Wat including two babies under two years of age. The Wat includes an "after death room", where you can see the corpses of some of the deceased patients, and a "bone museum", which consists of a collection of bones and ashes of about 3000 patients whose family didn't pick up their remains.



programme 2001

19 Apr.	Stamm Restaurant Chesa
5 - 7 May	Sport-Wochenende in Pattaya / Amari Orchid Hotel
17 May	Stamm Restaurant Chesa
26 May	Schiessen in Hua-Mark
16-17 Jun.	Besichtigung der Royal Porcelain PCL in Saraburi, Golf-Turnier Forest Hills Country Club
21 Jun.	Stamm Restaurant Chesa
19 Jul.	Stamm Restaurant Chesa
1 Aug.	Nationalfeiertag / Party im Imperial Queens Hotel
16 Aug.	Stamm Restaurant Chesa
8 Sep.	Klong-Fahrt / Metzgete, Rest. Swiss Corner
20 Sep.	Stamm Restaurant Chesa
6 Oct.	Besuch der Carlsberg-Brauerei
18 Oct.	Stamm Restaurant Chesa
15 Nov.	Stamm Restaurant Chesa
Nov.	Raclette-Abend in der Schweizer Botschaft
5 Dec.	Samichlaus
20 Dec.	Stamm Restaurant Chesa

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Restaurants

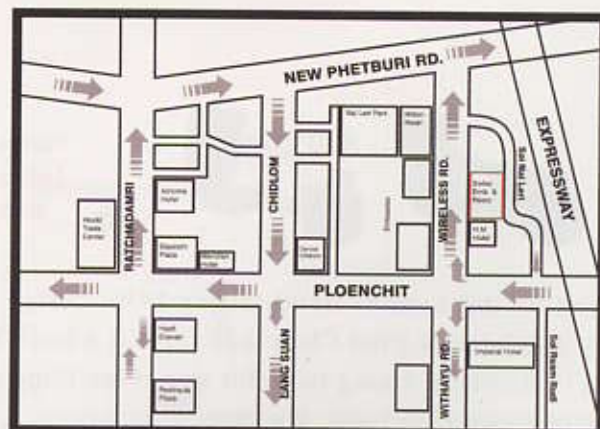
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Date..... Signature.....

new board members of the swiss society



Pierre Wyss-Chodat, from Geneva, Suisse romande, 62 years old, retired, in Thailand since early 2000, living in Bangkok (Saphanmat), with his wife Suda and daughter Tap.

Daniel Wyss, 44 years old, living since almost 4 years in Taling Chan (Bangkok), together with his wife Wanna and daughter Vanessa. Working with Thai Zurich Insurance Co., Ltd. since July 2000.



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Or contact Thomas Gerber from TRINA for customized insurance solution advice. See p.2 for TRINA contact detail.



Ladies Coffee Morning

1st Wednesday of the Month (9.30-12.00h)



What is the Ladies Coffee Morning?

The Ladies Coffee Morning is a new institution of the Swiss Society Bangkok. Its purpose is to welcome especially the women to Bangkok and help them to settle down easier.



It is a place where women (just arrived or here since ages) can meet in a private atmosphere, can exchange information about living in Bangkok (schools, activities, shopping...) and learn more about the Swiss Society and living in and around Bangkok.



Please come to visit us!

We are situated very close to the Swiss Embassy - so you are most welcome to stop by for a cup of coffee (or tea) and some cake! Or if you wish to drop by some other day please call 6552993!



Location

Sukhumvit Soi 3 (Nana), Tower Park,
Apt. 17B (Michaela Bolliger)
phone/fax: 6552993
e-mail: fam.bolliger@gmx.net

We look forward to seeing you soon!

