

NEWSLETTER ... August 2009

Oklahoma City International Visitors Council

Editor – Kay Bickham
Website: www.ivcokc.org



NEXT IVC MEETING THURSDAY, August 6, 2009

11:00 – 12:30

Meinder's School of Business—Room 107
Oklahoma City University
Corner of N.W. 24 & Blackwelder
2501 N. Blackwelder

Call 341-3169 or 341-2504 for more
information

Focus on Russia

Our speaker for August will be Olga Tarasova. She is Vice President of a media holding company --New Ad Age International, INC. -- that publishes *Russian-American Business* magazine and *The Russian America* newspaper. Olga is the editor-in-chief for both publications.

The Russian-American Business magazine is the only periodical publication for American businessmen that talks about commercial relations between Russia and the U.S. The magazine is circulated among members of government, leaders of the business community, and cultural organizations. *The Russian America* newspaper is a publication in the Russian language that is distributed in 22 states in the U.S.

Olga Tarasova is also Chair of the Russian Committee of Sister Cities International of Oklahoma City, the President of U.S. Russia-Civil Society Institute, and a member of the Coordinating Council of Russian Compatriots Living Abroad. She holds a bachelor's degree in Journalism from the Urals State University in Russia and a master's degree in Communication from Pittsburg State University in the U.S.

Quote for the month....

Few things help an individual more than to place responsibility upon him and to let him know that you trust him.

--Booker T. Washington

A message to IVC members and Friends:

We do wish to thank those who provided our wonderful program for our Independence Day week. Four people took us down a very personal memory lane to the day they were naturalized as US citizens and then elaborated on what US citizenship meant to them. Each presenter's story was very different and very unique.

- Young Minn of Korea represented Asia,
- Jalal Daneshfar of Iran represented the Middle East,
- Benford Dott of Ghana represented Africa
- Edgar Miraku of Albania represented Europe.
- Although not officially on the program Rafael Elias of Bolivia shared some of his similar experiences.

We found our new meeting room 107 in the Meinder's School of Business at Oklahoma City University to be a great venue for us and we look forward to meeting there at our August meeting. I also wish to thank Hwa Yun Paddock for securing the nice American flag motif cake for our meeting.

Best Wishes: Ron Paddock

For Your Calendar

August 15 6:30 – 9:30

A Hot Salsa Night at the Sportsman's Club

This is a fund-raiser for COINS – a nonprofit to help the medically uninsured and under insured gain access to healthcare. For more information call Birdie Johnson, ED at 524-8100 or Dr. Susan Harmon – 210-1197.

September 23 -- 11:45 to 1:15

– Latinos, Diversity and Economics

Latino Community Development Agency 18th Annual Recognition Luncheon at National Cowboy Museum. Call 405-236-0701 for more information.

October 3 – Global Oklahoma

--2009 Spotlight on France

Friendship Force

International – OKC

David Hanigar named president of the OKC Chapter at the general business meeting on July 26. There is still room for additional ambassadors for an outbound trip to Shelby, N.C. in September 2009. Contact Linda Kenney at: 405-373-2096.

Trips planned for 2010 include:

- Outbounds to St. Louis and Zutphen Netherlands.
- Inbounds from Hay River, NWT, Canada and Madison, WI.

Sister Cities OKC

Melissa Graffigna, Deanna Bradley, Ray Doonkeen, and County Commissioner Brian Maughan will represent OKC Sister Cities at the International SSI Conference in Dublin, Ireland this month.

Planning is ongoing for the Annual Global Vision awards which will be presented in October.

FYI.... Note received from

Open World 2003

Dear Ms. Bickham,

Oleg Rozhnov, whom you hosted as part of the Open World program in 2003, recently participated in the U.S. - Russia Civil Society Summit. President Obama, who was in Russia visiting with President Dmitriy Medvedev, also attended the summit.

The Center for Strategic & International Studies (<http://csis.org/event/president-obama-joins-us-russia-civil-society-summit>) describes the event as follows:

CSIS, together with the Eurasia Foundation and the New Eurasia Foundation, hosted a meeting in Moscow during the Obama-Medvedev summit. The meeting brought together approximately 130 American and Russian civil society leaders for two days of discussion. President Obama attended the last session

of the meeting, urging a shift in how the United States engages Russian civil society. "We not only need a 'reset' button between the American and Russian government, but we need a fresh start between our societies — more dialogue, more listening, more cooperation in confronting common challenges. For history teaches us that real progress — whether it's economic or social or political — doesn't come from the top-down, it typically comes from the bottom-up," President Obama said. He also received the recommendations that came from the six lines of work: press and new media, human rights and the rule of law, community development, public health, environment, and youth and education.

President Obama delivered a speech in which he noted his own experience working toward improving communities from the bottom up. He argued that government works better when leaders meet with their critics, and acknowledged there were Americans in the audience with whom he has met that expressed their frustration with the slow pace in closing Guantanamo. He also acknowledged the recommendations of the human rights working group that reminded him that human rights defenders all over the world are watching the language and actions of his administration.

Also in the audience were representatives of the Russian government and press.

Previous administrations have met with human rights leaders when visiting Russia, but this was the first time a visiting U.S. president had come to a meeting organized by members of U.S. and Russian civil society. The conveners expressed hope that this was a first small step toward a more robust relationship between nongovernment sectors.

Thank you for hosting for Open World and for partnering with the U.S. Congress in this way on public diplomacy.

Jenny Webb
Open World Program American Councils for International Education

Dr. Paddack Asks for Your Suggestions.

Although I have the September and December programs planned I would welcome your suggestions for speakers for the October and November meetings. I have some ideas, but I know each of you might know someone who would be great for an IVC meeting. If so, do let me hear from you.

Ron Paddack - 405-341-2504
ronaldpaddack@yahoo.com

I'll miss seeing you in August I'll be in Russia for 2 weeks. See you in September. Kay Bickham