



Isidor



A Donkey Story

as related by

Jolanda Bassi



Published by Isidor Publishing,
7 Emily Street, Monticello, New York 12701
E-mail: info@isidorpublishing.com
Photographs by Hans Enzman
Drawings by Ferdinand Bassi
Edited by Ely White: languagebydesign@hotmail.com
Layout & design: Tejasa Dawson: help@ah-tejasa.com

Copyright © 2016 by Isidor Publishing, all rights reserved
Printed in the United States of America
ISBN 0-9766167-0-X

December 6th, don't miss it



December 6th is the day when Santa Claus visits Swiss children. He is regally dressed, slim, and wears a high-pointed, gold-trimmed hat! He - and his helper Schmutzli all dressed in black, toting a big sack - visit each house after dark. Samichlaus (Santa in Swiss-German) review how the children behaved last year and remind each one to be caring and helpful, so that on the eve of December 24th, everyone can receive the "surprise" gift of lights, peace and joy with the celebration of the birth of a special child. Soon Santa empties the big bag, cheerfully rolling out tangerines, nuts and chocolates for the children all over the floor. Later, they stomp noisily away to the next house.

The Story

On December 6th, 1999 I drove from Lenzerheide in Kanton Graubünden, in der Schweiz (as Switzerland is called there), to the city of Zürich, to fly back home to New York. On the way I heard this story of a donkey named **Isidor**, the best story of public servants, bureaucrats, politicians and the voting public. I adapted **Isidor's** story while flying over Switzerland's blue lakes, snow-capped mountains, green valleys and picturesque towns. The story builds on fun vacation memories depicting Swiss idiosyncrasies, its politics, and its many fountains for horses and tourists alike. No bottled water needed there: mountain water is always cool, fresh, and full of minerals.

When I spoke to the story-teller she told me that this story is true indeed. **Isidor** the donkey belongs to her sister! Many thanks for allowing me to share **Isidor's** story with everyone.

Isidor's Face

The donkey drawings are by my brother Ferdinand Bassi, who had humor and attitude beyond the ordinary. When he heard the story of **Isidor** for the first time, he called from Switzerland across the ocean to New York and roared out loud in laughter "Hee-Haw." While he did so he made these donkey drawings with lively personalities all their own - he gave **Isidor** a face to remember. The smiles of the reader will be a long-lasting tribute to his *joie de vivre*!

Yyaa-Yyaa... yes in Swiss EEH-HAA... hi in donkey voice Hee-Haw... hallo in donkey English!



Hotel Danis, Lenzerheide

Yes, yes, yes

Isidor

is a New Winter Holiday Story!

It's a joy for children to **read**,
a chuckle for adults as they say out loud "**Hee-Haw.**"

Sure to teach **geography** with this true story
as it happened in **Switzerland**.

In timeless **history**, to repeat during **holiday time**,
at home or on **vacation**.

During this **tale of love and politics**,
best of all there is **no violence** here.

Or enjoy **dialect** and **language** differences
for a holiday play "**Hee-Haw.**"

Read this **story** over and over to a child
for the **love** of a favorite **donkey!**



Please say hallo to **Isidor**... "**Hee-Haw.**"



Graubünden



Haus Tano, where I was born

Isidor part one

Once upon a time...

Just before the year Y2K-[2000]



Strange things were happening the world over...

And - so it was December 6th, 1999 when I heard this - the best story of a donkey.

The story tells how this donkey became the proudest public servant in the town of Messerlin, Solothurn, near Basel Land in Switzerland and it tells you how he fell in love with his ladylove.

Would you know one donkey from another?

In Switzerland some people think that donkeys are stubborn, yet that is not true.

Donkeys have a great sense of timing and a great deal of self determination.

All they ask of their keeper is that he or she gently tells them what is expected of them.





View of Obervaz with its famous blue air

Donkeys like to do the same thing over and over,
and do it with great strength.

If the owner of a donkey is kind and patient,
then the donkey will do everything possible to please his keeper.

But, you know, so many people just don't know that,
and so donkeys are looked down upon as beasts
to carry big burdens, good for little else.

Do you think that to be fair?

Would you know how to train a donkey?

Some people think of public servants
as sort of mindless bureaucrats
who do the same thing over and over.

Yet they (the bureaucrats) also have great determination,
and try to be kind and patient, doing everything possible
to please their "keepers" - the politicians.

However, this sometimes upsets the public
because the bureaucrats can be very stubborn,
doing only as they are told and nothing else.

Sort of, stubborn like a donkey, don't you think?





Farmhouses with their characteristic roofs

Now, in Switzerland
there is a state called Solothurn.
It is not common to see a donkey there,
and never a donkey like **Isidor**.

There in Solothurn is Messerlin,
a small community
with public servants and bureaucrats
like every other place in the world,
and they also have farmyards
where horses are kept.

In Messerlin, some years ago,
Mrs. Brändlimeier brought home a donkey
and she called him **Isidor**.

Mrs. Brändlimeier found out,
while **Isidor** was still very young,
that he liked children, really liked children,
and that he was most happy when children were near.

Hee-Haw... Hee-Haw... Hee-Haw...

For years, his keeper Mrs. Brändlimeier
was pleased that her donkey,
remember, his name is **Isidor**,
was so happy to be with children,
that she took him wherever children go.





Is this the Brändlimeier farm?

She took him with a *Lampion* to the August 1st parades for the national festivities, when the Swiss build bonfires high on mountain tops, as they have celebrated their Independence Day ever since the year 1293.

A lampion is a paper lantern with a lit candle inside, hanging from a stick, and is carried by small children.



For these festivities, and during voting time, some Swiss wear traditional clothing with fancy embroidery, while the men in Appenzell wear swords and daggers to protect the public from harm and encourage them to respect the voting law.

Mrs. Brändlimeier took **Isidor** to harvest festivals for children to go on hay rides, and she invited them to come near to pet **Isidor**.

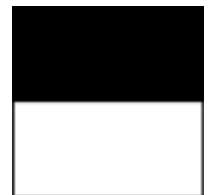
She answered every last question about **Isidor** and other donkeys just like him. When she did not know the answer to a question, all you had to do was ask **Isidor** and he answered all the questions in donkey speech: "**Hee-Haw... Hee-Haw!**"

Can YOU sound like a donkey? Practice a little while until you can make donkey sounds just like **Isidor**.

It goes like this: "**Hee-Haw!**"

Or it goes like this: "**Hee-Haw... Hee-Haw!**"

Or even like this: "**Hee-Haw... Hee-Haw... Hee-Haw!**"



Fribourg



Swiss people love to beautify their houses with flowers

Soon, **Isidor** became so popular that he was invited to school to visit the children every year to explain the letters of his name. *Esel* is high German for donkey, but "**Isidor**" is his name. (*Esel* is pronounced *ayzel*.)

Sometimes Swiss people use 'dumma Esel' for when they meet someone who will not listen to reason.

The Swiss also add 'li' to everything they hold dear, as in *Eseli* or **Isidorli**. What would your name sound like with 'li' (pronounced *lee*) added on?

*The Swiss use hundreds of dialects.
In every valley, they speak a little differently.
In Kanton Valais they speak so differently
that other Swiss can hardly understand them.*

When a donkey pushes against his front legs and doesn't budge they call him or her a 'stöerrischa Esel,' (stubborn mule).



Sometimes, people also stubbornly 'dig in' instead 'giving in' when that would be the better way!

But, no matter the many nicknames the Swiss use, **Isidor** definitely knew that it is not nice to call people bad names, and so he never did.

As the years went by **Isidor** became the favorite donkey of all the children in Messerlin.





An ancient Swiss hero stands guard in Churwalden.

More and more horses came to live in Messerlin,
and you know whenever something good happens any place in the world,
the politicians think of ways for the public to pay taxes.

Later they tell the public servants, to collect the tax,
no matter what anyone thinks of it.

Well, the town politicians decided on a new tax in Messerlin,
Solothurn, near Basel Land, in der Schweiz.

They sent out a **horse** tax bill for 43 Swiss francs and 50 cents
to the home of **Isidor** - the donkey.

*Helvetians were the earliest inhabitants of Switzerland.
CH stands for Confederation Helvetica.*

Just what would you expect of bureaucrats?
They did not care about the difference
between a donkey and a horse!

Now, YOU know
a donkey makes sounds
by breathing air in on the **"Hee"**
and breathing air out on the **"Haw."**

AND, you know a donkey speaks like a donkey:
"Hee-Haw... Hee-Haw..."





A display of puppets outside a historical building:
is this a comment about politicians?

Did you ever hear a horse sound like a donkey?

Can you sound like a horse? "Neeighhhh! Neeighhhh!"

And now bray like a donkey: "Hee-Haw... Hee-Haw..."

Tell me, do they sound alike? Not in any way, not even close!

"Hee-Haw... Hee-Haw... Hee-Haw..."

But the bureaucrats, who can be as stubborn as a donkey,
will carry on and on about rules and regulations.

They will tell you over and over
the way things are in their opinion.

And opinions they have!

Ask anybody; just ask anybody!

All they wanted,
was to collect the horse tax
for **Isidor!**



*In America taxes have to be paid by April 15th.
I am always glad when I pay mine just in time.*

Well! The moment Mrs. Brändlimeier, the owner of **Isidor**,
opened the bill for the horse tax, she called the village officials.

She told them, "**Isidor** is no horse!
He does not look like a horse, or sound like a horse.
Furthermore did you ever see a horse go to school
and help with the lessons of his name?"





This steep hayfield is one of the few places in Switzerland where electric wires are not underground

But, in typical bureaucratic fashion, the hard working and dependable public servants said:

"**I**sidor has four legs and so he is a horse, almost, and you have to pay the horse tax as if he was a horse!!!!!!!!!"

With this, Mrs. Brändlimeier became extremely upset. She thought: "A donkey is a donkey, and a horse tax is supposed to be for horses!"

Furthermore, she took care of him: she fed her donkey **I**sidor every day, and she gave him a warm place in winter, and cool, wonderful, fresh mountain water in summer.



She also thought that, since she took **I**sidor every place children are so they could enjoy him, she was doing enough for her community. Indeed, she should not have to pay this horse tax for her donkey!

It would have been different if it was a donkey tax, but by now, you know about the stubborn bureaucrats, right?

They would not listen. and they said, "The tax has to be paid, and soon!"

In America the donkey is the icon for the Democratic Party.





Lenzerhorn (9,534 feet high) showing the tree line underneath ancient erosion

This was just not right in the eyes of Mrs. Brändlimeier. She shook her head and went out into the yard to tell **Isidor** all that just happened.

He answered with "**Hee-Haw**" as he does every day when she goes to say hallo.

Except, on that day he seemed to make even more donkey sounds than ever!

Clearly **Isidor** did not sound like a horse, and he said so proudly with his head up high: "**Hee-Haw... Hee-Haw..!**"

As soon as Mrs. Brändlimeier heard that wonderful donkey voice, she knew what she had to do.

No matter what work she had to put aside, she would take **Isidor's** scrap book and his photo album, along with a big pad of paper, and go to every place in town where people go! Yes indeed!

*In America the elephant is the icon
for the Republican Party.*





The townspeople of Gruyere, a typical small Swiss town

First, she went to the children outside of school where she asked them, "Do you think a donkey is a horse?"

Naturally, all the children said: "NO!"

"Well then," she said, "do you think it is proper for me to pay a horse tax for Isidor?"

And again the children said: "NO!"

Soon, the children made comparison sounds between what they knew was a horse voice and what they knew was donkey voice. Soon, they imitated the walk of a horse and the walk of a donkey.

They made comparisons in Basel dialect, and in proper Hochdeutsch, while some children even spoke French.

Imagine: Children who speak Romansh at home learn Swiss-German dialect from their friends in kindergarten, and Hochdeutsch when they start school. In seventh grade they study French and later, they learn Italian and English.

It was then that Mrs. Brändlimeier asked the children to sign her petition against her having to pay a horse tax for Isidor!

Soon the adults saw what was going on, and they signed the petition, too!





The atelier of Swiss artist Friedrich Traffelet in Berne

All in all, more than 3,000 people
in the little town of Messerlin signed the petition.

Along with them, some very upstanding bureaucrats,
properly well meaning public servants and some steadfast
politicians signed the petition too!

But, just like everywhere else,
the public knew that bureaucrats say:
"The politicians tell us what to do
and we have to do it,
even if we don't like it."

And so it was with this horse tax for a donkey!

Some people call that loyalty
while others just shake their head.

Now, you know there are also burros, mules and ponies,
but they are something else again.

And here we are not talking about moose or reindeer,
broncos, or spitting camels, either.



***Swiss women could not vote
until the men in Kanton Appenzell
voted to grant them the right to vote in 1972.
The next year the Swiss elected
their first woman president.***





A typical *Gemeindehaus* (Town Hall)

When bureaucrats behave stubbornly as can be, going along with the rules and ways the politicians tell them to go, some people call them stubborn.

Just as a stubborn donkey behaves...
the bureaucrats said, when they saw the petition:
"We have nothing to do with this rule.
You have to go and see the politicians about this
or pay this horse tax and do it now!"

And so,
go to see the town fathers and town mothers
Mrs.Brändlimeier did!



*The Swiss government uses four official languages:
in the north, German; in the west, French;
in the south, Italian; and in the east, Romansch.*

Now, when the politicians heard
what was going on with this donkey **Isidor** and saw
how so many people signed the petition
outside of their *Gemeindehaus* (Town Hall),
they started to wonder about it themselves.

Is a donkey a horse?
Or is a donkey very different from a horse?



Appenzell
Innerrhoden



Swiss humor - talking heads at the "Rat"(Council) House

Did you ever see a horse stand like a donkey
when it did not want to go forward?

Did you ever see a donkey as big as a horse?
And the voice, is it even close?

Or did you ever see a donkey's loooong ears?
Would a rabbit be a donkey
just because a rabbit has long ears?

Soon, they laughed and thought:
"Who else but politicians could not see the difference!"

So the Swiss politicians huddled together and talked and talked
as they do endlessly.

But in the end, they still said:
"Isidor has four legs, and so
we say he is a horse,
and Mrs. Brändlimeier has to pay
the horse tax!"

Can you understand why
the Swiss use the word "Esel"
for those who irritate them?

The National Council of Switzerland
German: Schweizer National Rat
French: Conseil National
Italian: Consiglio Nazionale
Romansh: Cussegl Naziunal





Wouldn't you like to visit beautiful Lake Valbella?

But you know, politicians never want to make anyone upset, because they want to be liked by everyone, in the same way everybody liked **Isidor** the donkey!

Is it possible they became a little jealous when they saw how many people signed the petition and how many children wrote things like:

"**Isidor** has taught me so much about being a donkey, and surely I know how to spell *E s e l*."

How do you spell it?



In Italian, it's asino!

In German it's Esel (as you know),

In French, the word for "donkey" is âne.

and in Rumansch it's asen.

BUT, as Mrs. Brändlimeier arrived at the Town Hall, she did not even have to make a long speech (although she had one prepared **YOU** can be sure).

She was going to say how for years she gave up staying home (where it was warm and cozy), to visit the children everywhere in town.

She was going to tell them how the children liked **Isidor**, the Esel, AND how she was sorry it had come to this.



Geneva



In Switzerland, you can find flowers everywhere,
even right next to a glacier

She might have explained that a donkey sometimes is called *Mul-Esel* (big mouth) or jack, but never a HORSE!

Can you think of things YOU could have said to them?

She was also going to point out how every person in town (who voted and elected the politicians) had agreed with her that her donkey **Isidor** was a great asset to her town, to all the children, and even to the politicians, because **Isidor** often showed up at their political rallies.

AND, she was going to tell them, the children and their parents surely would remember how they (the politicians) treated **Isidor** when it was time to vote.

They would remember this horse tax, no matter how old they would get, and surely they did not want **Isidor** the donkey to have to pay a horse tax!

She was going to argue that instead of making **Isidor (Hee-Haw)** into a horse (**Neeighhhh**) the politicians should come up with a better plan.



Do you know that Hannibal's elephants traveled over the Swiss Alps to help in ancient warfare?





The Parliament House of Switzerland
houses the Federal Assembly and Council

But it was a good day in Government that day.
The Messerlin Town President told his committee
to vote on some new idea about this donkey, **Isidor**.

AND, he said, they did not want any problems with the voting public
because of a *Gump-Esel*, (meaning "jumping-donkey,"
which is a name the Swiss use for people
who jump from one thing to another).

Now remember,
the Messerlin politicians were wondering
how this situation would end.

Most of the townspeople had signed
the petition against the tax for **Isidor**,
and the same people also voted for the town politicians.
The politicians did not want any problems with the Swiss citizens,
because when it comes to voting the Swiss are very serious!

They have been voting in every town, sometimes every two weeks
in their Direct Democracy for over 700 years.
The people vote politicians in and they vote politicians out!



*In the millennium year of Y2K [2000]
the American presidential votes cast in Florida
were so hard to read that eventually,
the Supreme Court in Washington
chose the new president.*





Exploring "Swissminiatur" in Melide

The Swiss politicians knew that in a democracy, people mostly follow the will of the majority even if this is not always the way all people like it.

Every once in a while no matter what, no matter how anyone likes it, some people fight for the rights of just a few people and win the support they deserve.

Then their voices and ideas get agreed to.

Sometimes the people are bigger than their government.



Did you ever win by voting for something in your family or in your country?

And now these politicians had to vote on the matter of **Isidor**.

In this case, the majority of the politicians in the town government wanted a horse tax, and so they voted that **Isidor** had to pay the tax, no matter what!!!

But, they were also tricky, (oops! I meant to say, smart politicians, sort of 'smart as a fox') and they came up with a solution.

*What is it with donkeys, elephants and politics?
Do you think there should be
an American political party
with a giraffe as an icon?*





Of course, gondolas are found on many mountain peaks,
and they have the best views!

Because all of them wanted to be reelected,
they could not offend the voting citizens
and besides, they wanted **Isidor** at all their parades!

To solve the problem, the politicians voted on the suggestion
that instead of making changes in the tax laws,
they would in turn **HIRE Isidor** as a public servant,
and pay him exactly the same amount as the horse tax!

Do you remember that it was exactly
43.50 Swiss Francs?

And when Mrs. Brändlimeier showed up
at the Town Hall
they told her of the new decision,
and then they took a photograph.



When Mrs. Brändlimeier heard this, she was most happy,
since after all, **Isidor** had been serving his community for years
in ways hardly any politician ever had.

AND when she told **Isidor** about it, he agreed by voting
with a loud donkey "**Hee-Haw**" so that everyone would know that
he became Messerlin's proudest taxpaying public service employee!

*Will they have an elephant tax next?
Just wait, they will think of it
as soon as we talk about it.*





At the top of the mountain, underneath the gondolas,
is a friendly playground

After the news was told in the local paper, what was even better was that the children, the parents, the school teachers, the bureaucrats and the politicians all were proud to have such a loyal Goodwill Ambassador in their community.

Everybody was most happy with this turn of events, even though, **Isidor** sometimes was just a little too loud with his **Hee-Haws**.

Soon, people made jokes about this.

Did you ever see donkey jokes in your newspapers? Look for them -- some are really funny.

The End of part one
but NOT the end of **Isidor**





Deep in the valleys of Ticino

Dedications



*To all who learned to read
and vote for the right things in life*



*My father's beautiful
paintings inspire me
every day to reach out
and create things
once thought impossible*



*My Mom taught me
how to sew and persevere
by her determination each day
to hug life itself and
reach out for all it offers*



And now I will teach you how to sew a donkey on

www.isidorpublishing.com



Uri



Swiss kids start playing folk music at a young age

Isidor

part two

During the winter holidays...

Just before the new year...

The parents and children were planning a holiday pageant where the people would attend, sing songs, and share in the holiday celebrations together.

The pageant needed a donkey for the holiday play and **Isidor** was elected to be that donkey.

But then, one mother said,
"I am sorry, but I don't think **Isidor**
can be quiet long enough.
You know, he likes to greet children
with his loud **Hee-Haw... Hee-Haw**
every time he sees them.
Isidor just likes children too much!"



Everybody agreed saying "Yyaa-Yyaa"
sounding nearly like a donkey saying yes-yes.



Zug



Such a cute donkey and his little cart!
Did you ever see one?

The lady who spoke up had a solution.
She offered to make a stuffed donkey to look just like **Isidor**.

Everybody agreed with this,
and so she set out to make one.

At first when the children saw
the gray fabric cutout, they said,
"This donkey looks more like an elephant."
Later, when the donkey was stuffed, painted
and had a tail, it looked as good as **Isidor**.

The stuffed donkey was just a little smaller
to better fit into the festival play
in which some of the children and adults
were going to perform.

When it was time to bring the stuffed donkey to the play,
the children put it on a cart, and all walked towards the school.

The children gathered around the stuffed donkey,
as they led the wagon through their town's wintery streets.

Excitedly, they were all talking at once about this stuffed donkey.
They admired the job so well done,
wondering how it was possible
to make this stuffed donkey look so good
- almost like **Isidor**!



St. Gallen



Can you imagine the two donkey carts meeting on a street corner?

As it so happened, at the same time, Mrs. Brändlimeier also walked **Isidor** to the pageant so the children could ride in his sled.

She had a camera to take pictures so she could later show them to **Isidor's** employers.

She also wanted to send some photos to the newspaper so all could enjoy.

As **Isidor** came near the corner of the street, he heard the children and, anticipating seeing them, he made as much noise as he usually did:

"**Hee-Haw...Hee-Haw...Hee-Haw**"

When the children heard him, they mimicked him:

"**Hee-Haw...Hee-Haw**"

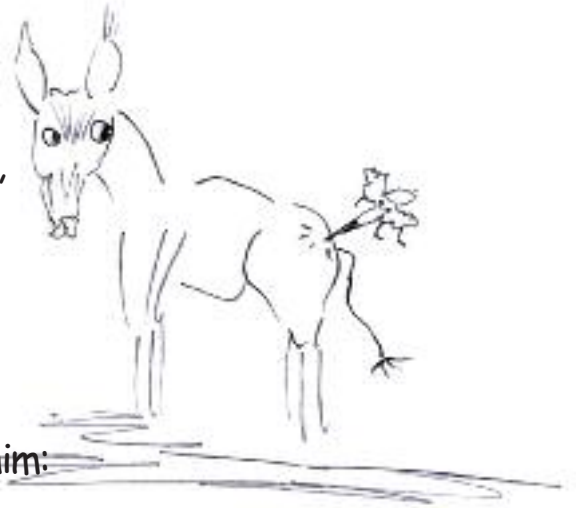
Some sounded good, some sounded almost better than **Isidor**.

Now, YOU should have been there when **Isidor** turned the corner and saw the children with the stuffed donkey!

Isidor STOPPED in his tracks the way only a donkey does.

He shook himself and *sloooowly* opened his eyes ever sooo large. He looked soooo surprised as if he had been shot by the arrow of Cupid.

Was HE seeing the BEST thing EVER in his LIFE?!





Jungfrauoch railway station
is the highest in Europe

Isidor was instantly "*verknallt*" as the Swiss would say.
He had instantly fallen in love with the stuffed donkey!
AND with that he "*Hee-Hawed*" over and over, and over again!

Isidor only stopped long enough to listen for a return
"*Hee-Haw...Hee-Haw*" from his lady love.

He waited for her to say,
"*Hee-Haw... Hee-Haw... Hallo!*"

When the children saw
that **Isidor** had fallen in love,
they made donkey calls themselves:
"*Hee-Haw... Hee-Haw,*"
so it sounded like the stuffed donkey answered.

By now,
Isidor really wanted to meet this donkey
on the cart going to the play,
and he pulled Mrs. Brändlimeier along with him,
trotting ever-so fast over to his new-found love on a donkey cart.

YOU should have been there!

You should have been there to see the ruckus the children made,
the noises and the "*Hee-Haw...Hee-Hawing,*"
the pointing towards **Isidor**
and towards the slightly smaller version of himself,
so wonderfully crafted for the holiday play.



Valais



The Swiss find the uniquely American teepee a practical temporary shelter for local food stalls

All along the way, people stopped and stared to look at the wonder of **Isidor**, and the happiness of the children, because who in the world does not like to see someone in love?

And then again, who would have expected that **Isidor** would fall in love with a stuffed donkey! All felt much Joy.

Could it have been because **Isidor** was proud to be a loyal public servant?

Or that he was the donkey ever-so-happy when children were near?

Or was he ever so happy because he was dear to the hearts of all his public and the children in the town of Messerlin, Solothurn, near Basel Land, Switzerland, in the center of Europe?

As far as **Isidor** was concerned, *this* was the middle of HIS universe.



The End of part two
but NOT the end of **Isidor**





Have you ever been to Switzerland?

Isidor and you

If ever you want to go to Switzerland you can see **Isidor** and other donkeys just like him contentedly eating fresh green grass and occasionally calling out a greeting to all who are near. Would you like to go to a farm or stand on a mountaintop and give Isidor a big "Hee-Haw... Hee-Haw?" Try it, you will find it makes you happy every time you stretch your chin really high and say out loud "Hee-Haw... Hee-Haw." Can you hear **Isidor** answer you like an echo?

But for tomorrow, maybe YOU write the next story? And when you are finished please send it by email to info@isidorpublishing.com and see what happens.

And someday, before you go on a vacation to Switzerland, make your vacation perfect and send us an email first.

For the stuff left on the editors' floor, and for pictures, Swiss music and more about **Isidor**, and to see how to sew a donkey, an elephant, or a giraffe, click on the interactive, kid-friendly website www.IsidorPublishing.com.

And so now, enjoy your future life with a story about voting for donkeys you will never forget no matter where you live. Here at the birth of the third Millennium (some called it Y2K, when strange things were happening all over the world) **Isidor** invites YOU to make him your new friend and wishes everyone:

A Happy New Year!... Or as the Swiss would say:

A Guet's Neü's und rutsch guet übera!

Das Ende ... The End

The photos

Jolanda asked me, the photographer, whether I would contribute a short afterword to this book. Intrigued by the harmless story, totally clear of violence and mischief, just a plain ridiculous event, entertaining more smiling faces as the story is getting on, I could not resist. Why?

I have children of my own, grown up by now, married and involved in raising their own four cute, lively little boys. The same procedure follows day by day, a good-night story sailing them away to the next morning. But, too often the illustrations are for the children only, tiring the reader, almost sending them to sleep instead. That's where Jolanda's idea comes to grip.

The accompanying photos could equally well entertain the reader, and might even lead to more realism in a world of orderliness and agreeable surroundings, good examples with a mix of modest sophistication. Sooner or later children might get more and more interested in the pictures too, thus keeping the story alive beyond the early childhood.

This may explain, why a photographer and not a draftsman had been asked to support the story teller. Therefore, why not change to more plain healthy realism with a book for children that might show its quality by intriguing in their own way the parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles and others interested in childcare.

Hans Enzman - (Grandpa Hans)
Bolligen, near Bern, Switzerland