



Servas Monthly News



May 2006

Sharing

Some ago, when living in Botswana, my Zimbabwean neighbour told me a saying he learnt when studying in East Germany. 'Was ist deine ist meine, aber was is meine ist nicht deine'. ('what is yours is mine but what is mine is not yours') We laughed about it but still discussed how so many people and countries live by that idea. They are ready to 'share' somebody else's items but not ready to share their own. It has been going on throughout history and continues today.

On the other hand, again some time ago, I was given another saying, this time from one of the Gandhis in India: 'If everyone shared enough and everyone cared enough, then everyone would have enough'.

I know which saying I prefer to follow. And in Servas that idea of sharing is one of our aims. We offer to share our homes and a bit of our lives to other Servas members. I hope we are ready to and automatically do so with non-Servas people as well.

In this issue we share a number of items: web sites that might interest us; the work Exco has been doing; ways of meeting others; a language; what other countries have been doing; peoples travel and comments. Keep sharing it opens the world to all.

Contact

We welcome articles coming to SI Monthly News. We do not guarantee that the article will be published. This depends on any theme for the month along with what 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. If the email address is not recognised it may well get deleted before being read.

The postal address is:
Jane Giffould, SI Monthly News Editor
20 Weavers Row, Halstead, Essex, CO9 2JX, England

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Contacts with other organizations:

From time to time other organisations contact us and suggest we read their web sites and get involved with them and share ideas. Similarly many of us have organisations that interest us with views that link with Servas, and we would like to share these with everyone else in Servas. The Monthly News is one way of doing it. Please send ideas in.

1) This organisation has been sending me details of their news. Admittedly I have not got round to following it up. But the title indicates that it could be of interest to Servas members. Hence I am including it here.

**MAHATMA GANDHI NEWS DIGEST,
Select News on Mahatma Gandhi, Peace and
Nonviolence**

Read this week's issue:

<http://www.gandhiserve.org/news/news.html>

2) And from someone interested in travel stories and offering a prize, passed on by Mary Jane Mikuriya:

A Travel Story Contest

(<http://www.travelandtransitions.com/contests.htm>) that invites our readers to contribute their travel stories of how travel opened their minds and broadened their horizons.

Of course we also have some fabulous prizes:

- **our grand prize** is a 2-week (15 day) Greek Sailing Adventure for 2, sponsored by G.A.P Adventures, Canada's adventure travel leader and a socially and environmentally responsible company
- **first prize** is a 1-week stay in a vacation suite for 4 to 8 people in a multitude of locations across the world
- **second prize** is a 2-night 3-day weekend in a B&B in Toronto complete with a city tour in an amphibious vehicle and a culinary tour of the St. Lawrence market
- **third prize** is a \$150 merchandise gift certificate from the Mountain Equipment Coop, another socially and environmentally conscious enterprise
- we also have a variety of magazine prizes for our **honourable mentions**.

The stories that we are most interested in are stories of learning experiences, of cross-cultural encounters and ultimately stories of human understanding through travel which Servas stands for. I am very sure that Servas members would have some amazing stories to share...
Best regards,
Susanne Pacher.

News of Exco's activities

Dear National Secretaries

You have not heard from me after the wonderful conference we had in Latina. This may have given you the impression that your new General Secretary has gone into "hibernation" or "sleep" mode! Let me assure you that this is not the case. After the eGA in Latina, most of the EXCO members, including me, spent some time travelling. It was only after all the EXCO members had returned home and settled down, that the new EXCO could start functioning in right earnest. The purpose of this e-mail is to update you on what we have done since then.

Among the unfinished agenda of eGA 2006 were the elections of Statutes and Job Descriptions Committee members, Nominations Committee members and ICT members. These elections could not be held due to lack of time. Additionally, in the case of ICT, eGA took a decision that the ICT members shall be appointed by EXCO rather than elected. The intention behind this decision was to ensure that only persons with knowledge of computers/software were made members of ICT.

There were four nominees for the Statutes and Job Descriptions Committee as follows:

1. Eda Guzeldemir, (Turkey)
2. Pramod Kumar, (India)
3. Diana Sweet, (Suriname)
4. Chris Jones, (Canada)

I was one of the four nominees. I informed EXCO about my decision to withdraw my nomination and suggested that the other three nominees be appointed as members of the Statutes and Job Descriptions Committee. They had expressed their willingness to work for this Committee and they should not be denied this opportunity simply because we ran out of time and could not hold the elections. EXCO has accepted my suggestion and appointed Eda Guzeldemir, (Turkey), Diana Sweet, (Suriname) and Chris Jones, (Canada) as members of the Statutes and Job Descriptions Committee.

There were two nominees for the Nominations Committee as follows:

Michael Johnson, (Canada)
Everen Ozkan, (Turkey)

EXCO has appointed them both as members of the Nominations Committee.

There were two nominees for the Information and Communication Team (ICT) as follows:

Omer Ozkan, (Turkey)
Uwe Federer, (Italy)

Since both the nominees are knowledgeable about computers and/or software, EXCO has appointed them both as members of the ICT.

One of the resolutions passed by eGA 2006 was that,

"GA give Exco the authority to give annual grants of up to 200 US Dollars to countries which apply for them. Such countries must provide an activity report".

This resolution seems to have created the impression among some members that any member country which applies for this grant of US\$ 200 will get it automatically, as long as it agrees to provide an activity report. This is a very wrong interpretation of the resolution.

GA has given EXCO the "authority" to give grants of US\$ 200. EXCO will use this authority in a responsible manner and will not sanction this grant without looking into the purpose for which the grant is requested. For example, if a member group applies for a grant of US\$ 200 for organizing a party for its members, it is highly unlikely that EXCO will sanction the grant.

In order to ensure that applications for such grants are processed in a fair and transparent manner, EXCO has decided to develop the criteria for processing of such applications. Omer Ozkan has been assigned the task of preparing the draft criteria which will be reviewed by EXCO.

The grants shall be on hold and will not be given till the criteria are established.

During the eGA at Latina, a number of delegates gave a representation to EXCO asking that an "Observer" be sent for the forthcoming election of Servas Nepal. Taking note of this representation, EXCO assigned to me the task of preparing a report on the status of Servas Nepal election. My report has been submitted to EXCO. It has now been decided that SI Peace Secretary Nandasena Amarasinghe will be EXCO's observer for the Servas Nepal election planned for June 10, 2006.

Keeping the Key List up to date is an important task which is performed by the Key List Group. A new Key List Group is being formed and they will be contacting you soon for getting the relevant information about the current Key Persons in your National Group.

EXCO is also working on appointing a Distant Vote Administrator and developing the rules for election of Area Coordinators.

There are a number of other tasks which we have to complete. I would like to assure you that EXCO is aware of its responsibilities and is working on preparing a schedule for completing these tasks.

I will keep you informed and will keep in touch with you on a more regular basis than has been the case till now.

In peace and friendship

Pramod Kumar, General Secretary, Servas International

Meetings, Get together, Seeing each other

Servas Peace Group Belgium & Luxemburg'

Sunday, June 18, 2006

**SERVAS MEGA PICNIC AT 1.00 pm
& BREUGHEL WALK at 11.00 am**

For full detail see Servas Monthly News April

Location for the celebration

Speelplein Begijnenborre
Bodegemstraat 113
1700 Dilbeek (near Brussels)

The working group 'Peace' of SERVAS Belgium & Luxemburg

Julie Pesesse + 00 32 (0)477 81 90 82 or + 00 32 (0)2 218 54 54

Gido Van Den Ende + 00 32 (0)2 466 45 86 or + 00 (0)472 490 137 gido.vandenende@scarlet.be

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

Bi-National Meeting, Mexico/US

A bi-national meeting between Mexico and the US will be held:

on 4-5 June 2006 in Cuernavaca, Mexico.
Hotel, meals, registration and excursion cost \$220.
Anyone wishing to attend should contact
Mary Jane Mikuriya - mikuriya@aol.com
or Grant Barnes - gbarnesesq@aol.com.
Bienvenidos a Mexico.

Latin American Meeting

There will be a Latin American regional meeting in July 2007. This is the initiative of Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay.

Details to follow later.

Servas Monthly Meeting, Belgium

The day of our monthly Servas meeting has changed. From now on we meet on the last TUESDAY of the month in the pub Le Cirio in the centre of Brussels, next to the Bourse/Beurs, from 6 pm to 8 pm.

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

On our annual Servas dinner in January the participants were of 10 different nationalities, all members of Servas Belgium & Luxemburg. We are 'Servas International' ! You can have a look at the pictures on www.servas.be

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!

More than 300 Servas hosts living in small villages or in bigger cities are waiting to give you a warm welcome. I'm sure your visit to Belgium & Luxemburg will stay in your memory for ever.

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

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

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

Get together in London, England

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.

National Conference, India

This invitation is open to all.

Dates: 31 Dec 06 - 01 Jan 07
Contact: Dr Ramesh Sharma
email: drrameshsharma@yahoo.com

Languages - Hungarian (Magyar)

<p>Language is an important tool of communication. When we understand each other we are more likely to be peaceful. Think how problems have arisen just by the wrong interpretation of what someone is trying to say.</p> <p>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. Please share your language with us. For the moment the base language will be English, hence any non-English words and phrases must be accompanied by the English translation of them.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>Our tenth language is Hungarian (Magyar) The informal phrases are given here but these change for the more formal language, as well as for singular and plural.</p>		Zero One Two Three Four Five Six Seven Eight Nine Ten Twenty Thirty Forty Fifty Sixty Seventy Eighty Ninety Hundred Thousand	Nulla, zèrò egy Kettò Három Negy Öt Hat Hèt Nyolc Kilenc Tíz Hùsz Harminc Negyven Ötven Hatvan Hetven Nyolcvan Kilencven Száz Ezer
Peace Hello How are you Goodbye Be seeing you Have a safe journey Best wishes to your family. Do come in 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?	Szia Hogy vagy? Viszontlátásra Viszlát. Szerencsés/ Jo utat. Üdvözlöm a csalà Gyere be Kerlek/legy szives Köszönöm Szivesen Hol (van) a mosdó /WC? BAL, Balra Jobb, Jobbra Egyenesen touább Mögötted Hol alszom/alhatok? Begetarianus vagyok. Hol van a legközelebbi telefon?	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.	Eszel hùst Hol laksz? (Ö) a (làn)testvérem (Ö) a (fiu)testvérem (Ö) az anyukàm (Ö) az apukà, (Ö) a fiam (Ö) a lanyom Milyen zenèt szeretsz? Lattad màr a vàrost? Hol vannak az ületek? Van itt piac? Köszönöm a segítsèget.

Apologies if the accents are the wrong way round - I tried my best!

Host and Travel Reports

Our visit to Florida, 20 Mar to 11 Apr 06

When I planned our trip to Florida I started asking from the Florida Servas list. I was surprised that there are so many hosts and I was even more surprised that almost all the hosts we wrote to, wanted to host us.

I want to write about the experiences that made this trip through beautiful nature with a lot of must-see musea, and of course Seaworld and Kennedy Space Center, a rich and deep human experience.

When we arrived we drove to Gail. She welcomed us warmly and she helped us find some more Servas hosts so we could "fill" some still "open" nights. It was the first time we saw the results of the hurricanes of last autumn: she had already removed the trees that had fallen down in her garden, but she was still waiting for her roof to be repaired: it was still wrapped in plastic foil. We realized that the many blue roofs (we kept noticing them from that moment on) were not a kind of fantasy but bare reality for so many people that lost the roof above their head and have to wait till workers find time to do the necessary repairs.

We cancelled an already booked hotel for the next night after we would leave her and then went to Cindy and Garry on their boat in Marathon, on the Florida Keys, the long tail of islands dangling at Florida's bottom. It was very unusual to look for a 4-digit "house number" and then for a "slip".

When I was walking among the boats I really felt great: am I dreaming or is this reality? Cindy and Garry are "snowbirds", spending their winters in Florida, away from the cold (Wisconsin, if I remember correctly). But not in rest and peace: they had a lot of work repairing the damage caused by the hurricanes. We enjoyed swimming in the warm ocean water in a small inlet at this marina: we never had such a large pool just for the two of us! Cindy and Garry thought "those Belgians must be desperate that they swim in such cold water!". It was there that we experienced what water spouts are: when we drove back from Key West after sunset the next evening, we could hardly see the road we were driving on, because of the heavy downpour. And next to most the road (basically a 100 miles long series of bridges connecting countless small islands) there is no emergency lane. We could not really enjoy the lightning and thunder then.

In the house of Barbara and Robert, our next hosts, we realized how strong love can be. We are impressed by the way Barbara takes care of her husband and how Robert struggles with his illness, thriving him away from his energy. We admire the way they deal with this bad fate and how they want to be in contact with the world and keep receiving guests very well - although it must be difficult for them.

Still in admiring reflection about Barbara and Robert, we met our next host, Dotty. We 'met' (climbing on our hands and arms) her pet, a hermit crab, as well. Here we learned more about shells and dolphins and life in a condominium. We only stayed one night with her and moved onwards to Kay and Don. Their house breathes an exotic atmosphere: the decoration of the house and the smell of herbs from the kitchen. All good experiences of their travels in the East they told us about, and our own come back to our memory. I consider the shark teeth I got from Kay as a treasure.

So far we met only elderly people - elderly in age, not in minds and behaviour. So we were delighted to meet young Servas hosts Noeleen and Deon and their children Carine and Gavin. Here we learned about fruit trees, and about keeping snakes as pets (Carine had eight!) and a lot about South Africa, the country of their childhood. We learned as well that young people have to work hard and we appreciate much that they want to take on the extra work and be Servas hosts. In their house I could once again get back in touch with the world: I could load the batteries of my cell phone and camera and read all my mails. That gave me a good feeling.

Another surprise, after those snakes, were Mary's, our next host's greenhouses. My husband Michaël grew up in greenhouses and has a lot of good memories of his childhood that he could now share with her. Her partner Jim, an experienced Servas traveller himself, very usefully asked us two important questions: (a) Do you want to wash? (b) Do you want to use the computer? Here we got a confirmation that you cannot say anything in general about "the" Americans, simply because there are so many special Americans. They, too, had an unusual pet: a tall blue heron that couldn't fly anymore and had been 'adopted'.

A few days later we had the honour of meeting the first (?) and the wisest of Florida's Servas hosts, Peg McIntire, our host Joe's mother. I think someone should write her biography or she should do it herself, because she is so inspiring, vivid, witty, busy. Only her body betrays more or less her age. Joe and Sally invited her, along with and Sharon and Jay, to share the fish Joe brought back home after a day out at the sea, a trip his dentist had offered him. We spent a fine evening, full of serious talk and laughter.

Our next hosts Howard and Susan offered us the lovely company of themselves (of course), but also of their "(rac)coon"-cat. As catlovers we enjoyed her very much. It was so good to have a cat for those two days. Their garden offered us a splendid view over the wide Indian River, with the huge assembly hall of the Kennedy Space Center in the faint distance. The weather was getting warmer those days and we realized that it was almost time to go back to Belgium, to our much fresher climate (not too fresh, we hoped).

We still were to meet another family with children, Marisol and Tom, with Alicia (2 and a half) and George (9 months). Marisol introduced us to life in Mexico. We are convinced, now more than ever, that we should try and go there, too. We enjoyed seeing how they educate their small children, and of course the smile of their happy children.

We came home with lots of memories of nice, very nice people, with pictures, with recipes of shortbread, chicken and tempeh, with plenty of interesting personal stories, ideas about houses, and decoration of houses, a richer understanding of pets, ideas about how it is possible to be good hosts even if you are really very busy, and so much more.

All Servas hosts of Florida, thank you very, very much. You made our trip a BIG experience.

Josée Heuts, Belgium & Luxembur

Country Reports

Servas Lunch in Botswana

A small group of Servas members who had not been able to attend the first national meeting in Serowe in February 2005 or the previous half-day gatherings in Tlokweng (just east of the capital Gaborone) met on Saturday 29th of April at the home of Sheldon and Gudrun Weeks. A number of regrets were received, including from a new family that wished to consider joining Servas. It was therefore a small meeting of only eight people, but refreshing because six of those who came had been unable to attend three previous meetings in 2004 and 2005. One, a day host in Molepolole 50 km west of Gaborone, made arrangements with the others that when Servas travellers are next visiting them that she be included so that they could come and meet with her and see some of the sites in her area, the gateway to the Kgalagadi (Kalahari Desert). The main concern was the dearth of travellers visiting Botswana, and the wish that more Servas people would include Botswana in their itinerary. The issue of whether Servas in Botswana could do anything as a group about peace was also discussed. It was noted that members do things outside Servas to promote peace through their church, medical, or other work, such as helping the only women's shelter for abused women and children, and that to act as Servas presents complications. A pleasant afternoon was had by all, including food and drinks.



Sheldon Weeks, Botswana

Japan continued

After these preliminary sessions we had a discussion of several problems. As to the plight of the head office finances, two regions offered to contribute ¥400,000. We agreed we should update our homepages so everyone can get a clear idea how each region is acting. It was motioned that Servas Japan should have several IT experts. Fortunately enough, we could appoint 4 capable members on the spot! The 28th national conference ended in a peaceful atmosphere as the EGA!

Meetings in Japan

Appeal for a total ban of every nuclear weapon

The 28th national meeting of Servas Japan was held in Niigata on March 18 and 19, 2006. This appeal was adopted by all the members present. It was decided that this appeal be sent not only to the EXCO but also to all the members of Servas International.

Sixty-one years have passed since the atomic bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The 6,000°C heat instantly killed over 200,000 people, burning and destroying both cities to ashes. Furthermore, a lot of innocent people were exposed to radioactivity and lost their lives through leukemia and other aftereffects. Even after sixty-one years hundreds of thousands of people are suffering from its aftereffects. For them the war has never come to an end.

We, Servas Japan, appeal to all the members of the world to remember this fact. We also would like you to understand that the existence of nuclear weapons is nothing but the greatest threat to our survival as human beings on earth.

We believe that all of us possess the right to live in peace without fear of being drawn into any nuclear war. Then isn't it our earnest wish to have all the nuclear weapons abolished completely?

As the only National Group that has been bombed by nuclear weapons, we make this appeal to all the members of Servas International to actively participate in various kinds of peace-making movements aimed at prohibiting and abolishing all nuclear weapons from the earth.

28th National Conference of Servas Japan

Servas Japan held its 28th national conference in March on 18 and 19, attended by nearly 30 members from seven regions including several executive members. This is our first contribution to the SI Newsletter. We hope you will get some idea of our recent activities.

It was held in Niigata City in the northeastern area of our country. It started at 1 p.m. at a small room of the local welfare center building. Following a welcome speech by Mr. Shohei Takahashi, regional secretary, Mr. Masahiro Nishiyama, NS, Servas Japan, made a speech in which he told not only about domestic problems like the decreasing number of hosts and the change of some regional secretaries but also told about international topics like a sudden increase of hosts in Korea and the EGA to be held in Latina, Italy.

Then we listened to a report by Ms. Ikuko Uchida, the treasurer, who told about the tight financial conditions of head office, appealing for urgent help. Mr. Tomio Yamaguchi, Peace Secretary, made a peace appeal to us. It was adopted unanimously and was decided that it should be sent to Peace Secretary of SI. Mr. Motonobu Takeyama, HLC, also made his report, in which he said that thanks to a humble printing firm we can continue to print our host list.

We saw every regional secretary make his/her report of their annual activities. As a result we could see there is a total number of 309 members in Japan. 37 members resigned but 26 people joined us last year. 55 people went abroad and about 300 travelers visited and stayed with our host members. Most of the regions hold a meeting regularly and issue a newsletter to be delivered to its local members. The Kyushu region held meetings in different prefectures, resulting in an increase of new members. ← continue on left side

Comments, More from the eGA.....

From Norway

Now Tora and I are back from Italy, after having been a week in Castiglione del Lago at Lago di Trasimeno. We had some wonderful days there, discovering the region by train.

Some short notes and comments after the GA.

We think that many people think it is desirable to do something with the form of the GA and its processes, and here are some thoughts about that:

- When running into periods when the communication isn't as good as desired, the moderators could take short "time outs" and let us have a short view on our communication, in what "room" of communication we are, if we are creating "winners" and "losers", "minors" and "majors", before we continue. Here it could be remarked that the ones that in the moment are keeping the "major" position (and know that they have this position!), will have a special responsibility.
- The discussions in plenary are too time-consuming. The GA should not do detailed considerations and discussions in many cases. It's very good that the GA leaves the work to committees and working groups, but the GA should also give the working groups authority to make decisions. That will of course make it necessary to do some work on beforehand, e.g. in the composition of the groups and their mandates. It's a matter of trust, which should not be a problem in a peace organisation!
- There are also too many agenda items. That has something with the culture in the organisation to do; whether we are able to put "limits to ourselves" and our ambitions
- Too much time is used to discuss statutes and regulations. Servas is a little and simple organisation, and after 57 years we should have come to a state where the statutes could be said to be rather "developed". In the end the statutes ideally spoken should be some kind of a "safety net", just to put in use when everything else fails!!!

Warm greetings from Tora and Dag Eirik, Norway

From Brazil ...

About eGA... it was great having had the opportunity of representing Brazil.

It was a very intensive learning process I must admit. I really appreciated some of the workshops that I participated – Youth, Development and Host Lists. Pat's presentation of Conflicts Resolution was great. Particularly I would like to thank the Italian team for all the hard work of hosting the Assembly. You are all welcome in my country and particularly my place in São Paulo.

Beijos,

Marina Maluly Pacheco, Brazil.

From Ex SI President.....

Dear Anna, Mario and Uwe

EGA2006 has 'been and gone' and I guess most of the participants are now home again.

I wanted to put on record my sincere appreciation for the magnificent job of work you each did to ensure that the ground logistics for the EGA were well and truly covered. There were no doubt other members of Servas Italy who assisted each one of you in your duties and I would also express my appreciation to them for their dedicated involvement.

Exco set out to bring to Latina an EGA with a solid foundation of peace and friendship. This I believe, we achieved. However, the combination of a friendly conference, together with the efficient ground planning organized by Servas Italy culminated in what is possibly one of the most successful GA's convened in a long time.

Please accept my personal thanks and also those of the 'old' Exco.

Kind regards

Geoff (Geoff Maltby, ex- SI president)

“PEACE”

This is the most widely spoken, discussed in various fora, argued upon word, in the world other than the word war. Peace is not a thing that sprang straight away but is an outcome of understandings and realizations of debates, fights, deaths, enmities, suspicious and finally a settlement.

Peace could be achieved through satisfaction within a person or a community.

When we look into the problems that the world faces today most of them has some linkages whether direct or indirect to do with development. Some may wonder how it could be.

Yes, development could be divided into two groups or could be put into two components.

1. Physical Development
2. Spiritual Development

Most of the Development processes that we talk at present falls into the category of Physical development which entertains more and more of personnel desires and aspirations. This also encourages greed, power, jealousy and finally frustration and hatred. Those who seek physical development always seek more and more gains and this is what has happened to the people and countries who say that they are developed yet in reality have they achieved their objectives of happiness and peace through development. Instead they have reached the calamities of tension, revenge hatred and competition. When jealousy, hatred, competition overrules humanity how can there be happiness. And when happiness and contentment is not there how could man gain peace.

As such let us give a helping hand to overcome these shadows to gain happiness, promote people to search for avenues for happiness through which we could gain peace.

Peace is not a trade mark and should not be made a business venture as we observe into the day to day happenings peace has indeed become a trade mark in the business world.

War lords start wars and when the situation gets volatile and reaches a stage which goes beyond control they talk of Peace.

- March for Peace -

Let us begin this march in a small way if we cannot reach the goal at large, droplets of water form a pool and overflows makes a streamlet, streams make the rivers that fill the sea. So let us start somewhere. It is peace that we seek to make the world happy and serene.

Nandasena Amarasinghe, SI EXCO, Peace Secretary

**World Peace Forum
in Vancouver, Canada
from June 23 to 28, 2006**

Dear Servas members:

The World Peace Forum 2006 is an international gathering of individuals, groups and civic governments from cities and communities who envision living in a culture of peace and sustainability in our lifetime.

It will be held in Vancouver, BC, Canada from June 23 to 28th, 2006.

It fits in so well with Servas ideals.

To obtain more information and to register for the peace forum, click on the following web-site:
<http://www.worldpeaceforum.ca>

I will be attending the forum and would be glad to meet with other Servas hosts or travellers who attend.

Initially, we can meet in the lobby of the Gage Residence on the UBC campus at 12 noon on Friday, June 23rd. I will wear a Servas button and hold up a Servas sign. And perhaps we can meet at other times, as well.

I will have my cell phone with me and the number is:
1-780-996-0538.

Also, please email me in advance at skrogh@shaw.ca so I can look out for you.

Hope to see you there!

Sincerely,
*Sylvia Krogh, Servas Canada Peace Secretary
Edmonton, Alberta, Canada*



Members' Activities

Closed Doors in Palestine

The Servas motto, "Open Doors", contrasts markedly with the daily experience of most Palestinians. I visited the country in early March on a study tour and was able to tell people at the AGM a little about it.

The country of Palestine/Israel has no concept of history that is found only in dusty books. Everything is relevant and history is being written and re-written every day. A broad brush sketch only begins to describe this. In basic terms the country is divided into an Israeli part (78%) and the Occupied Palestinian Territories (22%) of the West Bank and Gaza Strip. The boundary of the West Bank which was set in 1948 is known as the Green Line. Until 1967 this was ruled by Jordan. Since the six day war that happened in that year those lands have been occupied by Israel.

Today, a complex network of checkpoints, barriers, settlements, roads and military presence is establishing "facts on the ground" which are restricting Palestinian people to separated islands, on perhaps only 10 to 12% of the country. As a consequence, travel, education, health-care, work, agriculture, and many other things are becoming Closed Doors to the Palestinians.

We visited the Israeli settlement of Ma'ale Adumim east of Jerusalem. Founded in 1978, this town currently has over 30,000 and is projected to reach 70,000 by 2010. Recent press reports suggest Israelis may pull out of some of the smaller settlements but this has crucial strategic significance. It separates Jerusalem and Jericho east-west and north-south, dividing Palestine in two. If all the planned settlement expansion in an area known as E1, together with new roads and the Separation Wall are completed it will be impossible for Palestinians to travel north to south. This is where policy is translated into concrete that is immune to negotiation.

In a small Palestinian village, Wadi Fuqeen, near to the Green Line west of Bethlehem we saw how agricultural land is confiscated and contaminated with rubble and sewage from the nearby settlement. 65% of the people in the village depend on working in Israel for which permits are needed but not always granted. Again, when the planned wall is built and the settlement expanded, the village area will reduce from 3,000 acres to less than 200. Nevertheless, the people of the village are resolute, as well as friendly and welcoming. We had coffee in a Kindergarten built and run by a small local NGO. It works with help from international organisations to raise the profile and spirits of the village.

Palestine/Israel is a tiny country packed full of wonderful people and many tragic situations. We met many folk, both Israeli and Palestinian who are working hard to build a just and lasting peace. The message we heard again and again was tell people what you have seen and encourage others to come and visit us. If you would like to learn more, please contact me on woodalls@fish.co.uk or visit www.icahtuk.org.

Peter Woodall – Host 06/323, England

Promijo - an Open Door, Mexico

In a dusty Mexican town a man with one leg is standing at a workbench hand-crafting a prosthetic leg. He is working with plaster, scraping it finely with a file. He stands with the stump of his right leg resting against a padded stool designed for his height. Beside him another man lays face down on a guernsey and operates a welding torch. He is making wheelchairs designed especially for the rugged conditions of rural life in this poor country.

The town is Coyotitan in the State of Sinaloa. These men are working at PROJIMO, a community-based rehabilitation centre founded and run primarily by women and men with disabilities. The program was started 24 years ago, arising out of the lack of any basic services or programs for disabled persons and their families. In the absence of rehabilitation professionals the founders of the program recognised a need and an opportunity to learn how to provide essential therapies, devices, education and social support.

PROJIMO welcomes foreign and Mexican visitors alike to learn, to teach and to contribute to their program. I recently spent a week there learning and assisting in their programs. I lived with a village family and took my meals with them. I helped the coordinators, Mari and Conchita, and I attended some Spanish classes provided by Rigo. The costs were very modest, \$100 US per week for room and board, and \$50 per week for Spanish classes. I would encourage other adventurous travellers to consider visiting and perhaps even donating to this extraordinary organization.

For further info, see www.healthwrights.org
Joel Kumove, Toronto, Canada

Servas Canada hosts and travellers, Earl and Sudhu Choldin's blogs while volunteering in India – Feb. 2006

Sudha and I are in Delhi on a 10 week volunteer assignment through American Jewish World Service.

We are working for Swaasthya, a small NGO developing and disseminating effective methods of reproductive health service delivery to low income girls and women.

We have finally gotten settled enough that I can sit down and tell you about our blog. You can follow our experience at www.choldins.blogspot.com

SERVAS YOUTH PATAGONIA 06

GET TOGETHER



PATAGONIA '06 STATEMENT

We believe that

Young members should go through the same selection interview as any other Servas member.

It would be useful to add some specific tips for young travellers in the 'traveller's guide'.

Servas should take advantage of new communication technologies. Young members are proficient in this technology and in this capacity have much to offer Servas.

The web site "youth.servas.org" is a vital tool for the development of Servas Youth.

The web-page for Servas Youth should be interactive, regularly updated and attractive and prominently linked to the servas.org web-site

Personal interaction between Servas members nurtures action and better communication.

Local gatherings are essential to the development of Servas. While social in nature, gatherings should always include discussion of some Servas issues.

Maintaining the intergenerational quality of Servas is essential.

Young members should get more involved in Servas at the local level and steps be taken by the national groups to keep their interest.

Servas Youth meetings are vital because they provide the time and space for experience exchange and the development of new ideas for the future of the organization.

All group efforts need coordination and clear goals. Servas Youth would be best served through the establishment of co-ordination teams.

The worldwide Servas network is thirsty for projects that help develop the Servas spirit. It is important to promote concrete actions involving young members. Servas Youth can design interactive programs for different national groups that would strengthen their organisational structure.

Servas Youth has shown that initiatives such as the language exchange program can consolidate the local host groups and bring travellers to areas of lesser tourist interest.

Servas has the potential to design a program that would facilitate exchanges between professionals and students. Such a program would grow young membership and draw travellers to less visited areas.

Suitability rather than age is the most important criteria to be taken into consideration for running in any elected position in Servas and young people should be encouraged to participate.

Information cards describing the Servas goals and philosophy would be a useful tool to help introduce Servas to young people.

It is important to adopt a slogan for Servas Youth.

We are in the process of determining what is Youth within Servas, but we urge the eGA to consider Youth to be persons within the age group of 18 and 30. Other criteria can be adopted as needed.