

le News

WEEKLY SWISS NEWS IN ENGLISH

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Swiss terrorist trial

BELLINZONA A Federal court in Ticino is expected to demand three to four years in prison for two Kurdish brothers accused of working with al-Qaeda while living in Switzerland. The judgment will be made on 2 May.

The two brothers, who arrived in Switzerland from Iraq and have lived

in Basel for an undetermined number of years while requesting asylum, are accused of working with a terrorist recruitment internet site led by Mullah Krekar, a Salafist preacher currently in gaol in Norway. Krekar is the founder of Ansar al-Islam, an Islamist armed group suspected of suicide attacks resulting in the deaths of journalists, US officials and local citizens in Iraq.

The trial of the Kurdish brothers opened on 28 April with defence attorneys claiming that evidence against them is based on illegal spying on internet communications and telephone conversations, since wiretapping is prohibited in Switzerland.

According to *Tages Anzeiger*, intelligence officials presented the court with a seven-page

Continued on page 2

Next Week:

How Switzerland lost the Mont Blanc

When France's Napoleon III took Savoie in the 1858, he offered it to Switzerland where he had lived as a refugee. Swiss bickering proved otherwise.



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This Week in Switzerland

Luxury goods company Richemont and EPFL have announced the establishment of an academic chair in Multi-scale Manufacturing Technologies at Neuchâtel's Microcity Campus. Multi-scale manufacturing combines disruptive technologies to produce high quality parts on any scale and at any level of precision. The integration of these new technologies in production will reinforce Switzerland's leadership position in high-precision industries and high-end watchmaking



According to initial results of a Swiss salary survey, in the private sector the gross monthly salary rose by 13.4% from 2002 to 2012, to CHF 6,118. More than one employee in three receives a bonus and 10% of the best paid people saw their compensation increase by 22.5%. Employees belonging to the "middle class" won salary increases of 12.8%, while the increase in pay of the 10% least well paid amounted to 9.5%. Wage differentials between the top and the bottom of the wage pyramid have increased from a factor of 2.6 in 2002 to 3.0 in 2012.

Switzerland signed an agreement with the EU this week to participate in the European Union Training Mission in Mali (EUTM Mali). Under the agreement, a Swiss civilian expert – a media analyst – will be seconded to the mission, which aims to improve the Malian army's capacities in the fields of management, logistics, personnel, human rights and international humanitarian law. This secondment will complement Switzerland's involvement in peacebuilding in Mali and support the EU's efforts to stabilize the Sahel region.

The trend toward "slow-ups" continues. On Sunday 4 May, aficionados of "gentle mobility" can take to the lake road between Vevey and Cully in peace and quiet. Walkers, cyclists, joggers and rollerbladers will have the road to themselves from 10h till 16h00; all motorized vehicles will be banned from 8h30 to 17h30. The route through the Lavaux vineyards covers a distance of 18 km, there and back.

Justice Minister Simonetta Sommaruga is to present a proposal to better guarantee gender equality on a professional level. Recent statistics show the wage gap between women and men widened by 0.5 points between 2010 and 2012, to reach 18.9% or about CHF 677 francs per month. The main reason for the difference is attributed to sheer discrimination.

Switzerland wishes to re-launch negotiations and discussions on Switzerland's relations with the EU. It envisages approving a number of measures including admission quotas to the Swiss labour market for Croatian citizens. This should enable negotiations in various other fields such as research, education, electricity and emissions trading to be resumed.



An 18-year-old woman from the United Kingdom was arrested on Sunday at Geneva airport after customs agents searching her luggage found 62 kg of khat, a stimulant drug. The woman claimed the drug was for personal consumption and said she did not know that khat is illegal in Switzerland.

Youth hostels in Switzerland registered 947,000 overnights stays in 2013, increasing by 3.3% compared to 2012; camping instead with 2.9 million overnight stays saw a decrease of 3.4%. Most of visitors in hostels came from Germany, the UK and France.

Terrorist trial

Continued front page 1

report detailing the elder brother's contacts with al-Qaeda leaders in Iran and Iraq dating from 2007. Some of this information, it was conceded, came from European intelligence sources. The brothers had likely been under surveillance ever since they launched an appeal against earlier court rulings to overturn their refugee status and end their requests for asylum. A report by the Federal Police last June confirmed that jihadists are suspected of using Switzerland as a base for supporting Islamist groups, using the internet to place videos of executions and beheadings and other incitements to violence. An earlier report in 2013 by the Federal Intelligence Service said that unimpeded travel from Switzerland could result in the country being used as a preparation and recruitment area for terrorists. Not long afterwards, several experts were employed with the task of keeping an eye on jihadist activities in Switzerland. The brothers are accused of writing and posting a number of articles on

the Arabic and Farsi site of a Basel-based network known as Didi Neue which was founded in 2003 by refugees in several European countries. The site was reportedly used to recruit supporters for activities outside Switzerland through a series of online chat rooms. The elder brother is said to hold a senior position within this group and has passed messages from Mullah Krekar to rebels in Iraq, something he denies.

According to court witnesses, the defendants refused on Monday to respond to questions about the many inconsistencies in their plea, including dates and ages, although the elder brother made a lengthy and tearful statement about how his life has been destroyed by the accusations against him. Federal Prosecutor Maria Schnebli showed little sympathy and has demanded a sentence of four years and nine months for one, and three years for the other. It is believed to be the first criminal action in Switzerland involving al-Qaeda. *Pamela Taylor*

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Regional

le News

WEEKLY SWISS NEWS IN ENGLISH

Editor's comment

Switzerland: Struggling with global issues

The international community is imposing global responsibility on Switzerland whether it likes it or not. First, there's the problem of how to deal with individuals on Swiss soil allegedly involved with al-Qaeda-related activities. As in our front page report, in other parts of Europe, growing numbers of nationals of Middle Eastern and Asian but also Caucasian origin are becoming involved via YouTube with radical jihadists. But as Bern points out, it needs real evidence from international intelligence services if it is to help in the fight against terrorism.

Then there is the problem of getting effective humanitarian aid to Syria. Some 35 international law specialists have accused the UN of being "excessively" prudent with Damascus, which is calling the shots on how relief can be delivered. Switzerland needs to play a decisive support role, particularly in helping to inform local populations. Few Middle Eastern journalists, including Syrian, understand how humanitarian operations work. Targeted media training together with the UN, ICRC and other organizations could make a difference.

And finally, there are other conflicts where Switzerland is the only country able to serve as a truly neutral arbiter for peace. Bern says it's not interested in Afghanistan, but mediated once before after the 1989 Soviet withdrawal. The same goes for Ukraine with Switzerland as chair of the OSCE. What about a re-launching of the Geneva Israel-Palestine talks? No one else is getting anywhere on these. *Edward Girardet, Editor@lenews.ch.*

Patrouille des Glaciers

Organized by the Swiss Army, the biennial ski mountaineering race Patrouille des Glaciers held in the canton of Valais is one of the hardest skiing competitions in the world. Both military and civilian teams compete, and this year a record 1,800 teams (an additional 400) will take part in the event. Teams, or patrols, consisting of three members usually with significant alpine and ski experience, apply to compete in two races, one, called the "Petite Patrouille", an arduous 27km from Arolla to Verbier and the other, the "Grande Patrouille", a punishing 53km from Zermatt to Verbier.

The race takes place at night because of the avalanche risk, which increases during daytime, especially at the end of the ski season. The first part of the competition started earlier this week and the second part will run from this Friday to Saturday. The fastest patrols competing in the "Grande Patrouille" are expected in Verbier in less than seven hours (the record is a breath-taking 5 hours 52mins).

Jonathan Bischoff

Worsening allergies

An estimated 15–20% of residents suffer from hay fever and related ailments on a regular basis, but health specialists maintain that even normally resistant individuals may find themselves grabbing for their handkerchiefs. As well as sneezing, symptoms include irritation of the nose and eyes, coughs and fatigue.

With the recent cold weather delaying flowering by two to three weeks, there has been a more intense distribution of pollen from multiple sources ranging from tree blossoms to grasses. Pollen counts may worsen as May progresses. The best precaution, experts



In Europe up to 25% of the population suffer from allergies

say, is to refrain from drying laundry in the open air or doing outdoor sports.

Pollen counts are likely to worsen as May progresses.

The Swiss, however, have recently tested a new and extremely effective nasal spray, Dymista, comprising two key substances, azelastine and flu-

ticasone. According to Prof. Claus Bachert, head of the University Hospital in Gand in Belgium, the spray, which has been tested on 4,500 patients and is now available in pharmacies. It takes 10 minutes to start working and helps ward off further irritation and allergy symptoms, but does not cure hay fever.

Le News

UN strategic heritage plan for Geneva headquarters

Clarifying the article in Le News last month on plans to renovate UN Headquarters in Geneva, the CHF 15-16 million cited only refers to the amount pledged by the General Assembly, notably CHF 15.5 million in 2014, to begin the project. The anticipated cost over the next 10-15 years is CHF 837 million, which has to be raised from both public and private sources. Switzerland has already donated CHF 50 million for energy-saving measures such as doubled-glazed windows, currently being installed at the Palais des Nations.

GENEVA It took four years and 110 million francs but Geneva's main rail station has finally brought its interior up to 21st-century standards. It was a low-key opening on 24 April compared to the three days of festivities in 1858 that marked the rail connection between Geneva and Lyon.

The façade with its giant clock remains unchanged, while the dramatic entrance with its massive iron door embedded with perforated

New look for Cornavin

glass circles, causes passengers to stop and stare. Murals dating from 1929 have been preserved, but the shops, mezzanine and modern lighting bear little resemblance to the dark corridors some 115,000 passengers used to walk through every day. "We finally have a gare worthy of our city," remarked photographer Dany Gignoux.

There are two supermarkets: the Aperto in the east wing, and a large Migros in the new west wing. The mezzanine has a liquor store, hairdressing salon, coffee shop and, just inside the door, a Payot book shop with a section selling

English books. Other improvements include 17 ticket windows and many more ticket machines, an information desk, eight ATMs and 330 lockers equipped with USB ports and international power outlets for charging mobile phones. *Pamela Taylor*



Photo courtesy of CFF

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National

Vote to stop paedophiles working with children

The so-called Marche Blanche (White March) initiative would prohibit paedo-criminals and those guilty of sexually abusing a dependent person from ever working with children or disabled people, both professionally and as a volunteer.

After the referendum on immigration, the results of which are still raising questions and doubts, Switzerland is getting ready for an important new vote on 18 May – to ban convicted paedophiles from working with children for life.

After a 10-year campaign, in April 2011 Marche Blanche finally managed to gather enough signatures to force a nationwide vote. The name refers to a demonstration in Brussels in 1996 following the arrest of child serial killer Marc Dutroux.

Last month the Federal Council defined the initiative as “superfluous” and invited Swiss citizens to reject the proposal in favour of a law revised by

Parliament last November, which will be in force by January 2015. As the Minister of Justice Simonetta Sommaruga pointed out, the new law would “respect international law and the principle of proportionality”. The law includes a ten-year ban on working with children, which can be renewed by five years or extended to a life ban under certain circumstances. Judges will also have the power to forbid abusers from contacting victims and to declare certain public places off-limits to convicted paedophiles.

The law goes further than the initiative, applying to all forms of physical and psychological violence, and is more nuanced. For example, under the



initiative an 18-year-old who had a sexual relationship with a 15-year-old girl would be treated in the same way as someone preying on young children.

The first polls see 80% in favour of the text proposed by Marche Blanche, but parties are divided on the question. The Movement of Romand Citizens (MCR/MCG), the Bourgeois Democrats (PBD) and the Swiss

People's Party (UDC) are for a yes vote, but members of other parties such as the Liberals and the Swiss Socialist Party oppose the initiative. Andrea Caroni of the Liberals has put together a cross-party committee against the initiative, and Carlo Sommaruga of the Socialist Party also opposes the unconstitutional nature of the initiative.

Cristina Odero

Tourism roadshow for the Middle East

LAUSANNE Swiss tourism officials have embarked on a roadshow through the states bordering the Persian Gulf to promote a range of summer activities for visitors from the Middle East. The campaign, dubbed Switzerland Travel Experience, visited seven Gulf States from Abu Dhabi to Saudi Arabia.

Switzerland has long been a favoured summer destination for

wealthy Arabs fleeing the intense heat of their own countries. Last year, the Swiss Tourist Office registered a jump of nearly 23% in overnight stays. Visitors from Saudi Arabia hold first place, followed by those from the United Arab Emirates. They spend an average of CHF 500 per day, more than tourists from anywhere else.

Many luxury hotels now cater to this new clientele with halal meals, spa facilities and large connecting rooms for extended families. Alexandra Turcan, director of business development at the Lausanne Palace & Spa, said that the hotel's Arab visitors “are mainly interested in shopping experiences,” and that the hotel provides customized shopping trips. “They are also interested in packages that revolve around wellness, slimming and relaxation,” she noted.

Preferred destinations are the Lake Geneva region, Valais, Gstaad, Lucerne, Interlaken, Grindelwald, Zurich, Ticino and Bern. The Swiss Tourist Office has a new website with 2,400 pages of Arabic content regarding hotels, train and tour bookings.

Pamela Taylor



Doha, Qatar's capital city and stop-off for the Swiss road show.

Swiss take lead on combating terrorism

BERN Some 200 experts met this week in Interlaken at an Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) conference on terrorist financing. Two of the grimmest issues up for discussion were kidnapping for ransom and the “foreign fighters” phenomenon.



Opening the conference, Swiss president Didier Burkhalter stressed that terrorism is a common threat and insisted that “counter-terrorist strategies can only deliver sustainable results if they are implemented in legal, transparent and accountable ways.” Wise words, given the lack of credibility of many Western governments as human rights protectors after the abuses sanctioned in Abu Ghraib and Guantánamo Bay.

One OSCE goal is to establish a unified front to combat kidnapping for ransom, a major source of terrorist financing. This may prove easier said than done as controlling those who wish to pay is not straightforward. Another goal is to prevent the “foreign fighters” phenomenon. This is a concern for many states that believe returning fighters represent an internal security threat. It is estimated that nearly 2,000 people from OSCE States are fighting in Syria.

Muguet in May

On the streets of many towns and cities in France and Switzerland on the first of May, you will see stands selling lily of the valley, or muguet in French. It is traditional to buy a bouquet for loved ones. The flowers have a heady scent but the plant is highly poisonous and its leaves are very similar to l'ail de l'ours, bear's or wild garlic – so be careful if you are foraging in woodlands.



Business & Economy

Foreign businesses losing confidence

ZURICH Many foreign companies say they are limiting plans to invest in Switzerland as they await implementation of the February initiative against mass immigration.

A survey by the Zurich-based Swiss Economic Institute (KOF) on 25 April revealed that 13% of the 2,700 firms surveyed reported reduced confidence in investing in Switzerland.

Although few companies have altered their investment or staffing plans for 2014, around 6% of them said they intend to make reductions in 2015 and perhaps more in 2016 as a result of the initiative. "Firms with a higher proportion of foreign employees will be more likely to reduce investment and to hire fewer staff than previously planned," said KOF. Companies in the construction sector are more likely to consider reductions than firms in the



industrial or service sectors. In a separate announcement on the same day, the Conference of Cantonal Directors of Public Economics (CDEP) said it registered a decline in 2013 of new foreign companies locating to various cantons, leading to an 11.2 percent loss of jobs over the previous year.

CDEP spokesman Christoph Niederberger said that the drop was "insignificant" compared to the previ-

ous year, and attributed the decline to the strong Swiss franc and uncertainty regarding reform of the corporate tax code. Bern has three years to come up with measures to implement the February initiative in a way that does not penalize foreign companies and further strain relations with the European Union.

Le News

UPC Cablecom moves into mobile phones

Swiss cable TV company, UPC Cablecom is to sell a mobile phone service to its existing clients. Clients will only need to buy a new SIM card to use the service which offers free mobile and fixed calls over Cablecom's network.

Switzerland's population rises by 1.2% in 2013

The government has reported that Switzerland's population grew by 97,600 to 8,136,700, an increase of 1.2% on 2012. This is equivalent to a conurbation the size of Vevey and Montreux. While natural growth accounted for 17,200, immigration brought 80,400 people into the country. The report stated that the average age of immigrants is 37, while the Swiss average age is 43. The Swiss population is aging with one in five women and one in six men being over 64. Indeed the number of centenarians living in the country has doubled since 2000 to 1,500.

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Insight

Bern to fund research

BERN Switzerland's scientific community heaved a collective sigh of relief following measures from Bern to temporarily fund some projects.

The panic has not completely died down however, since the measures proposed by the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF) are transitional, pending resolution of the problem posed by the cutoff of EU funding. After the 9 February vote against mass immigration, the EU halted Swiss participation in the European Horizon 2020 scientific projects.

The SNSF's offer of temporary funding resulted in nearly 150 applications from scientists at the University of Geneva, Zurich's Institute of Technology (ETH) and EPFL in Lausanne. The concern is that it may become more difficult for Swiss scientists to participate in European research projects if they are no longer eligible for common funding through

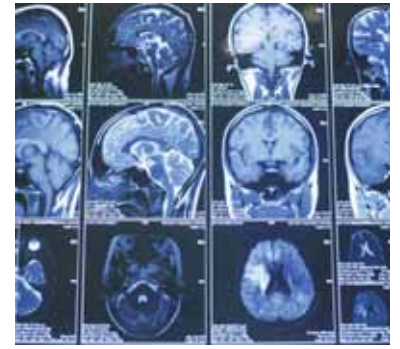
the important European Research Council (ERC) grants.

Roland Siegwart, professor of robotics at Zurich's prestigious ETH, believes the main damage to Switzerland is not financial but rather to its reputation as a reliable and important partner in scientific research. "It is not as catastrophic as some people think, although painful and the wrong move," said Siegwart, who is also vice-president of Research and Corporate Relations at ETH. "We had controlled immigration from Europe before 2002 but people are still worried and may decide not to come here because of this uncertainty."

Much has been reported about the important physics experiments going on at the CERN nuclear research centre outside Geneva. Less is known about other important projects such as the Human Brain Project, piloted by EPFL in Lausanne and relocated to Geneva at the beginning of this year. There is also a myriad of other significant research projects in medicine, phar-

maceutics, robotics and nuclear fusion – not to mention ecological and energy projects from solar to hydroelectric and biotechnology. Swiss universities historically get about two thirds of their researchers from abroad and most of those have come from Europe since Switzerland signed up to the EU Free Movement of Persons Agreement in 2002. The question is, will Switzerland turn towards non-European scientists to fill the gap? "It may be that Switzerland is now free to attract more scientists from non-European countries such as the US or India," said Siegwart. "For them the situation might well improve because until now it was easier to get people from Europe. It will now be equal for everyone."

Perhaps with this in mind, minister for economy Johann Schneider-Ammann flew to Brazil in early April to inaugurate a new office for the Swiss science and education network known as Swissnex. This is a public and privately funded network to connect Swiss scientists with research projects



around the world. The first office was opened in Boston in 2000.

Nevertheless, most Swiss scientists don't believe that non-Europeans will fill the gap. This is partly because it is more difficult to have common funding mechanisms with individual countries. It is also because the ERC provides funding for basic research, and offers awards for outstanding research. According to Siegwart this cannot be replaced and he is confident the government will find reasonable solutions. "Most Swiss know their government usually finds a way out of these problems but foreigners don't know that and are understandably anxious."

Pamela Taylor

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The Alumni HEC Lausanne Golf Competition, in collaboration with International Link

Following the success of last year's event, International Link is happy to join the Association des Alumni HEC to organize a second golfing competition on **16 May 2014 at the Vuissens Golf Club**.

International Link wishes to contribute to the integration of international companies' employees into the local community both through professional meetings and leisure activities.

This golf competition, which is intended for graduates from HEC Lausanne, employees of International Link members, as well as students of the Faculty, is the perfect opportunity to expand your network while practicing your swing. After a Louisiana Scramble tournament in teams of four, participants will have the opportunity to network during an aperitif and dinner. Great prizes offered to the best teams of the day. As for beginners, an introduction to golf will be offered in the afternoon.



Please find all details on the International Link website: www.internationallink.ch

Education & Technology

Unique summer opportunity at EPFL for undergraduates

LAUSANNE Every year at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology in Lausanne (EPFL), the School of Life Sciences offers 25 high-potential international undergraduate students full access to its top researchers and labs through its Summer Research Program (SRP)

The selection is tough; 25 selected out of nearly 600 applications makes the programme's acceptance rate even more rigorous than the Ivy League schools in the United States. The reward, however, is full immersion in a unique scientific environment for two months, with access to faculty, research facilities, ideas, seminars and projects that will have an impact on the lives of future generations.

The SRP allows these 25 students to become full members of an EPFL lab

team and experience first-hand the excitement and challenges of research within the four institutes of the School of Life Sciences: the Swiss Institute for Experimental Cancer Research (ISREC), the Brain & Mind Institute (BMI), the Global Health Institute (GHI) and the Institute of Bioengineering (IBI). In these labs, the students work on projects aimed at dissecting the intricacies of the cell to better understand and fight cancer, developing new drugs and diagnostic tools to conquer infectious disease, enhancing imaging technics and untangling the elaborate communication between neurons and the onset of neurological disease.

Started in 2006, the Summer Research Program is still going strong thanks to the support of EPFL, the School of Life Sciences and generous external partners. "The vast majority of the 200 students who have participated in our programme report that the SRP



Participants say that the SRP was a life-changing experience.

was a life-changing experience that helped shape their career goals and world perspectives," notes Alice Goodman, the SRP administrator. "These high-potential students from all over the world are being nurtured and challenged at one of Europe's best research technology institutes."

To find out more about partnering opportunities and how SRP helps dreams become reality, contact summer.sv@epfl.ch, or consult the webpage at <http://sv.epfl.ch/summer-research>.

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Lifestyle

Circuses: no laughing matter

GENEVA As spring unfolds, circuses such as the Nock, which visits Geneva from 30 April to 18 May, are setting up camp across Switzerland. In neighbouring France, which has an estimated 200 touring circuses, tents appear for a day or two in places such as Ferney-Voltaire or Evian, while zebras, camels and llamas graze in nearby fields; then they move on to the next town.

Boasting numerous companies, including the Stey, Royal and Olympia, Switzerland's circus history goes back to 17th-century "freak shows". By the 1800s, refined international companies such as Germany's Hagenback and America's Barnum & Bailey toured the continent alongside Switzerland's own longstanding Knie circus. Despite their enticing spectacles, most people know little about these modern-day entertainment nomads.

The circus, as we now know it, hails back to 18th-century England. First started as an equestrian show by ex-cavalry officer Philip Astley, the circus was eventually complemented by eclectic animal performances, acrobats, strength performers, jugglers and a farcical invention of Elizabethan theatre: the clown. This format, taking place around a circle (hence circus), catapulted the phenomenon internationally as competing companies vied for ever-more-daring acts. By the 19th century, cities ranging from St Petersburg and Paris to New York boasted fixed purpose-built arenas that would accommodate perform-

ances well into the next century.

The mobile tent circus, created by the American Joshua Purdy Brown in 1825, took off in Europe during the interbellum period. Most European circuses were run by families. In Switzerland, the Circus Knie was founded in 1803, while the Nock dynasty harks back to the 1600s. Just like film and theatre, performing companies have had to adapt with the times. After World War I and its tragic repercussions for men and horses, equestrian-based acts gave place to performances of physical agility, mirroring the 1896 Olympic Games. With industrialization and revolution, the circus evolved accordingly. After the nationalization of circuses in Russia and the creation of the Moscow Circus School in 1927, a new approach was established as the Soviets awed Western audiences with visually astonishing acts.

By the 1970s, the Russian model had proved the way forward. Two of the first Western circus schools opened in Paris in 1974, coinciding with renewed interest in circuses. By 1985, the French government had launched a national Circus School, a year after the creation of the renowned Cirque du Soleil in Montreal. The contemporary standing of circuses is still far from homogeneous. In Italy, France and Portugal, they are considered a cultural activity and benefit from state subsidies, while in Germany, Austria and Denmark they are viewed as commercial activi-



ties and are granted no financial aid, apart from certain tax levies.

Most companies are still run by families who have been in the business for generations, hence the nomadic stereotype of "occupational artists". Various attempts at regulating circus activities on a European level, such as their treatment of animals, however, reflect the true internationalism of modern-day companies: the European Circus Association (which includes Switzerland), created in 2002, is a good example. With artists from all parts of Europe, circuses reflect the value system of a cosmopolitan continent still enmeshed in traditional values. Despite dramatic changes since the early 1800s, the circus is still a magical venue for both kids and adults.

Christopher Woodburn

Strawberries – packing a nutritional punch

As the weather warms up, fresh produce is becoming more colourful and varied. Taking advantage of fresh fruits and vegetables is an excellent way to make more nutritious eating choices. These days it is the simple yet delicious strawberry that is catching my eye; I am buying a container every other day. Those available now are from Italy, France and Spain, but the season for Swiss berries is soon – it usually runs from mid-May until August depending on the weather.

The strawberry delivers a remarkable amount of nutrients. A serving of strawberries (150g) contains more than 100% of an adult's daily requirements of vitamin C and is also a very good source of dietary fibre. Vitamin C is necessary for the growth and repair of tissues while dietary fibre aids in digestion, plays a role maintaining a healthy weight and decreases the risk of heart disease. A serving is also a good source of folate, a B vitamin used in brain and cell function.

Strawberries also contain flavonoids, compounds that have antioxidant properties. Some of the flavonoids found in strawberries, called anthocyanins, are thought to play a role in reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease, cancer and age-related declines in cognitive function.

Getting enough fruits and vegetables can be challenging, so enjoy strawberries as part of your daily intake while they are in season and taste best.

Cheryl Miles is a nutritional consultant working in the Lake Geneva region, cherylmiles.nutrition@gmail.com

Top 10 best selling books of the week

Rank	Title	Author	Published by	Genre
1	Swiss Watching: Inside the Land of Milk and Money	Bewes, Diccon	Brealey, Nicholas	History
2	The Truth about the Harry Quebert Affair	Dicker, Joel	Quercus Publishing	Fiction Hard Cover
3	The Golden Egg	Leon, Donna	Arrow Books Ltd	Thrillers
4	By Its Cover	Leon, Donna	Heinemann Ltd	Thrillers
5	The Goldfinch	Tartt, Donna	Little Brown UK	Fiction Hard Cover
6	Swiss Politics for complete beginners	Cormon, Pierre	Slatkine	Swiss History
7	Buried Angels	Lackberg, Camilla	Harper Collins UK	Thrillers
8	The Gods of Guilt	Connelly, Michael	Orion Publishing Group	Thrillers
9	The Son	Nesbo, Jo	Harvill Secker	Thrillers
10	Never Go Back	Child, Lee	Corgi Bantam Paperback UK	Thrillers



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Property

Feng shui, designs for life and love

If you are looking to attract a romantic partner, think about following the guiding light of the art of feng shui to help design your inner sanctum.

Feng shui is not a philosophy or religion. It is the Chinese art of carefully studied principles to manage the flow of the all-important chi, or universal energy, to obtain maximum benefit in all areas of life. Feng refers to the movement of the wind and the omnipotent yet invisible energy of the sky. Shui means water, which describes the perceptible world around us – from nature in all its forms to man-made structures. Feng shui is all about the flow of energy, which needs to be free, positive and beneficial. Its principles are as applicable in Switzerland as anywhere else.



The Lake Geneva region with its lakes and mountains encapsulates the feng shui environment. Feng shui experts Dalia Esterer and Lila Trabelsi of inspirapure, an interior design and feng shui services company based in the region, affirm that living close to Lake Léman is beneficial, "It's a very good water location in feng shui because the water doesn't move too fast, thus it brings wealth, relaxation and abundance." The mountains, with their active communities of chalets and ski resorts, represent positive energy in feng shui. Mountains at your back or the back of your home represent protection, but our experts warn: "It is inauspicious to live below a mountain because too much energy (chi) can flow down to the home, causing mental and physical health problems, such as headaches, depression or worse."

Finding a partner in any city can be a challenge, especially in this region with its highly transient population. One of the ways that feng shui experts can help is by offering guidelines on how to rearrange and design your home – especially your bedroom.

A bedroom with a west-facing orientation favours romance and contentment, but there are other things you can do if moving your bedroom isn't an option. The easiest place to start is under the bed. Remove any items under it to allow the free flow of energy throughout your bedroom. Similarly, sort out clutter in closets and drawers. Excessive disorder means you may be holding on to emotional baggage and negative experiences that stop you moving forward. Take the time to clear out items that should no longer have a place in your life.

Balance the space to make it more inviting, not for one person but for two. The bed should be centrally positioned, allowing a view of the entire room. The foot of the bed should not be directly in line with the door. Having two bedside tables, one at each side of the bed, with a lamp on each sends out the message that your bedroom is made for two. Making room in your closet as well as keeping a dresser drawer free for that potential partner emphasizes that you're preparing for someone to enter your life.

White prevails in most bedrooms, but do you really want your "sensual space" reminding you of an office or hospital room? Add splashes of red and burgundy to represent heat and passion – these can be in the form of drapes. Bed sheets and covers should be made of natural fibres in skin tones ranging from pink to dark brown. Balance these colours with cushions in cool blues and greens, since too much red can be overpowering and foment destructive emotions.

Throw out that picture of a lone figure walking on a beach. Pictures of your family and religious imagery should be moved to other rooms. Instead hang pictures symbolizing couples or images that invite romance and sensuality.

Unbelievable as it sounds, mirrors in the bedroom are not feng shui friendly because they can be a constant source of intrusion into intimacy. How to get around this? Simply put the mirror on the inside of a wardrobe door.

The upper right-hand corner of a room represents love and romance so place paired items such as candles, figurines or even a vase with two red flowers there.

Feng shui can lend a whole new perspective not just to attracting but also to communicating with a partner, and to living an emotionally balanced life in harmony with the environment.

Russel Mohan



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GENEVA RELOCATION

Chez Vous

The Geneva Book & Press Fair: A future for reading?

Compared to India's Jaipur Festival, now regarded as one of the world's leading literary events and heavily attractive to young readers, the Geneva Book and Press Fair is a different beast. Far more commercial, it is seeking to establish itself as the throbbing heart of the publishing industry, at least in Europe.

Even though the guest of honour is Japan in tribute to 150 years of Swiss-Japanese diplomacy, the problem is that the fair still comes off as parochial – meaning Swiss or francophone – rather than asserting itself as a truly international event in a publishing world overly-dominated by English. Many of the authors – some of them heavy hitters such as Pierre Assouline and Abdellatif Laâbi – are Swiss, French, Canadian but also from elsewhere such as South Africa. The Fair's president, Isabelle Falconnier, is clearly making an effort to appeal across bor-

ders and to break out from traditional concepts of publishing. An effort is being made to appeal across borders, but one has the nagging feeling that content is guided more by sponsorship and salon fashion than literary fervour.

Nevertheless, this year's fair (30 April–4 May) may come up with surprises. The Japanese will focus on storytelling, creation and lifestyle, and there are also scores of exhibitors, mainly from Switzerland, France, Canada and Belgium, promoting books, magazines and other publications, including electronic versions. Non-stop debates, readings, comic-book (BD) presentations, signings, photography workshops and other events abound, including discussions on the future of books and media, both crucial themes. There are hidden gems waiting to be discovered, which is really what book fairs should be about.

Past fairs seemed angled more on



The Geneva's Book Fair is one of the most important literary events in Europe

getting kids to buy rather than excite them about new creativity. In contrast, at Jaipur, it is impossible to ignore the thirst for literature among the youth who flock to listen to authors and gather autographs. Maybe this time Geneva will offer a more provocative

attempt to inspire a new generation – one that will decide if books will survive in a multi-platform internet age. At least the 2014 programme seems to offer an impressive diversity of kids' workshops and events. So let's see.

Edward Girardet

Cracking up

How an ogre ate my favourite song

Try not to be judgmental, I really do. Treasure can often be found in the most surprising places; truffles don't immediately present themselves as edible, let alone delicious, and so on. But I admit, I'm losing the battle – I'm complaining a lot and my family thinks I'm boring.

For example, it causes me great pain that my children will probably always refer to Leonard Cohen's "Hallelujah" as "that song from Shrek".

Not that they like it very much.

"I think it's mean," the seven-year-old told me. "Someone tied someone else to a chair, and broke their throne and cut their hair. That's not nice."

"Well," I rushed in, "it's not really about that." "What's it about?"

What indeed. Passionate, destructive love. Bliss. Obsession.

"Erm ... nothing. You're right. It's just mean. Very mean!"

Anyway, my point is that, for the rest of their lives, every time they hear that beautiful, tortured song, the children are going to think of a green ogre. And every time they hear "Habanera" from Carmen, they're going to think of Pixar's Up. Now, Up is lovely and I'm

glad they saw it, but I wish they could experience this stuff in its original context before it's used in a movie. Or worse, in an ad. You don't get those out of your head. I don't know what the situation is in the rest of the world, but there's a generation of South Africans who struggle to think of Carl Orff's "O Fortuna" as anything other than "the song from the Old Spice ad".

And yesterday I stumbled upon some information that froze my blood. The ZhuZhu Pets – fluffy toy things with names like Ipsy-Woo and Tiddly-Pop – have released a CD of Beatles covers. I only managed to listen to the first five seconds of "All My Loving" before my teeth fell out. Under no circumstances can the four-year-old find out about this: I'm no musical purist, but the first Beatles songs my children hear will not be sung in squeaky voices by toy hamsters.

Books can be a problem too. Just about every other week I have to lay down the law afresh about Disney's *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*.

"Please, Mommy! We want to see it! Ple-e-ase," my daughters wail.

But they're not allowed to until

they've read the book. Honestly, there are some things that just should not be Disneyfied. It's not that I think severe deformity, emotional pain, public hangings, betrayal and murder aren't the stuff of great children's movies. It's just that I'd like them to experience the power of the book before they see Quasimodo dancing around and singing a duet with a cute little gargoyle friend.

Same with *Monster High* dolls, which the children are clamouring for.

"If I buy you that Draculaura fashion doll," I explained, "I'll be normalizing the undead and robbing you of your chance to be scared silly by your first vampire movie."

That was when they denounced me as boring, and I sloped off to my room to be old and grumpy by myself. Actually, I



had a nice time: I listened to some music by the guy who wrote that song from *Shrek*.

Robyn Goss is a South African writer, recently moved to Switzerland. You can read her blogs at www.robbygoss.com

Chez Vous

Screen addiction: One more minute, Mum!

GENEVA Depending on age, children spend an average of four to five hours a day on electronic gadgets.

The bad news is that the new generational obsession with "screen" time is in many cases proving detrimental to reading, learning and social awareness, even if some argue that online capabilities are making kids more digitally adept. The good news, sort of, is that most parents, and teachers, are now realizing that they are not alone. All are grappling with what to do about children being online too long – and coming up with solutions.

It's now one of the most persistent challenges for families with kids, particularly in the 11–14 age range: how to get them off devices without provoking yet another outbreak of cold-turkey hysteria or even abusive behaviour. According to the Pew Research Internet Project, obsession can develop into cyber addiction.

Repeated claims by both children and adolescents of just "one more minute" or "almost finished" when called to dinner or to do homework have come



to dominate households in a manner that is provoking deep concern among both parents and teachers alike. Various schools in the region have been organizing parents-teachers meetings, some involving mainly older pupil "advisors", to explore how best to deal with the problem.

Some parents maintain that their children appear not to be neglecting their homework or reading, but still remain glued to their devices for excessive periods of time. Others despair of the negative impact screen time is having on their children's homework, often

reflected by lower grades, a neglect of reading books, or not taking part in "real" activities such as sports and other outdoor pastimes. Another danger is that children may be exposing themselves to dangers ranging from paedophilia and pornography to violence. Some specialists also believe this constant cyber-stimulation could have an impact on brain development. Already evident, they say, is that cyber addicts eat poorly, lose weight, and develop vision and posture problems.

Either way, the challenge is how to establish a happy medium whereby the child learns to operate in moderation and in a manner that is socially acceptable, while remaining within a protected environment. For girls, the obsession has more to do with chat and online communication. For boys, it is particularly violent games, which they play online with multiple friends but also strangers. All too often, parents simply surrender, an approach that could lead to even worse behaviour later on in life.

According to Addiction Suisse, a Lausanne-based advisory group, the internet has clearly become an indispensable tool for work, school and recreation. "It is no longer imaginable to operate without it in our lives today," the organization says. Hence its recommendation that both parents and children must learn how to navigate the net, and be aware of what can be found out there.

Simply banning the internet from one's household is not going to resolve the problem. Children will find access to social-media sites or games no matter what through their friends or at school. Like drug addicts, kids can't leave it. If prevented access, they become aggressive, nervous and even abusive. Addiction Suisse points out, overuse of the internet does not necessarily mean addiction. Some children, particularly as they grow older, readily opt out on their own from excessive use. In fact, older children seem to become more responsible about their time.

Ed Girardet

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Travel

The wonderous Val D'Aoste

In one of Italy's most sparsely populated areas, the soaring peaks, hidden valleys and glaciers of the Val d'Aoste with their abundant wildlife are a wilderness waiting to be explored. And most conveniently, the region is just 90 minutes away from Geneva.

AOSTE A holiday in Italy conjures up visions of escaping cold, grey winters for a sunnier and warmer clime. In one of Italy's most sparsely populated areas, the soaring peaks, hidden valleys and glaciers of the Val d'Aoste with their abundant wildlife are a wilderness waiting to be explored. And most conveniently, the region is just 90 minutes away from Geneva.

The Meteo even reports sunnier weather in Italian-speaking Ticino right here in Switzerland. Nevertheless, just on the other side of the Mont Blanc tunnel, in Italy's Val

d'Aoste, the weather can sometimes be colder than in the Valais or the French Alps. This means that Val d'Aoste ski resorts often have better ski conditions lasting well into Easter week, as was the case this year.

Visitors have access to four peaks of over 4,000 metres: Mont Blanc, Matterhorn, Monte Rosa and Gran Paradiso. They will also find Roman ruins, mineral spas, fabulous wine and food and few tourists. The style and quality of the shops along the cobblestone pedestrian streets of Courmayeur testify to the influence of visitors from Turin and Milan, yet the prices are more affordable than in neighbouring France or Switzerland.

Courmayeur comes to life on market days and most evenings when shops and bars burst with life. An apero in the Val d'Aoste usually means a copious complementary plate of local sausage and Fontina cheese. There's no problem meeting the locals. They don't yet have foreigner-phobia and wel-



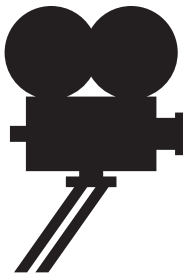
Castello di Finis near Aosta

come arrivals to cafés and taverns with a boisterous "Ciao, benvenuto, vieni!"

When the snow melts and the sun comes out to stay, hiking in the Val d'Aoste is sublime, with access to the 165km Tour du Mont Blanc, the Gran Paradiso national park, and two high-altitude trails. The Gran Paradiso is home to protected species such as marmot, chamois and ibex and some hikers have even glimpsed a rare ermine, ptarmigan or golden eagle.

From 1530 the valley was part of Savoy and later the Kingdom of Sardinia (along with Carouge) until it joined Italy in 1861. Mussolini imposed a programme of Italianization, but it gained special autonomous status after World War II. Today this semi-autonomous region is officially bi-lingual (Italian and French) but many villages still speak a Franco-Provençal patois called Valdôtain.

Pamela Taylor



FILM REVIEWS

By Neptune

FADING GIGOLO ★ ★ ★ ★

How can one resist a movie in which Woody Allen plays an accidental pimp?! Don't resist, just go and enjoy this multifaceted yarn written and directed by, and starring John Turturro of such superbly disjointed films as *The Big Lebowski* and *Romance and Cigarettes*. Turturro plays the at-first reluctant escort/gigolo alongside his buddy Allen, who takes the name Dan Bongo to fit his new position as a pimp in New York. But there's much more. There's the loneliness of a rich woman played by Sharon Stone alongside the shyness of a Jewish Orthodox widow played by a moving Vanessa Paradis, who needs to fit into her strict Orthodox community. It's a broad, delightful comedy that will keep you chuckling while feeling warm inside.



MY SWEET PEPPER LAND ★ ★ ★

Don't miss this captivating movie by Hiner Saleem, with the gorgeous Iranian actress Golshifteh Farahani. It is a both an eastern Western situated somewhere in Kurdistan and a stand for the emancipation of women in that part of the world.

NOAH ★ ★ ★ ★

Russell Crowe as Noah is once again grandiose and charismatic, as he was in *Gladiator* and *A Beautiful Mind*. The film, by Darren Aronofsky, recreates in full Hollywood spectacle a metaphysical view of this religious tale from the Old Testament. Due to Aronofsky's fervor, there is more soul-searching in this IMAX movie than in the usual blockbuster. Between the director's surrealistic vision and his

passion for the story, the film is finally about the struggle of a man bowing to the might of God or finding the truth in love and human mercy. Rather than just a fable about animals being saved in an ark, it's an intriguing cocktail that leaves one with many reflections. Jennifer Connelly and Emma Watson are fine as Noah's wife and daughter, as is an amusing Anthony Hopkins portraying Methuselah.



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LES ARTS

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LE MEET

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Allaman. Portes ouvertes de l'Atelier de céramique

3-4 May, 10-11 May
Saturdays 11h00-20h00
Sundays 11h00-18h00

Monique Duplain and four other artists are presenting their ceramic, furniture, leatherwork, recycled glass and woven garment creations in Monique Duplain's studio in the heart of the village of Allaman.

Atelier de céramique
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021 897 35 28
www.moniqueduplain.ch



Coppet. Journée des Plantes & Art du Jardin

9-11 May, 10h00-18h00

Lovers of plants and gardening can rejoice: the most important event of its kind in the region is here! This year's theme is "garden perfumes". Patrick Hérault, a parfumeur from Bordeaux, will lead a workshop on the subject. With 120 exhibitors including nurseries, landscapers and garden furniture suppliers, there is plenty to see. And you can also admire the winning masterpieces in the flower arranging competition.

Château de Coppet
1296 Coppet
http://jardinsenfete.ch/
CHF 12; children under 16 free



Morges. Koukansuru Show

3 May, 19h00

Amazing acrobatics, intoxicating techniques and break-neck speed. Welcome to the world of nip hop, where hip hop meets manga! Harking back to the Japanese martial arts, Koukansuru is a project initiated by Steps Dance Festival and brought to life by hip hop producer Bruce Ykanji, who has invited the Japanese dance groups Mortal Combat and Former Aktion to appear with his own crew Juste Debout.

Théâtre de Beausobre
Avenue de Vertou 2, 1110 Morges
www.beausobre.ch
Tickets: CHF 41 or CHF 36



Lausanne. La science appelle les jeunes

2 - 3 May
Friday 13h30 - 18h00
Saturday 08h30 - 14h00

"Science Rocks" is the slogan of this National Competition - an initiative to promote science among youth. This year, 101 young scientists from all over Switzerland will show off their innovative research projects, in fields ranging from natural sciences and technology to art, architecture and culture. Visit the stands to marvel at their innovative talent.

Rolex Learning Center, EPFL
www.sjf.ch
Free entry; prize giving is by invitation only



Geneva. Giulio Stracciati Trio

9 May, 21h30

Tuscan guitarist Giulio Stracciati's new trio offers chamber jazz full of nuances interplay and swing. Combining original compositions and arrangements, with counterpoint and joint improvisations alternating with solos, this promises to be a great night in the company of Danilo Moccia (trombone), Maurizio Bionda (saxophone) and Giulio Stracciati (guitar).

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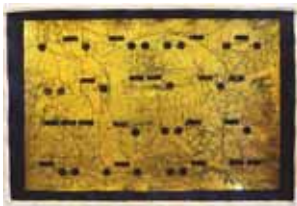


Geneva. Bill Claps "Enduring Conundrum" Exhibition

30 April - 7 June

Evarspace Art Gallery presents an exhibition by New York artist Bill Claps. The exhibition includes an interactive video installation and mixed media works that are executed by combining a number of artistic mediums, including video, photography, painting and drawing. "Enduring Conundrum" represents the eternal loop in which contemporary art is trapped.

Galerie Evarspace
12 Grand-Rue
1204 Genève
www.evarspace.com



Lausanne. The Crookes Concert

21 May, 21h00 (doors 20h15)

Hailing from Sheffield in the UK, The Crookes proudly represent the vitality of the English rock scene. After rapid success with their first album in 2009, their ambitions continue with the release of a third album this month. Come and check it out yourself in the intimate venue of the Cave du Bleu Lézard.

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CHF 24.00, in advance: CHF 22.00



Geneva. Spring Book Sale at the Library in English

9 May, 10h00-18h00
10 May, 10h00-17h00
11 May, 12h00-16h00

The famous spring book sale is back with an astounding range of thousands of books, covering all interests and ages at very moderate prices. There is a tea-room offering delicious sandwiches and home-baked goods when you need a rest from searching for all the books, DVDs and CDs you have missed and can now buy for a few francs. Come and enjoy with family and friends!

The Library in English
3 Rue de Monthoux, 1201 Geneva
www.thelibrary.ch



Lausanne. Concours Suisse de Musique pour la Jeunesse 2014

8-10 May, from 09h00: Auditions at the Conservatoire
11 May, 9h30: Concert by the winners at the Casino de Monbenon

The grand final of the classical music competition for Swiss youth. Over four days 203 soloists and 57 ensembles will play every instrument imaginable - from harp and guitar to accordion and sax. Note that the auditions and the concert are at different dates and locations. See the website for the full programme
www.sjmw.ch/fr



Lausanne. Carnaval de Lausanne

9 May, 16h00 - 05h00
10 May, 09h30-03h00
11 May, 09h30-19h00

Apéros and Guggenmusik are the order of the day - and well into the small hours as well! Three days of full-on carnival fun in the centre of Lausanne. The highlight is the carnival procession on Sunday afternoon at 14h30. Starting at Montbenon, it follows the route Rue Grand-Chêne, Grand-Pont, Rue des Terreaux, Rue du Maupas (lower end), Rue de l'Ale, Rue Neuve to end in Place de la Riponne.

Various locations along Rue Centrale
www.carnavalausanne.ch



LA BODEGA DU TERROIR GALICIEN

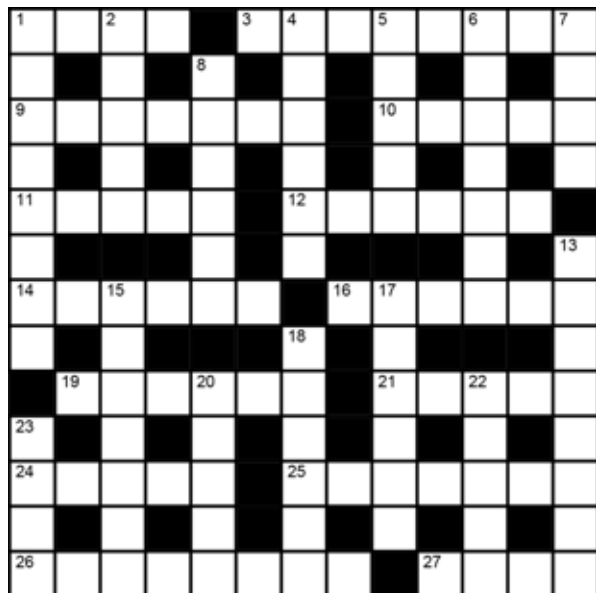
SAMPLE DELICIOUS PRODUCTS
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Puzzles



QUICK CROSSWORD

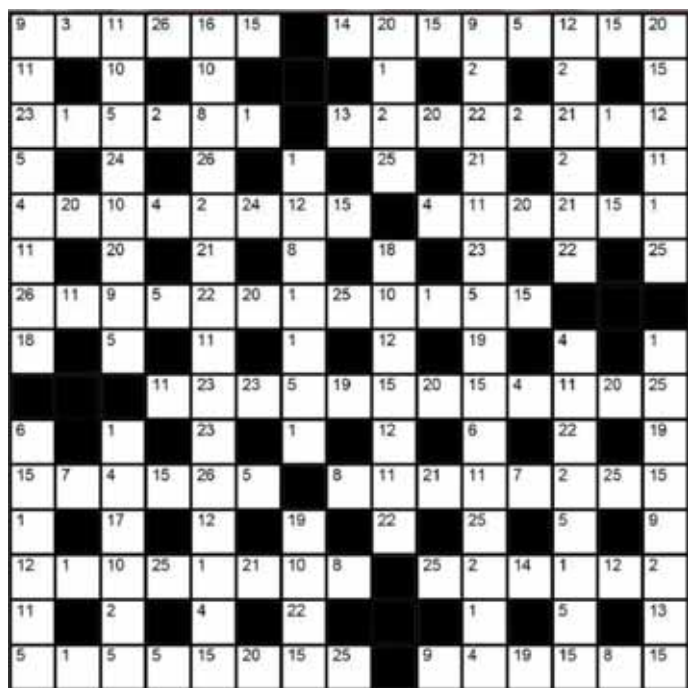
ACROSS

- 1 Expression of pain (4)
- 3 Striking appropriateness (8)
- 9 What something is used for (7)
- 10 The sky was on his shoulders (5)
- 11 Water nymph (5)
- 12 Simply put Equus caballus (3-3)
- 14 Located below or beneath (6)
- 16 A disastrous often embarrassing failure (6)
- 19 A small wave on the surface of a liquid (6)
- 21 Study intensively (3,2)
- 24 Lose one's nerve (5)
- 25 Public-service corporation (7)
- 26 A sudden violent spontaneous occurrence (8)
- 27 Be in the same place or state for an extended period (4)

DOWN

- 1 Adversary (8)
- 2 Her Britannic Majesty's favourite breed of hound (5)
- 4 Promise solemnly and formally (6)
- 5 Talk pompously (5)
- 6 Malady (7)
- 7 Other than what is under consideration (4)
- 8 Treat with excessive indulgence (6)
- 13 Igneous rock with embedded crystals (8)
- 15 A spear with three prongs (7)
- 17 A verse line (6)
- 18 An immense cloud of gas (6)
- 20 Fire iron (5)
- 22 Grain to be or that has been ground (5)
- 23 A rounded, expansive, densely curled style (4)

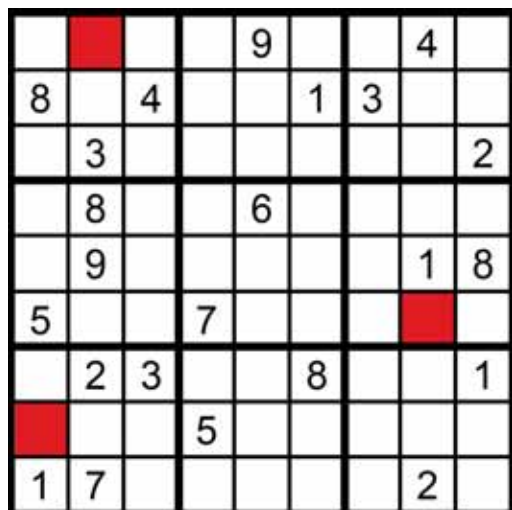
Last week's solution



CODEWORDS

Each letter has been replaced by the same number throughout the puzzle. Simply decide which letter is represented by which number and complete the puzzle. To start off we're given you the first three letters.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
				T		X						
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
											D	



SUDOKU

Easy

Enter numbers into the blank spaces so that each row, column and 3x3 box contains the numbers 1 to 9.

What's On

Paul Merton's Impro Chums

Paul Merton's Impro Chums return to the Uptown Geneva on Friday 9 May. Merton, one of the UK's best-loved and most intelligent performers, and his world renowned Impro Chums - Mike McShane, Lee Simpson, Richard Vranich and Suki Webster - will create a new and unique comedy show, based entirely on suggestions from the audience, their own finely honed improvisational skills and an almost manic compulsion to show off. Special guests who may also be joining them include Niall Ashdown, Andy Smart and Steve Steen.



observational and whippet-fast - and don't think for a moment that you're going to be subjected to a punchline during the evening. This comedy form is the absolute antithesis of anecdotal humour. Refreshingly, Paul Merton is also one of the few comedians from the UK who doesn't have to rely on continuously spewing out gratuitous profanity for a laugh. That said, probably best to leave the kids tucked up at home to watch something less adult. If you haven't had the pleasure of seeing Merton in action, watch him every Friday night at 22h00 on BBC 1's Have I Got News For You.

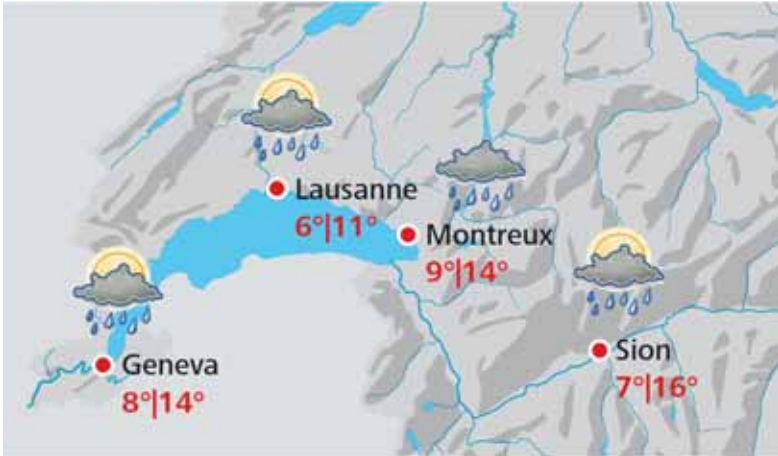
Merton, whose deadpan humour takes irony and extrapolation to the absurd to the level of an art form, has influenced British humour for more than two decades. He is dry, cutting,

Le News has a couple of tickets for readers for the Uptown performance. Please visit lenews.ch/competitions to apply.

Win!
Sudoku: Send us the three numbers in the shaded squares for a chance to win CHF 10.00. The first correct answer drawn next Monday will win. Email: prizes@lenews.ch
Codeword: Send us the three letters in the shaded squares for a chance to win CHF 10.00. The first correct answer drawn next Monday will win. Email: prizes@lenews.ch

Weather

SUISSE ROMANDE



	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
GENEVA	8 14°	8 13°	7 12°	7 15°
LAUSANNE	6 11°	5 8°	3 7°	5 11°



The weather report is sponsored by



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MUSÉE RATH, GENEVA
30 APRIL - 20 JULY 2014

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