



# Servas Monthly News 29



December 2007

## Hosts please respond to travellers

So often this comes up - that travellers leave their own country keen and eager to visit a new country, to learn about it through staying with local hosts. They return disappointed because they could not contact a single host. They feel deprived and wonder why they paid their traveller subscription, paid for host lists and so on. In Britain we have occasionally given a refund to counteract the ill-feeling that this has caused.

What can be done about it? Is it just the fault of the host? Is it anything to do with the traveller? Is it a bit of both? Can both do something to sort this out?

### Firstly the host:

It is only polite to respond to all traveller requests, even if only to say 'No, sorry, I cannot accommodate you on the dates you requested.' For those who have been brought up not to say 'No' to people, it is better to have 'No' than get nothing at all. At least one knows not to try again. No response from hosts is bringing Servas into disrepute with some travellers.

### Secondly the traveller:

It is essential to fully read the instructions as to the type of contact the host has given. Some hosts have given their email address but perhaps do not check email that often. If they have to go to an internet cafe or only have limited access at work then they may not see your email for a week. Do not expect instant replies. Check as well when the holidays are likely to be. I phoned round plenty of people in Amsterdam some years ago. But their holidays are similar to ours in the summer. Hence they were away as well.

Perhaps the best advice I have ever had was long time ago prior to departure to VSO volunteer work in Africa. We were told, 'Expect nothing, then whatever you get will be a bonus'. I considered it a bonus that I had running water. My friends considered it a bonus that they had a water truck coming round once a week. And any rain was a major bonus.

### So:

**Hosts, please respond.**

**Travellers, consider it a bonus when the hosts do respond.**

*See message on p7 Comments about hosts and response with some ideas about methods of checking up. I do not agree with them all but they are a good base for discussion.*

## Major Reminder - SI News 2008

### Numbers, Language, Address, Contact

**The deadline for numbers was 31 December 2007. It is essential to have those numbers so that I can put the order in to the printer. This year I will make an effort to keep to what people have given me. I am tired of guessing for the countries that have not sent in their request. Then I end up with several boxes spare. So this year, no request, no SI News 2008. Remember that for some people this is the ONLY contact with what is going on round the world in Servas. It is the ONLY way that they can feel part of the worldwide organisation.**

Because I will be away for a week I am extending the deadline to **15 January**. By then I should be just about ready to send everything to the printer. **Any requests coming after that will be too late.**

The only way **after mid January** will be to **print your own copies**. I can run off the **CD** with it on at **any time** during the year. Some countries are already printing their own. The main disadvantage is that I cannot check the printer's proofs. Any mistakes made by the printer will remain.

**Note:** out of 129 countries emailed at the beginning of November I have received only 47 replies at the end of December.

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## Contact

We welcome articles coming to SI Monthly News. We do not guarantee the article, or any part of it will be published. This depends on the theme for the month along with the number of other articles also available for publication.

Preferred method of contact is email at: newsletter@servas.org or jgiffould@aol.com

Please make sure that Servas: Monthly News is part of the subject heading. Otherwise if the email address is not recognised it may get deleted before being read.

### CouchSurfing and Servas, USA

I am proud that CouchSurfing and Servas are concerned about peace building and have together have agreed on a pilot project in San Francisco to provide hosting for San Francisco International Program (SFIP) J-1 visa "fellows" with home stays. These foreign professionals have come to the USA to work in their area of expertise for one month to 4 months.

Couchsurfing and Servas want to help provide enrichment to their USA experience. Thus, USA Couchsurfing, Servas and SFIP have entered into three way partnership to support their intercultural understanding. Couchsurfing and Servas will recruit their members in the geographical area where the SFIP fellow is working to provide one to three week home hospitality free of charge. The Fellow will apply, be interviewed and become an approved Servas Traveler with a valid current Letter of Introduction. Servas screens all Servas hosts. The hosts from Couchsurfing will apply, be interviewed and approved as Servas Hosts. Servas hosts provide extended homestays for the SFIP foreign visiting professionals.

Servas has been chosen to help provide the hospitality for the SFIP fellows since Servas has over 50 years of clearly stated expectations for hosts and travelers and a complaints procedure -- if there are problems. The fellows will be encouraged to meet locals and travel in the USA as a member of both Servas and Couchsurfing and, in so doing, obtain a fuller, deeper understanding of the many different cultures in the USA.

*Mary Jane Mikuriya, USA*

### And a picture from Guatemala:

Jose Roberto Montes National Secretary of Servas Guatemala and Ivan Garcia Youth delegate from Guatemala, at the in Costa Rica 2007.



### Looking Ahead

*(This email was sent to all National Secretaries, but it perhaps applicable to all of us to consider and discuss. jg. Editor)*

Dear Leaders of Servas,

Happy New Year!

Thank you, for your dedication to Servas. Your personal efforts are building an important Servas global and local network of helpful friendships leading to planetary peace.

Now, as the new year begins, it is a time to look back -- and also a time to look ahead.

Please review the many 2007 Servas activities which Jane has posted each month at: [http://www.servas.org/siexco/index.php/Servas\\_International\\_News](http://www.servas.org/siexco/index.php/Servas_International_News)

Please share that information with your Board. Your own updates are very welcome.

As we enter 2008 we are only a year ahead of the next General Assembly in 2009.

Already two member groups, India and Korea have offered to host the General Assembly. We are grateful to them, for their proposals.

Others are also welcome to offer to host pre-meetings or other functions for the General Assembly.

- Proposals will be evaluated according to criteria set by the GA at Thailand.
- Please let us know whether your member group is interested in helping or hosting?

Also, 2008 is time to plan for the global and local celebrations of the 60th Servas Anniversary in 2009.

Your Servas national and local events can announce and plan for the Anniversary.

Also, many Servas hosts and travelers can help you connect Servas with other groups to celebrate values of Peacebuilding, and Help for the Planet.

- a Distant Vote will be held shortly on the Servas International budget.

In 2008 we will also be consulting with Member Groups to update and adjust that Budget in advance of the Second Distant Vote. You will be given financial and other information updates before that Second Distant Vote.

In meantime, please share your own success stories in achieving the goals of Servas.

Please remember to send Jane a copy for SI News. [newsletter@servas.org](mailto:newsletter@servas.org)

Best wishes for the Year ahead!

*Gary Sealey, President*

## Meetings, Get together, Seeing each other

### Get together in London

The venue is **Pontefract Castle**.  
This is in Wigmore Street, London W1.  
The nearest Underground Station is  
Bond Street.  
Date: First Monday in every month.  
Time: 6.30 onwards.  
Look forward to seeing you all there.

### Annual Conference, India

Bangalore

Dear Friends,

It gives me great pleasure to invite you to our Annual Conference which we plan to hold in the South part of India at a beautiful, natural place, MITRA NIKETAN near Trivandrum in Kerala State. The conference will be for 3 days, dated 9, 10, 11 February 2008. Mitre Niketan will provide the accommodation and hospitality.

This is being organized by the Reception committee .

Tel ;0472 2882015 H ,  
Tel ;0472 2882045 Office, F 0471 2333614

Registration fee – Rs. 300 per person (Including hospitality & food )

Travellers Rs 500 per person (Inc: hospitality & food )

Please send your confirmation to Servas India office by 31st<sup>th</sup> December 2007 to the address below:

1 Dr Ramesh Sharma National Sec Servas India  
[servasindia@gmail.com](mailto:servasindia@gmail.com), [drrameshsharma@yahoo.com](mailto:drrameshsharma@yahoo.com)

2 LV Subramaniana Host Coordinator  
[subramanianlv@gmail.com](mailto:subramanianlv@gmail.com)

After due date Late fee Rs 100 up to 31 January 2008

*Dr Ramesh Sharma, N S Servas India*

### Join with others in Lyon, France

The venue is: Grand Café de la Soierie  
This is in: 1 place des Tapis, Lyon  
Date: First Thursday of the month  
Time: 8 pm

### Germany - European meeting,

For full details of the European meeting see Servas Monthly News October 2007.

**International Education Centre Jugendhof  
Scheersberg in Quern, near Baltic Sea  
4 th to 9th July 2008**

[servas-summer@gmx.net](mailto:servas-summer@gmx.net)

*Margret Kläser, Erika und Richard Cabassut*  
For further information check

[www.servas-summer.eu](http://www.servas-summer.eu)

### Sentierinsieme - Pathway Together - Route de l'Amitié - Miteinander unterwegs

Servas members from the Alps area have been meeting each year at the beginning of summer for more than twenty years.

The next meeting will take place on July 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> 2008 in France at Aussois, which is situated in the Maurienne Valley. It will be followed by two treks (4 days).

If you want to get an invitation in the course of next winter, please contact:

François Marseille  
26, rue Pierre Curie 26000 Valence - France

Or (easier!) send an e-mail to

[francoismarseille@free.fr](mailto:francoismarseille@free.fr)

For Information You can phone :

In German : Sabine Joertz 33 3 88 60 32 66

In Italian : Joëlle Chappuis 33 4 50 22 13 82

In French : François Marseille 33 4 75 56 13 67

In English : By email :

Myriam Michel [myriam.michel3@hotmail.fr](mailto:myriam.michel3@hotmail.fr)

### Meeting place in Paris, France

The venue is: **Le Vieux Châtelet**  
This is in: 1 place du Châtelet, 75001 Paris  
The nearest metro is: Châtelet  
Date: Second Tuesday of month  
Time: 7 pm to 9 pm

### International '08 Servas Youth Meeting

**CITY:** Istanbul (Turkey)

**DATE:** Jul.18- Jul.25 2008

**PLACE:** SABANCI UNIVERSITY-TUZLA

for more info on university:

<http://www.sabanciuniv.edu/tr/>

**SYNOPSIS:** Servas Youth Meeting, Istanbul will be the 3rd Youth Meeting after Patagonia and Yorkshire.

**MAIN THEME:** "Servas Dream Life"

Each day will have a concept to follow and activities to go with the concept.

**MORE INFO:** [www.servasyouth.org](http://www.servasyouth.org)

**CONTACT:** [pablochufeni@yahoo.com.ar](mailto:pablochufeni@yahoo.com.ar)

# Languages - Esperanto

For the next few months we will be learning some Esperanto, after all **Servas** is an Esperanto word. *Eugene Perevertajo* of Uzbekistan has kindly offered to give us some lessons. His contact email is given below.

## Use of Esperanto

SERVAS members enjoy travelling and when visiting other countries they stay in the homes of other members. They do not want to stay in hotels because they want to get to know the country and its inhabitants deeper than ordinary traditional tourists. Among SERVAS members are also thrifty people, who cannot or will not pay for lodging. I do not condemn them, because thriftiness is a natural human trait.

SERVAS publishes an address list of hosts who mention the languages usable in their homes. English is often listed. But the hosts are not very experienced in foreign languages and therefore the conversations don't flow as easily as one would like. For instance in conversation with my last guests from the US (a very nice married couple) we talked a lot at the table, using English. I more or less understand written English, sometimes using a dictionary, and I know the grammar well. My guests spoke very fluently (with no mercy!) and I understood perhaps only 70%, maybe less, but I could guess a lot. This makes sense, if I say that I speak English only a few times a year! Our conversation was like a healthy strong person and a handicapped person performing physical labor together. I really regretted that I could not express myself as fluently, but in any case we enjoyed each others' company. English spoken by French, Italians, Slovenians, and others is more understandable, maybe because it is simpler, more limited, or more primitive.

Language barriers have always existed, and they still exist now. But the appearance of Esperanto has made a breach in them. From experience of learning other languages, we know how difficult a task it is to learn a foreign language to the necessary level! In practice, to learn a foreign language, one needs years, to learn Esperanto to the same level one needs months or even weeks. It is hard to believe, but one can learn Esperanto to the level of a native speaker. Why? Because one does not just learn Esperanto, one creates it oneself. It is hard to make mistakes in Esperanto. Hard to imagine? Try it! Note: People from the same country speaking the same language who know some foreign language quite well never speak among themselves in the foreign language. They feel uncomfortable, and we should not consider them to be nationalists, not liking to speak in a foreign language. Even Esperantists with a common country and language easily communicate in the Esperanto they learned! Sometimes one finds Esperanto to be more precise than one's birth language.

*Eugene Serg. Perevertajo, Uzbekistan  
esperuzo@mail.ru*

*(I would disagree that people from the same country do not speak a foreign language when among themselves. I happily use my poor other languages with people from my country Ed)*

## LA ALFABETO

Aa - a, Bb - b, Cc - ts, ^C^c - ch, Dd - d, Ee - e, Ff - f, Gg - g, ^G^g - j, Hh - h, ^H^h - kh, Ii - i, Jj - y, ^J^j - zh, Kk - k, Ll - l, Mm - m, Nn - n, Oo - o, Pp - p, Rr - r, Ss - s, ^S^s - sh, Tt - t, Uu - u, ^U^u - w, Vv - v, Zz - z.

### Pronunciation:

The letters *b d f h k l m n p t v z* are pronounced as in English.

**c** = ts as in "bits"    **^c** = ch as in "choose"  
**g** = g as in "go"    **^g** = g as in "George" or j as in "jug"  
**^h** = ch as in the Scottish "loch",  
**j** = y, **^j** = z as in "azure" or s as in "pleasure",  
**r** = r always sounded and trilled.  
**s** = s always hissed    **^s** = sh as in sheep  
**^u** = w after a and e.  
**a`u** sounds similar to the "ow" in "now"

**The vowel sounds** are pure like Italian vowels. They are approximately:

**a** = ah as in "father";  
**e** = e as in "set";  
**i** = ee as in "sheep" or i as in "police";  
**o** = aw as in "raw" or o as in or;  
**u** = oo as in "boot", or u as in "rude"

### **C^aiuj literoj havas nur unu sonon en ajna kunig^o.**

Each letter has just one sound, always the same in every word.

### **Unuvorte, kiel oni skribas, same oni legas tion.**

The spelling of a word shows how to pronounce it.

### **La akcento estas ^ce la antau^lasta silabo.**

The accent is (always) on the second last syllable.

**Saluton!** - Hi! - *Bonjour!*

**Bonan matenon!** - Good morning! - *Bonjour!*

**Bonan tagon!** - Good afternoon! - *Bonjour!*

**Bonan vesperon** - Good evening! - *Bonsoir!*

**Bonan nokton!** - Good night! - *Bonne nuit!*

**Kiel vi fartas?** - How are you? - *Comment allez-vous?*

**Dankon, bonege!** - Very well, thank you! - *Tres bien, merci.*

**Mia nomo estas ...** - My name is ... . *Je m'appelle ...*

**Mi g^ojas konatig^i kun vi.** - Glad to meet you. - *Enchantee de faire votre connaissance.*

**Kiom longe vi jam estas en ...?** - How long have you been in ...? - *Depuis combien de temps êtes vous en/a?*

**Mi/Ni estas c^ai tie ekde .....** - I/We have been here since..... - *Je sois/ Nous sommes ici depuis .....*

**C^au c^ai tio estas via unua vizito?** - Is this your first visit? - *Est-ce votre première visite par ici?*

**C^au vi g^uas vian restan tie c^ai?** - Are you enjoying your stay here? - *Est-ce que vous vous plaisez ici?*

**C^au vi estas sola c^ai tie?** - Are here on your own? - *Etes-vous seul(e) ici?*

**Mi estas kun mia(j).....** - I am with my ... . - *Je suis avec mon/ma/mes ....*

## Host and Travel Reports

### Travelling in Victoria/Australia - Part 2

#### The Great South-West Walk

Leaving my car in the garden of my supportive host I was taken in the morning to a point near Portland of this circuit walk of ca. 250 km. The first day I had to walk mostly on roads until I finally reached the gum forest which embraced me for the next 120 km. I heard a screeching noise and looking up I saw 2 koalas in a tree telling each other lies. At the first campsite I found the most important ingredient: water (rainwater, but always drinkable), I pitched my tent, prepared my dinner and crawled, very tired, into my sleeping bag. Next day the forest shaded me from a moderate sun. On reaching the next campsite, a maintenance worker had already established camp and I was offered a cup of coffee. In the morning I had a hot breakfast. He told me about 80 people, mostly retired, are maintaining the trail, but seldom go themselves for a longer walk. They rather enjoy a night around a campfire. Next day I saw an echidna and a huge king brown snake, also flocks of kangaroos and birds of all sizes and colours. The following day brought me after a very long walk to the Glenelg River, where I stayed in a beautiful campsite at its shore. During the next day I recognized a diamond python rolled up in a deep burrow of a tree stump. I met 2 young women who were trying to get their lunch hooked up from the river. I camped near the river. Next morning I encountered a huge black snake. Walking became a bit difficult, because often the ground just consisted of loose sand but the campsite later was excellent. The sun next morning became scorching for a long stretch. When I finally reached the kiosk-shop in Nelson, the shopkeeper offered me a cup of coffee, because, she told me, I looked so exhausted. Camped nearby and a much needed shower. Later I had my dinner at the lakeside with plenty of water fowl. A good cup of coffee in the pub opposite gave me the final kick into my sleeping bag. As the sun next morning offered no relief and according to my guide book I would have to walk along the beach without any shade, I called my host near Portland. Immediately I was promised to be picked up during late morning and taken to their home.

#### The Grampians

From Portland I drove to Horsham, where I was invited by a friend whom I had met for many years in Nepal, where each of us had a job with the same organization. After healing my blisters from the Great South-West Walk, I went into the Grampians, a somewhat closed mountain region with rough peaks of sandstone. Sadly most of the forest had been burned down about a year ago. I went to a few sheltered sites where aborigines had left some ancient paintings. The following day I climbed up a rather steep sandstone rock, later camped at the source of the Glenelg River. After returning my friend showed me the Little Desert Park, which had burned down just 3 months ago, and Mt. Arapiles – a worldwide recognized Eldorado for mountaineering, because of its numerous vertical sandstone crevices.

*Gerhard Ondrej, April 2007, Belgium*

### " A Mexican Traveling in Great Britain" Part 1

#### Planning

When you plan to travel, you are wondering whether you have all the necessary items to enjoy it. But when you live that travel you can see that all your experiences have been better than your plans. You are so grateful with all the people that help you to enjoy everything.

My travel to Great Britain was amazing. In the beginning I was so nervous about the attitude of Servas Britain, because many people had told me that "English people are so special, so serious". I am from Mexico and my culture is so different to English culture. I was nervous and worried about these differences. Fortunately Servas Members and British people were so friendly with me and gave me a special time in their beautiful country.

#### London

First, I arrived at London Heathrow. My first hosts were Anne and Brian Heagney. I contacted them by Ann Greenhough. Here in London I made a fast tour in downtown. Anne and Brian gave a lot of tips to really enjoy London. And we talked a lot about politics, history, food and social characteristics of our cultures. This fast tour was only an introduction to London, because I had planned to finish my travel there.

#### Yorkshire

Anne and Brian drove me to Yorkshire. We arrived at Ann Greenhough and David Asher's home. They were the principal coordinators in Britain of Youth and Family International Conference. The home was so friendly, Mary (Malawi), Maggy (Venezuela), Chris and Marion (Wales) had arrived and we had an incredible dinner.

Everybody participated in the Youth and Family Conference in Dalesbridge. All Servas members lived together an unforgiving week. But at the finish of the conference my trip was not clear. In the beginning of that week Sem (Turkey), Moses (Uganda), Mary (Malawi), Magi (Venezuela) and I stayed at Ann's

home and  
visited  
Leeds.

Picture of car at campsite

*Packing at  
the end of  
the camp.  
One of the  
cars with  
camping  
gear and  
taking 3  
people.*

My objective was not so specific. I wanted to know something about the development of British Alternative Technology. In Dalesbridge, Matt Gordon offered me help about it. I traveled from Burnley to Colne, here I meet Matt.

*Rodolfo Alvarado Castañeda*

## Country Reports

### Dream comes true - Finally you can visit *Nicaragua* with Servas -

Hello dear Servas members all over the world. I'm really glad to tell you that due to a grand effort there is a new national group of Servas in Nicaragua. In January I chanced to take part in the 1st Regional Conference of Central America which took place in Costa Rica. There I met many nice people from Panama to Mexico, just Nicaragua and San Salvador were absent. This was a great pity for me as I was living and working in this country for one year as a volunteer helper doing my German civil service. So during the conference I decided to help Servas and I was elected as mentor to refloat Nicaragua. Back to my loved second home I contacted the very few active members of Servas in Nicaragua to see how to realize my plan to find at least 14 new people. I asked many friends and presented them the fabulous idea of Servas. Finally in August, after dozens of calls and travels, we convened a national reunion at a pretty organic farm named La Esperanzita ("the small hope"). When I left Nicaragua in October returning to Germany I was really happy to leave a new efficient national group and I am looking forward to return next year to continue my work over there.

Not only is it worthwhile to visit Nicaragua for its terribly nice new members but also for the places where they live:

Ever heard of Ometepe? - It is the world's biggest island on a (freshwater-)sea, formed by two gorgeous volcanoes. Karin, a very committed German woman, has lived there for over 20 years. Or just enjoy Masaya and its surrounding areas. There you can live in a nice tree house, see Nicaragua's poverty because the place where the host family lives is connected with a social project for street children. If you are interested in Central America's rain forest, make a trip to Nueva Guinea near the tropical Atlantic coast. There is an organic farm ("La Esperanzita") and an exemplary education project (Montessori school), too.

These are just three examples of 15 amiable new hosts. So I hope that all national secretaries might order the new, updated Host members List of Nicaragua in 2008 and one day receive or visit these lovely people.

I thank a million to Tom Baez and Karin Allgeier for their indispensable help and to SI for the 100 US-\$ donation for organization costs.

*Stefan Baschel*

For more information please contact me:  
[stefan.baschel@gmail.com](mailto:stefan.baschel@gmail.com)  
or Karin in Nicaragua: [karinanica@gmail.com](mailto:karinanica@gmail.com)

### Report from Congo on AAM (Africa Area Meeting)

I'm very glad to write to you and telling you that left Livingstone the last Wednesday and I had a very good journey for this time. I'm in Kinshasa and I will reach Brazzaville tomorrow.

I would like to thank all of you for your effort to make this meeting a success. Particularly I would like to thank Servas Zambia for the organization of the meeting and hosting the delegates. Specially I would like to thank so much Vimbi and Clare Mateke who hosted me during the meeting and a week after the meeting. Now I would like to tell to them with all my heart if it was asked for me to rename the friendship I'll propose "Wimbiclare" just for telling to you that at your home I was feeling to myself your attention, care, love, consideration, friendship, passions to me as your brother and children. I enjoyed all the moments passing with you. It was a wonderful experience for me. I'd like also to thank Aggrey Mute for hosting me in Lusaka for 3 days. It was also an enjoyable moment for me in Zambia. I promise you to have my travel report very soon with details of all my experiences in Zambia and during the meeting.

In peace,

*Ondon, Titan Serge; Servas N S, Congo Brazzaville*



.... an important part of the Africa Area Meeting .....  
the social aspects .....



Communication from the AAM

"The gathering [African Area Meeting] approved trying to use FaceBook as a means of communication." from Sheldon Weeks.

(There are at least 4 Servas groups now on Facebook.)  
*Gary Sealey*

## Comments and Countries

### Responses from hosts

I want to raise an issue that seems small but is pernicious and undermines the ability to retain travelers.

I just returned from Peru. Well before I left, I emailed all hosts in Cuzco. One address was bad and I never got any reply from the other 3.

With our new electronic forms, US Servas has made it easy for members to make comments to us. One that I've seen repeatedly corroborates my experience. Some members say, in effect, "I went through the whole traveler process, paid my money, got my lists, emailed hosts and couldn't reach a single one! What a waste of time!"

I think SI needs to communicate the vital importance of hosts responding to traveler inquiries, even if it's just to say they can't accommodate the traveler. I realize this is hard because all communications happen outside the purview of Servas itself. Ultimately, a system like the one Couchsurfing uses, where emails and replies go through the CS system and activity can be monitored is needed but that's a long way off.

For now, each host, worldwide, needs to understand that responding to traveler inquiries is an obligation and a crucial part of making Servas International a viable and rewarding organization. Every time a host ignores an inquiry, it encourages the loss of that traveler and the corresponding stamp income. A related issue is the need for national Servas chapters to periodically contact hosts to detect outdated or misprinted information.

*John Gunther, Board Member, CIO, US Servas Inc*

### News From Servas Congo Brazzaville

We have a great pleasure to thank Servas Belgium and Luxembourg, with all its members for the financial support for the travel of our National Secretary ONDON Titan Serge, represented the group at the Servas Africa area meeting in Livingstone, Zambia from 6<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> December 2007. This experience with travel report brings a motivation for the future travellers and host members in our country to participate in other cultures.

In peace

*Servas Congo Brazzaville*

### GROWTH OF SERVAS

Perhaps since its inception Servas International (SI) has relied on its policy of non-interference in the internal affairs of Servas Chapters. A change in foreseeable future in its policy appears unlikely. We need to see whether or not this thinking has helped the growth of Servas in its chapters which have existed both as Registered & Unregistered bodies. It is felt that a social service organization, such as ours, should observe strict transparency based on a proper constitution made out including proper acceptable rules for electing office bearers through democratic ways and management of funds should be strictly under scrutiny and sanctioned by proper authorities. This is most likely to be the case in registered but not so for unregistered chapters.

In the unregistered chapters the National Secretaries (NSs) give rulings on all aspects & they in most cases function undemocratically (Membership of members that oppose the NS is sometime terminated). The SI takes no notice of whatever the NS does. The NSs have thus enjoyed the privilege of remaining in saddle for decades (some did so until their demise), & have attended all SI conferences.

The SI does not bother on how any NS spends the money he gets from host members subscriptions, the LOIs fees or donations & so on. The NSs in the unregistered chapters themselves manage their funds. Since the SI does not oversee how the accounts are operated the possibility of wrong utilization of funds/ financial irregularities can never be discounted. It is therefore felt that SI should consider checking accounts of NSs of unregistered chapters as a desirable step.

How much do NSs contribute towards growth of Servas in their chapters? It is difficult to quantify the growth. In their initial stage the NSs are enthusiastic about growth. They get their relations & friends to join Servas from their area or nearby areas. Their coordinators (under them) in other areas are advised to have membership drives & enroll more members. The coordinators have no resources (all funds are utilized by NSs themselves) hence the NSs are unable to contribute towards the growth in different states (provinces) of their country.. After the initial stage the NSs are less enthusiastic & are sure of their attending SI conferences with full funding from SI. Thus it will be seen that the NSs are unlikely to adequately contribute towards growth of Servas.

For the growth of Servas it is felt that SI should evaluate the usefulness of its non-interfering mode. A change it is felt is desirable. It is hoped that our SI will find solution to overcome the shortcomings to help in its growth .

*Gurdev, India*

*(Comment from editor: This would be an interesting discussion point. Perhaps it would be necessary to review how Servas is set up around the world. I would tend to disagree with Gurdev about the NS being so much in control in the majority of places. What do other people think?)*

## Youth from Pablo Short version is in SI News 2008

Hello!!! I'm Pablo Chufeni (Rosario/Argentina) the Servas International Youth Coordinator elected by the last General Assembly. So good to have a new chance to reach all of you. Servas is growing daily and we need as many excuses as we can get to share ourselves. Twice a year I send a complete report of activities to all my personal contacts and to every Servas officer. If you are interested in receiving it please let me know and I will add you to my personal list of distribution. Here you can see some brief information about my work during the second half of 2007.

### - Music for Peace:

With lots of help we have put together 26 young peace songs from all around the world to promote Servas ideals. The CD has already been distributed during North American, International Youth and South American Meetings.

### - Distant voting

The first Distant Voting process was celebrated during 2007. Servas Youth has presented a whole proposal hoping to count on the support of the Servas community following the decisions of the General Assembly.

### - Yorkshire'07

Ann Greenhough and Servas Britain have lead an excellent second International Servas Youth Meeting, "Yorkshire'07" with more than 120 people there and a terrific agenda. First was Patagonia, then Yorkshire and now Istanbul is coming.

### - "Youth Travel Award"

A group coordinated by Ann G. collected money and helped young members from Turkey, Venezuela, Uganda and Mexico to join this meeting looking to promote new young leaders in Servas. The project was simply a total hit.

### - Regional and Youth conference for Central America.

At the Earth University of Costa Rica, we have celebrated "Youth and Leadership for Servas Central America" with delegates from Panama, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala and Mexico.

### - ServasYouth.org

With all the information already posted we are working now on the image. Go to [www.servasyouth.org](http://www.servasyouth.org) to know more about. Volunteers for working on the web with us are a crucial requirement to achieve our goal

### - National Youth Contacts

It is vital for the young travelers and for the Youth Coordination to find a Youth Contact. Several national groups have selected one. If your country still has not appointed one please do not wait any longer.

### - Istanbul'08

The third international Servas Youth meeting is on the go. Istanbul (Turkey) is getting ready to receive us all for one week - 18 to 25 July 2008. See website [www.servasyouth.org](http://www.servasyouth.org) for more details.

### - Oz'09

Australia will host the next South Pacific and Australasia Youth Meeting during the month of January'09. Based on the success of the regional youth meeting in Central America, Australia is working hard for this event.

### - SYLE '07 (Servas Youth Languages Experience)

The program offers one month learning a foreign language abroad through the Servas network. The 2007 was the third edition. Promotion, travelers' selection and coordination with port cities were done.

PORTS CITIES'07	YOUNG TRAVELERS'07
Rosario (ARG) -----	Gossia (POLAND)
Sao pablo (BRA) -----	Francisco (MEXICO)
Mexico DF (MEX) -----	Fernanda (BRAZIL)
Vancouver (CAN) -----	Richard (ARGENTINA)
Montevideo (URU) -----	Laura (ITALY)
San José (C.R.) -----	Cassandra (NEW ZEALAND)
Rennes (FRA) -----	Magiari (VENEZUELA)
Panamá (PAN) -----	Isah (USA)
Guatemala (GUA) -----	Mael (FRANCE)

Please let me know what you think about this info. OK? Your opinion is not only a suggestion, it is also a way to start a new friendship that surely will be productive to Servas. I'll be waiting.

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