

Contribution Form

Three ways to contribute:

By check:

Cut this panel from the newsletter, fill it out, and return with your check payable to "Siberian Bridges, Inc." to:

Siberian Bridges, Inc.
3212 18th Ave S
Minneapolis, MN 55407

Online using a credit card:

Go to www.siberianbridges.org, click on the Donate button. At the new page, scroll down to the Helping.org button. Read the instructions first, then click on the Helping.org button and follow the steps.

Online using Paypal

(No need to be signed up for Paypal):

Go to www.siberianbridges.org and click on the Donate button. Scroll down and click the yellow "Donate" button with the credit card icons just below. Follow the instructions there.

*Siberian Bridges is a 501(c)(3)
non-profit corporation.
All donations are 100% tax-deductible.*

Name _____

Address _____

Address 2 _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email address _____

Contribution Amount _____

Check this box if you would like your contribution to remain



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3212 18th Avenue South
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55407
www.siberianbridges.org
info@siberianbridges.org



May on the Ingoda River — by A. Lesnansky

2010 Financial Results are IN and We Are Winners!

The year 2010 was a new and daring venture for Siberian Bridges. Since its inception, SB has depended on donations from contacts and friends of our President and Founder, Tom Dickinson. Our new organization has expanded from two people to 18 (Board and Advisory Council) and we have many new contacts and friends that we have come to depend on. Thank you to all!

Beginning of year (January 1, 2010):	\$1,583.38
Income	
(donations)	\$10,688.86
Expenses	
(supplies, Chuck's trip & t-shirts, book mailings)	(\$6,462.44)
End of year (December 31, 2010) balance	\$5,809.80



Summer is around the bend — by E. Epanchintsev

WEBSITE AND FACEBOOK

In addition to our website SB now has its own Facebook page (just type "Siberian Bridges" in the search field at the top).

The website provides general information, news of past activities, and several ways to donate online. Our Facebook page is updated more frequently and makes it easy to comment on our activities and to contact us. Visit both and be sure to "Like" us on Facebook and then "Recommend" our page to your Facebook friends!

Special Note: Please share your email addresses with us using the return panel of this newsletter or by emailing it to info@siberianbridges.org. Communicating electronically is not only more "green", but also allows us to send information on upcoming events. It also allows SB to direct your contributions more to programming needs instead of postage.

WAYS YOU CAN HELP

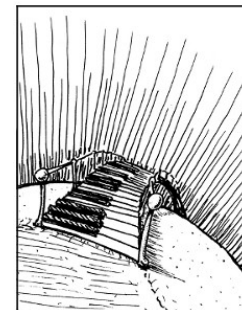
- Make a donation (make sure to include your email address on this form or email us or at info@siberianbridges.org and let us know if you would like to receive future newsletters electronically).
- Check out the SB Website and new Facebook Page (and "like"/recommend us!)
- Complete the enclosed (or online) survey.
- Consider donating your time and expertise to Siberian Bridges.
- Spread the word! Send this newsletter to a friend online (available from our website).

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Siberian Bridges Inc.

A Letter from the Siberian Bridges US Co-Chair

Spring ("Весна") is blooming on the prairies of Minnesota and steppes around Chita. It has also brought with it some new faces at Siberian Bridges. I am honored to have been elected, along with Sheila Jessen, as Co-chair of the Board of Directors.



Paula

As I have become part of Siberian Bridges over the past months, I have been amazed by the natural beauty and rich history of Zabaikalye,



Sheila

the significant social and economic challenges the region faces, and by the spirit with which so many of its people take them on. While working hard to help themselves, they are grateful for even the smallest things done to support their efforts and always eager to reciprocate in any way possible.

Sheila and I look forward to a productive year and to working with new and veteran board members of both Siberian Bridges and our sister organization in Chita, Sibirskiye Mosti ("Siberian Bridges"), to maintain and build upon existing programs and relationships.

I would like to thank you for your past contributions and hope you will continue to support Siberian Bridges' mission of promoting increased opportunity for the people of the Zabaikalye region and forging connections between them and the citizens of Minnesota and the Upper Midwest.

With best wishes ("с наилучшими пожеланиями"),

Paula Ramaley, Co-Chair

Meet Board Member Paul Johnson

Paul Johnson comes to Siberian Bridges because of a sad, but heart-warming story (below). He studied Russian in high school and college, including Concordia Language Villages as a student of fellow SB board member, Chuck Ritchie. With a masters degree in exercise physiology he coached college cross country and track & field at the College of St Catherine in St Paul, Minnesota. He became a stay-at-home Dad and has been involved in starting and working on several community sports events and extensive non-profit volunteering, from founding the YWCA's Women's Triathlon, to serving on the board of Doing Good Together (family volunteerism) and ECFE (Early Childhood and Family Education.) He looks forward to mountain biking in Zabaikalye!



Reawakening My Love of Russia

By Paul Johnson

My mother, Ellen Johnson, died unexpectedly on January 3, 2011. Six days earlier I received a call from the US Consulate in Vladivostok telling me she'd had a stroke on a plane. It made an emergency landing for her in Khabarovsk, and she was taken to the hospital in grave condition. My brother and I felt like we were making decisions in a fog, but I managed to get a passport by the next day, a visa in Washington DC by the next and was flying to Russia that evening.

During all this, my friend and Siberian Bridges board member, Judy Boudreau, got in touch with Svetlana Sivtsova of Sibirskye Mosti. Svetlana contacted those she knew in Khabarovsk and on the morning of January 2, I got a call at the hotel from a woman named Tanya asking how she could help. With her family, Tanya proceeded to drive me everywhere and help with the myriad details. I can't overstate how amazing she and her family were for my mother and me.

After my mother died, Tanya's friend Lena invited me to a party with her family. The hospitality, singing and warmth of that party cheered me and defined the whole trip for me. It was the kind of cultural and people-to-people experience that my mother, an anthropologist by profession and big-hearted woman herself, would have loved. I'm sure her spirit was with us.

Tanya's and Lena's families gave me a blanket of comfort during a very tough time and Svetlana's persistence made it all happen. And all these efforts for someone they didn't even know! Svetlana is visiting Siberian Bridges at the end of April--finally I'll get to meet her and give her a great, big hug!

SIBERIAN BRIDGES UPDATES

Petrovsk-Zabaikalsky Children's Home

◆ **The Sweet Sound of Success.** We are thrilled to announce that Petrovsk-Zabaikalsky Children's Home/School student, 18-year old *Vika Romanovich*, won third place in an international national singing contest in St. Petersburg. After performing locally at various events she was encouraged to set her sights on St. Petersburg, the site of the 4th International Competition for Soloists this last winter. There were 900 contestants registered, 700 of which actually competed. Of those 700 only two finished higher than Vika. You see her here with her 3rd place trophy. We sent our congratulations to her from Siberian Bridges US, and we will be following her future competitions closely. We wish her the very best in those endeavors.



◆ **Pen-Pals.** The Siberian Bridges pen-pal program is up and running! The students of *Oksana Cox's class at St. Paul Central High School* are exchanging letters with Children's Home students. We will be expanding the program to other age groups in September. Please see our website if you are interested in becoming involved in this program.

◆ **Computers.** We have initiated a project to provide internet-connected computers for the 127 children at the Children's Home. This will provide invaluable educational and economic opportunities and help these children to become true 'global citizens' who will also be better able to contribute to their local and regional communities. We are joining forces with a local organization, *PC United*, which refurbishes and donates used computers to individuals and organizations in the US and internationally. Our goal is to send 50 internet capable computers to the Children's Home by September and to expand the program there and elsewhere in the future. *Please contact us if you or your company can donate old laptops and we will make arrangements to collect them!*

Education & Materials

◆ **Books.** Led by *Renee Buchanan* and *Tom Dickin-son*, since the beginning of the year Siberian Bridges has sent six boxes of books to the Petrovsk-Zabaikalsky Orphanage & Children's Home, and two

to the Pushkin Regional Library in Chita (the current goal is to send two boxes of books per month). We remain the single largest donor to the Pushkin Library. At the library's request, this year we are concentrating on sourcing books in French and German, as well as children's books and educational materials for the Petrovsk-Zabaikalsky Children's Home and primary schools in the region.

Cross-Cultural Exchanges & Visits

◆ **Summer Workshops.** Board member *Judy Boudreau* will be going to Chita this summer to initiate scientific exchanges and to learn first-hand of Sibirskye Mosti's ambitious new Education Center proposal and other SM initiatives so we can develop ways to assist them. Most funding for her visit will be provided from dedicated private donations and through grants.

◆ **Siberian Sister Visit.** In April, we will welcome founding board member of Sibirskye Mosti, *Svetlana Sivtsova*, who will take a break from her graduate studies in Toronto to visit Minnesota. She will meet with Board and Advisory Council members, lay groundwork for Judy's visit to Chita and discuss joint programs and development.

◆ **Siberian Summer Camp Teacher.** We are excited to announce that Sibirskye Mosti founding board member *Olga Fleshler* will be coming to Minnesota to teach at Concordia Language Villages Russian Camp (Lesnoe Ozero) this summer.

Tourism/Economic Development.

Mary Adams is leading efforts to create a regular tour program to Chita by connecting a US tour operator with local organizations in the Chita region. In the meantime, we are also considering initiating our own annual tour for members of Siberian Bridges and the broader community (*please take a few moments to let us know your level and area of interest in travel to this fascinating region by completing the enclosed or online survey!*).

Strategic Collaborations

In addition to forging relationships with PC United, we have also been in discussions with the board of the Minneapolis *Russian Cultural Center (RCC)* to find ways for our organizations to cooperate. We are looking forward to future joint-programming and events -- stay tuned!

Please take our survey!

With its new beginning, new organization and leadership, SB would like your ideas as it starts anew.

1. How would you rank your interest in SB's projects and tasks? (1=most important)

- Children's Home Programs
- Books & Educational Materials
- Penpals
- Tourism development
- Operations (Fundraising, Publicity, Events, etc.)

2. We'd really like to encourage people to go to this wonderful place. What focus would be most enticing to you? (Trips are typically May through September. Feel free to answer even if you think you couldn't afford such a trip.)

- Nature Tour (unique flora and fauna, cranes, steppes, alps, rivers, lakes, unconfined wilderness)
- History/Cultural Tour (Decembrists, "City of Exiles" is part of the "Gulag Archipelago", famed Old Believers commune, Russian Buddhism, Genghis Khan lived here, Cradle of North American civilization.)
- Service Tour Possible services (Children's Home, summer language camp or other camps, ecological cleanup)
- Adventure Trip (Canoeing, hiking, spelunking, etc.)
- OTHER _____

3. What aspect of Siberian Bridges is most intriguing to you--perhaps regarding its intention, projects and locale or other aspect.

See opposite panel to input your address.

Cut along dotted line