

THE MARTIN FAMILY

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# SWITZERLAND

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Dear Reader,

I hope that you are well and happy as the steady march of time inevitably causes us all to move deeper into the 21st century.

In the last letter, I indicated that Nazy had purchased an Apple TV. Facing an installation quandary, I responded with my customary aplomb:

“This device is not an Apple™ product,” I began.

“I got it at the Apple store, Dan,” Nazy replied.

“Nevertheless, it doesn’t begin with the letter ‘i.’”

“Dan..”

“Think about it: iPhone, iPad, iMac. If this was genuine, it would be the iTV.”

“Are you saying that you don’t know how to connect it?”

“Perish the thought, my dear. I am simply noting that the Apple TV is not a TV.”

“Of course not..”

“It’s a little box..”

“... that lets you see photos and play music from a Macbook Pro. Shahriar has one and it works really well.”

“Really well? It wouldn’t display **my** photos.”

“Are you going to install the Apple TV?”

“Of course!” I replied. “Darius!” I called. “I need your help.”

Naturally, the cable that came with the iTV didn’t work with our Samsung TV. Darius and I bought and installed a HDMI to AVI cable. The Apple TV jumped into action. **But** as we were watching, the internet connection vanished. and could not be restored. Nazy was naturally understanding: “Why did you break it, Dan?”

Darius and I got a free replacement Apple TV at the Apple Store. (Note to Nazy: “I did not break it.”) We reinstalled everything, the photo collection sprang to life, **but**,,,

“The pictures are fine, Dad,” Darius explained after we, eh, after he had made the proper connections. “But there is no audio.”

Nazy arrived as we were considered the next step. “Still can’t get it to work?” She asked.

As we scratched our heads, Mitra initiated a Google search.

“The Apple TV requires a special optical to audio cable when used with Samsung TVs, Dad. I think you need another new cable,” Mitra explained.

“*Optical to Audio cable?*” I thought. “*That’s dumb: like inserting a hearing aid onto your taste buds.*”

The situation was more complicated: an optical to audio cable does not exist. We had to buy an optical cable, a converter and an audio cable. We ended up spending more on cables than Nazy spent for the device. But, I triumphantly claimed victory. Nazy was ‘thrilled’.

“Working, Dan? I didn’t know we’d have to listen to *your* iTunes music collection. And I don’t like the screen saver selection - it’s totally inappropriate.”

“Don’t worry, Mom,” Darius interrupted. “I can fix it for you.”

“*Great, just great.*” I thought.

“It’s a good thing Darius is here,” Nazy continued. “He’ll get it done correctly. I can’t understand your problem, Dan. Shahriar didn’t have trouble when he installed his Apple TV.”

“*Hurumphh,*” I thought. “We don’t know whether Shahriar had trouble,” I explained. “We were not there. And now that our Apple TV is working, no one will know that we had trouble.”

“Of course they’ll know Dan. You’ll write about it the weekly letter.”

“*Gasp!*” I thought.

Author interrupt

### **PR update: Dan had no problems whatsoever when he installed the Apple TV.**

The family did not have unlimited time to enjoy the Apple TV. Melika was the first to leave (Jan 29). Mitra and Stefan were booked for a flight the following day, but there was a challenge at the airport. Having forgotten his green **card**, Stefan needed a note from the American Embassy. Accordingly, we drove to Bern where he handled the details. This development meant that Mitra left alone and Stefan’s departure was delayed until New Year’s Day.

To celebrate the new year. Darius, Nazy and I went to a movie (more later). We planned to finish the day by viewing the fireworks. That left a small gap.

“.. and,” I explained. “I read about a wonderful organ concert that finishes just in time for us to watch the fireworks.”



“Where is this concert?” Nazy inquired.

“It’s at the Fraumunster; it has the biggest pipe organ in Europe.”



I was (gasp!) wrong. The recital was at the Grossmunster. When the movie ended (at 10:30), Stefan joined us. We had a quick bratwurst (photo on previous page) and then walked to the Grossmunster - Charlemagne’s Cathedral. They wouldn’t let us in when we arrived at 10:48. A passerby directed us to a ‘similar concert’ at the Pieterkirk. [←]

“Thanks,” I replied. “*We’re really lucky,*” I thought. “*I am looking forward to listening to a large pipe organ.*”

It turned out that ‘similar concert’ meant a “a musical event in a church”. The Pieterkirk event featured a singer, a minister and a piano player. The piano was the only one that didn’t communicate in German. When the service was over, we escaped, eh, departed. We walked toward the Lake. We expected a spectacular fireworks display.

We hadn’t noticed the low cloud cover. Although explosive rockets brightened the clouds, the impact was not magnificent.

Stefan’s (replacement) flight to California was scheduled for a (dreadfully early) departure on January 1. Everyone relied on multiple alarms set on iPhone devices but the alarm application did not work on 1/1/11. Luckily, I wake up at the same time every morning and we were able to get Stefan to the airport in time.

Responding to subtle hints emanating from Nazy, Darius and I voluntarily helped (un)decorate and (un)light the Christmas Tree. And, after chopping it in half, we took it downstairs in time (for the first time in 9 years) to have it carted away by the Swiss Christmas Tree removal brigade.

Fortunately, we still had time for culture. We went to the Kunsthaus (Art Museum) to view a Picasso exhibit and to the Opera house to watch “The Marriage of Figaro”. Our film selection (“Meet the Fockers”) was similarly cultural. More on our cultural activities will be conveyed in the next issue of The Weekly Letter.

Take care and Cheers,

Dan

P.S. To view family holiday photos, [click here](#).

