

2002 Summer
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Jancy Campbell and Ron Broome to Represent BDSC at International Sister Cities Conference By Jancy Campbell

On July 17th, I will be heading to the Sister Cities International Annual Conference in Toledo, Ohio. Also attending will be Ron Broome, member of the Dushanbe Cybercafe Technology Subcommittee. Attending the conference as a keynote speaker will be Patricia Harrison, assistant Secretary of State for Educational and Cultural Affairs. We have been invited to meet with her to discuss the Cybercafe and also the possibility of an Islamic network conference in Boulder this winter.

We have been told that there is tremendous interest in increasing the number of sister city partnerships in the Islamic world. There will be an Islamic workshop with three presenters, and our group has been asked to specifically focus upon sister city projects and activities because of our "tremendous track record."

Sister City partnerships with Islamic cities may prove to be one of the most positive diplomatic forces in the process of building strong and trusting relationships with the citizens of these cities and countries.

We continue to progress with our plans for the Cybercafe. We have an excellent presentation we will be showing at the Conference.

At this time several fundraising events are being planned. I want to thank Louise and Robert Dudley for the beautiful benefit concert held recently in their home. If you are interested in having a fundraising dinner or cocktails at your home speak with Lennie at the Teahouse.

We have a new e-mail/penpal program chaired by George Peknik, board member. You will be hearing more about this project, but begin to think if you would like to be talking with someone with similar interests or a similar profession in our sister city.

Last but certainly not least, at our June board meeting those attending got to see some of first items from a volunteer knitting group called the "Compassionate Stitches." The little sweaters and caps were absolutely beautiful. This is their effort to "reach out and touch the children of the world." They are knitting for the children of Dushanbe. Board member Calista Morrill receives these items, and we will be sending them on to our sister city.

Have a great summer!

Jancy Campbell,
President,
Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities

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Volunteers Needed for Tajik E-Mail Friendship Project By George Peknik

This is a call for volunteers who are interested in being a part of a potentially exciting and rewarding project that will link people of the two Sister Cities by e-mail. Now that e-mail is becoming more accessible in Dushanbe, BDSC is playing matchmaker for adults and children with similar interests in the two cities so that they can learn about and from each other and develop friendships.

There are three concepts that the group is exploring:

1. Linking people with common interests, professional or otherwise, in the two Sister Cities, such as physicians, cooks, bird watchers, and mountain climbers.
2. Distance English language-learning with volunteer tutors in Boulder helping people in Tajikistan improve their writing, grammar, and vocabulary skills.
3. Building on the successful pen pal program at Flatirons School in which students there corresponded with students at a Dushanbe elementary school and in doing so learned about each other and each other's cultures.

The following types of volunteers are needed: those with English-teaching experience; those with organizational and project management skills to help coordinate and train volunteers; and those who are interested in being part of a pilot e-mail pen pal project. All volunteers need to have easy access to e-mail and know how to send and receive e-mails. Time commitments can vary.

If you are interested please contact George Peknik.

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Former U. S. Ambassador Robert Finn Named Ambassador to Afghanistan

Robert Finn was sworn in March 22, 2002 as the new U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan at a ceremony in the U.S. Embassy-Kabul. During his three-year term as Ambassador to Tajikistan, he was a friend and supporter of BDSC

and visited Boulder and met with BDSC members on two occasions.

Mr. Finn, a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, is from New York. He is currently a diplomat-in-residence and Ertegun Professor of Turkic Studies at Princeton University.

Prior to his service in Tajikistan, he served as Deputy Chief of Mission at the American Embassies in Croatia (1995-1998) and Azerbaijan (1992-1995). He

opened the Embassy at Baku in 1992. In 1991, he served as director of the American Embassy Office in Diyarbakir, Turkey, during the initial months of Operation Provide Comfort and was a deputy coordinator of the Kuwait Task Force during the Gulf War.

He also served as Deputy Principal Officer of the American Consulate General in Lahore, Pakistan, from 1984-1986. He has had several different tours in Ankara, Izmir and Istanbul, Turkey.

Mr. Finn has a B.A. in American Literature and European History with honors from St. John's University, and an M.A. and Ph.D. in Near Eastern Studies from Princeton University. He also has an M.A. in Near Eastern Studies from New York University. He served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Turkey from 1967-1969, and was a Fulbright Scholar at the Turkiyat Institute of Istanbul University from 1976-1977. His publications include a book, "The Early Turkish Novel, 1872-1900," and poems, articles and translations in English and Turkish.

His languages include Turkish, Azerbaijani, Urdu, Tajik, Persian, French, German and Ottoman.

His wife, Helena Kane Finn, is a member of the Senior Foreign Service and diplomat-in-residence at the Washington Institute.

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Tajik Sister Farida Asadova

Reminisces on Her Visit to Boulder

Farida Asadova, a resident of Dushanbe and friend to many in BDSC, recently visited Boulder. Sophia and Peter Stoller hosted her for most of her visit. This was her first trip to the US. Here are her impressions of the U.S.:How did you first get to know the Stollers?

I first met Sophia Stoller during her first visit to Tajikistan in 1987 when she brought a group of students from Boulder there for a visit. After that, she visited Dushanbe several times. Later, in 1995, the Stollers became a host family for my elder daughter Adiba when she came to Boulder High School as an exchange student. The Stollers are a wonderful family and I thank them a lot for what they did and are doing for our family. Now we are more than just friends—we are really relatives! Now Sophia and her friends are doing the best for implementation the project – building Internet-cafe in Dushanbe, a very difficult job.

What is your job inDushanbe?

I am an office manager at one of the health projects, financed by USAID in Dushanbe. This project helps the Ministry of Health of Tajikistan reform the health system in Tajikistan, including implementation of family medicine (training and retraining doctors), public health information, a new finance system, project management, etc.

What was the purpose of your visit to Boulder?

First at all, I came to the U.S. for my elder daughter's graduation from DePauw University in Indiana. The Stollers (all of them) also came for this celebration. It's also shows their relation to Adiba and for our family in general. We spent a very nice time in DePauw. The ceremony of graduation was very interesting to me and it's quite different from Tajikistan. Then we all came back to Boulder. The Stollers prepared a very interesting big trip through several (six) states. If I wrote about everything that I saw during the trip, it will be more then one article, for sure!

Here are just some of the things that I did here: driving during the trip, camping with bears in the neighborhood (!!?), gambling in Las Vegas (!!?), conversation with a policeman because of high speed driving during the trip (!!?) (Actually, he was very friendly, it was strange to me, but he took into account that we were on vocation) (!!?). Also we went horseback riding!!! I never had seen a horse from so close up!!

Also I will not forget our walking up the mountains. I must also mention that I occasionally met my friend Amparo in Boulder. I did not see her since she visited us in Dushanbe with her sister three years ago. The place where we met her also was very interesting – a salsa club!

One more thing, when we were in Glenwood Springs, we were evacuated because of the fire in the mountains. I was so sorry that people had to move and were not sure if they could go back to their houses. It seems it's a big problem here.

What surprised you most about America and American culture?

I was surprised to see how American people travel, like the whole family, even with so small babies. Also how it is convenient for handicapped people to travel and get around. I should specially notice the good condition of roads and service. Also I was surprised that Americans are so open. I was told in my country that Americans smile at you, but aren't always as friendly as they look. But Americans around me were very friendly. Also how Americans takes care of their health by walking, biking, hiking etc. I don't know – maybe it's more usual in Boulder?

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AYUSA Seeks Host Family for Tajik High School Student By Sandra Wall

I work as a community representative for AYUSA Global Youth Exchange. I am trying to place a Tajik girl with a host family in Boulder. Her name is Nigina Kudratova, she is 17years old, and comes from Dushanbe. We have obtained a school placement for her at New Vista High School.

Nigina is coming to the U.S. on a FLEX scholarship for one academic year. The student's family is responsible for providing pocket money and insurance, the host family provides room and board.

Nigina has studied English for nine years. She is interested in sports, dance, classical and oriental music, and she likes to cook Tajik food. Her future plans are to become a journalist or a lawyer. She lives with her mother

and grandmother in Dushanbe. Her parents are divorced, and her father is a journalist in Moscow.

New Vista High is very interested in having an exchange student from Dushanbe, so we would love to place her as soon as possible, so that there is enough time to get her visa ready. If anyone is interested in hosting Nigina, they can contact me, Sandra Wall, (303)-926-8476.

We place students with families, as well as single parents with children, or couples without children.

The important things are that the host family is interested in cultural exchange, and can provide a safe, loving environment where the student will be treated as part of the family.

If you need any additional info, please contact me. I really appreciate your help, and we hope it can lead to a placement for Nigina.

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