DEAR FRIENDS AND MEMBERS OF THE STCC

BRUNO G. ODERMATT,
VICE PRESIDENT

A number of our members are having their summer breaks, such as our President, and I am happy to fill in for this newsletter. Last week I was on trip to Vancouver, and as I am a fairly environmentally conscious person, I always try to use public transportation to get around in a city to get the feel for the local community.

What really struck me this time, whilst using Vancouver’s high-tech bus system, is that whenever a passenger left the bus, be it a young person, student, business woman or pensioner, they all yelled a noticeable “THANK YOU” from the rear end to the bus driver. You really notice it and wonder about this appreciation of the public for the person driving a public bus and for a public service provided by the local government in general. I found this commendable and this leads me to the 1st of August celebration at the Swiss Embassy. Despite heavy rain and traffic jams around the Embassy, 870 people turned up to this memorable event and it was just a fantastic atmosphere, which is hard to match by any other embassy I would venture to say, not to mention security concerns.

Maybe it is now our turn to say “THANK YOU” to our esteemed Ambassador Her Excellency Christine Schraner Burgener and her supporting team who made the premises of the embassy available and made everybody feel just great at this evening. So why not, for a change, say thank you for the public ser-
THE PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

vice rendered by the Swiss Embassy for us Swiss citizens and our families, the citizens of the “Fifth’ Switzerland”, with a presence of 750,000 people around the world, which is quite staggering.

Unfortunately the address by Mr. Burkhalter, the President of the Swiss Confederation, to the Swiss abroad got a bit lost in the party hype and noise, but I would like to encourage you to read it again when you have a quiet minute, as it contains a deep message. “Switzerland is in your hearts, and you too have a place in Switzerland’s heart”, was the core message and it really touched me. He goes on to say that “Switzerland succeeds because it holds onto its values, such as freedom coupled with responsibility, dialogue, a taste for hard work, combined with modesty, and that young people and their future prospects are at the heart of our actions”. This also implies an excellent education system, for what Switzerland is renowned for, and those educated young people will then shape the future of Switzerland or any other nation for that matter.

For many of us Swiss Expatriates living abroad we do still feel part of Switzerland, its culture and its values, and it is good to see that this is recognized by the Swiss government. Thinking about education, over the next 10 years around 180,000 school teachers will be retiring in Thailand, and this might present an excellent opportunity to bring in new teaching models and ideas to re-engineer the education system and may be Switzerland could serve us a model here.

Looking at the Thai economy, the economy grew by 0.9% in the second quarter compared with the previous three months, after contracting by 1.9% in the first quarter according to the National Economic and Social Development Board. Overall things are getting better and when you see the traffic flowing again, pathways cleared of vendors stands, beaches cleaned up in tourists spots and the taxi service finally working at the major airports, then ordinary citizens can notice some visible positive changes. A poll conducted by the Bangkok University a week ago gave the NCPO a 6.9 points out of ten for overall performance over the last three months. The survey said, believe it or not, that the NCPO scored higher than the past 2 governments in all areas of work. Overall things are looking brighter and if the martial law will be finally cancelled, this will also restore investor’s confidence and boost the badly hurt tourism industry. Below you find a link to an enlightening interview...
STCC PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

of our Ambassador, Excellency Christine Schraner Burgener (in Swiss-German language) and on behalf of the STCC Board I also extend a THANK YOU for your continued support.

With best wishes
Bruno G. Odermatt
Vice President

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Have you ever wondered about the specific ingredients and processes that go into the food that we purchase in supermarkets or in restaurants?

It is not a thought which crosses our minds often because, we as consumers, are under the assumption that governmental agencies regulate and supervise the production and distribution of food before we purchase it. Given the very recent control exercised by Shanghai’s government following a food safety scandal which revealed that an American-owned, Shanghai-based supplier of chicken products to fast-food chains was relabeling expired meat as “fresh”. The new mandate requires all international food producers to disclose the source of every ingredient they serve in China. How well do Thai authorities play this role? Below we outline the regulatory framework that goes into ensuring that the next time you peruse the aisles of your local supermarket, you don’t end up buying contaminated or unsafe food.

The House of Lords decision in the landmark case of Donoghue v Stevenson in 1928 is considered to be the most influential to the development of the modern law of negligence. Ms. Donoghue had consumed a bottle of ginger beer, which had been manufactured by Stevenson. The bottle in question contained the decomposed remains of a snail which could not be detected until the contents of the bottle were partially consumed. The judgment gave rise to the “neighbor principle”, whereby “you must take reasonable care to avoid acts or omissions which you can reasonably foresee would be likely to injure your neighbor”. The neighbor in this instance was defined as “persons who are so closely and directly affected by my act that I ought reasonably to have them in contemplation as being so affected when I am directing my mind to the acts or omissions.
which are called in question”. Though Thailand does not recognize Donoghue v Stevenson as a source of law, similar principles are contained in several legislative instruments such as the Food Act B.E. 2522 (1979) (the “Food Act”), the Consumer Protection Act B.E. 2522 (1979) (the “Consumer Protection Act”) and the Product Liability Act B.E. 2551 (2008) (the “Product Liability Act”) which work together to uphold the very principles for which Donoghue v Stevenson stands for. The Food Act is aimed at protecting and preventing consumers from health hazards occurring from food consumption by regulating the production, sale and import of food in Thailand. The act states that the Ministry of Public Health is responsible for executing and administering the act and requires the owners of food production facilities to obtain a license from the Food and Drug Administration (“FDA”). The FDA has the authority to inspect food production facilities, and any failure during this inspection can result in the suspension or revocation of the food production license.

The Food Act sets out specific requirements regarding where a food production facility can be located, how it must be constructed, and how it and the machinery located inside it must be configured and maintained. Among other things, cleanliness, good lighting and adequate ventilation are a must, and of course keeping animals and insects – snails included - away from the production line is a priority. Production processes are also regulated, such as relating to the storage, cleaning and handling of raw materials, the cleanliness of the vessels and surfaces that will be used for processing the food, packaging and record keeping.

Various chemicals and other ingredients cannot be used in food products, so neither formaldehyde nor arsenic will make its way into your cookies but trans-fats and other less-harmful substances still might. A food production facility is also required to get their recipes (setting out all ingredients contained within each food product) approved by the FDA and cannot modify them in any way without further approval of the FDA.

There are other acts which also regulate the food products we purchase. The Consumer Protection Act and the Product Liability Act, work together to uphold the very principles for which

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Donoghue v Stevenson stands; even in restaurants. The sale of food, be it packaged or cooked, falls under the definition of the “manufacture” of a “product”. If food “manufactured” in a restaurant causes personal injury to a customer as a direct result of the restaurant either knowingly serving unsafe food, or unknowingly serving unsafe food due to “severe negligence”, the restaurant can be held liable under one or both of these acts. This principle is intended to cover all areas which “manufacture” and “retail” food products, from 5-star-Michelin restaurants to roadside mama noodle stalls.

What about the food on the street? Do the same principles apply to roadside vendors of moo-ping or somtam? If we as consumers incur “damage” or even die from eating this food, we still have an avenue of recourse against them. In such a case we would examine the food production and distribution supply chains to determine which party should be held responsible. Under the Product Liability Act the best approach may be to pursue the vendor in regard to who manufactured the ingredients used in the food which caused damage. If the vendor is unable to identify the manufacturer then the vendor will be held liable.

So, having conducted food production legal compliance reviews in the past, we can confirm that Thai food producers take these regulatory requirements seriously and we are confident there is no risk of finding a snail in the food we purchase from supermarkets unless we are looking to buy escargot.

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STCC EVENT

LUNCHEON PRESENTATION OF PROFESSOR KURT WÜTHRICH

As part of international Biochemistry conference (7th AOHUPO, 6 - 8 August, Bangkok), the 2002 Nobel Prize laureate in chemistry, Prof. Kurt Wüthrich was in town.

Switzerland is one of the leading HighTech nations in the world and many of our Swiss Thai Chamber of Commerce (STCC) members are involved and interested in the latest developments in the HighTech arena. How does basic Science and Technology affect our daily life? Does a Nobel Prize change the pathway of a particular technology and how does that affect us?

The event was open to all members and friends of the STCC and started with the welcoming of the 47 guests by Luzi Lersan Matzig, President of the STCC. He mentioned the recent political events in Thailand and assured the audience that Thailand is on path of recovery with the recent action taken by the government. He closed with a kind request to the Nobel prize laureate to keep his presentation simple and understandable for the mostly non-scientific audience. Peter Sprenger, a member of the STCC board, introduced Kurt Wüthrich. Referring to his biography, he mentioned Prof. Wüthrich’s upbringing on a Swiss farm and becoming a sports teacher as a rather unusual career choice to become 40 years later a Nobel prize winner in chemistry. Prof. Wüthrich had now enough time to down his desert and to get the energy for his presentation: Scientific
STCC EVENT

Research and Daily Human Life. Presenting highly complex technologies based on basic physics to business people is a challenging task even for a Nobel Prize laureate. Prof. Wüthrich managed to balance complexity with simplicity by showing easily understandable charts. It was exciting to learn about historical Magnetic Resonance by connecting the technology with discoveries by Albert Einstein, Felix Bloch, Edward Purcell, Paul Lauterbur, Peter Mansfield and Richard Ernst, all Nobel Prize laureates, the majority of them from Switzerland.

When showing the structure of the billion dollar blockbuster drug CyclosporinA, it became clear that it was indeed useful to have successfully completed the science quiz from the STCC (see July edition). Eleven chemical subgroups linked together in a particular configuration can lead to extreme wealth and save human life. Without basic science this would not have been possible. Prof. Wüthrich stressed this thought throughout his presentation. In most of today’s research funding clear objectives are attached.

Investors want Return on Investments. However, according to Prof. Wüthrich, this is a myopic approach. Major discoveries would never have happened if clear targets had been set. Let the scientists play around first and then think about the possible applications.

After 30 interesting minutes of science and history Prof. Wüthrich closed with encouraging words for government and commerce to keep funding science for the betterment of human kind. It was now on Frau Wüthrich to draw three lucky winners of the STCC luncheon lottery. A Noble signature on a Swiss T-Shirt was waiting for the winners.

The Swiss Thai Chamber of Commerce thanks the 47 members and friends for their interest and presence. Special Thanks to Khun Ploenta and Khun Mai for the perfect organization.

Again we like to thank Prof. Wüthrich for his contribution and effort to raise the interest in scientific discovery.

The luncheon closed at 13.45 with many enlightened minds returning to their daily routines.
MEMBER INTERVIEW

OLIVER YODRAK BURANADIS

Name or Alias
Oliver Yodrak Buranadis

Occupation / Employer
Chief Representative Thailand, Schueco International KG

Languages
Swiss, German, English, Thai

Family
Since 1 month reunited with my Father who is enjoining his retiring time finally in Thailand, after work and live in Europe and Switzerland for 40 years.

Years in Thailand
Over 9 Years

Favorite restaurants in Thailand
Swiss Food Pattaya, Bun Kluea Pattaya, Enjoy Andre Pattaya, Tuba Ekkamaï

Favorite destination in Thailand
Bangkok, Pattaya, Chiang Mai, Chiang Ray, Khao Kiew Yai, Kanchanaburi, Krabi, Similan & Surin Islands

How do you spend free time?
Spend time with Family, BBQ, Travelling, climbing Mountain roads with my 4x4 or Mountain Biking

If you had a million dollars, how would you spend it?
1. Invest in a project for simple construction tool and consumable material for the reinforced concrete construction market, what I am dreaming of to start since 9 years already.
2. Remove all low end quality windows and doors in my new House and replace with Schueco Window and Door Products
3. Holiday in and around Thai-land as there are many places unseen

If you had the power to change something in Thailand, what would it be?
1. Corruption should be definitively banned out
2. Education System should be reformed to date standards
3. Public transportation should be upgraded to date standards
4. City environment planning & Traffic control, far beyond to see a upcoming brighter future and less traffic jam and less stress for all of us
5. Waste and Wastewater treatment is to improve nationwide

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SWISS SCHOOL NEWS

CEREMONY MARKING THE BEGINNING OF THE NEW SCHOOL YEAR

On Wednesday, the 13th of August 2014, at 9:20 AM, RIS Swiss Section - Deutschsprachige Schule Bangkok arranged a ceremony marking the beginning of the new school year.

Students, teachers, administrative staff, parents and other guests were greeted with welcoming words from Principal Dominique Tellenbach, who gave a special welcome to the seven new teachers. The Swiss Ambassador to Thailand, H.E. Mrs. Christine Schraner Burgener, and the Deputy Head of Mission of the German Embassy, Dr. Peer Gebauer, were also in attendance and greeted the students and wished them a successful new school year. From our partner school RIS, Father Yuthana and Father Travis were present.

The highlight of the ceremony was the introduction of new students by Ms. Monika Eberl, Head of Secondary and the Head of Primary, Ms. Johanna Vaenskae. Following tradition for the first day of school, Ms. Uraiwan Sethakul, Head of Administration, presented the school staff to the guests.

Two saxophone performances by the new music teacher Mrs. Verena Bock enlivened the ceremony. After the ceremony, the students returned to their lessons and the parents and guests went to the entrance area where drinks and snacks were being served.

Important events in the first semester of the new school year:

14. 10. 2014 Annual General Meeting SEA
29. 10. 2014 Open House Day
06. 11. 2014 Loy Krathong Day
14. 11. 2014 Lantern Parade (KG - Grade 3 - evening)
09. 12. 2014 Sports Day
18. 12. 2014 Christmas Party

Please visit our website www.swissschoolbangkok.org and get more information about our upcoming events.
EDUCATION WORKSHOP AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION

Between the 5th and 8th of August 2014, RIS Swiss Section - Deutschsprachige Schule Bangkok teachers took part in various workshops in preparation for the new academic year organized by the steering committee of the school’s educational quality development and management team (PQM). The focal point of these workshops was preparing the school for the upcoming inspection by the German authorities, the so-called BLI (Bund-Länder-Inspektion) Bilanzbesuch at the end of November. The teachers also attended a workshop that gave them further insight into using various e-Learning tools in learning and teaching, presented by Tim Pettine, the Technology Coordinator of our partner school RIS.

MEKONG PROJECT WITH RIS

All 145 students from the 10th grade from RIS along with their teachers hosted this year’s second “Mekong Summit”.

Our 11 students from 9B Swiss Section also had the opportunity to participate in the project with the topic being the highly controversial Mekong dam projects in China and Laos. During the 3-week-preparation time all participants got ready in their specific interest groups for the presentation day. Some had to represent the energy sector or one of the neighbouring countries, while others had to inform themselves about the interests of the locals or became experts on human rights. On May 15th at the “Mekong Summit” held at RIS, the different committees came face to face, each well prepared and dressed suitably. There the students debated very heatedly and with definitely well-founded arguments for four hours, discussing all aspects of the Mekong projects in an attempt to reach the fairest solutions possible for this issue. This gave rise to many heated debates and the compromises reached were announced in brief statements in the final plenary discussion. Our Swiss Section participants did very well, despite lacking prior experience and having to express themselves in English all day long.
**MEMBER CONTRIBUTION**

**NEW TREATMENT FOR PROSTATE CANCER**

*Did you know that one in every 6 men is diagnosed with prostate cancer at some point in their lives? Did you know that about 80% of all men who reach the age of 80 were found to have prostate cancer when they died, but nobody knew, not even the doctor?*

Prostate cancer develops mainly in prostate gland cells. Fortunately it’s a slow growing cancer and most times remain harmless for decades. However it also gives no warning signs before becoming aggressive with the symptoms only appearing when the tumor causes the prostate gland to swell, or once cancer spreads beyond the prostate. Symptoms include the patient experiencing a frequent need to urinate, difficulty in controlling the urine particularly when laughing or coughing, a painful or burning sensation during urination or ejaculation or even blood in the urine or semen. If the cancer has spread beyond the prostate gland, the case becomes more complex making it difficult or untreatable.

Screening for prostate cancer should start at the age of 50 for all men and 40 for men with higher risks. If you’ve crossed the age of 50 include a PSA test in your annual check-up. You could have higher risk due to your age, diet or genetics. The disease is detected more in men from countries where meat and dairy products are dietary staples compared to countries where the basic diet consists of rice, soybean products, and vegetables.

Current standard treatments for prostate cancer like surgery or radiotherapy are effective but there is a high chance that it comes accompanied with side effects such as incontinence and impotence due to the need to remove the entire gland or kill all cells in the area. Now, there is another alternative to treat prostate cancer called the robotic assisted High-Intensity Focused Ultrasound (HIFU). It is unlike other traditional treatments; the side effects are less drastic, minimal incontinence, minimal impotence, no incision required, and can be used to target and kill only the cancerous cells.

HIFU is performed by putting an ultrasound probe into the patients’ rectum. From that position, the ultrasound can direct beams more accurately at the prostate. It destroys the diseased tissue non-invasively in less than 4 hours. Cancerous cells targeted by ultrasounds will overheat, liquefy, and then be eliminated by natural urine passage. There is no extended hospital stay and very little downtime post-procedure. You may experience pain for 3-4 days post the procedure. HIFU waves do not pass through either solid bone or air so the procedure is not suitable to
treat all types of cancer. Currently it is used effectively only for men who have early stage, localized prostate cancer that has not spread beyond the prostate. It destroys cancerous tissue only, leaving healthy tissue unharmed. If the cancer has infected only one side of the gland, this procedure is probably the only one that can treat only the infected area without needing to destroy the whole gland. This means the patient can live a normal healthy life post treatment. HIFU does not expose patients to any radiation and HIFU is safe to repeat as well as to treat recurrent cases of cancer. Nonetheless, each case is different and to monitor recurrence, post treatment check-up is recommended every 3-6 months.

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