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Fun Festivities

Activities

By LeeAnn Tice

Weekend after weekend, we are taken around Moscow seeing site after site. This weekend was no exception. Early Saturday morning we were off again. Numerous metro and trolleybus stops later we arrived along side of a highway with Ramon, Kostya, and Vanya (our guides) leading the way. We walked to a wooded park area and found ourselves amongst several hundred people, young and old. Immediately music could be heard from a big stage entertaining a small crowd. Directly in front, the snowboarders were putting on a show, and everything in-between was crammed with skiers, sleders, and more snowboarders. But with all this entertainment, one show took first prize.

Walking down a path we noticed an interesting game. We all stood and watched for a while as my eyes opened wide. I pleaded and pleaded with Barbie to join me in this game until she finally said yes to Tug of War - on ice! When it was our turn, they strapped belts around our waists with a metal link chain connecting us. Our goal was to drag the opponent across the metal bar lying on the ground. Ready...Set...GO! The chain went taunt. We both tried our hardest. We pulled and tugged, fell down and were cheered on. In the end I won the tug of war but Barbie could tackle the hardest. We stood up to be greeted with a crowd of Russians standing three deep. Thinking back to that day now, the only people playing this tug of war game were young boys. I guess two Penn State gals can really put on a show.

After that fine event I was taken off on an excursion with another Russian friend,

Fortunes of Forefathers

Culture

By Daniel Moore

Within the Kremlin Walls lies a steel vault with a collection of relics from past Russian Tsars and Tsarinas. The Armory was constructed in 1511 as a court workshop for the repair and reproduction of armaments and as a storehouse for ceremonial armor and other firearms. The Armory soon thereafter became the center of Russia's artistic production, later employing German, British and Czechoslovakian artistic masters in the seventeenth century to serve the Tsars. After centuries of plundering and rearranging, few of the Armory's original possessions remain, but the collection has been greatly augmented overall with antiques from the sixteenth through nineteenth centuries.

My favorite aspect of the museum was Coach Hall, home to a dozen or so stagecoaches from the seventeenth and eighteenth century. Their elaborate engineering and equally intricate aesthetics fuse to form utilitarian masterpieces; some so large no team of horses was ever assembled to pull them. The coach was a symbol of not only wealth but also nobility in Russia, and even the noble were not allowed to have their coaches pulled by more than two horses on weekdays, four horses on holidays and six horses for weddings. Only the Tsar or the Tsarina could, by a 1682 edict, be pulled by any number of horses they so chose. Even more majestic than the coaches are the sleds - winter carriers on runners and upholstered completely in luxurious furs. One slede in Coach Hall sat eight people, two pairs of four facing each other in a spacious and completely enclosed cabin with pure crystal doors. The sled looked as if it would take at

Alex, and a few of his pals. Running around the snowy hillsides reminded me of my home in northern Tioga County. Together we ran, or rather slid, all the way down the side of the hill, and before I knew it, a stream appeared and we took one leap and jumped across it together. Climbing up the other side of the bank, I turned around to see a small outside Russian wedding taking place. The bride was dressed in white gown with a fur coat draped over her shoulders, and her handsome groom was dressed in dark brown pants, a fur coat, and matching fur hat. The bride and groom were walking together, and they stopped just long enough to smile and look into each others eyes as she picked up her white dress and crossed the small arched wooden bridge that linked the two banks of the stream together. (sigh)

After returning to the group, we found that they had borrowed a small sled from a family, and we all took turns riding down the hill. On my turn I feared for my life. To the left of me a skier was whipping past, to the right a snowboarder wiped out, and I almost took out the little kids standing at the bottom like little bowling pins. Believe me I gladly let the next person take their turn down the hill. After all this excitement we all settled down to watch a break dancing competition on the big stage out front.



Danielle makes a wish as she blows out her twenty birthday candles.

least half a dozen Clydesdales to pull but looks can be deceiving. However, I wouldn't mind taking her for a test run to find out.

Not all of the Kremlin's antiques lie within its many museums. One of Russia's Tsars is preserved right on the sidewalk for the passerby to see. No, he is not Ivan the Terrible or Mikhail Feodorovich. He is the Tsar of Bells. The Tsar of Bells, the largest bell in the World, comes from a great lineage of famous bells, each one earning the title of Tsar before bequeathing it to its progeny. The grandfather of the present Tsar was cast in 1599 and weighed in at 33.5 tons. It died in a fire, breaking and passing on its legacy to its only son. The next Tsar, crafted in 1654, weighed in at 94 tons before cracking in another fire and passing on its title to an unborn son. His unborn son sprang to life miraculously twenty-four years later, its mothers, Ivan and Mikhail Matorin, laboring for two straight years before giving birth to the 201 ton baby boy, named The Tsar of Bells. His story is a sad one, as he never had a chance to ring, cracking after an inferno enveloped his home. The townspeople attempted to put out the fire using water from the river, but the attempt cooled the baby bell to quickly and he cracked, forever flawing his once perfect parabolic shape. His future was so bright. Scientists have calculated that his ring would have been heard for well over twenty miles and would have likely caused his ringers to go deaf.

Thanks again to our Russian friends for their hospitality and generosity. We have seen a great deal of Russian culture because of them and look forward to excursions like folk dancing and the ballet Swan Lake.

On Sunday night a big American feast was prepared in honor of Danielle's Birthday. The main meal was spaghetti with red sauce, cheesy garlic bread, and tropical punch kool-aid. Everything went off without a hitch and even a few Russians showed up to join us. But the fun started when we brought out the cake lit with 20 candles and banana splits. Danielle made a wish and blew all 20 candles out with one big breath. All in all the evening was very enjoyable!

February Forecast: Flu

Weather

By Suzanne Bruening

Suzanne's Weather Chart:

DAYS	C.		F.	
	L	H	L	H
MON. <i>Feb. 14</i>	-4	0	25	32
TUES. <i>Feb. 15</i>	-7	-5	19	23
WED. <i>Feb. 16</i>	-7	-5	19	23
THUR. <i>Feb. 17</i>	-14	-6	7	21
FRI. <i>Feb. 18</i>	-8	-5	18	23

This week's temperatures in degrees Centigrade and Fahrenheit

The recent weather in Moscow has been quite interesting. Due to high temperatures, (Monday 32 degrees F.) and too much group sharing, we have been experiencing a "widespread outbreak" of influenza. The flu mutated through nine of us. So much so, we have gone through 5 bags of cough drops, 8 packages of mini-tissues, and one shot in the rear. In class, there is a chorus of sniffles, coughs, and other strange noises too foreign to repeat. Despite our internal weaknesses, recent snow has caused much excitement allowing us to enjoy cross-country skiing. The recommended temperatures for optimum skiing are 28 degrees F but often we find



Part of our group just released from quarantine out for a ski to stretch their legs.

Four Fabulous Females

People

By Genie Szczesniak

We'd been in Moscow for just over three hours when we first met our new Russian classmates. The impressions they made on us that night over pierogies and pancakes (homemade) were lasting and true. After the welcome dinner, we reflected on our new home in a conversation dominated by thoughts of our new friends. Words like "beautiful" and "intelligent" frequented the conversation. Yet the overwhelming impression was best summed up by Christin, who exclaimed, "We are so lucky! They are so nice." Since that night we've come to appreciate their charms only further. Without their guidance and camaraderie, our experience thus far would be incomplete. Here we'll begin to introduce you to "our ten girls": the people to whom we owe our good times here in Moscow.

All of the girls study full time at MSAU and due to the differences in the Russian educational system, each girl's five years in the university make her qualified as an agricultural engineer, a teacher and an interpreter at graduation. All of the girls were also participants in last year's INTAG program.

Yulia Semenova is twenty-one years old and

ourselves skiing everyday no matter what the temperature is. We are determined to enjoy this Moscow winter.



Dr. Pat Whittington holds a cabbage at a joint stock farm.

Friendly Faculty

Education

By Barbie Berrang

On February 7, 2000, a man steps into the classroom ready to teach 20 eager students about International Web Design. He has had previous experience teaching international students, but this time is going to be different. First of all, this class is taking place in Russia. Secondly, he will be teaching both Russian and American students at the same time. But he is ready to face any challenges with a positive spirit. Dr. Pat Whittington received his bachelor's degree in Agricultural Economics at Ohio State University where he met his wife, Susie. They moved to Moscow, Idaho in 1991, where Dr. Pat earned both of his masters degrees in Agricultural Education and Education Administration and his doctorate in Higher Education and Administration at the University of Idaho. In 1995, he moved his wife and three daughters to State College, Pennsylvania. Dr. Pat received the position at Penn State

enjoys reading historical books, canoeing and traveling. She is separate from most of the other girls in that she also studies part time at Economy University and will add "economist" to her list of qualifications upon graduation. "I want to find a job which can give me a lot of skills, communication and active work..." she says, "where I'll be able to use my knowledge." Speaking about her experiences in last year's program, she comments, "At first it was difficult for us to communicate, but than we were emancipated in communication and could speak fluently. The lessons were passing in playing form. We could imagine ourselves in different roles - roles that differ from Russian lessons."



Yulia Semenova and Ksenia Koblik

Ksenia Koblik (Ksusha) is also twenty-one. Ksusha claims farming as her favorite activity and cows as her favorite animal. She also enjoys horseback riding, a skill she was learned this year at horseback riding school. Ksusha loves music; she dabbles in playing the guitar, piano and harmonica. "Oh yes," she adds, "and I love to sing in my car because I have no music there." Ksusha dreams of working in the agricultural sphere where she hopes to develop agricultural relationships between countries. "I liked last year very much. It was the best time in my life," she exclaims, "I have found many good friends, and one of them is my best friend. His name is Erik. I miss all of them very much."

Svetlana Dudarevo (twenty-one yrs of age) studies with Yulia Semenova at both MSAU and Economy University. As a result she will graduate as an economist and manager, along with the titles given her at MSAU. She enjoys reading, cooking, playing volleyball

University as Assistant to the Dean, Office of Undergraduate Education in the College of Agricultural Sciences, and it is this university that sent him to teach in Moscow's winter climate.

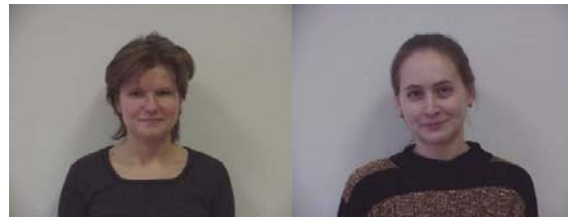
Dr. Pat finds teaching within another cultural to be very exciting. He enjoys the challenge of teaching highly technical computer applications, and he appreciates the motivation of the students. The English skills of the Russian students impress Dr. Pat most of all, and they make the class run much more smoothly - especially considering that none of the Americans are very familiar with the Russian language. In all of the exercises, each Russian student is paired with an American student because Dr. Pat feels that this is beneficial for both the Russians and the Americans. The Russians are able to work one on one, getting practice using the computers and asking questions, while the Americans have more opportunities to interact with the Russians and learn about their culture.

Dr. Pat looks forward to more international opportunities like this in the future - he enjoys the chance to provide the Russian students with computer knowledge and experience. Seeing their creative sides within their web design as they learn the programs is exciting for him. Of course, next time he would like to bring his whole family.



Penn State girls enjoy an afternoon of cross country skiing.

and dancing, though she claims her special talent is singing in the shower. Svetlana describes her experiences with INTAG last year, saying, "All of us were in the seventh heaven! ... From the very beginning of my childhood I dreamed to have a job dealing with communication with foreigners. From my point of view, if you want to do business with foreign people you must know not only their own language but their mentality as well. So I am sure that this program helps me to reach my goals, helps me to know American culture, American people, their character."



Svetlana Dudarevo and Svetlana Kisleva

Svetlana Kisleva enjoys cooking, dancing, knitting and different types of needlework. She speaks fondly of the friends she has made throughout the INTAG program, grateful for their help in teaching her "useful things" and about American culture. "Due to the contacts between countries there is an exchange of experience of teaching agriculture and other things which are very important for Russia especially," she comments. " ... I am very thankful to the people who conduct the program. As for me, I believe that the project is an important step I am taking in my life."

Our girls are incredibly special, chosen from all the students in their grade to participate in our program. As fate would have it, the smartest and the most apt are also the kindest and the greatest friends. "We are so lucky!" Be sure to check the next issue for a continuation featuring more of our girls.

Pictures courtesy of:

**Meg Bruening
Danielle Cowden**

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