



Servas International
NEWS

Vol. 3 No. 1 • April/May 2013

**SERVAS FRANCE:
POSTERS FOR PEACE page 5**

**SERVAS TRAVEL EXPERIENCE:
A TALE OF TWO HOSTS ... page 7**

**SERVAS JAPAN & MONGOLIA:
FRIENDSHIP PROJECT..... page 8**

**MEMORIES FROM THE SERVAS
YOUTH MEETING..... page 12**

...and MUCH, MUCH MORE!

ERVAS



PEACE

**IN THIS ISSUE:
BEING A
DREAMER**

**Children from Servas
Turkey Show Us How
page 6**

EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor & Newsletter Coordinator

Terry Stone
newsletter@servas.org

Proofing & Editorial Assistance

Michael Johnson

Distribution Coordinator

Michael Silbert

PRINT & WEB PRODUCTION

Design & Production

Alan Stone
newsletter@servas.org

SERVAS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

President

Jonny Sägänger
president@servas.org

Vice-President

Ann Greenhough
vicepresident@servas.org

Treasurer

Mirosław Wasilewski
treasurer@servas.org

Host List Coordinator

Arnoud Philippo
hostlistcoordinator@servas.org

General Secretary

Jamie Alberto Romero
generalsecretary@servas.org

Peace Secretary

Danielle Serres
peacesecretary@servas.org



Editor's Corner

By Terry Squire Stone



Finally, here's the latest Servas International News for your enjoyment. It is packed full of goodies from your fellow Servas members.

A new website for Servas International, with a search and communication function for members to connect and interact on the internet, seems to be our most urgent issues. Not only for Servas International, but also for individual countries that don't already have their own websites. As we are learning from web sites such as Couchsurfing.com we will have a hard time keeping up with the travel/hosting potential without a strong online position. I urge members who have solid experience with website development to step forward and offer their help. We need you now more than ever!

We've also added a "Classified" column (with just me contributing this time). I hope you find it helpful and will add some of your own announcements/needs/offers! It is, of course, free for all. Let me know what you think.

I would also like to suggest the following Ted Talk: "**Dan Pallotta: The way we think about charity is dead wrong**". It's available here: <http://on.ted.com/Pallotta> or go to www.Ted.com and search for "Dan Pallotta". I mention this video because it addresses the problem of how we look at money and nonprofit organizations. He raises ideas to think about and discuss. Definitely worth a look.

As usual, please see the last page for information on how to submit your articles, etc., for publication in the next issue. We will be on vacation until the beginning of September and I hope to come back to a pile of submissions for the next issue.

In the meantime, I hope you all have a splendid June, July, August, whether you're summering in the Northern Hemisphere or wintering in the Southern Hemisphere.

Keep in touch, and keep in peace.

- 4 President's Message
- 5 Posters for Peace
- 6 Being A Dreamer
- 7 Tale of Two Hosts
- 8 Friendship Servas Sendai Japan/Servas Mongolia
- 9 The Future of Servas On the Web
- 12 Memories From The Servas Youth Meeting!
- 14 International Peace Day
- 15 Golden Rule for Travelers & Hosts
- 16 Highlights in the Desert
- 18 The Mountain of Dreams
- 20 Letters
- 20 In Memoriam: Antonie Fried
- 21 Servas is Growing on the Web
- 21 Classifieds
- 22 How To Submit Stories
- 22 Translate Servas News

The Servas Summer Meeting in Berlin
17 to 22 August, 2013



Upcoming Servas Meetings & Events

AUGUST 2013

Servas Summer Meeting in Berlin

17 to 22 August, 2013

Bildungszentrum Elstal (Elstal Educational Centre)

The meeting will focus on the rich and varied aspects of past and present-day Berlin under the motto of "Berlin between War and Peace".

WEB SITE: www.servas.de/cms/index.php?getlang=en&menuid=18&reporeid=94

SEPTEMBER 2013

International Servas Meeting-Summer Camp for Families and Young People.

25 August to 1 September

Youth Hostel La Marina

Moraira-Teulada, Alicante, Spain

Event focus is Interculture and Peace with workshops on Spanish Cuisine & Language. Other Servas countries will show a bit of their cultures as well.

Optional activities (not included in event fee) include watersports like windsurfing, scuba diving, kayaking.

COST: 230 euros adults and 185 euros children and youth (under 24 years old).

100 places Available. Registration will open in March.

CONTACT INFO: servasalicante2013@gmail.com

REGISTRATION FORM: www.servas.es

NOVEMBER 2013

7th Meeting of Servas East Asia

15 to 17 November, 2013

Zi Jin Yuan Hotel inside Sun Yat-sen University.

Please make your registration to us by the end of August through your National Secretary.

COST: 300 USD per person, including 3 nights (double bed or twin bed room for two persons), three lunches, three dinners, and three breakfasts. Plus possibly an organized city tour.

CONTACT INFORMATION:

Mr. Jack Huang

E-mail: jack.r.huang@msn.com

Miss Eunice Zheng and Tiffany Zheng

E-mail: eunice94@163.com

SEPTEMBER 2015

Servas International General Assembly 2015

Date & Place to be determined.

At the 2012 GA in Poland New Zealand, Colombia and Hungary indicated they would like be considered as possible venues for the 2015 GA. We call on other National Groups who wish to be considered to submit applications so we begin the selection process.

We are available to discuss the idea in more detail.

Submission Deadline: April 30th 2013

Following this deadline each country will have until the end of July 2013 to submit a feasibility exercise. We will provide guidance on what information is needed and what issues will be considered when deciding the most suitable venue.

Exco will review all proposals in September 2013. If a suitable venue is not selected we will extend the selection process.

Please consider the following when making your submission:

- Do you have an active national group who would be committed to working together to prepare for an international meeting?
- Is there a suitable venue available at an appropriate cost ?
- What sort of travel costs would be involved for delegates from different regions?
- What issues might arise for delegates applying for visas to visit your country?

For information on how to submit an application for consideration please contact:

Jonny Saganger - president@servas.org

Ann Greenhough - vicepresident@servas.org

Your Definition of "Peace" – and others

By Jonny Sågänger
President, Servas International
president@servas.org

"Peace cannot be achieved through violence, it can only be attained through understanding."
– Ralph Waldo Emerson

Servas has its roots in the movement that was started by Bob Luitweiler who planted the seeds to what he wanted to become a network of "peace builders". This was in the 1940's and the memories of the terrible atrocities committed during the second world war were still in fresh memory. Bob wanted to give his contribution to prevent future wars and to build the foundation of justice that could lead to a peaceful world. To choose a name that contained "peace" was logic. At that time "peace" was predominantly defined as the "absence of war" or "balance of power" between nation-states.

Since then, an evolving world and increased human consciousness has made it possible for us to conceive of peace in an even larger sense. The concept of peace has become more multifaceted and complex. Please have a look at these four different definitions of peace and reflect about which definition is closest to your own:

Positive peace: this definition stands for social justice and is therefore the opposite of structural and cultural violence. Positive peace is often compared to negative peace which is the absence of war and direct violence.

Human rights peace: persons with this perspective on peace argue that both direct and structural violence need to be tackled also at the individual level as well, and that it's not enough to just tackle the problems at the system-level.

Green peace: this perspective stands for the opinion that humanity is destroying our planet's ecosystems and at the same time is eliminating the basic living conditions of future generations. For this perspective, peace with the environment has become another key element.



Inner peace: this is the belief that inner peacelessness is the cause of all forms of violence. Only a strong inner balance and harmony can lead to outer peace. The idea is often to base the balance and harmony on some form of spirituality.

It's my ambition that this presentation of definitions of "peace" might be a start for a serious discussion within Servas about which definition or definitions that the organization could embrace.

The discussion will be continued on the Servas International's Facebook Group, and to be more exact this one: www.facebook.com/groups/117649068294944/

For more information about definitions of "peace" have a look at the website of Service Civil International in Switzerland <http://peace-learning.scich.org/>

Posters for Peace

By Danielle Serres, Servas Peace Secretary

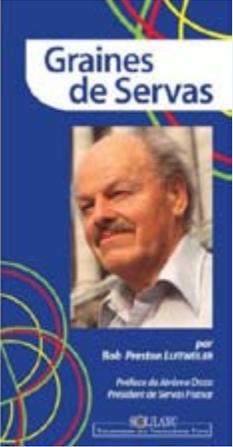
Servas France Peace Committee has been created in 2010. Now lead by Servas France National Peace Secretary, it's very active in the organisation. Some members have prepared an exhibition with several posters to be displayed at Servas meetings and/or at various events in order to spread the word about Servas. Posters will be on display for the first time during our next GA, in May 2013, with the celebration of Servas France 30th Anniversary.

You are welcome to use this material for your own Servas activities, as long as you keep the credits to Servas France Peace Committee and/or the artists/photographers if necessary.

Following are links e where you can download posters and text:

- Images Files in PDF format (good quality, can't be modified) www.mediafire.com/?nvwmnod6mq9o5
- Text Files in .doc format (can be modified for translations) www.mediafire.com/?t4rmp945ci7nq

For more information please send email to: peacesecretary@servas.org



Bob Luitweiler était convaincu que les injustices sociales, les nationalismes et la manière dont sont résolus les conflits dans les sociétés modernes contribuent à former les racines des guerres. Au contraire, il estimait que « notre volonté de partager plus équitablement les ressources de notre planète surpeuplée, notre tolérance envers la diversité et le respect de tous les peuples sont [des] racines de paix ».¹

pour Bob Luitweiler, Président de Servas France
Préface de Aïme Dossou, Président de Servas France

1 Jérôme Dossou - Avant-propos à Graines de Servas - page 12



SERVAS est une association accréditée auprès de l'ONU depuis 1973 avec la mission suivante :

« Servas est une association de paix internationale, non-gouvernementale et multiculturelle gérée par des bénévoles dans plus de 100 pays. Fondée en 1949 par Bob Luitweiler comme un mouvement de paix, Servas International est une organisation à but non lucratif qui œuvre au développement de la compréhension, de la tolérance et de la paix mondiale ».

À ce titre, *SERVAS International* siège parmi les *ONG observatrices* qui bénéficient d'un statut consultatif au Conseil Économique et Social (ECOSOC).



Les **jeux coopératifs** amènent les joueurs à **devenir partenaires** pour atteindre un objectif commun,




à la différence des jeux compétitifs où l'enjeu est de gagner face à un adversaire.




« La Paix est une création continue »

Raymond Poincaré



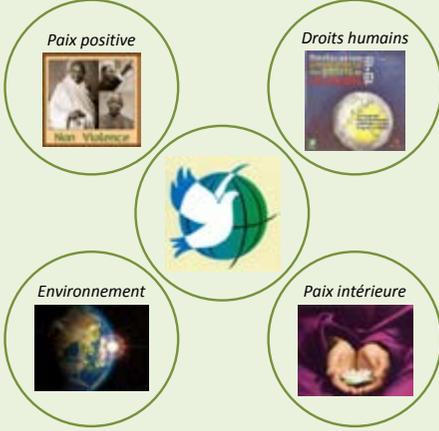
Frieden muss immer wieder neu gestiftet werden.
Peace is a continuous creation.
السلام هو إيجاد مستمر.

शान्ति एक सतत सृजन है.
La pace è una creazione continua.
Vrede is een doorlopende schepping.
Ar peoc'h a zo da grouñ diezhan.
Fred kræver konstant arbeje.
La paz es una creación continua.
La pau és una creació continua.
Paco estas senhesa kreado.

השלום הוא יצירה שאינה לוח קבוע.
La pace è una creazione continua.
Vrede is een doorlopende schepping.
Ar peoc'h a zo da grouñ diezhan.
Fred kræver konstant arbeje.
La paz es una creación continua.
La pau és una creació continua.
Paco estas senhesa kreado.



Approches complémentaires de la notion de paix



Peace positive
Human rights
Environment
Inner peace

« Je commençais à réaliser à quel point tout était totalement interconnecté, comment le social, l'économique, le politique et les relations personnelles non seulement s'ajustaient les uns aux autres dans un monde complexe, mais que chaque événement créait une vaguelette qui se propageait à travers tout l'Océan de l'humanité. »

Bob Luitweiler - Graines de Servas page 106



Being a Dreamer

Live with us, share with us

By Christina Buynova,
Youth coordinator of Servas Russia
pragamia@gmail.com



“Yes: I am a dreamer. For a dreamer is one who can only find his way by moonlight, and his punishment is that he sees the dawn before the rest of the world.”

– Oscar Wilde

“Live with us, share with us” is a name of a Turkish SERVAS project that has a goal to show to the kids from a village how big and interesting the world is, how many countries, cultures and languages are there, what is Servas and why to join it. We, the volunteers gathered by the organizer and the soul of the project - Mehmet Ateş, Servas Turkey peace secretary, - do it by coming from all around the world straight to kids living in Ekinci (Antakya, Hatay province) and teaching them things. Children are from 5 to 15 and actually you never know who teaches who there. This year was the fourth when we came together in Ekinci.

When I tell my friends about the latest "Live with us, share with us" project it must sound like the beginning of a joke:



a Russian, a Canadian and a Swiss went to a Turkish far-far away to do different activities with the kids. Normally in a joke I would go on stressing national stereotypes watching people of different cultures in a similar situation. I guess that there was something about the personal background

of each of us in how we reacted to the new environment; however the reality of the project was to feel united despite the origin, the language or the age but thanks to the idea of doing magic: creating our future by sowing it in kids.

By travelling I learned to appreciate my mother-land and found out how much I belong it. By staying in a place that I could have passed by - like Ekinci - I started to understand that you cannot divide the land into pieces. Both statements determine my way of thinking and I try to take this contradiction an exciting challenge.

Two years ago I couldn't explain to my friends (neither to myself) why I



decided to go "there" to teach "their" children, I just felt like doing that. It took time for me to shape a simple thought: there is no "their children". And as soon as the world gets it, İnşallah, there will be no "your land" or "my land", and the borders on the map will only demonstrate how rich is our world in it's diversity.



Latest developments in the region (Hatay is just on the border with Syria) make me glue my eyes to Facebook notes of the kids and their parents and fear to see a word that I learned well in Turkish: savaş (war). I only hope that the other word, barış (peace), that we spelled and wrote so many times together with the kids, will never be replaced in their minds.

A Tale of Two Hosts

Israel, Sept. 2012

by Regine and Tim,
Tallahassee, Florida, USA



We visited two wonderful Israeli families. It was a very touching experience, which helped us understand Israeli life and the delicate balance between Jews and Arabs.

Our first hosts were Alon and Inbal, in the Galilee. Their oldest daughter had just begun two years of compulsory military service (3 years for men). Alon is a 'sheriff' on constant vigil. His needs to be the peacemaker and de-escalate anger when thefts occur.

Inbal's dad was killed during the 1967 war. Israeli's count time much as we do, unfortunately, by war eras. For us it is WWII, Korea, Viet Nam, etc. For Israelis: the Independence, 6-day, Yom Kippur war, etc. - each generation participated and often someone dear was lost. Inbal's peace work focuses on what Jewish and Arab people have in common - their love of the land and its plants. She is compiling a book of native plants.

While we ate dinner young members of the Sheriff's "community watch" (24 hour patrols carrying M-16s) dropped by to check in. The sheriff



is ALWAYS on call....The headline in the Jerusalem Post that morning: "80 shells fired from Gaza to Israel; 3 near dead; retaliation likely." This made us understand the response of a Servas member near Jerusalem who told us that she could not host us since her grandkids were coming because their home near Gaza was unsafe since the bombing resumed. Every new house must have a bomb shelter which adds an enormous cost (around \$20,000).

Our second hosts were Arie and Mira (shown with two of their four children; one son had been adopted as a baby from Ethiopia). Mira travels over an hour each way to counsel Holocaust victims. Their oldest child just finished his required military service.

We experienced our first Shabbat dinner. Traditionally men put on a kippah (small cap) which our host provided. Arie read a short Hebrew prayer then we all sipped from a glass

of wine and took a piece of bread. We found it touching [reminding us of] Jesus' last meal!

A conversation ensued about education - Mira explained that Arabs enter university with preferential treatment compared to Jewish students. Indeed, this Israel program for Arabs (much like that for minorities in the USA) encourages higher education among Arabs - hoping it will help relationships.

The next day we had a wonderful tour of Zippori. We walked through underground cisterns, noting the paved Roman road with the groove marks from chariot wheels, and a 2000 year old Jewish menorah engraving. We ate cactus fruit, sweet white pomegranates, sucked on dried up carob beans, and chewed anise seeds.

Getting to know these hosts was truly a high point of our visit to Israel, bringing us closer to the lives of others.



Teachers-trainings-college from outside



Modern carpenter-tool: flexible saw



Looking at your own hand through the 'new' microscope

Friendship Servas Sendai Japan - Servas Mongolia

An international project to
help schoolkids in Mongolia

Sachiko Mori, Servas-member in Sendai-shi, Miyagi-ken,
Tohoku, Japan; samori@colorante.net

In Mongolia (less than 3 million inhabitants) there is one member of Servas: dayhost Mrs. Hishge Sambuu in Ulanbaatar. Twenty years ago she studied six years at the university in Hiroshima, where she got a university degree. In Hiroshima she was told about Servas. The first trip she made was to northern Japan, where she stayed with the family Mori in Sendai.

The average temperature in Ulan Bataar, where Mrs. Hishge lives, is about -2 or -3 degrees (Centigrade), all over the year. She has a managerial job at the Ministry of Education.

In 2012 Mr. Mori travelled in Mongolia and met Mrs. Hishge. She did show him a school and told him about the lack of furniture. Because more children need to be educated, there are two 'shifts': one in the morning and another one in the afternoon.

Because of the aging in Japan, there is sometimes a surplus of furniture. Mr. Mori started to collect this furniture for the schools in Mongolia. He put everything in two containers and in December last year these containers arrived in Ulan Baatar. The furniture as well as a piano, gymnastic appliances, a

blackboard, a microscope and carpenter tools, were transported to seven schools (elementary schools and highschools) and one teachers-trainings-college.

Some of the schools are 300 to 500 km from the capital. One school was even 1300 km from Ulan Bataar, where they do not have electricity or running water. While transporting the cargo, the temperature was around -35 degrees. But the happy faces of the children did keep the people going!

At some schools the children stay overnight (because the distance from their home to school is too big) and especially for these children it is nice that they can use the gymnastic appliances in their leisure time. The Mongolian and Japanese school tables look different: a Mongolian table is designed for three children, but the tables from Japan are designed for one child only.

This year Mr. Mori received pictures from the schools and college in Mongolia. The piano is at the teachers-trainings-college. Now, the students are able to study playing the piano, which was not possible before. Of course the children, parents and teachers are very glad!



Learning about music at elementary school



The 'new' blackboard



Sitting at the 'new' schooltables



Piano at the teachers-trainings-college



Teacher & Mrs. Hishge



Gymnastics with the 'new' appliances

A New Servas Web Site Is On The Move

By Jonny Sägänger,
President, Servas International

The creation of a new website is one of the top priorities for the Servas International Executive Committee, EXCO, that was elected in August last year.

Why is this a top priority for EXCO? The most important answer to that question is that this is one of the tasks that EXCO was given by the Servas General Assembly, GA, in August 2012. The GA is the most important democratic organ in Servas International. EXCO has then given the highest priority to the new website, based on the input from many, many individual members. The current website has become old fashioned and it's virtually impossible to modernize to today's necessary standards.

One of the main features on the new website will be a search engine which enables easy communication between travellers and potential hosts. It should also facilitate better communication – and interaction – between the other people who are part of our global organization. This will strengthen the global Servas community.

The new website's message about Servas' vision and mission will attract new members of all ages, in order to make our network bigger and to give the organization a well needed numeral and economic boost.

Most Servas members ask themselves: why doesn't our organization already have a modern website and an internet based system for host searching, communication and interaction between members? For the answer to this question, please read the article in the sidebar on the right.

As stated in the accompanying story a new SOL Working Groups has been formed and is now working hard to create the framework for the new website and the search function that will make it easier for travellers to find hosts and to facilitate communication between Servas members.

On the 23rd of February EXCO also made a decision to create a small group of people who will make an inventory of the current material on servas.org: - what content could be deleted, removed to the new website and which features and functions beside the search function should be added?

The name of the group is the Servas Website Content Task Force, SWCTF. The participants of SWCTF are Janek Dzierzawski (Poland), Arnoud Philippo (Netherlands), Danielle Serres (France) and Jonny Sägänger (Sweden). Janek Dzierzawski has the special task of refreshing the Servas Youth website which will be an integrated part of servas.org. Jonny Sägänger is the convenor of SWCTF (and the author
SERVAS WEB SITE - continued on page 10

Servas OnLine – Where It's Been, Where It's Going

By Jonny Sägänger, President, Servas International

Most Servas members ask themselves: why doesn't our organization already have a modern website and an internet based system for host searching, communication and interaction between members?

There is not one single, simple answer to this question. Let me try to guide you through the past, by presenting a version of what has happened and what I hope will happen in the future.

The origin of the project to digitize part of Servas operations and to optimize use of the Internet has its roots in administrative member handling systems like Whale and Dolphin which have been in operation for a long time in many countries. For example, currently more than 40 countries allow members to use Dolphin to download their hostlists in digital form as a pdf file. The problem with the existing administrative systems is that they are not enough "user friendly" to make it possible for every single Internet connected Servas member to use. A member shouldn't have to be an avid user of computers in order to search for hosts or interact in other ways with other members.

Because of this, there was a decision at GA 2009 to create a new, user-friendly system. The GA also decided that the project should be financed by Servas member countries of a certain size which would pay a levy of 1 swiss franc per year per member. The project was given the working name ServasOnline (SOL).

The new EXCO got the mission to create the system. A working group was formed. EXCO and the working group tried different solutions:

- cooperation with other organizations who had similar goals as Servas and who had a working Internet based search function as well as a digital community network.
- to buy existing so called "off the shelf" software program to create a social network/community, instead of building a system of its own, tailored for Servas needs.

Neither of these solutions worked out in order to fulfill the task that EXCO was given by GA 2009.

It's important to note that during the period 2009-2012 some of the key persons inside EXCO and experts connected to the group were of the opinion that SOL could not be implemented within the federative structure of Servas. Servas has a federative structure and the organization consists of many different national groups. Since these national groups have different systems for membership and membership fees some key

SERVAS ONLINE - continued on page 10

SERVAS WEB SITE

continued from pg. 9
of this article).

The overall plan is that the requirements and project plan for both the new website should be published in a public bidding process for proposals from professional web development teams.

A rough draft for a Request For Proposal, RFP, already exists. It was created by the former EXCO, but never used. This RFP is now being revised and should be published as soon as possible.

Both SOLWG and EXCO are keeping a list of willing and available people skilled in all phases of web site development including design, marketing, database, user interface, and scripting. Individuals with these skills can be volunteers from within the Servas organization, paid professionals or a combination of both. Selected Servas members will be asked to participate in beta testing a working prototype web site. If you're interested in volunteering, please send an email to president@servas.org.

After the completion and the implementation of the new website there will be need for people for the day to day running, maintenance and further development. We will need at least one web editor, customer and technical support functions. Hopefully these roles can be filled with volunteers.

There is a draft rough project schedule for the new website. The schedule will be presented as soon as possible during the first half year of 2013.

Please look out for news about the development of the new website in coming issues of SI News and at www.facebook.com/groups/117649068294944/members/

It's my strong belief that our new website with search and community functions will be an important step forward for Servas as an organization.

The next GA in 2015 is EXCO's formal deadline for the important SOL project. But it's our conviction that it needs to be finished sooner than that. With your help it should be possible.

To be perfectly honest: If we - you and I, the members of Servas - can't effectuate and finalize the ServasOnline and website project there's an apparent risk that Servas will fade away as an organization. And that, we cannot let happen!

Virtues of the ServasOnline (SOL) prototype

An search functionality that makes it easier for travellers to find hosts and other community functions will be important new features on the new Servas International website that will replace the current websites, including the site for Servas Youth. The search and community functions are being developed under the working name ServasOnline, SOL.

The existing ServasOnline, SOL, prototype includes the following functionalities, among others:

- SOL allows non Servas persons to see if there are Servas hosts in different countries and cities. But he/she will not be able to see the contact details of the hosts or communicate with them.
- SOL allows a non Servas person who wants to join Servas, to contact the National Secretary or other designated Servas key person in his country, through server based e-mail and arrange for his/her interview. After a successful interview and payment of the requisite fee as

SERVAS WEB SITE - continued on page 11

SERVAS ONLINE

continued from pg. 9

persons, especially the ones with software programming experience, were of the opinion that a global structure in which all Servas hosts and travelers as would belong to one global Servas organization would be a prerequisite for the implementation of SOL.

The persons who subscribed to this view claimed that new applicants would need to apply for membership in the global Servas organization. This line of action could mean the end of Servas national groups as administrative and legal units with their own economies. With such a development Servas would get a similar centralized governing structure as Couchsurfing, Hospitality Club and some other organizations that also offer hospitality exchange programmes.

Some in the members of EXCO during the mandate period of 2009-2012 were of the opinion that EXCO did not have the authority to make this structural change of Servas as a democratic organization. The reason was that amendments to the SI Statute would be required for such major structural and organizational changes. According to Pramod Kumar, who is the former vice president of SI EXCO and my predecessor as president after the resignation of Gary Sealey at the beginning of 2012, such amendments of the SI Statutes can be made only by the General Assembly. And they can be made only if two thirds of the member countries support the amendments. It's important to note that an amendment to the SI Statute cannot be made by Distant Vote, according to Pramod Kumar.

Despite several setbacks the SOL project was carried forward when Pramod Kumar searched for a volunteer software programmer and found Matthew Pashkovskiy of Servas Russia. Matthew was - and still is - based in St Petersburg. Pramod worked with Matthew and guided him in developing an SOL prototype based on the current federative structure of Servas. The SOL prototype has been shown on several occasions, for example at the Nordic Youth Meeting in Denmark 2011, at the Servas Youth meeting and at the most recent GA, both of which took place in Poland during 2012.

At the GA 2012, it was made public that not all countries had paid the levy that was decided by the GA 2009. Even before GA 2012, the account statements for 2009 and 2010 showed that not all countries had paid their SOL levy. Even rich countries with many members had not paid the total required amount. It was also made public that the money that had been spent was mainly used for an SOL project planning meeting in Spinea, Italy in May 2010. Parts of the results from the groundwork that was done at the Spinea Meeting has been used as input to the project. The SOL

SERVAS ONLINE - continued on page 11

SERVAS WEB SITE

continued from pg. 10

applicable in his/her country, the applicant can become a part of the Servas Online community. The Servas Online administrator of the country can designate the new member as a host, traveler or both.

- SOL enables Servas hosts and travelers to search for hosts in different cities and countries and see their Servas profiles and also communicate with them using the server based email, but without getting to see the real contact details of the hosts.
- SOL enables Servas hosts and travelers to individually edit and update their profiles, contact information etc.
- SOL enables hosts to check the authenticity of the Lol of a traveler based on the serial number of the Servas stamp on the Lol. By logging into Servas Online and entering the serial number of the Servas stamp, the hosts can see the name and the profile of the traveler to whom a particular stamp has been issued.
- SOL enables group administrators to send emails to their entire group using the server email system.
- Logged-in and approved travelers can use the Servas-route-planner to find hosts and travelers along the route they want to travel. Using a form with departure-location, destination, route-options like walking, bicycling, avoiding highways and a number of criteria (such

as languages spoken by the host, touristic locations in the area, etc) the result will be a list of matches which are shown on the map. Probably it is possible to use software which is already (free) available (like Google Maps) to implement this feature. For the Servas-route-planner it might be possible to develop a mobile app as well, to use the software of the Servas-route-planner for mobile devices.

The prototype exists mainly thanks to the dedicated work of professional computer programmer Matthew Pashkovskiy in St Petersburg, Russia and Pramod Kumar, former vice president of SI EXCO.

Additional features will be added to SOL at a later stage.

SOL - the Start of Life

SOL, the acronym for ServasOnline, has not been appreciated by everybody, since it for some people can have some demeaning connotations. But beside the not so favourable meanings SOL can also stand for Super Online, Solution, Start of Life, etc. Since it makes life easier in projects to use acronyms, we stick to SOL and continue to hope that it will give Servas a fresh, new Start of Life.

SERVAS ONLINE

continued from pg. 10

prototype had been developed through volunteer work, and with virtually no financial expense for Servas.

Because of the moderate progress of the SOL project, the GA 2012 decided the total levy is to be suspended until the existing collected levy money has been used according to the GA 2009 and GA 2012 decision. It is important to note that EXCO and its treasurer has the mission to collect the levy from countries that have not yet paid their levy for 2009-2012.

The total expenses for the SOL project between GA 2009 and GA 2012 and up to the 30th of March 2013 amounts to 4,910 euros.

At the GA 2012, it was also decided that both country representatives and individual members will be responsible for entering and maintaining personal data in the ServasOnline system. This was a significant decision, since member data by tradition has been handled by administrators and officers on a voluntary basis in Servas member countries.

Having said that, let me stress one thing: I personally belong to a significant group of Servas members that are of the opinion that the SOL project can be implemented without radically changing the present federative organizational and governance structure of Servas.

After the GA 2012, a ServasOnline Working Group, SOLWG, of five people was formed in order to create a solid foundation for the continuation of the project. The project's requirements were to be revised, extended and prioritized by the SOLWG to form a well-defined project plan, including a time schedule and a specific budget. The requirements and project plan was to be published for a public bidding process for proposals from professionals.

However, the SOLWG project group experienced problems in reaching its goals, and the project leader resigned in January 2013. The working group's actions were almost totally stalled for a little more than a month. After a search for new volunteers, EXCO on the 23rd of February 2013 appointed the SOLWG member Matthew Pashkovskiy as the new project leader. EXCO also appointed Walter Dieringer (Austria), Derek Carver (New Zealand), Anna Cristina Siragusa (Italy), and Pablo Colangelo (Argentina), as members of a new SOLWG. The group is a mixture of IT and/or web professionals and engaged lay persons.

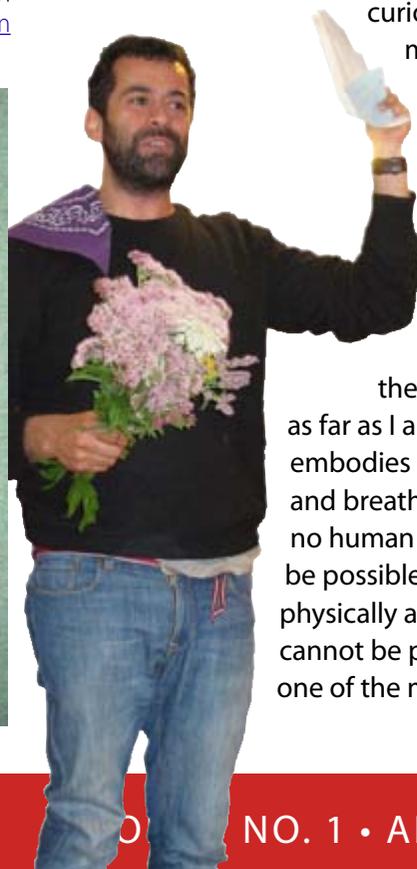
The SOLWG – in cooperation with EXCO - has a plan to create a framework for a new servas.org website where the search and community functions planned for SOL are incorporated. But in order to build the new website SOLWG and EXCO need to find out Why, With which content and for Whom?



Memories from the Servas Youth Meeting in Poland

By Heather Mason, Board Member, US Servas Team Member, Servas International Youth
servasheather@gmail.com

If you're 22,
 physically fit, hungry
 to learn and be better,
 I urge you to
 travel—
 as far and as widely
 as possible.
 Sleep on floors
 if you have to.
 Find out how other people
 LIVE and
 EAT and COOK.
 Learn from them—
 wherever you go.
 —Anthony Bourdain



For me the journey to Poland, the Youth Conference, and the GA began and ended with the same person: Pablo Chufeni.

The week before I was meant to fly to Katowice there I was doubting myself, dreadful, and even trying to come up with excuses not to go. Something about Poland just sounded so... dark and cold (which it was!) But, alas, my sometimes irrational

curiosity always beats out my mostly irrational doubts. Besides, I had to be there to see off my friend, everybody's friend, Pablo Chufeni. Pablo has been the Servas International Youth Coordinator since the beginning of time, as far as I am concerned. Pablo embodies Servas Youth. He lives and breathes it in a way that no human being should really be possible to do, because it physically and psychologically cannot be possible. But there he is, one of the most down-to-earth and

"normal" humans I have ever met.

Ok, admittedly not just for Pablo, but I had to be there to see the several Servas friends I've made over the years, including the friends I have communicated with and know of but had not met in person yet (which always feels strange when you know someone in a form other than their body, and then you finally meet that body, but you already have an idea of what it contains...) So then I jumped on a plane to Southern Poland.

The journey from Amsterdam to the Youth Conference site, a small town called Tylicz in the South of Poland, took me a total of fourteen hours. Surrounded by screaming babies on my Ryanair flight... A bus ride, then another bus ride, which literally stopped at every bus stop in Southern Poland... and then, finally... Tylicz! I may have shed tears at the relief of my arrival and the kind face of Polish organizer Ewa Dzierżawska.

I immediately had to eat some Polish food and taste some Polish vodka. My favorites: cheese peroggi (yummm) and Zubrowka, a smooth vodka made with bison grass and drank with pickled herring.

That evening and each of the following evenings were spent eating, drinking, and dancing by the campfire light until the early morning hours. An

YOUTH MEETING - continued on page 13

SERVAS YOUTH MEETING

continued from page 12

especially fun night was enjoying a Polish bar-b-que and polka music!

Each morning we were lucky to have the yoga expertise of Arnoud Philippo of Servas Netherlands, happy to lead the early morning/ jet-lagged attendees of the conference in some stretches.

After breakfast, attendees were invited to participate in a variety of activities, often just hanging out and discussing the future of Servas as a group. We went on a hike, visited one of the most charming story-book towns I have ever seen (Slovakia) and were able to interact with local schoolchildren! This conference was a blast and the Polish organizers did an incredible job making sure each of the over 90 attendees were always well cared for. I always felt at home with these lovely people.

On the business end of things, the group spent many hours each day discussing specifically:

Servas online. A sneak-peek of the prototype was shown by Jonny Sägänger of Sweden. In the end, the group voted to recommend to the General Assembly that this project be implemented a.s.a.p.

As this conference was held in Poland, I was especially happy to meet several members of Eastern European Servas countries, including some countries fairly new to Servas, and learn about the ways that these special people are working to establish the organization within their countries. This conference was



particularly valuable for the outreach and integration of Eastern European countries to Servas. The Eastern European countries also presented recommendations for the creation of an official Servas Area for this region.

The discussion of future Servas Youth annual conferences covering different regions of the world brought questions of location yet to remain unanswered. Of course, all present enthusiastically agreed that these conferences are not only SUPER fun, but useful for revitalizing and engaging membership. Servas Spain and Servas Germany each plan to host a youth oriented conference next summer! Stay tuned for more on those events!

The question of funding is always a concern. I was proud to present the US Servas Mogerman Scholarship for SYLE as a model of how private individuals can support Servas Youth. For more on the Mogerman Scholarship and the SYLE program, see usservas.com.

The idea was put forth prior to the conference that Servas Youth structure should be reorganized into a committee. This new structure was developed first through on-line public discussions, followed up with a presentation of the structure at the youth event, and after several meetings was finally presented at the General Assembly. With the work of several individuals, especially the expert help of Pablo Chufeni, this structure and the roles and goals of this team began to take shape. Following the conclusion of the Youth Conference we continued



to work on this and I was lucky enough to attend the General Assembly to help present the idea to Servas representatives from around the world. I'm happy to inform that the new Servas Youth Committee structure was approved at the GA! Now it will consist of eight people: Reut from Israel, Gonzalo from Columbia, Janek from Poland, Cristian from Argentina, Vivica from Hong Kong, Nauman from Pakistan, Bina from India, and myself (Heather) from Seattle. Please wish us luck!

Yes, I felt this conference was incredibly important for establishing the growth of Servas Youth for years to come. But my favorite moment of all was the opportunity to thank Pablo Chufeni, Servas Youth Coordinator from 2004 to 2012, for his years of invaluable dedication to Servas. A genuine soul, he sincerely believes in the power of this organization to change the world for the better, one experience at a time. He believes in the power of all of us to share Servas with the world. Truly inspirational, I know that my dear Bob Luitweiler would be especially proud of the heart Pablo has shown for humanity through his work with Servas.

Please share your thoughts with me! I look forward to meeting you in my home or yours.

Photos used with generous permission from the darling Christina Buynova of Servas Russia.

Servas And International Peace Day

Submitted by Danielle Serres, Servas Peace Secretary



1. SERVAS and the UN

SERVAS is an organization which has had accredited status with the UN since 1973, with the following mission: "Servas is a non-governmental and multi-cultural international Peace organization, which is managed by volunteers in more than 100 countries. Founded in 1949 by Bob Lutweiler as a Peace movement, Servas International is a non-profit making organization which works towards the development of understanding, tolerance and world peace."

This accreditation gives Servas a certain number of rights, but also responsibilities, including that of widening knowledge of the work of the UN and, so far as is possible, of implementing UN decisions.

2. International Peace Day

International Peace Day was instituted by the UN on 30th November 1981 by Resolution no. 36/367. On 7 September 2001 the date was set for 21 September by Resolution no. 55/282.

viz. (the UN):

"Declares that henceforward International Peace Day shall be observed globally as a day of cease-fire and non-violence, during which all

nations and all peoples will be urged to cease hostilities;

"Invites all Member States, constituent bodies of the UN, regional and non-governmental organizations and individuals to celebrate International Peace Day in an appropriate manner, including by means of educational activities and awareness-raising, and to cooperate with the UN towards the establishment of a global cease-fire"

Extract from exchanges which resulted in this resolution:

"International Peace Day should be devoted to commemorating and strengthening the ideals of peace, both within every nation and every people, and between them. . . . This day will serve to remind all peoples that our organization, despite all its limitations, is a living instrument in the service of peace, and should serve all of us, at the heart of the organization, as a bell which rings out to remind us that our lasting commitment, beyond all our interests or differences of any kind, is to Peace."

3. SERVAS & International Peace Day

In past years some countries have thought up various 'simple acts'.

For example, in Switzerland, on this day, Servas members have sung peace songs in the streets to attract the

attention of passers-by, and distributed leaflets to explain about Servas. In Australia members organized picnics in the parks. In Portugal Servas members joined in with activities organized by other (peace) groups in public areas. In Brazil, they did a walk for Peace in Petrolina, by the Sao Francisco River.

4. What can SERVAS do in practice?

Servas International Peace Secretary invites every Servas national group to reflect on the best way, for them, to mark this day, seizing on the occasion to widen knowledge about Servas.

In each country we can join in with initiatives organized by other groups who share a similar peace ethos.

Several Servas members are also members of one or more of these organizations. We suggest that the National Peace Secretaries/national Secretaries in the countries where there isn't a Nat Peace Sec. circulate round all their members a letter asking those amongst them who know of any practical activities being planned for the 21 September to come forward. It will then be possible to explore with these individuals practical ways in which Servas could be involved in these activities, and benefit from this in order to make Servas more widely known.

To explain specifically how Servas functions, we can draw on Article 2 of the 'Action Program for a Culture of Peace' (resolution adopted by the UN on 6/10/1999), which stipulates that "The development of a culture of peace rests on the transformation of values, attitudes, modes of behavior and ways of life likely to promote peace among individuals, communities and nations".

We can take part in Peace Walks, observe a minute's silence at mid-day, hang a peace flag at our window, make peace doves out of paper (origami), organize the release of peace balloons, put up displays of materials, write articles for local newspapers, put on a film / video, etc.

SI Peace Secretary is currently in the process of forming a small group of people working on this project.

We would be grateful if you would inform SI Peace Secretary of all your planned activities, who will then collate them.

So far as is possible, we will try from now until September to share suggestions with you, leaving it to each country to decide whether or not to pursue them.

A 'Golden Rule' for Travelers & Hosts

By Alice Diamond,
Servas USA Complaints Committee

“What is hateful to you, do not do to your fellowman. This is the entire Law; all the rest is commentary.”

Talmud, Shabbat 31a

Now that the summer season is approaching, with an increase in visits, this is an excellent time for a friendly reminder. There is a reason why almost all faith traditions have an “ethic of reciprocity” that requires each person to engage with others fully aware of the two-way nature of every relationship. So the next time you are either a host or a traveler remember the Golden Rule, however you feel most comfortable in expressing it.

Which brings me to the number one “annoyance” we hear from travelers... that they have written to many hosts and no one has responded. We can understand that because of very busy schedules, hosts may feel a bit overwhelmed at times. But consider how the Servas traveler feels, not wanting to write to new hosts before hearing from those already contacted?

Here is a list of tips for both sides of this mutual encounter that I have found lead to greater success in arranging Servas visits.

Look them over so that the next time you are trying to arrange a Servas visit, or have the opportunity to be part of a traveler’s fond memories of your country, you’ll think about the Golden Rule and do the right thing.

Tips For A Better Travel & Hosting Experience

TIPS FOR THE TRAVELER

- Always put the word “Servas” in the Subject Line of your e-mail.
- Individualize your letter to indicate why you would like to meet this Servas host(s). Sure, a blanket request is easier, but it is far less likely to result in a positive response, since the host can usually spot it and automatically takes him or herself off the hook by assuming that “someone else will have already agreed.”
- If you commonly have trouble with people saying they never received your international e-mails, it may be that your e-mail server is on a “black-list.” You can see if any specific mail server is on these lists at www.mxtoolbox.com/blacklists.aspx by entering its IP address. Having just one spammer on the mail server you use can cause your mail to die in transit. It sounds unfair, but you can be punished merely for the company you unknowingly keep. If need be, try getting an e-mail address on any of the major providers such as Yahoo or Gmail or Aol. They will check to see if your server is blacklisted, and you can try to switch servers.
- Attach a copy of your scanned LOI to provide additional information. (This does not replace the requirement of bringing and showing your original LOI if a visit is arranged, but will provide supplementary information about you that may “click” with the host and demonstrate shared interests.)
- Remember that not everyone in every country stays as “glued” to their e-mail traffic as you may do. Some hosts take vacations without their iPads or computers, and most European vacations are far longer than that of the average American! Since we Americans like to go traveling when our hosts travel also, problems connecting are not too surprising. Aahh, how this can contribute to your study of cultural diversity!
- If you don’t receive responses through e-mail, try calling. Many people list mobile phone numbers in the directories, and even if on vacation, may just have their phone with them. How marvelous to find that, while out-of-town now, they will be ready to greet you on the dates you would like to schedule a visit. Whereas international phone calls used to be very expensive to make, I now have a phone card which allows calls to most destinations for less than five cents per minute,

and Skype to a landline is probably even less. (But remember if you leave a message, don’t expect your host to bear the cost of a long distance call in return; they may not know about cheaper options and the costs may sound daunting. Better to leave your e-mail address and ask them to write with a convenient time for you to connect.)

- If visiting a popular travel destination, try a visit with a host who may not be in the very center of the metropolitan area and thus gets fewer requests. Particularly if you are visiting a location with good public transportation, this may not be a big inconvenience.
- And finally, plan ahead and contact hosts early. If you put forth the effort and are patient, you may just be making a new friend for life.

TIPS FOR THE HOST

- If you are using a spam filter in e-mail, check that spam folder at least weekly for requests for visits that have landed there because your system does not recognize the address. Yes, spam filters are a blessing so that you don’t get 100 notices of on-line pharmacies each week, but I always find there are a few legitimate pieces of mail within the 100 or so real spams I get weekly. When this happens, be sure to follow the procedures to add that contact to your list of acceptable addresses. (Often this merely entails clicking on the name and choosing “add to contacts.”)
- If your e-mail provider has the ability to add identifier words that assure a given piece of mail is directed to you, be sure to add the word “Servas” and/or “Visit.” Not all e-mail providers have this capability, but if they do, it is usually called a “White List.” Recognize that this only affects junk detection. It won’t have any effect on messages your mail server won’t accept in the first place since they are from a black-listed provider.
- If the number of requests for hosting you get is really high (as it seems to be during Spring Break in San Diego!), consider creating a Word Document that simply says: “As much as I would like to host you, I am not available for the days you requested. Wishing you a lovely visit to San Diego.” When a request is received, simply click “Reply” and copy in the two sentences from the document.



Highlights in the Desert

Servas Israel International Meeting
at Kibbutz Sde Boker in the Negev
on 2-7 April 2013

By Claudia Sagi,
Servas Israel National Secretary



Our dream came true after months of planning and preparations. We all arrived in Sde Boker: 80 Servas friends from 21 countries met for 5 days in the Negev.

Our goal was to enable Servas members to experience Israeli life, culture and the unique desert environment.

We had a full agenda, still allowing time to get to know one another and to share our feelings.

Every morning began with physical activities like Tchi Gong, gym or meditation. Afternoon workshops included folk dancing, Indian Rangoli drawing, games, photography, music and singing, all lead by the participants. In the evenings there were presentations of the different countries with slideshows, folklore, singing, dancing, food and drink sampling. We ended each evening with a poem of the day or a bedtime story.

During the meeting we all together created a mosaic of Peace Words in our different languages.

Our days included both field trips and enriching lectures on solar energy research and desert agriculture.

Day 1 – was dedicated to registration and formalities, meeting, greeting and “breaking the ice” activities. There were also informal meetings with Servas Israel members, who could not attend the whole

meeting, but joined the first afternoon and evening activities.

Day 2 – we learned about the kibbutz, Ben Gurion heritage, and solar energy in the Desert Research Institute. Also some of us visited the energy-saving house of Jerome and Drora in Midreshet Ben Gurion.

Day 3 – we took a guided tour by bus and visited the agricultural center of Ramat HaNegev to learn about experiments in desert agriculture. We met a young farmer in Kadesh Barnea, and had lunch in a Bedouin-style tent in Ezuz Beerotaym. We ended the tour with a visit to the Nitzana youth village and learned about their inspiring educational activities for special youth communities.

Following a discussion about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the quest for peace there was a talk with Naim and Rana - Palestinian Servas friends by Skype video conferencing.

Day 4 – we took a guided tour by bus visiting Mitzpe Ramon, taking in the breathtaking desert landscape while waking above Makhtesh Ramon, a unique natural phenomenon found almost only in Israel. We enjoyed lunch at Salman’s Bedouin tent and learning about the changing Bedouin lifestyle. On the way back to the kibbutz, we saw ancient rock drawings and observed from afar the old

SERVAS ISRAEL - continued on page 17

SERVAS YOUTH MEETING*continued from page 17*

Nabatean city at Ein Avdat, hearing about their way of life.

Later the kibbutz members invited us to join their Kabalat Shabbat (traditional singing, prayer and reading in honor of the Shabbat) and communal Friday night dinner, after which we learned Israeli folk dances in the gym.



Day 5 – we participated in invigorating group trips – walking or biking – across the plateau overlooking the Zin valley, and surrounded by majestic mountains. The evening began with an enlightening lecture sampling Israeli music “Between East and West” given by the Israeli composer and teacher Michael Volpe. Followed by the farewell party – the “cherry on top of the cream” of the meeting – full of love and excitement – dancing and singing, presentations and improvisations – a huge embrace between nations, leading to better understanding between cultures.

Servas Israel wishes to thank all the friends who made the effort to come and participate so lively in all activities of the meeting.

Many thanks to volunteers from all the countries who assisted with the meals in the kibbutz dining hall and in the club (moadon).

Special thanks of appreciation to Servas Israel organizers, who worked on the preparations since October 2012 – Zvi and Nitzhona from Kibbutz Sde Boker, Lesley and Meir from Jerusalem, Nirit from Sde Warburg, Reut from Jerusalem, Shlomi and Claudia from Hertzlia.

Special thanks to Israeli participants who assisted during the meeting – Yossi and Guy from Sde Warburg, Beni from Arad, and Meira from Jerusalem who volunteered as a nurse.

Many thanks to the participants who lead the physical activities and the workshops.

Please LIKE Servas Israel Facebook page to view more photos:

www.facebook.com/pages/Servas-Israel/318802998214263?ref=hl

Impressions of the Servas Israel International Meeting

Peter, Germany – Exciting! You offer a simple gameshop, some easy interactive games, and you find a dozen amazingly active participants, who create a fascinating flair of work & fun & fantasy. I love Servas people... This country - we experience just a segment of a small region, getting however, already a good idea about the great diversity of Israel.

Vibeke, Denmark – A new world – the world of the desert reveals itself to me. Vast spaces, a strong sun, shimmering light. Reveals to me the smallness of man and the greatness of creation. And a respect to the Israelis who built an existence out here – planting everything, harvesting and providing enough water. Thank you for this experience.

Pisit & Pantuda, Thailand – Early morning in the Midrasha where we spent the night is really extraordinary... Food served is healthy food, make me younger every mouthful (I hope). Visiting the Kibbutz, dream of Ben Gurion is another extra bonus... Such an inspiration to those following his path... Bit by bit, the Israel culture / belief / way of living/ way of thought, have been exposed through enjoyable trips into the world of the Negev.

Ulhas, India – The desert to me was a dead place. But now I have realized there is life. Desert is alive because of people like Ben Gurion. With peace & Love to everybody.

Marijke, Belgium – I am very surprised to see so much advanced technology, respecting the ecological way of living in the Kibbutz and in the villages, and also the cooperation within people can be an example for the very individualistic way of living in Western Europe.

Till & Gerlinde, Austria – The open discussions with Israeli Servas helped a lot to get a better understanding of the life in Israel including economic, social, religious, developmental and

even (to some extent) political aspects. Being a retired International Civil Servant, these discussions helped to substantially narrow a long felt “knowledge gap”.... The communication via Skype with a Servas member in Hebron, who couldn’t come, was a great proof of what “Servas” stands for.

Stefano, Italy – Magnifico. These 5 days have been amazing. It was my first international (and not EU) experience, and 3rd Servas travelling one. I didn’t know what to expect, but everything was just perfect. I came here to find myself again, looking for time to think about my life. I didn’t find me, nor I had any thought. It was better than that. I met many people, nice Israeli guys, crazy people from Americas, good people from India, strange Germans, kind Polish, friendly Spanish. And in this meeting, with the others, I discovered what’s to be Servas, what’s to be human, but, especially, what’s worth living for.

Jerina, Croatia – “If you don’t dream, you will never realize” – so that is contribution of Ben Gurion to this desert among many others. Some people made nice deeds of gentleness. I noticed Sunita’s stockings where one finger is separated from the others and she took her stocking off and gave to me!





The Mountain of Dreams

By Magiarí Díaz Díaz
and Moisés Uzcátegui (Venezuela)

Servas is usually my first “place” to look for help when I have a dream pressing on my to-do list. As a teacher recently graduated from an MA in Peace Studies, you might imagine how many wild dreams I have.

One of them is escaping the city and moving to the countryside. Easier said than done. Clueless about where to start, I looked up my country’s Servas hostlist and “Bingo”! I found a family of teachers living in a

little village in the Andean mountains. Taking advantage of the Easter school break, I joined a hiking expedition in the Andes and then travelled across many mountains to meet my Servas “friends-to-be”.

I was so excited that not even the fast bus journey by the edge of a cliff made me feel sick. It must have been the pure air, the beauty of the

mountains, the kindness of the people, the nice fresh food I had been eating.

The bus dropped me off at a police station along the way, where my Servas hosts, Yamellys, Freddy and their young son Moisés, came to pick me up. They welcomed me into their little old car packed with smiling relatives and grocery shopping. We started driving up a road with signs that read: “The Mountain of Dreams”.

That was surely a good sign. I had finally arrived after a very long trip. Now, I was curious to learn everything about life in their mountain. Moisés taught me all about fun. Yamellys and Freddy, taught me all about life as teachers. They told me about regular school visits to rural technologists, local farmers as well as their hikes in the mountains with the children.

Freddy took me to visit his “ecological classroom” project which encourages children to plant trees, grow a vegetable garden, an orchard and an ornamental garden inside the school. I was happy to see his work and do some “peace” activities with the children in the open air. They were so excited to have a visitor, that when I got off the jeep and they jumped on me and hugged me! They followed me around all morning, even to the toilet! They held my hands and gave me great big hugs, their laughter and smiles made my day!

MOUNTAIN OF DREAMS - continued on page 19



MOUNTAIN OF DREAMS

continued from page 18

Yamellys told me about teaching in a little village's school. She told me stories about her many trips and activities with the kids (all paid out of her own pocket). She showed me one of her recycling initiatives: making "ecological blocks", that is, filling plastic bottles with rubbish and using them to build benches for the school. She also took me to her radio programme: "Talent-Spotters of Knowledge" and interviewed me about Servas!!!

Moisés invited me to see him play at the Children's Orchestra and I ended up teaching a Cello (which I don't even play!) class to get him and his mates out of trouble. Moisés taught me endless life lessons through play and laughter. Seeing through his eyes and taken by his hand, I discovered what a magical place these mountains are indeed...

He was happy to make a contribution to this article, so here is what he has to say:

Who are you and where do you come from?

My name is Moisés Uzcátegui, I am 9 years old. I am from Chiguará, a pretty and quiet little village in the Andes, Mérida State, Venezuela. I like its

green countryside, there I play with my cousins a lot. We go up a hill, we fall and roll down. We also play hide and seek, I like to make a hole on the ground and hide inside the earth.

Do you like travelling with Servas?

Yes, I like it! People treat me nicely. I have been in Argentina, Brasil, Paraguay, Mexico and Colombia. I liked Mexico because food was yummy and for free! I also liked the pool. That was my favourite thing.

Do you like Servas visitors? Have you received many young ones?

Yes, I love visitors! I like their weird accents...English, Spanish, Italian...

Last month, there was a girl from Europe called Clara. She was 6 years old. The only thing she could say was "yes". We went to the countryside and played a lot although I couldn't understand what she said.

Last week Magiarí from Caracas visited us. That was a lot of fun. We played fishing in the lake and in the square of Lagunillas. We studied for my exam on the way up to the countryside. We sang songs and played Cuatro*. She came to see me play in the orchestra. Oh, thank you for the biscuits and the drawings you made! When I look at them I feel emotional...



What is peace for you?

It is feeling calm, when everyone looks after me and there is not a lot of noise. It is when countries don't fight.

My mum went to teach in a school near Colombia. The army and the guerrilla started fighting when she was there. The saddest part, was that the brother of a friend was killed.

Countries please, don't make war.

Do you want to say something to people who have never come to Venezuela?

Yes! Come to Chiguará and I will host you, there is a lot of nice food here. Those who are on a diet can also come.

The national instrument of Venezuela.

Note: if you are a teacher or have children or are interested in Peace Education, please contact me at magiari@gmail.com

NOT 'FALL' IN AUSTRALIA

I've just accessed what seems to be the latest SI newsletter.

As a resident of the southern hemisphere, Brisbane, I find the dating of the newsletter as 'Fall 2012', both confusing and discriminatory.

Firstly, 'Fall' is not a term used for Autumn in the UK, Australia nor, probably, New Zealand although we are all English speaking.

Secondly, if we did use the term then, in the southern hemisphere, the date, 'Fall', would be for March- May not September- November for when I think the newsletter was written.

Please date the newsletter with the month it is to be published on the website rather than a season that is irrelevant to many of us.

Many thanks.

Norma Nicholson,

Servas Australia Host and member of the SI Nominations Committee.

(Thanks Norma, we will do our best to not make assumptions like this again. -ed)

SERVAS BRITAIN HOST LIST

Servas Britain Host List 2013 will not be available as a paper copy.

In mid-February a new 2012 list will be published in PDF in HLSA.

Thank you.

*Anne Heagney, on behalf of Caroline Naysmith,
Servas Britain Host Secretary.*

TRAVELER'S TIME WITH HOSTS

We have been hosts for some 40 years and on the whole have enjoyed every minute of it. We find though, that these past few years, one or two visitors are inclined not to spend much time with the hosts as expected.

I wonder if this is happening to other hosts.

*Barbara and Brian Osborne, France
neufrehutrel@gmail.com*

WEB SITE HELP NEEDED

Servas Sierra Leone is seeking a local website designer and one who can maintain it for us. We will welcome assistance from any individual, group or organization in this regard to render us assistance in this.

I am now updating our 2010 host list and will send this as early as possible. I regret any inconvenience this may have caused.

Thanks so much.

Shed Jah

NS, Sierra Leone

crtpdprograms@yahoo.com

(Shed also sent a link to his article about Village Care Initiatives: www.overcomingpoverty.org/article/communities-can-lift-themselves-out-of-poverty. -ed)

SERVAS TRAVEL STORIES WANTED

A friend of mine told me about your fantastic travel organisation, which I recently signed up for. I think it's a GREAT idea!

Furthermore, I was recently published in an amazing book called "Hug Someone You Love Today". Its filled with inspiring, motivational hug stories from regular folks like you/I.

My publisher was so impressed with the books reception that he asked me to write a second hug book. I was hoping that I could tap into Servas International and get some traveling stories from your members.

I await your response.

Mike Pickles, BA, BEd, Med

Northern-Mike

mike_sabbie@yahoo.ca

Educator, Author and Speaker

Author of "Hug Someone You Love Today"

HUMAN RIGHTS VIDEO

I'm sharing a presentation I found interesting about Human Rights Education. I received it from Usman Shahid, Servas Saudi Arabia member.

www.slideshare.net/wetheyouth

Hope you all are very well

Kindest wishes, Pablo Colangelo

In Memoriam

Antonie Fried, 1940-2013, Germany

In January this year Antonie Fried passed away unexpectedly at the age of 73 in her hometown Landau/Germany. For over three decades she played an active role in Servas holding various national and international offices.



Antonie at the Servas GA in Montreal, Canada, July 1989

Antonie became involved in Servas in the early 1970s and after a few years as National Secretary of Servas Germany, she was appointed Area Coordinator for Europe in 1976, an office she held for 10 years. In those years Antonie was particularly concerned with the development of Servas in Central and Eastern Europe. She travelled to many countries "behind the iron curtain"

trying to find potential Servas contacts, supporting local groups, helping to build up a Servas network. In those days of the Cold War entering into or maintaining private contacts to Western organisations was a very dangerous affair for citizens of these countries and meetings with westerners could only be arranged at considerable risks. Since establishing official Servas groups was not possible under these conditions, hosts and travelers arranged their contacts using the cover name "friends of Antonie Fried". Her name served as a synonym for Servas in those days, when peacebuilding between East and West required great personal courage. Pursuing her aim to intensify relations between national secretaries and improve the organization of Servas groups, Antonie also arranged several European Servas conferences before she was elected General Secretary of Servas International in 1986. She held this office for 2 terms until 1992 and supported Servas representatives all over the world. Being a history teacher by profession she was always particularly concerned with documenting and preserving the history of Servas. Her collection of photos and documents since the early days of Servas as a "Peacebuilders" was impressive. Throughout her lifetime she wrote many articles for national and international publications on the development of Servas.

In honour of these efforts she was made International Servas Archivist in 1992 and continued her work until a few years ago.

We are sorry to lose Antonie whose life was dedicated to Servas for many decades, and it is with gratitude and appreciation that we remember her long-standing commitment.

Margret Kläser, Servas Germany

Former SI News Editor and Area Coordinator Europe

Servas' continues to grow on the World Wide Web. This issue we've listed more Servas Country web sites and Social Networking site on this page. If we've missed your country's web site, social networking site or other online link please send it to us c/o "servasnews@servas.org" and we'll be sure to add it next time.

Please note that here are two Facebook discussion groups: "Servas International", a members-only group, and "SERVAS" an open discussion group.

Here is an updated listing:



SERVAS SOCIAL NETWORKS AND WEB SITES

- **SERVAS INTERNATIONAL**
FB (page): www.facebook.com/ServasInternational
FB (members): www.facebook.com/groups/2519241851
FB (open): www.facebook.com/groups/servas
Web: www.servas.org
- **SERVAS YOUTH**
FB (page): www.facebook.com/servasyouth
FB (group): www.facebook.com/groups/31004490866
Web: www.servasyouth.org
- **SERVAS ARGENTINA**
FB: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/629327650426841>
Web: <http://argentina.servas.org>
- **SERVAS YOUTH ARGENTINA**
FB: www.facebook.com/groups/136739839825106
- **SERVAS AUSTRALIA**
FB: www.facebook.com/servas.australia.1
Web: www.servas.org.au
- **SERVAS AUSTRIA**
Web: www.austria.servas.org
- **SERVAS BRAZIL**
FB (page): www.facebook.com/ServasBrasil
FB (group): www.facebook.com/groups/servasbrasil
Web: www.servasbrasil.org.br
Blog: servasbrasilis.blogspot.com.br
- **SERVAS BELGIUM & LUXEMBURG**
Web: www.belgium.servas.org
- **SERVAS BRITIAN**
FB: www.facebook.com/servas.britain
Web: www.servasbritain.org
- **SERVAS CANADA**
FB: www.facebook.com/pages/Servas-Canada
Web: www.canada.servas.org
- **SERVAS COLUMBIA**
Web: www.columbia-servas.org
- **SERVAS CZECH REPUBLIC**
Web: www.servas.cz
- **SERVAS DENMARK**
FB: www.facebook.com/groups/servasdenmark
Web: www.servas.dk
- **SERVAS ESTONIA**
Web: www.emmk.ee/janc/servas
- **SERVAS FINLAND**
FB: www.facebook.com/servasfinland
Web: www.finland/servas.org
- **SERVAS FRANCE**
Web: www.servas-france.org
- **SERVAS GERMANY**
Web: www.servas.de
- **SERVAS GREECE**
FB Page: www.facebook.com/ServasGreece
Web: www.greece-servas.org
- **SERVAS HUNGARY**
Web: www.hungary.servas.org
- **SERVAS INDIA**
Web: www.servasbharat.org
- **SERVAS INDONESIA**
Web: www.servasindonesia.wordpress.com
- **SERVAS ISRAEL**
FB: www.facebook.com/pages/Servas-Israel/318802998214263
Web: www.israel.servas.org
- **SERVAS ITALY**
FB: www.facebook.com/servas.italia
Web: www.servas.it
- **SERVAS JAPAN**
Web: www.servas-japan.org
- **SERVAS JORDAN**
FB: www.facebook.com/groups/ServasJordan
Web: www.joy-or-above.com/support-groups/servas-jordan/
- **SERVAS KAZAKHSTAN**
Web: www.servas-kazakhstan.narod.ru/
- **SERVAS KENYA**
Web: www.pages.intnet.mu/servas/Kenya/
- **SERVAS MADAGASCAR**
Web: www.pages.intnet.mu/servas/Madagascar/
- **SERVAS MALAWI**
FB: www.facebook.com/servas.malawi
Web: www.pages.intnet.mu/servas/Malawi
- **SERVAS MAURITIUS**
Web: www.pages.intnet.mu/servas/Mauritius
- **SERVAS MEXICO**
FB: www.facebook.com/ServasMexico
Web: www.mexico.servas.org
- **SERVAS NETHERLANDS**
FB: www.facebook.com/groups/357680234308014
Web: www.servas-nederland.nl
- **SERVAS NEW ZEALAND**
Web: www.servas.org.nz
- **SERVAS NORWAY**
Web: norway.servas.org
- **SERVAS PAKISTAN**
FB: www.facebook.com/ServasPakistan
Web: [/pages.intnet.mu/ServasPakistan](http://pages.intnet.mu/ServasPakistan)
- **SERVAS POLAND**
Web: www.servas.pl
- **SERVAS PORTUGAL**
FB: www.facebook.com/ServasPortugal
Web: www.servasemportugal.blogspot.pt
- **SERVAS RUSSIA**
FB: www.facebook.com/ServasRussia
Web: www.servasrussia.ru/
- **SERVAS SAMOA**
Web: www.pages.intnet.mu/servas/Samoa
- **SERVAS SOUTH AFRICA**
Web: www.pages.intnet.mu/servas/SouthAfrica
- **SERVAS SOUTH KOREA**
Web: www.servas.or.kr/
- **SERVAS SPAIN**
Web: www.servas.es
- **SERVAS SWEDEN**
FB: www.facebook.com/ServasSweden
Web: www.servas.se
- **SERVAS SWITZERLAND**
FB: www.facebook.com/ServasSwitzerland
Web: www.servas.ch
- **SERVAS THAILAND**
FB: www.facebook.com/servasthailandfanpage
- **SERVAS TURKEY**
FB Page - www.facebook.com/servas.turkey
Web - www.servasturkiye.org
- **SERVAS UNITED STATES**
FB Page - www.facebook.com/us.servas
Web - www.usservas.org
- **SERVAS URUGUAY**
Web: www.uruguay.servas.org/
- **SERVAS VIETNAM**
FB: www.facebook.com/ServasVietnam
Web: servasvietnam.blogspot.com
- **SERVAS ZAMBIA**
Web: www.pages.intnet.mu/servas/Zambia

MORE SERVAS COUNTRY WEBS CAN BE FOUND ON THE SERVAS INTERNATIONAL WEB SITE: WWW.SERVAS.ORG

OTHER SERVAS-RELATED LINKS

- **SERVAS TRAVEL**
FB: www.facebook.com/groups/12708295429/
- **RICK STEVES' EUROPE ARCHIVES**
www.ricksteves.com/graffiti/archives/servas.htm
- **SERVAS ON WIKIPEDIA**
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Servas

CLASSIFIEDS

WANTED: MEMBERS TO MEET DURING SUMMER DRIVING TRIP IN EUROPE

We're driving through Italy and Germany during July and August (escaping the summertime heat of Greece) on our way to the Servas Summer Meeting in Berlin. We have some hosts scheduled but we would love to meet up with Servas friends along the way. Whether you're available for a night or two of hosting or would just like to meet up for a quick coffee and chat please drop us an email. We are travelling by car so we're very flexible! View our tentative itinerary at www.stonepages.net/berlintrip/trip.pdf

Terry Stone,
National Secretary, Servas Greece
terry.stone@yahoo.com

WANTED: SERVAS EDITORS/WRITERS

Servas International is seeking editors/writers for stories & articles to be published in SI News, on the new servas.org website currently in development and on SI's official Facebook page.

Knowledge of English, Spanish and other languages required. Translation ability a plus. Experience with writing and editing text for publication is preferred.

Please send your application with short presentation to president@servas.org with cc to newsletter@servas.com.

This is a new column idea that we thought might be useful to members. We'd appreciate your feedback and comments. Send an email to: newsletter@servas.org

TYPES OF ARTICLES APPROPRIATE FOR PUBLICATION

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

TIPS ON SUBMITTING STORIES TO SERVAS INTERNATIONAL NEWS

SERVAS NEWS is an INTERNATIONAL newsletter. Events or announcements of interest only to an individual country's members will not be accepted for publication. Also, long reports, such as technical and financial data, should be submitted go Renee (reneegendron@hotmail.com) for posting on SERVAS web site (www.Servas.org).

1. 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. Remember, you're writing a STORY or presenting INFORMATION not an sending an email or letter to a friend.
2. Give your story a HEADLINE and, if possible, a SUBHEAD, that gives the reader an idea of what is being presented.



IMPORTANT TECHNICAL TIPS

- 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).
- 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.
- 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").
- Photo captions (if any) should be keyed to the photos (photo A, photo B, etc.) and listed 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.

3. Include your name, Servas title (if any), country and email immediately following the subhead.
4. Make your article engaging and interesting, and pertinent to a global audience.
5. Avoid abbreviations so your message is clear.
6. Keep articles to one page if possible.
7. Spell check and proof your story, twice. We will not edit your copy unless there are space limitations.
8. Look at this or previous issues of SERVAS INTERNATIONAL NEWS for examples of format and structure.

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.

Translate Servas International News Into Your Country's Language

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.



Servas International News is produced using Adobe InDesign CS5.5 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 CS5.5 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.

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.