



Servas INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Vol. 4 No. 2 - November/December 2014

Servas Youth Saddle Up And Hit The Trail To Kyrgyzstan

PAGE 18



SIGA 2015 8
COME DOWN UNDER TO NEW ZEALAND

INTERNATIONAL PEACE DAY 6-11
REPORTS FROM AROUND THE WORLD & SERVAS AT THE U.N.

SERVAS EVENT REPORTS 12-22
DALESBRIDGE, TURKEY, KYRGYZSTAN, & ARGENTINA

SERVAS TRAVEL ADVENTURES 23-27
4 TRAVELERS SHARE THEIR EXPERIENCES

**SPECIAL END-OF-YEAR
34-PAGE SUPER-SIZE ISSUE!**

SERVAS **INTERNATIONAL NEWS**



Vol. 4 No. 2 - November/December 2014

EDITORIAL STAFF

Editor & Newsletter Coordinator

Terry Stone
newsletter@servas.org

Proofing, Photo Retouching & Editorial Assistance

Michael Johnson

Distribution Coordinator

Michael Silbert

Design & Production

Alan Stone
newsletter@servas.org

SERVAS INTERNATIONAL 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

We're Back!!!!

This is a huge issue that is well worth spending some time on. Grab a cuppa, a cozy seat and enjoy!

It's been a busy summer for a lot of us. I was able to get away to England and Scotland and visit many old and new Servas friends (see photos from my trip on [page 19](#)). I was lucky enough to be able to attend the Dalesbridge meeting in Yorkshire, ([page 11](#)). It proved to be a very challenging event, with many expectations, opinions, agendas, and food needs that the organizers had to deal with. Of course they did it magnificently! I hope we have many more of these meetings all over the world with the goal of examining where we are and where we're going.

Some highlights in this issue:

- The announced venue of the Servas International General Assembly ([page 5](#)) is New Zealand. A first, I believe, in Oceania!
- Servas Peace has some stunning announcements about our work at the United Nations (2) and seven impressive Servas events around the world on International Peace Day. [See page 6](#). We rock!
- In Event/Country Reports (beginning on [page 12](#)),



More photos from my trip are being used for filler on page 19

Editor's Corner

By Terry Squire Stone
newsletter@servas.org



amazing things are happening which open up all kinds of possibilities for the rest of us. Just to mention two items: Servas Turkey held their spectacular annual event, "Live With Us..." ([page 15](#)) which is a great example of what we can do with a lot of planning and hard work (Mehmet has committed to write a guide for us, so we can replicate this event in our own countries), and Servas Korea (page 21), who doubled their membership in one day with one brilliant move!

- There's even a little controversy about travel and hosting expectations, issues that could use a bit of review and reconsideration from all of us as active Servas members. Question: How can we make everyone happy? (There are also some great discussions continuing on our Facebook pages/groups; SERVAS and Servas International.)

Feel free to submit articles on any (Servas-related) topic, or comment on what you read here in a letter to the editor. We do print everything (within

reasonableness). SI NEWS tends to come out twice a year, so plan now for the next issue. Also, let me know what you are interested in reading about, which articles tickle you, which are boring, so that we can be the best Servas Newsletter possible.

President's Message	4
Siga Announcement	
Come Down Under To SIGA2015.....	5
Servas Peace	6-11
A Message From the Servas International Peace Secretary.....	6
Servas Around the World On International Peace Day.....	7-8
International Peace Builders Event.....	9
The UNO, Geneva - September 25, 2014.....	9
Servas At Home At The UN-NYC.....	11
Quotes From The Final Conference Declaration.....	11
Servas Event Reports	12-20
Servas International Event at Dalesbridge Centre.....	12
Three Sample Topics Discussed At Dalesbridge.....	13
More Dalesbridge 2014.....	14
The Utopia of Peace Village.....	15
Youth Meeting, Kyrgyzstan, 2014.....	18
My Summer In England & Scotland.....	19
Argentina-Chile-Uruguay Meeting.....	20
The Servas International Image & Design Support Team	14
Servas Country Report	21-22
Servas Korea Takes To The Air.....	21
What Has Been Happening In Malawi?.....	22
Servas Travel Adventures	23-27
My First Servas Travel Experience.....	23
Sabor de América.....	24
10 Months Of Summer.....	25
The Niece of Angela Merkel.....	27
Traveling & Hosting	28-32
Thoughts About A Complaint Management System Within Servas.....	28
How To Be A More Sustainable Traveler.....	29
Host List News.....	30
Tripping Through The Tulips With Servas.....	31
Why I Did Not Visit Any Hosts This Year.....	32
How To Prepare Your Submission For Publication In Servas International News	33
Servas On The Web	34

UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

DECEMBER 2014

CHRISTMAS IN ISRAEL WITH SERVAS

December 22-29, 2014
 contact: israel@servas.org

MAY 2015

SERVAS GEORGIA REGIONAL MEETING

May 1-4, 2015
 Tbilisi, Georgia
 Peace, tolerance and reconciliation are key needs for our part of the world. This regional meeting will be a chance to open Servas doors to new ideas!
 Mary Ellen Chatwin and Nana Dvali: servasgeorgia@gmail.com

OCTOBER 2015

SERVAS INTERNATIONAL GENERAL ASSEMBLY (SIGA2015)

Saturday October 10th – Friday 16th 2015
 Aotearoa, New Zealand.
 Email your questions about SIGA to:
 Jonny Sägänger - president@servas.org
 Ann Greenhough - vicepresident@servas.org

*Email meeting & events
 announcements in .txt or .doc
 format to:
newsletter@servas.org*



Kyrgyzstan Hosts Servas Youth
 page 18

*“Without continual growth and progress,
such words as improvement, achievement,
and success have no meaning.”*

Benjamin Franklin

Servas Moving Forward

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



When I had the responsibility and pleasure to give an oral statement at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva in September my speech had number 59. After Servas International came other NGO's like Human Rights Watch with number 60 and Amnesty International with 61.

I mention this to give you perspective of the importance for Servas to have access to the UN Human Rights Council as a forum. Amnesty and Human Rights Watch use this forum because it matters what is being said there and because it's an arena where your actions matters.

The Human Rights Council is a place devoted to dialogue. Representatives for governments and oppositional forces as well as NGO's can make their voices heard here.

The fact that this is a place and forum for communication between people with different views and perspectives makes it a perfect environment for Servas. One of our core tasks is to encourage increased understanding of various cultures, ideologies and religions when people meet in real life, on the Internet and via other means of communications.

The Servas representation at the United Nations in Geneva in September 25-26 was a big step forward in our plan to make Servas International better known and recognized as a peace organization.

The fact that meetings between individuals who belong to the Servas movement can meet, both in person, in our homes and in cyberspace, leads me to the question about Servas' presence on the Internet.

As you might have noticed Servas International's website has, since the beginning of this year, offered only weblinks to the national member group's websites

and an email address (helpdesk@servas.org) where basic contact information can be obtained from our support function/helpdesk.

Since Servas International is a federation of national member groups it's logical to have this basic website. But it's not satisfactory and it's not in tune with the long-term goals that Servas International General Assembly (SIGA), our highest decision making body, has pointed out.

The long term goal for SI Exco is to launch a new website at SIGA in New Zealand in October next year.

After periods of progress and a series of setbacks the so-called ServasOnline project is moving forward. This is a quite normal development for an NGO like Servas, which relies on voluntary efforts from non-paid individuals with no written contracts. Two steps forward, one backwards and then three steps forward, one backwards, and then it goes on and on...

The center of action for the ServasOnline project is now in France where the new project manager Bernard Andrieau lives.

Meanwhile, activity has been high the last couple of months to create a new and better temporary Servas International website on the web domain servas.org. Central persons for this is Stefan Fagerström, who created Servas Sweden's website, and Jean-Claude Eyot, who is the webmaster of Servas France website.

The plan is that there will be a new version of the temporary website on servas.org in November. Please surf in on servas.org and give me and the rest of SI Exco feedback, for example suggestions for improvements.

Email your feedback to president@servas.org.

You can always use this email address to contact SI Exco, the global board of Servas International.

Your input is of great value for us! 🌱



SI president Jonny Sägänger presents Servas oral statement at the United Nations Human Rights Council in Geneva, Switzerland. Photo: Susanne Schlegel

Come Down Under To SIGA2015

by Marijke Batenburg, National Secretary NZ and GANZ team

Aotearoa New Zealand wishes to offer a warm welcome to all who will attend the next Servas International General Assembly 2015. We were delighted to be selected by EXCO to host the 30th Servas International conference. The conference location is 2 hours drive to the south of Auckland a few kilometres from the country town of Matamata. This town is in the centre of productive dairy farming country, close to beautiful bush clad Kaimai ranges and hot pools – in fact there is a hot pool available for participants at the conference venue Totara Springs <http://www.totarasprings.org.nz/>. Matamata gained some fame for being the home of Hobbiton – the little village made for the film Lord of the Rings trilogy.

Why October?

There were several aspects considered. The season of the year, the cost of flights, and the availability of conference centres. Typically the GA has been held in



Totara Springs Christian Centre

the European summer July-August however that is the height of the NZ winter. The NZ summer is December – March and coming at that time was unlikely to work for those in the northern hemisphere. February is very busy with Chinese New Year and Easter is a high travel season. This left the shoulder season (low cost for airfares) of October as the best time to consider.

In New Zealand October is the middle of spring and day temperatures will average at 14.2 celsius or 57.6 fahrenheit. It is normally a time of settled weather before the heat of summer and after the cool of the winter. We may look small on a world map but New Zealand is as diverse as many continents rolled into one. Some of you may wish to travel before and some after the GA. If you wish to explore more about your visit to New Zealand we recommend this website <http://www.newzealand.com/int>

A Little About Us

New Zealand is a small country, similar in size to Great Britain or Japan. With a population of only four and half million people it's also gloriously uncrowded. New Zealanders are informally known as Kiwis. Approximately 69% are of European descent, 14.6% are indigenous Māori, 9.2% Asian and 6.9% non-Māori Pacific Islanders. Geographically, over three-quarters of the population live in the North Island, with one-third of the total population living in Auckland. The other main cities of Wellington,

*“Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi,
engari he toa takitini ke”*
(*“My strength does not come from me alone
but also from others.”*)

Christchurch Dunedin and Hamilton are where the majority of the remaining Kiwis dwell.

Planning

A core group of committed NZ Servas hosts have begun the planning for this General Assembly. We are working very closely with members of SI EXCO, the Servas International board who facilitate this gathering. The host country provides the location for meeting, the welcome and the closing. A time line is emerging and it is hoped that all the information needed for you to plan your visit and attendance at the General assembly will be available by November 2014.

Servas New Zealand is upgrading its website to be a source of information by July-August 2014 in order to give participants time to plan their journey. Registrations will be available in early 2015.

Questions regarding the GA 2015 can be emailed to SIGA2015info@servas.org

Your journey has begun with this announcement. Look for regular updates in SI news, as well as on social media sites such as Facebook. It is appropriate that we gradually introduce you to words and phrases of the Maori language so today I sign off simply with “arohanui” – “Aroha” which means love or sympathy or compassion, and :nui” means big. So we send much love to all those in the Servas family. 🌿



A Message From the Servas International Peace Secretary

by Danielle Serres, peacesecretary@servas.org

A lot has been going on since the last issue of SI News (June/July 2014)! Many people were involved in International Peace Day celebration; others participated in UN related events in NYC and Geneva. Here is a round-up with articles on the following pages

1 SERVAS COUNTRIES CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL PEACE DAY ON SEPTEMBER 21 - PG. 7

Each year the International Day of Peace is observed around the world on 21 September. The General Assembly has declared this as a day devoted to strengthening the ideals of peace, both within and among all nations and peoples. The theme of this year's International Day of Peace was the "Right of Peoples to Peace".

UN Secretary General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, noted in his message:

"Peace is a long road that we must travel together – step by step, beginning today.

"Let us all reflect on peace – and what it means for our human family.

"Let us hold it in our hearts and minds and tenderly nurture it so it may grow and blossom."

2 AT THE UN IN GENEVA ON SEPTEMBER 25 - PG. 9

A story behind the scenes, or... a stressful Summer!

In Spring, we had decided to focus on September 25th 2014 to organize a side-event during the 27th session of the Human Rights Council in Geneva. It was only on August 22 that we got the confirmation from the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) Civil Society Section that our request for a room has been accepted! They said they received 156 valid completed requests from 88 NGOs! I guess we were lucky! So we had to rush preparing and sending invitations, and making all necessary arrangements within a month, which was not always easy, as neither Magnus Adams nor me live in Geneva! ...The whole process was a wonderful experience, it taught us to learn more about patience... But the team kept strong and in the end it was quite an achievement!

If you would like more ways to participate in actively promoting peace in the world, just contact me. Danielle Serres, Servas International Peace Secretary, peacesecretary@servas.org

3 AT THE UN IN NYC ON AUGUST 27-29 - PG. 11

At NYC UN Headquarters, August 27-29, the 65th DPI/NGOs Annual Conference, titled '2015 and Beyond: Our Action Agenda', was attended by our newly accredited representative, Fanny Bello, who was one of over 1,500 NGO representatives from around the globe!

*"No peace in the world
without peace in the nations.*

*No peace in the nations
without peace in the town.*

*No peace in the town without
peace in the home.*

*No peace in the home without
peace in the heart."...*

The text: Dao De Jing.

Lao Tzu, Chinese sage, 6th century B.C.

Servas Around the World On International Peace Day

In Phoenix, Arizona

September 21, 2014: In Tempe, Arizona, the temperature finally cooled off a bit close to dusk, and Servas – Valley of the Sun celebrated International Peace Day at a community park on the evening of Sept 21 with peace builders around the world. (As we met, hundreds of thousands of people marched in



International Peace Day celebration by Servas members in Phoenix, Arizona.

New York and other cities for climate justice and there was a huge march against the war on Ukraine in Moscow.) We talked about the UN proclamation and the hope for universal peace at a time of turmoil across the world. We acclaimed our hope for peace while enjoying the songs and guitar music of a newcomer. We introduced ourselves – from Hungary, Germany, India, Japan and the U.S. – and Servas members shared how this peace movement builds a real spirit of peace beginning with the traveler entering a host's house, and sharing personal experiences, histories and cultures in trust, understanding and respect.

"As a train roared by, we moved to a nearby low-lit grassy area and lit our candles. Each participant shared a few words of what peace means to him/her individually, collectively and for the earth. There was a moment of silence and reflection. Together we raised our candles to the sky to collectively shout out PEACE TO THE WORLD in every language we know!

As we left for our homes each of us felt the comfort of Hope and the positive camaraderie from a quote from Richard 1: 'Every journey starts with 11!'. Although some members had hoped for a much larger gathering at our first celebration of Peace Day, Richard's statement reminded us that a small group of 11 people strongly committed to the Servas message of peacebuilding is a powerful beginning. Though a small group, we have enough enthusiasm for building the SERVAS peace movement across the Valley of the Sun.

Jeanne Devine

In Isreal

Servas Israel celebrated the International Peace day in the Peace forest of Jerusalem, bringing together about 40 Servas friends and guests from the Galil area, Haifa, the Tel Aviv area, Jerusalem and its surroundings.

"After all the participants arrived we enjoyed a Peace trail, guided by Servas member Yaffa Kfir, including magnificent views of both East and West Jerusalem, and a visit to St. Claire's Convent where one of the nun's shared with us the story of the convent and invited us to read St. Francis's peace prayer in their modest chapel.

"Returning to our picnic site overlooking the Peace Forest we shared a tasty common table for a delicious lunch followed by short presentations all given by Servas members:

- Yossi Harel encouraged us to search for inner peace in the coming year.
- Dan Sheffer spoke of his childhood memories in divided Jerusalem and Ruth shared a poem *Wildpeace* by Yehuda Amichai.
- oni Dunitz spoke of his exciting project: monthly group meetings with Jews and Arabs from the Sharon area, inspiring us with hope.
- Meir Hayoun shared several Peace poems read by the participants.
- Gabriel Cordell and his friends Derek and Chrys, our Servas guests from California spoke about Gabriel's incredible roll across America in 99 days and its profound effect on people they met on the way. They are planning to roll from Haifa to Tel Aviv from the 25th to 29th September, look at this link for more info: www.rollwithme.org

After the talks we shared the traditional apple in honey for a good and sweet New Year.

Finally, we visited the nearby Park of Tolerance with its skyscraping statue of a bronze tree among whose branches are seeds of hope."

Meir & Lesley Hayoun



In New Zealand

As I awake this spring morning to the sound of a local tui singing in my Whakatane garden I reflected how peaceful the morning is for me but inevitably the news of the day was fired into my environment by those dreaded electronic communication devices.

I thought about the teenager sitting next to me on the Artic Express from Stockholm to the north of Sweden on 21st September. After we exchanged salutations I ascertained that he was a refugee from Syria and was being resettled from Gothenburg to Kiruna. He was so dedicated to his mother's welfare. She was sleeping further down the carriage. He spoke good English and his mother only spoke Arabic. Thus my new young friend was the family spokesman – in English (most Swedes have English as a second language) and was so concerned about their future having been driven away from their home country and his father.

He was every parent's ideal of a son.

As I alighted in Sundsvall, some 3 hours on, I wished them *pax vobiscum*.

In this, my morning reflective time, I hope they are making out in their new country.

By communicating across cultures and offering friendly advice one can 'take one small step for peace

We as Servas members make a valuable contribution to world peace and understanding."

Ashley Burrowes, New Zeland Peace Secretary



See More on Next Page...

¹ Richard Newhauser is an enthusiastic member of Servas –Valley of the Sun – and a newly approved interviewer. He and his wife Andrea hosted Bob Luitweiler in Germany many years ago.

Servas Around the World On International Peace Day

In Malawi, Africa

Nyasa Junior Academy, based in Limbe, Blantyre, Malawi, Africa, was the setting for a whole school celebration for World Peace Day. This special international event was remembered around the world with a minute of silence on 21st September.

In 2014 that day fell on a Sunday. The school, which follows the UK Cambridge Primary system taught in English, orchestrated a large peace tree onto which each class placed "peace leaf" messages. These leaves carried definitions of peace, poems, prayers and quotes from books and famous peace activists. NJA invited each year group to come up on stage and explain their classes leaf ideas. Servas Malawi secretary & host Demelza Benbow, a Year 1 Primary Teacher at NJA, said: "It was great to hear such young people speaking about peace, especially when we have conflicts like, Syria, Libya, Iraq and Northern Nigeria impacting on people's lives so dreadfully. Luckily Malawi is a very peaceful country, but getting the future movers and shakers of this country to reflect upon these issues may help them guide us more wisely in future."

Demelza Benbow

*"With every true friendship
we build more firmly the
foundations upon which the
peace of the whole world rests."*

Mahatma Gandhi



In Toulouse, France

On September 21, 2014, Toulouse authorities gave us permit to set up an exhibition about Servas in the public garden situated in the very center of the city, right behind the city hall. They even lent us necessary material to hang the posters prepared by Servas France Peace Committee. Several Servas members distributed documentation about Servas and had lively conversation with passers-by. It was a beautiful day to give visibility to Servas!



In India

Birthday of Mahatma Gandhi: International Day of Non-Violence 2nd October 2014

Mahatma Gandhi is well known to many NJA parents and Servas members around the world as he stood up against racism, discrimination & pushed India forward towards independence.

NJA pupils celebrated his birthday on the 2nd October by reading out some of his famous sayings and making a display board about him.

*As a world-wide peace movement, Servas members encapsulate many of Gandhi's ideas by opening their homes to oversea members for 2days/2 nights:
More info: www.servas.org*



Submitted by Danielle Serres

In Brazil

We had some regional meetings taking place in different cities at the same time on Sunday 21st September.

Lead by Dorly Schutz, coordinator of Servas Santa Catarina, the local group had a nice gathering — a picnic at Ramiro Ruediger Park, in Blumenau city, sharing messages about peace, reflections and ideas for them to be, in fact, peace agents in the world.

In Pernambuco State, Servas group organized a gathering in Petrolina, a town rounded by São Francisco River. The state coordinator spoke about Servas and the importance of taking care of the river (the largest one in Brazil).

Sissi Santana, the local coordinator, and other 10 members — including a Colombian traveller, Fanny Villamizar — were together from September 20th to 22nd. During those three days, they shared special moments of companionship, pleasant visits to natural spots in the region, reflections and chats on peace and practical attitudes, such as interaction with participants in NGO Associação das Mulheres Rendeiras (that supports artisan women from the town) with dinner and discussion about Human Rights, the importance to get people involved, and how Servas can get involved with this matter in order to help people who cannot afford to travel.

There was also interaction with students from Educating for Human Rights and Peace Project, at Federal University of São Francisco Valley, whose campus is located there. Besides celebrating peace and friendship among the members, the meeting was an important moment to talk about Servas and promote the organization.



Servas group of Santa Catarina state

International Peace Builders Event

The UNO, Geneva
September 25, 2014

by Magnus Adams and Danielle Serres

The “International Peace Builders” event at the UNO in Geneva coincided with Servas International 65th birthday. Organized by Danielle Serres (Servas International Peace Secretary) and Magnus Adams (Servas International Peace Secretary Assistant), this birthday celebration was joined by the President of Servas International, Jonny Sågänger, as well as the Vice-President, Ann Greenhough, surrounded by nearly 70 guests from all over the world – Servas members and Partner NGOs.

A complete day at the UNO has been prepared for our Servas members who came to have a great day full of new experience with us. They visited the famous Ariana Museum with its garden next to the UNO. Some were able to sit in the main chamber of the United Nations Human Rights Council while others had a seat in the public gallery, observing the session from the upper rows.

Two speeches were delivered by Servas International representatives, and of course it is still possible



Jonny Sågänger addresses Servas members and NGOs at the side event in Geneva. From left to right : Danielle Serres, Servas International Peace Secretary, Magnus Adams, Servas International Peace Secretary Assistant, and Jonny Sågänger, Servas International President



A group of Servas members from various countries at the end of the day, in front of the famous United Nations flags in Geneva, September 25, 2014.

to watch them again on UN-TV. Jonny Sågänger delivered a speech during the general debate and impressed the audience by showing the great potential that Servas International holds. The other speech was about the grave situation in Africa. The Peace Secretary Assistant Magnus Adams showed in his speech that a crucial point in the Central African Republic was reached. It becomes more and more difficult for NGOs to work in African countries, due to security reasons. But can more military be an answer? After the speech, an NGO official came to congratulate us for the good words about Africa. This showed once more that Servas International fulfilled its task. Our message reaches the world!

In the morning, the Human Rights Council session was the main focus of the

Servas visitors who were fascinated by the setting. The famous colorful ceiling of the Human Rights Council, the multicultural assembly with all its languages, and people with traditional clothes, made this a memorable day for all.

At lunch time we had a break at the UN restaurant. We took advantage of this break to get to know each other much better and to have a little rest before the beginning of Servas International special event.

At 2.30, members of Servas International started to decorate the room for the Servas International Event. About 70 guests, including Servas and non-Servas guests, gathered and waited with great anticipation for the start.

As the moderator, Magnus Adams

Peace Builders- continued on page 10

PEACE BUILDERS

Continued from page 9

sat at the speakers' podium and opened the event with the traditional hammer stroke. After that, he also welcomed to the podium Jonny Sågänger and Danielle Serres. Classical music, played by the professional flutist Constanze Chmiel, a Servas Switzerland member, brought a peaceful note to the event's atmosphere. All those in attendance very much appreciated the moment. It was followed by speeches from Jonny Sågänger and Danielle Serres who presented the work of Servas for Peace.

A lively discussion started with contributions from Servas members and several NGOs.

The event came to a close after two hours, again with the famous hammer stroke. Finally Servas members gathered in the atrium, for refreshments and to share thoughts on their experiences through the day.

In thanks for their contributions, Daniela Doenges, a Human Rights specialist, and Susanne Schlegel, who had volunteered her help to Servas in organizing the event, received a complimentary Letter of Introduction offered from Servas Switzerland and signed by the Servas International President. These highly motivated new members are welcomed into Servas. 🌍



Servas members from several countries gathered in front of the United Nations before entering the venue. September 25, 2014. Geneva.



Servas members from Austria and Switzerland having a lunch break at UN restaurant in Geneva, September 25, 2014.

“

Participation in Servas International side-event at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva was for me a meaningful opportunity as one of Servas members. The key words from the side-event were World connection, Open-minded, Friendship, Communication and Understanding. The fact that these Servas spirit and objective contribute to build peace was highlighted, therefore all Servas members are having the role of "Peace Builders.

"From the side-event, I got a definite idea of Servas being not only for travelling but also for world peace. And it was a great pleasure to realize that Servas is receiving attention from UN and the other NGOs.

”

Choeui Song, Servas Korea

*“Let’s make a little peace,
You with me, and me with you.
Let’s make a little peace,
Small but true!
Let’s make a little peace,
Not a global peace,
Just a little peace,
Together you and me.
I won’t get angry,
If I can help it,
And I won’t make you cross,
I can swear it,
I’ll yield to you and
you’ll yield to me.
Let’s make a little peace,
We won’t shout or argue,
We’ll sit down together,
And listen to one another.
Maybe it’s not a very big peace,
It’s only a little peace,
An ordinary everyday peace,
But peace must begin
here and now.”*

Adapted from Leah Naor, Israel

Servas At Home At The UN-NYC

by Jonny Sågänger, President Servas International

On September 25-26 Servas International, SI, made what may well be its most decisive effort so far in the history of the organisation to make our voice heard and our presence known in the United Nations setting.

A group of dedicated Servas volunteers arranged for SI members to visit the United Nations Office in Geneva and to arrange for our own special event called International Peace Builders. SI is a non-governmental organisation with consultative status with United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) and this gives us access to the UN premises in the Palais des Nations.

At the Human Rights Council* the Servas group listened to oral statements about terrible human rights violations. The SI volunteer Magnus Adams and I presented two minutes oral statements at the Human Rights Council. In my speech I stressed the we, the individuals who belong to the Servas movement, are convinced in the effectiveness of our hospitality program. Our program is based on person-to-person interaction and exchange, and it increase tolerance and understanding across cultures.

I emphasized – among other things – that all people should have the freedom and economic means to move freely and

to travel to see the world and widen their understanding of other cultures, faiths and religions.

Our consultative status with ECOSOC made it possible for Servas to use a spacious meeting room at no extra cost. Mayors for peace was one of the invited NGO's that came to the meeting and participated in the discussion.

During the two days in Geneva it became obvious for all of us who were present that the United Nations can work in partnership with Servas and other parts of civil society on issues of global concern.

I felt – and I know I can speak for everyone in the group – felt at home in the UN environment. With our intervention we did a strengthen and support the efforts made by the international community to reach a sustainable peace.

On this weblink you can listen to my oral statement at the UN Human Rights Council in Geneva <http://bit.ly/1t5n9R3>

Scroll down to speech number 59 and you find it. 

* The Human Rights Council is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations system and it meets at the UN Office at Geneva. The council is responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing and make recommendations on them. During meetings throughout the year the council has the ability to discuss all thematic human rights issues and situations

REFLECTIONS ON THE DPI/NGOS CONFERENCE

New York, August 27 to 29

by Fanny Bello, Servas International Representative in NYC1

UN DPI was trying to achieve a platform for civil society voices to come together at the UN for an ambitious and successful post 2015 agenda.

I found the Conference informative and worthwhile. I think its primary goal was to increase awareness on the important role of Civil Society in the successful implementation of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, as well as introduce and provide resources that will support our work as a member of the NGO community.

As a personal experience it was very important to me to interchange experiences with people around the world, and knowing the different complaints they have about what is happening in their countries.

There were many topics covered during the Conference with several roundtable discussions and multiple workshops, and all speakers did an outstanding job of sharing their expertise with all participants.

For next Conferences², Servas has to bring a voice for a sustainable development agenda, bringing strategies, expertise and resources across the broadest spectrum of civil society to move poverty, eradication, sustainability, human rights, and climate justice into the mainstream discourse, and spark sustained public demand for lasting political action in support of an ambitious outcome from the post-2015 sustainable development process.

I think this because the variety of nations integrated in Servas make possible the treatment of the civil problems in all of them.

1 Fanny Bello, originally outstanding Servas Venezuela member now living in the US, recently became one of the SI Representatives in UN NYC venue.

2 Hopefully next year Servas International presence will be stronger, with several members able to attend this very important annual conference, and to distribute the recently made SI UN Observers cards (comment from Danielle Seres, SI Peace Secretary).

Quotes From The Final Conference Declaration

“We envision a Post-2015 world where inequalities, conflicts and human suffering from racial discrimination and xenophobia are eliminated as obstacles to human dignity, fulfillment of human rights, and sustainable development. Addressing the root causes of racism through human rights learning, promoting human connectedness, multicultural understanding with mutual compassion, non-discriminatory laws and practices, reconciliation and healing are instrumental to achieving this vision”

“We recognize that world peace and human security is crucial for development. Peaceful societies require strong enabling mechanisms for preventing violence and violent conflict, promoting peace through tourism and the teaching of sustainable tourism in universities, managing tensions and disputes, addressing grievances, and building trust and mutual accountability between social groups, society and the government”

For more, see:

<http://outreach.un.org/ngorelations/files/2014/09/Declaration-Final.pdf>

Where Next For Servas?

Servas International Event at Dalesbridge Centre

by Ruth Allen, National Secretary Servas Britain.

These questions took many directions at our meeting, at the Dalesbridge Centre in Yorkshire, England and these are questions we all need to ask ourselves as Servas members. Although founded as a “peace organisation” we all may recognise that “peace” can be in many forms, from participation at the UN to smaller simpler rituals, such as sharing a meal with guests, and comparing and contrasting our lives in conversations that extend into the small hours of the night. Indeed, we may occasionally host travellers, or even be hosted by hosts, who have little sense of the origins of the organisation, but at the end of the stay, we may have acquired new cultural and ethical perspectives, leading to increased tolerance. Even in some cases, we may agree to disagree.

Servas is a complicated organisation, and we had members attending from about 16 different countries. We had organised meetings and informal discussions, resulting in long lists of ideas, aims and objectives. Some examples are:

- Working more closely with organisations that share the aims of Servas, as well as bringing people together within Servas who share special interest groups

- Creating guidelines which can be used by countries wanting to set up a Servas cultural programme for travellers
- Looking at possibilities for more in-depth experiences and longer stays focused on language-learning, volunteering or work experience
- Offer the potential to set up a Servas International resource exchange, connecting people interested in taking part in and offering more in-depth



What Makes Servas Special?

Yorkshire, UK 16-23 June 2014

Servas experiences

- Encouraging Servas to be seen as a family-friendly organisation
- Making SI News, and all important

communications, available directly to all members

Extensive discussions centered around SOL (Servas on line), and the new website which will bring Servas into the 21st Century. Matthew Pashkovskii, from the SOL team, spoke about the development of the website and online functions

for travellers to search with and make contact with hosts. The new website should provide information about Servas International to potential new members.

On two occasions Amir Levy from Israel set up a SKYPE link to Jonny Sågänger, president of Servas International, from Stockholm, Sweden. We were able to share our thoughts, ask questions and get his feedback, not only about SOL, but also other Servas issues and activities. Another SKYPE link enabled Marijke and Chris in New Zealand, to tell us about the next SI General Assembly, to take place near Auckland in October 2015.

We looked at the new SI Logo presented by Terry Stone on behalf of its designers Alan Stone and Stefan Fagerström. It was well received and we thought it presented an appealing up-to-date image for Servas.

Danielle Serres, SI Peace Secretary, from France, organised a workshop about “Peace in Servas” and a presentation on “Servas at the UN”.

Local hosts Rob and Molly Kenyon promoted awareness of UNESCO world heritage sites, with particular focus on the local site at Saltaire, which some of us visited on as part of a larger outing to Bradford, to the Peace Museum and a curry fair. 🌈



Dalesbridge main house

Three Sample Topics Discussed At Dalesbridge

1 IN-DEPTH AND LONGER-STAY EXPERIENCES

How can Servas promote more in-depth experiences and extended stays for the benefit of both travellers and hosts? What mechanisms would help achieve this?

An enthusiastic debate looked at how in-depth experiences and longer stays could enhance encounters between travellers and hosts and promote peacebuilding activities within Servas.

There is much potential for Servas to promote such possibilities that go 'beyond the two nights stay'. There are already some notable examples, such as the children's project in Turkey each summer, where Servas members can get involved in community activities.

12 specific recommendations were developed on this issue.

2 TRAVEL PEACEFULLY AND WALK LIGHTLY ON THE EARTH

Should Servas have a policy on ethical, sustainable travel and concern for the environment?

A discussion group looked at how we might reduce our impact on the world's environment when we travel and support local tourist initiatives which most directly benefit the communities we visit.

More than five specific recommendations were developed on this issue.

If you would like to see the details, comment on our ideas, or be involved as plans develop for either of the above two issues please let me know via vicepresident@servas.org

Ann Greenhough, SI Vice President

3 THE SERVAS WOODLAND GROUP & THE ENVIRONMENT NETWORK

Do you love trees?

During our time at Dalesbridge, a number of us present formed a special interest group to share our particular interest in trees which we hope will in time become part of a wider Environment Network in Servas. We all are interested in the role trees can play in combating global warming and want to see more tree-planting around the world.

For more information about Tourism Concern, the UK based organisation focusing on ethical travel, and its links to similar organisations in other countries go to <http://tourismconcern.org.uk/>

Until we have the new website we will use the Servas International newsletter, email and perhaps Facebook to keep the interest alive. We invite others to join us. I have offered to be the coordinator of this Special Interest Group. Contact me at heagneb@hotmail.com

*Brian Heagney,
Servas Britain*



*Anne Heagney:
"Yes, I'm awake"*

WHAT ALL WAS TALKED ABOUT AT DALESBRIDGE?

By Ann Greenhough, vicepresident@servas.org.

The topics we covered at the meeting included:

IN-DEPTH AND LONGER-STAY EXPERIENCES:

How can we meet a growing interest in in-depth Servas experiences and extended stays?

What mechanisms would help achieve this?

SPECIAL INTEREST NETWORKS

Developing special interest networks using SOL and the new website.

ETHICAL TRAVEL

Should Servas have a policy on ethical, sustainable travel and concern for the environment?

CULTURAL PROGRAMES & MEETINGS WITH A THEME

Encourage international meetings and programs focused on cultural themes and other topics.

SERVAS ON LINE

How can Servas on Line (SOL), and the new website, help to attract new members and be used to develop new initiatives and projects?

PLANNING THE TRANSITION TO SERVAS ON LINE

How should national groups be preparing their members for the move to Servas going online?

FUTURE DEFINITIONS OF SERVAS MEMBERSHIP AND FEE STRUCTURE

How do we define membership of Servas for the future? What impact will SOL have on membership structure and fees.

SERVAS AND PEACE and SERVAS AT THE UNITED NATIONS

SERVAS INTERNATIONAL YOUTH FUND

Creating a permanent international trust fund aimed at increasing young people's participation.

PREPARING FOR SIGA 2015

Using technology to connect with those unable to attend the meeting. Planning logistics for SIGA 2015. How can language barriers be reduced?

THE NEW SI LOGO

SERVAS AND TWITTER

LINKING SERVAS WITH OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Promoting activities that support vulnerable people around the world

INVOLVMENT OF WORLD HERITAGE SITES

A summary of the discussions and recommendations from our meeting will be circulated to all national groups.

If you would like a more detailed copy, contact Ann Greenhough at vicepresident@servas.org.

More Dalesbridge 2014...

and Then There Was The Fun!

“The Saturday Outing”

By Maggie Joines, Servas Britain

The Yorkshire Dales was very kind to us in June. The weather was perfect and the towns and villages all decorated with yellow flags and flowers and lots of yellow bicycles, as Yorkshire was hosting Le Grand Depart of the Tour de France cycle race.

Back in the mini bus to Addingham, we met up with the other half of our group (which had been to Bradford and Saltaire that morning). We all sat with the local residents in the sports field and listened to music from Hope and Social, a local 6-piece rock band. The band was also



Celebrations in Yorkshire



Lunch at the Dales

celebrating the tour, so much so that the power for the sound system was supplied by six bicycles wired up to a generator at the front of the stage. The audience was expected to take turns to peddle furiously to supply sufficient power. Servas members were very happy to oblige and there were many photo opportunities to preserve the happy memories. 🦋

– INTRODUCING – The Servas International Image & Design Support Team WE'RE HERE TO HELP!

The importance of maintaining a consistent and uniform visual appearance of Servas around the world should not be dismissed. Whether you're developing a new web site, Facebook page, event flyer or just want to use the new Servas logo for your next project you are encouraged to contact the Servas' Image & Design Support Team (SIDST). SIDST was created to help assist member countries with their various design and promotional projects.

We realize that everyone is not a designer nor do they have the tools necessary to produce quality graphics. Servas IDST members are design professionals (and Servas members) who have volunteered to help and/or advise Servas member countries on producing their next Servas project.

If you are a Servas National Secretary or a project/event coordinator you are welcome to contact us with your questions and/or assistance.

Please refer to our web site for logo usage and design guidelines, as well as downloadable versions of the new Servas International logo.

Email: servasdesignhelp@gmail.com

designhelp@servas.org

Web Site: www.siidst.servas.org



P.S: We're looking for more team members with graphic design and promotional experience. To apply for team membership please contact us with your qualifications and background information.

The Utopia of Peace Village

Report From This Year's
 "Live With Us Share With Us" Event In Turkey
 July 6-16, 2014

by Mehmet Ates, LUSUP Coordinator
 Antakya, Turkey
 mehmettates@yahoo.com



Workshop: Peace word in many languages

It was born very little but it grew up very fast. Its roots have gone deeper inside the earth and the branches stretched happily to the sky in a short time. It has turned out to be a huge tree where hundreds of people can sit underneath. This is Live with Us Share with Us Children Programme (LUSUP).

LUSUP took place this summer again, over ten days, with 22 volunteers coming from Spain (Catalonia), Romania (Transylvania), Guatemala, France, Iran and Turkey and 70 local children in Ekinci, (a village of Antakya in Turkey). It was clear that the programme left distinctive influence behind it. The Servas volunteers, hosted by local families, studied environmental issues, peace, art, music, creative drama, different languages, chess, played children games and did reading activities with children. They displayed short movies, did radio interviews, country presentations, multi-lingual choir, taught how to make Origami enthusiastically. "The program area turned out to be a Servas Campus" as Catalan Volunteer Quim described it. The house yard, the streets and the big garden named Amazon were the places for sharing, learning, having fun, thinking and discovery.

One of the participant children named Çnar said; "I love Servas because we learn different things here." The programme aims to reach exactly this goal. It succeeds by bringing people from all around the world into the village and through the volunteers introducing new ideas, activities, programmes, games, languages and different cultures of world to the local children. It is a mutual transfer of the knowledge, experience and background. The children receive new ideas whereas volunteers learn vast cultural diversity of Antakya (Antioch) through children, local volunteers and people. Another child, Ali, said, "I even didn't know where Guatemala was. Now, I have two friends from this country. They are so sweet."



Different languages different lives...

Children started the day saying "Good Morning" in Arabic, Turkish, Catalan, Hungarian, Spanish, Greek and other languages. They learnt

how to say peace, colours in these languages and also sing. The songs of multi-lingual choir left a great effect on children and families. The goal was to raise awareness towards languages. We were relieved when we heard colorful words coming from the mouths of children at the Servas Campus every day. The goal was met. The views of Catalan (volunteer) therapist on the children's language ability were not surprising. Quim said; "Kids can pronounce words in different languages easily and learn them quickly. They can also sing. This is something amazing." The reason, actually, is that the kids usually

Utopia - continued on page 16



Kids painting wonderland with Little Prince

UTOPIA

Continued from page 15

grow up bilingual (Arabic-Turkish) in the region of Antakya. They discover their mother tongue, Arabic, which is now fading away day by day, and learn about other languages through this programme. It is obvious that the child who is involved in many languages shows the highest possibility of becoming a peace lover in the following stages of her/his life. Not only the language sessions but also most of the activities carried out within LUSUP aim to plant colourful peace seeds in children.

Local people experience & discover

"Our parents started to feel proud of us once we started to communicate in English with the volunteers. Because they liked the volunteers and appreciated the efforts they did for the local kids. The idea of going abroad did not sound strange to them now," said Selen, one of the local translators studying English language at University. Muhterem, who hosted a volunteer, tells; "People coming from every corner of the world try to learn our culture. They like and respect it. They learn Arabic and Turkish words. Also, they try to learn the different cultural aspects of Antakya. Honestly, I am also becoming more aware of my culture each time they ask me questions." Another host, Semire, explains; "Marina from Catalonia, asks many questions about our life, traditions and meals. When my daughter Esra (local translator) fails to answer some of the questions she asks me or her father. Esra is becoming more curious about life here and in the world." Local children get to know new people and they learn how to trust people coming from different cultures and learn from them. 10-year old girl Yaren says; "I love Servas people because they are good hearted." Isn't it a precious experience at this age of the children? Arzu, who is keen on art, says; "we walked through the old streets of Antakya. We lay down and painted the lovely pictures of the church with lovely orange trees and the well. We also visited

the mosque and the synagogue a few meters far from the church. It was amazing!" The kids are introduced with the value of 'living together despite the differences' through the vast and old experience of Antakya.

The young woman, Ela, who hosted the Iranian volunteer, Nasim deals with communication problems via google translate. She is talking joyfully while patting her baby in her lap; "Nasim cooked Persian food for us. They tasted very different. I think I can learn English until next year. Don't forget, Mehmet. I want to host at least one Servas teacher every summer." I note it down.

LUSUP and Servas seeds like these, land and have blossomed very quickly. The village has become part of the world information and culture network within six years. A new generation who are familiar with global thinking has grown up now.

Volunteers teach & learn

Volunteers, arriving with different predictions, knowledge, cultural background and expectations in Antakya (40 km far from border of Syria) notice in the face of local people broad smiles and welcoming (Ehlen Vesehlen-Arabic) expressions at the very beginning. Living together with host families creates a magical power which brings people very close in a short time. Any prejudices or hesitations disappear.

The sightseeing tours organised for volunteers allows them discover the multicultural life background of Antakya. Once they learn that different religions have been living together and touching each other for ages they realise that they are in an unusual spot of the world. At that moment I try to explain, Szerénke, coming from Transylvania; "Turkey has many faces. Antakya is just one of those many faces."

The children, instead of going home at night, worked like ants to learn from their photography teachers (Esra & Fatih) how to write names with light through photo



Peace Amblem with kids

cameras. The next day children went photo safari to shoot photos on friendship, helping others and love during the hot sunny day. Looking at the results, Fatih said; "The children have sensitive souls and curious eyes. They really excited me. I felt just like them. We found ourselves planning the next year photography topics."

Chess trainer, Erdem, didn't expect such big interest for chess. He got lost with kids holding their chess tables in the deep spots of the fruit garden every day. We sometimes forgot them and they also forgot the time despite the approaching darkness.

Experienced volunteer Zuleyha brought the Little Prince into the village. Children loved him. They read a piece of his adventures every morning, discussed his philosophy, did role plays and wrote him letters. At the end, volunteer artist, Leonie, painted Little Prince in the wall picture (Wonderland) she created with the kids. Little Prince visited the kids in the village and introduced his little planets to make discoveries about life.

The atmosphere that the programme created in the village was amazing just like every year. Quim says; "there is a lovely feeling in the streets and people. I see positive

Utopia - continued on page 17

UTOPIA

Continued from page 16

things everywhere. Lots of surprises. Lots of different things". Nasim ; we are always surrounded with children. They try to communicate and learn from us. Very curious and polite." Reka; "what kind of a place is a village? How do the houses look like from inside? I can find answers for these questions through this experience. Also, I am here to teach and learn." The programme focuses on environmental issues as well. The video and photo cameraman, Nico from Barcelona introduced children how to make flower pots out of plastic bottles. Then, they planted wheat seeds in the pots, watered them every day and witnessed how the seeds turned to be little wheat trees. 14-year-old child Berdan explains; "it is amazing to grow up something." Adela from Guatemala dressed in Mayan costumes and taught children how to make Pinata in a whole week. At the end, they had a party to blow up the Pinata and collect the candies fell out of it. It was a big fun. A tradition from the Central America could find a place here in the Middle East. Amazing, isn't it?

It was me who took any advantage to reflect peace thoughts to the souls, eyes and brains of the kids throughout the programme. One day, I wanted them to design their own peace organisation and a logo for it. The results were wonderful. One group of children imaged to form a music band and give concerts in the regions of war or conflicts. Another group wanted to organise big meetings of people from neighbouring



Story Making

countries at the borders. They displayed these ideas on posters at Servas Campus for their friends.

Actors and radio workers coming from Transylvania combined sports, drama and games together and had lovely time with kids in the olive tree gardens and streets. They also did a professional radio interview with all the programme participants to be broadcasted by the radio station in their country

Local translators explore new windows

LUSUP tries to use the local potential as much as possible. More people participate in the programme every year. Young people, going to university soon, found more opportunities to volunteer as translators, guides and assistants during the programme. Hosting volunteers helped them set up friendships and overcome language barriers. They were not only translating for the children but also for their parents and neighbours. So the transfer of experience among people was succeeded. Young people developed their own self confidence and started to imagine new lives out of borders. One of the translators, Esra, explains with excitement; "it was a far dream to travel even to another city of Turkey before LUSUP but now, I am making plans

to visit Marina and Nico in Barcelona. Aliye joins the conversation; "my parents do not think that it is weird to go abroad and volunteer. I think they changed her mind after meeting the Servas volunteers.

Growing up with LUSUP and hosting volunteers for 6 years, Mevsim received a lot of praises during the programme as she showed high language competency and was very helpful. Let's listen to her, "Servas programme was my first

motivation to learn English. Marilyn who was one of the volunteers from Canada helped me learn the first words in 2009. I learnt many things about the world with this language." Language student, Gizem says; "I have never had such fruitful time in the summer until this year. I wish the volunteers could stay longer."

From the local to the international

LUSUP proves again that any person with genuine experience, background, perspective and values can travel to different places on earth and share this potential with the local children and people. It is time to promote this programme in different parts of the world since it carries the potential of activating the local resources, provoking the inner worlds and curiosity of children, introducing the idea of world citizenship, increasing awareness towards environment and providing a fruitful summer holiday for volunteers. Besides, it costs a little and is applicable since it requires minimum bureaucracy. The promotion of this programme would bring effective outcomes. First of all, the gap between the poor and the old in different parts of the world or/and within the countries would be filled to some extent. Secondly, LUSUP would improve ideas of peace among people of the world and the risk of war would decrease. Thirdly, the 'unpopular' countries would find the chance of receiving volunteers and travellers. Finally, some individuals who have high living standards and intellectual background and thinking that 'something must be done' to make the world a better place could find a way out through this programme.

Making LUSUP one of the main programmes of Servas international and then promoting this programme in different parts of the world with the cooperation of related NGOs is the biggest utopia of the coordinator of LUSUP. It is obvious that it would be not difficult to find hardworking dreamers to share this utopia. 🌱

For the 6-year programme archive:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/95345139652/>

“Don’t count your life by the days you have lived, but by the days that you care to cherish.”

A Historical Servas Event In Central Asia

Youth Meeting, Kyrgyzstan, 2014

by *Asiia Zhakypova,*
Deputy National Secretary, Kyrgyzstan
asijakypova@mail.ru



History:

The Kyrgyz chapter of SERVAS International was started by Devendra Pal Singh in 2003, with 7 members. Due to various constraints no one has ever travelled the SERVAS express so far, although we hosted many over the years from around the globe.

Present:

Due to the efforts of EWA, Christina and support from EXCO we managed to host the SYM 2014 at the world famous ISSYK-KOOL lake, from 27/7 to 2/8 2014. Enthusiastic members from 16 countries participated with gusto.

For the local members it was a grand opportunity to meet and interact with not only the youth, but also the senior, wise citizens of the International SERVAS family, including the ‘Grand old Man of SERVAS Youth’; PABLO!

This meeting provided the opportunity to the participants to showcase their country, culture, traditions and the best side of their own character.

National Groups vied with each other to highlight their national uniqueness through costumes, dishes, songs and even maps!

Highlights:

- Kazakhstan; Display of National costumes, songs.
- Korean: National dishes, costumes, songs.
- Spain; National dishes, dance.
- Italy: Silent language through gestures, Maps, sweets.
- Poland; T-shirt printing by Lukas.
- Iran: Fresh Dates by Nader.
- Kyrgyzstan : Kyrgyz language by Asiia Zhakypova.

- Table Tennis tournament organized by Olga.
- Visit to the famous Grigorev gorge, where the members enjoyed the fresh air, scenery of high mountains, flora and fauna, meet the nomads, horse riding, open air lunch and Iranian songs by Nader.
- We were treated to the ancient customs of the Kyrgyz, from the birth of a child, cradle ceremony, engagement, marriage ceremonies, at the village ‘Sary-Oi’ courtesy Rakheela, who is the head of NGO ‘ERAYM’ engaged in the uplift of the Kyrgyz women. The members thoroughly enjoyed the unique feature.
- Farewell party organized by Kyrgyz side , started with Kyrgyz dances by Aipery, Gulsina and nomad games by Dinara, Kyrgyz national drink, “kymyz” Champagne Coniac, local soft drinks ‘Shoro’, Tan, dry fruits and dancing thereafter were a fitting finale to this grand event,
- Aigul Bakirova was chosen as the new NS of Servas Kyrgyzstan and Asiia Zhakypova as her Deputy.
- Leila Sultanova was chosen as the new NS of Servas Kazakhstan.
- Due the efforts of Anna, Ewa, Ursula, 6 new members have joined Servas Kyrgyzstan.

Future:

Though a lot was accomplished during the meeting, but it was basically an ice breaker. All agreed that a lot needs to be done not only for Servas Kyrgyzstan, but also for the entire region of Central Asia. For this, Devendra’s proposal for ‘A Bridge Across Central Asia’

Kyrgyzstan - continued on page 19

SERVAS EVENT REPORT

KYRGYZSTAN

Continued from page 18

which was unanimously passed by the EXCO at Delhi in December 2005 and forgotten due to EXCO's indifference and ignorance, needs to be considered afresh.

Servas Kyrgyzstan is grateful to all who came and helped us to make this a memorable event. We



enjoyed your company and look forward to your continuous involvement in this region. For those who couldn't make it, we would like to invite them to this wonderful land. Please don't wait for the next meeting, come whenever you can and you will be more than welcome.

Kyrgyzstan is a young, poor, generally unknown, virgin land of immense beauty with a friendly, vibrant and educated population, waiting to be explored. Servas members and Exco, can make a big contribution, by spreading the word about our area and giving positive support. 🌱

For more photos please visit:

https://drive.google.com/folderview?id=0By5ldh-4AKGpR2Y3ZVl1bzZMlEU&usp=sharing_eil&invite=CLqhqCg



My Summer In England & Scotland

by Terry Squire Stone, National Secrety, Servas Greece
terrystone127@yahoo.com

(This is a "filler" item. When a empty hole was left in the newsletter, my pictures were used to "fill" the hole. If you would like **your** Servas pictures to be used as filler, please see below.)



If you have a couple of photos to share from your Servas travel or hosting experience, please feel welcome to submit them for publication in the next SI News. Include a title & short introduction, captions not necessary. Send to newsletter@servas.org. We'll add them as space permits.



Group in the park before planting tree



Magnus with his mother Gisella from Uruguay and Chile NS Javier Heusser



Bronze plaque for the tree

Argentina-Chile-Uruguay Meeting

October 10 to 13, 2014
Los Cocos – Cordoba, Argentina

by Ana Manghi, Servas Argentina NS, info@amamanghi.com

Food was delicious and the company of Servas friends from Chile and Uruguay was wonderful. Added to that, the attractive panorama of the Sierras cordobesas. We planted a tree of an autochthonous specie of the region and we set a bronze plaque to commemorate it.

Ideas were exchanged on how we can attract people to join Servas. We're finishing a letter which many people collaborated to write and the idea is that every member will post it in FaceBook together with a Servas promotional video to let more people know about Servas and get interested in joining.

We explained how important it is that in the future, National Boards be presented to national elections as a team and not as individual candidates. There have been important disagreements among members of the NB in the past and we reached the conclusion that it is better to come to agreements and form a work team before people are elected.

Some ideas on the role of the South American Coordinator were said, a "sensitive" matter right now in the Region. Elections will be held in the near future. On one side, Argentina and Uruguay proposed to redefine the Mission of the Area Coordinator and the Guidelines for the position. This proposal is originated on the need to prevent malfunction and omissions by the Area Coordinator, as it has happened in the past. This proposal was presented to EXCO, with no results as yet.

We also talked about the CSE (Cultural Servas Exchange) program that are 3 weeks of exchange abroad to practice language and learn about a different culture. Argentina is working now for different projects to go to Australia, Canada, Austria and Germany. We are offering the CSE, focused on tango, for people to visit Argentina. We invited Uruguay and Chile to join us in this project since we're so close. We considered that receiving people in this program strengthens our local organization, something that's good for everybody.

Special thanks to all the people who came and special thanks to Dinorah Sanz, Uruguay NS, Javier Heusser, Chile NS, Francisco Rodríguez Central Region Coordinator in Argentina and Graciela Neme, Argentina Peace Secretary. 🌱



group all together in the theatre stage



Ana Manghi Argentina NS (with donkey)

*“The future belongs to those who believe
in the beauty of their dreams.”*

- Eleanor Roosevelt

Soaring To New Heights

Servas Korea Takes To The Air

by Choewi Song, Servas Korea
egoteamo14@gmail.com

On 15th July, Servas Korea was broadcast on KBS 1TV which is one of the main broadcasting station in Korea.

Servas Korea members were excited to watch the documentary about Servas and had an interest in what impact that will make on us.

The documentary, KBS ‘Docu-Gonggam’ was comprised of two stories introducing Servas experiences, both as hosts and guests.

One took place on Jeju Island and also in Seoul, with Servas Korea hosts and guests, Miki and Sidney, from Servas America. And the other was done in The Republic of South Africa with a Servas Korea member, Myunghwa Park who is having wonderful Servas experiences and activities while learning English and meeting Servas friends there.

According to Dongho Han, regional coordinator of Jeju Island, who also took part in the documentary hosting Miki and Sidney, the producer of ‘Docu-Gonggam’ said “I wonder why these amazing activities by Servas were not be known to all of the people around the world!”

The impact of this broadcast on Servas Korea was more than we expected. During and after the program, ‘Servas’ became the most searched word through Korea’s top web search engine called NAVER. Also the Servas Korea web page



was not able to open due to excessive web traffic. It was a very new and exhilarating moment to the members.

Until then, we had tasks to impart the aims and objectives of Servas to people in Korea, and the member growth. But the broadcast resulted achievements on these tasks indeed.

People understood that Servas is not only for travelling but also sharing cultures and do hospitality activities among people from other countries for peace. And some people actually signed up for the membership of Servas Korea.

At the beginning of 2014, the total number of Servas Korea members was 257 and until before the broadcast 10 members were added. However, after the broadcast 441 people newly signed up.

Regional coordinators are currently busy doing new applicants’ interviews, and Servas Korea is expecting to have over 700 members in total at the end of this year which is a splendid progress for us. 🌈

What Has Been Happening In Malawi?

We've Been Keeping Ourselves Busy!

by Demelza BENBOW, Servas Malawi Secretary
demelzabenbow@gmail.com

1 We had a celebration on World Peace Day in September.

A member approached a local primary school and asked if they could give an assembly presentation upon the subject of peace.

The school took up the theme and made a peace tree and celebrated "World Peace Day", each year group contributing peace leaves - see the photo montage of the event attached.

This led the school to go on and celebrate Mahatma Gandhi's birthday as well!!! Great!

2 We are still working on supporting the Peace Garden in Bangwe at AYISE youth center. Servas Malawi initiated the peace garden - making a big peace mosaic with two SYLE volunteers and landscaping it.

We are waiting for its director who received funding (who is also a Servas Malawi member, Marcel Chisi) - to account for the monies use and send us photos of the new roof over the peace garden! Marcel?? You; can see Marcel in the photo montage of our July *The Butler* meeting

3 We have had two film nights. In July; *The Butler*, and in October; *The Impossible*.

Both films were sent to us from Michael Johnson in Canada on DVD disks - BIG thanks to him and Servas Canada.

We had a good time and a lot of fun and we have some more films to watch like - *The Fisherman* - set and filmed in Malawi and *The No. 1 Ladies' Detective Agency* - (a wonderful seven-part series set in Botswana) and a film set in South Africa about Mandela and the springboks win - also great!

What's been going on in your country? Please let me know so I can inform my members. 🌱



The Obert Khowa Peace Garden



Francis, Hannah, Sandra, Ennie, Marcel Enni's sister, Elita, with Juliet the dog.



IF STRANGERS MEET

By E. E. Cummings

*If strangers meet
life begins-
not poor not rich
(only aware)
kind neither
nor cruel
(only complete)
i not not you
not possible;
only truthful
-truthfully, once
if strangers(who
deep our most are
selves)touch:
forever
(and so to dark)*



My First Servas Travel Experience

Japan May 2014

by Daniel Ben-Sefer, Sydney, Australia



Dressed up in Kimonos by our hosts

My parents were frequent travellers. In fact, I do not remember any time where we spent December holidays at home. Every school holiday we went away travelling. Sometimes near, sometimes far, but always away.

Hence my travel bug has been inherited, and now, in my early 60s, it still is there, as good as when I was a child.

About 4-5 years ago, I started learning Japanese, with the objective of eventually travelling to Japan and being able to communicate with the ordinary Japanese person. I did not expect this language to be as difficult to learn! With all those years behind me, I have a very basic knowledge, but enough to ask my way around and to hold a very basic conversation.

Just before starting to book our accommodation, I remembered a friend mentioning Servas a few years ago, and I thought to myself that this is a great idea for my intended visit to Japan.

And so it became to be. My partner and I became Servas travellers and after lots of correspondence, had our stay in Japan organised.

We stayed with 5 different hosts, each of them quite different from the previous.

We learned a lot about Japan, Japanese customs, traditions and food.

In most places we slept on futons on the tatami floor, the traditional way, and found that we actually slept better than when we were given a bed!

We found that Japanese people are



Sumo Wrestling



Snow monkey baby

very proud of their country and their traditions. They will go out of their way to help you learn about their culture. For example, one of our hosts insisted on also being our private guide for the day, and having a previous commitment for the second day, she organised a friend to come with us in her stead. No payment was accepted, not even allowing us to pay for lunch.

Another host brought out her parent's wedding Kimono and dressed us in it. What an experience that was! They also brought out a deck of cards so we could play a Japanese game, and showed us a shrine that they had built a short time ago for the Japanese "Children's day"

We were taken to an Izakaya (Japanese pub) to drink Sake and Japanese beer and were introduced to several snacks that we had never even seen before such as deep fried cartilage (yummy!), we were shown beautiful parks and places we would not have dreamed of visiting and given good advice on what and where to see, for example, on the recommendation of our Tokyo host while visiting the resort of Hakone, we went to a beautiful Onsen (natural hot spring bath resort) where we were the only non-Japanese guests at the time.



Visiting a Shinto shrine in Kyoto

At nearly all of our host's home we enjoyed going to the toilet, as it is customary in Japan to have them heated. Some of them also have buttons to wash you (and on one occasion even dry you) once you are done!

As tourists, we also happened to do things many of our hosts had not done, like going to see Sumo wrestling and visiting the snow monkey park, near Yudanaka.

To cut a long story short, we had a most successful trip, took thousands of pictures, 'lived' a Japan that most tourists do not see. A great Servas experience.

Needless to say, one of my first actions after coming home was to apply to become a Servas host.

Pictures of our trip, as well as tips for travellers to Japan can be viewed at <http://blog.dabas.net.au/2014/japan.aspx> 

Sabor de América

(Flavor of America)

by Susant Pal, Kolkata, Servas India
susantpal.india@gmail.com



During mid-September 2014 Madhu and I made our maiden visit to USA. This was a pleasure trip and our travel covered nine states of America and stretched over three time-zones. From Eastern Time in New York we passed through Central time zone in the Midwest to Pacific Time in Seattle. The journey was splendid as we drove a hundred miles and more each day along the corn fields exploring the lakes, the falls, the hills north of Minnesota, the magical colors of fall, the cliffs and canyons of the Wisconsin Dells, the streetscape of Chicago, tasty treats of Pike Place Market in Seattle and of course the lovely pumpkins on display in the country-side waiting for the Halloween to arrive. I read somewhere that the majority of the 1.5 billion pounds of pumpkins grown in the United States each year are sold for Halloween. I also learnt that that USA produces 13.016 billion bushels of corn each year (one bushel corn = 56 lbs = 25.4 kg)

The extent of our travel and the grandeur of the expedition wouldn't have been possible without the support of our friends in the US. At two places – Rochester NY and Seattle WA we were hosted by our Servas USA members whose hospitality we cannot undermine. Lisa Jadwin and Steve Derne in Rochester NY were very friendly and warm hosts. The courtesy and comfort extended to us from prior to our arrival till the day we left surpassed our expectations in every way. We wish to thank Steve in particular for sparing lot of his time and effort to take us to such places of interest in the countryside that otherwise we would never have experienced.

We are also thankful to yet another Servas friend Carol O'Brien. Carol day-hosted us in Seattle when she took us around in the cozy comforts of her car to make sure we saw the most of her city in the limited time we had in hand. We were indeed moved by her gesture of deciding to come to the airport to save our time. She braved the

fear of getting a traffic-ticket waiting at the gates of the airport with her car.

It was only after travelling extensively through the Monroe County we came to realize not only the charm of its exquisite landscape but that the richness of its history were sculpted by great men like, John Jacob Bausch and Henry Lomb originators of Bausch & Lomb Corporations and later George Eastman who founded Eastman Kodak that dominated the world film market for over a hundred years till 1990. Both these companies have their World Headquarters here while General Motors, Xerox, and ITT Automotive have their manufacturing facilities located here in Rochester.

One-day Madhu held a quick-breakfast making course when she tutored Steve to make 'Aalu Paratha' or hand-made Indian fried-bread stuffed with boiled potato mash and mixed with herbal spices. By Indian standards the preparation was very good but our American hosts were too courteous and said that too. Steve carried a 'parantha' for picnic that we had later in the day at the Sodus Point lawns beside the Ontario Lake. Before that we went to Shelby's barn for a stint of horse-riding when Steve offered her to have a bite of 'aalu parantha'. She too was too gentle and praised that spicy stuff. Shelby is very sensible lady and her horses are as gentle and trained as they could be. In the short while that we spent in her barn she made us realize the love one has to have for animals and the dedication with which she kept her involved with them.

The tour on the whole has been very fulfilling. Thanks to Servas again for allowing this opportunities of personal contacts among people of different cultures, backgrounds and nationalities. 🌈

Author is a freelance writer and loves writing for SI Newsletter. He can be contacted at susantpal.india@gmail.com. Find more about author and his recent publication at www.imbidedinfaith.com. Author is a freelance writer and loves writing for SI Newsletter. He can be contacted at susantpal.india@gmail.com. Find more about author and his recent publication at www.imbidedinfaith.com

10 Months Of Summer

by Michal Rupinski, Servas Poland
 michal.rup@gmail.com



Michal, Marlena and Ola

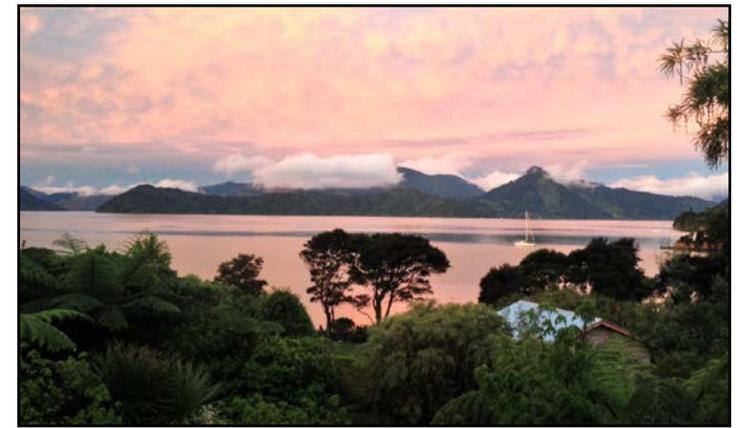
Polish Servas family Michal and Marlena Rupinski travel around the world with their one-year-old daughter Ola visiting California, Canada, New Zealand and Australia in 2013.

This trip was born in our imagination many, many years ago but there was always something in the way, like lack of time or money. Also the trip was supposed to be quite different – a great adventure to the antipodes [places diametrically opposite each other on the globe] for two dreamers, of which, only one was lucky enough to be in Australia and New Zealand before. In 2012 our wonderful little girl Ola appeared and the last thing that we were thinking about was a trip around the world. But in 2013 this trip did happen and it proved to be a

huge success. It lasted more than 10 months and took us to 4 different, yet equally fascinating countries: USA, Canada, New Zealand and Australia. One of the best things that we experienced was nearly the whole trip was in the summer. California in May and June as well as Canada in July and August were hot. When we came to New Zealand it was still officially spring but temperatures were rather high on the North Island. And Australia in December and January is one of the hottest places you can visit.

We travelled as Servas members from Ireland

where we lived for the last 10 years although our home country is Poland. Initially we were prepared to do some work on organic farms around the world in exchange for food and accommodation but it all ended up in the most unexpected way. For many, many months, our hosts, guides, and sometimes even saviors were great people from SERVAS. It is impossible to describe all the places we visited thanks to them, and at the same time we can't forget the wonderful atmosphere of love and openness towards other human beings that SERVAS members around the world had for us during this trip. In the States we were originally working on an organic farm in Northern California but things didn't work out – so for the first time we turned towards Servas and this first experience set the stage for the most amazing trip of our life. In the small town of Arcata in California, lovely local Servas



Marlborough Sounds, New Zealand



Rocky Mountains, Canada

member Judith invited us to stay for nearly a week in her home in exchange for some help with deer fencing in her garden. In Canada during our trip to the Rocky Mountains we were hosted by the family who had just bought an apartment in Canmore which is the gateway to Banff National Park and we were invited to stay there as their first Servas visitors ever.

In New Zealand we stayed with over 20 different families during the 3-month period visiting the most spectacular places on the planet including:

- the famous thermal reserves in beautiful Rotorua,
- magical Nelson Park and Golden Bay on South Island and
- the most famous day-hike in New Zealand – Tongariro Crossing.

It seemed like we were
10 Months - continued on page 26

10 MONTHS

Continued from page 25

guided towards the right places and the most wonderful people all the time. At some stage our parents flew from Poland to join us for three weeks in New Zealand so there were four adults and one little child. As difficult as it seemed, the five of us managed to find hosts in all the places that we wanted to see and all of them had enough space and happy to accept our little child. With many of them we have stayed in touch since and we will certainly be back "down under" in the future.

For the last month of our trip we flew to Sydney and were simply looking for a place to stay over Christmas and to see New Year's Eve fireworks over the



MacMasters Beach, New South Wales, Australia

Harbour Bridge. Everyone was so helpful that until this day we can hardly believe how wonderfully things worked out for us in Australia. We were invited to spend 2 weeks over Christmas on a farm in the middle of Australian bush at MacMasters Beach which is a lovely place located 1,5 hours north from Sydney. Our host Philippa had always something for us to do around the house and the garden, but at the same time she also always had time to show us places nearby that we could not believe existed.

Finally just before New Year's Eve the most amazing thing happened. Our hosts in Sydney told us that they are going away for a

week and we can stay in their home to look after it. Additionally they gave us their car which enabled us to drive to Sydney Harbour on New Year's Eve, watch the magnificent fireworks at midnight and come back safely to their home, all with a one-year-old little girl.

Many people have asked us during and after the trip how was it possible to travel for so long with a little child who wasn't even walking at the start of our trip. What we say to all of them is that anything is possible when you have a dream and believe that it can happen. We don't hide the fact that at times we were afraid, stuck or confused where to go and what to do next. But the goal was clear and our faith was strong. All the rest has always been taken care of. Ola benefited hugely from this amazing trip. She met so many people and has been to so many places that some people will never go in



Crater Lake, Oregon, USA

their lifetime and we as parents are happy and grateful that we could have her with us and that we all could be together for such a long time.

The videos from the trip that we have put on our YouTube channel have been created as a testimony of courage and passion in pursuit of the dream that our family: Marlena, Michal and Ola Rupinski had and managed to fulfill. It is also a tribute to all SERVAS members and friends around the world, without whom this journey would never have happened. To watch them you can go to <https://www.youtube.com/user/UnlimitedDreamers> and look for the ones called "Rodzinka Marzycieli" which means in Polish the Dreamers Family. 🌈



Rocky Mountains, Australia



Coromandel, New Zealand

The Niece of Angela Merkel

by Lisa-Marie Fladung, Servas Germany
 Lisa-Marie_Fladung@web.de



Lisa-Marie in her host's Irish garden

True Story:

I visited the Green Island in the North of Europe with SERVAS for seven days in my holidays in June 2014.

These were impressive and unique moments I spent with my host family and also with the people I met there.

It started all with the flight to Dublin. In the airport I met a nice Frenchman living and working there. He told me the way to the City Link Buses with which I continued my journey west. I had a tremendous view from the bus windows across the Irish landscape. To be honest, most of the time I slept in the bus because I had started at 5 am in the morning and I finally arrived in the afternoon at my host family's home.

Not only did my host parents Bridie and Ger welcome me: I got in contact with my best friend. I must admit that I really fell in love with him: He was clever, smart, handsome, and sweet with a cold snout.

Cold snout? Yes, it's right. During the following days Henry was my companion in walking affairs and catching the ball. – Did you get it? He is a dog.

Oh, I guess you wanted to hear the story about the title of this account of my journey:...



Henry

Here we go:

It was a warm Saturday afternoon and Ger informed me that their washing machine had broken. He had tried everything to fix it again, but there was no way to solve the problem. So he decided to buy a new one. I advised him to buy a German one, but he was skeptical about the price so we asked a shop assistant for advice.

As all the Irish people I met during my journey are funny and amuse themselves at my expense, Ger just introduced me to the shop assistant as "...the NIECE OF ANGELA MERKEL" and, in his words, I was "...on a journey to determine if the Irish people work hard, good and quick enough for the European Unions".

And so my new identity was invented.

That was not possible without the great experience I had with SERVAS.

Sharing everyday life with your hosts and meeting their friends is part of the deal, like helping my host to find a good washing machine.

Hopefully many more people will start to get in contact with some SERVAS coordinator and start their own journey to many countries.

And maybe you will get also a new identity. 🌈



*“A word on the sand
 in Bretagne
 made with algues
 near the waves
 the sea will like it
 we shall achieve it
 Soon...”*

Thanks to our dear Servas hosts in Bretagne-France who opened their doors and their hearts to us on our wonderful journey in this region, October 2014.
 Meir and Lesley Hayoun

Thoughts About A Complaint Management System Within Servas

by Wolfgang Stapelfeldt, Servas Germany
shusta@t-online.de

In a peace organisation like Servas complaints are something we don't really want to think of. And luckily enough it doesn't seem we often have to. But nevertheless it is important to at least think about it. So this topic arose during the General Assembly 2012 in Poland, which led to the following decision on 24th August as item 6:

"6. Handling of Complaints

The Conflict Resolution Committee, NSs and other volunteers coordinated by New Zealand, work together to prepare guidelines on how to act when complaints about hosts or travellers are received."

In February 2014 this year Marijke Batenburg, National Secretary for Servas New Zealand sent out a questionnaire to all National Secretaries worldwide to find out on how these problems are handled in the different countries.

Before giving an update of the whole process in a

later issue of SI News I would like to add some personal thoughts about a possible "complaint management":

Complaints about travellers and/or hosts may have different reasons. Some of them may even be just misunderstandings, lack of communication etc. Still it is often very hard to settle a conflict between the two sides involved immediately. And especially when it is more than just a misunderstanding it may lead to a heavier conflict which can again lead to the exclusion of a Servas member (worst case). In any case complaints have to be taken seriously, and it might be advisable that not only the Servas country involved will be in charge of the treatment of the complaint.

Of course it is not a bad idea to have in every country a contact person responsible for the handling of complaints, but in many cases it might be much easier to contact a "Complaint Committee" (CC) or whatever you may call it. In this case the committee members will have to make sure that there is always, without exception, at least one member who can be contacted directly. This is important as the CC in some cases will have to react immediately, especially when (like in most cases, I guess) it is a matter between Servas members of different countries. If the complaint is handled by a national representative then this person will have to contact Servas International or all other National Secretaries anyway. And I personally would like Servas to more act as a global organisation. In any case there should always be a close link between the CC and all the persons in charge in every Servas member country.

Wherever it will be and whatever will be the solution in the end: Complaints will always have to be handled very carefully. Often enough things get different once you've heard both sides.

*"Peace is not absence of conflict,
it is the ability to handle conflict
by peaceful means."*

- Ronald Reagan

And it is very important to separate the "cultural" reasons from reasons that have to do with ignoring the Servas values or even criminal acts. So it will be necessary that things can be discussed in a group of people with different backgrounds. Therefore this committee should consist of members from different continents. And they have to be very well trained as it comes to understanding of different cultures, of conflicts that may have a gender-related background etc. At this point it makes sense, I believe, to perhaps make the CC part of the Conflict Resolution Committee (CRC). But, and this is the difference I see – the CRC in this case would come second, at least in "cases of emergency", as mentioned above.

Of course, after a host or traveller of his country has been excluded, the representative of this Servas country can ask for a more intensive discussion, but there should be an international "authority" to be able to react quickly, if needed.

Later on, when Servas Online is finally being established, the CC will need to either have direct access to the system itself or direct contact to the people running the system, so that a global "warning system" plus an immediate suspension of a membership and/or Lol could follow.

Again: I do hope this will only be necessary in very rare and extreme cases – but we'll have to be prepared. Especially as one of the reasons why we are looking forward to having Servas Online is to make things easier to become Servas members. But then it is also important to keep in mind that the system could be misused – i.e. that someone who lost the right to travel with Servas could try to get a new Lol in another country where he/she is just travelling. But this is the next step... 🌈

How To Be A More Sustainable Traveler

By Lilly Kerekes and
Rodolfo Alvarado, Servas Mexico



1 COOK TOGETHER

Cooking is essential to share our gastronomy and heritage culture, it could be more organic and healthy, since we know its origin and how they are cooked. Besides, all can participate and it is a great moment to talk and share. If you decide to go out go to markets where you can find local food such as fruits and vegetables that are unique, different and organic. For your health and for the planet avoid garbage food.

2 RIDE A BIKE OR WALK

For short or medium distances bike riding is a fun way to know a place. It's cheap, you'll get exercise and will be helping the planet by reducing pollution. Walk for short distances and you'll have a great opportunity to talk.

3 DON'T USE PLASTICS, BUY WATER

It is easier to carry a water filter (available at camping stores) and a cylinder. Use recycled and/or reusable carry bags.

4 BUY LITTLE, BUY LOCAL

It's always better to avoid buying things since we live in such a devastating consumer society. You don't need to buy things to show friends or family you care but if you do, buy local, in markets or villages, direct from the producers. You'll support the handcrafts of local people who survive on it, plus you'll have an original present at a fair price, as well. It's also an opportunity to meet local artists and learn about their techniques, materials and lifestyle.

5 SHARE YOURSELF

Leave something behind as a remembrance of your visit, something not touchable. Prepare a conference, a performance, teach a local dance or how to cook traditional food. Focus on ecological issues that care about surroundings so your travel can have an armonic and spiritual trace, for example to plant a tree!

6 ORGANIZE AN EVENT

Ask the National Secretary to help you organize a little event when you can share something special and unique about your culture: it's gastronomy, celebrations, habits, language phrases. Ask your host to organize a small gathering of their family and friends where you can share your pictures, knowledge and special talents (and, as a host, you can do the same).

7 TAKE AN ALTERNATIVE TOUR

Go beyond the typical tourist routes! By going deeper we truly have a bath of local culture. Keep an open mind and see behind the typical scenes. Discovering those secret or folkloric places can be an amazing, funny or even a rewarding adventure. Plan to visit sustainable projects around the community. If your host doesn't know of one in his or her area use the opportunity for you both to do some research and maybe even become involved in one.

8 MAKE A GOOD TRAVEL PLAN

Try to reduce your air travel as much as possible. Airplanes generate more pollution than any other kind of transport on the planet. Air travel may be increasing around the world but we SERVAS travelers can help reduce the carbon footprint by taking buses, ferry boats, car pooling and - when it's safe to do so - even hitchhiking.

9 RESPECT THE ANIMALS

The animals are an essential part of the planet so do not feed them, avoid visits to zoos and circuses. At home or on the streets respect them at any possible way, and, if possible, do not eat them!

10 PLANT A TREE

There is not a better symbol to unit you with the nature of a place and also with the hosts. Invite the community to do so, film it, share it. Let's make a great campaign of our own.

11 SHARE SUSTAINABILITY CONCEPTS AND EXPERIENCES

Any personal point of view about ecology and alternative ways of living and respecting nature will be always beneficial for everyone, especially if you want to be a an ecology responsible traveler.

Host List News

by *Arnoud Philippo, SI Host List Coordinator*
hostlistcoordinator@servas.org

Here is an update on two of our main ongoing projects. If you would like more information on either, or both, please drop me an email.

Start-Up Contacts

SI Exco is working on a project to be known as 'Start-Up Contacts'. This is to make it possible for a person to be a 'member of Servas' even if there is no Servas group in the country or area where he/she lives. Arrangements for an interview (possibly by Skype) and the issuing of a Letter of Introduction can be made directly with Servas International until there is an opportunity for a Servas group to develop in their own country.

Once there are 10 or more members we can create a new Servas member country. At present we have about 14,000 hosts in over 115 countries. The total population in these countries is about 6.7 billion.

But there are about 70 other countries (with populations between 100,000 and 38 million) where there are NO hosts yet. In these countries about 0.5 billion people live who could be potential future members of Servas.

The host list reliability test

The host list reliability test is in progress. According to the procedures set down by the SI General Assembly there are 71 countries where the reliability of the host lists are to be checked. The host lists of 40 other countries will not be tested, because these lists had a good result (70 % or more reliability) in the tests in 2010.

We have around 30 volunteers who are doing the tests. E-mails will be sent to hosts and checked for a response before a reliability percentage is calculated.

So far we have results from 49 countries. Once the tests are completed results will be sent out in a report to all National Secretaries.

HOSTING IN ARGENTINA

I'd like to insist that every member who asks for hosting in Argentina should write a personal email (so he/she has to pick up one member of the list and write him or her specially) and in the first contact attach the LOI. It's unbelievable how many members write one email for 30 people at a time with no LOI attached. We don't like that in Argentina, many people even don't answer and these manners are not the ones for a peace organization at all. Argentina is a country that receives a lot of visitors (even not many can travel with all the economic problems we're suffering). Servas people should be polite and considerate with us. We're 366 members and we have our list up to date but some people could still not answer, but it's not the rule. Of course the phone still works, but we prefer to receive an email or a letter and a copy of the LOI, just for security!!!

Ana Manghi
NS Servas Argentina
servasargentina@gmail.com

COMMENTS ON DALESBRIDGE MEETING

I from India with some friends participated in Dalesbridge Servas meeting in June 2014 and enjoyed the discussion. Really, the organisers particularly Mr. David, Ann Greenhough & their team put best efforts in this programme & the programme came to end with success. I thank them.

The opportunity to meet with so many servas friends from the globe was really excellent and it is of course, unforgettable. I do hope that such meetings will again be held in U.K.

I reached at Dalesbridge in north Yorkshire on 15th June 2014 & programme lasted up to 23rd June, I visited London which is a nice city in fact. The people are good. The MAADAM TUSAAD museum was beautiful. The idols of Indian actors & Leaders are pride worthy. I invite to Servas people to come to me in India. Kindly send the newsletter to me after publishing my reflections in the coming issue.

In short, England is a beautiful country of good people. I wish to visit again.

Manoj Kumar'nishchint'
Servas Member Jammu India

Tripping Through The Tulips With Servas

A Long-Time Host Experiences The Ups And Downs Of Travel

By Terry Squire Stone
National Secretary of Servas Greece
greece@servas.org



The letter from Ana Manghi on the previous page brings up some very good issues that the Servas community has been struggling with for a while now, especially in the era of email and increased ease of travel.

As I read it, the two points that Ana makes are:

1. Letters of Introduction (LOI) should be included with any and all correspondence with a host.
2. Mass emailings are not polite and must be avoided.

I've been thinking over these issues since my most recent solo trip in Europe this summer. I stayed with many wonderful hosts, made contact with all them only through email. (Of course, I always included a copy of my LOI.)

I completely agree with Ana that sending your LOI should be a given. for safety's sake, if nothing else. (But let's face it, when opening your home, or travelling to unknown hosts, there is always an element of risk. One of the major lessons I have learned through Servas is to let go of fear. On the whole, the world is a safe place (at least in my world) and I trust my fellow man much more now than I did before Servas. Living in fear is a very nasty place to be, imho.)

Anyway, back to Ana's letter, and where I disagree!

As I traveled around I wasn't always sure where my path would lead me. I figured planning a week in advance was fine. (If that was too short a notice for some hosts, no problem, I didn't take offence.)

Major problem for me was, I found I could tell very little about a potential from our host lists when initially contacting them: just age, current or previous profession, and some interests. Not even a picture. (I would know a lot more about a potential host from CouchSurfing (CS)! At least there are pictures and write ups on CS.) So the personal appeal of potential hosts was very limited (Gee, a retired, 60 year old teacher, who likes nature and Greenpeace.) Although I was more interested in meeting Servas members than seeing



The Soulless Hotel

sights, from the host list I knew next to nothing. We complain when travelers just use our homes as a base from which to see the local sights, but we don't make it easy for them to pick interesting hosts

Then, if I were to pick only one host on my route to email, I would have to wait to see if they responded, and if they weren't on top of their email game, bang, my week's planning is gone, and I had no other option but to take a soulless hotel. I don't think emailing to five hosts in Manchester at the same time is a horrible social problem,

I believe in mass emails. It's nothing personal, not an insult, not impolite. It's just using the technology to do what it's best at. If someone wants to take offence, that's their choice, but certainly not intended by the traveler. If I can email 5 hosts in a general area, I have a much better chance of staying with a wonderful Servas host, and avoiding

that soulless hotel. I would hope that we can encourage spontaneity, whenever possible.

While I'm at it, here's another issue that bugged me, as a traveler. "Sleeping bags or bedbags are advised"? As a traveler, hauling around 1 to 3 months of personal items in a rollie bag, I can't imagine adding a sleeping bag or bedbag to my load. And then where would I wash it? When I host, as I do a lot here in Greece, I figure that doing one extra load of laundry is a given, as is supplying toilet paper and a hot shower.

Also, again as a lone, "mature", female traveler, I look forward to when we will get exact host locations on some kind of an interactive map. I can't tell you the number of times I have gone back and forth on a dirt road, dragging a suitcase, in the hot sun, after a day on planes, trains, and buses, just to find that the street number had been hidden by a bush! "Oh, you can't miss us" Ha. Maybe hosts could put a large "Servas" sign in the window when a traveler is expected.?

And oh, how I adore lots of hooks and hangers in a room so I can air out stuff. A bed off the floor. And WiFi, and a couple of electrical outlets!! But I'm getting carried away.

Please, feel free to follow up on this discussion. Servas is changing, and I'm so glad to be a part of it. It's an exciting time to live in! 🌈

Why I Did Not Visit Any Hosts This Year

by Jane Giffould, Servas Britain
jgiffould@aol.com

As a private pilot I am always looking at ways of extending my piloting skills. I have previously done a bit of mountain flying and loved it - rather different from the relatively flat land of East Anglia in Britain. So when I saw a notice about a week long pilots meeting which included mountain flying, in Germany, I signed up for it. I decided to extend this to a three week tour, by car not aircraft, where the only definite points were Dover-Dunkerque departure, a couple of days drive to Eggenfelden, a week at Eggenfelden, just over a week touring and Dunkerque-Dover return. Accommodation at Eggenfelden was taken care of by camping at the airfield. The rest of the journey provided an opportunity for Servas or probably a mix of camping and Servas.

Servas, as we know, requires a Letter of Introduction and host lists. No worry about the Lol. I got that sorted. However host lists are a problem. Deciding on host lists requires some sort of plan. Initially I had thought of touring round Germany and trying to improve my despicable German. With this there was a possible pop in to Denmark to call on a friend if he was available. With that I might have looked more at the northern area. However my friend was going to be busy

so I cut out Denmark. Eggenfelden is near the borders with The Czech Republic and Austria. Maybe I wanted to go south or east. So I got a rather old hard copy host list for Germany along with the electronic copy and added electronic copies for The Czech Republic and Austria. That seemed to give me a reasonable amount of latitude.

The outbound leg was camping as I had no idea how far I would get each day or even my exact route and wanted no commitment to times or places that Servas required. After a week with flying in the Austrian Alps I was making decisions about where to go next. Having enjoyed Austria from aloft I decided to explore on the ground level. A quick rule of thumb (I measure distances on the map with my thumb!) showed me I could drive round the perimeter of Austria, more or less, in the time available. I was unsure about The Czech Republic as I had heard I would have difficulty with languages there, confirmed later when chatting with a Czech guy at an Austrian campsite.

What about Servas? Thereby laid a major problem. The Austrian host list had not saved properly on my netbook, problems with Adobe, but I could download it from the email. Out on a campsite with no electricity or internet

“Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one’s lifetime.”

Mark Twain

it was not possible to access the host list, charge up the netbook and my basic mobile (which had probably run out of money anyway). So there was no way of finding out about Austrian hosts. Added to this one must book a host in advance. Most NPNR still like some warning, although I have been quite happy when people have turned up at the door following NPNR to the letter. Each day I would only have a vague idea where I might end up in the evening. I dislike planning ahead as I then miss out on items that just turn up but have to be turned down if they do not fit in with the schedule. Staying with Servas hosts requires planning and commitment which is not my style of travel. So to go with my flying I had a couple of glorious weeks with no commitment, no planning, no internet, no phone calls, camping every night a bit muddy at times but so what, bliss. I did miss out on potential interesting discussions with Servas hosts. One cannot have everything and at camp sites there were interesting people to chat with.≠

So what does this tell us? Servas may be all modern by being electronic and internet. However as I commented about 12 years ago that does not account for those people who do not have internet

access or even computer access. Then riding my motorbike through Norway I did not have space for a computer and there was not internet access in many places. I could not have gone Servas without a hard copy of the host list. This time I was in a car with space for my netbook but no internet access hence no Servas.

Servas requires:

- Internet access
- Electronic access
- Phone access
- Electricity to power computer and phone
- Forward planning by quite a few days even when NPNR.
- Definite pre-planned overnight stops
- Commitment to going where planned and so no change of route

I did not have any of these and so could not visit Servas hosts. How many other potential Servas travellers come across the same problems?

So a plea, repeated from 12 years ago, please do not rely only on electronic means as this disenfranchises some people. At times hard copy is the only viable method for contacting hosts. 🌈

How To Prepare Your Submission For Publication In Servas International News

ACCEPTABLE MATERIAL

- Details on Upcoming International Events & Meetings
 - Articles on Servas activities in your country, opinion pieces on peace, travel & hosting, travel stories with a Servas Theme
 - Letters to the Editor (complaints, questions, praise)
 - Short quotes regarding peace/travel/friendship, etc.
 - Servas travel experiences, peace projects, event reports
 - Web sites of interest to Servas members
- Send files to newsletter@servas.org

MATERIAL NOT ACCEPTABLE:

- Events or announcements of interest only to an individual country's members
- Long reports, such as technical and financial data, should be posted on the Servas web site.

Send such material by email to:
add_to_website@servas.org.

IMPORTANT THINGS TO DO:

- DO assume the reader knows nothing about your story. Provide an opening paragraph that explains what your story is going to be about. 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.
- DO give your story an APPROPRIATE HEADLINE and, if possible, a SUBHEAD, so your reader has an idea of what is being presented.
- DO include your (the author's) name, Servas title (if any), your country and, if you want it public, your email AT THE BEGINNING OF THE STORY immediately following the headline or subhead

(the exception would be for a Letter to the Editor where it should be at the end).

- DO make your article engaging and interesting, and pertinent to an INTERNATIONAL audience.
- DO avoid abbreviations so your message is clear.
- DO spell check and proof your story, twice. If possible have a friend review it for you. We will not edit your copy unless there are space limitations.
- DO prepare your story in a text application such as Microsoft Word, TextEdit. Save your file as .doc, .rtf or .txt format and attach to e-mail. Please give your file a name that RELATES TO YOUR STORY.
- DO include photos in .jpg format at 150 dpi or better in the SAME email (but NOT inside your text file).
- DO review this and previous issues of SERVAS INTERNATIONAL NEWS for examples of story format and structure.
- **DO thoroughly proof your article/event listing/letter before submitting it. We do not correct for spelling or grammar. Some editing may be done for space limitations.**

All material for publication in Servas International News should be submitted as E-mail attachments addressed to: newsletter@servas.org

THINGS YOU SHOULD NOT DO:

- DO NOT format your text with tables and fancy fonts.
- DO NOT double-space after a sentence.
- DO NOT add a space before a period or comma. Remember, a computer is not a typewriter.
- DO NOT enter double paragraph returns.
- DO NOT place photos within the story text. Submit them separately in the same email.
- DO NOT write your story in an Email message.

Translate Servas International News Into Your Country's Language

The current issue of SERVAS INTERNATIONAL NEWS available to any Servas member country who would like to convert an issue into their native language.

SERVAS INTERNATIONAL NEWS is produced using Adobe InDesign CC v9.1 for Macintosh. A press-ready, packaged file containing the fonts, photos and linked graphics used

in the current issue along with the complete InDesign file. A Macintosh or Windows version of Adobe InDesign CC v9.1 or better is required to open the file but if you have an older version just let us know. Fonts may not convert properly from Mac to Windows so some adjustments to the text might be necessary when using the Windows version.

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 by using 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, your country's Servas National Secretary should send a request by email to newsletter@servas.org. Instructions on where and how to obtain the file will be furnished at that time.



Servas Continues To Grow On The World Wide Web



To the right is a current listing of Servas-related web and social networking sites. If we've missed your country's web site, social networking site or other online link please send an email to "newsletter@servas.org" and we'll be sure to add it next time.

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

CLASSIFIEDS

HELP 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.

Email your CV to president@servas.org with cc to newsletter@servas.org.

HELP WANTED: SERVAS ASST. TREASURER

Responsibilities include assisting current Servas Treasurer Miroslaw Wasilewski with some of the many tasks associated with the job with the possible opportunity to succeed him as treasurer after 2015.

Email your CV to treasurer@servas.org, with cc to president@servas.org

Email your classified ad in .txt or .doc format to: newsletter@servas.org

SERVAS SOCIAL NETWORKS AND WEB SITES

- **SERVAS INTERNATIONAL**
FB (page): www.facebook.com/Servas.International
FB (members): www.facebook.com/groups/2519241851
FB (open): www.facebook.com/groups/servas
Twitter: twitter.com/ServasI (Servas International)
twitter.com/Servaspresident (Servas President)
Web: www.servas.org
- **SERVAS YOUTH**
FB (page): www.facebook.com/servasyouth
FB (group): www.facebook.com/groups/31004490866
Web: www.servasyouth.org
- **SERVAS YOUTH ESPAÑA**
FB: www.facebook.com/pages/Servas-Youth-España/107873695946821
- **SERVAS YOUTH PERU**
FB: www.facebook.com/ServasYouthPeru
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 BRITAIN**
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 COSTA RICA**
FB: www.facebook.com/servascostarica
- **SERVAS CZECH REPUBLIC**
Web: www.servas.cz
- **SERVAS DENMARK**
FB: www.facebook.com/groups/servasdenmark
Web: www.servas.dk
- **SERVAS EGYPT**
FB: www.facebook.com/pages/Servas-Egypt/195657580637097
- **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 IRAN**
FB: www.facebook.com/ServasIran
- **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: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/Servas.Jordan>
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 KOREA**
FB: www.facebook.com/ServasKorea
Web: www.servas.or.kr
- **SERVAS KOSOVA**
FB: www.facebook.com/KosovaServas
- **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/servas/Pakistan](http://pages.intnet.mu/servas/Pakistan)
- **SERVAS POLAND**
FB: www.facebook.com/servaspl
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/Servas.Sweden
Web: www.servas.se
- **SERVAS SWITZERLAND**
FB: www.facebook.com/ServasSwitzerland
Web: www.servas.ch
- **SERVAS TAIWAN**
FB: www.facebook.com/pages/Servas-Taiwan/130195033703178
Web: <http://www.servastaiwan.org/>
- **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.uservas.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**
ricksteves.com/graffiti/archives/servas.htm
- **SERVAS ON WIKIPEDIA**
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Servas