

RUSSIAN HERITAGE

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Fall Meeting: September 20

The first meeting of the 2008-09 year will be on Saturday, September 20 at the Russian American Club building (2920 Beach Blvd. S. in Gulfport). The event will begin at 4:30 pm. and will include a *zakuski* competition and light supper. The program will feature reports by individuals who have recently returned from Russia.

The dessert competition was a big hit at the spring picnic. All are encouraged to bring a favorite *zakuski* dish, to participate in the competition, and to share with the members and friends of *Russian Heritage*. Bring also recipes and any stories associated with your dishes. They can become a part of our cookbook project.

Our presenters will include Board Member Victor Peppard and his family who participated on a river cruise from St. Petersburg to Moscow. Victor has been a frequent visitor to Russia and the Soviet Union, as a leader of student groups and on many other occasions. A second presenter will be our student ambassador from Eckerd College, Adam Colby, who spent the spring semester in St. Petersburg. Others who have been to Russian recently should also be prepared to say a few words about their trips.

We hope to see many at our September meeting. And bring a friend!

From the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors of *Russian Heritage* met on August 17 to lay out plans for the coming year. They made the following decisions:

1. Dues for 2009 will be \$15 for individuals and \$25 for families. The forms for the new 2009 dues will appear in the next newsletter.
2. The Old Russian New Year's Gala will be on Friday, January 9 this year, and the prices will be the same as last year. More details to follow.
3. Programs for the coming year were discussed. See schedule of upcoming events on page 2.
4. A major project for the year will be completing the *Russian Heritage* cookbook of recipes and food stories. See pages 5-6.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- September 20, 2008 FALL MEETING AT RUSSIAN AMERICAN BUILDING (p. 1)
- October 19, 2008 CONCERT OF RUSSIAN MUSIC BY SERGEI BOLDIREFF
At St. Matthews's Episcopal Church (738 Pinellas Point Drive) at 3pm.
- November 16 RUSSIAN HERITGE 2ND TALENT SHOW at 6:30pm
At "St. Petersburg Nights Russian Restaurant" (6800 Sunset Way on St. Pete Beach)
- November 22 SPIFFS INTERNATIONAL BALL at Banquet Masters in Pinellas Park.
Good food, dancing, and presentation of our RH Person of the year.
- December 19, 2008 AN EVENING WITH THE STARS OF THE MOSCOW BALLE
The Moscow Ballet and St. Petersburg Nights Russian Restaurant combine to present the "Nutcracker" at the Mahaffey Theater, followed by a dinner with the stars following the ballet. Tickets for both (including the best seats in the Mahaffey) are \$100. Contact the restaurant soon – tickets are going fast. (727-363-3832)
- January 9, 2009 OLD RUSSIAN NEW YEAR'S GALA at St. Petersburg Yacht Club
- Other January Events An Exhibition of Paintings of St. Petersburg, Florida at the St. Petersburg Museum of History by Sarasota artist Violetta.
A PRESENTATION OF A NEW BOOK ON THE LIFE OF PETER DEMENS at the St. Petersburg Museum of History.

A Tribute to Aleksander Solzhenitsyn

Nobel Prize winner for literature, Russian nationalist, and chronicler of communist repression, Alexander Solzhenitsyn, died of heart failure on August 3, 2008.

He was best known in the West for his best-sellers *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* and *The Gulag Archipelago*. These and other works documented the evils of Communist system of oppression and he was expelled from the Soviet Union in 1974, living as a recluse in Vermont. After the fall of the Soviet Union he returned to Russia in 1994.

Although he is well-known as a critic of communism, he was also critical of the West, and is often seen as something of a prophet of Slavophile Russian nationalism based on the values of Russian orthodoxy. Ironically, he was born in the first year of the Bolshevik Revolution, and he was in the first group of Russian Octobrists and Pioneers, and was in the first class of students to graduate with a completely Soviet education. Apparently in his case the indoctrination did not work. Вечная Память!

Мэр Нью-Йорка поздравил русскую общину: вы подарили нам вертолет, телевидение и Google

Русские в США внесли огромный вклад в их развитие. Это признал мэр Нью-Йорка Майкл Блумберг, который поздравил русскую общину мегаполиса в связи с проходящим фестивалем культуры "Наше наследие", передает РИА "Новости".

Церемония чествования русских нью-йоркцев состоялась в главном центре искусства деловой столицы мира - музее Метрополитен, в роскошном египетском зале с алтарем и древними сфинксами, отражающимися в глади декоративного бассейна. Фестиваль русской культуры "Наше наследие", организованный российско-американским фондом, который известен своими проектами с Большим театром, Московской новой оперой, театром "Современник" на Бродвее, проводится уже в шестой раз при поддержке города.

"Русскоязычная община самых разных вероисповеданий оказала огромная влияние на культуру мегаполиса, начиная от Стейтен-айленда и до Брайтон-бич. Русские подарили Америке вертолет, телевидение и Google", - отметил Блумберг на торжественной церемонии.

Он напомнил о том вкладе в развитие мирового прогресса, который внесли выходцы из России Игорь Сикорский, запатентовавший Нью-Йорке в 1910 году вертолет, Владимир Зворыкин и Давид Сарнов, создавшие и запустившие 30-е годы в производство телевизор.

Блумберг признал русской и империю Google, которую основали в 1998 году студенты Стэнфордского университета Ларри Пэйдж и Сергей Брин - выходец из СССР.

РИА "Новости" также дополняет Блумберга: русские также создавали нью-йоркский балет, оперу, кинематограф, музыку и живопись. Русскоязычная община Нью-Йорка и пригорода составляет около 200 тысяч человек.

"Русскоязычная община прочно встала на карту Америки, а ее представители стали людьми, которыми гордится нация. Богатая культурная традиция - это тот самый мост, которые соединяет Россию и США, народы и континенты", - говорит Марина Ковалева, сопредседатель российско-американского фонда.

THE MAYOR OF NEW YORK CONGRATULATES THE RUSSIAN AMERICAN COMMUNITY: YOU HAVE GIVEN US THE HELICOPTER, TV, AND GOOGLE

Russians in the United States have contributed greatly to its development. The mayor of New York Michael Bloomberg recognized this fact as he congratulated the Russian community of the metropolitan area in connection with the current "Russian Heritage Festival", reports the Russian News and Information Agency "Novosti".

The ceremony honoring the Russians of New York took place in the main art center of the financial capital of the world – in the magnificent Egyptian Hall of the Metropolitan Museum, with its altar and ancient sphinxes reflected in the smooth surface of a decorative pool. The "Russian Heritage Festival" is being presented for the sixth time. It is organized by the Russian American Foundation which is known for its projects with the Bolshoi Theater, the New Moscow Opera, and the "Sovremennik" Theater on Broadway, with support from the city.

"The Russian-speaking community of the most varied religious groups has had a very large influence on the culture of the New York, from Staten Island to Brighton Beach. Russians have given America the helicopter, television, and Google," said Bloomberg at the opening ceremony.

He noted the contributions to the development of world progress which immigrants from Russia have made, such as Igor Sikorsky, who patented the helicopter in New York in 1910 and Vladimir Zworykin and David Sarnov, who created and put into production television sets in the 1930's. Bloomberg also recognized as Russian the empire of Google which was founded in 1998 by two students from Stanford University, Larry Page and Sergei Brin, an émigré from the USSR.

The correspondent from "Novosti" also adds that Bloomberg could have mentioned the Russian contributions to the New York ballet, opera, filmmaking, music, and art. There are about 200,000 Russian-speakers in New York and the surrounding areas.

"The Russian-speaking community is well established on the map of America, and its representatives have become people the nation is proud of. A rich cultural tradition is the very bridge which unites Russia and the United States, all peoples and continents," notes Marina Kovalyov, the president of the Russian American Foundation.

THE RUSSIAN HERITAGE COOKBOOK PROJECT

Last year we started a project of collecting recipes and food stories about Russian cooking and food preparation. This year we are continuing this project under the leadership of Mary Stenov. Below is her letter inviting you to become a part of this project. A great opportunity to participate will come at the September meeting. (p.1)

Dear members and friends of Russian Heritage,

We are again planning our Russian Heritage cookbook and would very much appreciate your help in becoming a contributing member of our project.

We need recipes and stories on food related events. We will publish memories of your childhood, comfort foods and comfort thoughts.

Please search your mind for memories of your childhood, memories of your parents, children, and friends that relate to foods. Send anecdotes, fiction, non-fiction, tales and recipes associated with your stories. You might even remember a poem or short story associated with a nourishing experience – just search your heart.

Please contact Mary Stenov on 727-867-6013 or marystenov@yahoo.com with your stories and recipes. Be creative in your thinking.

Looking forward to your response.

Mary Stenov

P.S. I am including a little example story and recipe on the next page.

Mary made the "torte ala babushka" for the most recent meeting of the Board of Directors and it was excellent. Now it's time for you to add to our cookbook project, and you might even think about a title for this book.

A Visit to Babushka in Kiev

Many years ago Gene and I were very privileged to be able to visit his grandmother in Kiev. We considered ourselves very lucky to be able to go to his home and be able to be on the same "street where he lived".

We were in the house where Gene was born and babushka still lived in the room where his nursery had been. These were difficult times in the Soviet Union in the late 60's. Food was scarce – ingredients were almost impossible to find. A family lived in each room of their old apartment. The occupants shared one bath, one kitchen - one way of life. They all shared the toilet, the sink and stove privileges.

Babushka, being as wonderful as she was – tried to be as hospitable as all Russians are. She wanted to make a Czarski torte (now known to us as "Walnut Torte ala Babushka") for a "пир на весь мир" (feast for the world). Ingredients for the torte were almost non-existent. Flour was not available for cakes – only black bread could be found in the shops – sugar was only beet sugar and even that was almost extinct. Eggs were rationed and needed to be acquired by "friends".

With much searching and many phone calls to Moscow – eggs were obtained – walnuts were cracked and chopped and vanilla beans were even found in a secret jar. A magnificent creation was put together to please everyone's palate. The torte was especially wonderful since we had to get in line for the use of the oven and of course share this creation with the entire apartment inhabitants.

Mary Stenov

Walnut Torte – ala Babushka

2 cups of ground walnuts
8 eggs – separated
1 cup of sugar
Vanilla

Chop the walnuts – beat the eggs separately – add vanilla and sugar to the egg yolks – fold in the beaten egg whites – put into a 9-inch baking pan (lined with wax paper) and bake at 350F for 25 minutes. Dress with butter icing if you like or cover with apricot jam, vodka or brandy.