

PEOPLE TO PEOPLE INTERNATIONAL
= EUROPEAN NEWSLETTER =
 - PEACE THROUGH UNDERSTANDING -

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Message from the President

Dear Friends,

This autumn has given me two exceptional opportunities to see People to People at its best.

Taking part in the Chapter Leadership Seminar in Berlin was a most enjoyable and enlightening experience. As well as meeting some old friends this was an exceptional opportunity to make new friends and exchange ideas with a number of impressive leaders from some of our newer chapters. Some of them had made long and difficult journeys to reach Berlin, and all were keen to learn and willing to contribute their time and skills to promote People to People in Europe. We should be very grateful for this level of commitment and for the efforts of Lars and his colleagues in planning and organizing this successful event as well as securing such a good venue and facilitator.

Just before the seminar, I attended the Board of Trustees' annual meeting in Seoul, South Korea and then joined a special delegation of the Board of Directors to the Republic of China, Taiwan. This was a chance to experience the world-wide outreach of People to People International.

South Korea was one of the earliest countries to develop a PTPI presence, and has many chapters and an extensive membership. Our programme included a number of opportunities to explore the ancient culture and civilisation of this fascinating country. We also experienced the very generous hospitality of a friendly and courteous people, particularly when we were able to share the 30th anniversary celebrations of PTPI's Daejon City Chapter.

In Taiwan we were the guests of the government and were privileged to meet representatives of the President and the Foreign Ministry at the highest level. We also visited the PTPI Chapter in Tainan, in the south of the island, who hosted us very generously. Again our programme offered experiences of the distinctive culture, history and heritage of Taiwan, and featured a visit to the impressive technical university in Taipei of which our distinguished PTPI colleague Dr Chuan Lee is principal.

As we look forward to celebrating PTPI's 50th anniversary and another year of positive progress in our region, may I on behalf of your Executive Committee wish you all a joyful holiday season and a happy and prosperous New Year.

Sincere good wishes,

Peter Whitby

President of PTPI's European Council

Content	Page
Message from the President	1
PTPI Reflection	1
PTPI Experiences	2
Coming events	4
PTPI Updates	5
Chapter Reports	6



International

PTPI Reflection

A few thoughts about Intercultural Education and Learning promoted by PTPI

"Education alone can make people understand that skin color, language or place of birth is actually of no importance. Knowledge and wisdom have neither color nor religion. Knowledge is a passport with all the necessary visas. It is extremely easy to organize education. It is much easier than fighting wars."

Prof. Aleksander Nalaskowsky

For the last 50 years, People to People International has been promoting non-formal intercultural learning and education through a number of unique programs. Intercultural learning is seen in a larger context to denote a concept of how people with different backgrounds can

live together peacefully, and the process that is needed to build such a society. The main aim of intercultural education is to develop the interaction abilities as well as communication skills between people and the world that surrounds them.

“Peace through Understanding” has been the logo type and guiding principle of PTPI for 50 years. The mission statement of the organization sustains: “The purpose of People to People International is to enhance international understanding and friendship through educational, cultural and humanitarian activities involving the exchange of ideas and experiences directly among peoples of different countries and diverse cultures. (...) People to People International is dedicated to enhancing cross-cultural communication within each community and across communities and nations.” (www.ptpi.org)

It is impressive how up to date these goals still are today given that we face major changes in almost all aspects of life, no matter if social, cultural or political. New democracies are emerging, we are witnessing an ever growing globalization process, borders are opened and, especially in the countries formerly under communist rule, people are striving to cope with transition or emigrate in pursue of better jobs while at the same time worrying about their national identity. All these changes are accompanied by feelings of fear and anxiety. People might say: “We are afraid that others will take our jobs, we are afraid of loosing our identity, we are afraid of those people, because we have heard only bad things about them, etc.”

Many intercultural education and intercultural learning projects have been developed, books have been written about this subject area and professional people have discussed about it. People to People International had already 50 years ago the quite original idea of achieving an informal intercultural learning experience by relying on the beliefs that “individuals can often be more effective than governments in promoting human relationships and world peace” and that “citizens of all countries need personal contacts with other peoples and cultures”.

In a survey done at the Nicholas Copernicus University in Torun, Poland, the respondents, students of the university striving to be future educators, emphasized the importance of establishing direct contacts abroad to discover different cultures and traditions. They also stated that despite various European Union mobility projects,

just a few students and educators have the chance of participating in international exchanges. The decisive factor in this context is not the mobility of adults, but rather the travel and subsistence costs being discouraging. Throughout the years, People to People International has developed programs that facilitate the traveling of both young people and adults with the aim of getting a real feeling of understanding for other peoples and cultures. What is even more important is that PTPI encourages people from developed countries with well established democracies to visit people in new democracies and developing countries. In my opinion it is important to encourage mutual exchanges not just from Eastern to Western Europe, but also the other way around. Otherwise, people may speak the same language when they meet, English, German, French, Spanish, Italian, but yet they will not be able to understand each other since they have completely different mentalities.

This year, PTPI's Roman, Romania Chapter is celebrating its 15th anniversary, being the first chapter established in Eastern Europe after the fall of the Iron Curtain and just after the Romanian Revolution. Youth and adult members of the chapter have experienced this type of non-formal intercultural learning which led to unforgettable experiences through Homestays in Switzerland, France, the United States, participation of student members in a study session in Budapest, participation of two students in PTPI's Peace Camp in Egypt, the constant contact and exchanges with our sister chapter Bern-Switzerland, the organization of a national conference, participation in European conferences and having the chance of organizing the European Conference in 2003. Our anniversary is a time of reflection but also a time of assessing new ways of action and programs in order to strengthen and expand our chapter, to come closer to our community, to cooperate with different ethnic groups and to support them in defining their own identity, to multiply our humanitarian efforts as well as to support intercultural education and learning for people of all ages. “Learning to live together” is one of the main guidelines of education for the future in a peaceful world.

*Sorina Danciu
PTPI's Roman, Romania Chapter*

PTPI Experiences

Inspirations and impressions of PTPI's leadership seminar

I would like to start by thanking immensely People to People Europe and of course its staff there for organizing the 'Leadership Seminar' in Berlin last October because I think it has been one of the most interesting and fruitful meetings I have ever had. I had the opportunity to meet people and get in touch with so many realities I would probably never have had the chance to get to know. It was great to speak to them, to exchange our points of view but also our problems, our doubts and try to find out ways to be of help to each other and to the whole organization.

So I learnt for instance that Romania needed English books and immediately my mind started working because I felt I could do something for them. I started working on that idea when back home. It was not easy to organize the shipping. Nevertheless, I hope that Bogdan has by now started to receive some cases of books. He will have many more starting a small library to the memory of my friend and colleague Prof. Maria Castoldi who was the first President of PTPI's Milan Chapter and with whom I started this great adventure called People to People International many years ago. Maybe not all the books are of interest, but I am sure sooner or later they will be used. I do not know the reality they will be directed to, so it was very difficult to choose. I hope they will be of help! I only wish I had known that before and I could have done more, but I will keep on working on this!

And what about Galych! I had never known about them and instead during the meeting I got in touch with Vasy! and now we do have young people, ages 10-13 corresponding and we do hope the number will increase! We are also thinking of the possibility of realizing a 'sister chapter' relationship with Moscow. We'll be in touch with Diana Belan and see if this project can become reality. After January I will let everybody know details about that project for an International Camp in Italy in July

and I am also happy to inform everybody that Joint, the organization that contacted me, has been so impressed with People to People International that they are exploring the possibility of organizing another one in 2007 just with PTPI.

I cannot mention all the people I met and I would like to thank for teaching me something and contributing to send me back home richer in knowledge, sensibility and friendship! Thank you all!! And, Chiara and I also had a Homestay in Berlin before the seminar and that is another great experience!! How else could we have met those incredibly friendly and unforgettable people that are the Lehmanns and the Büchlers? Personally, I learnt more about the city and its history in three days with them than in all my life through history books and now I have new and precious friends! Thanks to them and in particular to Karin who was my teacher all the time!!

*Valeria Magistrelli
President of PTPI's Milan, Italy Chapter
Member of PTPI's Board of Directors*

Young Generation Meeting in Bern, October 15- 16, 2005

From the sunny Spiez, we came to the foggy Bern, where we met our friends from Strasbourg, Zurich and Bern at the meeting point of the train station. Soon after we had left the building the sun emerged from behind the clouds. We strolled to the "von Wattenwil Haus", a historical building used by the Swiss government for important talks, meetings and private events. We enjoyed a guided tour through the house which was very impressive as well as interesting. Later we visited the "ghost house", which is vacant since a man murdered his wife decades ago. Since then, it's said to be a haunted house.

After the sight seeing in Bern, we drove by train through the beautiful countryside of the valley "Emmental". In Eggwil we had our first stop to have a look at a mill, which runs by water electricity produced by the water power station of the owner of the mill. With great interest, we observed the different steps of the flour production. We considered that we eat flour daily without thinking much of it, for example in pasta and bread. There is in fact quite some work involved in making it. The owner and his wife kindly offered us soft drinks and home grown apples as refreshment before we continued our trip.

After a short drive to "Chuderhüsi" we walked to the "Röthenbach Tower". Almost everybody climbed up the tower, from where we had a wonderful view on the hills and mountains all around. Some of us didn't feel very comfortable, as the tower was shaking a little bit. Back at the farmhouse, we had a delicious barbecue with huge "Holzfäller" steaks and salad. After the long walk, we felt that we really deserved this feast.

The air had cooled down, when we made our way to Kehrsatz, where we had a cozy being together in an exclusive private lounge. While having coffee and tea, Ernst Honegger, member of PTPI's Board of Director, joined us. Later Marie-Anne did an interesting and informative presentation about the experiences she had made during her 3-month-stay in Mongolia. We used the occasion to discuss cultural differences between Mongolians and Europeans and difficulties in Mongolia with her.

Night had fallen and slowly but surely everybody disappeared to go to bed. GOOD NIGHT SLEEP WELL.

Get up, it's Sunday! We had a nice breakfast before taking the train to Bern. There, we took the bus to the recently opened Paul Klee (a famous Swiss painter who deceased in 1940) Museum, where we went on a one hour guided tour. After the tour, we walked around in order to have a closer look at the exhibition.

Later, we had lunch in a vegetarian restaurant at the train station before it was time to say goodbye. It was once again a great meeting. Thanks Cornelia for organizing the meeting. We are looking forward to the next.

*Susanne Kaiser and Marie-Anne Aebi
PTPI's Interlaken, Switzerland Chapter*

Iasi and Hannover students on a joint trip

On Saturday, December 3, I was invited by Julia and Andrea, students at the same department with me and members of PTPI's Berlin Chapter, to join them for a day-trip to the nearby town Lüneburg to meet a friend of theirs from Bulgaria and to participate in a European event organized by the local Town Hall. Lüneburg is a nice picturesque town and at this time of the year, the local Christmas Market enhances its charm. The European event held in Lüneburg reunited several countries from Europe including the EU candidate country Bulgaria. Each country organized exhibition stands with traditional handicrafts and performed in the market traditional folk dances and Christmas carols to the delight of the local people and tourists.

Then Julia and Andrea invited me to a local traditional restaurant and I enjoyed a German meal typical for the beginning of the cold season called "Grünkohl Bratwurst" – a tasty sausage with green cabbage and stewed potatoes. We have already planned a next trip to Julia and Andrea's home towns, Springe and Hameln next Sunday.

I really enjoyed this trip and even though it was cold outside I could feel the warmth of friendship of my two new PTPI Hannover friends.

*Sorina Danciu, PTPI's Roman, Romania Chapter
Julia and Andrea, PTPI contact in Hannover*

Coming events

Date	PTPI Chapter / Program	Contact
2005		
December 19 - January 7	Galych, Ukraine / Winter holidays' cultural program for youth	Vasyl Ukhman (ptpgalych@bur.if.ua)
December 26	Tallinn, Estonia / Traditional Christmas Dinner	Ruta Pels (ptpest@hotmail.com)
December 28	Galych, Ukraine / Chapter meeting – Follow-up meeting of the Seminar in Berlin	Vasyl Ukhman (ptpgalych@bur.if.ua)
2006		
January 7	Brussels, Belgium / Visit to Brussels Theater: "Pierre et Jojo font de la résistance"	Daniel Schaubacher (daniel.schaubacher@skynet.be)
January 17-19	Galych, Ukraine / Seminar: "Exercise of Democracy" for NGO and public leaders	Vasyl Ukhman (ptpgalych@bur.if.ua)
January 21	Brussels, Belgium / New Year's Teatime	Daniel Schaubacher (daniel.schaubacher@skynet.be)
January 28 – February 19	A group from Haderslev – Vojens in Denmark will visit New Zealand with a stop in South Korea	Gunild Bogdahn (gunild@bogdahn.dk)
February 1	Brussels, Belgium / Candlemas Party	Daniel Schaubacher (daniel.schaubacher@skynet.be)
February 15	Brussels, Belgium / Lunch at "Bleu de toi" and visit of the exhibition "Théo Van Ryselberghe"	Daniel Schaubacher (daniel.schaubacher@skynet.be)
February 17	Interlaken, Switzerland / General meeting for the chapter's 10th anniversary	Ernest Wälti (waelti@tcnet.ch)
April 1-7	Plovdiv, Bulgaria / Training of Teacher's Trainers in Human Rights Education With Young People	Zina Lubenova (ptpi_plovdiv@yahoo.com) http://www.ptpi-bg.tripod.com/id13.html
May 26- 28	European Conference in Denmark	Sven Erik Kristensen (ptp@peopletopeople.dk)
August 23-27	17th Worldwide Conference and 50th Anniversary Celebration in Sydney	PTPI European Office (admin-europe@ptpi.org)

European Conference: May 26-28

PTPI Europe will hold its annual meeting in Køge, Denmark. PTP Denmark offers a three day program plus homestay in Jutland before and after the event. Both members and non members are invited to this highlight of the PTPE year. Invitation is attached to this newsletter and can also be found on the conference Web site: www.ptpe.org/denmark 2005.

Please feel welcome to join this year's European Conference. We look forward to seeing you!

Conference Organizing Committee

PTPI's Official 50th Anniversary Celebration and 17th Worldwide Conference

Plan today to participate in *People to People International's Official 50th Anniversary Celebration and 17th Worldwide Conference* in Sydney, Australia from August 23-27, 2006! The celebration spans across four days at the renowned Sofitel Wentworth Sydney and includes interactive and educational sessions; networking and social events; and the opportunity to learn about the fascinating history, culture, and people of Australia.

Appropriately themed Celebrating 50 Years of Peace through Understanding, this memorable event will begin with a reception aboard a chartered Captain Cruise ship on the beautiful Sydney Harbour and culminate with a grand Gala Dinner at the Famous Sydney Opera House.

High caliber speakers are being sought. Invitations have been extended to Australian Prime Minister John Howard, former Australian Deputy Prime Minister John Anderson, and Her Excellency First Lady of Egypt Mrs. Suzanne Mubarak, to name a few. Session topics include a Taste of Australia, an Australian Perspective on Global Affairs, and workshops on various topics including Australian wine and food!

All participants will receive a 50th Anniversary Certificate (suitable for framing) signed by President and Chief Executive Officer Mary Jean Eisenhower; a commemorative PTPI 50th Anniversary Opal Lapel Pin courtesy of Costello's Opal Discovery Centre; and a 50th Anniversary Conference bag courtesy of Tourism Australia.

It is our hope to see many PTPI chapter members participating in this unique and special event. We are excited to announce two special offers for PTPI chapter members only! Details will be sent to all PTPI chapter presidents in the coming month.

1. **Chapter Promotion:** If five chapter members register for the 17th Worldwide Conference Package, the sixth member's conference registration fee is waived (for free)! Travel, hotel and expenses are not included in the 17th Worldwide Conference Package and are the responsibility of the individual.
2. **Chapter Grants:** PTPI is offering 15 grants to chapter members, which covers the Worldwide Conference Package Registration fee. Travel, hotel and expenses are not included in the 17th Worldwide Conference Package and are the responsibility of the individual.

We certainly hope you will be with us in Sydney to celebrate the past of PTPI, applaud the current efforts of our dedicated members and launch the next fifty years! Online registration is now available at www.ptpi.org. 17th Worldwide Conference Registration brochures will be sent by postal mail to all members in early 2006! Any questions can be directed to Karen Hoch at karenh@ptpi.org. See you in the Land Down Under!

PTPI Updates

Language Ambassador Program

PTPI's European Office has the pleasure to present to you a new program offered by PTPI in Europe: the Language Ambassador Program. This initiative has been developed in response to one of the many ideas brought up during the leadership seminar in Berlin last October.

PTPI's Language Ambassador Program combines an intercultural learning experience and language teaching. An international visitor goes to a local PTPI chapter for a period of two to four weeks and offers conversational language classes to the members. In return, the chapter members provide free board and accommodation. They should also arrange for the teacher to be able to discover the local culture in the afternoons and during weekends.

The teachers are either native speakers or they need to have a good command of the language they teach. Teaching experience is of course of great advantage. The class offered should especially focus on conversational skills.

The local chapters should make sure that the participating students have a basic knowledge of the respective language. There are no age restrictions for the language students.

During the initial phase, the program will focus on the English language. In the long run, we would like to offer the possibility of including other languages as well.

In order to take part in this program, there are some requirements for both, chapters and teachers. The chapters need to supply the teacher with accommodation and board, and should introduce him or her to the local community. The teachers are required to hold conversational language classes part-time and need to cover their travel expenses as well as costs for insurance, visa and vaccines.

More information on this program is available at www.ptpe.org/language-ambassador.

PTPI chapters interested in participating in this new and rewarding program are welcome to contact PTPI's European Office.

PTPI Summer Camp

The idea of organizing a PTPI Summer Camp for youth was brought up during PTPI's leadership seminar in Berlin. Meanwhile, an Organizing Committee has been formed to pursue this initiative further.

The summer camp will be open to teenagers from all chapters and countries actively participating in the preparations. Participants in the camp will have the opportunity to meet people of their age from different countries and to build new international friendships. The communication language will be English. Participants will not only improve their language skills, but also make international friends, gain self-confidence and learn to feel at ease as member of an intercultural group. The Summer Camp will be an opportunity for intercultural learning, acquiring leadership and team building skills and of course having lots of fun!

Representatives of the following chapters are currently involved in this project: Roman (Romania), Värmland (Sweden), Galych and Eastern Ukraine (Ukraine), Ches-

ter (UK). The Organizing Committee would like to invite all interested chapters and members to join them in planning this event. Any contributions are highly appreciated. Please contact the European Office for further information.

Support for Humanitarian Projects

PTPI's Roman Chapter and its YG group are making an appeal to other PTPI members and chapters to join their fundraising efforts for two very urgent cases:

1) A schoolgirl who is paralyzed after an accident in an international summer camp at the seaside needs urgently a special corsage and devices for legs and arms as well as money for medicine (100 Euro/month) and a rehabilitation program at a clinic in Italy. Although the necessary sum is big, we think that any contribution will help since many students and institutions in Roman are trying to help.

2) The center of rehabilitation for children with cerebral palsy in Roman (a local NGO established by parents) is running out of funds. The center will probably close down if it cannot identify funds to pay for their three employees: a kinotherapy instructor, a psychologist and a speech therapist (800 Euro/month). The Roman YGs have been working with the children in this center, providing English tutoring classes and support for their Christmas show, and would appreciate any supporting initiative.

If you decide to join these efforts, please contact PTPI's Roman Chapter at ptroman@yahoo.com or Sorina Danciu at sorinadanciu@yahoo.com.

PTPI leadership seminar in Berlin

PTPI's leadership seminar on "Tolerance in Intercultural Cooperation – Building Bridges between Chapters" was a great success. We thank you all for your hard work and the great contributions.

The participants of the seminar will hold follow-up meetings in their local chapters in order to convey the results of the seminar to their fellow chapter members.

For all interested, a detailed report, the major results and the evaluation of the seminar as well as many pictures are available at: www.ptpe.org/programs/leadership-seminar/files.htm

University Families

The European Office would like to bring an exiting intercultural program to the attention of all European chapters: the hosting of international students at local colleges and universities.

This is an opportunity for chapters to meet people from around the world who are already living in your community. It is also an excellent way of promoting People to People International and its goal of achieving peace through understanding.

The program enables students to feel like having a "home away from home" and to discover the local culture in a new and very personal way. Host families may be needed at the beginning of the semester, on holiday breaks, or just during times of homesickness.

To get started, contact universities or colleges in your city or region and ask for the international relations department. Send them information on PTPI and your chapter and explain the idea behind our concept of Homestay and dinner at home.

The European Office will assist you with public relations material. More information on the concept of "university families" can also be found in PTPI's Homestay manual (the version last updated in May 2004).

Day Hosting

PTPI's Homestay manual presents an interesting alternative to the traditional three to five day Homestay: Day Hosting. Like Homestays, Day Hosting has the goal of fostering cross-cultural friendships and understanding; however, the visitors stay overnight in hostels or hotels instead of with families. They only meet the members of the chapter they visit during the day to do sightseeing together or other activities.

There are no fees associated with Day Hosting, but the basic Homestay guidelines still apply. Members interested in Day Hosting should make sure to contact the chapter they visit at least two months in advance to allow enough time for finding an appropriate host. If visiting the US, PTPI's World Headquarters should be contacted

which will eventually put the applicant in touch with local chapters.

PTPI's Homestay manual contains a Day Hosting Request Form. It should be completed and sent to the hosting chapter to facilitate the matching process of applicant and possible host.

Closed chapters

PTPI has closed six chapters in Europe during fall. These were chapters in:

- ◆ Lviv and Zaporozhie (Ukraine)
- ◆ Poprad, Banska Bystrica and Ruzomberok (Slovakia)
- ◆ Leitrim (Ireland)

PR – PTPI presentation on DVD

PTPI has produced two DVDs presenting our organization. The two versions (one youth and one adult) explain about PTPI programs, heritage and members. It is a very good thing to use when meeting with people new to PTPI - and of course to any member as well. The DVDs have been distributed to all chapters in Europe in December. Please use it to promote our programs and to get new members.

Chapter Reports

Berlin

A delegation of PTPI's Berlin Chapter met the participants in PTPI's leadership seminar at the Johannesstift on October 7. We enjoyed the meeting very much. It was a great occasion to exchange with old friends and meet some still unknown members of the European Executive Committee, PTPI Trustees and the presidents of new European chapters. Some of the participants were hosted by members of the Berlin Chapter before and after the seminar.

In addition, two guests from PTPI's Interlaken, Switzerland Chapter were hosted by chapter members during the famous Berlin Marathon in the beginning of October.

On November 3, three Berlin chapter members presented some impressions of their trip to Estonia in August, where they had met members of PTPI's Tallinn, Tartu and Viljandi Chapters. The group had also visited Riga in Latvia. Their presentation including some very interesting background information about the countries and cities they had visited.

A group of members and friends went on a trip to Prague and enjoyed the city in November. They were guided by Marie Hlávková, a new contact of PTPI in Prague.

In early December, the chapter hosted members of PTPI's Interlaken, Switzerland chapter living in Spiez.

Brigitte Kasigkeit

Brussels

PTPI's Brussels Chapter continues with reasonable success its program of visits to concerts, museums, parks, theater plays, etc. Efforts are being made to reach out to the numerous expatriates in the European capital.

Over seven days of a busy visit in Brussels, Anita Manuel, Chairperson of PTPI's Board of Trustees, opened doors for PTPI activities and hearts of dozens of

people. Anita Manuel personified the PTPI slogan "Peace through Understanding" to perpetuate Dwight D. Eisenhower's values and vision, be it at the European Parliament, at the European Commission, at the European Union's advisory Social and Economic Committee, or at the reception hosted by the Mayor of Schaerbeek-Brussels. At PTPI's Brussels Chapter's annual Christmas Gala Dinner Dance in the elegant Plein Ciel restaurant of the Hilton Tower, Anita Manuel was the guest of honor. Among the 70 participants were visitors from Switzerland, UK and dancers from Mexico. During her stay in Brussels, Anita Manuel also attended the Astoria concert and visited the Europalia exhibition on Russian history at the Palais des Beaux-Arts, as well as the Music Instruments exhibition and the foundation and ruins of Charles the Great's palace. Her program in Brussels included in addition the participation in a Club of Rome lecture on the UN Millennium goals at the Royal Academy and the Scandinavian Christmas concert and brunch at the SAS Radisson, where Anita discussed cultural exchanges with the Public Affairs Counselor of the American embassy. Everywhere, Anita brought the joyous news of PTPI and came with a radiant smiling face enticing people to listen, and eventually join in PTPI's intercultural efforts. We from People to People Belgium are immensely grateful to her for the encouragement and vision she shared with all of us.

In June 2006, People to People Belgium will offer a special cultural trip to Budapest and the south-west of Hungary, including a stay in Spa and in Pécs. In Pécs, a concert in the historic cathedral will be attended since the visit will coincide with the annual Summer Classical Music Festival. The activities our chapter plans for next year are also listed under "coming events".

Daniel Schaubacher

Interlaken

Marie-Anne Aebi successfully applied for PTPI's Mongolia Culture Program and went as English teacher to Ulaan Baatar, Mongolia, where she spent three months teaching English this past summer. The local chapter there has established a language school with classes of several hours a day for school children, each class consisting of 5-10 students. There was also a week-long English summer camp about 50 kilometers outside of the city. At the camp, Marie-Anne taught 10 students between 8 and 16 years of age. For a change from studying, they swam and played in the river. As a result of her teaching in the language school, she was also employed for private English lessons, which brought in a little money to support her trip, which like all PTPI cultural endeavors is voluntary and not paid. On weekends, Marie-Anne's "host mom" Moogli guided her on excursions in the countryside. Marie-Anne reported on her culture-shock over the huge difference in everyday comforts. For instance, there isn't always warm water. Towards the end of her stay, Marie-Anne spent four days taking care of animals in northeast Mongolia, which she found to be the most beautiful days of her journey. During her three month stay Marie-Anne sent several reports of her experiences back to the chapter, and on her return treated us to a PowerPoint slide show of the people and places of Mongolia.

Towards the end of September, Thomas and Claudia started their long planned trip to Berlin, where they were warmly welcomed to begin their Homestay by Hannelore and Peter. Although Thomas had been in Berlin many times over the years, he could hardly recognize the city when they went on a first walk around town. Thomas and 40,000 other runners took part in the Berlin Marathon – the largest Marathon in the world – and we heartily congratulate him on being ranked 1500. A million people hemmed in the course to watch the race and cheer the runners. After all this great effort, Thomas and Claudia spent the next days taking in cultural sites: The state Opera Dépendence in a factory hall, Potsdam Square, the Museum Island, from where you can see what's left of the Berlin Wall, Checkpoint Charlie, the new Holocaust memorial sculpture, the Jewish Museum, and so on. The highlight for Claudia and Thomas was the indescribable hospitality of Peter and Hannelore, as well as their contact to the local PTPI chapter, whose members meet weekly for an English hour in a Mexican restaurant. Lars Poignant, from the PTPI's European Office in Berlin, organized an occasion for Thomas and Claudia to meet new people and learn more about the innumerable PTPI projects and activities. A trip to Berlin is surely a wonderful experience for all PTPI members, especially for those who have never been, or who haven't been to Berlin for a long time, also for school classes, in conjunction with a Homestay. The train ICE goes directly to Berlin from Interlaken East daily at 5:57 A.M.

Regina, as PTPI Trustee, and Ernest, President of PTPI's Interlaken Chapter, attended the leadership seminar in Berlin from October 7 to October 9. PTPI extended the invitation and 19 women and 12 men came together in the lovely green-bedecked Christophorus House in Berlin-Spandau. The seminar lasted three days and centered on the following themes: getting to know each other; chapter and country presentations including information on most recent projects; workshops on stereotypes and prejudice; workshop on tolerance in intercultural coop-

eration with a focus on PTPI and PTPI chapters; information seminar on funds for intercultural projects and other fundraising possibilities. Lars Poignant, Verena Dank as well as the trainer Behrooz Motamed-Afshari troubled themselves to offer a very well organized, enjoyable and valuable seminar. Sixteen European countries were represented by chapter leaders - both young and old, experienced and novice - all of whom had the opportunity to get to know each other, and take home new experiences and connections. Each chapter, alone or together with other chapters, was encouraged to offer "follow-up seminars" - hopefully before the spring of 2006. Lars and Verena summarized the results of the seminar and presented them to the participants. Those who need more information or support in organizing follow-up seminars are encouraged to contact PTPI's European Office in Berlin. With such a full program, not much time was left for socializing. Nevertheless, at least we could get together one evening with the hospitable members of PTPI's Berlin Chapter.

Ernest Wälti

Korca-Bilishti

It is a real pleasure for me to write for this newsletter. I took part in the leadership seminar in Berlin in October. I appreciated most the group work and the friendships I made there. I was in a group of representatives of experienced chapters as well as new chapters. I really learnt a lot from Hans-Dieter, Hans, Regina, Iryna and our group leader Chiara Pedretti. Without them and their ideas, I would never be what I am, the vice-president of the new Korca-Bilishti Chapter. I will always remember "the great singer", Peter Whitby, as well as all the others.

Finally, I would like to thank PTPI's European Office, Lars, Verena and Teresa for the very good and useful organization of the seminar and for finding me very good hosts.

Apart from all this, I realize that it was a great opportunity for the newly established Korca-Bilishti Chapter, which I represented there, to present itself to the other chapters and it gave a great push of motivation for our participation in such an organization.

A special thank goes to the Berlin chapter members, who I met there: Brigitte, Dagmar, Jutta, Hans-Dieter and Stefan. They were very good friends and guides to me and helped me getting to know more about the wonderful city of Berlin.

Thank you very much for everything. Our young chapter will do well in the future thanks to your help.

Olda Çiço

Tallinn

PTPI's Tallinn Chapter participated in the Global Education Week 2005 which was organized by the North-South Centre of the Council of Europe on November 14-21. We sent information about possibilities to join PTPI's School and Classroom Program, Pen Pal Program and other PTPI programs for youth to 75 schools in all Estonia. The meeting of PTPI's Student Chapter in Tallinn Jumera Secondary School was held and focused on the Global Education Week and tolerance in Estonia and in the world. Both chapters in Tallinn, student and adult, will have a traditional Christmas dinner on December 26.

Ruta Pels

Värmland

I am happy to announce that after months of preparations with the support of PTPI Headquarters in Kansas City, Missouri and PTPI's Director of European Operations in Berlin, Lars Poignant, PTPI's Värmland Chapter has been started in Sweden. We are all looking forward to working towards promoting world peace through understanding and having fun at the same time!

I would like to introduce the executive board members of PTPI's Värmland Chapters: Christina Leander, Co-founder and Vice-President; Dine Bolmsted, Co-founder and Treasurer, Jonas Knochenhauer, Secretary and Assistant Youth Coordinator and Zeldi Jansson, Officer and Youth Coordinator. I also want to mention some members that fulfill important functions in our chapter: Jennifer Gamble-Tedenby, Homestay Coordinator, Ia Pettersson, Assistant Ambassador, Carola Johansson, School & Classroom Program and Catarina Larsson, School & Classroom Program.

The first programs we will be initiating in the coming year: Artistic Ambassador, School & Classroom, International Visitors (Homestay) and Meet the Diplomats Program. Our main goal is, of course, to carry out programs for all ages, but our main focus for now are programs for children and youths.

Promoting world peace, international communication and tolerance has been and is an ongoing global effort; but now, it is more important than ever. We firmly believe that we need to instill the vision, values and beliefs set out by PTPI's founder, President Dwight D. Eisenhower, as early in life as possible. After all – and I am sure we've all heard this before - our children and youth are the future.

So, how and why I became interested in People to People International? To make a long story short: I have been in contact with a fellow American and Sports Ambassador Program Board of Trustee member, Rafer Johnson. I touch base per telephone and e-mail with Rafer Johnson from time to time. As many of you know, Rafer is also one of the founders, past president and now Chairman of the Board of Governors for Special Olympics Southern California. Also, Mr. Johnson and I grew up in the same town in California: Kingsburg – the Swedish Village. Which is also one of the sister cities of Sunne, a town just

60 kilometers from my "hometown", Karlstad. Five months ago, May 2005, I got in touch with him again to talk to him about a couple of project ideas I had in mind, dealing with cultural and sports exchange. He mentioned the People to People International organization and one of its affiliates, the Sports Ambassadors Program. Since I love to meet people from all over the world and was interested in looking for a cultural exchange organization, I followed through with my research, checked the PTPI Web site out, made a few phone calls and before you know it, I was in touch with the Director of European Operations, Lars Poignant. From the get-go, I was well received and warmly welcomed by Lars. But what I was astonished to find out was that Lars spoke Swedish! September 15, 2005, he arrived in Karlstad with Cornelia Siegenthaler, member of PTPI's Bern Chapter and Treasurer of PTPI's European Council, to be a part of the official start-up meeting. Meeting Lars and Cornelia was great, and the fact that they were here to partake in making PTPI Värmland chapter history was especially rewarding!

Thank you Lars and Cornelia for being present when we officially joined the People to People International network! We're already making plans on attending the European Conference in Denmark! So hope to see you there!

Before I draw this to a close, I'd like to send a special thank you to Rafer Johnson for mentioning PTPI to me several months ago since that is one of the reasons that PTPI's Värmland Chapter now exists. Anyone who has had the privilege of meeting Rafer and knows all his merits and accomplishments also knows that he truly is a source of inspiration and a man of great honor.

On behalf of PTPI's Värmland Chapter, I would like to extend a warm welcome and invite other PTPI chapter members and their family and friends to Sweden.

It is an honor to be a part of the PTPI network working towards promoting peace through understanding.

Wishing you all the best!

P.S. The PTPI Värmland Chapter Web site will soon be launched, hopefully sometime in November 2005. Please be on the look-out! D.S.

Antoinette Mc Intyre-Andersson

People to People International

www.ptpi.org

People to People International (PTPI), with World Headquarters in Kansas City, Missouri USA, was established by President Dwight D. Eisenhower on September 11, 1956 to enhance international understanding and friendship through educational, cultural and humanitarian activities involving the exchange of ideas and experiences directly among peoples of different countries and diverse cultures. Today, as a not-for-profit, 501 (c)(3) organization, PTPI has a presence in 135 countries with more than 80,000 families and individuals actively participating in People to People International programs.

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Newsletter for PTPI Europe

www.ptpe.org

The European Newsletter is published within PTPI Europe and sent to all chapters and members. 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.

The newsletter is published on the PTPE Web site (www.ptpe.org). If you feel it is enough to read the newsletter from the Web site, then would send a link to you with the address to the recent newsletter. In this way, you will receive the newsletter faster and PTPI would save money. Please send us an e-mail and we will update subscription details.

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