

St. SomeTimes

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A high-angle, wide shot of a suspension bridge spanning a deep, forested valley. The bridge's deck is made of wooden planks, and its sides are lined with metal mesh railings. A man in a white t-shirt and dark shorts is lying face down on the bridge deck, his arms outstretched. The bridge is supported by two large, grey concrete pillars on either side. The valley below is filled with dense, dry-looking trees and shrubs, suggesting a late autumn or winter setting. The lighting is bright, casting shadows on the bridge deck.

Another Spring in Switzerland

Go Diving or Go See Friends...? Friends!



In Saudi

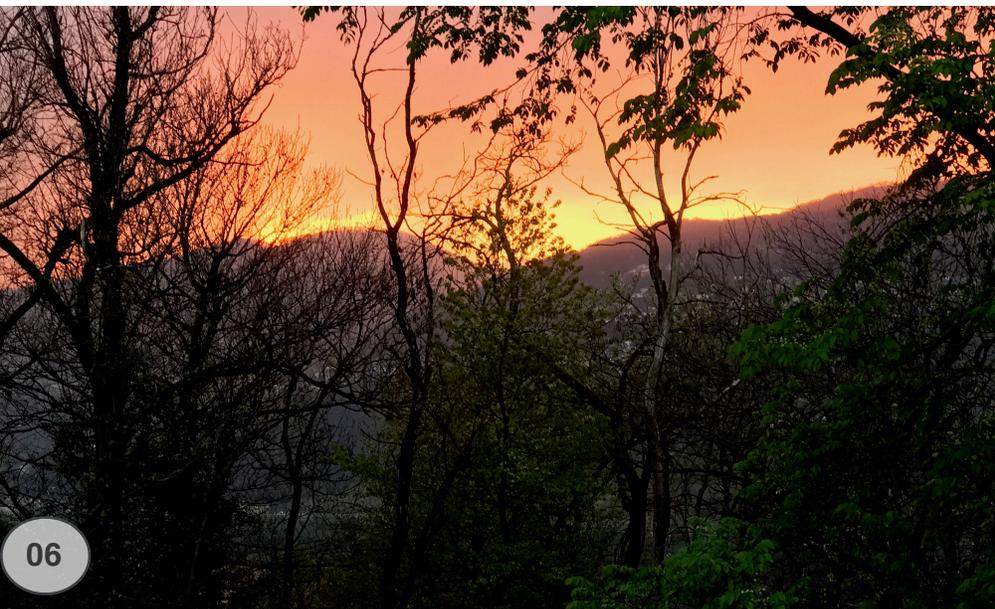
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FROM THE EDITOR

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Mike Olsen

Perhaps one of the only people I know that has more interesting stories in life than I do. Meet Mike Olsen. Ex-Navy, climber, counselor, father of two, and husband waiting for his wife to rejoin him in the region.

He's just one of those guys! This picture is taken while he and a 70 year old friend went for one of the tallest peaks in the Mountains of Saudi Arabia.

The first time they went up, they ran short on water. They went up half way the second time and deposited water for the second full-on attempt to the peak. This is real climbing as opposed to a stroll up a mountain path.

Mike was designated as my "mentor" for my incoming first few weeks on the "island" we call home. I hope he writes a book. His stories are absolutely unbelievable.



Owl Pellets were the most exciting science activity this year in 3rd.

When owls eat small rodents, they eat them whole. Just swallow them fur, bones, and all. The vomit the remains in a small ball similar to a cat coughing up a hair ball.

Part of our science curriculum in third grade is to take apart owl pellets. The students dig through the ball of fur and bones to recover the bones of a rodent. Once the students have collected all of the bones, they attempt to recreate the full skeleton of a rodent body. It all ties in with the study of our own skeleton.

The owl pellet activity is just one part of the FOSS science kits that our school orders. According to FOSS, the owl pellets are autoclaved before they are shipped to us.

The class was quietly working in pairs with a few EWWs and AAHHs.



Switzerland

Spring Break

Visiting friends again. Seeing my former school.

Spring break is the same at this school as every international school I have worked at. The staff and students go ALL OVER THE WORLD. This time, since I haven't found anyone to really travel with (besides the Judds, who just added a fourth child to their family) I decided to go back to Switzerland to relax. This was a great decision.

Retodd and Sarah invited a whole bunch of people over to their apartment for a Mexican party. Almost everyone that I could have wanted there, were there. It was so

great to see all of my friends again. The main exception was Laurent. He wasn't there.

It was the usual mixture of Italian and English being spoken. There were teachers, techies, and most of the people that I got to know over the past three years at TASIS.

Todd and Sarah were so kind to let me sleep on their couch. They made sure to have a lot of beer and pork available. We spent the weekend catching up on all of the gossip and all of my recent adventures.

Four highlights of this trip besides the usual Todd-Sarah-Pam-Heidi-and Andra: 1-I went to dinner with Todd and Sara and the entire Volpi family at the pizza restaurant next to Volpi's house. 2-I spent an entire afternoon with Laurent at his new Swiss mountain retreat talking about life over a few beers. 3-Andra's father came to visit Switzerland so we got to meet again. 4-Several of us went to the Tibetan Bridge (above) - a suspension bridge in the Swiss Alps.



I really miss the Swiss Alps, the fresh air, the weekends in Europe, the friendships.



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The Tibetan Bridge

The 270 m long Tibetan bridge built by the Foundation Curzútt-S. Barnard allows the passage of the rugged valley that separates the communities of Sementina and Monte Carasso, two towns located in front of Bellinzona. The bridge joins the stone made village of Curzútt to the hiking path of “Via delle Vigne”, allowing you to make excursions in an area characterized by a landscape rich in cultural heritages.

Anchored at a height of 696 m, the bridge rises 130 m above the ground. The walkway, large approximately one meter, is made of larch wood. Crossing it is a

unique experience that represents a true challenge. The safety measures guarantee a risk-free approach and make it a top-attractions either for young intrepid or adventurous families.

The trip started with a half hour car ride a little past Monte Tamaro and included an 8 person gondola ride up the mountain. We hiked an hour, walked across the bridge, hiked back and met Sandra. Then we sat at the mountain restaurant for a few drinks, cheese and bread. After a gondola descent, I fell into the couch and killed Halo aliens with Todd for a few hours.

Monte Carasso   40 min

Mött der Aqua

S. Bernardo 	15 min	Corte di Sotto Curzütt 598 m
Pientina 	1 h 30 min	
Mornera  	2 h 20 min	
Cap. Albagno UTOE 	4 h 05 min	
Ponte Tibetano  Carasc	1 h	
San Defendente 	1 h 45 min	
Sementina 	2 h 15 min	







Pork and Beer

You know, until someone says you cannot have something, you don't necessarily miss it. That's pork for me. I love bacon and I love beer, but it's just not part of the life in Saudi. It's "haram" - forbidden. That's not to say I don't have the occasional drink or pork treat. It's just not easy to come by.

Life goes on and I just have to go on vacation for pork or alcohol to enter my life again. Bahrain is close by. I sneak over for a weekend. Beyond that, it's all about the vacations. That's what allows me to stay sane in such a conservative Muslim country. It's the vacations like this one that allow me to step back into reality.

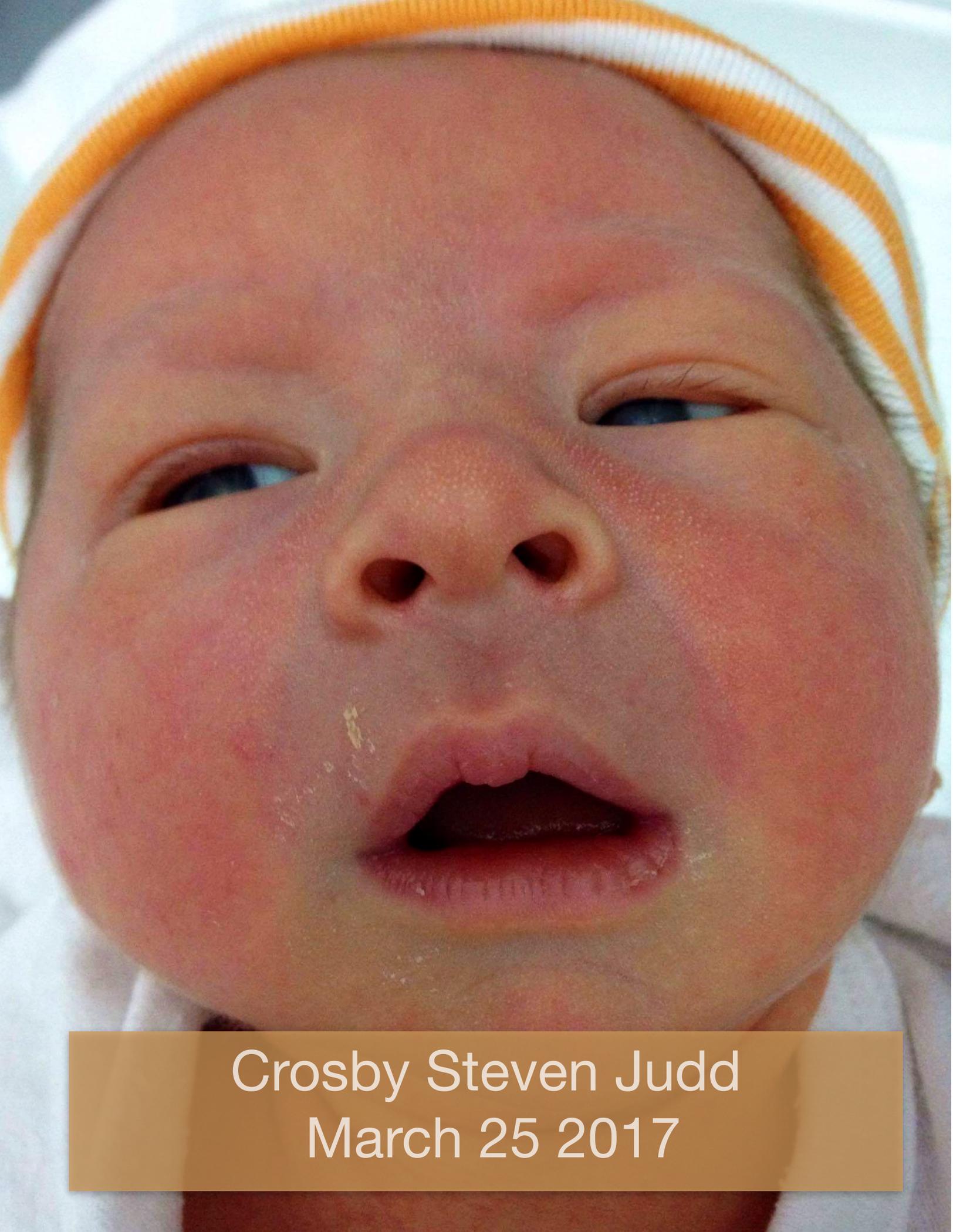
Yes, I stepped into Switzerland for a weekend back in November. That was such a quick there and back that it seemed more like a dream than a weekend. This trip was different. I got to see my former students. I dropped in on them while they were in classes and surprised them. Even though I felt right at home, it felt out of place at the same time. This school doesn't change!

I especially enjoyed hearing that Kent and Tracy are leaving TASIS. Kent will be the superintendent at a small private school outside of Miami. It isn't a bilingual school, but it might go that way. Kent and I spent two recess periods watching kids and talking about his future. It's so exciting. They deserve it.

The entire trip wound up being exquisite. Visiting a former school and staying with former colleagues was a very bizarre feeling I've rarely felt. Life goes on.

Yummy!

Yummy¹⁰⁰



Crosby Steven Judd
March 25 2017