

Newsletter

for People to People Europe

January, 1997

Dear Friends,

Another People to People year has ended. A lot has been accomplished in all chapters such as homestay, meetings and letter writing. With the meetings in both Pécs Hungary and Prague PTP Europe is on the move towards new goals. We are setting up new priorities, committees and with assistance from PTP International we have good chances to succeed in promote existing chapters and develop new programs. On behalf of the Board I would like to express our appreciation for the efforts last year and wish everybody a successful 1997.

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Lars Poignant
secretary

Europe Revisited

Fifteen years ago Melinda Langworthy participated in People to People High School Student Ambassador Program. She went along with 30 other American high school students to Europe for one month. She now lives in Europe with her husband and son for a longer period of time. This are her reflections on her trip as a high school girl.

During the summer of 1982, I had the opportunity to go to northern Europe as a People to People High School Student Ambassador. As a typical teenager in the United States, my world was small and centered around school. I worried about things like math tests and who would ask me to the school dance. Freedom meant having a drivers license. Then one day a teacher recommended me to be a People to People High School Student Ambassador. A what? I must admit that at the time the most appealing aspect of this program was the chance to go to Europe for a month with thirty other high school students and *without* my parents.

My first European experience was every bit as fun as I anticipated it would be and more. About 15 of us from Spokane, Washington--my home town--flew to Washington DC where we met up with the other half of our group from Pennsylvania. Visiting my nation's capital for the first time was a great experience in itself, and left me wishing I had paid more attention in Civics class. After our 3-day orientation, which consisted of meeting with congressmen and being briefed on current domestic and foreign affairs, we were on our way to England, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Russia.

Half of our time was spent in hotels in the big cities, and half with homestay families. The big cities were very exciting with so many famous tourist attractions,

but few experiences in life are more valuable than meeting people from foreign lands and learning to respect and appreciate their culture. While I have long since forgotten most of the churches I saw in Europe--and they *were* impressive--I will never forget the families who opened their homes to me.

My best memory of my homestay family in England is the daily tea served promptly at 16:00. To look at the table you would think we were expecting the Queen. Tea was served from an ornate, antique china tea pot; and an assortment of very colorful and delicate "biscuits" that looked too pretty to eat were elegantly displayed on a silver tray. All this was a lot to take in for Americans, who are known to drink milk straight from the carton.

In Denmark I stayed with a family in the country and I felt as if I have gone back in time about 100 years. I recall going with my "homestay sister" to get milk. She brought a bucket with her and we rode bicycles about a kilometer to this small barn which housed a big milk tank. The procedure was as follows: you dip your bucket into the milk tank, place a check mark next to your name on the chart on a wall to indicate that you took milk, then you place your bucket of milk on the handlebars of your bicycle and



ride back home. Amazing! I could not believe it was all on the honor system. And she didn't even fill her bucket to the top. I still chuckle when I think about how such a system would go over in the US.

Because of the Communist government and the "Cold War" between the US and Soviet Union, we did not stay with families in Russia. In fact, we were kept on a very short leash. Every time we went somewhere by bus, we always took the same route. "What is it they don't want us to see?" I wondered. Still, my trip to Russia was an eye-opening experience. We traveled from city to city by train and they could not hide the poverty and harsh living conditions of the farmers. I saw for myself that not everyone enjoys the comfortable life I have with luxuries and freedoms they could only dream about. Evidence of their oppression showed in the sad expressions on the faces of everyone I passed on the street. The guard at our hotel entrance, armed with an automatic weapon, was a harsh reminder that the freedom I had taken for granted as a US citizen and been temporarily taken away.

As I see it, the purpose of People to People is to bring the world together one friendship at a time. My roommate, Lisa, and I had such an experience in Leningrad. We met three Russian guys in our hotel lobby who were curious about American girls, but since they spoke very *very* little English, conversation was difficult. Later, they called our room and we tried to tell them our room number, but again we had a communication breakdown. So while one of them kept us talking, the other two went through the hotel putting their ears up to each door until they heard our voices and that's how they found us. After a few minutes of attempting conversation, we realized it was a futile effort. Luckily, Lisa and I had brought along our high school yearbooks and we were able to show them what the life of a typical American teenager was like through pictures (and a little bit of charades). We spent the evening laughing and sharing and, in the end, we connected with these people. A few months later I received a letter from one of them named Igor. I still have his letter but regret that I never had it translated into English.

I left Russia with fond memories of these new friends and others we met later in Moscow and I remember thinking, "So these people are our enemy who pose the greatest threat to US national security? These are the people we have our nuclear warheads aimed at?" Maybe our top government officials should go on a People to People exchange program.

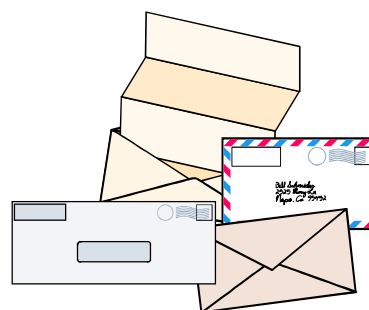
I would not have predicted that after 14 years, the collapse of Communism, the end of the Cold War and a name change, I would find myself returning to St. Petersburg. Last spring I once again went on a PTP exchange, but this time we stayed with a host family and experienced a day in the life of a Russian family. They were warm and wonderful people who bent over backwards to make us feel like honored guests. In fact, everywhere we went in St. Petersburg my family

was given the red carpet treatment. They also made the best tea in the world!

Someone recently asked me how my PTP experience changed my life. Looking back I can see how it has made a *big* difference in my life. It has made me truly appreciate my own country with the freedom and comfortable standard of living I enjoy, and now when I hear the American national anthem, I notice that I am the only one with a tear in my eye.

It has brought out my spirit of adventure. After school I moved to Dallas, Texas, though I had never been there before. There I met my husband and we had our son. A few years later, we thought it would be fun to live in Colorado so we moved to a town we had never been to. A couple years after that we heard about an opportunity to move to "somewhere in Europe" for one or two years. We didn't hesitate--we jumped at what we thought of as the chance of a lifetime. And that is how I ended up in Europe. First in Stockholm for one year and now in Switzerland for another year.

It has increased my desire to meet people from foreign countries and learn more about their country and culture. This past summer we had the privilege of hosting a family from Estonia on a PTP exchange who were traveling outside their country for the first time! And on two other occasions last year we have played host to people visiting from other countries. Our hearts and our home will always be open to international guests. That is, after all, what PTP is all about.





European Conference

Gliwice, Poland

May 16-19

First Announcement and Call for Participation

We have the pleasure to invite members and friends of PTPI to participate in the forthcoming People to People International European Conference that will take place in Gliwice, Poland May 16-19, 1997.

Tentative programme (aimed at maintaining a balance between business, sightseeing and having fun).

Friday, May 16

Registration, Gliwice sightseeing, evening reception.

Saturday, May 17

1. Speech of a noted international personality (former Polish Prime Minister or former Foreign Minister)
2. PTP Europe General Assembly (open to guests from overseas) including:
 - Election of PTPE Board
 - Secretary General Annual Report
 - Amendment of People to People Europe by-laws.
3. PTPI report
4. PTPI keynoter's presentation on a topic such as "PTPI: Towards the New Millennium"
5. Lunch
6. Three parallel one-hour workshops or panel meetings on
 - How to organize successful homestays
 - How to establish and consolidate a chapter

- Intercultural and other PTPE activities and opportunities

7. One hour plenary meeting to summarize results of panel meetings
8. Public meeting on 1-2 topics of broad general interest (e.g. conflict resolution)
9. Dinner
10. Social event

Sunday, May 18

1. Board of Trustees' meeting
2. Chapter reports
3. Unfinished PTP business and committee or specialized meetings
4. Half-day excursion (probably medieval silver and zinc mine)
5. Farewell banquet

Monday, May 19.

Gliwice sightseeing (for those arriving late on Friday).

A choice of optional one-day trips:

Auschwitz-Birkenau - former Nazis concentration camp,

Czestochowa - a spiritual capital of Poland and world famous pilgrimage place famous for its monastery housing miraculous image of the Black Madonna,

Krakow - medieval town, former capital of Poland,

Wieliczka - the biggest and most interesting salt mine in Europe,

Kalwaria Zebrzydowska - a pilgrimage place in the ht highlands and Wadowice - pope John Paul II birthplace

Beskidy Mountains - hiking and ski resort open-air museum and ethnic art workshop (laces)

Private visits, business, homestay etc. or departure from Gliwice.

The registration fee will be approximately \$110. It includes all meals from Friday through Monday breakfast (three breakfasts, two lunches, welcome reception, dinner and farewell banquet), coffee breaks, attendance to all workshops and plenary sessions, bus transfers, social event, and a tourist programme (Gliwice sightseeing on Friday and a half-day excursion on Sunday afternoon).

We offer a choice of accommodation:

Type of accommodation	Price per person and night
student hostel or youth hostel	\$ 4
university hotel (singles and doubles with a bathroom)	\$ 9-16
hotel of different categories	\$ 20-60

The fee for optimal one-day tours includes transportation, English-speaking guides and

Please feel invited to participate to our conference! If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact the organizers. The best way of contacting me is using e-mail. I will be happy to answer all your questions. On the reverse you'll find some information on Gliwice an how to reach it. I am looking forward to seeing you all in our beautiful city at the 1997 PTPI European Conference.

Tadeusz Grabowiecki

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entrance fees and varies from \$15-50 depending on the distance and entrance fees. The fee does not include lunch during the tour, which can be purchased for additional \$10.

There is a possibility of staying a couple of days after the conference in Gliwice. Due to our limited capacity it is strongly recommended to contact us will in advance.

We also offer a choice of post-conference tours around Poland from 3 up to 10 days. More details on those tours will be published in our Second Call for Participation.

Although this is basically a European Conference, we look forward to having guests from all over the world. There are no restrictions on the numbers of participants. The more people from different places, countries and continents comes the better the conference will be. Don not hesitate! Make a bookmark in your calendar for PTPI European Conference right now! Success of the conference depends on your participation.

In February we will publish and send to all chapters a second Call for Participation. You will find there more information on the conference together with a registration form. Ask your chapter president for a copy of the Call. You can also find the latest information the conference at our WWW homepage at he URL address:
<http://www.polsl.gliwice.pl/ngo/ptpe>.

Reports and Messages

World Wide Conference in Newport Beach California

At the World Wide Conference in September Europe was well represented. The Conference was also part of the celebrations of the 40th anniversary. At both the meeting of the Board of Directors and the Board of Trustees PTP Europe presented its chapters, activities and future plans.

PTP Europe meeting in Prague

I early November 15 members met for three days. The meeting was initiated in order to discuss items of interest for PTP Europe. Invited were any chapter official or member with interest for PTP activities. Thanks to all participants. The meeting minutes are included in the Newsletter. After the meeting PTP joined parts of the annual conference of AUDEM (Alliance of Universities for Democracy). A meeting was held with Prof. David Hake President AUDEM.

Committee work

As PTP Europe will increase the efforts for new programs and activities two new committees have been formed; Resource development and Public Relations. They currently consist of Olga Ganzen (Estonia) and Justyna Dziurma (Poland) respectively Justyna and Ruth Weber (Switzerland). They will give reports at the Annual Conference in Gliwice. Please feel free to contact them if you want to participate or help in their efforts.

European activities in ON TRACK.

Each month PTPI sends out an issue of *ON TRACK*. Chapters are welcome to submit materials to PTPI.

New chapter: Sofia - Welcome!

Please join in the greeting of PTP Sofia. Mr Peter Andonov is president (address below). If not sooner we hope to meet some of the Bulgarian members in Gliwice.



International Youth Leadership Conference

In September the next PTP Youth Leadership Conference will take place in Washington DC.

The two previous conferences have been quite successful and the participating students have appreciated the program. Students are welcome to participate in the conference. More information will be sent out later. Earlier years some European chapters have sponsored youth from Europe to participate. It is suggested that each chapter try to support *one student each* to participate in this very nice event.

Internship for PTP in Europe

Starting in January *Anthony Shafto*, New Jersey, will work as an intern in Sweden for two months. Anthony will work partly for the Center for International Youth Exchanges in Stockholm and partly for PTP. Among other things Anthony will compile data from the European chapters. He maybe also will contact the chapters.

Fees and dues

In order to finance activities of PTPE fees will be collected from the chapters. The current fee is one CHF (Swiss Franc). The expenses for PTPE are mainly postage, printing and telephone. Payments can be done either via bank transfer or directly in person at any PTP events during the year. (A good opportunity is the Annual Conference).

European coordinator - Lars Poignant

PTP has decided to employ an officer for PTP in Europe. Starting February 1st Lars Poignant will be working full time for PTP in Europe. The main tasks will be to support existing chapters and programs, improve communication, seek funds for future projects and promote expansion of PTP in Europe.

I'm very excited about this. We have a very good opportunity to take advantage of present network and ideas to make something special with PTPE. /LP

National and Chapter Reports

Estonia

In November/December last year PTP Estonia organised a new part of the "Democracy School Project". This part had special focus to journalism with lectures, seminars and discussions. It was divided into two halves - one in Estonia and one in Denmark. Special thanks to Danish Democracy foundation and PTP Sillamae, who sponsored the program. There were 30 participants - both Estonian and Russian. (Olga Ganzen)

Germany

Starting on February first PTP **Berlin** will make a five week long trip around the world. Places to visit are California, Australia or Fiji and Hong Kong.

For the summer visits are planned to Scotland, Greece, France and New Zealand.

Coming events

February 17	Annual Meeting, PTP Berlin
March 8	Annual Meeting, PTP Sweden
May 16-19	European Conference in Gliwice, Poland
July	Peace Seminar for Youth, Europe
September 26-27	Trustee Meeting, Washington DC
September 26-27	Youth Leadership Conference, Washington DC

PTP International Youth Conference

Parallel with the World Wide Conference in California last year PTP International Youth Conference was held. Some 60 students participated. One of them was Natalia Kotlyarchuk, youth coordinator from PTP Tallinn, Estonia, who reports.;

PTPI 40th anniversary gathered people from all over the world in Newport Beach, California. All chapters made a great performance introducing themselves. I was participating at the conference as a staff member. It gave me a possibility to take part in all events of the Worldwide Conference and of the Youth Conference as well. Both of these components were prepared very carefully. It was very important and useful for young students to meet members of the Board, Awards Luncheon, reception etc. Students

found a lot of new information about the history of PTP, different programs and chapter members.

The Youth Conference consisted of lectures and training session on the topic *Conflict Resolution*. It was of course also a lot of fun.

I think that participation of students from different countries can make Youth Conference more interesting. I look forward to the next Youth Conference in Washington in September and hope that it will be more international.

Newsletter for PTP Europe

Any written contribution is highly appreciated. The Newsletter is distributed to each national chapter. It may be redistributed within the chapters to members and non members.

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Questionnaire for all European Chapters

In order to determine the present level of activities, members and to update the address list, chapters presidents are asked to fill out the following questionnaire. Some of the findings will be included in the next Newsletter. Some chapters have already given information and only need to update the information. The thought is the data can be updated at any time and available for all chapters. At least once a year the chapters will be asked to make updates. See below for address. Please answer before February 15.

Last year - 1996

What were the main activities?

How many homestays did the chapter have (incoming)? *If possible* expressed as number of visitors, nights or homestay. Please include where the visitors came from.

Number of members.

Coming activities - 1997

What scheduled programs are there?

When is the Annual Meeting?

Names and addresses

Which officers are there in the chapter? (President, homestay coordinator and youth coordinator will be included in the official address list). Please indicate

address, telephone/fax and if available Internet address. You are very welcome to include a member list.

Homestay capabilities

What are the capabilities to host visitors?

Approximate number of guests at a time.

Do you have any restrictions - time of year?

Other

Would you like to join any committee or nominate someone for on a committee or on the European Board? (These answers will be forwarded to Daniel Schaubacher).

Do you have any contacts with other organisation you would like to tell? (university, other international organisations)

Names and addresses

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