



(nr. 3/00)

the quarterly publication of the  
Swiss Society Bangkok

swisseecho+

# autumn season issue

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# message

## from the PRESIDENT

I like, first of all, to thank you for coming so numerous to the celebration of our National day. The party is a major event of the SSB, we had decided to celebrate it in a casual way, which apparently was appreciated by a lot of our Members.

This year our program is similar to previous years. However the Committee has decided to set up a FAMILY STAMM. We meet at the Restaurant CHESA every 2<sup>nd</sup> Friday of each month. Everybody is welcome. The STAMM is an opportunity, especially for new members, to come to know other Swiss people that have lived here for quite a long time, being able to give some advices or just to chat and make friends or to play a game of Jass. The September and October Stamm was well frequented, we hope the FAMILY STAMM will become a regular event among the supporters of the SSB.

You have voted to donate 100'000 Baht for charity. We will contribute 25'000 Baht to 4 different institutions, you will read more about it in this ECHO.

We are already approaching the end of the Year 2000. The Committee urgently needs new members. Please do not hesitate to offer your services if you will be able to join most of the Committee Meetings. Our meeting is usually held on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month.

Last but not least I like to thank very cordially H.E. Mr. Freymond and Mrs. Freymond as well as the staff of the Swiss Embassy for their continuous, effective support. The ECHO will appear shortly after the Raclette event at the Embassy. This gathering is only possible thanks to extra efforts from almost all members of the Swiss Embassy.



Sincerely yours,

MARKUS RUPRECHT  
President  
Swiss Echo Bangkok

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# In good mood at the SSB Family Stamm



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More than 35 years ago, a group of Swiss parents started a school for German-speaking children in Bangkok. Later, together with German and Austrian friends, they founded the Swiss Educational Association. In the beginning only elementary grades were taught at the school. In 1982 the Swiss Educational Association's small school became affiliated with a large private school in Bangkok,

Ruamrudee International School, which follows an American curriculum. Thus the school acquired the name it has today: Ruamrudee International School Swiss Section (RIS Swiss Section) or in German, Deutschsprachige Schule Bangkok (DsSB). Eventually, as RIS Swiss Section grew, it included the Mittlere Reife, and with the move to the new campus in 1991 the Gymnasium program was introduced. In 1995 the first group of students graduated with their Matura certificate. A month later the school gained formal accreditation by the Swiss Government (Eidgenössisch anerkannte Maturität).

Since October 1991, the Swiss Section, along with Ruamrudee International School, has been moved to a spacious new campus, in the district of Minburi, northeast of Bangkok. The new building is located in the suburbs, approximately 20 kilometers from downtown Bangkok. Fortunately, more city roads and freeways have been recently constructed, so now school buses can reach the new Swiss Section within a reasonable time. Moving away from the pollution and noise of the inner city proved to be a wise decision.

On this campus the modern Swiss Section building was especially designed to fit the wishes and needs of

the people who would use it. The RIS Swiss Section building encloses a small rainforest growing in its inner court perfectly suited to all kinds of festivities, parties and celebrations. During breaks, it turns into a playground for Kindergarten.

The new school campus in Minburi has made it possible for the school to accommodate a larger number of students. At present, more than 260 students attend classes ranging from Kindergarten to 13th grade. Last year, a record-breaking number of eight students graduated from the Swiss Section, having attained a high school diploma that is both a Matura of the Swiss kind and equivalent to a German Abitur. Swiss Section graduates can enrol at any university worldwide, and of course in Switzerland or in Germany.

The Swiss Section is a private school, financed mainly

## at the swiss school

by school fees and funds granted by both the Swiss and German governments. But for generous donations from members of the German-speaking community in Thailand, the Swiss Section would never have been able to afford an all-new building. The new school facilities today include a student library, a gym, special rooms for biology, physics, geography and two languages as

well as a computer room. They feature arts and a music room as well as a little kitchen, a workshop for students and ample grounds for outdoor activities. The cooperation with Ruamrudee International School provides access to a swimming pool, canteen, clinic and an extensive library.

Life at school blends Asian cultural elements with those of Europe. Thailand has its Loy Krathong festival, which is as important to the school as Christmas or Easter. For Loy Krathong, little floats are made of banana trees and flowers, which later will be launched in canals, lakes or in the sea to make merit with the gods of the water. They carry burning incense sticks and candles, so at night they can be seen floating in the water for a long time. All students from Kindergarten to the upper grades of high school work together in building their krathongs, discussing methods of assembly and helping one another achieve the best results. At Christmas celebrations and farewell parties, some students perform traditional Thai dances, while others present German folk songs.

The majority of the students at the Swiss Section today hold a German passport. Others come from Austria, Finland, Greece, Iran, Thailand, and a large number from Switzerland. Approximately 40% of the students are Eurasian and bi-cultural, familiar with both the Asian and European way of life. The other large group are European children, whose parents live as expatriates in Thailand, working for international companies. For these European expatriates especially, as well as for many Eurasian students, it is important to know that the Swiss Section follows a combination of Swiss and German curricula. Thus, a student can easily move from Europe to Thailand or vice versa, without losing valuable time.

Only qualified teachers who have teaching experience in Switzerland or Germany are hired by the Swiss Section. Thanks to their expertise, a new step towards cooperative learning has been in effect since last year. In accordance with the curriculum adapted from Trogen (Appenzell), four one-week periods in every school year are organized as Sonderwochen (special weeks) for classes including grades 9 to 12. During these weeks, classes work with two teachers at a combination of two or more different subjects. Water, for instance, can be seen both as a subject for studies in chemistry as well as in literature. Biology and sports can be combined to gain a deeper insight into the





working of the human body. Teachers and students alike appreciate these weeks as a highly motivating and intense learning experience.

Every year, one of those special weeks consists of a trip students make with their homeroom teacher. During these Landschulwochen, it is intended that the students improve their knowledge of Thailand. They travel to one of the national parks, to the hilltribes or to one of the Highland Development projects supported by Swiss or German government agencies. The tenth graders do work internships for two weeks in winter. Some of them will leave school after tenth grade, so these weeks of professional



training may help them find a start into the profession of their choice.

The high school teachers have been busy in the last two years developing a new structure for the Gymnasium that fulfills the requirements of the MAR (Reglement über die Anerkennung von gymnasialen Maturitätsausweisen). This has not been an easy task because the MAR was conceived for schools with much larger student populations than ours. Therefore we chose the Trogner-Modell and adapted it to our purposes. Appenzell, being a small canton, has been confronted with similar questions. One main feature making this new concept attractive is that the final exam is taken at the end of year 12, rather than, as before, after 13 complete years. Another highlight is the Special Weeks program of interdisciplinary learning mentioned above.

After Grade 6 the students can enter the Untergymnasium, where they follow a program similar to the Secondary School, but do so at a more intense pace. In Grades 9 and 10 the students have a choice between Latin and Special Maths, but otherwise follow a curriculum that covers a wide variety of subjects, in order to provide a sound base of general knowledge. Grades 11 and 12 form the so-called Vertiefungsphase. Here the students specialize in either languages and literature or in physics and applied maths. To prepare students for university studies, they have to write a small thesis paper in

Grade 12. A satisfactory outcome on this Maturaarbeit is a prerequisite for admission to final exams. In December 1997 the Swiss Maturity Commission basically approved the model developed by the Swiss Section because it fulfills the requirements and follows the spirit of MAR.

Private initiative is the decisive factor in running the school and in shaping school life. To a large extent, this school is supervised by parents, and their cooperation in various fields is highly welcome: Parents who act as chairpersons for the School Association, mothers who prepare food for the lunch break once a week, fathers who organize soccer games for our youngsters on Saturday mornings. School uniforms are sold by parents in order to help poor villagers in Northeast Thailand, parents provide help in the library. A sponsorship program is run by students and parents together: Each class has adopted a godchild from a Thai school to finance his or her studies at a Thai school. The students bake cakes and sell them during lunchbreaks or do some other sort of work to gather money for the child their class has adopted. Every year the Thai students visit the school and attend classes together with their sponsors.

For teachers and students alike at RIS Swiss Section, these are fascinating times because the long-awaited renovation of the good old Gymnasium system is now opening up many new avenues to the world of learning. We are looking forward to the year 2001 when the first group of students will finish their 12-year school career - at the same time as their older friends, who spent 13 years to reach their university entry diploma.



Dr. Wolfgang Munzinger has been teaching German and English at RIS Swiss Section since fall 1996. Together with his wife and his daughter, also a student at DsSB, he enjoys his stay in Bangkok. Before, he taught in Hamburg for 13 years. He has been an exchange student to New Jersey during his university years.

## School Calendar

14 - 23 oct 2000

4 nov 2000

10 oct 2000

5 dec 2000

14 dec 2000

16 dec 2000 - 7 jan 2001

Chulalongkorn holidays

Parentsday

Lay Krantong build

day off, H. M. King's Birthday

Christmas-Party

Christmas holidays



Le Club des Francophones est une association sans but lucratif, libre de toutes influences politique et confessionnelle. Il ne dépend d'aucune nation et se veut le reflet d'une francophonie ouverte et solidaire.

Cette association internationale regroupe des membres dont le seul lien est la pratique de la langue française et l'amitié qu'elle engendre; ils jouissent de droits égaux quelle que soit leur nationalité d'origine. Ils peuvent tous assumer une fonction administrative à part entière au sein du comité responsable.

Il existe à Bangkok plusieurs associations de langue française. Chacune a son identité propre. Elles travaillent dans le respect mutuel les unes des autres et tissent des liens d'amicale collaboration.

# Bienvenue au Club des Francophones Association Internationale de Langue Française

## Les activités.....

Le Club des Francophones propose à ses membres des activités culturelles et sociales, des excursions en Thaïlande et dans les pays limitrophes, des conférences etc.

Celles-ci contribuent à une meilleure intégration dans la vie et la culture de la Thaïlande.

Visite de sites historiques..... sorties.

Universités..... conférences.....

C'est dans ce but que l'association a développé, voici 10 ans, des échanges réguliers entre ses membres et les professeurs et étudiants des départements "français" des universités de Chulalongkorn et de l'Institut.

Lettre mensuelle.....

Toutes ces activités sont proposées dans une lettre mensuelle largement documentée: fêtes, cérémonies, traditions, histoire, botanique, tropicale, bouddhisme, etc.

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# donationforcharity

The member of the SSB have decided at the AGM 2000 to donate 100,000 Baht for charity. Together with Mr. Freymond from the Swiss Embassy, we agreed to divide the 100,000 Baht on four parts of 25,000 Baht. The amounts will be paid to:

## The Sparrow Home

Contact person is our committee Member Esther Kaufmann. She lets us know

The NEW LIGHT FOUNDATION was founded in December 1993. The objective was to help their very young children who are either born in prison or brought to prison by their nursing mother to prisoners. In 1995 the NEW LIGHT GROUP opened the so-called SPARROW HOME. The people at this home takes care of the homeless children of prisoners. The responsible members of the foundation are group of volunteers, The Thai Personnel of the SPARROW HOME are paid employees.



## Proposal of Ms Freymond - Refugee's health care at the Immigration:

Responsible is Dr. Dominica P. Garcia, Physician at the Immigration center since 15 Years.

Dr. Garcia needs the Immigration helpful and care. Mr. M. who need our



help for children of refugees. Some of them arrive seriously ill at center and need help and care. The Thai Authorities are very understanding, but there are no substantial funds for health. Ruprecht has visited her premises. He is convinced that the kids support quite badly.

## The Victory Tree Foundation

Contact person is Mr. Freymond. The children were last invited at celebrate St. Nicolas. The event will be repeated this year.

The VICTORY TREE FAMILY HOME began in 1985, little boy, abandoned by his parents. The foundation these kids a home, a place to come back to, a place to place in which to learn the responsibilities of daily living warmth And acceptance.



the Embassy to

receiving one desires to give grow and develop, a in an environment of



## A mountain Hill Tribe school



Contact person is Markus Ruprecht. He went to visit the school in Naarn District in April 2000.



The School teaches Children of Hill Tribes. It covers a surrounding of about 100 km2. A lot of the pupils can't make the way to the school daily because they are located too far form the Schoolhouse. The School needs funds to accommodate those children.

If you would like to donate personally to one or all of the above mentioned projects, do not hesitate to contact us. We will be happy to provide more information. Your help is forwarded directly to the different institutions. None of the money will be lost for administration.



1 August 2000

# 1<sup>st</sup> of August 2000

Ladies and Gentlemen,

As mentioned in our Program, my short speech was held in Swiss languages. This was to provide the Swiss community with a touch of a real 1<sup>st</sup> of August celebration. But I had promised as well to provide an English version in the Echo:

Swiss who live abroad and celebrate 1<sup>st</sup> of August in a foreign country often become heartfelt, true patriots. We heartedly think of the fathers and mothers of the Swiss people, of William Tell, and of other doubtful legends.

This is understandable. Our native country does, seen from a distance, appear in a lovely shine; as Thailand appears in warm and bright colours when looked at from far away.

I will refrain from criticising narrow-mindedly and do not want to engage in "Stammtisch politics". The 1<sup>st</sup> of August is not the day to be sad. Let us be cheerful so as the President of the Federal Council encourages us to be. Switzerland is alive; it is a small country but provides a lot of space, gives plenty of way to all kind of persuasions to its citizens and its guests.

Many things have been achieved in our home country. Our ancestors were diligent, hard-working, smart and modest people. They had managed to remain independent in a war furious Europe for centuries and nevertheless remained open to the world. It was in 1515 when Switzerland offensively led a war for the last time. Since then, the Swiss have lived in peace, apart from a few skirmishes and Napoleon's attacks.

And this is the biggest achievement: The Confederation of the Helvetic States has succeeded in maintaining peace for over 485 years. To uphold peace and protect freedom of thought are the most outstanding achievements of our Nation. It provides not just for our survival, but allows the Swiss citizens to live humanly.

And that is what I expect from myself, from the politicians, from all of us: Devotion to peace and freedom and to be proud to be a Swiss!

And for this dedication to peace and freedom I would like to express my special thanks to our ancestors.

I like to thank all of the members of the Committee of the Swiss Society Bangkok for their engagement, the work, for the time they have sacrificed, the effort they made.

Finally, I would like to mention a very special person, one of our honorary members, who is no longer in the Committee: Isabelle Meyer, thank you very much for your help!







⤴ Dr. Alain Schifferli  
in the middle  
of plenty of beauties.



Dani  
>>



⤴ Kids did enjoy  
the festivities  
as well.



⤴ A lot of VIP's



⤴ Nobody is afraid of clowns.



<<  
The president likes  
beautiful ladies.



⤴ The Meyers



>>  
Mr. & Mrs.  
Schellenberg



⤴ Dr. Philippe



<<  
We should have  
danced more often.





# list of sponsors



\* Swiss Society Bangkok, National Day 1st August 2000

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# shooting event

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Was René's score so exciting?

A genuine Swiss Lad won't forget it... and, surprisingly, there were many ladies who also faced up to the challenge when roughly 50 rifle-enthusiasts invaded the Hua Mark Shooting Range on Saturday, June 10<sup>th</sup>.

Res Zihlmann introduced the program: unlimited trial followed by two series of 6 shots each. At this point it became clear who was more interested in the shooting competition or in the following lunch at the Swiss Corner Restaurant.

We not only thoroughly enjoyed the shooting competition but also appreciated the warm welcome and the excellent food at the newly opened Swiss Corner Restaurant.

## Result

### Gentlemen

1st	Heinz Saxer	112 points
2nd	Stefan Kühn	106 points
3rd	Werner Bruderer	103 points

### Ladies

1st	Theresa Ganz	99 points
2nd	Gabriela Mueller	84 points
3rd	Choekyi Bruderer	77 points



# info**paGes**

Have something to add here?  
Contact the Editor with your information

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### Quarter 3 2000

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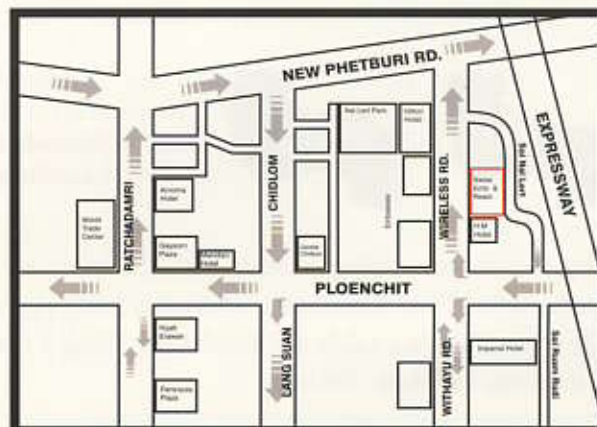
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15

## application for membership

Family name: ..... First name: .....

Date of Birth: ..... Nationality: .....

Occupation: .....

Spouse's first name: ..... Nationality: .....

Date of birth: ..... No. of children: .....

Private address: .....

Tel. .... Fax: .... E-mail: .....

Business address: .....

Tel. .... Fax: .... E-mail: .....

### Membership fees

The entrance fees are THB 200.- for a single and THB 400.- for family members. The yearly membership fees are THB 800.- for single and 1,400.- for family members. Applicants registering after 30th of June pay 50% of this year membership fee, registering after 31st of September, the membership fee is valid until the end of the next year.

Please pay by crossed cheque to „Swiss Society Bangkok“ and mail it to „Swiss Society Bangkok P.O. Box 296, Bangkok 10110“ or transfer amount to Thai Danu Bank, Thonglor branch, account number 018-3-012599 (saving account), account name: Swiss Society Bangkok and mail the pay-in slip to the above mentioned address.

Entrance fee                      Yearly fee                      Total

THB. .... + THB. .... = THB. ....

Date: ..... Signature: .....



# membernews

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**ZURICH**

ไทยศรีซูริค





001-12/00

January Food Promotion

## **Swiss Cuisine & Cultural Festival 2001** **at the Amari Watergate Hotel**

Promenade Coffee Shop at Amari Watergate Hotel in co-ordination with Luzern Tourist Board will be staging the "6<sup>th</sup> Bangkok Swiss Food and Cultural Festival 200" from January 18-29, 2001.

Swiss Guest Chef Mr. Hans Peter Aschwanden will prepare mouthwatering delicacies from the **four parts of Switzerland throughout the week**. Swiss specialties in Italian, French, German and Roman styles will be served in buffet lunch and dinner including traditional **Raclette**, "**Air Cured Beef**", "**Barley Soup**" and the world famous **Zurcher** with **Rosti** etc, with on request, a la carte popular **Swiss Cheese Fondue**. Swiss wine is also available to round off the culinary aspect of this event. Complemented by the fabulous entertainment from the well-known five-piece country music of *Luzerne's Water Tower Band* and 3 Swiss '**Alphorns**' in their rural setting who will create the traditional atmosphere of Switzerland daily.

There will also be a '**Children Drawing Contest**' of age 6 - 9 years during **11.00 - 12.00 hrs. on Sunday, January 21, 2001** in the topic '**Switzerland In My Dream**' with oil pastel color.

Come and try the foods of Switzerland and learn more about the Alpine country's tourist sites and tradition at the **Promenade Coffee Shop, Amari Watergate Hotel**. For reservations please call 653-9000 at 355 or 356.

Thank you for your kind contribution

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