



**WINTER 2008
BOULDER, COLORADO**

AKHBOR: News of Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities

CYBER CAFÉ UPDATE

CYBER CAFÉ ARCHITECT SAM NISHEK VISITS DUSHANBE

The Boulder Dushanbe Cyber Café construction is well under way. On January 28th through the 31st, I was in Dushanbe to review the progress of construction, coordinate future construction and select some finish materials. This winter has been very hard on the people of Tajikistan. There is limited access to electricity and natural gas. Most people have to endure sub-freezing temperatures, even inside their homes. While I



expected to endure the same living conditions on my trip, I was lucky to get a hotel that had electricity and heat. The popular items for sale at the markets were small generators and temporary wood/coal burning stoves. The construction has stopped for the

last month due to the cold and lack of reliable power. RSS, the building contractor is confident, that in the spring, when the site warms up and power resumes, they will have their portion of the work complete by the end of April.

We are shipping a container to Dushanbe with a 5.6 KW photovoltaic backup electrical power system and a solar thermal water heating system. The building is also designed with passive solar heating and cooling principles to allow it to function as a communication and education hub even during grid blackouts. The container will also carry over 1,000 books for the Cyber Café, children's clothes for the Dushanbe Parenting Center, and playground equipment from Ft. Wayne for the Dushanbe Zoo (see related stories on page 2).



The people that I talked to are excited to receive and use this reciprocal gift from the citizens of their sister city, Boulder, Colorado.



EVENTS CALENDAR

March 16 - Navruz/Persian New Year Celebration

Come celebrate the Persian New Year with many fun activities at the Teahouse. For information contact the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse at 303-442-4993 or check our website www.boulder-dushanbe.org

May 22 - Annual Fashion Tea

You are invited to the fifth annual Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities Fashion Tea at the Boulder-Dushanbe Teahouse. This fun event has been a great success over the years and has been an important fundraiser for Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities. More information to follow. Check our website (see above) or call the Teahouse at 303-442-4993.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

TAJK DELEGATION TO VISIT BOULDER

Boulder is looking forward to hosting a U.S. government funded Open World delegation of Tajik public and private sector leaders March 8-15. If you would like to meet our visitors, attend events, and get involved, please contact Sophia Stoller at 303-444-3196.

YOU ARE INVITED TO TOUR DUSHANBE

BDSC is organizing a September, 2008 tour to Central Asia and Dushanbe to celebrate the opening of the Cyber Café for Dushanbe.

The tour plans to visit such Silk Road cities as Samarkand & Bukhara as well as ancient Khujand where many parts of Boulder's beautiful Teahouse were made. Tour plans also include the mountains of Tajikistan and a visit to Boulder's sister city Dushanbe, where we hope to have a cup of tea and surf the web. For



more information please contact Sophia Stoller at 303- 444-3196, sophiastoller@yahoo.com or Mary Axe at mary.axe@colorado.edu.

SEVERE COLD WEATHER IN TAJIKISTAN

This winter is one of the coldest on record in Tajikistan. Because

FIRE BURNS TAJIK STATE MEDICAL UNIVERSITY MAIN BUILDING

From a letter by Phil Simmons MD, leader of Physician-Retraining Program in Dushanbe:

“The Tajik State Medical University in Dushanbe, caught fire and has burnt down. Fortunately no-one was hurt, but the entire building itself is destroyed. The fire was probably started by an electrical fault and began at 1 p.m. 26th December. There is nothing of the building left, some books and equipment have been saved, but I think only a very small proportion as the fire quickly spread.



The Tajik State Medical University during the fire, December 26, 2007.

This is obviously a disaster for the medical school and wider medical system as it is the only medical school in the country where 3000 medical students study (as well as pharmacists and dentists), obviously a massive task to rebuild and restart university



The Tajik State Medical University after the fire.

medical education here.”

To help with the reconstruction efforts, funds can be sent to:
 BDSC/Fire relief
 P.O.Box 4864
 Boulder, CO 80306

FORT WAYNE, INDIANA AND DUSHANBE START DUSHANBE ZOO PROJECT

In May 2006, a group of pen pals in Fort Wayne and Dushanbe started the Dushanbe Zoo Project. One of the Dushanbe pen pals, Liza, was seriously injured at the Dushanbe Zoo. Fort Wayne students wanted to help Liza and improve the zoo. After much work, these students joined together with Black Pine Animal Park in Indiana and received a \$75,000 grant from American Association of Museums to bring about improvements to the Dushanbe Zoo. The Fort Wayne pen pals will also be building a Tajik Teahouse at Black Pine Animal Park. Congratulations to these hard working thoughtful students. For more information contact Roger Kovacs at rkovacs@khujiand.org.

BOARD MEMBER LETO QUARLES' VISIT TO DUSHANBE

Dr. Quarles is a Boulder-based Family Physician who recently traveled to Tajikistan with members of several humanitarian and professional groups. She and her fellow physicians spent time in various parts of Tajikistan working with Tajik physicians. They visited clinics and participated in training programs and seminars. The people she met touched her greatly. She writes, “. . . Just people, ordinary and imperfect and beautiful all the same, sitting and talking and laughing together and sharing a cup of tea. That is the simple wisdom of the Sister Cities ideal, people-to-people “citizen diplomacy”... Please read more of her reflections on our website: www.boulder-dushanbe.org

DUSHANBE PARENTING PLACE CENTER

Some 20 years ago, Boulder physician Dr. Bob McFarland co-founded the Boulder Parenting Place “to relieve isolation, reduce the stress of parenting, and prevent child abuse and neglect by providing a place where families can receive support and education.” Aware of the low incomes, high unemployment, and high infant mortality rate in Dushanbe, Dr. McFarland convened a committee early in 2005, to explore the possibilities of establishing a Parenting Place in Dushanbe. Dr. Dilorom Asimova , a Dushanbe physician now residing in Aurora, is a member of the committee.

In November of 2005, Dr. Asimova visited her former hometown and succeeded in founding the Dushanbe Parenting Center. The Center’s first task was to conduct a needs assessment survey. Based on its findings, the following goals were established: (1) to provide prenatal and postnatal counseling as well as parenting skills information, (2) to visit pregnant women and new mothers, and (3) to render medical and psychological assistance to families. Dr. Nazira Khojeyva has served as the Center’s Director for the past two years; other staff include an assistant director and two visiting nurses.

The Center has been remarkably successful in working to meet the needs of a heretofore underserved population in our sister city. To date over 150 mothers and teenagers have received medical treatment, healthy baby counseling, and assistance in coping with stress resulting from lack of employment, family pressures, health dilemmas, and the absence of spouses due to labor migration.

To help continue the essential work of this fledgling organization, tax-deductible contributions may be mailed to: Dushanbe Parenting, Wells Fargo Bank, 1242 Pearl St., Boulder, CO 80302

VOLUNTEER HELP NEEDED! DATABASE ADMINISTRATOR

SKILLS: basic database user skills (no programming required); knowledge of spreadsheets, word processing and mail-merge very helpful; detail-oriented

DUTIES: enter membership and donor information (name, contact info, dues payments, donations); provide mailing lists, mailing labels, email lists as requested (6-8 times/year); generate membership packets (membership cards, coupons, welcome letter) and mail them out (mostly late fall to January, after membership events, and rarely throughout the year)

TIME COMMITMENT: 1-2 hours/month (7-8/month during fall/winter renewal or after special renewal events), 1 hour per mailing list request

TRAINING: 1-3 hours depending on database, spreadsheet, mail-merge skills

For more information contact: Sophia Stoller - sophiastoller@yahoo.com

BDSC WEBSITE

Visit our web site. Photos of the Cyber Café construction are regularly posted to the BDSC website along with more information about our organization, projects, programs and activities in Dushanbe.

www.boulder-dushanbe.org

BDSC NEWSLETTER VOLUNTEER STAFF

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WELCOME TO DUSHANBE STUDENT!

Malika Musoeva, a student from Dushanbe, is attending the ESL program at Teikyo Loretta Heights Univ. in Denver until April 30th. Former Boulder High School student Kristof Richmond was hosted by her family in Dushanbe in 1991 during a Boulder-Dushanbe Student Exchange. Her brother Sandjar stayed with the Richmond family in the Summer of 1997 as part of the return exchange. Welcome, Malika!

CONTACTING BOULDER-DUSHANBE SISTER CITIES

General information: info@boulder-dushanbe.org
Donations: treasurer@boulder-dushanbe.org
Membership: membership@boulder-dushanbe.org
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If you received email notice of our newsletter please feel free to pass the newsletter on to others who might be interested. If you are not a current member consider joining our organization.

To receive future newsletters, event notices, invitations, and to support our efforts, send a check for a \$30 basic membership to:

Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities - Membership
P.O. Box 4864
Boulder, CO 80306

To make a contribution to the Cyber Café Gift project, send a check made out to:

Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities - Cyber Café
P.O. Box 4864
Boulder, CO 80306

Please include name, address, phone and email address with all correspondence. Information is kept confidential by BDSC.