

The CIVIC Citizen

The Council for International Visitors to Iowa Cities

A Brazilian journalist, Ricardo da Guia Rosa, visited in March as part of a group of four journalists from Brazil who were hosted by an Executive MBA class, Lyle and Linda Hubbard, Harold Rocha, and Chivy Sok. He wrote (after apologizing for his English): "I'll never forget Iowa. The travel around the U.S. keep me a surprise. Now I know Iowa City. Went in four cities and if you ask me, 'Which one do you prefer?' - maybe Iowa City, with the snow, the river, the sun and, especially, the people. Washington, a good city to see how is the life when you have the power. Seattle, a good city to think you are like a nobody. 'My money was over the ocean....'. Houston, a good city to remember: Bush's ultimate! No war, my friend. Visit Iowa City and don't forget - I'll come back".

Silvia Faria, from the same group, added in an email: "Before anything, I'd like to say that we had in Iowa City the best moments in our travel to United States. We enjoy the people and the place and we hope to go back soon.

"The best thing Iowa has is the people, the high level of education and kindness. There is something very young in the city. Probably because of the university, because of the country life, people are so calm, kind and simple. We observed the life in community, the relationship among people of many countries living with each other in harmony. It is, in my opinion, the enchantment of the place.

"We appreciate a lot the meetings we had in the university, especially with the students who were being prepared to visit Brazil. Although we were meeting for the first time, we felt very welcome. And in the coquetaill in the university we could meet people that have known our country. I liked to hear these people saying they love our country. It was a good opportunity to know and talk with them, practice our English and hear about their way of life. We cannot forget to say that the Riverdance show was terrific! It was the most beautiful ballet I have seen in my life.

"In Iowa I could feel the American democracy too, through the respect with the differences, like to the Amish community. We can disagree with their vision of the world, but we appreciate the respect you have toward them. We were well impressed too with the respect we were treated for everybody. The men who have answered our questions about agricultural subsidies were so honest, even though the theme was delicate for them and for the U.S. government. That fact helped us understand other sides of the problem. You must know that the Brazilian government has complained against the American and European subsidies in the World Trade Organization, because we don't have conditions to compete in these terms.

"We understood a little more about the American people with Lyle and Linda Hubbard. We spent a day with them, in their softly house. We went to the church to have a dinner with their friends, where the children organized a theater. It was so funny, mainly when their fathers represented the Riverdance's dancers. The pastor included. Imagine how funny it was!

"When we came back to Brasilia, where we live, we told to the U.S. embassy assessors that in Washington we have learned about politics, in Seattle, about the commerce, in Houston, about business, and in Iowa, about American people. We thank you a lot for the opportunity. And we hope the people we have met in Iowa have liked us too.

"I hope I have say a little about my experience in Iowa. It was a beautiful human experience. Thanks for your attention. We hope we can give you the same when you come here".