

The American Cultural Rodeo Begins



Americans give strong support for campaign

The *American Cultural Rodeo* is off to a great start thanks to strong support from our American Churches and sponsors. Because of you, the Gospel is being printed and distributed among 889 schools in Sugd Oblast, Tajikistan. Hundreds of Tajik school children and Tajik English school teachers have entered the ACR hoping to win a trip to the USA next July.

A long line of participants formed outside the *Sugd Teacher Training Institute (STTI)* the day the ACR began. Nozimova and Nuriddinova (pictured at left) were just two of hundreds of Tajik schoolchildren who decided to bring their 300 word essays in person rather than trust sending it by Tajik postal mail. Phone lines jammed and our Internet mail was flooded as students and teachers signed up to participate in the contest.

In the first round, 300 word essays (in English) were required on the subject: *Why is friendship between the US and Tajikistan important?* Ten American judges will now grade these exams to select the top 5% from each of 18 regions in Sugd Oblast. Those selected will advance to the second round contest on November 10. Round two will be a 3 hour written and oral (in English) American history exam on November 10. Winners in round two will advance to the finals scheduled for Dec 10. Teachers and children are competing to be one of 25 finalists who will win an all-expense-paid-trip to visit the country of their dreams next July: **The United States of America.**

But there is more good news to share. Because of your donations, we are able to print thousands of the *ACR American History Study Guide* that outlines the Christian heritage of our nation. We wrote the guide ourselves using material we gathered from many sources. Adding our own analysis to the facts, we share the Christian testimony of our nation and leaders. The study guide contains the Gospel message and is required reading for all participants. And there is more good news.

As organizer of the ACR campaign, I have been able to speak before hundreds of students in high schools, colleges, and universities in Sugd Oblast. The response has been wonderful.

The opportunity that stands before is huge but prayers are needed for the printing and distribution of the ACR study guide this school year.

More sponsors of the ACR are needed and you can now donate with a debit or credit card at our website: www.russiainlandmission.com

Tajik Students bring their essays hoping to be one of the 25 finalists who will win an *all-expense-paid-trip* to the country of their dreams: The USA

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Pioneering the Gospel in Tajikistan

By Missionary Mark Rose

Sponsors needed for 25 Finalists

We are seeking sponsors to help bring the 25 finalists to America next July. The group will consist of 10 Tajik English teachers and 15 Tajik students. Our plan is to land in Washington, D.C. and travel south through Virginia, North Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee. But our hope is that sponsors will invite the Tajik child or teacher they sponsor to their hometown. We still need sponsors so please let us know if you are interested by writing: LRose25607@aol.com or give us a call at 423-842-7452. You can sponsor one of the finalists for approximately \$2500. We will need the money in March 2008 to take advantage of group rates for travel.

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God has opened many doors for the Gospel

When the *American Cultural Rodeo* began in September, many doors opened allowing me to serve as a teacher and lecturer in Khudjand. At every turn, God is opening doors for the Gospel.

First, I was asked to teach 7th Grade history at the Khudjand (Private School) *Gymnasium of Languages*. Next, I was asked to be the weekly discussion leader on current affairs at the US SPONSORED *American Corner Project* located in the main library downtown. In addition to these new responsibilities, I serve as guest lecturer at the Khudjand State University's History Faculty.

My head was spinning from all the opportunities God was giving me to be a Christian witness and teacher in this Moslem country. As if that was not enough, I received invitations to speak to the National Assembly of Educators in Dushanbe later this year. There I will have opportunity to address a crowd of about 1500 school teachers.

Forgive me, but I must make one point. The ACR project and these opportunities would not be possible were it not for the construction and renovation work that we continue to do daily at the *Sugd Teacher Training Institute*. I just want any new readers or new supporters to understand the **Russia Inland Mission** has been effective in the former Soviet Union because of the humanitarian construction work that we do.

The *STTI* renovation and construction project will take another year to complete. We chose this construction project because of its strategic importance to the Tajik Ministry of Education and the 35,000 school teachers in the Sugd Oblast.

The total cost of the *American Cultural Rodeo* project and the *STTI* construction-renovation project will be between \$160,000 to \$250,000. If this seems to be a staggering amount of money, just remember that our goal is to spread the Gospel to the half a million school children and the 35,000 school teachers in the province. It will take us approximately 3-5 years to realize our goals and we really need your support and prayers.

These opportunities would not be possible without your prayers and support. Please continue to pray for the work in Tajikistan.



I am now teaching 7th graders American History at the *Gymnasium of Languages* on Thursdays.



On Wednesdays I serve as *Current Affairs* discussion leader at the *American Corner* in the Khudjand City Library.



Lecturing at the *Khudjand State University* to seniors and professors.

Donate Online

You can make a donation for the ACR and STTI projects at our website:

www.russiainlandmission.com

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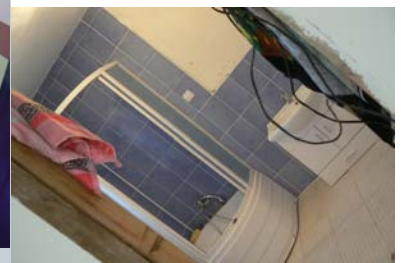
STTI Construction News

We want to thank everyone for your prayers and financial support allowing us to renovate the *Sugd Teacher Training Institute (STTI)* facilities. These facilities serve 35,000 teachers in the Sugd Oblast. Our ministry operates in Khudjand as *The Rose Charity*.

We just want to emphasize that while humanitarian construction work is not that exciting, it opens many doors. If you follow our work and our reports, you see this is true.

We live and work at the institute daily. But being a construction contractor, a school teacher, and a missionary is about like working three jobs in the same day.

We thank you for your prayers. We send you these pictures so you can follow our progress. The construction work is about 30% complete.



Shakhrinov Orphanage needs help!

The Tajik Ministry of Education has asked me to help build a bathroom for an orphanage in Shakhrinov, a town near Dushanbe. Anybody willing to help can contact me by email: LRose25607@aol.com I can help with visas and arrangements. Shakhrinov is near Turba Kala where we have some converts from 2004-05. Doing the work will allow us to work with our converts with suspicion.



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Top Secret Page

Let's learn about the Tajik-Islamic People...so we can win them to Jesus Christ!

Fascinating! That is all I can say about the last three months here in Tajikistan. I have learned many new things about the culture of Tajikistan and the culture of Islam. At times they run together and at times they do not. I want to pass along a few of the highlights.

The one thing that really stands out about the Tajik people is their warmth and friendliness toward me and the work we are doing. Of course, we have not come to that "Moment" yet when all of that will certainly change. Once we begin to organize a Church, there will be plenty of trials and opposition.

But another thing that really stands out is the oppression of the people by the government; especially of women. There is a class system in Tajikistan. There is a *peasant class*, a *worker class*, an *intellectual class*-all of which are remnants of the socialist communist system from the cold war days. This is added to another class system that existed before the communists took over in 1917 called a "Cast System" similar to that of India. Recently I met a family who once were members of the "Royal" or "Upper" class system based on royal blood lines and all of that. The only Tajiks who say this are those whose ancestors were part of that "Upper" class. But they insist it still exists.

Women are oppressed beyond our ability to believe it.

Another thing I learned recently is that Tajiks fight a lot. My assistant in Khudjand has had 8 broken bones in his 31 years. All of them suffered in fights. One day I had to excuse my construction foreman because his brother had kicked his wife out of the house and told her to go home to her parents (it happens often when Muslim husbands get upset with their wives over petty things at home). Of course this shames her family and they normally show up the next day to fight (I mean fistfight) with the husband hoping to convince him to take her back. He can refuse and she can never return. So, I had to dismiss my foreman so he could go home and help his brother fistfight with his brother's wife's family. Tajiks have a tribal clan system that is very strong. Last year many Tajiks were beat to death in Khudjand after a fight between rival villages. Over 300 were involved in 3 days of street fighting between the clans. Nobody was prosecuted for the deaths.



These are my construction guys! I have come to love every one of them. On the sawhorses is my homemade table saw and router. Hey, they work! Pray for my men: Forkat, Rakhim, Baidlow, Mohommed, Akhad, and Mohammed.

But the number of women and children who die as a result of oppression really worries me.

Our cook is named Sha-ho-dat. Her husband appears to the far right in the photo on this page. Her mother died last week suddenly. Tajiks bury their dead the same day that they die. This is followed by three days of mourning when friends and relatives can visit. I visited her home. Only the women go inside while the men remain outside. Tajiks believe that the soul of the dead will return everyday to the home on Thursday and Sunday until the end of time. And I also learned that Muslims believe that the end will come on a Friday.

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