



Servas Monthly News



July 2006

Time Zone differences

- I sent my email at 10.00 last night. I wonder why I got a reply from A in North America before B in Asia.
- It is 3pm here in Britain, I think I will just check that point with C in Japan on the phone.
- I want to check out staying with D in France, it is 8.30 pm here (UK) so not too late.
- Exco teleconferencing, now ranging between Canada, USA, Italy, India and Sri Lanka

A few scenarios that have happened or might happen. And they are all having to deal with one thing - different countries run on different times. We all know that. Yet how often do we really consider it?

Look at the examples:

- 10.00 pm in UK, time to think of sleeping, but in North America it could be up to 8 hours earlier, maybe end of lunch time with all the afternoon to go. Whereas Asia could be 6 hours later and so probably still fast asleep in the next morning.
- 3pm in Britain is midnight in Japan. A phone call would not be very welcome.
- In France one is asked to not call after 9pm. Whoops that makes it 9.30pm. Now to apologise for calling at the wrong time.

I know that Exco diligently try to find a time that is suitable for all. That is often difficult enough for people in one country with one time zone. Now consider people in different time zones. Look at the spread of times between Sri Lanka and North America. There are 14 hours difference which could include Sri Lanka being a day ahead of North America, with Europe in the middle. Hence they work their meeting times on GMT, Greenwich Mean Time. This is the international recognised time by many organisations including aviation. So a teleconference at 16.30 GMT would be 22.30 for Sri Lanka - bedtime, and 8.30 GMT for North America Pacific coast, just after breakfast perhaps with Europe coming in at 17.30.

Understanding the communication problems for instant contact around the world can help people communicate better. They will understand then what the people they are talking to might be doing, and it will not be the same as themselves.

Travel tips

Travel tips is a new column. This issue it is introducing itself and giving the first column. The author, John Gunther, would welcome people's comments about the articles.

Meetings

Lots of meetings are emerging. I am aware that it is past the date due for registering for the meeting in Turkey. However I included the detail so that people could be aware of what is going on. There is no harm in asking if any places are available.

Note the Youth meeting for next year on p10. More detail will be coming, hopefully next month.

Websites

I have asked for people to send in ideas for useful/interesting/relevant websites.

Gary Sealey has sent the following one. It covers a range of in country tours and forums on many issues. There is a block on Peace issues which could be especially relevant to Servas.

<http://www.globalexchange.org/tours/byIssue.html#6>

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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.

News from South America and Africa

South America Area Coordinator

Congratulations!

Exco monitored the South America Area Coordinator Election. We are pleased to confirm Roberto Borenstein as Servas South America Area Coordinator.

We wish you and Servas South America much success.

At the end of the election schedule, EXCO called all the Servas Member Groups of Servas America, namely Servas Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

As you know, through the efforts of SI General Secretary, Pramod Kumar we had already initiated and have completed a Servas South America Area Review. This review of Areas was requested by the GA. That Review determined what Member Groups are part of the Servas South America Area and are therefore eligible to vote. (Pramod will be publicly documenting the review.)

We know Servas wants to improve democratic election procedures. We therefore took care to respect the spirit of Democracy, particularly as there was only one candidate, who was also the organizer of the election.

We worked to make sure that there was no doubt about the outcomes of the South America Servas Area election. We wanted to help make sure the elected candidate could count on a majority of support during the next term of office.

Bolivia

It is a big joy for me to be able to announce that Servas Bolivia is coming back to life. Nils Peters, an enthusiastic Servas member born in Germany in 1977, has signed up as a host in the town of Santa Cruz de la Sierra, having also volunteered to become a Servas coordinator and help in re-establishing Servas in Bolivia.

Nils Peters' family joined Servas in 1990, having hosted travelers from all over the world. Nils has also gathered experience as a Servas traveler, having visited hosts in Finland, Spain and Israel.

There is 1 year that Nils and his wife (Marion) have been living in Bolivia. Marion has German, Bolivian, Argentinean and Japanese background. Besides Germany and Bolivia, they have also lived in the US.

As a first step, Nils will initially establish a network of new hosts in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, where he knows some people that will probably become Servas hosts.

We will soon be issuing an updated host list for Servas Bolivia, with the addition of the new members in Santa Cruz de la Sierra.

Please, let's welcome Nils Peters as new host and new Main Contact for Servas Bolivia.

Roberto Borenstein, South America - Area Coordinator

The African News comes with thanks to Demelza Benbow of Malawi for her Servas Malawi Newsletter.

Botswana

Servas Botswana held a successful AGM. For the report contact Sheldon Weeks at Botswana@servas.org

Uganda

Servas Uganda now has an up to date host list.

Malawi

Servas Malawi will be having a get-together on Saturday, 28 October. Meeting for a social walk at the Petroda gas station near Blantyre at 14,00h. Essential to bring hat, water, snacks and a smile.

Southern Africa

The Southern Africa Area Meeting will be in Livingstone, Zambia during August 2007.

Africa - Scandinavia Links

As a part of working together, links have been set up between various countries. This was started in Barcelona in 2004. The aim was to link African countries with Scandinavian countries for friendship, experience, help and cross-cultural links. This idea was extended in Latina in 2006 and included an evening meeting to review ideas. The following are the links:

Botswana - Sweden
Zambia - Norway
Zimbabwe - Finland
Malawi - Iceland
South Africa - Denmark

Malawi - Iceland Link History

- Servas International meeting in Barcelona in 2004 decides to link Scandinavian countries Southern African countries (based on the idea of Zambia's Margaret Whitehead) *Mali became linked to Iceland.*
- Following this decision/meeting the N/S Bergapora Skukadottir was contacted about a possible visit in summer '04. This did not work out. 2005 Christopher Morden took over as N/S and emails were exchanged.
- In Servas Malawi's National Newsletter information on Iceland was include in the '*Link Country Corner*'
- The link between Malawi and Iceland certainly puts very contrasting countries into closer contact. Strangely enough there are some similarities and co-operation could be mutually beneficial.

Servas Malawi hopes to help support Iceland:

- By contacting Icelandic volunteers who are annually placed in Malawi to offer them free hospitality in our Servas homes - we have few Servas Travellers in Malawi and this would be an indirect way of boosting hosting.
- By introducing Servas to the Icelandic volunteers - hoping they may join Servas once back in Iceland.

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 room, 45,- Euro double room

13-17 years old: 20,- Euro

3-12 years old: 10,- Euro

Troya Meeting, Turkey

Servas Turkey welcomes all to their:

3rd Euro Asian Meeting

Dates: 16 - 20 August 2006

Place: Troya, Turkey

website: www.servas.org

See p 6 for detail

Languages- Austrian German

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 **twelfth** language is **Austrian German**

(F) = formal, for people you do not know

(I) = Informal for people you know well

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

Eins

Zwei

Drei

Vier

Fünf

Sechs

Sieben

Acht

Neun

Zehn

Zwanzig

Dreißig

Vierzig

Fünzig

Sechzig

Siebzig

Achzig

Neunzig

Hundert

Tausand

ißt du Fleisch?

Wo wohnst du?

Das ist meine Schwester

Das ist mein Bruder

Das ist meine Mutter

Das ist meine Vater

Das ist mein Sohn

Das ist mein Tochter

Welche Musik hörst du gern?

Warst du schon in der Stadt?

Wo sind Geschäfte?

Gibt es einen Markt?

Danke für Ihre Hilfe. (F)

Danke für deine Hilfe. (I)

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?

Friede

Hallo! (I) Grüß Gott! (F)

Wie geht's?

Auf Wiedersehen!

Bis bald!

Gute Reise!

Alles Gute!

Komm bald wieder!

Bitte

Danke

Gern!

Wo ist die Toilette?

Links

Rechts

Geradeaus

Hinter dir

Wo werde ich schlafen?

Ich bin

Vegetarier/Vegetarierin

Wo kann ich telefonieren?

Travel Reports - Malawi to Ireland

SERVAS IRELAND, MAY 2006.

MY EXPERIENCES OF SERVAS

- ▶ Became a member because my sponsor mom was national secretary of Servas Malawi and a host.
- ▶ Experienced hosting when Servas Travellers visited Malawi and Mom arranged hosting for them.
- ▶ Took part in Servas National meetings which took place at my home in Blantyre – *I cooked the brownies!*
- ▶ Took part in Blantyre Servas social activities like hiking up Michiru Hill & visiting Leopard Match factory.
- ▶ *This was my first experience of Servas Travelling!*

PRE-VISIT PREPARATION:

I had planned to go to the USA, but to my ☹surprise I got refused a visitors visa. (*It cost ☹\$200 to apply!*)

I was tired and had really been looking forward to a 'holiday' and time to 'reflect upon my year away and what I'd done and achieved'. I had to start planning a new trip from zero and more the problem where to go? In the end Mom booked flights to Ireland x1 week, Scotland x1 week and Israel x2 weeks. *I couldn't wait to relax, chat and just be a tourist!*

TRAVEL & ARRIVAL TO IRELAND ✈:

The day before I flew to Ireland I was staying in Bury St Edmonds with my friends Andy and Emily and their 4 daughters; they used to be my old next door neighbours in Blantyre, Malawi. My mom had real problems finding out if I could go to Ireland without a visa but the Honorary Irish Consulate in Blantyre (Mr O'Neil) assured her I didn't need a visa. In the end I caught a night bus from Kentish Town to London Victoria where I took Terravision bus at 2am to London Stansted Airport. There I caught a 0600am Ryan Air charter flight - booked over the internet by Mom.

The flight itself was fast and good and the air felt fresh and cool when I arrived in Dublin all excited at 8am!

My Irish Servas hosts gave me directions and warmly welcomed me. I bought a day-travel ticket from the Airport for Dublin buses which I used for the whole day. I didn't have any problems finding my hosts house which was great (usually I'm useless with directions, I was obviously getting better at it).

ACCOMMODATION 🏠:

I stayed with *one Servas host* the whole trip in Ireland. The two story home of Gwyn and Sean in Dublin, in the Glasnevin area of Dublin. I had my own cosy bed – very nice. Over the weekend they drove to their holiday cottage in the North and I got to go with them!

FOOD 🍴:

Food was good in Ireland, similar to that in the UK with many of the same large brand supermarkets like Tesco etc. This was good because I was familiar with their foods; meals = rice, spaghetti, potato with meat sauces etc which I had got quite used to, was great. Fresh fruit, cheap chocolate bars and snacks to gobble at lunch-time where reasonably priced. I did try some Irish pubs out to and they had a rather special atmosphere and were 'smoke free'!!

TOURISM/TRAVEL IN IRELAND:

Just like any other big City, Dublin has well organised tours, with lots of free 'what to do' leaflets in the tourist centres. There were coaches and trains to take you in and out of Dublin and to places further a field like Galway on the west coast of Ireland. I'd wanted to go there but I ran out of time. There were lots of sight - seeing buses in Dublin taking and dropping you off at tourist attractions. But I did not take one because I prefer to walk and soak up the atmosphere at ground level! Prices on the trains, coaches and buses were more reasonable than those in the UK. Everybody speaks English in Ireland but I found their accent very difficult to understand at the beginning of my trip.

PERSONAL EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES

- ☹ Not knowing I was going to Ireland for sure, until 24 hours before I actually flew there!
- ☹ Getting 100% correct information upon whether or not I 'needed a visa or not' to go to Ireland.
- ☹ First time travelling abroad and having to organise all my hosts stays/hostels myself.
- ☹ My first travel experience as a Servas Traveller made me nervous – 'had I forgotten some Servas rule I was supposed to keep too?'
- ☹ Not feeling confident my 'volunteer visa' in my passport would allow me to re-enter Britain;
- ☹ Not getting to visit Galway. I only had 6 days in Ireland and by the time I'd decided where I wanted to go the Servas there had made other plans and couldn't host me! *Shame.*
- ☹ Not getting to stay with any other Servas hosts because I was spoilt by the hospitality + kindness of Gwen and Sean. ***But thanks thanks thanks!***

ENJOYABLE, REWARDING, FULFILLING

- ☺ The opportunity to be a member of an organisation like Servas and have the opportunity of staying with hosts.
- ☺ Being a Servas Traveller for the first time! Good fun
- ☺ The kindness and warm welcome I received from my hosts when they were obviously busy themselves.
- ☺ The opportunity to stay in a real 'Irish' (especially in Cavan) home and discuss and chat to my Irish hosts about their lives and the latest economic and cultural changes.
- ☺ Being taken by my hosts to their Cavan county holiday cottage in the north town of Cavan, near the Northern Ireland boarder. Very kind Sean and Gwyn to let me go – a great chance to see a different part of Ireland.
- ☺ My hosts allowing me to stay extra days with them beyond the normal just 2 nights and 2 days.
- ☺ I thought there was a special feeling to Ireland. The people are very relaxed and seem proud of their country, its recent EU development, and its rather stormy history.
- ☺ Meeting and having a companion to travel around with was great. The Servas Traveller from USA. She also stayed with Gwyn and Sean and came to Cavan with us. It was interesting to hear her travel stories and ideas – her outlook in life was similar to mine. That is another benefit of Servas that you often meet quite like-minded people and get cheap fleece jacket and lovely leather travel wallets given to you!!
- ☺ Rich linguistic heritage – Irish and all the music that goes with that, theatre and poetry.
(*There was actually plenty more, but we have run out of space, another time perhaps. Ed.*)

Saulo Phiri, Malawi

Country Reports - Turkey

We are going to Troy for riding, Canakkale for swimming, Mount IDA for breathing... going for a heart union

17-20 AUGUST 2006

LOCATION : Canakkale Troy EUROASIA
ACTIVITY : International Excursion
PARTICIPANTS: Servas Turkey Members and Potential Members

Servas Members from 15 Other Countries

GOOD NEWS!!!

**FEE PER PERSON : 120 EURO for room,
80 EURO for tent**

(Reduced from 220 Euro, Euro increased 30% and Servas friend find a cheap Bus)

DIFFICULTY RATING:

You are going to have a hotel, a bus and dinner in your hotel and lunch during your travel.

TRANSPORT: Istanbul-Canakkale-Istanbul 5 hours by bus.

DEADLINE FOR APPLICATION: 25.June.2006

COMMUNICATION: Oylum KURU, Evren ATVUR,
Sercan DUYGAN

E-Mail: oylulkuru@gmail.com,
evrenatvur@gmail.com, sercanduygan@gmail.com

THE THINGS THAT SHOULD BE BROUGHT :

Clothes:

- Walking boots (providing grip and supporting the ankles, having solid or jagged soles). It is recommended not to wear high-heeled, leather or flat-soled shoes.
- It is usually recommended to take substitute shoes and clothing according to the weather conditions(You should prefer clothes that can dry easily)
- A light jacket or gore-tex jacket
- Polar and Thermal Clothes
- A comfortable loose fitting trousers for walking (no blue jeans)
- In case it rains a raincoat or poncho
- Backpack (It can be 30 or 45 liters) or appropriate sports bag
- A hat and sunglasses

Cleaning Accessories:

- Wet towel towels, hand sanitizers, toilet paper, soap for hygiene
- Personal Hygiene (toothbrush, toothpaste, hand towel)
- sunscreen, lip balm, hand cream

Miscellaneous:

- a flashlight (with extra batteries)
- Thermos, appropriate water bottle or pet bottle
- An unbreakable cup for drink(including soup.)
- a compass or a whistle (only for precaution)
- If you have your medicine, painkiller...
- Camera with extra batteries and films

THE PROGRAM:

1st Day :

CONK SLOPE(The unity ordered by Mustafa Kemal stopped the occupation forces in Conk slope on 10 August 1915), ATATURK Monument and Battle Trenches

Arrival to the 57. Regiment Memorial, visiting the Memorial and the Monument (The first troop joined the Land Wards.)

Kaba Tepe Museum (The relics after the War of Canakkale including weapons, bullets, clothes and battlefield photographs are exhibited.)

Moving to Martyrs Memorial (It is the most magnificent memorial symbolizing our 253 thousand Martyrs) After visiting the Memorial go to CANAKKALE by ferry

HOTEL

2nd Day:

Cimenlik Castle

Naval Museum

Photograph Break in the replica of Nusret Mine Ship in the castle (One of the main actors of the Victory of Canakkale.)

Canakkale Archaeological Museum

HOTEL

3rd Day:

Travel to Assos (Behramkale)

We are moving to Mount Ida.

Ethnography Museum in Mount Ida

HOTEL

4th Day:

Historical Gallipoli Peninsula

Moving to the site of Ancient Troy in Hisarlik (At first Homer mentioned the story of Troy in Iliad and Odyssey. Crafty Odysseus devised a plan that ultimately doomed the Trojans. Sending all the Greek ships away or into hiding, it appeared to the Trojans that the Greeks had given up. The great wooden gift the Greeks left before the walls of the city of Troy appeared to be a peace offering to Athena. The Trojans dragged the wooden horse into their city to celebrate the end of the ten years of fighting. Killing Trojans and setting fire to the city, Greeks quickly won the war.)

Return To Istanbul

P.S.1 : Programme can be modified acc. To Travel Agency.

P.S.2 : The money includes Breakfast-Dinner-Travel-Hotel-Travel Guide & (Museum Fees, Dinner and Hotel extras paid by participants.)

Comments and Sharing

THE HISTORY OF CANAKKALE...

Canakkale is one of the precious places where a lot of civilizations were accommodated throughout the history. Together with the historical remnants, you can see the great combination of blue and green.

Dardanelles, whose shores touch both Europe and Asia, connects the sea of Marmara to the Aegean and the bank of European to Asia. That's why it has had a strategic significance since the Ancient Ages and has an active role in the history of civilization.

The city was known as Hellespontos and Dardanel in ancient times and has continued to resume its role as a major residential center since 3000 A.D. The province bearing the name Canakkale is 9,737 km squares with a 671 km coastline.

It is known that from the ancient ages people have settled this area. As the people living in the Aegean coast started seamanship the Greek sailors came here and had commercial relations with the community living here. Later Athens dominated the coasts of the straits. In the following centuries different societies captured Canakkale.

When under the control of Ottoman Empire, Fatih, The Emperor, had two citadels built on the narrowest two banks of the strait to be able to protect it. The citadel in the bank of Thrace was called as Kilitbahir and the citadel in the Anatolian bank was called Canak-kalesi or Sultan's Castle. (1452-53)

The date The Sultan's Castle was built was the first step of building today's Canakkale. The city has expanded through the time. Fatih built a mosque and Turkish hamam there. The following emperors understood the importance of the strait and they gave necessary importance to it while defending the country.

Later on it was exposed to the invasion of the Venetians and after that the Russian fleet forced the Strait, but later Ottoman Empire got the control again. Canakkale suffered its most difficult, but most honourable, days during the First World War. Turkish Soldiers established a legend that the Canakkale Strait was impassable. The importance of the Strait was once more understood after the war. Canakkale became a province of Turkey after the formation of the Turkish Republic.

Our Responsibilities

As human beings we have a responsibility towards others:

Whether Catholic or Protestant Christian, Sunnite or Shiite Muslim, Sikh, Hindu or Buddhist, or any other religion; we all have a responsibility towards our fellow man.

As Nationals of a political territory or economic region; we have a responsibility towards our fellow man.

Memories of Latina from India

Hi Friends,

Greetings to you and your families from all of us here in Servas India.

Four months have gone by after our wonderful meeting at Latina for the General Assembly. The memories still linger on and I sometimes wish that we relive these moments again. The excellent hospitality and conference arrangements starting with our breakfast till night has made this occasion a wonderful and a memorable gathering.

This was my first International Servas Conference and I thoroughly enjoyed each moment of it and I have tried to capture some of these lovely moments by my camera.

I have uploaded them to the following website for your viewing:

<http://s93.photobucket.com/albums/l42/subramanianlv/>

I am not an expert photographer, hence please excuse me for my poor shots.

I do look forward to meeting each of one as Servas Travellers (prior to our next GA) or as Delegates at the next General Assembly (hopefully in India).

Regards and best wishes,

Lvs, India

As Men or as Women; black, white, yellow, red, old or young; we have this responsibility.

Some times this responsibility is called "Human Rights"

So why are politicians incapable of fulfilling their greatest responsibility?

Whatever reference we use to describe ourselves, we must now assume that responsibility, as individuals, and do something to persuade our politicians that they HAVE TO fulfil their obligations. They MUST stop war. They MUST NOT encourage war. They MUST learn to negotiate not impose by force. They MUST be taught that peace is in everybody's interest.

And so, here is my plea:

Dear Important Person,

As a citizen of this planet, I urge you once and for all to negotiate a peace process in the Middle East, in Africa and anywhere else that considers war an answer to their problems.

Politicians in the first world originally created most of the current problems, so we have an even greater responsibility to put right the wrongs that we created.

Please help other citizens of the world to get on with their ordinary lives and not risk death by warfare, (after all, it makes economic sense!).

I cannot support a political regime that supports or encourages war.

Earn my vote: create peace.

Yours in trust, *Angela Fay, France*

July Update from EXCO

Here is an update on EXCO's work on the appointment of an auditor, and several other items.

Auditor:

We delayed a decision to appoint an auditor, whilst looking for a good auditing firm, at a reasonable price. Announcement to follow soon.

Book keeper

We are also seeking a part-time professional book-keeper, to set a good pace of recording accurate accounts.

Nepal Election Monitoring.

EXCO has received letters from a letter-writing campaign to do with Nepali Elections. We are compiling and examining this correspondence which we will share with officers and others for study and advice.

Guideline on SI Areas.

Thanks to Gurdev Singh and also to the cooperation of Robert Borenstein during the South American Area Co-ordinator elections, EXCO is considering a draft guideline on Areas -- expectations of Area Coordinators, Area Reviews, and Area Coordinator Elections. When we are satisfied with the draft we will send it to SI Officers and National Secretaries for review.

Peace.

Some of us have received several letters on the Middle East crisis and on Peace in general. We are preparing an advisory letter to help National Secretaries and Peace Secretaries, and we will update it on basis of comments received. Leave your national flags at home; send your hearts and minds.

SI Data.

Development work on unified, "federated" data continues. Expect to hear more about this in the next issue. The rising tide of technology has brought us a new Genie in a bottle: Ruby on Rails. Wait for it.

GA Minutes --

Honora Clemens has heroically followed up on the volunteer work of Uwe Federer and David Asher, and the assistance of Elena Paxia. She has put together the complete minutes of the GA using the input from all the above people. We will post this as the official version very shortly.

Servas Website.

We are doing a minor review of the website, with a view to making it convenient and current.

EXCO meeting.

Usually EXCO meets by teleconference nowadays. To support the Budget Process and other important items, EXCO should meet together this October, possibly near Area or regional meetings. Input to the EXCO Agenda is always welcome.

Servas Business Cards.

For the past two years Servas business cards have been used successfully by Mary Jane and Gary and some others. They are useful for outreach and networking. If there is interest, we could supply "artwork" for such cards, for local printing. Please let us know.

Gary Sealey, President

And from the Hávamál Eddaic poems (700 - 900 AD)

He is truly wise
Who's travelled far
and knows the way of the world.
He who has travelled
Can tell what spirit
Governs the men that he meets.

Travel tips

TIPS FOR CROSS CULTURAL TRAVEL

For me and for many, the best part of travel is learning and interacting with unfamiliar cultures. Discussing Islam, snacking on live termites, debating the societal effects of religious devotion, understanding how a person of modest means can be a conservative Republican ... extra-cultural experiences like these are what lure me on the road time after time. Not knowing what or who you'll encounter next is a literal thrill for many travellers.

Those same cultural unfamiliarities can also cause problems. Unintended insults, damaged international perceptions, financial loss, even crime and violence can result when you don't understand the culture in which you're immersed. Nothing ruins a vacation quite like dying or landing in prison along the way.

The purpose of this series then is to expose a variety of principles and situations of which knowledgeable travellers should be aware. This is not a paranoid listing of how horrible the rest of the world is. If it strikes you that way, you need to travel more (or not at all). Even where life is hard, there are many good, wonderful people to meet and share with.

For some Servas travellers, what I say will be obvious. To those, I apologize and invite you to skip on to something else or suggest future topics..

As an American, the viewpoint I express tends to be that of the Western traveller in the developing world. Similarly, many of my examples are taken from my Moroccan travels, where I learned an enormous amount about cross-cultural contact. Everything I say, though, can apply to some extent to every traveller in every country. Take away with you the generalizations rather than the narrow examples.

The next few columns will cover avoiding financial damage to hosts, awareness of hosts' self-interest, and engaging in sensitive discussions.

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RICH vs POOR I - DON'T PRESUME !

Travelling Westerners, no matter how affluent or poor, will often be perceived as rich – and relative to the locals, they often will be. Social contact between rich and poor can be awkward in any context. Trying to keep up with a rich friend's tastes in restaurants and entertainment can ruin an ordinary American's finances. On the other hand, almost everyone would find it uncomfortable if the rich friend paid for everything just to enable the other one to participate in their mutual social life. No matter how selfless the rich one's motives may be ("Hey, what the hell, I can afford it and you can't. I'll be happy to pay.") tensions would almost inevitably develop.

Even if you never play the "rich" role at home, you'll find yourself in it when you travel in developing nations. I use the term "developing" politely. In many areas of the world the lives of ordinary citizens are gradually improving. In many others, the rich are getting richer and ordinary people continue to struggle, year after year, for the bare necessities of life.

Virtually every Servas host is hospitable. It's the very definition of Servas but host hospitality sometimes exceeds financial capacity and many hosts, particularly those who have had few or no travellers, will suffer economically rather than rein in their desire to treat their guests well. That chicken and fish feast served up in your honour might well have cost a week's worth of grocery money.

Offering a host money, although a practical gift, is simply not part of the Servas tradition and it risks setting too commercial a tone. Once a visit is under way, family pride will often prevent a host family from accepting traveller help with hosting expenses. I've never had a problem, though, arriving at a host's home carrying an armload of fresh groceries. It makes the "visitor gift" both symbolic and practical, lessening the hospitality burden for a host of meager means.

Groups of two or more travellers can easily precipitate an unseen financial crisis. If your visit is extended, you'll probably develop a sufficiently honest relationship that allows you to contribute financially or in kind for the costs of hospitality.

Servas travelling is a way to go further on less money, but don't make that your priority. Be prepared to contribute as much to hosts as you would on low-end commercial accommodations. In almost every case, hosts won't consider accepting that much assistance, but it's arrogant of you to presume on their generosity. Hosts and travellers exchange cultural contact, attention, hospitality, and eventually friendship. Hosts' out-of-pocket costs should not be taken for granted.

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Youth

SERVAS YOUTH WORKING GROUP

- Hello there Servas members. It is great to speak to you as always. The last General Assembly gives a lot of support to Servas Youth (SY). One of the points that they approved was the creation of a working group to work with the coordination of SY. It was not easy, but the first move was done. A group from all around the world now is trying to start to work together on some projects.

• **Schedule for the Youth Working Group:**

- Construction of a concept – Meeting of the Servas Youth Team in Leeds.
- General invitation to National Secretaries – 2 Apr 06
- Personal invitations of the International Youth Coordinators. – 4th week April 2006
- Distribution of the “Application Forms” – 1st week May 2006
- Final reception to the “Application Forms” – 1st week June 2006
- Construction of sub groups by topics – 2nd week June 2006
- Instructions and deadlines to each sub group – 3rd week June 2006
- Assistance to sub groups by the International Youth Coordinators. – July/Nov 2006
- Reception of product of each sub group – Dec 06

- The schedule is being followed.
- It is important to remember that the Youth Working Group is composed of volunteers that have personal obligations, so the schedule could be changed. We cannot expect the same dedication of time and energy that we offer to Servas from every volunteer, it is a personal choice that each member makes.
- The Servas Youth Working Group now counts with volunteers from all around the world. The invitation was made based on the links of the International Youth Coordinators, meetings at the eGA, personal offers and recommendations from National Secretaries and other Servas International Officers. And the invitation is still open if some young members are out there waiting, come on board.
- Members from several countries, from every continent, are now working with the International Youth Coordinator in this Servas Youth Working Group, even if we still are in the first stage of introductions and “Let’s start to...” the perspectives are good in the long term.

- The subgroups and its members are:

1 - Develop the SYLE (Servas Youth Languages Experience)

MARINA - Brazil LILLY - Mexico
SARENA - Canada ANABELLE - France

2 - Translations of Servas Youth material

CHRISTINE - Austria ANIA – Poland
KATTIA – Mexico/Portugal FLORENT - France

3 - Compilation and design of an international CD for Servas Youth with "peace-youth-music"

KATTIA – México/Portugal MAGIARI - Venezuela
M. GABRIELE - Honduras MOURAD - Egypt

4 - Design a Logo, an slogan and a brochure for Servas Youth.

LUCIANA - Argentina CASSANDRA - New Zealand
TANVEER - Pakistan CHRISTINE - Austria

5 - Improve and upload the website

youth.servas.org

IAIN - Canada ENDER - Turkey
CATHERINE – Philippines RONEN - Israel

6 - Discussion and construction of a new concept of YOUTH for Servas.

ANDREZJ -Poland CAROLINA - Uruguay/Spain
MARY - Malawi ADRIANNE - USA/Argentina

7 - Presentation of articles about "Youth" and "Servas Youth" to be included in the Servas News Letter (Monthly and by year)

ANUJ - India (July)
DIANA - Guatemala (August)
FLORENT - France (September)
SARENA - Canada (October)
ANIA - Poland (November)
MARY - Malawi (December)

- This structure is a first draft, in time we'll see if changes need to be done and how it works. It is a long term project with medium term objectives. It is an open doors project, so if you are interested in helping, please let me know.

Lots of love to you and hope that your world is turning well.

Pablo Chufeni, Youth Coordinator

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