

# Snippets from Switzerland...

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as shooting and bowling have to be organised outside the club. Please ring Roland Schütz (568 67 72 home /568 57 37 work), if you can assist.

- Everybody is invited to spend a great Saturday evening with our friends from Taranaki; be there after 6 pm. Book with Vreni Madgwick (526 98 41) or Trudi Brühlmann (562 80 19) so the chefs have an idea how much to cook.

#### Attention - attention...

The Clubhouse will not be open all Friday afternoons in February and March, as I'll have visitors from Switzerland. It will be open on some Fridays, though...! Please check with Trudy (562 80 19) tb.

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## Snippets from Switzerland.....

### Basel architects receive prestigious award

Herzog & de Meuron, the Basel architects who designed the Tate Modern in London, have won a prestigious Swiss award for their artistic contribution to cultural life.

Worth SFr25,000, the Max Petitpierre Prize has been awarded every two years since 1984 to Swiss achievers in the fields of science, politics and the arts. Previous recipients include the astronaut Claude Nicollier, the sculptor Jean Tinguely and the conductor Armin Jordan. Jaques Herzog and

Pierre de Meuron, both of them born in Basel in 1950, founded their architectural practice in 1978 after completing their studies at the Federal Institute of Technology in Zurich. Since then they have been involved in design projects throughout Europe and the United States, and received international awards for their work by arts organisations in Germany and Italy. Their most high profile commission was the transformation of the former Bank-side Power Station, next to the Thames in London, into Britain's national museum of modern art, the Tate Modern. Since it opened last year, the Tate Modern has attracted huge numbers of visitors who go there not only to see its contents but also the building which houses them.

### Switzerland implicated in huge money laundering scandal

An Italian company has allegedly laundered around SFr800 million worth of dirty money through Swiss banks and financial institutions. So far, (18.1.2001) the Italian police have arrested ten people and premises in Switzerland have been searched. Financial institutions in Zurich, Geneva and Lugano are believed to have been involved in the money laundering before the end of 1999. The affair involves an entrepreneur from Naples who ran an import-export company, Italgrani, dealing in cereals.



*"Ski free" is the password used by Swiss people on the Internet, to obtain a free 6-day ski pass (on all lifts and related amenities, during the month of March), if at the same time an 8-day hotel booking is made. - The free ski-pass is only available under <www.MySwitzerland.com>*

### Resurgent watchmakers in need of new blood

Twenty years ago, the Swiss watch-making industry was in the doldrums. Now it is booming and faces a new problem: finding enough skilled staff to meet demand.

### Swiss design in the limelight in Cologne

A museum in the German city of Cologne is celebrating Swiss design with a special exhibition showing classics such as the Swiss army knife, Swatch watches and the Toblerone chocolate bar.

### Weapons containing depleted uranium tested in Switzerland

The Swiss defence ministry has confirmed that ammunition containing depleted uranium was tested in Switzerland during the 1970s. What happened to the spent shells, however, remains unclear.

### Switzerland placed fourth in globalisation poll

Switzerland is the fourth most "globalised" country in the world, according to the American magazine, Foreign Policy, which has carried out what it says is the first-ever survey on the issue of globalisation.



## Switzerland builds world's largest solar-powered boat

Land-locked Switzerland is soon to start constructing the world's largest solar-powered boat at Nidau, close to Biel.

The catamaran MobiCat, which will be able to transport 200 passengers, is to play a central role in Switzerland's national exhibition, Expo.02.

On Tuesday, (9.1.2001) a special convoy transported one of the boat's hulls, which measured 33 metres and weighed 18 tonnes, from Langenthal to Nidau. The mission was accomplished without any hitches,

confirmed spokesman Sabastien Vogel. The other hull is due to be dropped off on Wednesday. The two hulls will be connected by a cross-bar that will support the solar-powered engine. The boat is estimated to cost around SFr2 million and will be the first solar-powered vessel that is used commercially on a lake. Its designers hope to have the ferry in the water by the beginning of the summer. The boat will be able to operate for several hours without the sun. And when the sun refuses to shine long enough, batteries will kick in to give a helping hand. The boat is destined to ferry passengers on lakes Biel, Neuchatel and Murten. It will also be used to stage exhibitions throughout Expo.02 in the summer of 2002.

Finally, the project's managers have attempted to please environmentally-conscious visitors to Expo.02 by stating that the boat will not emit any toxic substances into rivers or lakes.

## Swiss shoppers go on holiday spending-spree

Swiss shoppers have spent more money on Christmas presents in 2000 than during any year over the past decade. Experts attribute the upsurge in spending to a rebound in the nation's economy.



*Ulrich Inderbinen, Switzerland's oldest Mountain guide celebrated his 100th Birthday recently. As a little boy he used to sell 'edelweiss flowers' to the tourists for 20 'centimes' a bunch; as an adult he climbed the Matterhorn 380 times taking tourists to the top.*

## Peter Schweiger receives national theatre honour

The Swiss Theatre Society has awarded the prestigious Hans-Reinhart prize to Peter Schweiger for his contribution to German-language theatre in Switzerland. Born in Vienna in 1939, Schweiger arrived on the Swiss theatre scene in 1965, and currently co-directs St Gallen's theatre.

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