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WINDHAM

Sister City Committee

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HIGHLIGHTS OF 2003

MINUTES SEPTEMBER 7: The meeting was held at the Senior Center at 7pm. Attending were John Breda, Bruce Moeckel, Jan Rokel, Bette Williams, J Gross, Beth Strauss, Barbara Coish and James and Cheryl Joaquim. Kathy and John Barry; Rex Norman and Cheri Maw and Michele Dimes contacted Barbara to say that they are willing to help with the anticipated visit from Suzdal. Bruce Flanders is taking leave from work presently for his health and is being re-evaluated.

Barbara showed the article from the Independent picturing John with the children of the orphanage. Fifteen hundred dollars was delivered to Orphanages #3 and #5. These donations were from the Town of Windham and The Windham Presbyterian Church. These donations were given directly to the Directors of each orphanage who had many needs in mind for the use of this money to benefit the children.

Barbara mentioned the sudden untimely death of Olga Surikova. Olga was the subject of the book by Russ Kendall titled "Russian Girl: Life in an Old Russian Town." A recent email from Russ Kendall asked if Windham would be doing anything to commemorate Olga's life. We need to give this some thought.

Barbara Coish and John Breda talked about their recent trip to Suzdal. The meeting with Mayor Ryzhov was brief. The mayor expressed concerns about the house project, the sister city agreement and the money for the orphanage. Barbara and John expressed to the mayor their opinion on his concerns. On September 16 the Duma is expected to vote to cycle all elections to fall at the same time. This may be a very good thing for Suzdal if the vote is positive.

John spoke about his idea to go to Suzdal to teach English during his vacation times. J shared information about the librarian exchange. There is a group looking for a sponsor in December. The library will keep in contact for future possible dates as December may be too close to our possible visit from Suzdal and very close to Christmas. Barbara and John shared photos from the recent trip. A group of eight to ten people hope to visit before the end of the year. Everyone is willing to help in some way when we know the exact dates of the visit. The new batch of quilts was on display. Bette Williams supplied a delicious zucchini cake for refreshments.

Respectfully submitted, Barbara Coish, Chairman

~ IN MEMORIUM ~

Olga Surikova (1983 - 2003)

In August 2003, Olga Surikova, the subject of a children's book, "RUSSIAN GIRL, Life in an Old Russian Town" by Russ Kendall was tragically killed. Olga and a friend were struck by a car in Vladimir and both girls died in the accident. The girls are buried together in the cemetery in Suzdal.

In 1995, the Sister City Committee brought Olga, her mother Elena and her brother Ivan here to visit Windham. Russ Kendall, the author of the book about Olga was here for the visit as well. During her visit she met with the Police Department, the Fire Department, the Selectmen and stayed with a local family. A trip to Canobie Lake was a highlight for the visit.

In Olga's memory, the committee will be bringing some children's books to the Suzdal Library during our next visit.

The Scholastic book about Olga is currently out of print but is available to borrow at the Nesmith Library and the Golden Brook Library. Below are some pictures highlighting Olga's time with us in Windham.

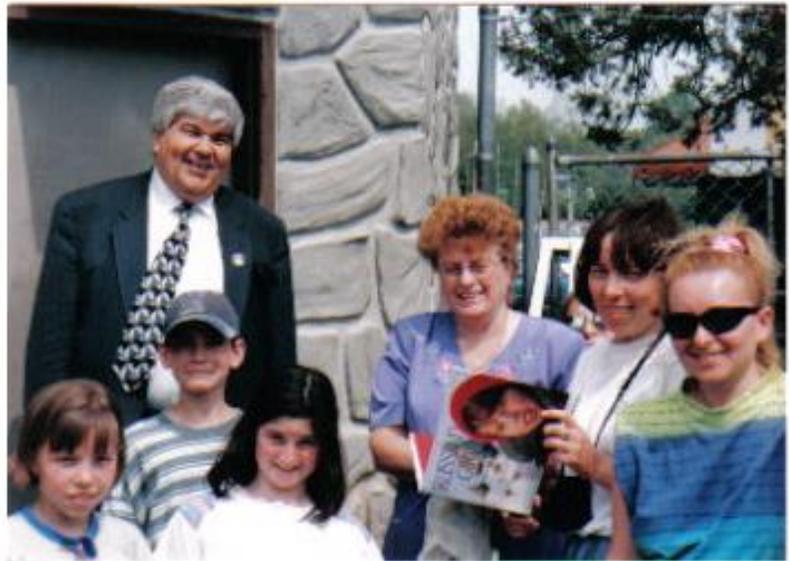


Left: Olga, her mother Elena and her brother Ivan taken at Town Hall near the symbol of Suzdal, "Sokol".

Right: Olga and Chief Moeckel in disguise.



Former Deputy Chief Wallace, Elena, Ivan, Olga.



The group with our host at Canobie Lake Park.

