

CVIP SPRING 2009 NEWSLETTER

COMMUNITY VOLUNTEERS FOR INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

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GIRL SCOUT WORLD THINKING DAY: A FUN APPROACH

Wouldn't it be fun to learn about your peers in other countries around the world by reporting information from an encyclopedia or from a web site? NOT! How about some personal contact, talking with people from those countries, seeing their artifacts, observing some of their performing arts?

Fifty Girl Scouts from Service Unit 151 in Holt found the latter choice much more engaging! Eight Girl Scout troops "visited" in rotation eight countries on the evening of February 25 in celebration of World Thinking Day, an annual consciousness-raising program the Scouts observe each year. Each girl carried her "passport" and received a flag sticker from each country. Four countries were represented by high school exchange students, and India, Kazakhstan, Brazil and China were represented by our MSU Speakers Bureau volunteers.



The girls saw pictures and artifacts from India, speaking with **Arito Nath**, a graduate student in genetics from Mumbai. **Assem Abzakirova** allowed the girls to try on her beautiful dance dress and headgear brought from Kazakhstan, telling them the cultural significance of each. **Tagore Trajano** from Brazil sat on the floor with his laptop full of pictures and music, surrounded by fascinated girls. He told them about Brazilian Carnival, and then had them participate in a brief lesson in dancing the

samba. **Mumu Yu**, **Mengxue Li** and **Xiaoxiao Chen** shared with the girls a number of artifacts from China, along with a video, pictures and ethnic costumes.

The evening ended with a performance of Chinese dance and traditional dance from Kazakhstan while the girls munched on--you guessed it--Girls Scout cookies!



To learn more about Speakers Bureau, contact **Carol Bryson** or **Carol Towl** at sbcvip@yahoo.com.

Consider yourself invited!

If you receive our Newsletter, then *you* are a member of CVIP and are invited to join us on **May 13th** at the **CVIP ANNUAL MEETING AND SALAD LUNCHEON**. It will be held at the University Lutheran Church, 1020 S. Harrison Road in East Lansing. Come at 11:30 a.m. for punch and conversation. The luncheon begins at 12:00 noon, with the CVIP award ceremony following. The price of admission: bring a salad for ten to share. Drinks and eating utensils will be provided.

Do come!



I finish my first term as president of CVIP, marveling at the large number of our community members who support our international educational objectives. You are the key ingredients that make our programs, designed to welcome international students and scholars to our communities, so successful.

“Change” was a theme in the election this year which CVIP shared. We stayed with our mission and became a more efficient and effective organization. Our retreat in September, facilitated by Frank Fear, jump-started the process. Four major focus groups worked to bring change and renewal to CVIP.

1. **Branding:** We have a great organization and mission and we sponsor excellent activities and programs to promote international understanding, but so many people do not know about us! A group has been working on branding CVIP – getting the message out that we are an international service organization to become involved with if you want to share experiences with MSU’s international students and scholars.

2. **Structural Changes:** The infrastructure (those elements that are often “back-stage”) has undergone streamlining and some labeling changes to better identify who we are and what we do. The CVIP constitution was updated and a new Administrative Services committee (absorbing three other committees) was created. Look for the improved CVIP website that is evolving thanks to the leadership of **Pat Barrett**.

3. **Recruiting new participants:** We are in the process of developing a better understanding of the meaning of volunteerism in today’s world and identifying strategies to expand our base of qualified and committed people.

4. **Public Diplomacy** is the current buzzword in international relations. All our efforts in CVIP contribute to public diplomacy, defined broadly. We all want this world to be a better place to raise our children and grandchildren.

Here are some additional changes we’ve experienced (or anticipate) this year.

☞ A new location in Spartan Village was found for the **Lending Center**, the original service began by CVIP over 45 years ago. (Please see the **Open House Invitation** – page 3 and **Congratulations to Erika Nwankwo Larson**, who also won the 2009 Homer Higbee award this year – page 5.)

☞ The CVIP **Visioning Committee**, under the able leadership of **Arlene Brophy**, has successfully identified issues for the CVIP board to consider. The excellent contributions of **Tamiko Rothhorn, Mary Walker, Marc Thomas, and Fred Fritz** as community members have been instrumental in creating and implementing change and new direction for CVIP.

☞ Through the efforts of both **Pat Barrett** and **Stacey Bieler**, you are enjoying this newly formatted Newsletter. However, after 13 years, Pat is retiring from his co-editorial responsibilities for this Newsletter and is passing the baton to Stacey. The Leadership Committee is looking for someone to assist Stacey. (Are you interested?)

As an organization we are extremely appreciative of the support we receive from the staff of the Office for International Students and Scholars (OISS) at MSU, particularly Nicole Namy, our official liaison, and Peter Briggs, the director who does an excellent job of providing insightful leadership support.

Spring is here and besides looking forward to our annual salad luncheon on May 13th, we are already discussing program plans for the 2009-2010 academic year. Predictions are that MSU will once again enroll a record number of new international students and visiting scholars. All of you play an important role in welcoming and providing support to these future world leaders. We give you our heart-felt thanks for the time and energy you have contributed to the success of CVIP!

David Horner, CVIP President

LENDING CENTER OPEN HOUSE INVITATION

Who: Lending Center

What: Open House for New Location

When: Saturday, May 16, 2009 - 1:00 – 4:00 pm

Where: 1434 Spartan Village, MSU campus, East Lansing

How: See map below or follow these directions:

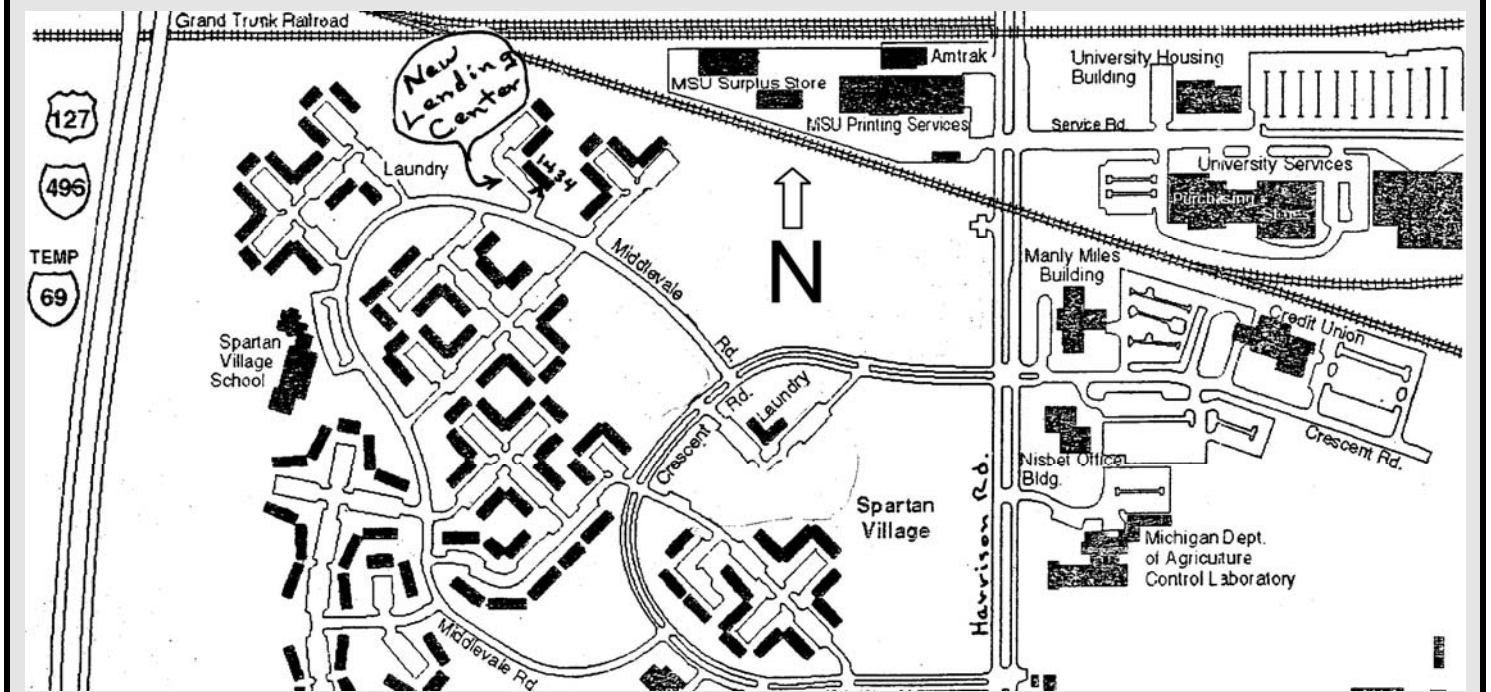
Take Harrison Rd. south to Crescent Rd.

Turn west onto Crescent Rd. into Spartan Village

Turn right (north) onto Middlevale Rd.

Turn right into the second drive on your right, 1434 E & F Spartan Village

Housewarming gifts or donations of items for the Center will be warmly accepted but not required. Come and enjoy light refreshments with your tour. Questions? Lost? Call 282-6553 or 420-0314.



LENDING CENTER WILL HAVE A NEW ADDRESS

Wait till you read what's happened to the Lending Center! It started back in the fall of '08 and won't finish until sometime this spring. This event definitely deserves reading about! **The Lending Center is moving to 1434 Spartan Village.**

It's light; it's bright; it's on the ground floor; it has BIG windows; it's pest free; it's closer to more of our foreign students; it has a large kitchen sink and a clean restroom, linoleum flooring, freshly painted walls, AND it will have beautiful shelving from the former Linens 'n Things. Can you believe it?

Many of you have helped make this happen, and we continue to benefit from your various contributions. Thank you so much.

The most impressive donation came in December 2008. The Linens 'n Things store needed to be out of Frandor Shopping Center by December 21. Right! Nothing else demanding out attention that time of year! Thanks to the CVIP Board (**Peter Briggs** and **David Horner** particularly) and Church Women United, we were able to buy the fixtures. Fortunately, the cost was only about a third of the original "guesstimation." One catch; we had to detach, disassemble, and remove them ourselves. This was the real challenge.

Pastor Fred Fritz and one of his friends came to our rescue big time. They detached, dismantled, loaded up the wall units and trucked them over to an MSU warehouse, since our unit was not ready for occupation. That took one whole day.

The weather was not good. They discovered they really needed a truck with a lift for the

remaining islands to be moved. Thankfully, Pastor Fritz' church, **University Lutheran**, agreed to pay for the rental of just such a truck. And Pastor Fritz knew how to handle all that electrical stuff like an old pro.



The next day he and his friend needed more muscle for the actual lifting involved. Two young men from **Lansing Teen Challenge** came to the rescue. The move occurred during *the* blizzard of 2008. The snow was coming down so fast and furious we could barely see the road. Inches of snow covered the cars in a matter of minutes. Pastor Fritz could not even see his friend at the end of the truck as he was trying to guide him backing up to the warehouse door, but they got the job done.

We're still a couple months away from having everything in place, but we have set a date to have an Open House to show off our new "digs". We hope all of you who receive this newsletter will be able to come and bring a friend or neighbor to see our houseware "recycling" center that helps build international understanding and good will.

To volunteer to help at the Center or to donate items, call **Erika** (351-4548).

**SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM GRANTS
FOUR SCHOLARSHIPS**

The Scholarship Committee granted four scholarships for Spring Semester 2009 from the cash donations, the earnings from participation in Younker's Community Day Sales, and the sale of items donated to the Global Festival's World Gift Shop. The recipients were **So Yun Park** from The Republic of Korea, who is in the masters program in interior design; **Lusine Petrosyan** from Armenia, who is in the doctoral program in cello performance; **Minjung Bae** from The Republic of Korea, who is in the doctoral program in educational psychology; and **Aixia Shao** from The People's Republic of China, who is in the masters program in electrical engineering.

Receipts from the 2008 World Gift Shop were nearly \$6,000 from the items donated by fewer than 50 contributors; there were only 11 new donors. Both numbers are significantly lower than in recent years. Volunteers helped collect, sort, price, pack, transport, display, and sell the items. The Committee is grateful to both the contributors and volunteers whose generosity has enabled this Committee to continue granting scholarships to spouses of international students.

Participation in Younker's Community Days provided \$726.54 for scholarships. This continues to be a significant event for fundraising for the Committee. Please contact members for information and sources for coupons this fall. This will be a great opportunity for you to purchase holiday items while donating \$5.00 to CVIP for a booklet containing a coupon worth \$10.00 toward merchandise and several 20% discount coupons.

The Committee now begins the cycle again. We need help in soliciting items to sell at the

World Gift Shop. Please request appropriate items from friends and inform garage sale persons about making tax-deductible contributions. Please contact the Committee for further information regarding the delivery of the gift items.

The Committee also appreciates cash donations for our worthwhile cause. Donations are, of course, tax deductible. Please make checks payable to Michigan State University (with a notation that the funds are for CVIP Scholarships) and send to the attention of **Lois Sollenberger**, CVIP Office, Room 12C, International Center, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI 48824.

Find out more about the Scholarship Program from **Lillian Kumata** (351-6046 or kumata@msu.edu) or **Lois Sollenberger** (349-1862 or hsolly@msu.edu).

CONGRATULATIONS, ERIKA!

Winner of this year's Homer Higbee Award, CVIP member **Erika Nwankwo Larson!** "Above and beyond the call of duty"—this phrase certainly describes Erika's efforts during the last seven years. As the chair of the CVIP Lending Center, she has kept the Center staffed and constantly restocked with household items that are loaned out to newly-arrived international students living in university apartments. But Erika went above and beyond her normal duties when she negotiated with the university for a commodious new venue for the Lending Center in Spartan Village. Then she got a huge bargain on sets of large shelves and counters from Linens 'n Things, a Frandor store that was going out of business. You can see how these shelves look in our new Center if you accept the invitation to the Open House on page 3.

ESL STUDENTS ENJOY HOME VISITS

The CVIP Home Visits program partners with the Haslett A+ English Language School to provide their international students visits to American homes. The visits occurred on November 11, 2008 and March 31, 2009. Sixty- three students participated in November, and forty-four students in March. Between the two programs, fifty volunteers offered their services.



The opportunity to practice English in a safe environment outside of school is an invaluable experience for the students. The students returned to school quite animated, sharing their experiences with their classmates and teachers. “Big, clean, beautiful houses” and “very, very nice hosts” were the most heard comments. Thank you to all of the hosts and drivers for facilitating this wonderful cultural exchange.



Volunteer Adventures:

You volunteered to drive for the Home Visits program. You’re assigned to be the second driver for a trip to your neighbor’s house. You arrive at school at the appointed time, and your neighbor doesn’t show up. You wait and then call her. No answer.

You decide that the group ought to set out anyway. Another driver steps in, and everyone is on their way. You arrive at your destination. You knock on the hostesses’ door and find that the hostess is unavailable. Obviously unprepared, but without missing a beat, you invite the group into your home, (very close by), dirty dishes in the sink and all. The students enjoy themselves and get to snack on an American favorite--Girl Scout Cookies.

Thank you, **Becky Lesmez**, for your gracious hospitality!

In the fall, **Bonnie Ghavami** volunteered to host. The morning of the visits, she became ill, yet managed to find her own replacement, her next-door neighbor, **Jean Hamilton**. Thank you, **Jean** for stepping up!



To know more about the Home Visits program, call **Lisa Homeniuk** (337-2297).

SHARE INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP AT EVERY TUESDAY (E.T.)

The Every Tuesday Group serves the wives of MSU international graduate students. E.T. follows the MSU academic calendar and has completed its weekly meetings for the 2008-2009 school year.

Over the past nine months, E.T. with its 6-8 American volunteers served 40-50 spouses and their pre-school children. They came from China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia, Hong Kong, Mexico, Brazil and the Ukraine. Every Tuesday meets at University Lutheran Church on the first, third and fourth Tuesday of the month.



Every Tuesday is a support group whose aim is to help diminish the isolation of international spouses, who generally live in university apartments. Because of visa restrictions, they cannot work in our country. E.T. serves as a social network that helps these international women make new friends. They also gain a place to find answers to the many questions they have about the new location and culture in which they find themselves.

We form our friendships while doing a craft or cooking demonstration. University Lutheran Church has a huge kitchen, so all 15-30 of us

can help prepare recipes under the direction of that day's experts. For Thanksgiving, the Americans prepare a turkey dinner complete with trimmings. For the Chinese New Year, the Chinese and Koreans taught us how to make their special dishes—along with information as to where we can purchase the specialty ingredients here in East Lansing.

Our craft activities range from making holiday table runners to stamping decorations on tiles for table hot pads, sewing fleece hat and scarf sets to decorating miniature straw hats for closet sachets (see picture). Then there was the day a line dancing instructor had us all up and moving, as she taught us several dances. That afternoon ended with all ages involved doing the Hokey Pokey.

Sound like fun? If so, come join us. Our next meeting will be Tuesday, September 15, 2009 from 1-3 PM. Pre-school children are welcome. You'll probably find that children and their mothers have much in common around the world.

For more information, please call **Mary Barrett** (337-2212) or email barrett9@msu.edu.

CVIP Newsletter Editors:

Pat Barrett and Stacey Bieler

Editorial Assistant: Mary Barrett

Submissions of articles and other features by email are welcome. Please send to cvip@msu.edu.

FRIENDSHIP FAMILY THROWS POTLUCK PARTY

Over 120 people attended the first Friendship Family Potluck Party held since 2005, when **Iris Horner** began working with this program. On Sunday afternoon, April 5, there was lots of energy, food and fun. New and old friendship families were acknowledged and we heard some great stories from a few of the families.

Amber Arashiro created an interactive bingo game which had people moving around asking each other questions to win small prizes. **Nicole Namy** was a great support person who knew how much chicken schwarma to order for the group. The event was so successful and well attended that the question was asked: "Where can we find a bigger space to do this next time?"



Thanks to everyone who helped set up tables and stayed to clean up. A special thanks to **Nicole, Amber & Peter Arashiro, student Eiko Hatagawa, David Horner, and Marion and Lon McCollum**, who supported our efforts in this party.

Over 300 international students are currently enjoying time with 250 or so volunteer American families. Following are some of the evaluation comments that families have shared regarding past memorable moments:

"We have had so many memorable moments, I don't know where to begin! Li helped us decorate our

Christmas tree, we decorated Easter eggs together, went to a cider mill, and talked and talked. ... She's a wonderful person and we feel incredibly fortunate to have her in our lives. She's also a fabulous role model for our daughter, who adores her."

"...our student and I shared the same birth date, so we had a combined birthday party. He appeared to be very touched by the event."

"...the most fun was when they cooked dinner for us. At first I think they were horrified that I asked them to cook for us but then they got into shopping and cooking. It really was a lot of fun!"

"We prepared a Thanksgiving feast in March so that our student could experience that before returning to South Korea in the summer. We still laugh at how much food she was able to pack into her tiny body...and that she liked pumpkin pie so much!"

"We had fun teaching Jian about BBQ'ing. We celebrated every American holiday together...When Jian found out that Mike was going to Shanghai on business, they spent a lot of time talking about customs, protocol etc. Then Jian contacted his father, whose village and business are a few hours away, but has an office in Shanghai. Jian's dad made arrangements for Mike to be picked up at the airport. The English speaking co-worker, Henry, and his wife gave Mike a personal tour of Shanghai before taking him to his hotel.....This has been a very rewarding experience for us..."

If you do not currently have an international student to welcome into our community, please let us know and we will be happy to match you with one of the many international students who would love to meet YOU. Our next orientation will take place in September 2009.

Please go to isp.msu.edu/cvip and sign up to be a volunteer Friendship Family, or call **Iris Horner** (349-1865) or **Bonnie Bankson** (482-6657).

VISIONING COMMITTEE FOCUSING ON RECRUITMENT AND SCHOLARSHIPS

The Visioning Committee is currently engaged in four projects relating to CVIP recruitment and scholarships. The first two projects involve the development of a professional quality video (Group Coordinator: **Tamiko Rothhorn**) and a brochure intended to tell about CVIP and its various programs (Group Coordinator: **Marc Thomas**). These will be used to recruit new volunteers from MSU faculty groups, service clubs, churches and local school teachers. In addition, a third project focuses on other ways in which CVIP can implement and strengthen volunteer recruitment (Group Coordinator: **Fred Fritz**).

A fourth project is working on a solution to the present difficulty of finding married students who qualify for CVIP scholarships, because of a recent change in U.S. laws dealing with the immigration status of international students (Group Coordinator: **Lillian Kumata**). Now in order for the spouse of an MSU international student to receive a CVIP scholarship, he or she must be a full time student. This greatly reduces the number of scholarship candidates who meet this requirement.

Thanks to **Arlene Brophy**, who is the Chair of the Visioning Committee, for submitting this report.

CVIP'S NEW UNIT: ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Administrative Services volunteers staff the CVIP Office, keep and update the official membership list, publish the *CVIP Newsletter*, and maintain the CVIP website. These functions, formerly performed by Office Committee, Public Relations, and Membership Committee volunteers, were combined into one unit in the fall semester of 2008.

William Eubank is the main Office staff person. He reports that the Office will get a second computer from the Office for International Students and Scholars. William plans to dedicate this one for keeping official CVIP records and master copies.

Stacey Bieler will continue as co-editor of the *CVIP Newsletter*. Stacey tells us that this issue is the first one to feature color pictures. Stacey is also looking for a co-editor.

Pat Barrett will take over the task of maintaining the new CVIP website, in addition to his job of updating the membership list. He expects the new website to be online by the end of May, but as website development goes, this may be optimistic.

For more information about Administrative Services, call **William Eubank** (353-1735), **Stacey Bieler** (332-0464) or **Pat Barrett** (337-2212).

2008 GLOBAL FESTIVAL JUDGED A TREMENDOUS SUCCESS

The Global Festival Committee had lots of help from many, many volunteers from CVIP, from the community and from MSU students--both international and domestic-- a special thanks to all who helped to make this a very exciting festival for everyone.

Students helped our Public Relations Committee distribute flyers and announcements on and off campus and along Grand River. The PR Committee made many flyers for elementary students in Okemos, E. Lansing, DeWitt, Mason, Holt and many of the Lansing schools. As a result the Children's Games area, supported by MSU student volunteers, was well attended. CVIP volunteers located at the Welcome Tables at the Union entrances gave out "passports" to visiting children.

The children were encouraged to have their name written in another language in their passport when they visited over 25 nationality club exhibits from around the world. Many international students volunteered to staff their exhibits and also to perform in the Union Ballroom, showing off their home culture in music and dance.

National dress was exhibited in the opening style show parade that wound around the first and second floors of the MSU Union and ended up in the Ballroom, gathering the crowd as they went. Cameras were flashing as these students marched by in their lovely dresses and suits. This was one of the first early events of the day and even by this time, there were crowds of people on the first and second floor of the Union.

The student performances began after the parade and lasted all afternoon until 5:00 p.m. More groups applied to participate

this year and in spite of the many performers, the show went very smoothly. The Ball-room was packed and enthusiastic applause was heard throughout the afternoon.



Again this year, the World Gift Shop had many bargain-hunting shoppers. More than 60 people volunteered to help sell the donated treasures from around the world. We were pleased to have so much student help, particularly from the MSU Law School, the Student Union and Student Service group who also helped with set up and packing up at the end of the day. More money was made to support the CVIP Scholarship Committee that provides successful and needy spouses with tuition support.

Our committee is looking forward to another great Global Festival in November of this year. So mark your calendars for **Sunday, November 15, 2009**. We are on a roll to make each festival a little better than the last one.

For more information about the Global Festival, call **Peggy Arbanas** (517 669-1239 or email arbanasp@msu.edu).