



This Month We Say Goodbye to a Dear Friend, Announce Two Upcoming International Meetings, & Present Some Fresh Ideas from Our Younger Members.

UPCOMING MEETING

All Are Welcome to a Meeting in The Netherlands on June 1
 Note: This is NOT the annual GA.



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SCWA Conference
 Kandy-Sri Lanka, 2011.

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Solution in Nepal



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EDITOR’S MESSAGE

Terry Stone, Editor
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Greetings from Greece on a cool, bright November morning. The “economia” may be dismal here, but the weather is splendid!

Welcome to another issue of *Servas International News*. Please keep sending items for publication so we are kept busy compiling this newsletter. I hope you enjoy, and please, please pass it on to ALL Servas members who have e-mail (and maybe print it out for those who don’t - it is printer friendly).

A Couple of Announcements:

We will not be including articles on “national” meetings/conferences. I looked at the Servas online calendar and there are at least five such meetings a month. That amount would overwhelm the newsletter and those stories can always be read online at www.servas.org. I would like to keep the newsletter relevant to an international audience.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Servas and the UN

As I write this note to you the world is celebrating United Nations Day. It is 66 years since the founding conference of the United Nations at San Francisco. In England, the next year, Servas founders met. It was a big time. The end of a war - and hope for a new era of peace and development.

Both Servas and the many-sided UN are now reaching out, to raise their profile and become more accessible. Today, the UN DESA (Department of Economic and Social Affairs) notified us that it was joining Facebook.

The United Nations links and represents governments. The UN is still the only place for all governments to discuss approaches to fundamental world issues – global change, poverty, justice. Relations between people have not developed as much as organizing for money, profit and trade, like World Trade Organization and business global coalitions. Other parts of global governance include the Bretton Woods institutions, including the World Bank. International Money regimes and massive investment in development are funded without any direct public consultation.

When you check out the UN on Facebook you will see some comments from some of the 3000 civil society groups are accredited to the UN. Most of these are voluntary societies, like Servas, or federations of peoples' groups. They observe and create an informed and concerned constituency that brings the people's perspective into high chambers.

Like Servas these other groups are a major force for goodwill and the values of hope. Otherwise, they have no authority, no policy role, and most like Servas (and unlike CARE, OXFAM, Medics) have no capacity for emergency assistance. What they can do, however, through civil society study-groups, letters and simple friendship is to bring their moral voice and special knowledge, in a non-religious and non-partisan way to the search for better solutions. They can point to the reasons which lie behind urgent human issues, more compelling for change than the global

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UPCOMING MEETING

All Are Welcome to a Meeting in The Netherlands June 1-6, 2012

By Lage Vuursche, The Netherlands, ServasNetherlands2012@gmail.com

Join us for a week in the Netherlands! We offer you a program of various activities and lots of fun in the Servas-spirit, above as well as below sea-level. There will be contributions from participants, invited speakers and activities in large and small groups, some pre-planned, and others spontaneous. Be open and let yourself be surprised.

People from all continents and all ages are very welcome!

We will also give you a great insight into the Dutch countryside and crafts. We are traveling by bus and we will visit:

- the Zaanse Schans: a historic village on the banks of the river Zaan with characteristic green wooden houses, charming stylized gardens, small hump-backed bridges, tradesmen's workshops and old windmills(www.zaanseschans.nl);
- the world-known and biggest international trade centre for flowers and plants in Aalsmeer (www.floraholland.com);
- the typical Dutch polder-landscape and the forests around the village Lage Vuursche near Utrecht and Amsterdam with a broad selection of sightseeing choices led by Servas-members in small groups.

Our accommodation is a bit more than one hour away from Schiphol International Airport at Lage Vuursche. The accommodation is owned by an organization of nature-friends (NIVON) and located in a beautifully forested surrounding with a peaceful atmosphere (www.nivon.nl).

Costs and Formalities:

The registration fee is 220 euros per person (150 under 12 years), including meals, lodging and bus transport for excursions.

Registration will be final, once the form is received and the payment is made in full before December 15th. If we

have less than 50 payments on this date, we have – unfortunately – to cancel the meeting.



The registration-form can be downloaded from <http://netherlands.servas.org>, where you can find more information, like photos of the venue.

Payment to:

Servas Nederland, ING account nr. 3613402

Use the following data for international payment:

BIC (SWIFT): INGBNL2A
IBAN NL25INGB0003613402

Last but not least: we have many hosts who are looking forward to accommodate you before June 1st and after June 6th.

Let's all meet and have a great time, so it will be a week to remember.

Looking forward to see you and be welcome in... *The Netherlands!*

Servas International
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UPCOMING MEETING

SCWA Conference

By Muhammad Naseem, Area Coordinator, Servas South Central West Asia - servaspakistan@yahoo.com

I feel immense pleasure to announce the Servas South Central West Asia (SCWA) Conference in Sri Lanka in December.

This Conference will be held in our region after a long time, so my humble request is to please attend this event and make it a successful area conference.

DATE:
9, 10, 11, December 2011

VENUE:
Nation Builders
Association Hostel
New Town, Kundasale
Kandy-Sri Lanka

AGENDA:

- 1 Introductions & presentation of Servas National reports.
- 2 Discussion on Servas Hosts & Servas Travelers qualities.
- 3 Improvement of Host List printing & quality of information.
- 4 Possibility of printing one consolidated host list covering the countries of SCW Asia in one single location & dispatch from the same location to cut down on costs.
- 5 Support & Buddy assistance to needy SCWA member countries.
- 6 Strengthen the Servas spirit & build up a good network in SCWA with special focus on democratic process in committee formations, greater transparency, dedication & commitment.
- 7 Involvement of Servas Youth in National & International Servas activities.
- 8 Solve the Servas Nepal dispute in priority & recognize a new board of Servas Nepal.
- 9 Restoring member status of Servas Nepal & Bangladesh in SI & open Servas doors in Afghanistan, Maldives, Tajikistan, Bhutan & Turkmenistan.

Most of the countries do not need a visa for Sri Lanka but if you need a letter from Servas Sri Lanka for your visa process, please let me know so that I will arrange it for you.

More detail is available on the Servas Pakistan website (<http://pages.intnet.mu/servas/southcentralwestasia/>) or you may contact me at: servaspakistan@yahoo.com

**“Don’t Let Van Get Cold”
Humanitarian Campaign**

A huge earthquake hit the city in the very east of Turkey called Van on 23rd, October, 2011. So far it has been reported that more than 600 people have been killed and thousands of them have been injured. The area is in a great need of stuff such as clothes, blankets, food and shelters. Servas Izmir of Turkey has launched a campaign and collected 150 blankets for the victims of the earthquake.

On behalf of servas izmir, emsettin kurt&mehmet ates
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Solution in Nepal

By Muhammad Naseem, Area Coordinator, Servas South Central West Asia - servaspakistan@yahoo.com



It is a great pleasure for me to announce that I did solve the Servas Nepal conflicts with the kind cooperation & help of both groups.

I reached Nepal on 20th of October & back to home on 27th, I am very glad with this success & achievement.

I am so thankful to nominated National Secretary of Servas Nepal Mr. Shyam Pradhan & nominated Deputy National Secretary of Servas Nepal Mr. Shiva Sherestha for their cooperation & trust on me to solve the problem.

They decided to work together to make Servas Nepal more active & strong.

I wish them all the best for their future work for Servas Nepal.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SYLVE IN MALAWI

Servas Malawi would really like to have someone come to our 2012 Servas Youth Language/Volunteer Exchange (SYLVE). Please contact me for details.

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NORDIC YOUTH MEETING

I was among those attending the Nordic Youth meeting in Denmark and want to say that for me, and all of us who attended the venue, it was most interesting and consciously well prepared event ever for all ages. The Danes had minimized the attendance fee by using self service. It was great fun for all of us to work together in the kitchen, setting or cleaning tables and washing dishes. Often there was too many of us wanting to participate. Not to mention, all the meals were vegetarian. There were no grudge whatsoever because everything served was most appetizing and delicious. The team of Servas-Denmark managed to get 10/10+ points again and great thanks to Susan and Jan for arranging it for all of us!

With love, Anne Hemming

Send comments & suggestions to newsletter@servas.org

REPORT

Annual Peace Update

What's Been Done & What Can Be Done

By Luisa Corbetta, Servas, International Peace Secretary

A new International Peace Day is approaching and it is my great pleasure to address you a new message as Servas International Peace Secretary. It will be shorter than last year as unfortunately I'm very ill, with little energy, but I'll try to stick to the main points.

PEACE is such a big word that it can mean everything and nothing. Usually NGOs, charities, voluntary organizations concentrate on one or few aspect to work

on: health, human rights, the environment, disarmament, etc...

Servas concentrates upon the encounter between different cultures and identities. I have already written about that in my previous message in September 2010, now I would like to stress on the encounter between people belonging to the "1st world" and others. I am inspired by the wave of rebellion coming from North Africa and the Middle East, the

bloodshed, the efforts of refugee's boats to reach a safe country often drowning in the sea and the inability, or unwillingness, of European and western countries to help, to offer shelter.

What can Servas do? Offer it, not only in Italy, but everywhere people are displaced and seek refuge. This happens in several parts of the world.


Such an action is certainly more difficult than hosting people with a way of living and background similar to ours, but why not try? Of course, one can't do it individually, a network is necessary, and The Intelligent Road Map (see link below) can be helpful.

And now I would like to report the activities which have been carried out about Peace in Servas International:

- **March 15th 2011:** Oral statement submitted by Servas International on Human Rights Education and Training
- **October 2010:** Accreditation of the Servas United Nations observers and their activities, including the program of the Peace Building training courses
- **February 16th, 2011:** Welcome address through Skype by Luisa Corbetta to the participants at the beginning of their peace building course at El Bosque University (Bogotá).
- **Peace courses in various Servas countries:** Great Britain, Uruguay, Portugal, Brasil, Spain
- **May 2011:** Contacts with Palestinians. Focal meetings
- **28 Feb. 28th – March 25th 2011:** 16th session On Human rights
- Report by Hilda Burer and Catherine Burer Lehmann, Representatives of Servas International to United Nations Office in Geneva
- Servas UN involvement

For more details about the activities, and information about the Intelligent Road Map and Peace Course, please click on http://www.servas.org/siexco/index.php/Peace_Secretary_materials.

Many other peace activities have been carried out by Peace Secretaries and National Secretaries. I would be grateful if you will share and spread them.

I wish you to continue your good work and I thank you for all your good work and wish you to continue and be successful. 

Remembering Luisa Corbetta

by her brother, Piergiorgio and sister Rosetta Corbetta

On 27 October our sister Luisa has left us, after suffering since one year from a terminal disease. Generally it is always hard to find the right words to express feelings: all kind of feelings, but particularly those "great" feelings such as love and pain. In the case of Luisa is even harder to talk about her death, since she was seen by everyone as a true example of a person full of life and joy. She loved the seaside, the mountains, and travelling; she was curious and enthusiastic; she always wanted to live. This wonderful way of living life has not abandoned her even when she realized what was going to happen. She understood right away and perhaps sooner than all of us that this time the disease would have won, and yet she did not fall into depression as perhaps would have happened to many of us, but continued to live her life as before. She did not do this in a 'naïve' way, as a hope of escaping from her fate, but rather since she was always convinced that life should be lived with joy and passion even when only a small fragment of it is left.

This vitality was also expressed in her way of relating with others: she was a woman that generously developed many friendships and personal relations, and who has been surrounded for her entire life by friends who supported her and provided constant help throughout the course of her illness, until her very last moment.

This generosity is expressed not only in personal relationships, but is also mirrored through her social relations. Her whole life has been dedicated to a strong engagement in political and social movements. In particular we would like to mention her commitment to the "Women House" in Turin, the "Women in Black" movement in support to Palestinian women, Amnesty International, many initiatives supporting African Refugees in Turin, and finally her commitment with Servas as Peace Secretary. For all that which we will always be grateful with her and we will remember her with love.

MEETING REPORT

Servas Nordic Youth Meeting

A Message from the Young People

By Magiari Díaz Díaz
 Servas Youth Development Officer
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From the moment I landed in Denmark I knew something magical was about to happen. It was 11pm and the most beautiful sunset was happening in front of our very eyes. The caring smile and loving arms of Sus (Susanne Thestrup, Nordic Meeting Co-organiser) met us at Copenhagen Airport.

Sus had sent her charming young son Aron to look for us. "Go find a young lady with black hair, always smiling, and a... ginger Toby" she said. So he did. Only he did not tell us, and we did not ask. We just bumped into each other, got chatting, laughing and walking with him, trusted him to lead us on our next adventure. And that's Servas for me: Trust – magic that will take you where you need to be.

"I'm in Denmark! I'm in Denmark!" I kept shouting all the way from the airport to Sus' house – not easy to believe for me, after all the hard work and fair amount of magic it took to get me there all the way from Venezuela. The excitement didn't wear off over the next couple of days of preparation prior to the meeting. Juggling with Aron around the house surely kept the excitement level to the maximum – just in case those cooking dinner, planning, packing or organising, needed a laugh or a reminder that we came together to have fun!



So, when the grandiose moment to meet with the rest of the participants arrived, an explosion of laughter, hugs and tears overtook Copenhagen Train Station. I still remember the moment I approached my friends Dianne Peterson and Minna



Aho from behind and said "Guess who?" only to meet each other's eyes overflowing with tears, unable to speak. "I love you" would have been too insignificant a thing to say.

With full hearts and heavy bags, Aron led us on a train journey to Hvalsø, where we were greeted by the extended Servas family of Danish host organisers – Jan, Sus, Heiner, Lasse and Inge – and, last but not least, the bikes, which would take us on the wildest adventures through the Danish woods of Avnsø and beyond!

Quickly, people put their bags in Jan's van, jumped on their bikes and set off, while I, too excited to keep track of my stuff, lost sight of my 'cuatro' – the traditional little Venezuelan little guitar which would not only provide entertainment but also serve as an alarm clock in the morning, a bell at lunchtime, playtime, discussion time, and every other gathering time in between.

I freaked out for a second at the loss of my instrument, only to find that Jan had caringly and carefully placed it on the front seat of his van. At that very moment, my heart felt warmly embraced by a gentle but profound realisation. This is what Servas is about: caring for each other, caring for what is fragile and precious in

our lives, in our families, in our homes, in our communities, in our world. World peace is fragile, yet it only takes a small act of kindness to build a solid foundation of trust and friendship.

To experience Jan, Sus and Heiner's loving care for each one of us and for every detail of the meeting, was truly honouring and humbling for me. The range of social, cultural and ecological activities, the choice of food and venue, the efficiency of the logistics, funding me to participate and lead workshops on Servas Youth and 'Creativity for Peace' through play, music and discussion... such actions speak louder than words about the passion of Servas Denmark to carrying out a spirit of peace and friendship in the world.

And all participants actively contributed a piece to that beautiful peace mosaic: when sharing stories, meals, rooms and toilets; when cycling together; when swimming naked in the lake – we initiated the SINE (Servas Intense Naked Experience) QUA CLOTHES tradition; when playing, laughing, talking and thinking creatively about our challenges within Servas; when learning about Viking history; when visiting an organic farm and an eco-



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MEETING REPORT

Servas International Youth Event and Africa Area Meeting In Uganda

By Margaret Seelig,
 Servas Britain Peace Secretary
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I was privileged to attend this event, the first International Youth Conference to be held in Africa, which was being held alongside the Africa Regional Conference.

My first week was spent in Tanzania with Servas National Secretary Peter, and included a short stay on the 'Spice Island' of Zanzibar, a beautiful and fascinating place with its rich ethnic and religious mix. My Servas host, Lourenço, was originally from a Goan family.

After a flight from Dar es Salaam, over Mount Kilimanjaro, we arrived at the Conference venue, the Church of Uganda Conference Centre, at Lweza, midway between Entebbe and Kampala. Having visited Uganda before, I know how 'challenging' the roads and traffic can be, but this was an oasis of calm, with plenty of space, monkeys jumping from tree to tree, and good accommodation which enabled us to sleep, eat & have our meetings all on the same site.

There were 60 delegates, including representatives from 9 African countries – Uganda, Tanzania, Kenya, Malawi, Zambia, Botswana, Sierra Leone and



Ice Breaker two on one lap

the Francophone countries of Burundi and Congo Brazzaville. There were also delegates from Argentina (Pablo Chufeni, the International Youth Development Officer), Russia, Israel, Portugal, New Zealand and Réunion (France), plus some 'oldies' from Belgium (Rita), Poland (Ewa) & UK (me!). Our programme showed some separate sessions for the two conferences, but it very soon became apparent that nearly



The full circle at AAM&WYM

all the African delegates, including National Secretaries, were 'young', resulting in activities being merged into one.

With a few sessions being facilitated by Sheldon Weeks, the Africa Regional Co-ordinator, most were presided over by Pablo. Issues looked at and discussed included the history of Servas and its relevance to today, especially in Africa. Rita gave a presentation on the Dolphin system (I think I fully understood it for the first time!); again there was a discussion on the implications of Dolphin and also of Servas On-Line, for African Servas groups – only about 10% of African countries have direct access to the Internet, and even this is not always totally efficient or reliable. Rita, Ewa & I were asked to give a work-shop on Interviewing, particularly for those who felt themselves to be less experienced. One of those who really appreciated this session was Adolphe, National Secretary of Servas Burundi, the newest group in the region. Since he did not speak any English, much of this was conducted in French – fortunately we were all able to translate / interpret.

Pablo gave a presentation on the history of Youth activities in Servas, including SYLE (Servas Youth Language Experience). This was Pablo's first visit to Africa, and he was extremely encouraged and inspired by the enthusiasm and work being done in Servas groups across the region. He stressed the importance of young people in Servas, if we are to survive as an organisation, and that we need to recognize and appreciate

inter-cultural differences as positives, not negatives. There was a discussion on issues relating to hosting and travelling in the Region, many of which are different from the issues which confront us in Europe / UK. Relatively few Servas members in the Region get the opportunity to travel overseas – it is expensive, and there are often difficulties obtaining visas

One solution is to encourage and promote travel within the Region, including SYLE. There was an interesting discussion on the possibility of SYLE stays being offered for English or French in specific Anglophone or Francophone African countries, (or even Portuguese). However it was felt that where European languages are the 'lingua franca' of a country, they are often not the language used in the home, which could be a problem. Another suggestion was to offer



Margaret Seelig and Pablo Chufeni

other widely spoken languages such as Swahili. It was also suggested that a SYLE stay could form the basis or preparation for volunteering work.

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village and learning about environmentally-friendly practices; when eating exotic Nordic food – such as Cecilie’s cinnamon rolls and brownies, Danish biscuit soup and Norwegian watermelon burgers. (Watch us in action on Danish National TV: www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6UfKpMYgSE)

I feel privileged to have a first-hand experience of what peace is, as a Servas community, and I feel inspired to take this gift and share it. There are so many easy ways to do it: When hosting, inviting friends, family and neighbours to meet our Servas visitors. When travelling, visiting and contributing to local projects. Staying longer. Volunteering. Teaching. Learning and sharing at home later. Making local

Servas gatherings in your community. Involving young people in your national groups and giving them real responsibilities and power to act.

We, young people, know the future of Servas depends on us, and we take up the challenge with a huge smile. We are gathering our tools and ideas together, and we need your loving guidance and support to move forward. We want to celebrate the caring, compassionate and joyful nature of Servas and we want to restore the Peace ideals that Servas was founded upon. Please join us!

A massive thank you to each person and national group that contributed towards my participation: Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Germany, Singapore, Finland and Britain. And thank you friends from the Nordic



Youth Meeting for restoring my faith in Servas – Magiarí Díaz Díaz, Venezuela, 29 years old.

Following are experiences from several of the young people who attended the Nordic Youth Meeting:

“What I enjoyed the most about the Servas Youth Meeting was being around all the others there and just relaxing... riding the bike down to the lake and jumping in together in the water”

– Aron Thestrup Okkels, Denmark, 15 years old.

“I did very much enjoy getting along easily with many friendly people (old as well as young) from different countries. So, it did not matter that I was the only Chinese at the Nordic Youth Meeting. Furthermore, I enjoyed eating delicious food (especially the Cinnamon Rolls!), socializing and, not to forget, hanging out and having a photo-session with Moco Loco, my best friend!”

– Charlie Happy, China, 17 Monkey years old.

“The Servas Nordic Meeting was different from my previous international meetings, as this time, I had my two sons Reni (11) and Rasmus (10) with me. It was their first trip abroad, so it was truly unforgettable for them. I was very happy to share with them the true Servas Spirit, a little bit of the World, to broaden their views and understanding, and to introduce them to my lovely friends Magi, Janek, Dianne, Anne, Jean and Ann.

What an adventure it was to cycle together with Stan, Marcin, Magi, Cecilie, Troels and Janek through the dark forest to go swimming in the lake! (Naked, of course – our new Servas tradition... and to swing from a branch of a huge tree). The boys enjoyed playing (loudly) in the woods with their new little friends. At the meeting I enjoyed talking with people, having fun together and becoming friends with new people. I will always remember the second night’s bonfire and an amazing feeling of togetherness with my dearest friends,



going to sleep at 3.30am, and waking up very tired at 7am the next morning to do yoga with our lovely friend Arnoud. Because of that one hour of yoga, I joined a local yoga class here in Finland.

On the visit to a local farm, I talked with my wonderful friend, Michael, who barbecued delicious watermelon-hamburgers for us on the last evening’s bonfire! The boys also had fun there playing table-football with Stan, Marcin, Toby, Magi and Janek, while I

lost well in playing ping-pong with Lasse. I also enjoyed much of the car trips and conversation with Inge, who kindly offered a ride to “my family” several times! There are so many good memories and nice people, that it’s impossible to write it all down. But anyone who has experienced a Servas Youth meeting knows what I’m talking about. The feeling is indescribable! I want to thank all the people I met in Denmark – my Servas family, (also our lovely host in Copenhagen, Jakob!) and most of all, thanks to the Denmark Team: Sus, Jan, Cecilie, Heiner, Aron and Thora, you did a great job!! Beware, next time I will take even more children with me (I have plenty of them!) so that they can also share the Servas experience with us”

– Minna Abo, Finland, 33 years old.

“I loved sleeping in Danish trees and visiting an eco-village and an organic farm where animals, like me, are treated with care and respect. I like Servas people because they care about living in harmony with the environment. At the Nordic Meeting, I also enjoyed playing with children and adults of different species, especially with Charlie Happy, my best monkey friend. If monkeys and sloths can get on, surely people of different cultures can live in peace!”

– Moco Loco, Ecuador, 9 Sloth months old.

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“The Servas Youth Nordic Meeting was my first Servas meeting, and therefore an entirely unforgettable and positively overwhelming experience for me. I had never experienced an atmosphere so truly welcoming and open-minded as in this meeting. A moment that I will always keep in my heart was the bonfire evening. I was sitting and feeling the warmth of the colourful flames while simply observing the joy and happiness of the young people around me. Everybody was singing and dancing in their own funny way, as we all became one”

– Cecilie Larsen, Denmark, 23 years old.

“The Servas Youth Meeting was simply marvelous: it was full of young people that believe that an incredibly beautiful world is possible, a world made of different colours yet similar smiles. Young people that do not think: ‘The world is what it is, we will take it as such’, but rather: ‘The world will surely be a much better place, since we are part of it’. Servas Youth is on its path and it is full of resources... Step by step, Servas promises to evolve into an even more wonderful association. Servas seeds are already thriving into little fruitful plants – we just need to keep watering them!”

– Gaia Bigatti, Italy, 22 years old.

“The Nordic Meeting was a fantastic experience, I felt a real sense of camaraderie from the moment I arrived and I met many wonderful and interesting people. There were lots of great moments; riding bicycles down a country lane with horses running alongside, sitting round a fire at night talking to new friends and being woken in the morning by the sound of Magi singing were some of my favourites, but I guess the most important thing was the feeling that everyone there really did believe in peace and did want to do something about it. It is inspiring to spend time in the company of people with real commitment to peace and I hope that the energy and ideas that came out of the meeting are not lost to time. Thank you to everyone I met in Denmark, you have given me a lot to think about”

– Toby Thomas, UK, 31 years old.



Summary points from the ‘Young Adults’ at the Servas Nordic Youth Meeting 2011

1. Regarding Host Lists:

1.1. Family interest listings

It was suggested that all Servas countries should be encouraged to list all members of the host family (specifically teenagers and children, with name and gender) and add details of their individual interests rather than one generic description of the families interests.

The reasoning for this was to encourage young people to take more of an interest in Servas visits and to feel more included in the Servas experience, rather than just ‘tagging along’, hopefully resulting in young members taking ownership of their own Servas experiences. This could also be done in the same way on letters of introduction.



The reasoning for this was to encourage young people to take more of an interest in Servas visits and to feel more included in the Servas experience, rather than just ‘tagging along’, hopefully resulting in young members taking ownership of their own Servas experiences. This could also be done in the same way on letters of introduction.

1.2. Active young adult section

It was pointed out that some countries include an additional section at the end of the host list with details of active young adult Servas hosts (defined by SI as 18 to 30) who have opted to have their details added to the section. People agreed that this was a good idea and one that other countries might want to adopt in order to promote greater involvement from younger members and to enable young members to find each other in a quicker / simpler way.



2. Regarding Membership:

2.1. Joint hosting and traveller fees

A suggestion was made that young adults should only have to pay one fee if joining as both a Host and a Traveler (some countries already do this and some countries do not

charge a fee to hosts). This would hopefully encourage more young adults to join both as hosts (even if just as day hosts) and travellers.

2.2. Young adults fees

If a Servas country offers a discount for younger members to join this should be available to all young adults as defined by the SI age range (some countries currently offer discounts only to adults under 25 for example).

3. Regarding Activities for Young Adults:

3.1. Activities in conjunction with other organisations

In order to attract new people to Servas and to enhance the Servas experience, young adult members could attend, organise or support activities (such as peace festivals, music events, workshops etc) in conjunction with other peace organisations. This would enable young members of Servas, and non-Servas people, to work together on peace-related themes so as to give young adults a strong motivation to join Servas, to share



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PRESIDENT

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market or national armies.

Would you like to be appointed a Servas Ambassador to the UN? Please consider. This is the season for Servas to nominate UN Observers. There is no funding; the work is done voluntarily. You can attend meetings in Geneva, Vienna or New York; or you could attend global meetings, like the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change meeting in South Africa in November/December. Or, you may wish to follow UN discussions of a theme-issue -- of the Rights of the Child, for instance, or Education for All. Following the UN, contributing to its on-going reform, bringing the home-sense of Servas to the world, is a delightful way to grow and develop your own skills and education. Check out the UN on Facebook. <http://tinyurl.com/3gdkvo4>. Let us know now if you would like to be proposed as a Servas Ambassador to the UN.

Gary Sealey
President, Servas International

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 9, 10, 11, 2011

SERVAS SOUTH CENTRAL WEST ASIA CONFERENCE

Kandy-Sri Lanka, 2011.
Nation Builders Association Hostel
New Town, Kundasale
Kandy-Sri Lanka
See story on Page 3
servaspakistan@yahoo.com

JUNE 1-6, 2012

SERVAS INTERNATIONAL MEETING IN THE NETHERLANDS

www.nivon.nl
REGISTRATION DEADLINE DEC. 15
See story on Page 2.
ServasNetherlands2012@gmail.com

*Send international calendar items at least 2 months in advance of event. **Only International and Regional events will be listed.** Send National meeting info to (reneeendron@hotmail.com) for inclusion on www.servas.org.*

SUMMARY POINTS

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the Servas ethos with other organisations and to strengthen Servas' role in promoting peace. This could also give opportunities for young adults, who may not be able to travel or host, to be involved in Servas and feel that they belong to the organisation.

3.2. Servas Youth Cultural Experience (SYCE)

It was suggested that the SYLE (Servas Youth Language Experience) could be opened up to include different types of experience (i.e.

not always purely focused on developing language skills). This would give opportunities for countries that do not have a language that many people would be interested in learning (such as the Nordic countries) to host interest-based exchanges. This would not replace the existing SYLE scheme but be in addition to it, the name suggested was Servas Youth Cultural Experience (SYCE). It was suggested that Magiari Diaz Diaz, SI Youth Development Officer, would be the main contact for people interested in this scheme.



This could work in connection with Ann Greenhough's interest in a 'Servas Connection' scheme for hosts to publicise what they can offer travelers.

3.3. Groups travelling together

As well as the current way of travelling with Servas, it was suggested that Young Adult Servas members could arrange to travel together to different countries or places as a group. This would not necessarily mean staying purely with Servas hosts, but rather a shared experience of travelling as a group staying in a variety of places using Servas Hosts, Couch Surfers, Youth Hostels etc. The idea is for the Servas experience to exist between fellow Servas travellers rather than exclusively between travellers and hosts. This would allow larger groups of Servas travellers to travel together without the problems of trying to find Servas hosts to accommodate such large numbers but at the same time keep the emphasis on meeting other Servas members and sharing cultural experiences. One specific example that was mentioned at the meeting and that could be done in this way was a group visit to the UN Headquarters or the Peace Nobel Prize Institute.

3.4. International Map of Existing Initiatives

It was suggested that an online platform was developed to highlight peace-related initiatives that Servas hosts are involved in around the world that Servas travellers might be interested in visiting. This could range from small-scale initiatives in which a member is locally involved to more global initiatives. Gaia Bigatti suggested the name 'International Map of Existing Initiatives' for this scheme and it was suggested that something like this may be a way to both engage current Servas members in peace related activities and to generate interest in Servas amongst young non-Servas members already interested in peace work. This is essentially an extension of the existing practice of listing interests and membership of peace organisations in host list and letters of introduction but with the added facility and function that comes with searching an online platform.



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AFRICA

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There were several sessions devoted to Servas as a Peace organisation. As Peace Secretary of Servas Britain, I gave a message from Luisa Corbetta, Servas International Peace Secretary, who was prevented by illness from attending, as she had been for our AGM in April. I said a little bit about our activities, but it was much more interesting listening to what is going on in Servas Africa! Pablo asked everyone to say what sort of things they already do in their own country, either as individuals or as Servas members. Examples given included working with other NGO's, charities, including health related organisations for HIV/AIDS etc., peace oriented projects, cultural activities, sports activities, working in schools and faith-groups, volunteering and work-camps. Pablo talked about

and practical, and involved us all in games and interactive activities, which challenged our ability to talk about things we usually keep silent over.

However some of the most moving contributions came from people from countries where there has been conflict and civil war in recent years. Especially memorable was that of Tibo and Jah from Sierra Leone, who talked of the reconciliation work being done in their country with both victims & perpetrators of violence in the recent Civil Wars – the enforced conscription of child soldiers and horrible mutilations.

Throughout the week we had presentations on the various countries from which those attending had come - all were very interesting, covering geography and climate, wild-life and food, population, ethnic / tribal mix, languages, traditional cultural life, exports, education, government, national flags and history – from ancient, through the colonial period, to independence and the present day.


Our evenings were taken up with socialising, music and dancing; a group of young German Global Exchange volunteers on an orientation course at the Centre looked on enviously, then joined in. The highlight was when we were entertained by a group of professional traditional dancers and drummers, who soon had us on the floor as well!

We had a day out sightseeing in Kampala, visiting the Independence Memorial and the Memorial erected in 2007 for the Commonwealth Conference which was held in Uganda; we also had a guided tour of the Kampala Museum. Finally on our last day, when some were



Fridah Wakhasa and AVP

leaving for home and others going off travelling, the rest of us spent a most enjoyable day at the Botanical Gardens in Entebbe. We were fortunate to have Clare, National Secretary of Servas Zambia with us; Clare is a biologist and a curator of the Livingstone Museum in Zambia which we visited during the last Africa Regional Conference four years ago; she was able to point out much of the flora and fauna. Part of the Gardens stretch along the shores of the huge Lake Victoria, the largest lake in Africa, with the border between Uganda and Tanzania running across it. Alexey from Russia decided that he just had to swim, a sight not to be missed!

It was a most successful and wonderful event. Being amongst young Servas members with their enthusiasm and different ways of seeing things was both stimulating and inspiring. Throughout the week Pablo managed and controlled (!) the various sessions with great sensitivity. However the greatest credit has to go to Moses Kigozi, whom some of you will remember from Dalesbridge in 2007. It was Moses' ambition to hold this first ever fully international conference in Africa, and the conference was his inspiration. It was Moses and his small team who were responsible for all the work done in preparation over many months – the venue, applications, registration, finance, transport and many other things. Throughout the conference itself he kept out of the limelight, but was always around to see that everything was running smoothly. As Sheldon was standing down Moses was unanimously elected to replace him as Regional Co-ordinator for the whole of Africa. 



In conclusion Pablo flies

the importance of linking these activities more directly with Servas; indeed many of these do already form part of local Servas activities.

Joel, Peace Secretary of Servas Zambia, talked about the work he does with young people in the school where he teaches, in which he tries to differentiate between 'sin' and 'sinner'. Not everyone was in agreement with him, and this sparked a very lively discussion (which for once I did not join in, just listened!) on various issues, ranging from corporal punishment to homosexuality.

Stella and Keletso from Botswana, together with Frida from Uganda, ran an excellent work-shop based on a project they are involved in, 'Alternatives to Violence Project' (AVP), started by local Quakers. This was both very thought-provoking



Clare Zambia Brief

SUMMARY POINTS

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4. Regarding Servas, Peace and the Wider Community

4.1. 'Practical Peace': Social inclusion and responsibility

In the presentation by Alvany Santiago about her group 'Servas, Peace and Youth', and the presentation by Magiarí Díaz Díaz, about promoting peace through Servas by engaging with the wider community including those affected by poverty, conflict, imprisonment and disease, it was suggested that Servas hosts and travellers expand the meaning of opening their hearts and homes to new people beyond the boundaries of the typical Servas hosting and travelling. The emphasis of this was to expand the social engagement of Servas to non-members who are unable to join or benefit from Servas in its current form (which is predominantly composed of fairly affluent sections of society) and also to actively participate in and promote the message of peace that is integral to Servas in a socially inclusive and responsible way.

It was suggested that Magiarí Díaz Díaz could coordinate the practicalities of this scheme such as exchanges (SYCE), visits, volunteering and teaching opportunities or other activities for travelers to engage with the wider communities in the areas they visit, and for hosts to signpost local opportunities that may be of interest. Specific examples include Magiarí's experiences volunteering with asylum seekers in the UK as a music facilitator, and clowning in hospitals, prisons, orphanages



and nursing homes in Ecuador, USA and Sweden, while using Servas accommodation and Cecilie Larsen's (Youth Contact for Denmark) expression of interest in engaging with social activities with a refugee centre in Denmark.

4.2. The origins of Servas

A desire to engage more with the original ethos and purpose of Servas was expressed in terms of social responsibility and Servas members engaging directly in peace related activities.

5. Regarding Servas Families

5.1. Family Facebook Group

It was suggested that a Facebook group could be set up for Servas families to share information about travelling opportunities and available activities and to link together to strengthen the connections between Servas families around the world. This would support the Servas Family work currently being developed by Ann Greenhough and it was suggested that Toby Thomas (Youth Contact for Britain) could set up the group.

Summary points compiled by Magiarí Díaz Díaz (SI Youth Development Officer), Toby Thomas (Youth Contact for Britain), Gaia Bigatti and Minna Aho with huge thanks for the contribution of everyone at the Servas Youth Nordic Meeting 2011.

SEEN ON THE NET

Site recommended by Muhammad Naseem, Area Coordinator for Servas South Central West Asia

"A Rubber band Kind of Year: See You Later Pakistan"
www.risingpyramid.org/2011/08/25/a-rubberband-kind-of-year-see-you-later-pakistan/#more-2658

Ed: If you ignore all the references to "company" & "customers", this is a nice review of Servas.
www.aohtaradivision.com/hi-from-calgary-revealing-within-the-the-us-us-servas-conference/320

Ed: Another person finds Servas
www.faihofholland.com/GreggAGranger/

*Do you have a good web site to share?
 Please submit it to: newsletter@servas.org*

"The forces that are driving mankind toward unity and peace are deep-seated and powerful. They are material and natural, as well as moral and intellectual."

Arthur Henderson

Translate Servas News into Your Country's Language.


By Terry Stone, Editor-Servas News

We have received several requests for help with translating the newsletter into different languages. We want *Servas International News* to be accessible to as many members as possible, so, to help toward achieving that goal, we are offering to make current issues of *Servas International News* available to any Servas member country who would like to convert them into their native language.



To receive a complete, press-ready packaged file, the country's Servas National Secretary should send a request by email to newsletter@servas.org. Instructions on where and how to obtain the file will be furnished at that time.

Servas International News is produced using Adobe InDesign CS2 for Macintosh. A press-ready, packaged file will contain all the fonts, photos and linked graphics used in the current issue along with the complete InDesign file. You must have either a Mac or PC version of Adobe InDesign CS2 v4.0 or better to open the file. Please remember that certain fonts may not convert properly from Mac to PC so some adjustments might be necessary when opening the file in a Windows machine.

If you do not have Adobe InDesign and want to produce a version of *Servas International News* using another software application you can still make use of the images and graphics contained in the packaged file and use a PDF copy of the current issue as a design and production template or a guide to rebuild your copy of *Servas International News*. Experience with the preferred software and producing publications or other materials is highly recommended. 

EDITOR

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Second item is "Down with Deadlines!" Send whatever you want, whenever you want to send it. We'll sort it out here. No more deadlines here at Newsletter Central but if your information is time-sensitive do your best to get it to us as far in advance as possible!

Let me know what you think about the newsletter and what kinds of articles you would like to see. We are your humble servants!

Next issue should come out some time mid- to late February.

A Happy Year to all.

How to Submit to Servas International News

Articles will be posted as submitted!

Spell check and proof your story, twice. We will not edit your copy unless there are space limitations. Assume the reader is new to Servas and knows nothing about your story. Include the Who, Why, What, Where and When in the first paragraph. Avoid abbreviations. Keep articles to one page if possible. Make your item engaging and interesting, and **pertinent to a global audience**. We will not publish individual country events or announcements. Long reports, such as technical and financial data, go to Renee (reneegendron@hotmail.com) for posting on www.Servas.org.

Types of Articles Appropriate for Publication in Servas International News:

- Global calendar items
- Articles, opinion pieces, travel stories with a Servas theme
- Letters to the Editor
- Short quotes regarding peace/Servas
- Short jokes, funny stories that relate to travel and/or peace
- Web sites of interest to Servas members
- Questions about Servas

----- IMPORTANT -----

- Prepare your story in a text application such as Microsoft Word, TextEdit. Save file as .doc, .rtf or .txt format and attach to e-mail. *(If it is not possible to use a text application software you can write your story in the body of an e-mail).*
- Include story author's name, title and e-mail address at the BEGINNING of the story and AFTER the story title/headlines.
- Avoid fancy text formatting and do not double-space after a sentence, or add a space before a comma. Remember, a computer is not a typewriter.
- Look at previous issues of *Servas International News* for examples of format and structure.
- Attach photos to e-mail in .jpg format. **DO NOT PLACE PHOTOS INTO THE TEXT DOCUMENT.** Use file names that match your story (i.e., "SYLE-meeting_01.jpg").
- Key photo captions (if any) to the photos (photo A, photo B, etc.) and list them at the end of your story as lines of text.
- Include Country/Article Headline in the subject header of **ALL** e-mails relating to the story.

If you have any questions send E-mail to: newsletter@servas.org

REMEMBER: What you write is what we'll post. Please thoroughly proof your article/letter before submitting it.

TRAVEL ADVENTURES

Do you have a Servas travel story from your corner of the world? Share your adventure and experiences with other Servas members. We will feature one story each issue. Please send your story and photos to newsletter@servas.org. - ed