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***BECHA!
SPRING!***
By Andrew Roach



We must thank the ringmaster from the circus. Several weeks ago in a performance he said his goodbye to winter and welcomed spring. Spring has sprung, although for the past three days the weather has again turned cold, windy, and at times very snowy, our yearning for spring has not abated. Our appetite for activity has been whetted by the pleasant weather, which has allowed us to explore the city in comfort. Our coats have come off, and the walking shoes have come on.

As the weather warmed two weekends ago, we took off for jaunts across the city. One area of special interest for several of us has been the Moskva River. Although flanked by a very busy street, a stroll along the river is a pleasant weekend activity.

We have visited the river several times, which has allowed us to see the White House, the Kremlin, and huge statue to Peter the Great which stands in the middle of the river. We found that we were not the only people to stand gawking at the statue of Peter manning the helm of a great sailing vessel floating over 8 smaller ships. In fact, cars were stopping in the middle of the road so that people could get out and take pictures.

We were also not the only people to be enjoying the weather either. A

Global Citizen
By Jamie Rayman



As I came here, to Russia, I was unsure of what I would find. I didn't know much about the country, except what I remembered from social studies classes in middle school. I had, and still have, a vague understanding of communism and an even vaguer idea of how the Soviet system had shaped the lives of the Russian people. I knew that there was a Revolution in 1917 and that the Bolsheviks overthrew the tsar. And that made sense to me because the American Revolution, which was clearer in my mind and nearer to the hearts of my American social studies teachers, seemed to be about a similar problem - throwing off the chains of an unjust monarchy. I had a vague understanding of what that Revolution must have been like; I tried to couch it in terms of the American Revolution.

All I really knew before coming here were some vague ideas; all of them based on catch phrases or stereotypes. I knew, however, that for being a "European" country Russia was exotic by American standards.

So here I am now, in Moscow, and I can say that the first month and a half was exotic. Not in a glamorous way, but in an I've-never-done-this/I-can't-believe-this-is-how-it-works-here kind of way. I was astounded to see that

great number of people were out walking along the river and enjoying themselves. Unfortunately, the great amount of water from the melting snow has made some of the parks virtual lakes, and so recreation is not yet possible in these parks, though some of the dry paths are used for quick games of badminton between mothers and daughters.

Later in the week we spent an afternoon at VDNKH, a sprawling former exposition center for technology that now houses a myriad of electronic shops. The center is huge and we spent a warm afternoon lounging by the gold fountains (which, unfortunately, are not yet in use) watching youngsters rollerblade by. A wonderful view of Moscow can be had here from a large ferris-wheel. The best way to see it is from an open car, which gives you visual access to everything nearby and far away.

Although it has turned cold and gray again, I can only think that this will be temporary and we will again be enjoying outdoor Moscow shortly. I hope so, because Moscow experienced unencumbered by coats is surely the best way to see the city.

everyone lives in apartment buildings, I was frightened to make transactions with non-English speaking people at the outdoor market. I was surprised to see stray dogs roaming the streets and riding the metro, and impressed at the amount of hard physical labor that goes into washing clothes by hand in the bathtub. Yes, at first I wrinkled my nose at new foods, new smells, new clothing styles, new colors and textures.

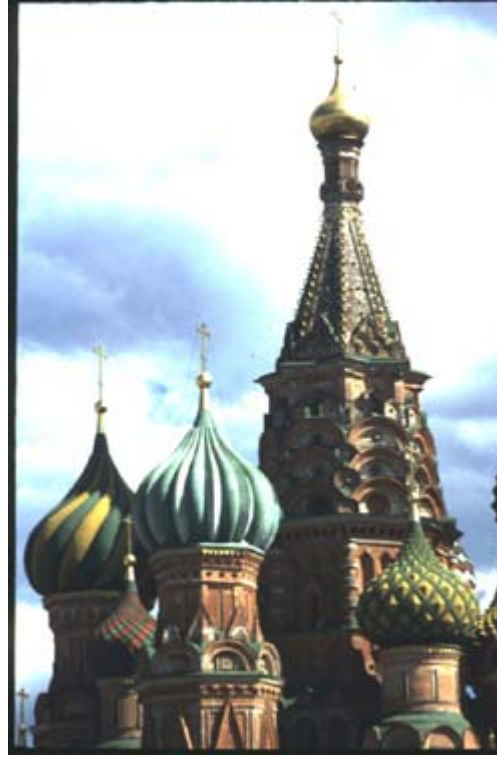
But now, after 3 months, these characteristics of daily life that initially were such a surprise and an inconvenience seem trivial as I begin to know this country better. And really, things aren't so different here as they are at home. People go about their business, maybe they read more books and we watch more TV, but they kiss on escalators, so do Americans; they walk their dogs and their babies, so do Americans. They throw snowballs, eat chocolate, write letters, have boyfriends or girlfriends, and like to have parties just like we do.

Being in Russia has changed me. I still don't know much about the politics that run thick between our countries. Perhaps more importantly, I have made new friends. Along with new friends, I have learned new customs, new skills and found a resilience within myself that I didn't realize existed before I came to Russia. In a month I hope to bring home with me some mailing addresses, some recipes, some Matryoshka dolls, some Russian songs, and a sense of myself as a more global citizen.





The statue of Peter the Great on the Moskva river .
Dr. Bruening took this picture last year when it was still under construction.



St. Basil cathedral on the Red Square
cr.: T. Bruening



*A Visit to Monsanto
By Erik Kelling*



During our time in Russia we have visited several companies and organizations. Recently we visited the American company, [Monsanto](#), located in Moscow. The company develops products such as crop protection chemicals, bST, human medications, and recently hybrid seeds.

The agricultural division in Moscow currently represents 80 jobs. Their main focus is Agricultural Business in Russia. Some of their tasks include selling chemicals and seeds to state, collective and private farms, selling and leasing special equipment to farmers, and also

*Changes
By Bethany Nelson*



When we first arrived in Russia, none of us knew what to expect from this program or from each other. I think we were at a slight disadvantage by not knowing each other before we came, because we had to adjust to a new environment and to one other. Fortunately, our group of nine meshed together well. Initially, we had Russian language class for four hours a day and went sightseeing in our free time. This didn't give us much time to get to know each other. It was like our lives were in warp speed and we were just hanging on for the ride. Eventually, things calmed

running test plots where farmers can get a first hand look at the new types of crops and chemicals on the market. Monsanto's sales representatives who work in four of the five regions in Russia cover this area.

There are two primary chemicals that Monsanto sells in Russia. The first, and most popular, is the non-specific herbicide, Round-up. Round-up must be applied before planting, unless you have crops like Round-up ready soybeans or corn, which are resistant to the chemical. Unfortunately, these types of resistant seeds will not be available in Russia until 2001 or 2002. Last year in Russia, Monsanto sold a million liters of Round-up to farms at a price of 10 dollars per liter. The second chemical is Harness; this chemical is a herbicide that is used for corn, beans and sunflowers. This is a post-emergent herbicide, which means that it is applied after the crop has started growing.

There are many challenges for operating an American Company like Monsanto in Russia. The biggest problem in Russia is getting farmers to change from their old forms of technology to a newer, more modern form of technology. There is also a lack of equipment and education about new technologies. Other challenges include pressure from other, similar chemical competitors like Novartis and American Cyanamid.

The future looks bright for Monsanto, however. They are expanding their hold on the chemical and seed sector of Russian agriculture. This year Monsanto is planning to develop business in Western Siberia. Hopefully, selling this new technology in Siberia will improve crops and benefit all of Russian agriculture.

down and we had time to get better acquainted.

Now we have been virtually inseparable for almost four months. Oddly enough, we have all adopted habits and quirks from each other. You could almost say that we are turning into one another.

We sometimes talk alike, act alike, and since a recent head-shaving extravaganza, some of us look alike. Those of us that opted to not shave our heads are beginning to look something like overgrown Chia Pets. Not having a haircut for four months will have that effect.

Nonetheless, we're having a good time together. If we're not wrestling in the hallway or dancing around to our music, we're finding other ways to liven things up. Although we have our disagreements, we depend on each other more and more as time goes by.

As our stay in Moscow rapidly draws to a close, I can look back and see that we have all changed in many ways. Our trip has been memorable and enjoyable, not only because of the cultural and personal experiences we have had, but also because of the friendships gained.

We all came as strangers, but leave as family. Regardless of what happens when we return to Penn State, we will always have one thing in common - an incredible experience.



Day by Day Schedule



Apr 5 Visited American Chamber of Commerce with the Russian

By Dax Fleckenstein




- Apr 1 Dax, Bethany, Andrew, Lincoln and Jamie hung out at VDNKH Exposition Center. Samra, Samantha and Marcus visited Vietnamese black market.
- Apr 2 Visit to Monsanto with Yulia and Ksyusha. Russian class with Lidia in the afternoon.
- Apr 3 Visited the outdoor CD market and bought music and movies. Later watched "Something About Mary".
- Apr 4 EASTER. Dax, Jamie, Bethany, Sylvan, Samantha, Joe, and Samra went to church in the morning. Made supper and ate with our Russian and foreign friends.

students. Dax, Bethany, Samra, Lincoln, and Marcus went to Great Canadian Bagel.

- Apr 6 Russian class with Vera in the morning. Everyone went downtown to the GUM and to Arbat Street.
- Apr 7 Class with Marcus. Dax, Andrew, Bethany, Lincoln, and Jamie went to the GUM again to find "killer outfits" and then had supper at a Russian café.
- Apr 8 Class with Marcus.
- Apr 9 Went to Ismaylovsky Park shopping for souvenirs with Svetlana and Natasha. Joe and Samantha went to Labamba's to dance and everyone else watched "Pulp Fiction."
- Apr 10 Dr. Bruening arrived. Dax, Eric, Lincoln, Jamie, Andrew, and Bethany went sightseeing with Ksyusha at the war museum and later went to Ksusha's flat to eat. Joe and Samantha went out for dinner.
- Apr 11 Class with Marcus. Took Russian classmates out for lunch at TGI Friday followed by a cocktail party.



 E-mail us your questions/suggestions:
[Dr. Thomas Bruening \(Project coordinator\)](mailto:Dr.ThomasBruening@psu.edu)

*Moscow Weather Report
 By Lincoln Rodgers*



Well Dax's last weather report was right; spring had arrived in Moscow. Over the past two weeks the melt water from the snow slowly

drained away and the view went from snow everywhere to a mix of bare ground and mud. But, now it feels like we have arrived right back at winter again. The temperatures have plummeted from

Class Schedule

Mo/Thu	Communication course Thomas Bruening Marcus Twyford 9 am to 4 pm
Tue	Russian Language 9 am to 12:30 pm
Fri	Various field trips

around sixty to near thirty degrees Fahrenheit over this past week. We have a theory; we think that the past week and a half of warm weather may have comprised both spring and summer in Moscow.

We have all gone back into the winter mode; the heavy coats have come back out and our T-shirts are back in the closet. Russian winters have definitely earned their reputation. It's not that this one has been particularly severe, it's just the duration. The coldest we saw was -11 F. Here we are in April watching the snow fall again!

Personally, I have enjoyed being here this winter. I like the winters at home and I have appreciated the chance compare them to a Russian winter. I think that being through a winter here helps me understand some aspects of this country and its people better.

