

BURALARDA

Newsletter of Arkadaslar, Friends of Turkey, Number 25, SEPTEMBER, 2006

Time to plan for a Bayram dinner. There's a list on page 3 of those that are already in the works for various areas. If you can make it to one, by all means call or email the contact person and have a wonderful time. If you can't make it to one of the organized dinners, at least raise a glass of wine (Kavaklidere) to Turkish independence!!! Bayraminiz Kutluolsun.

In the last issue of Buralarda we published information about a new Turkish Grammar having been published. Apparently the daughter of *Karen de Cormier Tiregol, T-14* has also published a grammar text workbook with audio and video. It is called Intermediate Turkish, published in conjunction with the University of Arizona, a DVD-ROM that is part of the Critical Language Series. The author is Jessica Tiregol.

New Milford, Connecticut Senior Center Program Director *Catherine Posselt Bachrach, T-8*, has retired. She served the senior center for 10 years providing diverse programs to attract seniors in their 50s and those older seniors who need socialization.

TO CONTACT BURALARDA-- Marcia Gnuse,

DON'T FORGET THE ARKADASLAR WEBSITE: www.arkadaslar.info. There's always something new--pictures, articles, reminiscences, etc.

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THE CHICKEN

Lex Youngman T-16

Karen and I had become good friends with the butcher whose shop was on the ground floor of our apartment building in Eskisehir, and one day, after a pleasant exchange of information about our families, he invited us to visit his home village not far from the city. We gladly accepted and set the date.

It was late morning on a beautiful spring day when we arrived at his mother's house, a small, clean place with a tile roof, white washed walls and immaculately swept dirt floor. Our hostess, a slight woman with a print dress and a white head scarf covering all but her face, sent her daughter out to get a fresh chicken for her guest. The girl returned with a small scrawny bird which was promptly dropped into a kettle of water over a small fire in the courtyard behind the house. We wondered how it would feed five people, but said nothing. We sat outside around a large copper dinner tray in the center of the group, passing the time chatting and drinking tea while the chicken boiled.

Mid afternoon approached as our hostess continued checking to see if the meat was tender, and our thoughts drifted wistfully back to the meager breakfast we'd had before leaving. Finally, she declared the bird done and removed it with a fork to a wooden carving board. Using a knife that seemed twice as big as the chicken, she began to cut into the carcass--but nothing happened. Explaining that it might be an older chicken, she began to saw back and forth at the rubbery mass between body and thigh. Still no progress. She apologized. We assured her it was OK. Undaunted, she removed the fork, gripped the slippery body with her hand and applied the knife with even more pressure. Then it happened: without warning the bird shot off the board and landed in the sandy ground just outside the seating cloth.

I don't remember what we had for supper that evening, but it wasn't chicken. What I do remember is the warmth of the people, the honor of being invited into their home, and the extravagance of their hospitality. That experience remains with me today as a very tangible demonstration of the Turkish saying that "Every guest is a gift from God."

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OUR COMMON EXPERIENCE

The following was written by *Carol Kocan, T-8* in response to an article entitled "Some Reflections" by *Sandy Pfunder, T-8* and posted on the Webpage.

Reading "Some Reflections" was enjoyable as well as entertaining. They provided moments of recognition, even though I was in a different place, doing different work, and having different experiences. There must have been commonality of influences for those of us who acknowledge that we have been bound in some way to a situation we had in common decades ago.

Whether we taught English or influenced nursing students or promoted good sanitation or tourism or whatever, it seems the effect of these contacts rebounded onto many of us in unforgettable ways. I was thinking - naively - that the effect of such close contact over an extended period of time will generally have a positive effect, but that isn't true--just look at all the situations where neighbors in Europe, Africa, the Far East and the south Pacific have turned violently against each other after centuries of living side by side.

Whatever it was we were fortunate enough to live through, I'm glad it happened, and know that my own ties to Turkey are as strong today as the were just after I was there, 1965-67.

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TURKEY TRIP

by Todd Boressoff, T-10

Our trip to Turkey... basically, it was terrific. It is hard for me to get my mind around all of the different ways we were moved -- a visit to the village, Istanbul, the people, the countryside, the Aegean, just driving -- the food. If you haven't been there since we were there, go.

I did a lot of informal brushing up on my Turkish. I listened over and over to the two CDs and read the textbook from "Teach Yourself Turkish." I worked on a phrase book and took what I was relearning to our favorite Turkish restaurant in West Patterson. It was surprising to me how much and how easily what I knew from those days came back. They say that about old age.

Visiting Ayvali Koyu, the village where I'd lived for almost a year 38 years ago, was extraordinary. With the help of a Turkish colleague at work, I wrote in advance to the *muhtar* and enclosed copies of the letter to be shared with my closest friends or their families. Two weeks later I received a welcoming email that one of these friends had had someone send.

When Judy and I drove up the same road I had walked many times before (7km each way), not much appeared changed--an electric wire running into the village, a few houses built of cement rather than adobe style. When I inquired in front of the *kahve* about my friend Veli Genc, I was told, "He's here, inside." Veli came out before we could enter and gave me a full and warm bear hug.

...Veli's was a typical village home--kitchen with wood burning stove, sitting room, front entry area and a bedroom. There were *kilims* and fabric everywhere--and now a TV. And no more outhouse; there was an indoor flush squatter. We toured their garden, which was all organic,

"*hormonsuz.*" Veli, who 38 years ago was proud to use a horse and metal plow (most villagers used wooden plows then), is now on his fourth tractor. This one has heat and air conditioning and pulls his wide plow or seeder behind it. Everywhere in the Eskisehir region there were now straight rows of wheat. No more rhythmic hand-toss sowing of multiple grains (wheat, barley, oats, rye). No more wonderful village brown bread.

...Some thoughts on Turkey today. The people were almost to a person, warm, welcoming, and helpful. Not sure how to get to our hotel in Eskisehir (it was in an all pedestrian area), two older boys jumped into our car, and showed us the way to the closest parking lot. They offered to carry our luggage to the hotel and refused my offer to pay them for their help. In another town when we asked the man on the scooter next to us at a light where to find the nearest *Turk Telecom* (a wonderful little chain of store with phone kiosks: less than \$2 for two relaxed calls home to our children each time), he waved for us to follow him and led us there. Most amazing of all was the Istanbul cabbie who drove us to our *Sultan Ahmet* hotel after we flew back to Istanbul from Izmir. After asking others on the plane what they thought was fair, I had negotiated a 20 YTL rate (about \$15). It turned out that our hotel, the wonderful Empress Zoe in the warren of streets below *Hagia Sofia*, was not easy to find and he had to ask again and again. When we finally got there, I offered him 25 lira, and he held up his hand, No! I do think that speaking Turkish makes a difference in this, but people were almost universally welcoming.

Half of our trip was during *Ramazan* and this proved exciting. Breaking the fast in a city restaurant is an event. There are a number of special meal choices only, all with the same soup, salad and dessert. Everyone waits patiently, usually elbow to elbow, until the call to prayer; and then the owner calls out, "*Afiyet Olsun*" In Istanbul, ringing the Hippodrome, were hundreds of stall restaurants, each with a tented seating area behind. You could

sight down those rear tented areas for hundreds of yards as thousands of Turks who come to Istanbul for the holidays sit on tiny stools at tiny tables to break fast together beside the Blue Mosque.

Some other highlights: *Foca* is a small fishing village about an hour north of Izmir. It is beautiful: what so many of the Aegean ports used to be. *Kusadasi* today could be any other Mediterranean tourist port--enormous cruise ships in the harbor, stacked condos up the hill, even huge Disney-like water parks with tunnels and slides. But *Foca* and the hotel on the water where we stayed, the *Focantique*, was wonderful. The owners had led English speaking tours for 15 years before they bought the hotel. This was our first real English after about a five-day stretch. *Foca* is only about 40 minutes from Bergama and maybe 2 hours from Ephesus. I could stay in this town for a long time.

Although breakfasts were great everywhere, ours at the *Focantique* was wonderful--three kinds of cheese (*feta*, *kayseri*, another), three kinds of olives, fresh tomatoes and cucumbers, melon, grapes, fresh figs, multiple jellies and jams and bread. And olive oil fried eggs or French toast. All this while looking out on the Aegean. Though this was our best breakfast, all of our breakfasts, always free with the room, were great. Always more than the simple, *feta*, olives, bread and jelly we remember (which I always loved anyway.)

We did Turkey simply, spending time in non-tourist towns, eating in typical restaurants and staying in small hotels. Only one hotel was over \$100, the one in *Foca* (\$120). The cheapest, in Eskisehir, was \$37. We were looking to experience some of the Turkey I'd known so many years ago. Not that I wouldn't like to spend some more time experiencing upscale places. Though we lived fairly simply, our downfall was carpets. We bought two. But those we got to bring home.

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NEREDELER

It has been suggested that we revive this column in Buralarda. So, do you know the whereabouts of:

Elaine Edwards, T-8

Roberta Kehrer Rosen, T-8

Karen S. Tate, T-15

If you know anything, please contact
TurkeyDost@aol.com

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IN MEMORIAM

Howard D. Woodruff, T-3

Howard died April 14, 2006 due to kidney failure.

He was born July 16, 1939 in Olean, N.Y. Mr. Woodruff graduated from the State University of New York at Albany and was employed by the University for 30 years before his retirement. He then moved to Bakersfield, California to build his dream home. He had served with the Peace Corps in Turkey for four years. He was an unassuming, conscientious, dutiful worker, who never sought the spotlight.

Helen Mally Trapp, T-9

Helen Trapp died at her home on May 15, 2006. She was born in Columbia, SC and was a graduate of the College of Saint Rose in Albany NY, and had a distinguished service in the Peace Corps. Helen began a career in education in Moncks Corner, SC, teaching at A.C. Flora High School and Midlands Technical College, and finished her service at C. A. Johnson High School in Columbia, SC. She sang proudly in the St. Martin de Porres Catholic Church GOSPER Choir and the South Carolina Symphonic Chorale for many years.

Roseanne S. Ronni Allexenberg, T-14

Ronni died January 4, 2005 in Buffalo, New York. She was born in Buffalo and received two masters degrees, one in art and literature and the second in early education. She joined the Peace Corps in the 1960s and served two years in Turkey. After returning, she became a recruiter in St. Louis, Mo. She later became the public relations person for the St. Louis Health and Hospital Systems, until 1985.

Ronni accepted a position at Tufts University in Boston to teach on the subject of World War II, but due to ill health returned to Auburn, NY to be with her family. She was employed as a newspaper reporter with the Auburn Citizen.

She originated the Christmas Elf program in Cayuga County in 1987 and worked part-time with the paper on the program through Christmas 2000.

She was a literacy volunteer and was writing a book on the Peace Corps up until the time of her death.

Maryanne Kummerer, T-10

From Maryanne's daughter Sarah, we received the following:

"My mom led a very beautiful life that ended last night (August 27, 2006) just before 9:30. She died at home which was her wish. None of us was in the room at the moment of her death. We were all in the next room carrying on our normal, light-hearted banter. She died listening to us all chatting, laughing, and remembering.

"During the last 10 days we have had a steady (yet not overwhelming) stream of visitors. We had not seen you all for so long--and you did so much to help us remember who she was.

"Her wish was for her body to be cremated. We will be planting a memorial rose bush in her garden and will bury her remains at that time.

"You all meant so much to my mom and your support over the last few months has meant much to me and my family."

Patricia E. Dillon, T-4 passed away on September 20, 2006 in his sleep apparently of a heart attack.

Linda Schiffer, T-8, writes "Patyti was one of my roommates in Karabuk, and *Angela Costanza Warner*, was the other one. *Dick Bier, T-8*, was also in Karabuk. We all had good times together.

Patti was well liked by her fellow teachers, students, neighbors, and friends in Karabuk. On my frequent trips back to Karabuk, I invariably run into someone who remembers Patti and asks me about her. Having been in Turkey a year before me, she was especially helpful to me in translating what the Turks were saying. She was a very good hostess when we invited the teachers over to our apartment for tea, and she was the one who made Turkish coffee.

Patti and I kept in touch over the years, but only saw each other infrequently, as she lived on the west Coast (Portland, Oregon) and I live on the east Coast (Arlington, Virginia). We did get together in the summer of 2005 at the Turkey Peace Corps Reunion in Portland. We had a lot of fun reminiscing about the good old days in Turkey, especially in Karabuk. She also had a wonderful time getting together with the T-4s who were in attendance.

This past summer, Patti got to experience a lifelong dream of hers. She and a friend traveled to Ireland and enjoyed themselves immensely.

Patti was a kind, gentle, and giving person. She helped out others less fortunate than her, whether

disabled children, or people stricken with AIDs.
She will be missed by all whose lives she touched.

DEATH NOTICES

We have received notice of the passing of *Jo Ann Roseler, T-3*, who served as a nursery school educator in Zonguldak, and *Jean Zukowski Faust, T-2*, who served as an English teacher in Bursa and the American Girls College.

As always, if you would like to write a brief memorial to either of them, please send it to Buralarda, R (or the address on the first page) and it will be published in the next issue.

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BOOKS, BOOKS, AND MORE BOOKS

From *Sandy Anderson, T-13* comes the following:

"I just finished reading Ironfire by David Ball. The book was for sale at the Smithsonian in conjunction with their exhibit of Ottoman Kaftans. (Scrumptious fabrics.) The novel traces the lives of a brother and sister from the Island of Malta, caught in the crossfire of naval skirmishes to dominate the Mediterranean in the mid 1550s. The social rules, roles, tyrannies, and opportunities of Christian Europe with Malta guarded by the Knights of St. John, are compared with Topkapi and empire of Suleiman the Magnificent. It was a good read, with cultures we can relate to on both sides."

Joshua Bear, T-8, recommends Sweet Confusion on the Princes' Islands by Lawrence Goodman.

"Ed Wilkie, an earnest if somewhat naive young American, comes to Istanbul to teach at a private boys school on the Princes' Islands, but finds more complications than he expected. He and his bull terrier, Starleen, find themselves plunged into an increasingly comic--and sometimes threatening--series of intertwining plots. These

involve a colorful cast of characters, including amorous older women, a stuttering spy, the mysterious Mr. Brown, hookers, diplomats, policemen and a sweet but determined young Turkish woman named Elif. After delightfully chaotic twists and turns, Ed finally finds his kismet on the Princes' Islands."

Ellie Lebaron, T-15, submitted this book to the website.

Adventures with the Vagabond Flying Carpet by Debra Zumstein. On a cloudy, rainy day, three children find a magical flying carpet, which whisks them away to Turkey. The rest of the day is spent flying through cities and villages, exploring old ruins and getting a bird's eye view of life in Turkey.

The book educates the reader about Turkey on a social, geographic, architectural and cultural level. The story, intended for children 3 - 5 is written in an easy to read style and is illustrated with watercolor style photographs.

Colleen Clark, T-4 writes:

The editors of the "International Journal of Turkish Studies" are happy to announce the publication of Volume 12 (Nos. 1 & 2), 2006 of the Journal. This volume is a special issue on migration from the Ottoman Empire and Turkey to the United States includes many articles about immigration and the immigrant experience.

To order contact Dr. Dniz Balgamis at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, 4255 Humanities Building, 455 N. Park St., Madison, Wisconsin 53706. Cost is \$36 for US and Canada shipments.

Joshua Bear, T-8, writes that Robert Finn is soon to publish a translation of Nazli Elray's Orpheus, an adventure novel set in Turkey in the 1980s. Its "a mystery story with a humorous bent."