



Servas Monthly News 41



December 2008

Bad day? Who sorts it?

"You'll have to excuse him/her because he/she has had a bad day." Is this right? Should other people have to do extra/have their work spoilt because someone has had a bad day. Once in a while one can shrug one's shoulders and accept it. However nowadays it seems to be the standard excuse for sloppy work, work not done, not accepting the blame and not being prepared to rectify the situation.

As a child I was taught "Laugh and the world laughs with you, weep and you weep alone". I took this to mean that although it is good to share the joys of life it is not fair to inflict our 'bad days' onto other people.

Take this into a wider context. One person's bad day can then infect others who become disenchanted and perhaps even angry at their time being spoilt. Like a ripple on a pond this spreads even further out generating more ill feeling. This could just gradually peter out. But supposing that it started with a high up person having a bad day, the ripples might be larger, they might clash into the ripples of another bad day and end up Tsunami style. They would not be peaceful. They could be then be the start up of fighting. And I can think of countries where one event has had enormous bad effects.

So let us look on bad days from a Servas outlook. How can we sort them out? Can we spot a bad day and rectify it before it goes any further, either in ourselves or in someone else? How would we do it?

Happy New Year for 2009
with lots of *good days* in Servas

Contents: December 2008

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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.

contact: 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 get deleted before being read.

S I News 2009

Good News: By 25 December 54 countries had responded to the request for numbers of SI News required for 2009.

Bad News: By 25 December 80 countries had not responded to the request for numbers of SI News required for 2009.

Gentle hint: when requests are not answered then a follow up is required. This has meant that 80 countries had to be contacted. It is acknowledged that some email addresses are faulty. This is seen by the number of bounces that there are. So each country had all keylist members being copied to. 80 emails with multiple copies takes up 2 evenings to get done. Somebody has to spend 2 evenings of their own time to chase up the non-replies. If people had all replied then that person would have had those 2 evenings to get on with other jobs/relax.

Suggestion: Please reply immediately to requests. If you do not have the answer then make sure you reply with the answer within the next week, no longer.

Request: Would all those countries who have not sent in their orders for SI News 2009 please do so immediately. These are essential for the printing. Remember that every member has a right to have a paper copy. Here is the order format:

1.a) **Paper copy** b) **CD** c) **Paper copy & CD**

2. **How many paper copies** for each language

a) **English** b) **French** c) **Spanish**

3. Please give the following **contact details**.

Note the contact is the person who will receive either the CD or the hard copies, or both.

a) **Contact name**

b) **Contact email address**

c) **Contact postal address**

Without these details it is not possible to get the copies to you.

STOP PRESS: **31 Dec 2008**
- 88 countries out of 135 have now responded.
Keep going.

India and 60th Anniversary of Servas 'Going to Goa'

Name of the event:

CELEBRATING 60TH BIRTH YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF SERVAS INTERNATIONAL

Place of the event: GOA , INDIA
Country where the event takes place: India
Start date of the event: Oct 10, 2009
End date of the event: Oct 16, 2009
Contact name: DR RAMESH SHARMA
Contact e-mail address: servasindia@gmail.com
Registration will be start from 10 January 2009 .

Short description of the event:

CELEBRATING 60TH BIRTH YEAR ANNIVERSARY
OF SERVAS INTERNATIONAL IN GOA INDIA
DATES: FROM 10TH OCT TO 16TH OCT 2009
(7 DAYS BOTH DAYS INCLUSIVE)

Location: GOA , INDIA – has its own airport and connected from Mumbai , Delhi Chennai ,and Bangalore for international delegates.
Please await further details of this Event by December 2008 .

The Registration Fees which will cover Accommodation and Food (Vegetarian) for 7 Days and Airport transfer of delegates from and to airport/conference site.

Also scheduling a sight seeing tour of the lovely beaches of Goa.

Special Discounts being offered to promoting Servas ;

- Students-Youth & Groups
 - from South American, Central American, Asian & African, Servas Hosts .
 - Servas Travelers,
 - NGOs of Peace & Goodwill,
 - Founder Members (prior to 1990) of the Member Groups.
 - Previous S I Exco members .
- (for price list contact Servas India)

Dr Ramesh Sharma National Secretary Servas India
www.indiaservas.org

France and Servas 60th Anniversary

SERVAS FRANCE decided that one way of celebrating 60 years of SERVAS would be to make sure that every SERVAS HOST has a visitor in 2009--very ambitious.

So if you have a bit of spare time you'll be very welcome in France.

With all our best wishes for 2009
David and Agnes NORTHEY
SERVAS FRANCE
ANNECY

SERVAS Korea activities in 2009

SERVAS Korea Country pilgrimage project

SERVAS Korea is planning to have a 'Country pilgrimage project' for 5 years.

This project was planned to travel our beautiful country to experience our country more closely and increase the relationship between regional members.

We will travel the country on foot and by bicycle, car depending on the desire of members.

It will be held one or two times per month during weekend.

1H-2009 : Jeju Island

2H-2009 : Gangwon region

1H-2010 : Jeonnam region

2H-2010 : Seoul

1H-2011 : Busan, Gyeongnam region

2H-2011 : Gyeonggi region

1H-2012 : Jeonbuk region

2H-2012 : Chungbuk region

1H-2013 : Daegu, Gyeongbuk

2H-2013 : Chungnam region

There is no special qualification for attending this program, whoever can join this program ,Servas member or no. We hope that many foreign Servas friends, who live in Korea or from overseas, will join '**Country pilgrimage project**'.

Looking forward to seeing you....

Belgium & Luxembourg 2009

February 07, 2009: Servas Anniversary Dinner in Brussels

Venue: Planet Primerose, Ave du Gros Tilleul,41-43/Dikkelindelaan 41-43 1020 Brussels (close to the Atomium)

On Saturday afternoon and on Sunday guided walks are on the program.

Hosts of Brussels will give you the opportunity to stay overnight.

May 03, 2009 : Leuven for all

Last day of the annual 5-city meeting will be open for all Servas members

(01-02-03 of May 5-city meeting : Leuven, Basel, Frankfort, Utrecht, Strasbourg)

June 2009, Transborder cycling in Belgium and France

Cycling tour starting and finishing in Péruwelz (Belgium)
Due to the national elections in Belgium on 07/06/2009 we have to look for a new date

October 2009, SERVAS Anniversary Weekend in the Ardennes

Due to the GA held in September 2009 we have to look for a new date

More details will be announced in due time .

Info Johan Stiens jstiens@etro.vub.ac.be
belgium@servas.org

Meetings, Get together, Seeing each other

Regular meetings

Around the world there are regular, often monthly meetings of Servas people. Here are some of them. If you want your meeting on the list then please send it to newsletter@servas.org

Country	Place	Day/time	Contact
Australia	Mawson Club, Canberra	Third Thursday, alternate months	australia@servas.org
Australia	The Carringbush, Melbourne	First Weds, alternate months	australia@servas.org
Belgium	Piazza Italia, Brussels	Last Tues of month, 18:00	belgium@servas.org
Britain	Pontefract Castle, London	First Monday of Month, 18.30	info@servasbritain.org
Costa Rica	Gran Via Café, San Jose	Alternate months	costarica@servas.org
France	Grand Café de la Soierie, Lyon	First Thurs of month, 20.00	france@servas.org
France	Le Vieux Chatelet, Paris	Second Tues of month, 19:00	france@servas.org
Germany	variable Hamburg	Third Tuesday of month, quarterly	treffen-hamburg@servas.de
Germany	variable Mainz	First Monday of month, variable	treffen-mainz@servas.de
Mexico	Sahuaro's Coffee Mexico City	First Monday of month, 19:00	mexico@servas.org
Portugal	Café d'Alma Lounge, Lisbon	Last Weds of month, 18:00	portugal@servas.org
Scotland	Elephant House, Edinburgh	Last Thurs of month, 18:00	britain@servas.org
Spain	A la Gorra, Madrid	First Friday of month, 20:00	bbc17926@gmail.com
Spain	Barcelona	Last Friday of month, 20:000	cpisabel@gmail.com
USA	variable San Francisco	variable	sfservas@yahoo.com

To find more meetings both regular and occasional go to www.servas.org and follow the events links.

60th Anniversary events 2009

More and more events are appearing for the 60th Anniversary celebrations. Some are here. As for the regular meetings, look on the website to see what is happening and for fuller details.

Country	Place	Day/time	Contact
France	all host homes to be visited	all year	france@servas.org
India	Goa	10 - 16 October	india@servas.org
Belgium & Lux.	See page 2 for details	See page 2 for details	belgium@servas.org
Korea	see page 2 for details	See page 2 for details	korea@servas.org
Britain	Dalesbridge, Yorkshire	1 - 4 May	info@servasbritain.org
Switzerland	Wintertur, Biel-Bienne	4 July, 12 September	switzerland@servas.org
Italy	Val d'Ossola, for Sentierinsieme	10 - 17 July	uslenghi@fauser.it
Australia	Portland, South West Victoria	25 - 30 April	australia@servas.org
Argentina	Mare del Plata, for GA	5 - 12 September	siexco@googlegroups.com
Honduras	Lake Yojoa	Mid January	servas_honduras@yahoo.com

If your country has a meeting that you would like to add to the list then send the details to newsletter@servas.org

Travellers Tales and Country News

From Luxembourg to San Francisco

I spent a week in San Francisco at the beginning of December 2008. A couple of weeks before leaving I booked a room in a bed & breakfast in the city centre and I contacted some Servas hosts by e-mail. I must say that some of the e-mail addresses were old and no longer valid. Nevertheless I got quite a few answers and in one case I sent a card from Luxembourg by mail and in this way I managed to get in contact with the host. However a week passed so quickly and unfortunately I didn't have time to meet all the Servas friends who had answered me (I even thought I would have time to go to Berkley and visit the university campus but in the end I just stayed in San Francisco).

In any case I met Andrea who took me to a lovely restaurant along Ocean beach where we had a nice walk (she managed to persuade me to touch the water with my hand to see how cold it was compared to the Mediterranean!), talking about politics and French cinema. I also met Gabrielle with whom I spent a nice evening in a French restaurant (with a Mexican waiter!), talking about our lives and on the evening before my departure for Europe I met Carl for a cup of coffee. I told him what I had seen and loved in San Francisco and he spoke about his travels (he has travelled almost everywhere!).

When I arrived home in Luxembourg I wrote to all those whom I hadn't been able to meet, thanking them and saying I had had a safe journey home: I hope I can go back to San Francisco one day and meet them all.

*Laura Marinangeli, host in Luxembourg
Member of Servas Belgium & Luxembourg*

From England to Japan

This was my first encounter with the Servas organisation and I was very impressed. I have just spent two days (26 and 27 November 2008) with a couple in Kyoto in Japan who were very hospitable and showed me the local temples and helped me with my ongoing travel arrangements.

Then I spent two days (28 and 29 November 2008) with a couple in Tokyo who were also very hospitable. They showed me their paintings and poetry and I felt a real affinity to them.

I was amazed at how hospitable the Japanese people were. They provided a very comfortable bedroom and shower/bath facilities as well as providing me with breakfast and an evening meal on both days. It was really good to be able to talk to them about a variety of cultural, artistic and religious topics. Being able to stay in their homes gave me a real insight into how Japanese people live their lives. I felt privileged to be able to speak to them about their lives and their culture and in return to tell them about England.

I have invited both sets of people to stay with me in England whenever they wish.

I think that Servas is a really good idea. It helps people to understand each other's cultures and makes the stay much more real and enjoyable. My stay in Japan was definitely enhanced because I was able to stay with the local people.

I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Servas for providing me with the contacts in Japan. I would be very happy to continue to be a member of Servas. so that I can also provide a hospitable environment for travellers to my part of the UK.

Pauline Marley, Britain

Welcome to:

Congo-Kinshasa (DRC) Francophone Africa

Being distant interviewer for francophone Africa I'm happy to inform you that a country of this region joined Servas: **Congo-Kinshasa or the Democratic Republic of Congo (DCR)**

The contact person is **Claude Diata Luyindula** living in Kinshasa. (M 1969)

His motivation (translated from French): "I want to be member of Servas to promote peace in the world, to create ties of friendship, to share my culture and learn about the culture of other people"

I hope that there will be a good cooperation between Servas and Congo-Kinshasa.

*Rita Dessauvage, Distant Interviewer
NS Belgium & Luxembourg*

Countries of the francophone region are waiting for your visit! WMT!!!

Congo-Kinshasa (DCR) Main Contact: Claude Diata
congo-kinshasa@servas.org / claudediata@gmail.com

Congo-Brazzaville (RC) Main Contact: Titan Serge Ondon
congo-brazzaville@servas.org / crlieond@yahoo.fr

Cameroon Main Contact: Etienne Maemle
cameroon@servas.org / amour_pardon@yahoo.fr

Algeria Main Contact: Med Khazini
algeria@servas.org / tea4two4tea2@yahoo.fr

You'll be very welcome!

*Rita Dessauvage, Distant Interviewer
NS Belgium & Luxembourg*

Travellers Tales

My first visiting experience with a Servas friend in America, proving that I am a lucky man.

I searched Servas friends who live nearby the George school. My mission to US this time was to send and accompany my 16 years old, only daughter to study in an independent high school in Newtown, PA. For that reason, I wrote to Frances Dreisbach. She responded to me with very warm welcome. I also noticed that she was over 80 years old, this made me a little bit unsure whether all these plans was proper? . However, the results turned to be just wonderful. it was just like a good living America lesson for me. What I am a little bit sorry about is that I mistakenly calculated on a google map and estimated that it might be a distance of half hour to a maximum of one hour driving for her to come to George School to fetch me from there. I was wrong in fact. The real distance was around one and half hours drive. However, she seemed not mind at all and showed no sign of tiredness.

Frances is such a wonderful lady. She gave me a lot of surprise and great moments during my time in the US. Firstly, she suddenly appeared in front of us when I was talking with another new boy student from Taiwan on the campus. She held a fresh, colorful flower with a little home glass cup. This small flower from her own garden pleased my daughter and I very much. This was something we had not imagined at all. A surprise and a happy surprise. She was coming forth in white hair, common but elegant style of dress in her age, asked whether I was the Mr.. Yi from China? Her style and voice made us feel immediately that she was a very kind women, highly intellectual and still full of vigor.

After we had said good bye to my daughter, she drove me directly to her friends in nearby Newtown. That is a 'retirement community'. This is a new concept for me, which is quite different from the general 'old people community', or 'Altesheim'. It provided many facilities that assisted the aged people who can go on living independently. We met her friends and visited their home. They invited us to eat in their dining hall. It was exciting to see all these new things, which just gave me an idea, that one day, if the conditions allow, I shall do something similar in China?

Frances is really a wonderful white haired lady that I admired very much.. I told her before I left her that I would be fully satisfied if I could be as active in mind and health in body at her age. I just record here a few things to give you the imagination. She has been teaching English and living in China for one and half year in Wuhan. She has been to Tibet once a few years ago. I asked what is her impression about Tibet. I also frankly expressed my point view about Tibet because we are not politicians but people who love peace and better understanding. Her open view and interest in these sort of issues at her age surprises me again.

What was more surprising for me was that sitting next to her in her car, she was driving at a full speed, occasionally a little bit more than limit, constantly giving all kinds of introduction to me about the buildings or places along the road as we passed,. She told me that there exists some potential risk on the road because some old people cannot react to things quickly enough. There should be some kind of regular checking for these aged people to decide whether is it suitable for them to drive further. The way she speaks is just like she is a 20 years old young officer in charge of traffic accidents. Imagine this was out of the voice of an 84 year old lady. Amazing isn't it?

The most happy time for me was to sit in front of her old house on her farm. Fresh air, just comfortable weather, quiet and natural, clean surrounding, with organic vegetable from own garden, taken just a few minutes before?? All these are just a dream for any people living in crowded city. I took a lot of photos, though it may be just some common scenic forest, which however, is something I really experienced and felt.

She also gave me some introduction to Quaker values and its traditions. She showed me an important meeting house for Quakers in Philadelphia.. How the meeting proceeded and how to conduct its meaning in a silence?? Although, I understood only a very little of this, when coming back home, I was an expert when I talk with my friend here about Quakers. This is because most of them never heard of it. This, of course, is also part of Servas, that building up the understanding. I guess, if more politicians were Servas member, the world would be much better.

Changxian, China

Jotenheim, Norway



To remind us that it can be cold in winter!

from Siri
Gunn Simonsen



Country Reports, USA & Botswana

Looking back at the 2008 United States Servas National Conference in Rosendale, New York

Forty attendees participated in making this year's conference an enthusiastic and warm rural event in Rosendale, NY in the Hudson Valley. It was agreed that we all feel a strong desire to make Servas and our future gatherings more appealing to younger members. The youngest person at this conference was 45!

The report on the Servas Youth meeting in Turkey by Edith Sommer was well received. It pointed up our desire to welcome younger members into all manner of Servas peace initiatives. Young members could participate in the Servas Youth Language Experience (SYLE), help organize and be actively involved in the United States Servas 60th Anniversary Conference (being held in Racine, Wisconsin October 9-11, 2009) or generate local initiatives through peace building groups.

Many conference attendees were touched by Helga Smith's presentation focusing on Bob Luitweiler, the founder of Servas, who passed away in April, 2008. Having Bob speak for himself through clips of Jay Tomioka's video footage was a great way to give a sense of the man and of his hopes for Servas and the world. In the presentation, Bob spoke with passion about how he came to be a founder of Servas, a passion which he carried with him throughout his life. (The DVD is still in a draft form, and we are putting out a call to Servas members who are accomplished video editors who would be interested in polishing Helga's work. If that describes you, please get in touch with the United States Servas office by e-mailing James at tech@usservas.org. This would be a fantastic project for our 60th Anniversary year.)

Most agreed that the discussion regarding our aging membership (now averaging over 50 years old) and the powerful influence of the world wide web are necessary elements of discussion when we talk about the "competition" we feel from other host-and-travel volunteer organizations. These ideas will continue to be discussed as we look at our own organization and how we might bring more people, particularly younger people, into the organization to work for peace.

The presentation of an ambitious effort headed up by Servas member Dr. Rolande Hodel to facilitate manufacturing generic pharmaceutical AIDS drugs in Africa by Africans was inspiring. There is so much work to do, and again we are shown that a single person can catalyze projects having far-reaching results.

On Sunday we saw the film documentary, "The Sacred Run, the Lotus and the Feather", which was personally introduced by the film's maker, Andrea Sadler. In the film, American Indian leader, Dennis Banks, with First Nation people from North American and indigenous Japanese were joined by volunteers from thirteen countries on a ceremonial run the length of Japan, finishing in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. It was a heartfelt illustration of Servas values by non-Servas participants.

Native American elder Larry Bringinggood led us in a blessing circle to close the conference. It was a very centering and peaceful way to end the weekend.

In brief, there were many moments throughout the conference which inspired each of us. Laughter, stories, drumming and singing, sharing rooms and eating together is the stuff Servas is made of. The one repeated lament at the end of the conference was we didn't have enough time to simply be together, walking, talking and formulating the resulting plans that come out of time spent together. We will consider this as we start planning next year's conference. Please join us in Racine, Wisconsin for United States Servas' 2009 Annual Conference on the shores of Lake Michigan October 9-11, 2009 at the stately Dekoven Center (www.dekovencenter.org).

Namaste.

Judy Sears, Office Administrator, United States Servas

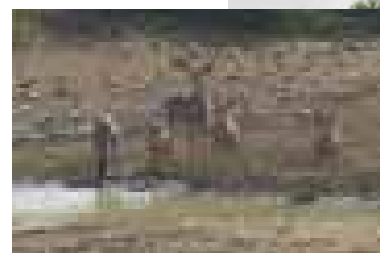
Botswana National Meeting 21- 23 December 2008

Mokolodi Nature Reserve



Some participants

More participants



The meeting discussed a wide range of factors including reviewing the Area Meeting in

Zambia in 2007 and looking forward to another larger meeting in 2009.

Lesotho was welcomed as a new country to Servas.

for more details contact botswana@servas.org

Peace and Greetings

SERVAS ARGENTINA



WISH YOU A
PROSPEROUS NEW
YEAR FULL OF
PEACE AND
UNDERSTANDING

NOW I WALK TO MAKE PEACE REAL

Nobody destroys my hope
Now I walk to make peace real
I have no chance to close my fists
I have my hands busy with other ones
to start a current to walk for one reason
to make human beings live in brotherhood

The new world is mine
I take the best from the old one
Because it failed, I change it
And risk everything to bring love to it

I saw what I ought to see and what I ought not
And today I walk
To banish pain
Nobody will destroy my hope

Peace is harmony
There is not harmony without it

Love is a hopeful song
In which Peace and welfare
Will fill our souls

ELIANA MICAELA ALBORNOZ, 10 ,
5to A SCHOOL N° 1 "Francisco Narciso Laprida"
Victoria Entre Rios
TEACHER: Norma Graciela Nunez
FIRST PRIZE POETRY
2nd CONTEST PEACE POETRY FOR CHILDREN
IFLAC ARGENTINA
Results translated to English and published by
MARIA CRISTINA AZCONA

EVERYONE OF YOU WILL BE VERY
WELCOME TO THE GAO9 IN MAR
DEL PLATA

SERVAS FRANCE

Amis Servas bonjour,

Sluggishness in the present world shows
us the assignment of Peace and solidarity
of Servas is even more necessary today.

Happy and a beautiful year 2009 for the
large Servas family.

Warm regards

Bernard Cassignard
National Secretary of Servas France

SERVAS



INDIA

Dear all friends

Time comes and goes,
incidents happen
not all of them intentionally
some positive while others negative
but the life still continues like a wheel
with some speed breakers always coming
on the way to achieve something.
The wise person always takes the good out
of it as Mahatma Gandhi took the pins from
the paper chits to be tucked, handed to him
with bad words written for him. He just accepted
the messages because he knew that the people
were not bad but they simply did not know the
truth.
So reflecting back discard all your bad experiences
and carry on the positive experiences and pleasant
remembrances.

A Happy Prosperous New Year 2009 to all.

**Meet you at Goa on Servas day
10 Oct 2009**

(Grand celebration of 60 Anniversary of
Servas International)

*Dr Ramesh sharma
N S Servas India*

Korea, 2008

SERVAS Korea activities in 2008

1. MOU Exchange Ceremony with UMMCK

SERVAS Korea had MOU Exchange Ceremony with UMMCK (United Nations Memorial Cemetery in Korea) at the hall in UMMCK on Feb. 23rd. 2008 (16:00~) The UMMCK, as the world's unique UN cemetery, is sacred home for the UN fallen who gave their priceless lives in defence of freedom and peace in Korea. As thanks for their sacrifice, SERVAS Korea assists UMMCK in offering our sweet home and day hosts when the victim's families come to Korea.

We had great support from UN during the Korean War (June 25, 1950 ~ July 27, 1953). After the war broke out in Korea on June 25, 1950 when North Korea suddenly invaded South Korea, UN hurried to convene a meeting of the 2nd UN Security Council and decided on June 28, 1950 to dispatch UN troops to Korea. This remains yet, in the history of UN, as the unique resolution where troops are dispatched in the name of UN. In all, 21 nations volunteered for assistance under the UN flag to help Korea --16 nations provided combat troops, equipment and armaments while 5 nations provided non-combat assistance by dispatching medical ships with staff and medicine. During the Korean War there were UN casualties of 40,896 from 17 nations including Norwegian.

16 Nations with Combat Aid : USA, UK, Turkey, Canada, Australia, France, Netherlands, New Zealand, South Africa, Colombia, Greece, Thailand, Ethiopia, Philippines, Belgium, and Luxemburg

5 Nations with Medical Aid : Norway, Denmark, India, Italia, and Sweden

2. 'LOVE Delivery Project' for Indonesian labourers who work in Korea.

SERVAS Korea had 'Love delivery project' for Indonesia labourers in Korea. The Korean government announced an NGO support program and our SERVAS Korea submitted 'Love delivery project' which was selected and supported by the Korean government as an NGO project. We had visited 15 Indonesian labourer's homes in Sumatra/Java and delivered to them video letters from Indonesian labourers in Korea and gave computer training to returned Indonesian labourers from Korea for 2 weeks during June.28-Aug. 9th. 2008. It was a very lovely project and we can exchange the love with Indonesia with the name of Servas.

We are planning New NGO project for 2009 with SERVAS Korea members.

3. SERVAS KOREA National Conference 2008 in Tongyeong

We had '2008 SERVAS Korea National conference' at Tongyeong, Gyeongnam on Nov. 8th-9th. 2008. It is the most beautiful season to enjoy the rich colors of autumn leaves in Korea, we had enjoyed beautiful nature and spent an enjoyable time at Tongyeong.

There were more than 100 Servas Korea members and 8 foreign guests from overseas. We sincerely thank Ms. Anne Hemming (NS of Finland), Ms. Rita Dessauvage

(NS of Belgium), Mr. Vitaly (The son of NS of Servas Uzbekistan), Ms.Yano, Ms.Tomoko Hirai, Ms.Sumi Ibuki, Ms.Sonoko Kochi from Japan, etc. for attending our Nation Conference in Tongyeong.

We will have '2009 SERVAS Korea National conference' at Seoul in November. We are looking forward to meeting many foreign Servas friends from overseas....

4. The Bicycle Tour at Gyeongju

We had Bicycle Tour at Gyeongju on Oct. 20th-21st. 2008. It was related with the 3Q board meeting of SERVAS Korea. The board meeting was held at Kensington resort in Kyoungju.

The bicycle tour at Kyoungju is held every year by hosts of East-Gyoungbuk region. Gyoungju is a city of history, culture and sightseeing which attracts a lot of tourists from home and abroad. There are abundant treasures throughout the city. We also can see the treasure city, Gyoungju, in different way if we travel to Gyoungju by bicycle. We had 47 Servas members for the bicycle tour this year. It is getting more and more popular.

We expect Bicycle Tour again at Gyoungju year 2009. Please come and join us !!!

5. Europe Exploration tour for 'Eurasia Servas, Seoul to London 2010' program

4 SERVAS Korea members, Mr. Kim JongSu (NS Servas Korea), Lee Sayoung, Hur Jong and Lee Gunil, returned from Europe after a 3 month travel. It was exploration travel for the 'Eurasia Servas, Seoul to London 2010' project. They travelled 31 countries starting from Portugal to Belgium for 3 months during Apr.22 - Jul. 16. 2008.

Mostly they stayed in Servas homes in Europe. Sometime they stayed all together but sometimes they were separated into two groups depending on the host situation. It seemed like visiting the home of a relative who lives overseas when they drove to Servas hosts. They were made very welcome by every Servas host. It was just one or two days stay but they had unforgettable recollections. Sometimes, they stayed at hotels, youth hostels, camping, B&B, etc. They also spent a night at hotel, af Chapman. This old trading ship had delivered tea to Stockholm in Sweden from India for a long time but now it is renovated as hotel.

Their total distance was 18,057km from Lisbon in Portugal to Paris. They visited Askov High School where Servas was established by Bob Luiweiler. They attended Servas Europe Summer University held at Sheersburg in Germany. They met again the Servas friends who had hosted them before during this trip and had met more than 100 Servas Europe friends at Servas Europe Summer University.

It was unforgettable experience to meet many different people, in different countries. They learned different cultures and love from Servas, it definitely will help 'Eurasia Servas, Seoul to London 2010' project. We hope for the success of 'Eurasia Servas, Seoul to London 2010' project.

Youth

Israeli-German Youth Exchange Germans to Israel, part 1

In the summer of 2006 I happened to meet Shmulik Lahar at the airport of Berlin while waiting for a delayed plane from Tel Aviv. We started to talk, and it turned out that both of us are engaged in similar activities – bringing people together in the name of peace. He is head of the „Israeli and European Youth Exchange“ I&EYE, and I am a Servas member – so we decided to merge our interests and start an Israeli-German youth exchange with Servas members.

In summer 2008, after a long process of preparation, we could start. The program had two parts – young Israelis coming to Germany and young Germans traveling to Israel. Markus described the first part – Israel visiting Munich – I will describe part number two.

Israel – is it really a place to go?

In the beginning it was not so easy to find enough young people who were interested in the programme that was sponsored by the government of Germany. But eventually we started with fourteen students between the age of 17 and 26 to get to know Israel and the Israelis. Several of the students came from Servas families, others were friends of Servas members – Harald Seiffert and I had the pleasure of accompanying these great young people!

For most of them it was the first time to be in Israel – a country full of history, religions, beautiful landscapes, a country with three seas, high mountains and a desert, a country with Arab and Jewish people living next door – but at some parts divided by a nine meter high wall, topped with barbed wire.

We were based in Holon, a city close to Tel Aviv. Most of the students stayed with the families of the Israeli students that had been in Munich; others stayed with Servas members. Shmulik Lahar guided us through the country, and at some places we met members of Servas Israel who gave us more information about life in Israel.



In Holon we visited one of the high schools where our exchange students came from; and we had a discussion with a survivor of the Shoa who lived as an orphan in Berlin, hidden in a cellar, given food by people he did not know, before he was rescued by the Red Army in 1945 at the age of seven.



We visited Haifa, where Chaim, the National Secretary of Servas Israel, showed us the „German Colony“ and the Bahai Temple and Gardens – a huge garden owned by the people of the Bahai religion.

Bahai Garden in Haifa

After visiting a Druze village (the Druzes are Muslims that are something like a Muslim sect for over 1000 years by now) we headed towards the area of Lake Galilee („Kinnereth“ in Hebrew) with an abundance of Christian places – including Yardenit, a place at the Jordan river where they nowadays pretend that Jesus had been baptized there – many Christians pay 50 US\$



for a white gown that they wear when they are baptized at this place.

Baptized like Jesus in the Jordan river

We stayed in a youth hostel above Lake Galilee. The next morning we went uphill to the Golan heights – 900 meters above Lake Galilee. We visited areas of former battles with the trenches still in place, and had a look into Syria. We were told that there might be landmines in the area of the Golan heights so we had better stay on the road.



Trenches on the Golan Heights

To be continued next month...