

PAPER CONNECTION

The Institute for International Connections Newsletter Preview August, 2005

IIC Officers:

President, Laura Dodson

Vice President, Hal Bolton

V.P for International Projects, Alexander Cheryomukhin

Treasurer, Debbie Laner

Secretary, Jeanne Reock

IIC is doing it again!--now in the **Caucasus** and **Central Asia**, the most southern republics of the former Soviet Union. The former Soviet nations where we now work — Azerbaijan, Tajikistan, Georgia, Moldova —suffered ten years of civil wars after the fall of communism in 1991.

Now they struggle to recover from the oppression of communism **and** the problems war and poverty bring – orphans, refugees, post traumatic stress, family violence, gangs, loss of hope, total reorganization of society. These problems touch every life and every family. Visionary leaders in our groups in Azerbaijan and Tajikistan come from many walk of life and struggle to establish democratic principles in persons, families, communities, industry and government. These leaders need our collegueship, friendship, support and skill training as they work to stabilize a new way of thinking that includes self esteem, creativity, initiative, leadership and most of all, hope

Our first step toward responding to these countries was in the summer of 2002 when we held our bi-annual international conference in Baku, Azerbaijan at the request of the Azerbaijan Psychological Association. People from twelve (12) nations attended this conference, including some we had connected with earlier. Over the last fifteen years we have worked with people from Russia and the Baltics and teamed with them in leadership. At the conference our awareness was raised of the particular needs of the war torn Muslim countries of Tajikistan and Azerbaijan, and as well, Moldova and Georgia where we had worked in 1988 with Virginia Satir. Request for continued work from the IIC came. The following projects developed:

1. Baku, Azerbaijan (just north of Turkey and Iran on the Caspian Sea). We are in the beginning of the second year of a four-year training project with the Azerbaijan Psychological Association entitled, "Building Civil Societies". We are addressing movement toward democracy, self esteem, creativity, leadership and initiative on a personal, family, community and cultural level, intertwining the overlapping principles of systems change common to all these systems. Workshops for refugee workers and civil society leaders were held in August 2004, March and June 2005. At the July, 2005 IIC board meeting—with a conference call with our Croatian colleague and with our Azeri board member present— we worked further to respond in detail to our grant writer for this project and to develop consulting teams for teaching various therapeutic skills, work with management in industry, and work with community leadership. We reaffirm our commitment to experiential learning in which we are all living as community during training and in which we live what we teach.

2. Dushanbe, Tajikistan (north of Afghanistan, Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan) In June of this year we responded to nine Tajikistan persons who came to our training project in Baku by a team of IIC going to Dushanbe, Tajikistan to address, at their request, the issue of family violence and to do a needs assessment to assist in determining how we might work with them in the future. At the July, 2005, board meeting of IIC, we teleconferenced with persons from Avesto, our partner organization in Tajikistan, to establish, at their request, a several year training program designed to the unique needs in Tajikistan.

3. Tbilisi, Georgia (north-west of Azerbaijan and just east of the Black Sea). We revisited our plan for a bi-annual conference in Georgia projected for 2004. Georgians who attended our 2002 bi-annual conference in Azerbaijan had requested and agreed to host this proposed conference. Civil war outbreaks there and pressure of insufficient time needed to do pre-conference planning with our colleagues (in a manner that reflects living our values) took us away from the 2004 date. At the July, 2005 IIC Board meeting, we took another major step to respond to the request from Georgia. We established a cross-cultural committee which includes several groups there to plan and develop a conference in late May of 2007 in the Caucasus near Tbilisi. (Put it on your calendar now.)

IIC has an active nine member Board of Directors, an Advisory Board, and three committees, one for each of the three projects above. People from the countries involved and people from America are working together on these committees, which number seven to ten people each. In our search for funding, we have gathered sufficient monies to pay a grant proposal writer for the project in Azerbaijan, though no grant yet.

Some American, Croatian, Russian and Lithuanian , Azeri Staff members of the projects:

Barbara Jo Brothers, MSW, group therapy and Satir systems
Ivan Urlic MD, psychiatrist; specialist in group therapy and post traumatic stress disorder
Laura Dodson, PhD, MSW Satir Systems and Jung,
Alexander Cheryomukhin, MS, Theater of the Oppressed
Linda Provenza MS, conflict resolution, organizational change, Theater of the Oppressed,
Jean McLendon, LCSW, Satir Systems
Rasa Bieliauskaite, PhD, child therapy
Jeanne Reock, CRS, body-centered psychotherapy, recovery from PTSD
Craig Barnes, JD. community and political systems
Hal Bolton, PhD, management consultant, organizational change
Lena Mazur, refugee camp leadership trainer

The jobs are big and we need your help!!

***The Institute for International Connections Newsletter
August, 2005***

I want to help IIC's work toward Developing Civil Society* in Caucasus & Central Asia

Yes, I want to support the programs. (Please print large in block letters)

Name _____

Address _____
(number, street

(town or city, state or province, postal code, country

Email address: _____

Telephones _____

My check for \$ _____ is enclosed

- ***\$50, Friend of IIC (first \$50 donation entitles you to continued receipt of newsletter, special bulletins, and first privilege of sign up for trips),***
- ***\$200, Contributor to IIC,***
- ***\$500, Supporter of Programs***
- ***More than \$500, Generous Supporter***

***Please make your tax deductible check payable to:
Institute for International Connections***

***Mail your contribution with this page to:
IIC, 2545 E. Wesley Ave., Denver, CO, 80210, USA***

___ ***I am interested in going with IIC to conferences in Caucasus or Central Asia***

___ ***I am interested inquiring about how I might volunteer to assist IIC in its work.***

___ ***My friends or colleagues listed on reverse side would like to receive your newsletter.***

* **The term "civil society"** refers to democratic processes, non-violence, self-other respect, clear communication, democratic leadership, freedom to see, hear, feel, think and to comment on it (Virginia Satir) in all systems of society, personal, family, community, industry and political. Our work involves system transformations on all these levels.

We send great gratitude to those who have helped financially to make these projects possible by their tax free donations over the past three years.

2002	2003	2004	2005
Avanta Network Barnes, Craig and Mikaela Crosby, Harriet Mango, Cecily McFeaters, Susan McNaughton, Lucille Miller, Daniel Penara, Carol Suarez, Margarita Short, Susanne & colleagues Wilkinson, Harry	Bregman, Susan and Ralph Brewer, Frances Bunch, June Burke, Joseph Cinque, Julius and Anne, Frank, Signe Gilmore, Patricia Harte, Bennett and Marlene Kronick, Alexander and Katya Novak, Sandra O'Hora, Jill Peacock, Margaret and Loverd, Watermann, Eugene and Mary, Wilt, Sonya	Bacigalupa, Andrea Cardinale, Robert and Patricia Child and Family Therapy Dodson, Laura Fergus, Judge William Lee Gilchrist, Hope Grimmer, W.E. Bubba and Eberle Henry, Troy Hetue, Linda M. Kajeckas, Eleanor Kennedy, Evelyn Laser, David and Ann Le May, Ann Patrick Lynn, Ann Macpherson, Malcolm Malcolm, Alan and Nancy Mango, Mabs Mixon, Donn and Kathryn Neville, Peggy Reasoner, Susan Reock, Jeanne Savadove, Patricia Snyder, Maryhelen The Vennewitz Family Trust Vollman, Don & Mary Ethelyn Wells, Phillip and Becky	Baker, Katherine Bolton, Hal Crosby, Harriet Dodson, Laura Eljia, Joyce and Lester Franck, Walter and Joan Mango, Mabs Milner, Beth Parker, Julie Reock, Jeanne Schreuder, Carol Vennewitz, Peter Woolpert, Bruce and Mary

Particular appreciation to Susanne Short and her colleagues and Julie Parker, whose generous gifts designated for use in Tajikistan only have made our work in Tajikistan begin through bringing Tajiki's to Azerbaijan conference in 2002 and 2004, and now through enabling us to go to Tajikistan in June, 2005, to teach and do a needs assessment and begin planning for future work there.