



Barbara Coish, Chairman
Tel: 603.898.9520
Email: bacrdh@aol.com

WINDHAM

Sister City Committee

9 Golden Brook Road, Windham, NH, USA 03087



John Breda, Jr., Vice-Chair
Tel: 603.556.5028
Email: jbreda@comcast.net



DECEMBER, 2010: Windham's relationship with Suzdal, Russia began in 1992; therefore we have enjoyed our friendship with one-another for the past 18 years. Although no one from the town or committee traveled to Suzdal during 2010, we maintained our very close relationship by computer, facebook and skype. Light-years difference in communication in the 15 years since we sent them their first ever computer!

During 2010, two natural disasters caused difficulty for travelers to Russia. First the Icelandic volcano's eruption caused volcanic ash to spread rapidly toward Europe, causing disruption in flights for an extended amount of time. This event was happening exactly during the springtime when we would usually make a trip to Suzdal. We were happy that we had not planned a trip at that time.

Then later in summer, Russia was plagued by serious, devastating forest fires, which resulted in dangerous air quality for weeks. We were very worried about the well being of our friends as heavy smoke surrounded Suzdal. We can only imagine how difficult it was for Russians and visitors during the summer of 2010. We are grateful that all of our friends survived the dangerous summer very well.

This summer one of our "longest" friends from Suzdal, Mila Yurastova was in Boston acting as a translator at a MIT conference. At the end of her time here, she was able to spend a day with us in Windham reconnecting with many friends in just a very short 24 hours. We were glad to host her if only for a brief time.

We had a communication from a private school in Suzdal wishing to begin a relationship with our schools. At this time, we are waiting for further response from the Suzdal side as to how we will proceed with such a possible exchange.

At this time, invitations are being processed in Vladimir for several of us who will travel to Russia in 2011. We are looking forward to seeing our friends personally after a span of over 12 months time. Each year the Town of Windham appropriates \$500. in the budget for support of the Suzdal orphanages. When we travel in 2011, we shall carry the support from 2010 and 2011. Supporting the orphanages there is a fitting donation of support for the institution from which three children were adopted to become part of the Windham family.

We have yet to meet the new mayor of Suzdal (Town) whose name is Olga Gusvea. The mayor sent a greeting to Windham for Christmas, which is included with this report. We look forward to our visit in 2011 during which time, we hope to take along new visitors.

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