



## THINKSWISS - AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN TRANSPORTATION: SWISS SOLAR TAXI STOPPED IN THE U.S. CAPITAL ON HISTORIC ROUND-THE-WORLD TRIP

Washington, D.C.– September 2-4, 2008

Co-organized by the Embassy of Switzerland and the Electric Vehicle Association of Washington, D.C.

During the Solar Taxi's stopover in Washington, D.C., Mr. Louis Palmer met with students, academics, media and lawmakers to showcase his innovative project. The Solar Taxi is about to become the first car ever to drive around the world fueled entirely by the power of the sun. "I haven't spent a penny on gasoline," said driver and Swiss schoolteacher Louis Palmer of his round-the-world trip, which is dedicated to showcasing the possibilities of alternative energy. The events were part of the U.S.-wide program, ThinkSwiss – Brainstorm the Future. As a leading country in science, research, and technology, Switzerland is working with its American counterparts to address climate change to better understand trends and arrive at solutions. For more information visit "[ThinkSwiss Climate Trail: The Pathfinder Toward Global Solutions](#)" and upcoming events at "[thinkswiss.org](#)."

### Solar Taxi visits Georgetown University

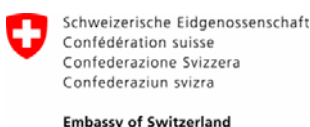
On September 2, 2008, hundreds of students passed by and were amazed by the solar powered vehicle. Mr. Palmer gave a presentation on his Solar Taxi project: "I left Switzerland on July 3, 2007 in my Solar Taxi and am completing the last stage of his trip across North America. By the time I return to Switzerland in November, I will have driven through five continents, more than 40 countries and over 33,000 miles. It has been an honor to have shared my two-seater cabin with ministers, journalists, and Hollywood celebrities".

Karen Frank, vice president for facilities and student housing, stressed the numerous initiatives that have made the Georgetown campus "greener". Various innovative initiatives help to reduce the university's energy consumption, e.g. motion sensor lights, energy efficient lighting, or fuel-cell transportation.



*Louis Palmer and Karen Frank outlined feasible and affordable projects to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.*

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## Solar Taxi cruises to the George Washington University

On September 3, Palmer and his team delivered a lecture and answered questions at George Washington University. Hundreds of students came and were excited to see the Solar Taxi. **Alexander Wittwer**, Chargé d'affaires at the Embassy of Switzerland, emphasized Switzerland's strong commitment to address climate change: "Through our **ThinkSwiss program** we hope to share technological solutions such as the Solar Taxi to address the issue of climate change. **Public transportation, energy-efficient buildings, and electric vehicles** are effective examples of how Switzerland is responding to global warming."



*"Solar panels are installed along most highways in Switzerland", Alexander Wittwer explained.*

**Jill Kasle**, Chief of Protocol at George Washington University, pointed out the various implementations of the **GW Presidential Task Force on Sustainability** and the newly created **Institute of the Analysis of Solar Energy**. "Solar provides an efficient solution to managing carbon dioxide emissions," said Jill Kasle. "For



*Hundreds of students walked the ThinkSwiss Climate Trail, which shows Swiss best practices on how to address climate change.*

example, by using solar-generated electricity for the next generation of plug-in hybrid vehicles, the dependence on foreign oil will be reduced. The George Washington University and the new institute are committed to drafting that roadmap and conveying its importance to policy makers in Washington." **George Washington University's President Steven Knapp** was excited to join Louis Palmer for a test-ride on campus in the solar powered car.

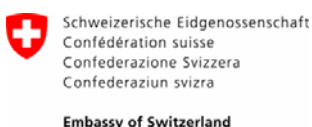


*Louis Palmer discussed the future of transportation with high-ranking officials of the District of Columbia.*

## Meeting with District of Columbia Lawmakers

On September 3, Mr. Palmer presented his innovative car to District of Columbia government officials. **Dan Tangherlini, City Administrator and Deputy Mayor**, enjoyed the test-ride around the Wilson Building. Also, **George Hawkins**, Director of the Department of Environment, **Harriet Tregoning**, Director of the Office of Planning, and several **D.C. Council members** such as Mary Cheh and Tommy Wells, **all strongly support the idea to use renewable energy for transportation.**

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They were all impressed by the car, which cruises at speeds of 55 mph and has performed flawlessly throughout the trip. Built over three years with the input of four Swiss universities, it is a technological innovation that for Palmer translates into a message of hope: “Admittedly, **as a regular citizen**, I cannot change the world but I can **demonstrate** just how dire the global climate situation has become and how many sophisticated **solutions to lower the greenhouse gases already exist.**”

### Test-rides on Capitol Hill

On September 4, 2008, Mr. Palmer met with journalists and congressional staffers on Capitol Hill to exchange opinions. He gave them short test-rides at Garfield circle next to the U.S. Botanic Garden and the Capitol reflecting pool. **Rising gas prices** make people curious about new and affordable transportation solutions. **Journalists and congressional staffers were impressed and pointed out the importance of reducing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the transportation sector.** Mr Palmer explained: “It took three years to build the Solar Taxi. The Swiss Federal Institute of Technology and three Swiss universities of applied sciences have been involved in its construction, integrating top-notch technologies such as a flexible steering-wheel that allows the passenger to take control of the vehicle.”



*David Goldstein, president of the Electric Vehicle Association of Washington D.C., stressed “we need to educate people about the benefits of electric/solar transportation.”*

### Media coverage in Washington, D.C. (click to watch/listen)

The media outreach for the SolarTaxi events in Washington DC was a great success. We had local journalists from many of the major radio and television syndicate stations (CBS, NBC, FOX, NPR, and Voice of America) as well as C-NBC, COX broadcasting (a syndicate with 10 stations nationwide), and Al Ahurra (an Arab-language television network sponsored by the U.S. government). We also had good internet news coverage with W-TOP, a Washington Post-affiliated radio/website and a major local news source. Print media were represented primarily by speciality journalists interested in environmental and science issues; among these we had such prestigious publications as Science Magazine. Below are two television/radio monitoring reports we ran after the event, and a list of media outlets that covered the event, with links where available.

### Monitoring Reports for Television and Radio Outlets

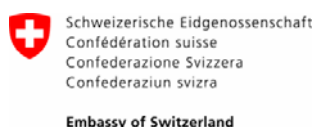
Media Monitoring Report September 4, 2008

<http://media.vmsnews.com/MR.pl?id=090408-896227-A001509950>

Media Monitoring Report September 9, 2008

<http://media.vmsnews.com/MR.pl?id=091008-897217-P001514642>

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## Print Media

- Washington Post Express*  
preview & photo published August 29 or Sept 1
- Clout Magazine*  
forthcoming. Diane Walsh
- Greenwire*  
forthcoming, Michael Burnham
- Earth Magazine*  
September 8, 2008. Carolyn Gramling.
- Washington Times*  
*Science*  
forthcoming September 10, 2008
- The GW Hatchet*  
September 4, 2008. (George Washington University student paper)
- The Hoya*  
September 4, 2008 Georgetown University student paper

## Television/Film

- WRC-TV Channel 4** (NBC affiliate)  
September 9, 2008. Wendy Rieger "Going Green" segment
- WTTG—Channel 5 FOX**  
September 3 & September 4, 2008, Beth Parker
- WUSA Channel 9** (CBS Affiliate)  
September 3, 2008. Scott Broom.
- C-NBC  
Forthcoming "Powering the Planet" series. Joanne Fuchs (producer)
- Al Ahurrad Television  
September 8, 2008, Khaled Khairy. Clip forthcoming.
- Cox Broadcasting--Syndicate with 10 affiliate stations. Examples of stories
- KIRO TV, Seattle, WA**  
September 4, 2008. Megan Hughes
- WHIO TV, Dayton, OH**  
September 4, 2008, Megan Hughes
- WJAC-TV CH6 (NBC)**  
September 8, 2008 Johnston, PA (Clip on monitoring report)

## Television/Film (continued)

- News Channel 8  
September 3
- World News Now (ABC National)  
September 8, 2008
- CleanSkies TV.news
- Vasco Dones  
Swiss Journalist/Filmmaker, working on a documentary for Italian Swiss Television)

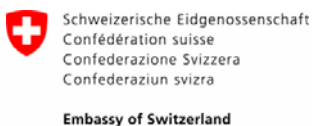
## Radio

- CNN Radio Network  
Ed McCarthy
- WAMU—88.5** (PBS affiliate)  
September 4, 2008 (two stories) Jessica Foress
- Voice of America**

## Internet

- W-TOP**  
September 5, 2008, Markette Smith
- USA Today.com**  
Event Blog, September 3, 2008
- ABC News.com**

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**For further information, please visit:**

Further events and venues: [www.solartaxi.com](http://www.solartaxi.com)

More information about the Solar Taxi: [www.bluewin.ch/solartaxi](http://www.bluewin.ch/solartaxi), <http://solartaxi.blueblog.ch>

For further ThinkSwiss events: [www.thinkswiss.org](http://www.thinkswiss.org)

Embassy of Switzerland, Washington, D.C.

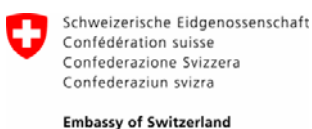
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