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2009 Autumn Projects



Thailand 2009 ~ F.Renedo

There are still over 400 projects available for the remainder of 2009. After receiving registration and payment, it typically takes about 3-5 business days to get placed on a project. There are projects available in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Americas.

Please visit the [OPEN PROJECTS DIRECTORY](#) today!



USA Concord, NH 2009

Returned Volunteers Reports Wanted!



Owain Iorwerth
from Wales in the VFP t-shirt

We here at Volunteers For Peace are very interested in hearing from volunteers after their volunteer project. Returned Volunteers are an integral part of our mission - joining together to improve all life on the planet. Reports from returned volunteers able us to assess the quality of the assignments and determine future cooperation.

So far this year, we have received reports from volunteers who have participated on projects in a total of 33 countries throughout the world. If you haven't done so already, please send VFP a few paragraphs or more with your candid opinion about the experiences you had. Information about the work, accommodation, level of organization, and how you got along with the other volunteers are particularly interesting to us. There is no special form to complete. If you do send a report we will renew your membership for 2010 and you will receive our 2010 Brochure and early access to view and register for projects in March.

For more information please visit the [Alumni section](#) of our website.



Volunteers Voices: CLEAN ENVIRONMENT International Voluntary Workcamp

By Nicholas Chang, 2009 Pierre Ceresole Scholarship Winner

The "Clean Environment" workcamp in Batman, Turkey, was a professionally-executed project that introduced the international volunteers to community service, Turkish culture, and personal friendships. The daily activities were well prepared and impactful to the volunteers and the local communities. Our hosts welcomed us like family members, and the accommodations provided by the host organization, Tupras, were of the highest quality. With such an organized service project and hospitable environment, I experienced one of the best two weeks of my life while working at the Clean Environment workcamp. I also had the pleasure of visiting Istanbul thanks to a nice "pre-camp days" orientation put on by the Turkish placement organization, Genctur.



Gucumuz, Enerjimiz – Our Power, Our Energy



The service project that Tupras and Genctur put together was titled, *Gucumuz, Enerjimiz*. The objective was three-fold: (1) we worked in the field to pick up garbage and sort out recyclable materials, (2) we gave presentations to elementary and junior high school classes about energy efficiency and responsibility toward the environment, and (3) we participated in workshops to brainstorm tangible ideas and sustainable environmentally responsible programs that the local community could implement going forward. All three aspects of our project were insightful, active, and participatory, so it was no surprise that they were very well received by the students, teachers, and local citizens involved. The participants were always very enthusiastic, and we arrived to all of our work destinations to rock-star welcomes!



Tupras organized a full itinerary for our two-week project including one day off each week. Every day consisted of a complete schedule, and I must mention the three excellent meals provided each day as well! First off, we met the Tupras employees who were leading the overall program, and they introduced us to the firm, the refinery where we were working and living, and the city officials who were giving us the go ahead to implement our project in and around the Batman area. Then, we embarked on our various town-cleaning exercises alongside partner schoolchildren, teachers, townspeople, and Tupras personnel. We also put on simple, but comprehensive, presentations to schools about how to incorporate an energy efficient and environmentally conscious agenda into daily life. Finally, we administered workshops to three different audiences: university students, schoolteachers, and Tupras families. In each type of exercise, the international volunteers were able to deeply interact with the people involved. We shared conversation, laughs, and photo opportunities---/lots of photos! Many of us made such close ties with the locals that we often exchanged e-mail addresses and facebook information with each other.



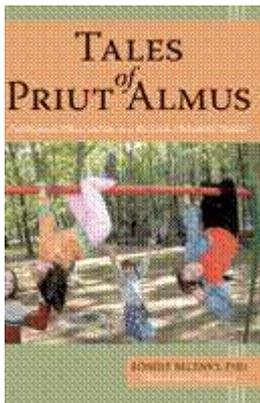
Turkiye, cok guzel! – Turkey, very beautiful!

Turkey, and Eastern Turkey in particular, was more beautiful than I had imagined. Batman is in the Kurdish region of Turkey where many tourists do not visit because of the draw of more well-known parts of Turkey in the West. Thanks to the hospitality of our hosts, we took full advantage of our location and visited much of the Southeast during our work days and free time. Furthermore, as guests at the Tupras compound, we were able to interact daily with the company's employees and their families. We built special bonds with this little community, and we would spend time with them in their homes, restaurants, sports fields, and parks every day after we



finished our work. Although I was able to make connections with many people at every stop on our schedule, the Tupras families are the people that I will never forget because they welcomed us with great enthusiasm. I hope we were able to add as much to their lives as they did to ours.

Tales of Priut Almus: Participant Observation in a Russian Children's Shelter



By Child Psychologist, Robert Belenky, PhD & VFP Advisory Board Member

Our world is overflowing with surplus children

Once upon a time in St. Petersburg, Russia, there was a place for them. It had an oddball, familial feel and, if records were kept, probably an impressive track record. It's name was "Priut Almus." ("Priut" means "shelter" in Russian.)

Robert Belenky, PhD, "Dyedoushka [Grandpa] Bob" to the children, is a clinical child psychologist/progressive educator from Vermont. He made annual visits to Priut Almus since 1998.



Belenky takes us into that unlikely institution. He introduces us to the children and the staff; shares interviews, relates stories of daily life and, finally, offers his views about how children such as those in Priut Almus might ideally be dealt with whether in Russia, the United States or anywhere.

The goal, he believes, is not merely to feed and house children whose lives have been hard but to help them flourish. Flourishing is what "Tales of Priut Almus" is all about and Belenky shows it to be a compelling, achievable goal.

The book ends in a thoughtful conversation with the brilliant, elusive founder/director of Almus, Mikhail Makarievich, one-



time orphanage resident, man of the theater, and relentless children's advocate.

"Tales of Priut Almus" is a must-read for everyone concerned with children; social workers, psychologists, child care workers, educators, students, parents, and ... kids themselves.



Idealist.org International Volunteering Web Survey

VFP, in conjunction with [Idealist.org](http://www.idealists.org), a "global clearinghouse of nonprofit and volunteering resources" are asking alumni volunteers to participate in a short survey. The survey has about 30 questions--mostly multiple choice--and takes about 15 minutes to complete.

Below is the link:

idealist

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=BiCa2z_2bolodruk8sYg8ZnQ_3d_3d

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