





# The Garden Companion

(Biointensive for Russia's newsletter)

Volume 4 / Fall 2000

## VALLOTTONS AND VESECKY FIND WARM WELCOME IN NUKUS

No, we were *not* captured by Islamic fundamentalist guerrillas in the Western Tien-Shan mountains, nor did we die of thirst in the Kyzylkum Desert! In fact, Daniel and Amber Vallotton and I completed a fascinating and successful Biointensive (BI) workshop tour of Uzbekistan in late July and early August, and lived to write a full account of our experiences. The complete "Travelogue" is available by e-mail or in hardcopy — just write or phone BfR (contact info on p. 7). Here follows a very brief summary of the tour and some info on the 5-day workshop in Nukus.

We spent short periods of time in Tashkent and Chirchik (in northeastern Uzbekistan near Kazakhstan) as departure points for our visits along with Irina and her student "activists" to regions where we would be holding seminars and visiting established BI gardens in remote villages. In Nukus, Karakalpakstan (an autonomous republic in the northwestern part of Uzbekistan) and Samarkand (southwest of Tashkent), we presented seminars hosted by local nonprofit organizations.

Our tours of the Nuratau Nature Reserve (north of Samarkand), the Brichmulla Forestry Farm (north of Tashkent and Chirchik), and Chirchik were planned so that we could observe progress made by Irina Kim and her student ecoactivists promoting BI in various regions of Uzbekistan. Irina and her high school-level "mini-farming" students have been cooperating with local families, schools, and researchers to start BI gardens since 1995. Their efforts were given a boost in 1998, the year the first BfR/Winrock mission brought Patrick Williams and Darina Drapkin to spend 10 days working intensively to share information and experience with them in Chirchik. In 1998 and 1999 they journeyed several times to work in Nuratau, supported by the German non-profit, Naturschutzbund (Nature Protection Union). The villagers have enthusiastically begun experimenting with BI and report good results, and all involved are hopeful for a properly funded "Cultural Landscapes" program to continue the work.

(See page 3 for a report on the seminar.)

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## MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

We resume publication after too long a hiatus. As a result, this newsletter is very full, including reports on our varied activities over the past 2 1/2 years.

Winrock/USAID co-sponsored Biointensive workshop tours of Uzbekistan and Russia occurred in 1998, 1999, and 2000 with Patrick Williams, Albie Miles, Darina Drapkin, and Daniel and Amber Vallotton as presenters. We've hosted extended conference, workshop and internship visits for Irina Kim (see p. 3), Aleksandr (Sasha) Avrorin, and Vladimir Loginov (see p. 5). As a follow-on to our work, Alan Buckley conducted a terrific tour in Fall 1999 for Sasha Avrorin and Tanya Polyakova of Habitat for Humanity building sites in Idaho, Washington, and Alaska, and passive solar homes in Colorado including Rocky Mountain Institute's headquarters (p. 6).

Most importantly, at long last (in summer 1999), the second edition of *Kak vyraschivat' bol'she ovoschei...*, the Russian translation of *How to Grow More Vegetables...* by John Jeavons, was published in Novosibirsk! If interested in presenting a copy to a Russian friend, please write or call me at [cvesecky@igc.org](mailto:cvesecky@igc.org) or 650 856-9751 for a brochure.

Wintertime in Russia is especially beautiful, a time when the scenery is at its most picturesque and the hospitality at its best. You won't want to miss the tour coming up in January — read on below for details!

*Carol Vesecky*

## BfR OFFERS RUSSIA ART / ECO-AG TOURS IN JANUARY AND DECEMBER, 2001

Biointensive for Russia is planning two tours to the St. Petersburg and Moscow areas in 2001. The first, from Jan. 12-28, will feature a week of art events in St. Petersburg arranged by Bay Area artist and teacher Stephanie Tsuchida. We will tour the world-renowned Hermitage and Russian Museums, led by Sergei Katin, a knowledgeable, English-speaking art instructor. We'll visit an artist's private studio for an afternoon of friendship-making around the samovar, and an internationally respected children's art school, meeting students and teachers and viewing the children's astonishing paintings. An optional day trip will be offered to Repino, location of the charming dacha studio of the 19th-century Russian painter, Ilya Repin. (cont. on page 3)



# On the Home Front

## EVENING OF UZBEK & RUSSIAN CULTURE & CUISINE by Shoshana Billik

At last we can offer you a description of the "Evening of Uzbek and Russian Culture and Cuisine" event which took place in March, 1998, at St. Mark's Parish Hall in Palo Alto. A fundraiser for that year's BfR/Winrock mission to Russia and Uzbekistan, the event netted some \$1000 for the tools, books and local expertise needed. (For more info on the tour itself, see page 4.)

The evening began with a mini-bazaar. Central Asian books, clothing, and handicrafts were on display; items from Common Ground Garden Supply, Uzbek and Russian CDs, and Russian jewelry, also benefiting Friends House Moscow, were offered for sale. An exhibit previously seen at the DeYoung Museum portrayed the ancient Silk Road of Central Asia. Dr. Sharof Tugizov, an Uzbek emigre, presented his and Stanford professor, Dr. Albert Dien's slides of Samarkand and other ancient cities of Uzbekistan, revealing the beauty of the ornate Islamic architectural styles.

The program began with a talk on Uzbekistan's agricultural problems by Vice Consul Shakarbek Osmonov from the Russian Consulate in San Francisco. Shakarbek is of Uzbek and Kyrgyz descent and has lived in Uzbekistan. Then Dr. Galina Zheltova, a distinguished professor of history from Tashkent, spoke movingly on her homeland and encouraged us all to visit it.

Next came a delightful Russian puppet show and tea dance, performed by Darina Drapkin and her father Edward. The two Russian emigrés enthralled the audience with their clever show of a courtship between two hands. They then



provided great comic relief with their tea dance puppet skit, which Edward originally performed in the USSR. Next, the BfR team that traveled to Uzbekistan had the opportunity to describe BfR and the Biointensive method.

Finally, we were treated to storytelling by gifted Kazakh folklorist and musicologist Dr. Alma Kunanbayeva and Russian songs sung by Alma, Darina, and Darina's mother Elena. The crowd (including many native Russians) was enchanted, often clapping and singing along with the music.

An attractive buffet table nourished the assemblage of more than 100 people, courtesy of Tugizov, Zheltova, and Dinora Azimova from Uzbekistan, Sara from Mongolia, Darina, and their American kitchen assistants. Fare included *plov* (rice pilau with lamb, onions and carrots, Uzbekistan's national dish); and

Russian *borscht*, *pir-oshky*, and *salat olivier*. What a splendid evening! *If you and/or your organization would ever like to collaborate on producing a similar fundraiser in the future, please call Carol.*

Thanks to everyone who participated and contributed to making the evening a big success! Special thanks go to Dr. Jeannine Davis-Kimball of the Center for the Study of the Eurasian Nomads for the magnificent display of Kazakh costumes and jewelry, and to Dr. Dinora Azimova (then a Fulbright scholar at Stanford University) and ceramic artist Barbara Brown for their Uzbek textiles, costumes, pottery, and books. For the Silk Road history, formerly displayed at the Wonders of the Silk Road festival at the DeYoung *continued on page 7*

## IRINA KIM VISITS FROM CHIRCHIK

Agronomist/Biointensive high school teacher Irina Kim visited us in late April and May for nearly four weeks. During her stay she attended "Soil, Food & People: A Biointensive Model for the New Century," an international conference organized by Ecology Action and held at UC Davis in late March. She made many contacts there and deeply impressed the audience with a description of her work teaching Biointensive (BI) in rural villages with her high

Biointensive for Russia (BfR) is a project supported by Ecology Action of the Midpeninsula. Founded in 1993 with the aid of LO\*OP Center, Inc. to help promote Biointensive dacha gardening in the former Soviet Union, its goals now include a two-way sharing of information on environmentally sound lifestyles.

BfR enabled the primer on Grow Biointensive<sup>SM</sup> mini-farming, *How to Grow More Vegetables*, to be translated and published in Russia in 1993 and 1999. BfR has also hosted 20 former Soviet gardeners in California since 1990 to attend workshops offered by Ecology Action, and conducted four annual Biointensive workshop tours of Russia and Uzbekistan. This issue of the *Garden Companion* was edited by Carol Vesecky, assisted by Stephanie Tsuchida, Barbara Brown, and Bruce Benedict.

school student trainers. She is totally committed to the cause of saving Uzbekistan's soils by spreading the method country-wide.

Irina's time in California was full, including the following tours and visits: Tour of Adrienne and Gene Duncan's productive Palo Alto backyard BI food garden • Palo Alto Homeless Garden (downtown, near Caltrain) visit hosted by Jolene

Hsu • Tour of Silicon Valley via light rail with Shoshana Billik, Bobek Farhat, and Fran Adams. • UC Davis Biointensive Conference, "Soils, Food & People." Irina impressed the 235 partici-



pants with her impromptu talk, and presented John Jeavons with a beautiful Uzbek robe and embroidered *tubiteika* (cap). For the conference's content, visit [www.growbiointensive.org](http://www.growbiointensive.org). If interested in a talk's tape or transcript, write to Carol. • Loop Center's "Last Friday" Salon — BfR's four new stand-up photo displays presented • Chinatown tour with Natalya Lukomskaya *cont. on page 5*

# BfR's Farflung Workshops

## SEMINAR ON BIOINTENSIVE MINI-FARMING IN NUKUS, UZBEKISTAN

The Farmer Center in Nukus, Karakalpakstan, Uzbekistan hosted a highly successful 5-day seminar on "Grow Biointensive" (GBI) from July 24-28, 2000 at the Aral Water Planning Institute. It was taught by Daniel and Amber Vallotton, husband-and-wife agriculturists from New Mexico State University in Las Cruces, like Nukus in a desert area. The Vallottons have collaborated for ten years with John Jeavons, the world authority on GBI. They traveled to Nukus as USAID-supported "Farmer-to-Farmer" volunteers at the invitation of Winrock International's office in Tashkent.

Carol Vesecky worked with Rustam Arzykhanov and Sara Imbarova of the Farmer Center to plan the mission, the third in three years co-sponsored by Winrock. Carol's trip and most seminar costs were supported by an anonymous private grant to Ecology Action.

Attending the seminar were 72 participants, including Farmer Center staff and the interpreters into Russian and Karakalpak. Each attendee had received a copy of the Russian book *Kak vyraschivat' bol'she ovoschei...* to study a week before the seminar began. Irina Kim and eight high school students from the Combination School in Chirchik where she offers BI and basic soil science traveled with the Vallottons and Vesecky to share their Uzbekistan experience and improve their knowledge of Biointensive theory and practice. The other participants included six scholars with "doktor" and "kandidat" degrees and other senior scientists from the Institute for Bioecology, the Institute of Archeology and Ethnography, members of the University's Agrarian Faculty, farm association officials, representatives of 14 local NGOs and other institutions, and a number of amateur gardeners.

Lecture topics included the world and regional agricultural situation vs. the Biointensive (BI) solution, BI philosophy and history, BI components and advantages, soil preparation, soil fertility, composting and growing compost crops, open-pollinated seeds, seed propagation, transplanting, intensive plant spacing, companion planting, "closed-system" sustainability, growing a complete diet, BI in arid regions (soil-plant-atmosphere water movement, water scarcity, how BI conserves water, rainwater harvesting strategies, irrigation alternatives, salinity, water-use efficiency of various crops), and BI mini-farm planning.

During two mornings of practical work, "double-digging" the soil 60 cm deep was practiced, using techniques that minimize the amount of effort needed. Participants also built a carbon-conserving compost pile with the help of the young students from Chirchik (emphasizing that it must be kept moist), and learned the proper manner of adding cured compost to the prepared garden bed. Preparation of seed flat soil, seed sowing, and transplanting of seedlings were also covered during the demonstrations.

In their seminar evaluations, participants especially praised the effectiveness of the demonstrations. In fact, one, Dr. Bakhtier Jollibekov, was so inspired by the compost demonstration that he built a compost pile in his garden before the next morning's lecture. Another, Marina Orel,

double-dug a bed in her garden during the week, and wrote that the seminar "shook me up and made me see my garden in a new way." Ludmila Lutsenko and others appreciated the information received on the "various soil/ climate conditions of many countries" and the emphasis on "the importance of the deep digging factor, of careful use of water, fertilization, soil structure, compost building, and humus accumulation."

After returning home, Carol received information from Nukus that the group has met and is preparing to plant garlic in BI winter beds. A grant proposal is being written by the Farmer Center to support more translations and research based on Ecology Action guidelines. Group members hope for continued collaboration via e-mail and a follow-up seminar in a year or two, and the Vallottons and Vesecky intend to work toward this, considering the potential of this group in Nukus to conduct valuable research on BI yields in salinized, desert soils to be high. And, remembering friendships made at the seminar and at a farewell picnic in a yurt at the Salty Lake near Nukus, they certainly plan to stay in touch with this most congenial group of people. *For more info on workshops, see pp. 4 & 5.*



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*Jan. 2000 Tour, cont. from p. 1* Carol Vesecky and Sasha Avrorin will conduct follow-up meetings with BI gardeners of all ages in St. Petersburg and Pushkin; tour participants will also be invited to participate.

For the second week in the Moscow area, we will spend at least two days sightseeing with local Russian guides. Those wishing to learn more about Biointensive mini-farming (BI) with Russian gardeners and ag teachers will drive to the Educational Methodology Center (EMC), a Ministry of Agriculture short-course college in Novo-Sin'kovo, north of Moscow. There, Aleksandr Avrorin, director of Biointensive in Siberia, will teach a 3-day workshop. Double-digging and other demonstrations will be performed in a heated greenhouse, whatever the weather is like outdoors.

For those preferring to continue sightseeing, visits to more art, history, or literary museums and churches will be offered, such as, for example the Leo Tolstoy House Museum or the newly rebuilt Cathedral of Christ the Savior. Another alternative could be an overnight excursion to one or more of the Golden Ring cities (at extra cost). Tour participants will have the opportunity to study Survival Russian for several sessions with Carol, who has taught in the Palo Alto Adult School.

Cost of all of this will be \$1800 for one week and \$2200 for two, (based on B&B accommodation) including "profit" that will help support future Biointensive workshops. Join us to experience Russia at its most magical, when its people are at their most hospitable! But, if you know this tour is not for you and yet the cause is worthwhile, tell your friends! And please, get in touch immediately if there's a chance you can join us, and we'll put you on the electronic and/or paper mailing and/or phone lists. If your answer is "not this time," then consider coming with us in December 2001. *The January tour is filling up fast! For more info call Carol or Stephanie as soon as possible at 650 856-9751.*

## BI SEMINARS IN 1998 IN CHIRCHIK & NUKUS, UZBEKISTAN AND ST. PETERSBURG, RUSSIA

Ecology Action's Biointensive (BI) message reached high school students, teachers, farmers, orphaned children, agricultural researchers and dacha gardeners in Uzbekistan and Russia in April and May of 1998 through workshops given by a three-person Biointensive for Russia team, co-sponsored (as in 1999, see above) by Winrock: Patrick Williams, Darina Drapkin, and Carol Vesecky.

En route to Uzbekistan, during a 12-hour layover in Moscow, the three gave a short demonstration at a chemical, cucumber-growing greenhouse enterprise in Moscow. Ivan Antiushin, Director of the Ministry of Agriculture's Educational Methods Center and a graduate of a 1996 Ecology Action 3-Day Workshop, joined them there.

After arriving in Uzbekistan, the team divided into two. Darina and Patrick taught workshops in Chirchik, where their host was high school teacher Irina Kim of Ecopolis. The fourth team member, Dr. Maria de la Fuente of UC Continuing Extension/Santa Clara County, was unable to travel due to a last-minute family emergency. Winrock fortunately recruited Ned Kalb, a recently retired agricultural extension agent from Purdue University now living in Tashkent, to replace her. He and Carol journeyed to Nukus, Karakalpakstan, in the western end of the country, to teach workshops hosted by Rustem Arzykhanov and Sara Imbarova of the Nukus Farmer Center.

Following the Uzbekistan tour, the team traveled to St. Petersburg, Russia, where they presented the Ecology Action slide show and answered questions at the School for Young Naturalists, and also taught agricultural researchers, teachers, and dacha gardeners in nearby Pushkin, Shushary, and Pavlovsk.

These presentations were coordinated by Albina Kochegina and Natasha Krestiankina, who participated in Ecology Action's 3-Day Workshop in 1995.

In all locations, the team distributed Russian-language books and articles, tools, and seeds to the organizations involved. A great deal of enthusiasm for the method was generated in both countries.

The St. Petersburg visit and the donations of literature, tools and seeds were funded by Biointensive for Russia, with some help from Winrock's Moscow and Morrilton, Arkansas offices. For a more descriptive report on the trip, write to Carol Vesecky, BfR, 831 Marshall Drive, Palo Alto, CA 94303, fax 650 424-8767, or e-mail <cvesecky@igc.org>. Information is also available on the Web site, [www.igc.org/biointensiveforussia/](http://www.igc.org/biointensiveforussia/).

*From Ecology Action's newsletter of August 1998*

## SECOND WINROCK-SPONSORED BfR TOUR TO UZBEKISTAN AND RUSSIA by Carol Vesecky

In 1999 our team included Albie Miles, a teacher of Biointensive and apiculture based at UC Santa Cruz; Darina Drapkin, then teaching English at a Waldorf School in St. Petersburg, and myself. The program involved a return visit to Chirchik, Uzbekistan, and basic seminars in Bryansk, Russia near the border with Ukraine, and Novo-Sin'kovo, near Dmitrov, north of Moscow. As in 1998, our mission was co-sponsored by the Winrock International Institute for International Development, within a Farmer-to-Farmer program funded by the U.S. Agency for International Development.

## Chirchik's AgroCenter Actively Promoting Biointensive

Albie and I spent our days with Irina offering BI review and follow-up lectures to her 48 students in the Mini-Farmer Class and Ecoclub at the Combined Studies Center, a senior high school where students receive instruction qualifying them for many different occupations as well as for university entrance. For more information on the EcoClub's activities teaching BI in various regions of Uzbekistan, see page 3.

The students clearly understood BI's potential for helping slow desertification in Uzbekistan largely caused by the cotton monoculture and its wasteful ditch irrigation. They had written final-year papers on the subject; one of the best can be viewed on BfR's Web site [www.igc.org/biointensiveforussia/](http://www.igc.org/biointensiveforussia/). In the classroom, in addition to reviewing the basic topics of BI "how-to's" and their implications for saving the soil, Albie described his 1996 research project on nutritional self-sufficiency (see EA's newsletter of May 1997) when, for seven months, he consumed only those foods he personally grew in his garden. Demonstrations were held at the dacha gardens of Irina Kim and local journalist Victor Starshikov, both of whom had been gardening Biointensively for years.

## Regional Program for Bryansk

Bryansk is a city of about 200,000, not far from Russia's border with Ukraine. One-third of the Bryansk region received radioactive fallout from Chernobyl, a situation which sparked the founding of the "Viola," a nonprofit composed of teachers, doctors and students determined to do whatever they could to educate the population on the dangers of radiation and on methods of cleansing the body of radioactive substances. Viola activist Albina Samsonova participated in Ecology Action's 3-Day Workshop in Willits in

1996. Albina and Dr. Ludmila Zhirina, Viola's dynamic director, worked with Igor Prokofiev, a doctoral candidate in biology and others to make our visit as pleasant and productive as possible. Our workshop was held at the university's Center for Training in Decisionmaking, involving the regional Young Naturalist organization which takes an interest in promoting Biointensive.

Participants in our longer and shorter workshops in Bryansk, numbering about 115, included Viola members, faculty and students of the agriculture and biology departments of the university, seven Forestry Academy faculty members, and biology teachers in the Young Naturalist program. As of this date in Fall 2000, many have incorporated BI in their curricula, and Viola is seeking grant funding to carry out a major project.

## Ministry of Agriculture Provides Warm Welcome

Near Dmitrov, north of Moscow, Novo-Sin'kovo is located in a vast marshy plain that has been drained for the growing of crops. The lands of the Yakhromskiy State Farm and College cover this plain; the Ministry of Agriculture's Educational Methods Center is situated nearby.

The EMC is directed by Ivan Zakharovich Antiushin, who attended the Ecology Action 3-day workshop in Willits in 1996. Evgeny Shmelev, Director of Foreign Relations; Victor Voronkov, and Ludmila Polivanova set up our seminar. Valentina Arshinova saw to our every physical need, serving delicious meals to us and seven participants in a

*continued on page 8*



## SASHA AVRORIN TEACHES IN FOUR CITIES

Supported by funds from the same grant that enabled BfR's Uzbekistan tour, Aleksandr (Sasha) Avrorin, Director of "Biointensive in Siberia" journeyed to Kurganinsk (near Krasnodar) in August to present two seminars in the agriculturally significant Kuban region near the Black Sea. Hosted by Vladimir (Volodya) Loginov and others, he presented a three-day seminar at Professional School 50 in *Kurganinsk* and a two-day seminar hosted by the Environmental-Communitarian Union "Atshy" in *Maikop*. (We were duly thanked "for this technology, for the book, for the fact that such seminars are organized...") Sasha traveled to Southern Russia from Novosibirsk without a return booking, due to heavy holiday traffic from the Black Sea resorts. Volodya accompanied him to *Rostov-on-Don* to catch a train back from there, and they stayed with Anatoly Skorobogatov, an old friend of our colleague, star networker Volodya Shestakov. Anatoly had built his insulated-concrete house in Rostov with the help of Doug Walker, a writer and inventor from Colorado. Anatoly introduced them to Andrei Surovoi, a Ph.D. in ag science and nursery/garden supply store owner who holds classes at the store, much as is done at Common Ground. Naturally that led to Sasha's presenting a one-day seminar in Rostov, and his being invited to return in January to teach a longer workshop. At the beginning of October, Sasha presented a three-day seminar with the Siberian Ecological Fund in *Novosibirsk*. He reports: "The weather of the digging day was good, but a little cold. Participants were frozen during my show, but enthusiastic."

## 2ND RUSSIAN EDITION OF HTG OUT IN JUNE '99

Yes, edition two of *Kak vyraschivat' bol'she ovoshei...* was published at last in Novosibirsk, and is available for

purchase in Siberia and Kazakhstan. The production task involved finalizing the editing on Carol's Mac of three new sections and carefully checking (with the aid of several volunteers from the Mid-Peninsula Barter Group) the updated figures in the master charts which had been converted to metrics by computer.

КАК ВЫРАЩИВАТЬ  
БОЛЬШЕ ОВОЩЕЙ\*



Джон Джевоис

The book was also printed in a small way for our workshops in May, 1999 by the Russian Ministry of Agriculture's Educational Methods Center in Novo-Sin'kovo (near Moscow), and with the color cover for the commercial market by Igor Ivanenko and Viktor and Valery Yukechev of Infosib in Novosibirsk ([www.infosib.ru/ecology\\_action/](http://www.infosib.ru/ecology_action/)) in July. It is again available for purchase as a gift for Russian friends — just send \$15 and an address, and we'll send your order on to Igor for dispatch from Novosibirsk. A brochure is available on request. (A copy can be mailed to a US address for \$25.) A printing is envisioned for Western Russia; this awaits additional funding of at least \$3000.

An edited translation of *Sustainable Vegetable Garden* by John Jeavons and Carol Cox should be published by spring; we have funding for a small printing from the same anonymous grant that supported the Uzbekistan tour in summer 2000. Plans are also in the making for Russian translations of Ecology Action's publications *Test Your Soil With Plants*, *Backyard Homestead Mini-Farm & Garden Log-Book*, *One Circle*, and *Future Fertility*.

cont. from page 2 • Tour of Permaculture-based "Our Farm" CSA in Woodside with Dave Blume • BfR slide show, talk by Irina in Peg Smith's lovely home in Aptos • Three days of hosting in Santa Cruz by Patrick Williams, co-director of SC Homeless Garden and his sister, Lawnae Hunter. *Highlights:* Meeting the homeless workers in the garden near Natural Bridges and the Women's Project garden just north of Beach Hill. Robbie, a young Korean-American homeless gardener, interpreted while I returned to Palo Alto. (Irina speaks Russian, Korean, Uzbek, and German, but not much English!) Visit to Cowell State Park for the redwoods, with Santa Cruz' Russian interpreter emerita, Betty Bernstein, along for the ride in her wheelchair. The Santa Cruz "Green" Grange meeting. Visit to "Utopia" in the hills above Aptos, which is being readied by Elizabeth Hamilton and Alan Brown to provide a mini-farm B&B experience. • Common Ground lecture/slide show class by Irina and Carol, "How Former Soviet Gardeners Provide 50% or More of Their Family Diets"; Margarita Orlova from Almaty, Kazakhstan via Mountain View helped interpret. (Margarita now volunteers in the Common Ground store and library!) This followed our attendance at the class on Double-Digging (aided by Aikido) given by John Jeavons • Morning tour of the Alan Chadwick Garden and the lower-down-the-hillside part of the Agroecology Farm and Garden Project with Albie Miles and Orin Martin at UCSC (Susie Mader joined us) • Delightful fundraiser with BfR supporter Marlene Broemer at SF home of Bob and Linda Nellessen • "Growing Up Korean and Female in Modern Uzbekistan" talk at Palo Alto AAUW Global Awareness section, resulting in forwarding of Irina's interesting articles to her list by Helen Young, a

sociologist studying Chinese women's issues at Stanford • Visit to Fair Oaks Demonstration project, with Rita and Gene Fisher of Los Gatos — Chuck Ingels, UCCE Farm Agent., offers instruction on high density planting, tree size control, fruit variety selection and sequential ripening, budding and grafting, and much more — see <http://commserv.ucdavis.edu/cesacramento/orchard.htm> • Tour of Harald Hoven's flourishing Biodynamic CSA garden at Rudolf Steiner College, Fair Oaks (where Waldorf teachers are educated).

After Irina's return to Uzbekistan, several of us, including Doris Williams Robertson and Susie Mader of Palo Alto, returned to visit the Agroecology program and "Utopia."

## IRINA KIM'S ARTICLES AVAILABLE

During her visit in March and April, Irina wrote several short articles that may be of interest to readers. These were translated into English by BfR associate Maria Belodubrovskaya. The following can be obtained via e-mail or ordinary post by contacting Carol:

- "Koreans in Uzbekistan"
- "Uzbekistan Needs Biointensive!"
- "Agricultural Ecology and Food Gardening in Uzbekistan"
- "What is "Ecopolis"?" (Irina's BI teaching program)
- "Women's Rights in Uzbekistan"

*Irina's daughters Irina (the younger) and Mei, and activists Aziz and Maksim are studying English and would welcome pen pals in English or Russian or both. Contact Carol if interested.*

# Russians Hosted in Fall of 1999

## AVRORIN, POLYAKOVA TREATED TO HOMES TOUR by A. Avrorin & C. Vesecky

We've already heard many words about how we must not pollute the environment, that we should conserve energy and natural resources. Up to now this has been impossible for most people, since often we really don't know how to accomplish these goals. We look askance at those who try to convince us that we have to change our way of life and live according to the principles of sustainable development. We know that it's easy to proclaim new principles, but not so easy to live by them. It's just easier not to think about it. Nevertheless, the results of recent studies show us that we must not only think about the fate of our planet and its dwellers, but also move on to a practical course of action.

This is especially important in the field of homebuilding, because the manner in which we build now will determine how we will live for the next hundred years. Nature's capacity to reprocess our wastes without our assistance has been exhausted, and we have to stop placing them in the environment in a form it cannot digest. Even now we can use technologies that preserve the environment and use a minimum of materials and energy. It's good to live well, but we must not forget that we should leave equal opportunities for a good life to our children and ensure that this happens by our actions in the here and now....

The above words were written by Aleksandr (Sasha) to introduce one of his lectures in Novosibirsk after returning from a tour of home-building sites in four western, cold-climate states in early fall of 1999. (Currently he is offering a entire course of lectures on Energy-efficient Homebuilding in Cold Climates at the Novosibirsk Academy of Architecture and Art.) Alan Buckley coordinated the tour of Northern Idaho, Eastern Washington, and Alaska aided by Rotary International and Habitat for Humanity members, and Alan and Carol organized the Colorado portion of the tour which Carol also joined) with much help from Coloradans.

Before the trip, we were fortunate in being able to arrange for Sasha's participation in a 3-Day Workshop in Grow Biointensive<sup>SM</sup> Sustainable Mini-Farming in Willits, and a two-hour session with John Jeavons during which Sasha deepened his knowledge of Ecology Action's educational and experimental programs.

In Colorado, we mainly visited houses already built, our hosts offering much information on their construction and design principles. Our chief guide was Rick Heede, research scholar at Rocky Mountain Institute, who showed us the Institute's headquarters ("Amory Lovins' house") and his own home, the new Sundeck at the top of the Ajax Mountain's main skilift, and several other projects. Also memorable were the straw-bale Waldorf School in Carbondale and architect Jeff Dickinson's straw-bale home, Woody Creek Tavernkeepers Shep and Mary Harris' passive solar home *par excellence*, the Benedict Building in Aspen (visited in memory of noted Aspen architect Fritz Benedict, Carol's uncle), Carol's cousins Jessie and John (Benedict-) Gordon's home in Twin Lakes, and Don Galston's geodesic, passive solar home in Buena Vista.

Information on the visits to the other states can be obtained from Alan Buckley, 209 523-4243. Sasha recorded

the entire tour on a 3-hour video, which he has edited for use in a course of lectures he is teaching this fall. We hope to receive this and translate the narrative in due course; for now, members in good standing may request a copy of the complete video by calling Carol at 650 856-9751. Alan also wrote up what he had learned as advice to Russian and other cold-climate homebuilders; his article is available from Carol via e-mail and post. The best online resource on the subject is, of course, [www.rmi.org](http://www.rmi.org).

## V. LOGINOV RETURNS TO CALIFORNIA

Before Sasha Avrorin's departure (see left), Vladimir (Volodya) Loginov arrived from his home in Kurganinsk in the Krasnodarsky *krai* (near the Black Sea). Volodya participated in a 3-Day Workshop at Ecology Action in 1996, and has been testing the method and producing videos in the interim; he recently hosted Sasha Avrorin for workshops in the area (see page 5).

While here, Volodya completed a two-week internship at Ecology Action in Willits, and also helped out for varying periods in BI gardens in Santa Cruz (the Homeless Garden Project co-directed by Patrick Williams and UCSC's Alan Chadwick Garden where Albie Miles teaches), Aptos ("Utopia," the future B&B retreat center of Elizabeth Hamilton and Alan Brown) and Palo Alto (the Urban Ministry garden where Jolene Hsu was director, and Carol's own garden). Volodya and I also worked together on his proposal for a USAID-funded grant, to teach and demonstrate BI at the agricultural school near his home in Kurganinsk and in nearby Maikop (Northern Caucasus), and to introduce the method to the *krai*'s population via a media campaign. This proposal was not funded for the year 2000, but is being revised and resubmitted for 2001.

During Vladimir Shestakov's visit to the SF Bay area to facilitate a Center for Citizen Initiatives delegation of Russian bakers, we held a fundraiser evening for BfR, with four Russians (Shestakov, Avrorin, Loginov, Polyakova) participating. Guests donated \$20 to enjoy a Russian buffet of *pirozhky*, *borscht*, *salat olivier*, and *vinegret*, with California wine in the Common Ground garden supply store and educational center (a project of Ecology Action), then moved to the nearby Wesley Methodist Church community hall where Carol had set up a poster display, and all four



Russians spoke on their work with BI and other environmental causes and Carol described our Winrock workshop missions. Several guests expressed appreciation for being able to hear about Russian lives directly from those who lived them. With perhaps 35 people attending, we netted about \$500; of this we sent \$200 back to Siberia with Sasha to help him with his Biointensive in Siberia costs. A most enjoyable and worthwhile way to spend an evening!

**OUR SUPPORTERS HAVE BEEN GENEROUS! (Tally for 1998, 1999 and 2000)**

**Supporters:** Barbara Brown • Alan Buckley • Pria Graves • Ed Kinderman • Hans & Nancy Samelson • Jacques & Barbara Schlumberger • Daniel & Margaret Seligson • Sergei & Nancy Smirnoff • David Vick **Contributors:** Bruce & Bonnie Benedict • Shoshana Billik • Barbara Dawson • Sherry Everett • Gene & Rita Fisher • Jo Glickman • Sandy & Stu Harris • Shirley Peterson, John & Cynthia Vesecky **Donors:** Kay Anderson • Bill & Marilyn Bauriedel • Joe Bikulcius • Amanda & Bill Binder • Marlene Broemer • Susanne & Tom Campbell • Cynthia Costell • Lois Crozier Hogle • Andrew Crowley • Alvin Davis • Edith & Jonathon Eddy • Judy & Don Fo • Ernest Goitein • James & Joyce Harris • Richard Hasenpflug • Barbara Hazard • Jacky Hood • Jolene Hsu • Isabela & Yves Huin • Larissa Keet • Roy Kole • Bob & Joyce Leonard • Rene & Art Lynch • Susie Mader • Ruth McDowell • Mike & Terry McMahan • Michael Mora • Vladimir Motalygo • Thomas & Carol Platner • Gail Schubert • Tracy Strom • Jackie Dunn Swoislin • Julie Tilley • Stephanie Tsuchida • Wesley Walters, M.D. • David & Jennifer Watts • Martha Whitney • Caroline Wyss • Ed & Emily Young **Members:** Fran Adams • Judith Bares • Stephen & Zoya Barlow • Ellen & Melvin Barnhart • Paul Burch • Genya Bykin • Dottie Cichon • Jill Clay • Bill & Audrey Cutler • Anna Derugin • Gwen & Charles Dougherty • Charles & Margot Drekmeier • Adrienne & Gene Duncan • Michael Eager • William Easton • Susan Ford • Mary Lee & Arlen Hagen • Elizabeth Hamilton & Alan Brown • Roberta Harvey • Sam Hawes • Gail Hicks • Deborah Honig • Tom Jaworowski • Stan & Karen Johnsen • Glenda Jones • Wendy Kahn • Bill Kent • Valerie Kockelman • Bert Laurence & Barbara Bowden • Bill Leland • Frank & Patricia Lonyay • Doris & Don Lorentz • Mr. & Mrs. J. Gordon Loughlin • Robert & Laura Lovato • Natalya Lukomskaya • Magda MacMillan • Sandra Mardigian & Doug Burck • Ed & Carol Margason • Jane Marshburn • Marjorie Martus • Ruth McDowell • Art & Annette McGarr • Olga Myers • Debbie Mytels • Bohdan Papara • Helen & Joe Pickering • Anne Rassweiler • Trudy & Daryl Reagan • Robert & Patricia Reed • Alana Reynolds • Doris Williams Robertson • John Robinson • Elena Sedik • Peg Smith • Mary Ann Sproat • Stan Stratton • Bruce & Mary Beth Train • Hans Von der Pfordten • Elizabeth Watson-Semmons • Bruce & Elinor Wilner • Suzanne Williams

*Uzbek, Russian Culture & Cuisine, cont. from p. 2*  
Museum in Golden Gate Park, we are grateful to Adela Lee and Roger Olson of the Silk Road Foundation. Thanks also go to BfR volunteers not mentioned above for their indispensable, whole-hearted assistance: Emcee par excellence Alan Buckley, Hans von der Pfordten, Marlene Broemer, Yury Popov, Pat Broemer, Stephen Vesecky, Lea Stocking, Olga Gary, Alex Pergamenschikov, Alis Filipi, and many others.

Call, fax or e-mail us c/o Carol Vesecky:  
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[www.igc.org/biointensiveforrussia/](http://www.igc.org/biointensiveforrussia/)

**What You Can Do!**

**Volunteer your time:**

- Networking for grants & donations: help us find groups or individuals that could take an interest in our work. Carol would be happy to present a program!
- Help in organizing and publicizing events
- Office organization, database, and filing help in three-hour stints
- Newsletter layout & writing assistance

**Contribute financially to help pay for:**

- Three 10-minute calls to Russia: \$10
- Tempered steel fork and spade: \$89
- Teacher salary to conduct and teach a 3-day workshop: \$120
- Enable a BI teacher from afar to attend the Novo-Sin'kovo workshop: \$100-300
- Sponsor a workshop taught by Sasha Avrorin in Siberia or Western Russia: \$800-\$1200
- Fund a book printing: \$2500 or more

Here's my tax-deductible contribution to Ecology Action or a membership in Biointensive for Russia:

\$ 20 Regular membership     \$ 50 Donor

\$ 100 Contributor: Request a gift (Russian handicraft)

\$ 250 Supporter Receive the 2nd Russian edition of **How to Grow More Vegetables....**

\$5000 Workshop Sponsor

\_\_\_\_\_ Other

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Ph/fax: \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: BfR, 831 Marshall Drive  
Palo Alto, CA 94303-3614



### ***Upcoming Events***

**Saturday, Oct. 28:** Valley of Heart's Delight "Grow Your Own" home food gardens event, 9 am - 3 pm. Lucie Stern Community Center, Palo Alto. For info call Debbie Mytels at 650 328-7756 x 607 (Foundation for Global Community)

**Sunday, Nov. 5:** Tea in the Garden, slide show on Summer 2000 Winrock co-sponsored Biointensive workshop mission to Uzbekistan (Nukus, Nuratau, Brichmulla, Samarkand), 4-7 pm. \$5 donation requested. Short info session on Jan. 2001 Art / Eco-Ag tour of St. Petersburg and Moscow. Home of Carol Vesecky and Stephanie Tsuchida, 4-7 pm. Call 650 856-9751

**Every Saturday, 10:30 am - Noon:** Gardening classes at Common Ground Garden Supply, 2225 El Camino Real, Palo Alto. Call for info, 328-6752

**Wednesday, November 15, 7:30 pm:** Informational session on Jan. 2001 Art / Eco-Ag tour of St. Petersburg and Moscow. Home of Carol Vesecky and Stephanie Tsuchida, 4-7 pm. Call 650 856-9751

**Fri. Jan. 12 - Sun. Jan. 28:** Eco-Ag/Art Tour of St. Petersburg and Moscow and regions. Biointensive workshops with Russian gardeners. Hermitage, Russian Museum, meetings with artists, Repin's dacha, children's art school visit (St. Petersburg), Tretyakov Gallery, Pushkin Museum, Kremlin (Moscow), option to join Biointensive workshop in outlying town. Call 650 856-9751 for Carol or Stephanie

*Novo-Sin'kovo, cont. from p. 4* small kitchen and dining room close by our guest quarters, much of the fresh produce (and lovely tulips!) coming from her own highly productive dacha garden.

The center serves 285 agricultural colleges with materials and short courses. New methods from abroad are researched in the laboratory where our seminar was held, which is well supplied with working computer and audio-visual equipment. An essential CD-ROM drive was acquired following our visit, thanks to a cash gift from Rob Lancefield, a Palo Alto who has worked with EMC staff (through the Center for Citizen Initiatives) in years past.

Our seminar participants included faculty from the Yakhroma College as well as from the Kaluga, Detchina, Kolomna, and Krasnoholm colleges, who joined us thanks to travel funds donated by BfR supporters. The All-Russian Agricultural Correspondence College in Sergiev Posad was also represented, and local dacha gardeners and 47 agriculture students joined us at various times during the seminar.

Interspersed with our offerings, our Russian hosts and their colleagues spoke on ecological issues and progress made by the new agricultural extension services. And, we were treated to visits to a mushroom-growing enterprise, two Bio-Dynamic farms, a vegetable and fish farm, and a huge tomato greenhouse.

At our farewell supper we toasted our common work with a bottle of wine, pledging continued cooperation. Darina Drapkin noted that "people were impressed by our altruistic sharing of knowledge, and some stereotypes were thankfully put to rest." Our experience in Novo-Sin'kovo deepened our respect and understanding of the Russians, and rekindled our desire to continue working with them in the coming years to share the life-affirming, resource-conserving Biointensive method of growing food.

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