



Servas Monthly News



August 2006

Trust.....

I was thinking about trust as I waited for someone to collect some goods from me. I am part of a group called Freecycle. People put offers of goods or what they want onto the internet website. Others respond by either saying they would like the goods or that they have what people want. The goods are passed on free of charge. This is a small contribution to society and the environment by not putting stuff out as rubbish but by helping others by letting them take and use the goods. However it depends very much on trust. I had put some speakers for offer. Someone from the next town was trusting I had told the truth and was coming to collect them. I was trusting a strange man would come into my house to collect the speakers.

Servas is the same, we depend so much on trust. As travellers we trust our hosts will do as they have said and similarly as hosts we trust that our travellers will behave in a certain manner. On a larger scale people in a country trust that their management team will get on with the job efficiently and with consideration for all the members in the country. On a global scale we put our trust in Exco to co-ordinate Servas internationally.

It is up to every member to ensure that the trust is honoured.

Thank you and corrections

Thank you to all those who send in articles. As editor I much appreciate your wish to share your thoughts and experiences with all the Servas community.

Part of my job, as editor, is to check the spelling and grammar in articles and to correct it if necessary. I have a great admiration of those, for whom English is not their first language, who send their articles in English. I hope you accept I do have to do corrections. Please forgive me if my correction changes the meaning of what you wish to say. I have the problem that I generally do not have the time to correct the article and return it to you to check. Usually I am correcting as I put the article into Servas Monthly News. If you think I have changed the meaning of the article please email me and I will try and put the correct meaning in the next issue.

Clear out

I am doing a clear out of old **SI News**. I have a pile of **SI News from 2005** in **English, French** and **Spanish**. I had over ordered due to people not putting in their requests on time. If anyone would like to have any of these copies then I am willing to send them. If no-one has asked for any copies within the next few months then they will be going to the re-cycle bin. I also have a few copies left of **SI News 2006**, in **English**.

For copies contact me at: jgiffould@aol.com

SI News 2006

- Did you get your copy?

In February/March SI News 2006 was sent to 109 countries. It was sent either as a CD to the country or as a paper copy for every host and some for travellers.

It is important to know if SI News actually reached the correct place. To find out I enclosed a post card for every country to return. If the recipient preferred to email me then that was fine.

Thank you to the 35 countries that did reply. However that means that 74 countries did not reply. So I do not know if they actually received their copy or whether it is still somewhere in the postal system around the world.

I will now have to email those 74 countries to enquire whether they received the copy. This takes a lot of time.

SI News contacts please let me know as soon as you get your copies, it saves time for everybody. Thanks.

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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.

The postal address is:

Jane Giffould, SI Monthly News Editor
 20 Weavers Row, Halstead, Essex, CO9 2JX, England.

Bob Lutweiler in hospital

Good Evening Servas friends,

Carole Wagner, staff in the NY Servas office, is a good investigator. She discovered Bob Luitweiler is in a Nursing Home with Bone cancer.

I have just spoken to Bob and he is in good spirits, mentally aware and alert, however he can't walk now. Phone calls are difficult. Please send Bob notes of remembrance to:

Bob Luitweiler
Alderwood Nursing Home
2726 Alderwood Ave
Bellingham, Washington 98225

Mary Jane Mikuriya

Annual Ngo Conference At The UN

Every year the UN hosts a DPI/NGO conference. This year's conference focuses on "Unfinished Business: Effective Partnerships for Human Security and Sustainable Development" and will be held on September 6, 7, and 8th, 2006.

The 2005 Conference focused on "Our Challenge: Voices for Peace, Partnership, and Renewal", and was held on September 7, 8, and 9th, 2005.

[Read more](#) about our relationship with the UN.

Website, UN, Youth

Congratulations to Servas Belgium

The UN is looking at Sustainable Development in its section UNEP - United Nations Environmental Programme. As part of this it is developing a site for Youth to see how they can be part of Sustainable Development - www.youthxchange.net To help Youth extend themselves there are a number of areas on the site of which one of them is related to travel. Naturally this is looking at Sustainable Tourism. It would seem that UNEP have been searching sites for suitable travel options for youth. They came across the Servas Belgium site and decided that they liked it.

So well done to Servas Belgium for providing a site that is attracting people and so providing greater links with other suitable organisations. Especially as this is relating to a Youth oriented site and so fitting in with the Servas wish to encourage Young People.

Servas in the New York Times

I saw the excellent article about Servas in the travel section today! Congratulations on getting such a clear description of what makes Servas special and differentiated from the other travel groups.

I am so proud to see Servas in the news!

http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/09/travel/09prac.html?_r=1&oref=slogin

-Lara

The article is quite long, following are some excerpts:

Go to Strangers

(and They'll Come to You)

Amber Plaunty, a 24-year-old from San Diego, figures she has stayed with about 20 complete strangers while traveling around Europe since last August. Mark Galbraith, a 34-year-old manager with a finance company in London, has played host to more than 200 people he met online. But that's still shy of the number of travelers 66-year-old Helga Smith has welcomed into her apartment in Manhattan: "I stopped counting after 300, and that was three years ago."

All three are members of hospitality exchange services, groups that link willing hosts with travelers looking for experiences that range from a meaningful cultural exchange to simply a free place to stay.

One of the oldest services, Servas (www.servas.org), has been around for nearly 60 years and has more of a high-minded mission — fostering peace through cultural understanding — while the Internet has given rise to newer groups like Global Freeloaders (globalfreeloaders.com) and Hospitality Club (www.hospitalityclub.org), which tend to attract more budget-minded travelers.

"I invite people into my home because I want to get to know them," said Helga Smith, who joined Servas more than 20 years ago. Now retired, she spends much of her time visiting her former guests traveling to places like Samoa, South Korea, Ethiopia, Australia, Japan and South Africa — and still plays host to about 25 people a year in New York. As someone who escaped from East Germany in her early 20's, raised three children on her own and ran her first marathon at 59, it's not surprising that she's open to traveling the globe by herself.

"I'm not really on my own because I have Servas people waiting for me," Ms. Smith said, citing examples of generosity she has experienced, like a couple in India who gave her their bedroom while they slept in a hammock outside, or adventures like hitching a ride on a mail boat into the heart of Surinam. Her philosophy about travel pretty much sums up why certain people are attracted to hospitality exchange services, despite all the unknowns.

"If you're open to experiences," she said. "Then all kinds of things can happen."

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.

Servas Monthly Meeting, Belgium

Last TUESDAY of the month in the pub Le Cirio in the centre of Brussels, next to the Bourse/Beurs, 6 to 8 pm.

Hosts, travellers, visitors, friends, everybody can join us and enjoy with us one of the 500 famous Belgian beers!

We invite all Servas members from all over the world to visit Belgium & Luxemburg, two small countries in the heart of Europe which had a lot to offer to all of you.

We want more travellers!

www.visitbelgium.com www.luxembourg.co.uk
www.belgique-tourisme.net

See you, *Rita Dessauvage*
National secretary Servas Belgium & Luxemburg

Camping Weekend, Netherlands

Servas Netherlands is organizing a camping weekend:
from 4 pm Friday, 15 September 2006
to 4 pm Sunday, 17 September 2006
in Zeewolde, province of Flevoland,
and would be very happy to welcome Servas members from neighbouring countries.

For full detail see Servas Monthly News April
Ineke Takken, coordinator Servas-camping weekend
phone + 31 36 5352389

e-mail address: itinholland@planet.nl

Annual Meeting at the Jersey Shore, October 13 to 15

The US SERVAS annual conference will be held on the New Jersey shore in Brigantine on Saturday, October 14, 2006. Members who are not already 2006 electors who wish to vote must notify our office by August 5th.

The board is planning to meet on Sunday, October 15th and members are welcome to attend. A tour to Batsto Village in the nearby Pine Barrens is also planned for Sunday. On Friday evening, October 13th, we'll have a meet-and-greet session in Atlantic City (only 5 miles away). Please check our website www.usservas.org for the most current information; or if you are not internet active, please keep in contact with the office after July 1st either by telephone, 212-267-0252, or US mail, 11 John Street, Room 505. For further information about the conference, contact *Robert Allekotte, at robabet@aol.com or (609)266-6065.*

Annual Meeting

Servas Germany e.V.

Fri, Sept 15th till Sun, Sept 17th 2006

**“ Kolping Familienzentrum ”,
Duderstadt, Bischof-Jensen-Strasse**

Annual Meeting will take place from September 15th to September 17th 2006 in Duderstadt, right in the middle of Germany. The motto of this year's meeting will be "*Conflict Management*".

Friday evening - an informal get-together;
Sat am workshops with Servas relevant issues,
Sat pm: 1) a walk
2) General Assembly of Servas Germany,
and in the evening - well, we will see...

Sun morning workshops on conflict management.

Youngsters - develop a musical, dealing with our motto, and the workshop "strong kids".

The place where we will meet is excellent for all people between 0 and 99.

please contact (nationalsecretary@servas.de).

See you in Duderstadt! *Inken Resa-Thomas,*
National Secretary, Servas Germany e.V.

Detail

Date: Friday Sept 15th till Sunday Sept 17th 2006

Venue: Kolping Familienzentrum "Ferienparadies Pferdeberg", Bischof-Jensen- Strasse, 37115 Duderstadt, <http://www.kolping-duderstadt.de/>

Accommodation: single and double rooms, apartments with up to five beds

Prices: Adults: 55,- Euro single, 45,- Euro double
13-17 years old: 20,- Euro 3-12 years old: 10,- Euro

Youth Week 2007

Dalesbridge, Yorkshire, UK

Provisional arrangements to be firmed up during the next few months.

Dates: Sun 29 July - Sat 04 Aug 2007

Place: Dalesbridge, nr Settle, Yorkshire, England

This will be an opportunity for Youth to meet up, do a range of activities together and explore a beautiful moorland area of Britain. Dalesbridge offers a range of accommodation including bunkhouses and camping.

We hope to see lots of you there.

For the moment contact is: newsletter@servas.org

Languages

Language is an important tool of communication. When we understand each other we are more likely to be peaceful. Think of the problems that have arisen just by the wrong interpretation of what someone is trying to say.

In this section, the aim is to build up a selection of words and phrases to help hosts and travellers communicate with each other and with other people. If you have words or phrases that you find useful then let us know. If you have languages you would like to share then let us know. For the moment the base language will be English. Hence any non-English words and phrases must have the English translation of them.

In the long run it would be good to be able to publish a booklet of useful words and phrases in a range of languages for the Servas hosts and travellers.

Our **thirteenth** language is **Norwegian - Bokmål**

Zero

One

Two

Three

Four

Five

Six

Seven

Eight

Nine

Ten

Twenty

Thirty

Forty

Fifty

Sixty

Seventy

Eighty

Ninety

Hundred

Thousand

Do you eat meat?

Where do you live?

This is my sister

This is my brother

This is my mother

This is my father

This is my son

This is my daughter

What music do you like?

Have you visited the town?

Where are the shops?

Is there a market?

Thank you for your help.

Null

En

To

Tre

Fire

Fem

Seks

Sju/Syr

Åtte

Ni

Ti

Tjve/tyve

Tretti

Førti

Femti

Seksti

Sytti/Søtti

Åtti

Nitti

Hundre

Tusen

Spiser du kjøtt?

Hvor bor du?

Dette er min søster

Dette er min bror

Dette er min mor

Dette er min far

Dette er min sønn/Han er sønnen min

Hun er dattera mi

Hva slags musikk liker du?

Har du sett byen?

Hvor finner jeg butikkene?

Takk for hjelpa!

Peace

Hello

How are you

Goodbye

Be seeing you

Have a safe journey

Best wishes to your family.

Do come again

Please

Thank you

That's nothing

Where is the toilet?

Left

Right

Straight on

Behind you

Where do I sleep

I am vegetarian

Where is the nearest telephone?

Fred

Hei/Hallo

Hvordan står det til?

Hat det/Horna

Sees seinere/På gjensyn

God tur

Ha det bra

Velkommen tilbake

Takk

Takk/Tusen takk

Hvor et toalettet/do/WC

Venstre

Høgre

Rett fram

Bak/Derdu kom fra

Hvor kan jeg#g sove

Jeg er vegetarianer

Hvor finner jeg nænneste telefon?

Host and Travel Reports

Singapore and Australa 2006

Travel experience sent by Till Lembke 18 years old, the youngest Servas member of Servas Belgium and Luxemburg.

Hello Rita !
How are you ?

I'm in Adelaide at the moment with the Dow family, a superb Servas family !

Actually all my Servas experiences (I've had four so far) have been great ! My first contact was Anne in Singapore. We got on so well that I left all my belongings at her place when I left for Malaysia. I spent a total of 6 days with her ... and we are going to see each other again in New Mexico this summer. Thanks to her I've been able to meet 'real' Singaporeans, and I've had the chance to mix with everyday life in town, not only as a tourist.

I am also very happy to have been able to stay with Bruce and Bernadette in Darwin because this gave me the opportunity to have a local insight into the relationships with the natives in Northern Australia. If I hadn't had this conversation I would have left Darwin with a very pessimistic idea of relationships between Aborigines and white Australians.

In Alice Springs I contacted Ernie who is a day host and we went on a hike through the Australian desert hills.

And as I have already said, I'm now staying with Rose and Alastair and their two children, Aisha and Angus.

In a word, it is great !
Thank you for your work and all my best wishes to you.
Yours, Till

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

"When your ship, long moored in harbour,
gives the illusion of being a house,
PUT OUT TO SEA!
Save the boat's journeying soul
and your own pilgrim soul,
cost what it may."
— Archbishop Helder Camara

On the road in Africa with Servas

We are a French family (Emmanuel & Nathalie, Pollux - 7, Titus - 5 and Cléobule - 10 months) travelling around the world with a 4WD truck. After Asia, where it was just amazing for us as Europeans to spend some time with Indian and Thai families, then Oceania and South America, with the warm welcomes from Argentinean hosts, we are glad to arrive in Africa.

Africa is our last continent before reaching Europe and to go back home after this four years on the road.

Travelling overland is a good way to discover the evolution of the people kilometre by kilometre.

Servas is for us the best organisation to achieve our goal to understand a little bit more the people around the world and in a peaceful atmosphere. Servas gives us the opportunity to meet people for whom the relations between humans are essentials, with the duty of helping each other. Within Servas, we think that there is no taboo because the relation is made to understand and to be richer.

Thanks to Sheldon Weeks, we have been in contact with Tracey and Alec Collier in Durban, South Africa who are very keen on Zulu culture and active in supporting its development with a great approach: "help the people to help themselves".

We are now in Botswana, discovering another face of Southern Africa. Our next destinations will be Namibia, Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya, Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt before crossing the Middle East. We have already made our contacts in those countries and we will change our route to meet the different hosts.

Thank you to all the people who have opened their doors. We hope to see you in Paris when we return home in June 2007.

*With peace
Emmanuel, Nathalie, Pollux, Titus and Cléobule.*



Unimogers out the gate at 943 Tlokweng, Botswana

Country Reports

Turkey

1 - We open our (Servas Turkey) new Website.

The new Servas Turkey Web Site has been built in order to have better communication with Servas members and to share experiences on the internet.

Beside this we try to give some important information about Turkey to Servas visitors on the English pages of the web site.

On the next step we will develop an administrator interface to send out newsletters, process membership online, provide member management ...

We are targeting a more functional and user friendly design for Servas members.

www.servasturkiye.com

2 - Indian delegation of Servas visited our country for 5 days. Our servas members hosted all of them.

Twelve members of Servas India visited Istanbul in the second week of June 06.

On the last night of the visit, there was a "good bye dinner" at one of our member's, Kemal's, terrace. We were about 25 Servas friendly people. There was delicious Turkish food and a brilliant Bosphorus scene.

We talked about world's actual problems such as the Middle East, wars and of course peace. Servas Turkey Coordinator, Sercan, Servas India Coordinator Ramesh and Geetha Metha (a member of Servas India) made very nice and illustrative conversations about Servas, cultures, people and our roles in the connection of these diversities as Servas. Observations of Servas India about Turkey were really interesting and they had got almost the same ideas about multicultural Turkey. Next morning Ramesh and Geetha prepared Indian food for the breakfast

Regards, Devrim, Turkey

U . S . A .

WE ARE MOVING!

We wish to announce to you the timing of our national office move from
11 John Street in New York City
to
1125 16th Street, Suite 201 in Arcata, California.

Our last fully-operating business day at 11 John Street in NYC will end at **4pm on Friday, August 18th, 2006.**

The phones [(212) 267-0252] will be answered for questions only until Wednesday, August 23rd, 3pm EST.

We will re-open normal operations at:

U. S. SERVAS

1125 16th Street, Suite 201

Arcata, CA 95521-5585

(707) 825-1714 or

In the U.S. ONLY (888) 825-1714

Fax: (707) 825-1762

NOTE: these phone numbers will be active on **Wednesday, August 30th, 2006**, under the direction of Daryl Chinn, U.S. Servas board member, and Judy Sears, office administrator. Many Servas volunteers from the Northern California area have also offered to help us make this transition go as smoothly as possible.

NOTE: Our New York staff, along with our Arcata staff, will continue to respond to e-mail inquiries during this transition time.

Mail sent to the New York office will be forwarded to Arcata by the U.S. Post Office. We are told this forwarding may take up to two weeks.

Please check back often for further announcements. We intend to have an opening celebration in the fall, to be announced.

Help us to spread the word of this move to other SERVAS members.

In peace and gratitude,

U.S. Servas, New York and California

Experiences

Malawi Youth helps the world

Saulo PHIRI – the young volunteer from Cape MacClear (Ireland travel report, July 2006) has returned to Malawi. Saulo (who had never left Malawi before or flown in a plane), flew off to Kenya after helping Bangwe based youth NGO – AYISE prepare the foundation for a new sports centre in Namiyango as part of a workcamp. In Kenya he attended his first international workcamp helping empower women and build community buildings. Speaking to our reporter Saulo commented *‘Nairobi was enormous, busy and noisy, it scared me, but then I got to London and the size of that city was difficult to believe. Its been a roller-coaster year for me. I have worked very hard and been to places and countries I only dreamt of seeing and felt the cold that almost froze my breath! People were very kind to me but I never forgot my home and promoted it wherever I went and was very proud of my country.’* Saulo cared for disadvantaged youth in the Welsh valleys in the UK and created foot paths in the Snowdonia National Park footing 10km a day in winter weather. He left the UK in October to complete conservation volunteer work with the NGO Concordia in France, in Germany and renovation with Lunaria in Italy. He returned to the UK in December 2005, to complete a 3-month placement with the United Nations Exchange, which saw him leading youth activities and promoting third world development issues by talking to students in local schools. His efforts were covered by newspapers and he promoted the idea of Fair Trade for African-made products. His last workcamp was in Southern England with the workcamp group Concordia-UK and ended in a street festival and a 10km fun run which he completed to raise funds for a local school. Surprisingly his favourite place was Israel because the peace volunteers of an organisation called Servas were so keen to host him. There he spent a 2 week holiday, staying in Haifa – the town of recent Hezbollah bombing from Lebanon. Speaking from his home in Blantyre he told Young N’ Free, *I am delighted to be home and I hope I have challenged British and Europeans perceptions of African youth. We have high unemployment in Malawi and I think volunteering is a way of getting experience and exposure.*

I think there is a lot that can be learnt from voluntary work and it needs to be seen more positively by young people and parents need to encourage and give it more support’.

Saulo was an outgoing volunteer for the Bangwe based NGO called AYISE and worked with their partner organisations abroad. AYISE’s MWAI programme runs 2-4week social projects which can see youth from Malawi and worldwide take part in volunteer activities, such building schools houses in rural areas, tree planting, conservation in national parks, renovation of orphanages etc. For those interested volunteering, helping in leading, sponsoring please contact AYISE on ayise@malawi.net or visit their officers in Bangwe or contact Saulo PHIRI on phirisaulo@yahoo.com

Hungarian view of British AGM

Dear Ann and John

Thank you ever so much for the possibility of joining your Servas AGM this year. It was a unique experience for me.

I had a SUPERB weekend with all of you and I did feel part of of such friendly and lovely British Servas Family, which I did appreciate very much, especially because I am quite far from my homeland. I was so glad to see smiling faces all the time around me that weekend. That was very nice indeed to met both of you, other new hosts and my old (meaning not the age!) Servas friends with whom I have stayed but I had not seen for over 10 years.

Thank you once again for a BRILLIANT weekend.

Valèria Erdős, Hungary

(Note: It was thanks to Valèria that we had the Language page in Hungarian in May 2006. Ed.)

Translators needed - please!

I am looking for a team of up to 24 Spanish speakers to translate SI News 2007 into Spanish. I have a few people so far but the more we have the easier it is for everybody. Please let me know that you can help by emailing me on: jgiffould@aol.com or newsletter@servas.org Muchas gracias.

Exco Info

Starting Point: New Servas International Photo Contest!

An on-line photo exhibition and international photo contest will be opened for Servas hosts and travelers, and you are invited to help start the first pilot test.

Theme of the exhibit and contest is: "Peaceful Faces, Peaceful Places and Peaceful Deeds".

Any member of any Servas Group and their friends will be able to display their pictures in a free "digital warehouse" managed by Easel.ca. Photos would be freely accessible in the on-line gallery. Your photos would remain your property. Additional access to some photos would be arranged, for educational uses reserved by Servas.

This is not just a global photo show for expert photographers. It will include images captured by new talent and everyday people. If a pilot project shows it is successful, it will help link Servas people to each other, and to their interpretations of peace.

High quality photos will be selected by an International Judges Panel including a renowned photographer and a distinguished member of the UN. Organizers are now seeking interest among Servas Member Groups, to twin with each other, to arrange for the first-ever international sister exhibitions of the Servas International Photos for Peace Project.

The Servas International Photos for Peace Project advances peace on two levels. It combines the community-building and friendship-building functions of Servas International and Easel.ca, bringing together art and community in global outreach. Founded in August 2004, Easel.ca is an online arts community specializing in the promotion of original works of art of all mediums. This is a non-commercial use of its specialty approach.

By entering you may:

- visually interpret any of the dramatic stories of peace with photography displayed globally by Easel.ca facilities;
- extend your personal communities of friendship and intercultural understanding.

Through the Servas system of hosted travel, you can also advance cross-cultural understanding by choosing to visit people, places and activities similar to those featured in the photos.

Additional technical details of how to submit photos have already been arranged and will be tested.

What we need now, are signals from Member Groups that they would like to participate in the first pilot project. Who wants to be among the first? Please let us know.

Gary Sealey president@servas.org

Russians and Chechens work together on developing Constructive Nonviolent Conflict Management

by Pat Patfoort

(Pat Patfoort did an excellent job as one of the moderators at the eGA. Pat works in Conflict Management, which should be part of what we do as Servas members. She has written various papers on her work. They are quite long and so extracts have been taken to give us ideas and help us to see our way forward in the world. If you are interested in the complete paper then contact the newsletter email.)

We have brought Russians and Chechens together, during two one-week seminars, the first in St-Petersburg and the second in Rostov, in October 2005. The objectives of these seminars were to learn more about violence and conflicts, to develop knowledge and skills in nonviolence and nonviolent conflict management, and to learn to use those concretely, first in ordinary daily cases, and then in the conflict between Russians and Chechens.

In each group there were about 16 participants, including teachers, educators, social workers, directors of schools and libraries, psychologists (for instance involved in rehabilitation of children and teenagers, or working with immigrants, or in psychiatric hospitals with people who committed physical injuries, or in prisons), lawyers, journalists, members of humanitarian organisations and human rights organisations. In the beginning of the seminar each participant presented him/herself and expressed his/her expectations.

(Following are the topics covered)

- 1) Expectations of the participants for this seminar
- 2) Associations with pain and suffering
- 3) Transforming conflicts from the individual to the inter-ethnic level
- 4) Working on solutions
- 5) Meeting of Russians and Chechens in Equivalency
- 6) Evaluation and results of this seminar

One of many:

Here we felt as if it was a real solution, but there is still lack of **trust**. We need to build confidence between people in real negotiations.

I wish the description of this seminar will help others to think about how hatred, images of enemies, prejudices and despair can be replaced by communication, understanding, respect and hope.

Peace

SERVAS BELGIUM & LUXEMBURG

About the activity of the “Peace Group” and the ‘Day of Peace’ 18th of June 2006

Two years ago I joined the national team of Servas Belgium and Luxemburg, composed of the national secretary and the coordinators, as Peace Secretary.

For one year, Servas members have answered to the announcement of creating a peace group.

Their concerns are the following:

- What do members feel about Servas and its connection to peace?
- How could we create dynamics within Servas?
- How could we define the general core of Servas?

The answer and the result were: let's make a group and let's get to know each other better.

The specific actions were:

- Inquire from members as to what Servas, as an organisation, means to them.
- The general answer is: Servas is an organisation to approach others and by this create a peaceful mind without a fear of being different.
- Inquire if Servas members were ready to give hospitality to people active in peace organisations but non-Servas members.
- We already have 15 families willing to invite in their home non Servas members active for peace. The inquiry is still going on!
- Organize a mega picnic with the aim: I would like to know you better!”

The purpose is to stimulate visits between our own members, the national group Belgian & Luxemburg.

More than 30 members presented themselves to participate in this exchange.

The picnic itself and the Breughel walk have been a great success, more than 80 participants came to meet each other to express their wish to be more active within Servas to create more dynamics within the organisation.

The peace group is getting bigger, we have 3 more members to organize the 2007 Peace Day. This will take place in the region Ronquières/Ecaussines (S. Belgium)

My conclusion is: When people get to know each other better they feel part of something in common and positive energy is emerging. Start small, within your own country and develop the positive mind of a peace network within an international peace organisation.

We send our special regards to Bob Lutweiler, the founder of Servas. Thanks and great appreciation for the work of our Nat Sec Rita Dessauvage. Special thanks to the Belgian & Luxembourg Peace Group.

Peaceful regards to all Servas members.

Julie Pesesse Peace Secretary Servas Belgium & Luxemburg
belgium@servas.org

Tools for Peace

Part 1

Let us see how the people tend to lose peace and happiness in their day to day life, and from an individual to the effectiveness of the entire society. To begin with let us see into the tools we should seek to gain Peace.

We all must understand that life is dear to all. Nobody wishes to gain any harm to his mind and body, neither a part nor as a whole. As one loves his own self he should treat other the same. As such do not harm others, what will you gain through another one's grief. Speak not harsh to anyone as you too do not like and retort the painful species in exchange which may bruise you.

Part 2

Today we will discuss hatred and selfishness. In the past when we go through the ancient history King Asoka of India conquered the Kingdoms up to Mongolia in Central Asia and he whole of India, Millions of people were killed in war. King Alexander the Great did the same.

In the recent past people faced World War I and World War II. What was the root cause for these intolerable happenings?

Again it was supremacy for power and hatred. What was the outcome? It was bloodshed and thousands of innocents made refugees.

Hatred! Remember the Atomic Bombing of Nagasaki and Hiroshima. People suffer even to this date with the effects of that bombing.

Why not we replace hatred with love. If everybody loves the other and develops kindness and affection what a beautiful world we could achieve.

- “Hatreds never cease through hatred in this world; through love alone they cease. This is an eternal law.”-

-* non – anger (Avera)

In Peace, -Nandee- Exco Peace Secretary

Youth

CENTRAL AMERICA REGIONAL MEETING “YOUTH AND LEADERSHIP IN SERVAS”

- Here I am again. Another month with more brief news for you to share. As you know Servas Youth is growing and taking action in several levels and regions, well, Central America and the Caribbean region is our next stop.
- “*Central America Youth and Leadership in Servas, January '07*” is a project that the International Youth Coordinator is working on right now with the support of the vice president, the DFC and mostly all the national groups of the area including Mexico. This region, without area coordinator and plenty of needs could be supported by Servas Youth in several ways.
- During the GA Servas Youth organized a lunch with all the national secretaries present from the region and other members. Also the Vice President (now in charge) joined us, to find the way to provide some support to this area. The most important outcome from that lunch was a personal bridge with these members. Great people. After the Latina meeting Servas Youth has maintained a strong mail correspondence with this area looking for volunteers to the Servas Youth Working Group, to try to find a city to host a SYLE the next year, offering help in several matters and reinforcing the link with these Servas.
- The action will be a meeting in Costa Rica during the second week of January for Servas regional leaders and Servas youth members from Central America and the Caribbean to celebrate specific workshops and discussions based on two topics:
 - Develop the youth in the area
 - Improve the Servas outreach and structure in the area
- Workshops on:
 - **Design a development plan for the area including Youth actions.** For this assistance in material, technical support, guide, and others will be requested from DFC.
 - **Presentation of the Servas Youth Programs.** Looking for an strong presence of this are in the S.Y. Working Group, cities that will host a SYLE, designation of a Youth Contact for each country.
 - **Training for Servas Youth Leaders.** Look for new ways to develop the youth in the area. How the Servas structure works. Conflict resolution. Construction of networks with other members.
 - **Link with other Youth NGOs.** Invitation to other NGOs working in the area to make a brief presentation and look for the way to work together.
 - **Presentation of the results of Servas Youth Working Group.** For next January we will have already results from each sub-group to present, re-discuss and share.
- A dynamic e-mail correspondence is happening with this national groups to put all the pieces together. Each country was invited to send proposal to include on the agenda and to let us know its reality. Will be a pleasure share with you the agenda when it is done. And obviously you are invited to join us. Central America receives a lot of travelers and has a huge potential in Servas.
- Thanks for your attention and soon you will hear more about this through this Servas Monthly News.

Pablo Chufeni, Youth Co-ordinator

THE BARRIERS OF THE LANGUAGE FOR TRAVELLING YOUTH AND THE BENEFITS THAT SERVAS YOUTH OFFERS

Communication is of supreme importance and it is the base of a good human coexistence. Overall it is important for the youth that we have at the present of our countries. At world level it is necessary to know or at least to have the base of another language different to our own, since when facing the globalization the communication is fundamental among countries, cultures and people.

The language can be restrictive, it can also open many doors according to how people take advantage of it and have the necessary tools for it. Servas Youth, is a group that is newly formed, and is helping to conquer the barriers of the language. This offers big benefits and opportunities for exchanging languages and overall the option of learning traveling.

Being a young traveler means to enjoy more as an experimental education, not so much as formal lessons, although these they are important. Servas Youth allows you this and more, since when visiting, chatting and knowing people around the world enhances learning so that you know more and better.

As world youth builds, from our present to a different world, they should know how to take advantage of the opportunities that today SERVAS offers us. In this way they can achieve a world without barriers of languages.

Diana Tomás, Servas Guatemala

See also:

P2 Servas Belgium with UN website and Youth

p3 Servas Britain and the Youth Camp, 2007

p7 Servas Malawi, Youth helps the world.