

TF

TOLSTOY

FOUNDATION

NEWSLETTER

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YOUNG RUSSIAN CADETS AT TOLSTOY FOUNDATION CENTER

THE TOLSTOY FOUNDATION CENTER resonated with children's laughter and cadet songs for 2 months this summer as the TF hosted a group of 18 boys (ages 11-14)—fifteen from the Krasnoyarsk Cadet Academy and 3 orphans from a "school-internat" in Krasnoyarsk (potential candidates for the cadet corps). The Krasnoyarsk Cadet Academy is not affiliated with any branch of the Russian military. It is a boarding school whose primary purpose is to instill in young boys the proper cultural and spiritual values; the education and the psychological equilibrium necessary to become productive and self-reliant. About 50% of the enrolled cadets are either orphans or come from needy families.

Thanks to the efforts of the splendid teaching staff of the Alexandra Tolstoy Institute, the boys participated in a daily curriculum geared toward improving their English language skills, as well as rekindling cultural, spiritual awareness and historical pride so vitally important in shaping a new generation in Russia today.

The boys won the hearts of everyone who came in contact with them. It was a major learning experience for all—especially for those who have never had any personal contact with children from Russia, and for the boys

from Siberia who had never dreamed that there were so many generous and hospitable people in America who share a common language, religion and culture as well!

The deep bonds that have formed between these boys and so many people of diverse generations and walks of life is remarkable. Moreover, the memories and the lessons learned, that these boys have taken home with them, will remain with them for many years to come.

Highlights of the 2-month visit included:

- Excursions to major points of interest.
- A gathering at the TF Center of the old and the new generations of Russian cadets to pass on traditions and to celebrate together a cadet holiday on the feast day of SS. Constantine and Helena.
- An appearance on WNYC Radio's "New York Kids" (kids interviewing kids).
- An excellent performance commemorating Pushkin's anniversary, including excerpts from Boris Godunov.
- Visits to Washington, D.C. and

St. Petersburg, Florida as guests of the local Russian-American communities, organizations and parishes.

- A "VIP" welcome at West Point Military Academy.
- A commencement ceremony and luncheon on St. Sergius Day.

Xenia Woyevodsky



TF Board and Staff with cadet boys



Father Gregory bids fond farewell to cadets



Boris Godunov performance

On behalf of the Board of Directors and Staff of the Tolstoy Foundation, we wish to express our deep appreciation to all our donors and friends and to the many organizations and parishes who participated in our cadet program. We thank you for your support and for generously opening your hearts and homes to our children. We couldn't have done it without you! Unfortunately, space will not allow us to list all the many donors to this program. We would, however, like to acknowledge herewith those individuals and organizations without whose special efforts, participation and support the success of this program could not have been realized.

Association of Russian Cadets
Graduated Outside Russia, Inc., NY
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Rev. Elias Gorsky
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Association of Russian Cadets, Inc., St. Petersburg, FL
Congress of Russian Americans, St. Petersburg Chapter

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Our heartfelt gratitude also goes to the teaching staff of the Alexandra Tolstoy Institute.

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CELEBRATING TF'S 60TH ANNIVERSARY AT TF CENTER...

OVER FOUR HUNDRED CELEBRANTS turned up for the two-day Jubilee held at the TF Center on Labor Day Weekend, in the words of the Foundation's Executive Director, "to honoring those who came before us and who are a part of the rich tapestry that makes up the legacy of the Tolstoy Foundation."

The Jubilee Weekend began with a memorial service honoring the memory of Alexandra Tolstoy and other departed founders, colleagues and friends of the Foundation. There was a very special nostalgic feeling that permeated everything which transpired during this weekend. Old friends were gathered back into the fold, and new friends came away with a better understanding of TF's legacy.

The first reunion of camp alumni and others who passed through the "Tolstoy Farm" (later the TF Center) for over half a century brought back many people and warm memories. Among them were Lucy Schmidt, Oleg Maceralnik and Peter Melnick. Lucy Schmidt and her family lived at the Tolstoy Farm from 1949-1958 after fleeing the horrors of war-torn Europe. Oleg Maceralnik also lived there for a year and a half as a boy in the 1940's after his father moved them to the Farm from Manhattan. Peter and Helen Melnick were the first children in need brought to live at the Farm in 1941.

The 60th Anniversary Gala held on Sunday stressed the international flavor of the celebrations with representatives from the Russian, Serbian, Tibetan, Kalmyk, Mongol, Northern Caucasian and American peoples in attendance. The enthusiasm and the overwhelming outpouring of gratitude to TF were most heartwarming. Djab Naminov Burchinow, hon-

orary citizen of the Republic of Kalmykia, gave a touching presentation honoring the memory of Alexandra Tolstoy, Tatiana Schaufuss and Teymuraz Bagration for their efforts in helping the people of Kalmykia gain entry into the U.S. after they had been refused entry by 17 countries because of widespread discrimination against Asiatic people. Yahiya Kazan, representative of the Circassian community, praised the diversity of TF's anniversary celebration as exemplifying all that is best in cooperation between nationalities and which is characteristic of TF's broad, non-prejudiced approach to humanitarian assistance.

In celebrating 60 years of helping people build new lives in the U.S., the two-day Gala brought together alumni and descendants of alumni with many varied ethnic backgrounds, who came to reminisce and to show their gratitude, sharing colorful national dances and music.

This rich event was woven together by mutual participation and the remembrance of how much good TF had done for so many lives. As both a culmination and a



Pictured above:
Tanya Tolstoy Penkrat, Co-Chair



celebration of 60 Years, the Jubilee generated a dynamic spirit of goodwill and enthusiasm towards doing good, which will certainly act as a springboard for future life-enhancing programs in the 21st Century.

Xenia Chermeteff

...AND IN MOSCOW

ON APRIL 21 1999, Xenia Woyevodsky, TF's Executive Director, and I arrived in Moscow on the first leg of our trip, which would also include Voronezh, Tula and Munich. We were in Moscow for the

our arrival from Viktor Aleksandrovich Moskvina, the Director, and were most pleased with the photographic exhibit which was put together with material from

"I have the honor of bringing home to Russia the humanitarian legacy of Alexandra Lvovna — a legacy that is not ours alone, but belongs also to the Russian people whom she loved and defended throughout her life"

XENIA WOYEVODSKY

opening of an exhibit at the Biblioteka-Fond "Russkoye Zarubezhiye" on "Alexandra Tolstoy and TF's 60 Years of Service to Humanity", and to celebrate TF's 60th Anniversary. This was an event of historical proportions for the Tolstoy Foundation and for the legacy of Alexandra Tolstoy, whose work

With my Russian-American background and frequent trips to Russia, including studying in Siberia, and as Vice President of the Friends of Tolstoy, I served as a qualified spokesperson for the Tolstoy Foundation of the future. Everybody truly enjoyed our well-balanced and potent representation, which tied

the history and the strength of this tremendous Foundation to the vision of our future. There was a total of eight speakers that evening, among whom were Viktor Aleksandrovich Moskvina, Yuri Evgenievich

Hechinoff, author; Valentine Zaharovich Kunin, Director of the Yasnaya Polyana School in Tula; and Lydia M. Lubimova, Director of the L. N. Tolstoy Museum in Moscow.



From left to right: V.A. Moskvina, X. Woyevodsky, S. Janke and Y.E. Hechinoff

The entire presentation — and the warm and lively reception following — received a great deal of television and media coverage throughout Russia. We seemed to have struck a note that is in harmony with the current mood in Russia. The official "rehabilitation" of Alexandra Tolstoy by the Russian Federation in 1994 has made way for a genuine thirst for information on Leo Tolstoy's youngest daughter.

We were totally overwhelmed by the reception we received everywhere we went. Although very few people in Russia know enough about the Tolstoy Foundation and its activities, there exists today tremendous goodwill towards us by way of Alexandra Tolstoy. Many people expressed to us their strong desire to see that her humanitarian principles and commitment to her fellow man will also inspire their future generation.

Sacha Janke

"... I am here this evening as a representative of the next generation of humanitarians"

SACHA JANKE



From left to right: Y.E. Hechinoff, V.Z. Kunin and X. Woyevodsky

on behalf of all victims of communism was villainized and repressed for over half a century by the Soviet authorities. We were touched by the warm reception we received upon

Return to Yasnaya Polyana School

*"Here now the dark times have ended.
Your image grows brighter and brighter.
Alexandra Tolstoy! echoes along
The pathways of Yasnaya Polyana,
Unshakable, mighty, robust,
Having lived almost a hundred years,
I see you behind each branch..."*

Excerpt from "A BELATED LETTER FROM RUSSIA
TO ALEXANDRA IVOVNA" By V. Hodulin

IN APRIL, MY YOUNG ASSISTANT and V.P. of Friends of Tolstoy, Sacha Janke, and I embarked on the first official TF trip to Yasnaya Polyana School. The trip by car from Moscow took only 2 hours, but in reality it was a monumental journey that took 60 years to accomplish! Yasnaya Polyana School was founded by Alexandra Tolstoy, who successfully secured the funding for its construction and served as its director for about one year prior to her exile. It is an imposing white structure located on the other side of the road from Yasnaya

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*V.Z. Kunin and TF delegation with
young student*



*The unforgettable Nikolai P. Puzin,
distinguished archivist, YP Museum*



G.N. Piroshkova with TF delegation

Tolstoi Library's Gala Anniversary in Munich

THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY celebration of the Tolstoi Library in April was held at the beautiful palace of Ludwig of Bavaria in the center of Munich. In attendance were members of the German, the Bavarian and the Munich authorities, along with the U.S. Consul General, prominent members of the clergy and other distinguished members of the local Russian-speaking community. Many of the distinguished speakers praised the Tolstoi Library's contribution to the cultural and intel-

lectual life of this charming Bavarian capital.

It was a great honor and privilege for me to participate in this event as a tribute to the splendid work that TF began in Munich during the post-war period, and which continues today.

We are sister organizations sharing common roots and a brilliant legacy of humanitarian and cultural activities. The valuable collection of the Tolstoi Library

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*Tolstoi Library and staff in Munich (from left to right): Gottrud Ritz,
Director, Tatjana Erschow, Viktorija Falkova and Nina Leptih*

AN EXCERPT FROM SACHA JANKE'S DIARY: VORONEZH

The adventures continued...

FOLLOWING OUR TWO days in Yasnaya Polyana, having already spent two days in Moscow, Xenia Woyevodsky and I arrived in Voronezh on April 26, 1999. The next two days were packed with activity regarding the establishment of potential exchange programs. Dr. Tatiana Nastasheva, an integral member of the vitamin distribution program in Voronezh, led the way.

Our first stop was a children's home in the city that has been benefiting from the vitamin program.

There we met with the Director and toured the facilities and were able to observe first hand the benefits of the program. Our next stop was the Ministry of Health, where we met with the Deputy Minister and discussed ways in which TF could further its humanitarian activity in the area. Our third stop was a children's home out-

side the city, whose primary function is to deal with mentally and physically disabled children. Again, we met with the Director and toured the facilities. Nothing could have prepared us to witness the struggle that the children and the staff deal with on a daily basis as a result of scarce resources.

Our second day in Voronezh, Xenia and I visited two children's hospitals and an orphanage. Our first stop was at the newer of the two children's hospitals in the city, followed by a visit to the older chil-

drren's hospital in order to make a comparison. Dr. Nastasheva then took Xenia and me to a different type of children's orphanage. It was an orphanage with many gifted children. There, we were greeted with a lovely performance of song and dance. The children then led us on a tour of their school, at which point Lubov Tsapina, an energetic and dedicated woman, met with us and discussed creating exchange programs with TF. This was a positive and productive note on which to end our stay in Voronezh.

In the warmth of the Russian tradition, Dr. Nastasheva, Lubov Tsapina and many others escorted Xenia and me to the train, thus bringing to a close an informative and worthwhile visit. As a result of our joint efforts with the city of Voronezh, we will be welcoming their children at the Foundation this Fall.



PHOTOS BY SACHA JANKE

Friends of Tolstoy

THE FRIENDS OF TOLSTOY are planning a fundraising event centered on the footage of Col. Ilya Tolstoy's epic trip to Tibet. They envision a grand preview for the Spring of 2000, with the potential to have subsequent screenings open to the general public. This event will be held in New York City, and the proceeds will go towards new programs for Russian orphans. The Friends of Tolstoy continues actively to recruit talented new people to join the team. Their efforts, thus far, have been extremely successful.

St. Petersburg Activites

IN 1998, THE TOLSTOY FOUNDATION approved 13 grants for applications received through the St. Petersburg office for small, local "grass-root" charitable institutions. Our commitment to assisting charities in Russia continued in 1999 with approval of 10 additional grants. Examples of grants that we approved are: "Children and Charity," an initiative to set up a cultural center/school to get children off the streets for approximately 250 youths; "Hope," a teenage halfway-house for 8 homeless kids; "Sunny Wind," a learning center for 4-5 year-olds and their parents; "Rider," riding club/stables for 15-20 kids from orphanages and crisis families; and "Colon," which supported the publication of brochures regarding stoma care and rehabilitation.

YASNAYA POLYANA

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Polyana Museum. It was ravaged during WWII, but the spirit and the devotion to its founder apparently continued through the bleakest times, when few in Soviet Russia could openly acknowledge Alexandra Tolstoy, branded by the Soviets as a traitor to her country. We received a very warm reception from the director Valentin Z. Kunin, from a very distinguished member of the faculty, Galina N. Piroshkova, and from the entire staff and student body.

The school currently has 250

students (ages 11 to 18) — children from the local villages, including about 80 orphans from the local orphanage. Very little regional funding is provided, and the School Administration is struggling to make ends meet. Teachers have not been paid in 6 months. In keeping with old traditions, the school continues to provide a very balanced education, which does not exist in most regional schools, including moral and ethical instruction, developing natural creative talents of children through music, art, literature, poetry, as well as advancing practical training programs

designed to develop skills and to build self-reliance.

Without a doubt, the spirit of Alexandra Tolstoy permeates the halls and the classrooms of Yasnaya Polyana School, and her portraits hang everywhere. We experienced very emotional moments here as we began to recount the years of separation which were totally swept away by this first official TF visit, leaving us very much more aware of what binds us together as two institutions and "off-spring" of Alexandra Lvovna.

Xenia Woyevodsky

TOLSTOI LIBRARY

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with its unique archival material is one of the major private, Russian cultural resources outside of Russia today. It directly complements the library and the archives at the Tolstoy Foundation Center. Today, the library also serves as a Russian cultural center. It is a unique "cultural oasis" which fosters mutual understanding and cultural awareness through the universal language of art, literature and music.

Xenia Woyevodsky



Borzoi Dog Show

AFTER A 24-YEAR ABSENCE, the sleek and elegant Russian Borzoi recently returned to the Tolstoy Foundation Center for a dog show, which was sponsored by the Borzoi Club of Greater New York. These noble Russian dogs, whose ancestry can be traced to *boyar* times, were welcome guests and were greatly enjoyed by all.



On the occasion of the
Twentieth Anniversary
of the death of
Alexandra Lvovna Tolstoy
Founder, Humanitarian
and Writer
September 26, 1979

ETERNAL MEMORY!



A BANNER YEAR!

OUR 60TH ANNIVERSARY YEAR HAS BEEN ONE OF ENORMOUS REVITALIZATION AND considerable achievement. We are invigorated and we are encouraged by so much that has happened this year and which is reflected in this anniversary newsletter. We are moving forward in realizing our dual mission of humanitarian and cultural concerns at home and abroad. We have expanded our activities in Russia, and we are currently working in Moscow, St. Petersburg, Voronezh and Tula in support of programs that foster self-reliance and improve the general health and well-being of children and the elderly. We have embarked on two new projects: (1) educational and cultural exchange programs for youth at the TF Center and (2) a 24-hr counseling and support center for orphans and run-away children in Voronezh—the first of its kind in Russia, and which can be easily replicated in other regions as well. Soon, we will also be welcoming another group of Russian children to the TF Center for a 3-month educational program—this time, gifted orphans from a local orphanage and “school-internat” in Voronezh.

Because of your generosity, we have been able to accomplish so much this year. We need you now—more than ever before. At a time when many say that the world “has lost its heart,” please help us ensure that the “beacon of hope”—which symbolized the Tolstoy Foundation and its efforts on behalf of about one million people worldwide—will not be diminished. Please help us keep alive the humanitarian legacy of Alexandra Tolstoy, which has undoubtedly begun to stir the hearts and the consciences of many people in Russia today, and which can inspire the next generation of humanitarians into action. Please give as generously as you can, so that we can offer even more help to those who truly need it now and throughout the coming year! We count on your commitment, generosity and good will!

Xenia Woyevodsky

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