

# THE <sup>endy</sup>W.A.M<sup>nd ike</sup> REPORT

## VOL. 2 NO.1 WINTER 1994

NOTICE: You will probably notice that this has been mailed from *California* and not *Switzerland*. We decided to have our newsletters printed and mailed out of Wyliffe's U.S headquarters because it is much less expensive than mailing from Switzerland where a single air-mail letter costs \$1.20! We are sorry that we can not put personal notes on the letters using this system. We want to be good stewards of the money God has entrusted to us and feel this is the best way to do that. We hope you will understand. We promise though to answer personally all letters from you. HINT! HINT!

Dear friends,

Greetings from Neuchâtel, Switzerland! We arrived on December 28th & were met at the Geneva airport by Michael's sister Debbie and her Pastor and his wife. This was super nice because they had a car and we had several large boxes and it would have been difficult lugging the boxes around. We had a desktop computer & printer in the boxes & praise God, everything worked when plugged in. We had hoped to be able to use our computer modem to link into Compuserve & send electronic mail (E-mail) to the States and Africa but found out that you have to have a Swiss approved modem which sells here for about 500 SF (approx. \$360 which is very expensive considering a modem in the States sells for around \$50.)

The first few days we did sightseeing with Debbie (she's been here a year and speaks French well) and took care of some housekeeping things like setting up a bank account and getting bus passes. We live about 10 minutes away from downtown Neuchâtel by bus. The bus system here is excellent, if a bus is supposed to be at our bus stop at 4:33 you can pretty much rest assured that it will be there on time, every time. We live in a small apartment (23'x16') which has a small kitchen, bathroom and bedroom/living room. We also have a small clothes washer in our kitchen which is quite a luxury!

In many ways everything is smaller here than what we are used to in the States i.e.. smaller cars, narrower streets, our refrigerator is smaller & the food is packaged in smaller quantities. A fair percentage of the people do not own cars and so when they grocery shop they will only get as much as they can comfortably carry in a few bags. So people tend to go grocery shopping every few days. Most of the supermarkets are owned by a company called Migros and the prices are printed directly on the package so that whether you are buying something at one of the large stores or just a corner co-op (like a convenience store), the prices are always the same. Of course the prices are quite high compared to the States and that takes some getting used to. The main Migros downtown is 3 stories high and you have people escalators and shopping cart escalators side by side to take you to the different floors!

Neuchâtel is really beautiful. It has a population of about 70,000 & lies between the Jura mountain range and Lake Neuchâtel. On a clear day, you can look south, across the lake and see the Alps. They remind Michael a lot of the mountains in Utah.



On New Years Eve we went to the church Debbie is attending for a party. It started at 8:00 and we stayed until 2:00 A.M. We ate lots of food, played charades, performed skits, ate desert and then played some more games. These have to be described. In the first game, all of the married men had to take off their shoes and roll up their pants and stand on a row of chairs. Then, one by one the wives were brought into the room blindfolded and had to figure out which man was their husband by feeling their legs. It was quite an ordeal for me because I am very ticklish. In fact, the way Wendy found me was by tickling all of the men's feet until she came to me (she recognized my laughing, I couldn't hold back!) The other game had about 15 people sitting around a table. A dice was tossed & if you rolled a 6 then you were given a French hat, linen napkin & knife & fork to use to open and eat a large chocolate bar. As soon as someone else rolled a 6 however, they took the chocolate from you and it continued on. The object of the game was to eat as much chocolate as possible before it was all gone. The game took about 20 minutes & everyone got a few bites, (some more than others). One teenager was especially funny, each time he was about to get a fork-full of chocolate, someone else would roll a six and he would have to pass it over. I think he got 1 piece of chocolate the whole game! When the game ended it was midnight & we all went around shaking hands and saying "Bonne Annee" (Happy New Year). We also experienced the Swiss embrace of 3 kisses to the cheeks. The pastor then gave a short sermon and we had a time of prayer with many of the people praying. We really had a fun time and are going to continue going to that church. It is relatively small (about 50 people) and the people take an active interest in the missionaries learning French i.e..having them over for dinner and helping them with conversation practice. A few of the people can speak some English, but most speak only French & perhaps Swiss German.

We have finished up our first week of classes & found it to be quite a challenge. Classes are from 9:00 A.M- 1:00 P.M. There are 10 students in our class; 4 Americans, 4 Swiss-Germans, a German and a Yugoslavian. After class we spend the afternoon studying and doing homework.

Please pray for us that we will learn the language well & make friends with people we can practice with. Also that we would be a positive witness in Neuchatel & would have opportunities to share our faith and get actively involved in the church. We thank you all so much for your prayers and financial support. You are a blessing to us! It has been so exciting seeing how God has provided for our needs and brought us to this place (we were approved to leave the States with 95% of our quota, a few churches are still considering us. Thanks for praying!) We look forward to getting to Africa in about 16 months and beginning language survey but we know it is a process, not only in learning the language but also in learning to trust God in all situations.

Well, that's about all the news for now. Please write, we would love to hear from you and we promise to answer each letter individually.

*For His Glory,  
Michael & Wendy*

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