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HIGHLIGHTS OF 2004

LETTER OF THANKS FROM BESLAN:



AMBASSADOR
OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
TO THE USA

September 21, 2004

Ms. Barbara Coish, Chairman
Windham Suzdal Sister City Committee
9 Golden Brook Road
Windham, NH 03087

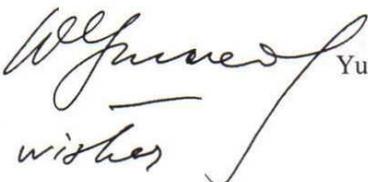
Dear Ms. Coish,

I would like to express to you and your colleagues my most sincere and profound gratitude for your feelings of compassion for the tragic loss of life as a result of a despicable terrorist act in Northern Ossetia.

I want you to know how important it was to see your friendly support and sympathy coming from the heart.

Your donation is very much appreciated and is being forwarded to the families of Beslan victims.

Sincerely,


Yuri V. Ushakov
Best wishes

FUNDRAISER SUCCESS! OUR LETTER TO THE RUSSIAN EMBASSY:

September 15, 2004

Embassy of the Russian Federation
2650 Wisconsin Ave NW
Washington, DC 20007

Today at the polls for our primary election for State officials, members of our Sister City Committee held a raffle of small items from our Sister City, Suzdal. It is our usual practice to hold such a raffle at elections in order to gain a small amount of money for our treasury. These monies are used during exchange visits for support of activities. It was decided that today's donations would be sent to you at the Embassy for you to distribute to those affected by the unspeakable horror that was perpetrated upon the children and parents of Beslan. Our citizens were today very generous in their support and thus we are sending a contribution to you for \$500.00 for you to distribute to those in need.

Four of us left Moscow on August 25th after a wonderful visit with friends in Suzdal. That was the same day as the beginning of the most recent terror activity in Russia. By phone and email we have shared our grief over the loss of life especially the lives lost of children just beginning their life's journey.

We have read with interest the stirring words of Ambassador Ushakov as published in the Washington Post. We pray that our countries may join together in the fight to eradicate terror from our earth.

Sincerely,

Barbara Coish, Chairman, Windham Suzdal Sister City Committee
9 Golden Brook Road
Windham, NH 03087

ARTICLE BY YURI USHAKOV, AMBASSADOR OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION TO THE U.S., PUBLISHED IN THE WASHINGTON POST ON SEPTEMBER 8, 2004: All of Russia grieves today because terrorists made a choice to kill children. This terrible tragedy, with its huge loss of life, is one we shall never forget. We shall never forget the great heroism of local Russians, who leapt forward to protect children with their own bodies. We shall never forget the heroism of our commandos who stormed the terrorist positions when it became clear that the children were being shot. At the same time, to echo the words of President Vladimir Putin, we as a nation were not prepared for such an attack. There will be a full investigation, as is appropriate for a tragedy of such a scale. But we must never forget the enormity of this crime against the civilized world, perpetrated against the most defenseless among us – the children. Truly, it is appropriate to say that Beslan is our 9/11.

VISIT TO SUZDAL - AUGUST: For almost two weeks in August, members of the Windham Sister City Committee spent time visiting with friends in our sister city. Bruce Moeckel, John Breda, Bette Williams and Barbara Coish made the trip. During our time in Suzdal, we had several interesting contacts.

We had a tour of the milk plant where milk is processed and many other products from milk are produced. We tasted many products some of which are quite different from those produced in the states. Svetlana Urvacheva, Director of this plant is nominated for an award as an extraordinary business woman.

We visited Orphanages #3 and #5 and personally delivered a donation from the Town of Windham. For several years now the Town budget has included a donation of \$500. to be given to these orphanages. The donation was divided equally between the two orphanages and was given directly to the women in charge of these facilities.

The parents of the students who visited Windham in May prepared a wonderful get together for us. The meeting was in the forest lodge and in spite of rain we had a great time remembering our time together here in Windham.

As usual we dropped in to see the members of the quilt club "Suzdal Swatch" It has been our pleasure to assist these women in the sale of their work and we always try to carry to them a fresh supply of fabric.

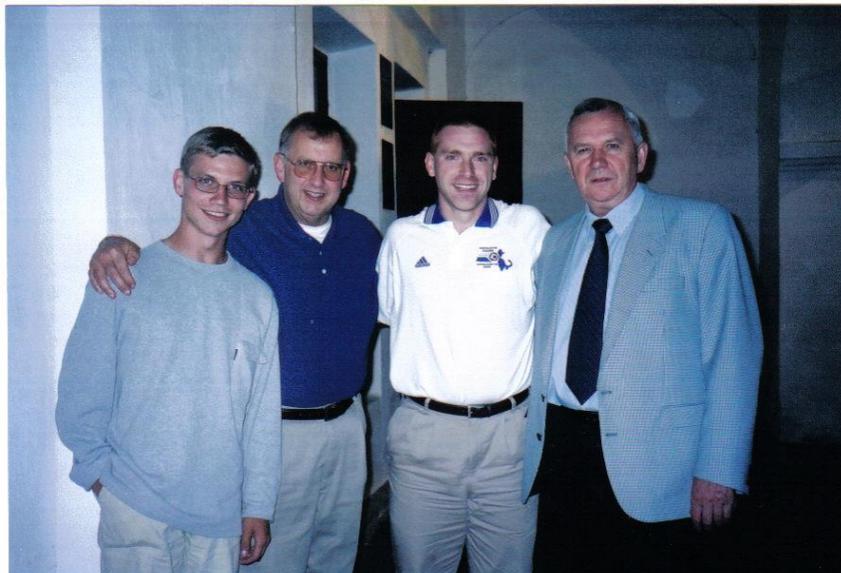
We visited the final resting place of Olga Surikova and left flowers at the site. Olga was the subject of a little book about Suzdal which was written by Russ Kendall about the Town of Suzdal.

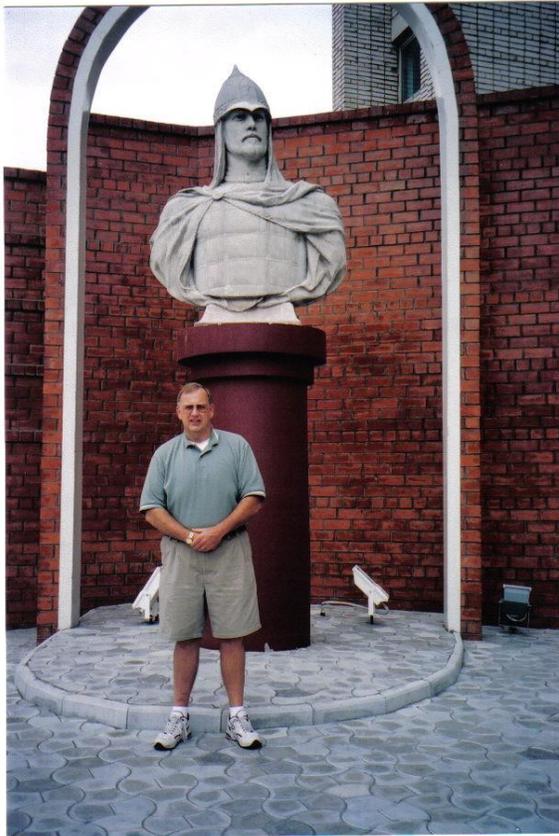
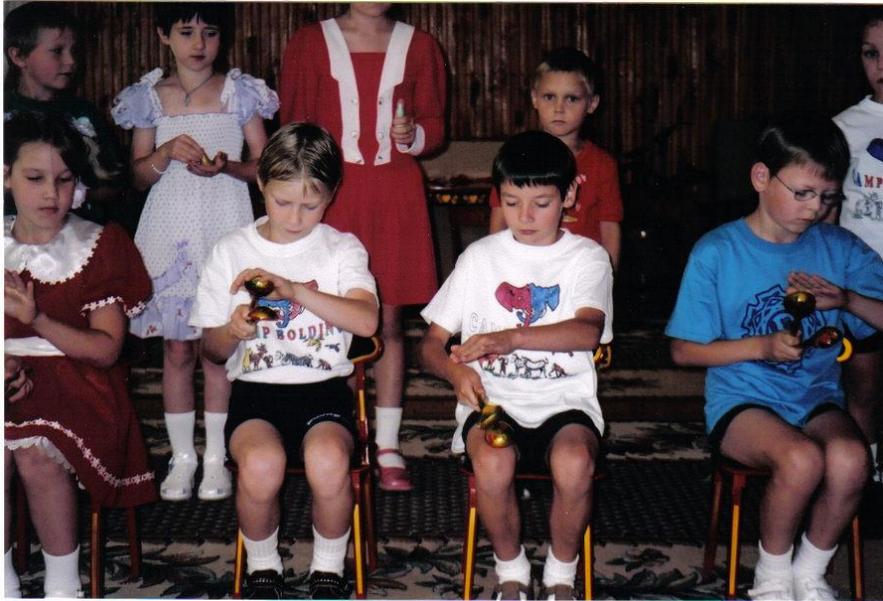
Bruce Moeckel was interested to visit the Police Training Institute in Vladimir. It was a very interesting tour and Bruce had his picture taken underneath the statue of Alexander Nevsky.

Progress on the Friendship House of Suzdal is suspended and will remain so until there is a change in administration. The committee fully intends to continue with this project in some form in the future when the timing is right.

Suzdal is looking forward to local elections in 2005. The elections will occur sometime between March and October. The date has not yet been set by the region.

We left Moscow on the same day as the beginning of the recent terror activity. We grieve for those lost and especially for the children of Beslan.







SUZDAL STUDENTS/TEACHERS VISIT WINDHAM, MAY: The Sister City Committee welcomed two teachers and several students from Suzdal to Windham this month. The group will be with us until the 18th, and the Sister City Committee would like to thank those Windham families who have opened their homes to these guests, helping to make this visit possible.

With us from Suzdal are: Galeena Orlova, 14, staying with the Dolloff family; Katya Zakharova, 13, staying with the Keating family; Yulia Surikova, 14, staying with the Norman family; Dasha Urvacheva, 15, staying with John and Kathy Barry; Seva Kuznetsov, 14, staying with the Mackey family; Iliya Komarov, 13, staying with the Yourtee family; Dima Shevelev, 14, staying with the Soucy family; Boris Bykov, 15, staying with the Spatharos family; Pavel Grebov, 14, staying with the Wrenn family; Ludmilla Shamba, staying with J and Carol Gross; and, Galeena Razumkina, staying with Mary Lee Underhill.

Highlights of their trip will include: a trip to Searles Castle; "Castaways" production at Center School; visits to/attendance at Golden Brook, Center, and Middle schools; pot luck dinner with the Russia Society of NH; visit to Selectmen's meeting; evening of miniature golf at Victorian Park; attendance at a Center School dance; and, possibly, trips to Canobie Lake Park and the Concord State House.



SISTER CITY NEWS, FEBRUARY: During the February school vacation week, two members of the Sister City Committee Barbara Coish and John Breda traveled to Suzdal, Russia. John spent the time there teaching English to students in grades three through eleven. In each class, John discussed various topics of interest to the students. It is the plan to have this educational opportunity happen on a yearly basis as John's teaching was greatly enjoyed by students and teachers alike.

The committee plans to host a group of eight students and their English teachers from Suzdal here in Windham in May or September. The students will be ages' 13-14. When definite dates are known, a call for assistance with the visit will be made to the Windham community.

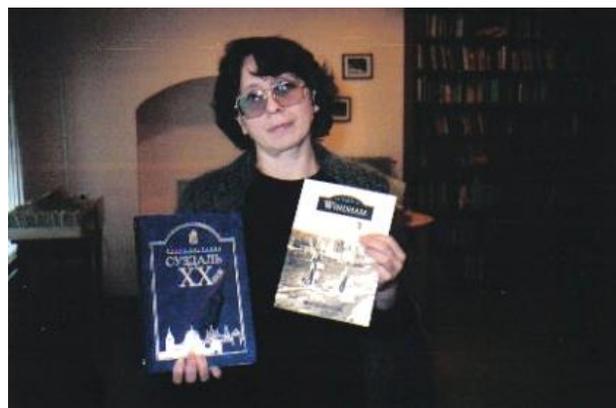
A large number of books in English for young children were donated to the Suzdal library in memory of Olga Surikova, the young girl who was the subject of a children's book about her old Russian town, Suzdal. Olga and a friend were tragically killed by a car as they walked at night in Vladimir.

A financial contribution to Orphanages #3 and # 5 was delivered. This money was a gift of the Windham Presbyterian Church and each orphanage will use the donation to improve the lives of the approximately 60 children in their care.

Discussions were held regarding the ongoing American house project. More definite information will soon be available as to the future direction of the project. Language lessons have been ongoing for some time under the umbrella of the American house project and the Partnership Without Borders.

A group will be going to Suzdal in late July to the first part of August. Persons interested in joining the group should immediately contact the committee.

Pictured below: Left: An English class of 5th graders, Right: Galina Nasadova, Librarian with copies of a book about Suzdal and Brad Dinsmore's picture book of historical images of Windham.



SUZDAL SWATCH HAS SURPRISE VISITOR: The women of the quilt club in Suzdal, "The Suzdal Swatch" had a special visitor during the Christmas holiday in January 2004. The President of the Russian Federation, Vladimir Putin was in the town celebrating the holiday with relatives. The photo below was taken with the quilters at the site of their quilt exhibition.

