

The CIVIC Citizen

The Council for International Visitors to Iowa Cities

A letter from Belarus:

“Dear Friends,

I remember my visit to Iowa City with great pleasure and lots of thanks. Today I got back (mentally) to my recent visit to the U.S. So my problem is that the film where I had images of Iowa City got damaged when it was developed at a developing center. So I was left without anything to see or to show others those shots. But today Yureii Guborevich, he was also present, he sent me the print-outs of those films, about visiting the U.S. And again, I have a chance to see our “dream trip”.

“Dream”, please accept it without quotation marks because for us, since we are simple people, this trip happened as an absolutely wonderful dream. We found wonderful, just about everything. First of all that we were chosen for this trip in the first place. Secondly, the way it was organized by the Department of State. Starting with the representatives of the U.S. embassy in Minsk, as well as the department for arranging of the programs by the international center (Meridian), and ending with CIVIC and sister organizations in Oregon, Texas, and Minnesota. Of course I can not give enough thanks to those people, as co-sponsors of our program, who organized the meetings with our group, and who shared their knowledge and experience with us. They donated their time and were very open-minded and out-spoken. All the time we had our meetings I was wondering about the volume and the significance of the work laid upon them. Because of that, I cannot avoid mentioning a very symbolic phenomenon. The very first night I was back in Belarus, I dreamed a very symbolic dream. I saw a beautiful, tall building. And the building attracted a very huge crowd from all four parts of the world. Understand that in my dream this building is a central depository of the expertise of all the people populating the United States. So those people, they came to this building to submit short summaries about all the useful deeds they did for their own country, as well as new ideas they offer to boost the further development of their country. At this point I awakened and I started to think about the symbolism of my dream. And I started to think about purely human desire or hope, and the assurance I got from this visit to the U.S., which includes: your own experience, hard work, intellect – that is what is necessary and that is what helps in development and the well-being of families, your organization, and eventually your country and the whole world you live in; secondly, even a small success in what you (referring to CIVIC) are doing is still a success.

The U.S. is a huge, diverse, and beautiful country. It is populated by smiling, cheerful, smart, and interesting people. These people, they love their country. And they want this country to be even better. I fell in love with your country, and wish it all good well-being, happiness, and peace. I thank you from the depth of my heart, and I wish my age would let me see your country one more time, and get to know it even better. My wife and I invite you to visit us, and we would be glad to host you in our house, show to you our city (Brest) and its historical sites, and overall get you acquainted with Belarussians.

Sincerely yours,
Uladzimir Zhyliuk”
(Editor-in Chief, Svoyo Radio, Brest, Belarus)

The above is a literal translation from the original Russian.

Editorial Staff
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