

Tbilisi Y M C A News

Issue 4, Fall 2003

www.tbilisiymca.ge

BORJOMI-KHARAGAULI NATIONAL PARK CAMPING EXCURSION

Several Tbilisi YMCA volunteers, ten children from the Avlabari Shelter House and two US Army personnel went on a three day hiking/camping trip in the Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park. All of this was made possible through the generosity of the WWF and Karin Steinmetzer who helped fund this trip by providing a wonderful cottage for the group to stay in, along with three pack horses, and two tour guides.

The group took a comfortable fast train from the Tbilisi Railway Station to Marelisi on the morning of August 13th. Upon arrival, the group was met by two tour guides, Jaba and Beso, who greeted the group and helped them load their belongings onto the bus that would take them to the park.

Once at the park's entrance, the group ate lunch, loaded up the pack horses and started on their hike through the beautiful scenery of the Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park.

After three hours of hiking, the group reached its final destination, the cottage. The children took the opportunity to explore the wonders of nature, while the adults were preparing dinner. The menu for the meals was very nutritious. There was: bread, cheese, vegetables, potatoes, potato mash, and some wonderful khachapuri and dairy products donated by the friendly local villagers. In the evening the group sat around a traditional camp fire, told stories, roasted potatoes in the fire and relaxed.

The second day began with an opportunity for those who felt adventurous to try their luck with horseback riding. In the afternoon the group went on a three hour hike in the beautiful hidden gorge and back. The gorge is only accessible by hiking through a river. The beauty that awaited the hikers made them soon forget their wet shoes. After coming back to the cottage and changing out of their wet clothes, the two US Army personnel, Sgt. Sonny Apperson and Specialist Jessy Ring, taught the children how to make bows and arrows as well as how to set traps for hunting.



The last day picture.



Travellers in the train

These skills were readily picked up by the children who all seemed to have bows and arrows in no time. In the evening a small group of hikers visited the people who had sup-

plied the previous night's khachapuri and milk in their old picturesque village, while the others in the cottage relaxed and played different games. The day ended with another traditional camp fire and more ghost stories.

The visit to the village was interesting as well as educational. The village itself is situated away from civilization. In fact, there is no electricity, no running water, and the villagers live much as their forefathers lived in the 19th and early 20th centuries. These villagers tend to their large vegetable gardens and herd cattle in the upper meadows of the region during summer months.

Their hard work makes for some of the best natural products found anywhere. It was a wonderful experience for all who visited, especially for the children who were amazed at this different way of life. It should be noted that in the Fall the villagers head to their winter homes in the valley below.

The third day arrived much too soon and the group found themselves having to make ready for their return to the hot and humid city. They packed up all of their belongings and headed back down the trail. At the end, there was a bus waiting to take the tired, but happy group to the town of Kharagauli. Once in Kharagauli, the group visited the National Park's main office and spoke with the staff about their exciting experiences. Soon after, the group sat down to a late lunch in one of the local cafes. Once everyone had eaten, the group was taken to a local museum, where they had an opportunity to view ancient artifacts, observe pictures of famous people and become acquainted with the traditions and customs of the area.

After saying goodbye to our new found tour guide friends, the group boarded a minibus for the return trip home. On the way back the mini bus stopped for a little snack in the village of Surami, where the locals specialize in making "Nazuqi", a very tasty sweet bread. The minibus arrived all too soon in Tbilisi by 9:00 pm. An exhausted but contented group made their way home.



The crew by the evening fire

Borjomi-Kharagauli National Park web site is available at:
www.borjomi-kharagauli-np.ge

This wonderful and memorable trip will not be soon forgotten.

TBILISI YMCA SEEKS FUNDING

Funding has become a critical issue for the Tbilisi YMCA. Over the past few months, most of our projects have been accomplished through extreme sacrifices made by our volunteers. In order to provide the necessary funding to make the day trips a reality, the volunteers have had to contribute their own money.

Beginning in May, the Tbilisi YMCA began to develop a fundraising program which we hope will provide much needed financial support. Meetings with various foundations, business leaders, and individuals have taken place on almost a daily basis. These meetings have proved to be a great boost to "networking." And through these efforts, the YMCA is becoming more known in and around Tbilisi.

The months of June and July were devoted to preparing grant proposals for submission to various foundations and embassies. In the coming year,

the YMCA's major focus will be on helping shelter house children to fully develop their educational skills and thereby become integrated into a society that has always viewed them with suspicion and distrust. Our objective is to provide these children with proper educational and social skills so that they can confidently compete on equal footing with their peers. In addition, we hope to break down the walls that divide these children. We were making great progress with our one day excursions in the spring, and look forward to developing this project further in the coming year.

Now that these proposals have been submitted, we will be using the months of October and November to pursue more leads and set up more meetings as well as for exploring more grant proposal possibilities. As difficult and time consuming as these tasks are, it is a very exciting and rewarding time to be at the Tbilisi YMCA.

Meeting of Georgian and Danish volunteers in Ureki

While on a recent pleasure trip to Ureki, or to be more precise Magnetiti, we had the privilege to become acquainted with a group from Denmark. The group, Youth for Christ (YFC), was in the Guria region to lend a helping hand in the smaller communities. During the meetings the leaders of both organizations shared with their experiences in youth and volunteer work.

At one of the meetings, Tea, who was a leader of the group, presented the Tbilisi YMCA with 2 new Bibles. This wonderful and extremely thoughtful gift will indeed make a unique addition to the Tbilisi YMCA's growing library. We are very grateful for their kindness.

Successful candidate for the book competition

The Tbilisi YMCA was delighted to hear that they were a successful candidate in the book competition sponsored by the British Council in Tbilisi, Georgia. There was, in total, 143 English language books, 56 English language cassettes, 4 English language videos, 9 sets of color pencils, and one set of flash cards.

The Tbilisi YMCA received these gifts with much gratitude as they make an excellent addition to the library, and are looking forward to working with the British Council in the future.

kept themselves well entertained by playing on the beach, swimming in the sea, and playing cards and other games. The adults kept busy by spending their days laying out on the beach, building sand castles with the kids, swimming in the Black Sea, playing card games and having good conversations. The time was really used for relaxation and a break from real life.

Everyone left on Tuesday evening at 10:45 and arrived back in Tbilisi on Wednesday morning at 7:15 with great tans and a readiness to get back to real life after a much needed rest.

Summer time at the seaside

At 9:45 on Friday evening July 11, YMCA volunteers, friends and children from Avlabari shelter house boarded a train which ran from Tbilisi and arrived in Ureki at 5:30, Saturday morning.

Ureki is a small village on the seaside of the Black Sea. The home in which they stayed for the mini,



Shelter house children playing in the sea.

4 day vacation belongs to YMCA chairman, Tengo Gogotishvili's family. The house is located perfectly on the beach with a balcony overlooking the black sand and beautiful sea. The sun set can be seen perfectly from this balcony and every evening everybody would watch the yellow, orange ball of the sun sink out of view as if it were sinking into the water!

The group consisted of 12 people. The children

Editorial board:

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Tbilisi YMCA English Language Library

The Tbilisi YMCA library contains over 3,000 English language books. The library is filled with a variety of books categorized into the following sections: Fiction, Biography, Children, Juvenile, Easy Readers, English, Arts, Drama, Poetry, History, Religion, Politics, Economics and Business, Science, Geography, Nature, Traveling, Sports, Humor, Essays, Short Stories and Collections, and Computers, as well as Dictionaries and Encyclopedias.

The **FICTION** section contains over 2,000 books to date. The authors are as diverse as the countries we have received the books from. There are books written by classic writers as well as modern writers. Hemmingway, Orwell, Hugo, Hardy, Dickens, J.R.R. Tolkien, and Catherine Cookson are just a few of authors that occupy the fiction section shelves. The books are categorized by author in alphabetical order and are easy to find as the shelves are labelled A-Z.

The **BIOGRAPHY** section is filled with books about many people from different era's and countries. There are biographies on Anne Frank (the young Jewish girls dairy kept during the Holocaust), as well as on her stepsister, Eva Schloss, whose biography is also about her survival during of Holocaust. There are also more recent biographies such as Princess Diana's biography and David Pelzer's autobiography on the horrible child abuse he suffered when he was young. These are arranged in alphabetical order by the person the biography is about.

The **CHILDREN'S** section contains books with famous fairy tales such as *The Frog Prince*, *Snow White*, and *Sleeping Beauty* as well as famous children's characters from Disney and Sesame Street. Educational books can also be found.

The **JUVENILE** section contains the ever popular Harry Potter stories along with other adventures for the "big kids."

For those who want to learn or are beginning to learn English, the **ENGLISH** and **EASY READERS** sections are perfect. The English books will help to improve grammar and vocabulary skills while the Easy Reader books will help to improve

reading and comprehension of the English language.

The **ARTS** section contains books on Georgian enamels, Oriental rugs and carpets, antiques, *The Works of Raphael*, as well as cook books.

The **DRAMA** section contains many famous plays such as Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*, and of course drama is not drama without Shakespeare, who's plays grace the shelves of most of our drama section.

There is also a **POETRY** section which is home to one of the library jewels, *Gems of National Poetry*, printed in 1902 and in almost perfect condition.

The **HISTORY** section is made up of informative books on government organizations such as the CIA and KGB as well as books on different wars. There are also books on the history of civilizations and countries.

The **RELIGION** section is broken down into four categories. There are books for inspiration to help people get through life. There are also books on Christianity, which deal with the Bible and the teachings of Christ, as well as books written on cults, magic, and mysticism.

The **GEOGRAPHY** section contains many National Geographic magazines as well as beautiful World Atlases.

The **TRAVEL** section is home to bright and colorful books on China, Ireland, Pakistan, England, USA, etc. with unique pictures and helpful information on the countries and their culture.

The **NATURE** section is home to many books about botany, farming and both wild and domesticated animals.

The **SCIENCE** section shelves are filled with books about outer space, the stars, the sun, moons, and planets, as well as

books about mountains and other wonders found on earth. It holds a wealth of information.

The **POLITICS** section contains books about many different governments and policies, as well as a book on NATO.

The **BUSINESS** and **ECONOMICS** section contain textbooks from this ever popular course of study as well as books on economic and business policies.

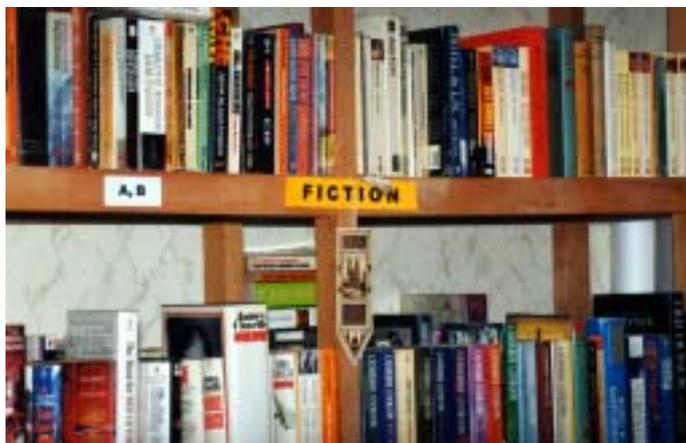
The **SPORTS** section is great fun and popular with the children who visit the library as it contains books on football as well as on American football and British recreations.

The **HUMOR** section will have you laughing out loud, while the **SHORT STORIES** section will sweep you away to a different time and place for a brief moment.

The **ESSAY** section is filled with essays on a variety of topics, as well as famous speeches and important letters. It makes for a great resource center.

COMPUTERS are a fast paced and booming technology. The computer section has books on different programs such as Access 2000 and Adobe Photoshop. It is a helpful section for people trying to learn or freshen up on their computer skills.

The **DICTIONARY** and **ENCYCLOPEDIA** section makes a great resource center.



Tbilisi YMCA Library

The encyclopedias are *New Universal Encyclopedias* and are a complete set. There is also a *Book of the Year "1969"* put out by *Encyclopedia Britannica*. The dictionaries are also very useful as there are not just dictionaries in English, but also Russian/English and Georgian/English dictionaries, which are a big help to anyone.

**The library is free and open to the public.
You can check out certain books for 7-10 days.
Please don't forget to show our ID before checking out a book.**

November 19 - International Day for the Prevention of Child Abuse

The Tbilisi YMCA would like to inform you about an upcoming event on November 19th, 2003 dedicated to the World Day for the Prevention of Children's Abuse.

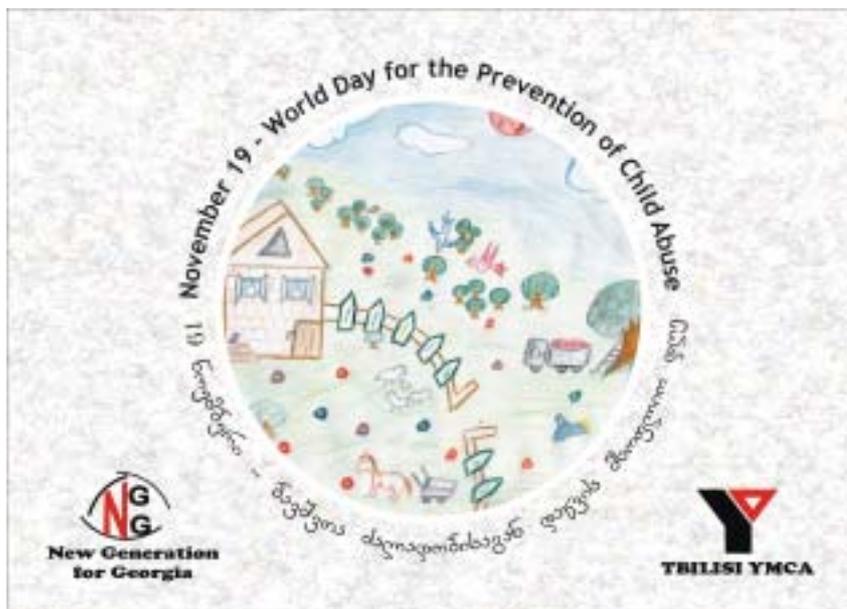
The Tbilisi YMCA and NGG, a local NGO that focuses on youth and democracy, are organizing a picture exhibition, where paintings by the children will be displayed. Over a hundred children from local schools are taking part in the event. We have already received the pictures from Armenia, Macedonia and are still waiting ones from Bangladesh and Somalia.

This event will take place on November 19 at the Chardin Art Gallery, located at 12, Chardin Str, Tbilisi, Georgia. Opening ceremonies begin at 3 PM. All authorities, ranging from Embassy staff to representatives of different international organizations are invited to attend.

The subject of the exhibition is "The Childhood of My Dream" or in other words - "How I want to see my childhood." On the walls of the hall one will find different messages from the constitution and children's convention and other documents adopted by various international organizations.

Also, one will be able to see different tale personages, kids in colour, etc. walking in the hall.

The objective of this display is to remind all people that Child Abuse is a huge problem, not for only Georgian children, but



Invitation Design (front face)

children worldwide. It should be noted that while children represent the future, they alone cannot build it. It is the adults who are responsible for protecting, supporting and nurturing youth to become productive members of society and create a more stable future for all.

If you'd like to submit a picture painted by the children in your country, community or organization to be on display, we would be more than happy to display it at the exhibition. Please send any material to:

Tbilisi YMCA, 9, Chonkadze Street, 0105, Tbilisi, Republic of Georgia

If you have any suggestions, comments or ideas concerning the event, please do not hesitate to contact us at:

info@tbilisiymca.ge

or by phone at:

(995 32) 251-347.

After the event the pictures as well as photos of the events will be available on the Internet at www.tbilisiymca.ge.

BOOK OF THE SEASON

Synopsis

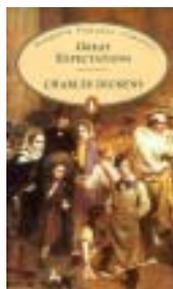
A mysterious benefactor provides Philip Pirrip with the chance to escape his poor upbringing. Aspiring to be a gentleman, and encouraged by his expectations of wealth, he abandons his friends and

moves to London. His expectations prove to be unfounded, however, and he must return home penniless.

From the Publisher

Great Expectations opens unforgettably in a twilight and overgrown churchyard on the eerie Kent marshes.

There the orphan Pip is disturbed to meet an escaped convict, Magwitch, but gives him food, in an



encounter that is to haunt both their lives. How Pip receives riches from a mysterious benefactor, snobbishly abandons his friends for London society and 'great expectations', and grows through misfortune and suffering to maturity is the theme of one of Dickens's best-loved novels.

In *Great Expectations* Dickens blends gripping drama with penetrating satire to give a compelling story rich in comedy and pathos: he has also created two of his finest, most haunting characters in Pip and Miss Havisham.

Source: www.amazon.co.uk

Relax with us:

PUZZLE

Can you find the eleven hidden colours in the following paragraph:

Puzzle devised by © Kevin Stone: [www.brainbashers.com]

Many injured animals are invited to live at the 'Toronto Range'. Stop in kangaroo corner and marvel at the lovely creatures within. Dig over the potato patch to find small furry caterpillars, but don't yell! Owls can be found swooping for edible rodents, earwigs or perhaps bluebottles in the undergrowth. The brown bear, Rob, lacks grace and may look like an ogre, enter at your own risk! Peacocks can be found showing their colourful wares, which look fantastic when viewed with our ultraviolet torch.

ANSWER: Many injured animals are invited to live at the 'Toronto Range'. Stop in kangaroo corner and marvel at the lovely creatures within. Dig over the potato patch to find small furry caterpillars, but don't yell! Owls can be found swooping for edible rodents, earwigs or perhaps bluebottles in the undergrowth. The brown bear, Rob, lacks grace and may look like an ogre, enter at your own risk! Peacocks can be found showing their colourful wares, which look fantastic when viewed with our ultraviolet torch.