

A PROMISING END OF A CHALLENGING YEAR 2020

Dear members, friends and your families, in other words: dear Nabolomistas

ONCE upon a time there was this Swiss woman working in Mexico who became enchanted with the wonderful forestry of the southern Mexican State of Chiapas. She was Gertrude Duby, born in Innertkirchen, at the foot of the famous Swiss Alps. Some of us know that she was, really, the first woman ecologist and environmentalist in our world.

Even less people, except those in her lifetime (1901-1993) such as “doña Beti” Mijangos Zenteno who was part of her life since 1952, are aware that Gertrude, worldwide known as Trudi, was really, really fond of Christmas time.

Trudi liked to hold *Posadas* in her home, la Casa del Jaguar or Na Bolom in maya, in San Cristobal de las Casas, Chiapas, where she took residence in 1950 with her new husband, the famous Danish archeologist Frans Blom for friends who will come all the way from Nahá, at the heart of the Lacandon jungle, to enjoy *piñatas* and Swiss delicacies such as chocolates made with real Chiapas's cacao and homemade cakes and fruits drinks and more, plus get from her small presents for adults and kids. Yes, local friends and other ones from various parts of Mexico and abroad, will have the privilege to spend joyful Christmas time with her, singing and dancing as well.

One may say that she preferred Christmas time so much that, coincidentally, it was during the Christmas of 1993 that Trudi passed away, on December 23, leaving behind a life rich in experiences and knowledge, a legacy for those who follow her footsteps protecting nature and spreading the words of ecological consciousness; that is what Na Bolom.ch try hard to do.

At one Christmas time, Trudi started the tradition to write a Newsletter to put in writing how her life had been during the year. Reading some of those “Cartas Informativas” (here were bilingual) give us facts about the real life in Mexico and elsewhere at the time, since she travelled to spread the message so dear to her: protect the environment, defend forests, prevent destruction of our biodiversity and privilege consuming local natural products over manufactured ones from afar.

Those are our words for introducing to you dear Nabolomistas, the news that our Swiss Cultural Association Na Bolom.ch is to share with you this end of the year.

2020 has positioned itself as the starting of a new era, that of the COVID-19 which no doubt, has come to stay for a good time.

We want to express our heartfelt condolences to all of you who have lost dear ones due to this pandemic.

And to you who have suffered from the contagious disease, the Executive Committee send you words of sympathy with our request to look well after yourselves and your families.

2020 is a year when our lives have been affected in so many ways by the coronavirus pandemic spreading all over the world and homes. So far, no country has been spared from “the big sickness” -as children call it. We all have suffered the effects of COVID-19 which made us find ways to re-organize our lives in a totally different environment and under an intense pressure with demands for social isolation and for some of you, incorporating children’s education at home, working from home and much more. At the same time, we can’t ignore the increased violence which resulted from it.

The sanitary contingency prevented us to meet personally and achieve the planned activities, nevertheless we took the time to reflect and set out new aims to look ahead once it is possible to re-start what is going to be, hopefully, a new and better way of life.

The first reaction to the pandemic has to be to re-orientate how we live in our world. Some of us think our Mother Earth is sending an alarm sign; biodiversity is decaying at the same time that globalization put everyone in closer contact.

What impress us the most is the veracity that Trudi had when she started to call for protecting our nature. Did we listen? apparently not. But now we can hear and change and be well aware of what is at stake: our survival.

On that note, let us come to business the way Trudi did in her famous Newsletters:

Na Bolom.ch was not idle without work. On social media, we continue to up-date, feed and maintain active contact specially with a new design of our webpage www.nabolom.ch in order to attract your likes and feedback. We introduced our *Ecologist Calendar* on the hope that you will find it interesting; we gave more and specific interest to news on Switzerland, Trudi’s birth-country and our headquarters, so you can enjoy wonderful pictures and opinions from members of our association that shows other ways to social distancing such as walks in the Alps; and, more importantly, we continue to be in contact with Trudi’s dear friends in Nahá.

Facebook and Twitter are there to improve our proximity, please interact sharing some “likes” to our posts or contributing with your comments, photos or reflections... COVID-19 gives us the time to be near, let us profit from it! Those of you wanting to share please contact: communications@nabolom.ch in a way that not only we *facebook* but also *facefood*!

Happy to share with you that the book “126 heartbeats for International Geneva” by Mr. Zahi Haddad, came out recently. This work was undertaken by the Swiss journalist to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the League of Nations. It includes testimonies from representatives of the international community in Geneva including, none other that

Na Bolom.ch thanks to the very interesting article on our association with information provided during an extensive interview to our President Nuria Font de Berlioz.

Part of an activity taken during coronavirus time by the Executive Committee is now on your mailboxes in the form of a questionnaire, we encourage you to fill it in to let us know what you are like and what you would like to get from Na Bolom.ch and each of its aims to help protect our global world. Your reaction to it will enrich our data base, no doubt.

More importantly, it will shed light on the kind of activities that will attract your participation and cooperation. We think ahead on what to offer you dear readers, apart of spreading knowledge about ecological principles, and so we have in storage some events related to specific dates in our *Ecological Calendar*.

To tempt you, let us mention some examples: on January 26 an expert will talk on World Environmental Education Day; February 13th is Park Ranger Day... we know one female ranger in Switzerland who does an incredible job; March 21, a friend of Trudi and one of those who were at the beginning of the Na Bolom era in the 50s in San Cristóbal de las Casas could come up to address International Day of the Forests. And we insist, our Lacandon friends are happy and ready to welcome us and to visit Trudi and Frans resting place in Naha as soon as “the big sickness” as my grandchildren call it, is put under control. Much more can come for the following trimesters of the challenging 2021 with our new platforms where we will interact at our own will. Look at our Na Bolom.ch calendar and give us input!

Last but not least, we inform you that as the end of 2020 we are 179 members in 12 countries: Switzerland, France, Mexico, United States, Canada, Sweden, Spain, Australia, Belgium, India, Nepal and Ecuador. We are becoming a family and families in time of joy or disarrays are united, so let us be!

New is the year 2021, new are the hopes and the aspirations, new is the resolution, new are the spirits and forever our warm wishes are for you. Have a promising and fulfilling new year.