

# FOBbriefs

VOL. 10 NO. 1  
DECEMBER 2003

NEWSLETTER OF FRIENDS OF BOSNIA

## FOB Receives \$135,000 World Bank Grant

*Funds Support Innovative Economic Development Project in Tuzla*



Volunteers from the Tuzla Association for the Hearing Impaired during a break in their workday. For each hour they work on city projects, they earn credit toward equipment for their organization.

**F**riends of Bosnia is proud to announce a \$135,000 World Bank grant to implement a model development project in Tuzla, Bosnia. Chris Bragdon, FOB's director of Bosnia projects, conceived of this unique economic development project, called "The New Initiative," that also challenges the culture of dependency and corruption that has developed in Bosnia

For highlights of the work that our participant NGOs have been doing within The New Initiative and the benefits they have brought to their organizations and communities, please turn to page 3.



A volunteer from a student Internet club planting trees for the city.

since the delivery of more than \$5 billion in aid.

In January 2002, FOB was invited to Washington, D.C. by the highly competitive World Bank funding program "Development Marketplace" to present a \$97,000 proposal. Then, after being referred to the Post Conflict Unit, Bragdon worked closely with World Bank development officers.

These meetings resulted in a \$135,000 project with implementation beginning in October of 2002.

Building upon the project's success in 2003, FOB is expanding The New Initiative to eastern Bosnia, with assistance from the SFOR peacekeeping force

and UNHCR, to support the integrated sustainable return of refugees to their original communities.

This innovative community-driven development model — which is proving to be a very effective method of delivering

*Continued on page 2*

## FOB Turns Ten: Celebrate with Us

**N**ext April, Friends of Bosnia will celebrate our tenth anniversary. Although the war in Bosnia left little to celebrate, we are very proud to have been one of the earliest advocacy groups to address the genocide in the Balkans that began in 1992. We are also one of the longest lasting, as most groups came and went with the war. While the specifics of what we do has changed over the years, our mission has remained the same: to help victims of genocide in the Balkans and to educate the American public about the challenges confronting the region. And while our roots remain in western Massachusetts, we have expanded our reach and now have members throughout the United States and around the world.

### CELEBRATION PLANNED FOR APRIL

To celebrate our anniversary, we have planned a

series of exciting events. For the evening reception, we have invited Danis Tanovic, director of *No Man's Land*,

*Continued on page 2*

## We're Changing Our Name to The Center for Balkan Development

To better reflect our focus on a regional solution to reconstruction and reconciliation, the Friends of Bosnia board of directors voted in January 2003 to work toward changing our name to The Center for Balkan Development (CBD). In addition to more accurately describing the work of the organization, this new name will better position us to receive support within the funding community.

The new name will become official at our tenth anniversary, although we will retain Friends of Bosnia for specific projects. Look for our new website and logo with the new name in 2004!

## Letter from Executive Director

Dear Friends:

A decade ago FOB was just beginning as a local initiative to address an international crisis — genocide in Bosnia. Ten years later, Friends of Bosnia is committed to working with our partners in Bosnia and other countries of the former Yugoslavia to directly assist in their struggle for lasting peace and to continue to educate the American public about ongoing developments in the region.

As we celebrate our tenth anniversary, we invite you to join us and renew your commitment to work for peace and stability in the former Yugoslavia.

Although the wars ended years ago, the struggle remains for the people of the Balkans to rebuild their homes and economies and to reconcile their differences enough so that they can create safe and secure borders and establish trade and cultural exchanges — which the citizens so desperately want and need.

Our most ambitious project to date — The New Initiative — has been recognized with financial support from the World Bank (see cover article). Much of this newsletter highlights the direct impact we are having with local NGOs under the guidance of Chris Bragdon, our director of Bosnia projects. Through our work with committed citizens in Tuzla, FOB is strengthening local capital by turning a culture of dependency into a culture of self-reliance and respect.

In April FOB will be celebrating our 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary with a weekend of events held at Boston College. We will host an awards reception to honor individuals who have done outstanding work toward creating peace and stability in the former Yugoslavia, as well as a conference exploring the multifaceted issues of war, peace, reconstruction, international law, and culture of both the war and postwar periods. Details of these events will be available in early 2004. We especially hope that those committed activists, scholars, journalists, aid workers, and government officials who worked so selflessly during the war will join us for this event to reunite and to show their commitment to progress in the region.

Finally, I am both a bit sad and very proud to announce that we are changing our name to The Center for Balkan Development. Friends of Bosnia was an appropriate name when we first started the organization, but now that we are more involved in development work, and we work in areas other than Bosnia, our name should reflect this new focus. The name Friends of Bosnia will still be retained for certain projects, but the organization's name will become The Center for Balkan Development, effective this April.

Best regards,

Glenn Ruga  
*Director*

## World Bank

*Continued from page 1*

economic aid in post-conflict situations — brings together nonprofit organizations (NGOs), the municipal government, and private businesses to leverage local resources for job creation, sustainable community services, and the restoration of public spaces. The city receives free labor for public projects, such as improving parks, schools, and hospitals; NGOs provide the volunteer labor for these projects, and in return receive income-generating equipment for their organizations; and in exchange for cash donations, participating businesses receive advertising exposure. With local investment and local leadership, this model is self-sustaining beyond the initial international funding. There is no dependency and no charity. And with The New Initiative's ironclad

oversight procedures, the possibility for corruption is all but eliminated.

During the first year of The New Initiative (2002–03), FOB has — with materials, tools, and experts provided by the municipality — contributed to 10 public works projects; worked with 12 local NGOs which provided over 300 volunteers and 5,600 professional labor hours to city projects; and invested approximately \$65,000 of income-generating equipment in participant NGOs' sustainability programs. By generating concrete results through joint efforts, the project fortifies organizations with increased confidence and self-reliance. Thus, in addition to creating jobs, generating revenue for NGOs, and improving public infrastructure, the project achieves its underlying objective: fostering the healthy and productive relationships (social capital) essential to sustainable growth.

---

## FOB Turns Ten!

*Continued from page 1*

to be the keynote speaker. Also planned are exhibits, speaker programs, an awards reception, and other programs both to honor those who have worked alongside us and to look at the conflict in the Balkans in an international context — especially in light of the recent wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the subsequent reconstruction efforts.

### HONORING THOSE WHO MADE A DIFFERENCE

Thousands of people from across the United States and around the globe tried to change the world for the better during the darkest days of the war in Bosnia. This gathering will be an

opportunity for activists, scholars, journalists, aid workers, teachers, and government officials to come together and reflect on what we did right, what we did wrong, and possibly how to respond more effectively in the future to apathy and indifference in the face of genocide.

We will provide more complete information about the celebration early next year, but we hope that all those who have worked toward a just resolution to the wars in the Balkans, have supported reconstruction efforts, and have supported the victims of genocide will come out to celebrate with us and attend our programs.

# FOB's Community Service Program Empowers Local Organizations



Volunteers from IPAK, an organization dedicated to youth programs, earn equipment for a community center by helping restore a city park.

**F**riends of Bosnia's Community Service Program strengthens the fabric of the communities in which it works, as those who are helped by FOB offer help in turn to others in need. Our program is based upon the belief that straight charity is harmful to a person's spirit and self-respect and often causes a debilitating sense of dependency as well as resentment. Instead of charity, FOB's Community Service Program offers beneficiaries the opportunity to gener-

**FOB's community service program offers beneficiaries the opportunity to generate a healthy sense of accomplishment, self-respect, and self-reliance.**

ate a healthy sense of accomplishment, self-respect, and self-reliance, as recipients "earn" assistance by being of service to their own community. There are many examples: The Tuzla Association for the Hearing Impaired (TAHI) needed equipment for its community center, which FOB provided. In turn, TAHI provided volunteers to restore the city's parks. Nermin Mujicinovic received free classes in Java and PHP computer programming through FOB's information technology (IT) training program. Meanwhile, he helped FOB purchase and repair a used car for a community rehabilitation center that helps troubled youth recover from drug addiction. And ASSD, a student organization, received computer equipment for their IT center, while ASSD provided volunteers for planting over 200 trees throughout Tuzla.

Following are some of the stories of community organizations participating in FOB's Community Service Program.

## Tuzla Association for the Hearing Impaired (TAHI)



The Tuzla Association for the Hearing Impaired organizes cultural, educational, and sports activities for hearing-impaired members of the community. In addition, through its community center in central Tuzla, TAHI creates job opportunities for hearing-impaired individuals through its auto repair business, sewing business, and soon, through recent FOB assistance, an Internet café. Friends of Bosnia is assisting TAHI in several ways, including:

- ▶ Providing furniture and equipment for improving a café at the TAHI community center, which will create a meeting place for hearing-impaired people and their friends and families. The café will generate income for TAHI and provide an educational facility for teaching marketable skills in information technology.

- ▶ Providing computers for an Internet learning center at TAHI, which will be used for classes in basic computer skills, as well as courses in graphic design and computer programming. When not being used as a classroom, the learning center will function as part of an Internet café, thereby helping earn income for TAHI.

- ▶ Providing auto repair equipment for TAHI's auto repair business and sewing machines for its garment

business, both of which help create employment for members and earn income for the organization.

- ▶ Helping TAHI develop a transparent decision-making process and a financial plan as well as negotiate a viable settlement of the large rental debt TAHI is facing as a result of the war and ensuing financial difficulties.

## IPAK



IPAK is an organization dedicated to helping youth. The name derives from a word that means something like "With that said, onward," as in "Yes, a terrible thing happened; *ipak* we can work together today to create a better future." Working together with IPAK to create a better future, FOB is helping the organization develop a community center in an underserved area outside of Tuzla, as well as working with IPAK in eastern Bosnia. FOB is:

- ▶ Providing computers for the Internet center, to be used as an educational and computer center for local residents of all ages. One joint FOB and IPAK project involves creating programs for senior citizens designed to introduce them to the Internet. This technology will allow older residents to stay in touch with their children and grandchildren throughout the world, who, as a result of the war, may have emigrated thousands of miles from their homeland.

► Providing a movie projector for the community center, which in turn creates a gathering place and entertainment for local residents, while enhancing sustainability by generating income for the community center.

► Working with IPAK in outreach programs to eastern Bosnia. Friends of Bosnia helped IPAK obtain support from SFOR and UNHCR for its activities in Krizevici near Zvornik. And IPAK is helping FOB develop the Community Service Program in Zvornik. In addition to arranging affordable transportation and media attention for Zvornik-based activities, IPAK was instrumental in helping FOB instantly develop strong relations with Zvornik's mayor and local authorities, resulting in a very successful pilot project in Zvornik in the fall of 2003.

## Association of Students in Student Dormitories (ASSD)



ASSD's self-sustaining computer lab

Through FOB's Community Service Program, ASSD has developed into one of the strongest student organizations at Tuzla University. With over 400 members and a leadership dedicated to the values of leadership by example, genuine transparency, and inclusion, ASSD advocates for improved student conditions while providing discounted computer services at their computer lab. FOB has:

► Helped ASSD develop transparent and inclusive decision-making processes.

► Provided eight computers, a multipurpose printer, a copier, and

furnishings for a student center that provides discounted computer and office services to students. Services include Internet access, Microsoft Office, scanning, printing, and copying.

► Helped ASSD further develop its organization with such initiatives as greater membership involvement through petitions and advocacy programs, as well as helping negotiate a favorable contract with a local Internet service provider.

ASSD is now fully self-sustaining with five student staff members. The organization's current income covers all monthly expenditures, with a surplus for a rainy-day fund. FOB is currently helping ASSD build relationships with OSCE, OHR, and UNHCR to further develop this model for cultivating student leadership and self-sustaining student services.

## Fenix (Organization for people suffering from trauma)



FOB is helping Fenix develop a therapy-through-farming program, which will provide therapeutic group activities, create income for members, and help Fenix become self-sustaining. FOB is providing a trailer, rototillers, and farming equipment for a Fenix program through which members will farm and harvest private land. Fenix will then either give a percentage of the harvest to the landowners or provide assistance to farmers and in return receive a percentage of the harvest. The harvest will be

sold in local markets, with the proceeds going to Fenix members and the organization. The group farming activities will be incorporated into the group therapy program, so members can use the farming as a catalyst for healing. FOB is helping Fenix become a part of the SFOR Mentorship Program, which will provide trained US military psychologists to teach methods of healing from post-traumatic stress disorder.

## Prijateljice—Tuzla



Prijateljice's membership is 95 percent women—many of whom are survivors of the massacres in eastern Bosnia. Prijateljice creates jobs for members through laundry services, a vehicle-washing facility, and a rug-cleaning business.

In 2003, because of a lack of water from the municipal water supply, Prijateljice services were functioning at only 30 percent capacity. In November 2003, FOB dug a well and provided pumps and new cleaning equipment, bringing Prijateljice's businesses up to 100 percent capacity with higher quality services.

Through FOB's Community Service Program, Prijateljice has proven itself a very healthy organization dedicated to its mission with a strong active membership. FOB is now helping Prijateljice develop markets through advocacy, consulting in advertising, and partnerships with local NGOs also participating in FOB's Community Service Program.

## USPPIv (Students for people with disabilities)

USPPIv is a group of student volunteers who assist people with disabilities. FOB is providing computers and networking equipment for a USPPIv video game center, which will produce over \$700 in surplus income for the organization each month. USPPIv will use the funds to buy equipment for disabled individuals, such as a voice-activated computer for a visually impaired person or a wheelchair for the disabled. FOB is currently working with USPPIv to develop fundraising activities. In the fall of 2003, FOB and USPPIv successfully requested \$500 from SFOR's Chaplain's Fund, which helped pay for a new hearing aid for a graduating senior at Tuzla University.

## Receive e-mail updates from FOB

If you aren't receiving e-mail news from us, you are not on our distribution list.

To join our e-mail list, go to our website at [www.friendsofbosnia.org](http://www.friendsofbosnia.org) and enter your e-mail in the "Join us" form.

You will receive timely updates from FOB and announcements of programs sponsored by FOB and other organizations.

This list uses a third party service that requires that you verify your e-mail after entering it. To protect your privacy, we will never give this information to other organizations.

# Information Technology Training

## Creating Skills and Community



Students attending a PHP programming class at FOB's IT education center. The class is being taught by Nino Skiljic, a former student of an FOB-sponsored training program.

One of the most critical avenues for creating jobs and stability in Bosnia is through the realm of computers and information technology (IT). The modern world communicates through the Internet; computers are essential to the functioning of most businesses. Friends of Bosnia is providing training in information technology to help Bosnians learn necessary skills, create jobs, and come together for a common goal: the reconstruction of their war-torn country. Here are some of the IT initiatives in which FOB is involved:

### Friends of Bosnia's IT Education Center

Through a creative partnership with Impact, a local Tuzla-based business, Friends of Bosnia has succeeded in creating an entirely self-sustaining information technology (IT) education center that provides up to eight hours a day, seven days a week of nonprofit community education programs. The center, located in one of Tuzla's urban neighborhoods, boasts 10 IBM computers with Internet access for teaching everything from basic IT to advanced computer software.

The IT education center hosts Friends of Bosnia's IT

classes and is open to community organizations and local schools that wish to use the center for educational programs. Impact provides electricity, system administration, security, space, and Internet access at no cost to Friends of Bosnia. In return, when FOB is not using the computers, Impact uses them for its for-profit activities, including its Internet center. In effect, the computers pay for themselves.

At a time of diminishing grant funds for Bosnia, solutions such as this partnership between the business Impact and Friends of Bosnia show that, after an initial investment of grant funds, we can

create entirely self-sustaining community services using local resources.

### Traveling IT Class

With four laptop computers donated by the soldiers of SFOR 13, the 13th rotation of US peacekeepers in Bosnia-Herzegovina, as well as additional desktop computers, Friends of Bosnia's Traveling IT Class is off to a good start. The class visits different parts of the Tuzla region, with volunteer teachers providing instruction in computer skills. The laptops can be used to increase the capacity of an existing computer classroom or to create an instant classroom anywhere in Bosnia. Friends of Bosnia hopes to eventually own 10 laptop computers for the Traveling IT Class.



Efendija Alija Ahmetovic is introduced to laptop technology.

Currently, the class offers courses on marketable skills in computer software, such as FOB's Java class being taught at the Medresa School and soon to be expanded to the Catholic High School in Tuzla; classes on basic computer skills, such as FOB's senior citizens computer class organized with help from the Serbian Orthodox community center in Tuzla; and

assistance to community centers, such as the Serbian Orthodox Monastery in Papraca, an underserved rural area about an hour outside of Tuzla.

Since the students and teachers are of various ethnicities or religions, the Traveling IT Class is a very practical way of bringing people together for de facto trust building, a way of weaving together Bosnia and Herzegovina's torn multiethnic culture. Using the shared desire for practical education, the Traveling IT Class builds



Engineers Without Frontiers intern Doug Mitarotonda from Cornell teaching a computer programming class.

bridges and creates common ground for reconciliation and sustainable community development.

### FOB Initiatives with Cornell University

Over the past few years, FOB has been developing a relationship with Cornell University, especially Cornell's computer sciences program, which has provided several of its highly skilled software engineers for FOB programs. In 2002, a team of master's students developed software for FOB's *connect-bosnia.org* project (see page 9), and in the summer of 2003, a Cornell computer

*Continued on page 11*

## Friends of Bosnia Honors the Life of Frank McCloskey

Friends of Bosnia was deeply saddened by the passing of former Indiana congressman Frank McCloskey, who died in early November at age 64 after a year-long battle with bladder cancer. We mourn his loss and send our best wishes to his family and friends.

Rep. McCloskey was a good friend and valuable ally of Friends of Bosnia throughout the Bosnia crisis. He led the fight in the House for legislation to lift the US arms embargo on Bosnia, which, against all odds, passed in June 1994. Unfortunately, he was rewarded with losing his reelection bid the following November. But Rep. McCloskey never doubted his decision or his priorities.

He made several trips to Bosnia during his years in Congress and called in 1992 for selective air strikes against nationalist Serb forces if they continued their siege of Bosnia-Herzegovina. He later criticized the Clinton administration's handling of the Bosnian conflict, and called for the resignation of then-Secretary of State Warren Christopher, warning that nationalist Serbs were committing genocide in Bosnia. Rep. McCloskey also called for war crime trials for nationalist Serb leaders, specifically Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic, who was ousted in 2000 and is currently on trial at the International War Crimes Tribunal in The

Hague, Netherlands. Much of Rep. McCloskey's career after 1994 was spent trying to bring stability to Bosnia and the Balkans.

Frank McCloskey was an honest politician who tried to do the right thing. He was willing to sacrifice his political career to help people with whom he had no personal connection. Rep. McCloskey was a hero to Friends of Bosnia and to all who fought for justice in the Balkans. He is survived by his wife of more than 30 years, Roberta, and their two adult children.

## Medical Aid Drive

In the spring of 2002, Friends of Bosnia was approached by the Brimmer and May School in Chestnut Hill, Mass., to see if we would consider hosting a high school student from Bosnia to work with us as an intern. A week later, Selma Duhovic showed up at our door eager to begin.

Duhovic, who is from Gorazde, came to the United States with her mother and brother just as the war was ending. They had endured more than three years in the most isolated region of Bosnia and were under intense siege for the entire war. Tragically, Duhovic lost her father during the war, but she did not lose her spirit nor her will to make a new life in a new country.

After considering several ideas, Selma decided that she would like to raise money to help her country. To do this, she sold baked goods during a school fundraiser, raising \$1000.

Her goodwill inspired

Neda Chernack, of Belmont, Mass., to donate \$5,000 worth of medical supplies. Their combined effort assisted FOB programs in Bosnia, where people are only now returning to their former homes, with the medical supplies being delivered by SFOR peacekeepers to medical centers in Prijedor and Srebrenica.

## FOB Kosovo Photo Documentary

In 2000, FOB produced a documentary photo exhibit, "Reconstructing Kosovo," that was conceived to help



Americans understand the war in Kosovo and the complex problems of postwar reconstruction and reconciliation. The photographs and text present images and stories of people who lived through 10 years of Serb oppression followed by 78 days of a NATO air war. Now Kosovo is struggling to survive as the economy falters, the long-term political status of the province remains unresolved, and abuses against minorities continue. Through the exhibit, individuals speak out about their fears, hopes, and desires for the future, providing powerful portraits of a nation scarred by ethnic violence working toward peace.

After traveling to a dozen sites across the United States, the exhibit was shown in Pristina in August 2003. For more information about the exhibit, visit [www.friendsofbosnia.org/kosovo/index\\_alt.html](http://www.friendsofbosnia.org/kosovo/index_alt.html).

## Stories from a War Hospital by FOB Board Member



FOB Board Member Sheri Fink, M.D. has written an important new book that reviewers have called "a moving account of one of Europe's worst modern tragedies" and "tough and unforgettable... a lesson in courage." The book, *War Hospital: A True Story of Surgery and Survival*, presents an account of the experiences of several young doctors, who in April 1992 were trapped in Srebrenica and worked heroically to keep the residents of the besieged city alive. Reviewer David Rohde wrote of *War Hospital*, "This heroic story of a small group of seemingly doomed doctors skillfully raises questions about medical ethics, international aid, and human nature itself. Humanity captured at its worst and its best."

This gripping and thought-provoking book, which the author spent five years researching, illuminates the moral and medical challenges faced by the doctors — who were not surgeons — and the life-and-death decisions they were forced to make under terrible conditions. The book also follows the doctors' lives, as they struggle with personal as well as

professional issues against a backdrop of war.

*War Hospital* made its debut on August 12, 2003, in bookstores around the country, and Fink has appeared on NPR, CNN, and other major media promoting the work. Friends of Bosnia held a book signing and reception with Fink in early November, to celebrate the book's release. For more information about *War Hospital*, visit [www.warhospital.net](http://www.warhospital.net).

## FOB Receives Pro Bono Legal Support

Palmer & Dodge, a leading Boston law firm, has been providing pro bono support to FOB, helping with our name change and other legal matters. Attorneys Amy Grunder and Michael Zucher have been assigned to our account, and we are deeply grateful to them for volunteering their time and effort!

## Finding the Good in Evil



Marshal Josef Tito's granddaughter, Svetlana Broz, has written a book about reconciliation in Bosnia and the heroic efforts of people of different ethnicities to help their neighbors during the war. In 1993, Dr. Broz, a cardiologist, began to record the stories of people

throughout Bosnia who witnessed the bravery of people of different and "opposing" ethnicities in helping their neighbors and strangers to survive impossible situations. These stories form the heart of *Good People in an Evil Time*.

The book's introduction includes the following tribute to the human spirit: "Human goodness is something we take for granted under normal conditions. Often enough we don't even register it. In evil times when someone's survival depends...on someone else's respect for moral and ethical norms, only against a backdrop of countless horrors does goodness gleam like a pearl in the sand, plucked from a shell at the bottom of the sea."

*Good People in an Evil Time* is available from Friends of Bosnia. To order, send a check to FOB made out to Friends of Bosnia.

### Good People in an Evil Time

By Svetlana Broz  
Translated by Ellen Elias Bursac  
374 pages, hardbound  
\$25.00 USD  
Plus \$3.00 postage and handling (US delivery only)  
For international orders, please inquire about postage before sending order.



## Exhibit on the Aftermath in Bosnia

**A**ward-winning photographer and writer Sara Terry is completing a book and exhibit of photographs on reconstruction in Bosnia. "Aftermath: Bosnia's Long Road to Peace" examines the country's struggle to rebuild a civil society and, says Terry, "explores the human costs and consequences of war — not on the battlefield, but in its aftermath, which is where the painful work of true peace making begins." FOB cosponsored a fundraiser for "Aftermath" in September 2003, and we are planning to cosponsor an exhibit of Terry's work in Boston next spring. Here is an excerpt from Terry's writing about her exhibit:

"Since the fall of 2000, I have been documenting the social, political, and economic upheavals that have been part of Bosnia's struggle to deal with the aftermath of a war marked by ethnic cleansing and the worst genocide in Europe since the end of World War II. Although photojournalists provided remarkable images of that war, I believe they did not tell the whole story — that the media must also be responsible for documenting what happens after the guns and bombs and the madness of violence have finally been

stilled. War is only half the story. It does not teach us about peace. That part of the tale unfolds only in its aftermath, and I believe that it is as newsworthy as war itself.... So I went to Bosnia to

**"We need post-conflict images to remind us of our humanity — to testify that war is not the final word on who we are as human beings, or the final image of our spirit."**

**Sara Terry**

cover the aftermath of war — to try to capture the images that are the all too often forgotten companions of the vivid pictures of war itself... I went to Bosnia with the desire to document the incredibly difficult period when humans move out of war's desperate struggle to survive, and begin another equally mighty struggle — that of learning to live again. In the two years I've been working on this project, I've become convinced that we need post-conflict images to remind us of our humanity — to testify that war is not the final word on who we are as human beings, or the final image of our spirit."

For more information about "Aftermath," visit [www.bosniaaftermath.com](http://www.bosniaaftermath.com).

## SFOR: A Crucial Resource

From 1992 to 1995, Friends of Bosnia called for military intervention to stop the genocidal bloodshed that killed hundreds of thousands of innocent people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. In 1995, as one component of the response to the world's plea for peace in Bosnia, 20,000 US soldiers (part of a 60,000-strong NATO-led international peacekeeping force) entered Bosnia to secure peace, under the name SFOR (Stabilization Force). With exceptional discipline and professionalism, the US military took a very murky situation and used its overwhelming military superiority not to "destroy the enemy" but rather to separate the opposing armies and deny them the capacity to wage war. As part of SFOR, the US military has used its immense strength toward the most noble end: peace. If it were not for the work of the SFOR peacekeeping force, Friends of Bosnia would not be able to do its work to help establish a lasting peace and rebuild Bosnian lives and communities through its community development projects. With an intimate knowledge of the good SFOR is doing, Friends of Bosnia extends its deepest gratitude and appreciation to the men and women serving in the SFOR peacekeeping force.

## Friends of Bosnia's Guest Lecture Series



Friends of Bosnia's Guest Lecture Series in Tuzla focuses on teaching marketable skills and teaching about issues central to the development of civil society and a viable economy. Through 2002 and 2003, guest lecturers included FOB's executive director, **Glenn Ruga**, teaching an intensive course in web design; **Robert G. Cameron**, a prosecuting attorney from the Pennsylvania governor's office, teaching conflict of interest; **David Leibler**, a business consultant formerly of KPMG, a New York-based consulting firm, teaching business management; Cornell computer science graduate **Doug Mitarotonda**, teaching Java software programming; information technology specialist **Ted Dagnal**, teaching system administration; and **Nino Skiljic**, teaching PHP programming.



The teachers aren't just ordinary folks, however. Skiljic is a 2002 graduate of a Friends of Bosnia-sponsored training program, now teaching new students in PHP. Volunteer teachers Liebler, Cameron, and Dagnal are all members of the

US peacekeeping force, SFOR (see accompanying articles). Since all of the US peacekeepers are "citizen soldiers" from the National Guard, they possess an extensive wealth of knowledge and skills and are a wonderful resource as volunteer teachers. FOB's Guest Lecture Series provides an avenue for US peacekeepers to make a personal contribution through education, thereby helping Bosnians and at the same time boosting morale for soldiers who are far from home and who benefit from seeing firsthand the good their peacekeeping work is doing in the region.

## Friends of Bosnia Supports SFOR



Corporal Brian Self, FOB's Chris Bragdon, and Major David Futch working with RS Police at a multiethnic volunteer project near Zvornik.

Friends of Bosnia and the US military peacekeeping mission in Bosnia, SFOR (see sidebar), have a mutual interest in creating a lasting peace in the region. FOB and SFOR have worked together and supported each other's efforts in a number of ways, and this work is ongoing. In one general example, FOB is helping to build bridges between SFOR and Bosnian citizens, through creating clear, open, direct lines of communication between Muslim community leaders and the US military. Such initiatives include hosting interfaith gatherings

among US soldiers and Bosnian religious leaders, which promotes friendships and understanding among these people of different backgrounds.

In more specific examples, FOB provided medical supplies for SFOR assistance in Prijedor and Srebrenica; an FOB volunteer helped at a SFOR Medical Assistance Event (MED-CAP) in Modrica; FOB assisted SFOR outreach to the Serbian Orthodox community in Papraca and Tuzla; and FOB helped SFOR find grassroots connections to Bosnian community organizations that could benefit from SFOR donations, such as books and computers for schools.

## Two Friends of Bosnias Work Together

Friends of Bosnia and Connecticut Friends of Bosnia (CFOB), two previously unrelated and unaffiliated groups, have come together to collaborate on reconstructing a village in central Bosnia. CFOB founders Carol and Barry Schaefer, from Greenwich, Connecticut, have been committed Bosnia activists from early on in the war in Bosnia. Initially their work centered around bringing Bosnian students to study in the United States and advocating for a just resolution to the war. Since 1993, they have sponsored 14 students to study here at both the high school and college levels.

CFOB's work now is focusing on rebuilding Kopice, a village north of Sarajevo near Zenica that was badly damaged during the war. During the past three-and-a-half years,

CFOB has rebuilt 60 houses in Kopice, returning nearly 300 people to their homes, and constructed a residential water-delivery system. CFOB will also be working with families from Srebrenica and has recently expanded its Family Assistance Program to help families rebuild their lives, as well as their houses, with educational, medical, and relocation costs.

For more information on this project, contact John Niesyn at johnniesyn@otponline.net.

## Weaving for Hope Exhibit of Bosnian Kilims



*“The dedication of these women to their art means that peace is possible. If all ethnic groups can join hands to weave, they can all join hands to rebuild their deeply wounded country.”*

Kelly Kliebhan, exhibit curator

Beginning in November, FOB and the Washington-based Advocacy Project ([www.advocacynet.org](http://www.advocacynet.org)) are cosponsoring an exhibit of kilims (traditional Bosnian carpets) at the Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center. The kilims are created by refugee women from Srebrenica, who survived the notorious 1995 massacre in that town. These women weave together at Bosfam, a

Bosnian women’s organization that supports women who were widowed or displaced during Bosnia’s brutal three-year war. In addition to offering its members an opportunity to work, the Bosfam center provides a place for them to meet and console each other about their loss. Over the last 10 years, Bosfam has trained hundreds of women to weave kilims, sweaters, knitted wool socks, and even fashionable dresses; many are made on looms in the Bosfam office. For many Bosfam members, weaving provides their only source of income.

The exhibit features 20 kilims, all individually woven and bearing the name of their weaver. Rich in color, they also feature traditional Bosnian patterns that have been handed down from mother to daughter. The largest kilims, which measure one square meter, can take up to three months to weave. The exhibition, “Weaving for Hope,” will celebrate Bosfam’s message of hard work, hope, and reconciliation.

The kilims on display may be ordered through the Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center or through the Advocacy Project. Allow 4 to 6 weeks for delivery.

### Weaving for Hope

Traditional kilim rugs woven by refugee artists from Bosnia  
Nov. 19, 2003–Jan. 2, 2004  
Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center  
41 Second Street  
Cambridge, MA 02141  
617-577-1400 x.10  
[www.cmacusa.org](http://www.cmacusa.org)  
Gallery is open Monday through Friday 10:00 am–6:00 pm and during all CMAC events. Free admission.



## www.Connect-Bosnia.org

### A New Way to Connect People and Resources Worldwide

One result of genocide is that entire swaths of society are destroyed. As a result, for every interest a donor might have, there is a corresponding need in Bosnia. A contribution to any part of Bosnia’s society brings people one step closer to rebuilding their lives and their communities and recovering from a genocidal war.

To help provide donors with a more personal means of donating to this cause, FOB worked with a team from Cornell University to develop software for the new [connectbosnia.org](http://connectbosnia.org) website, which has been described as an “amazon.com of e-charity.” With sophisticated software that makes the site both user friendly and easily managed by FOB staff, [connectbosnia.org](http://connectbosnia.org) enables donors to choose a specific recipient for their on-line donation from a number of important reconstruction projects in Bosnia. For example, a donor might choose to donate a computer for the Zvornik Boy Scouts Troop, or new linen for the Tuzla Orphanage.

The “Passion Finder” feature matches the donor

with projects in any of 10 areas of interest, including education, women, refugees, and community initiatives. The donated item is then delivered by FOB staff in Bosnia, with digital photographs and e-mail confirmation of delivery sent to the donor. We anticipate that the website will be fully operational by January 2004.

## FOB Received Grant from Good Housekeeping Magazine and GE

In recognition of her international medical care work, FOB Board Member Sheri Fink was a finalist in this year’s Heroes in Health Award from *Good Housekeeping* magazine and General Electric. Sharing the stage with Pfc Jessica Lynch and four other women who have made outstanding contributions to health, *Good Housekeeping* and GE donated \$10,000 to a charity of Fink’s choice. She divided the contribution between FOB and the Srebrenica/Potocari Memorial Foundation. This group is working to establish a permanent memorial in Potocari, where thousands of Bosnians gathered at the UN base seeking refuge from General Mladic and his troops prior to the massacre.

# Reflections on Peacekeeping in Bosnia



Colonel Ron Cobb (center), FOB's Chris Bragdon, Medresa School Imam Razim Colic, and the two SFOR soldiers representing the SFOR family and friends who donated the laptops.

By Colonel Ronald Lee Cobb, US Army (Ret.)

**F**rom January 2003 through October 31, 2003, I served the NATO peacekeeping mission as a United States Army Staff Officer in Eagle Base near Tuzla, Bosnia, under the command of General Ron Mason of Stabilization Force (SFOR) 13.

Peacekeeping missions tend to be more complicated than combat. Because of the multiethnic nature of central Bosnia, this was graphically true for our mission. Not only were Croat, Bosniac, Roma (Gypsy), and Serbian identities a part of the puzzle, there were also Roman Catholic, Islamic, Orthodox Christianity, agnostic, atheist, and postcommunist ideologies involved. Tie this in with the Serbian Mafia, the Bosnian Mafia, the slow growth of civil government, the lack of law and civic standards from years of war, and a 50 percent unemployment rate, and one can see how problems can logarithmically escalate.

As Command Chaplain (Colonel) of SFOR 13, one of my peacekeeping duties

was to interface with the religious leaders of northeastern Bosnia. In Tuzla, FOB's director of Bosnia projects, Chris Bragdon, was helpful to me beyond words. He was instrumental in guiding me to propose to Mufti Husein Karazovic four monthly faith-based therapy classes for his imams (Islamic pastors) and leaders so that they could learn methods of therapy that have proven effective in the United States. Chris also suggested a meeting with Father Benedict, abbot of a Serbian Orthodox monastery east of Tuzla. I felt that Chris was such a key part of my communication with these religious leaders that I always invited him to attend these meetings. His sensitivity to Bosnian culture and religion, and the support of FOB Director Glenn Ruga, were a large part of the success of many missions during SFOR 13.

Since the end of the war in 1995, drug addiction and alcoholism have been escalating problems in Bosnia, as they have been for much of eastern Europe and the countries of the former Soviet Union. For years I

worked as a nationally certified addiction therapist with the well-known Menninger Psychiatric Hospital, which has recently become part of the Medical Center complex in Houston, Texas. With General Mason's permission, I brought the first Croatian-language (very similar to Bosnian) Alcoholics Anonymous books into central Bosnia and distributed them to Mufti Karazovic at Tuzla, the local imams, Bishop Basil in Bijeljina, Orthodox priests and monks, Zepce eighth-grade students, Zepce school staff, Imam Tutnjic in Zepce, and the staff at the new rehabilitation center for drug-addicted teenagers north of Lukovac.

**Freedom and free trade are slowly developing. Minefields are being cleared. Shattered buildings are being repaired. What is most important, however, is that ... through the very hard work of the Bosnian people, human lives are being mended in practical, therapeutic ways and inner and outward peace are coming in small but steady steps.**

After 29 years in the Reserve Components of the United States Army, I retired on November 7, 2003. My plans for 2004 include hosting the leading imam of Tuzla, Amir Karic, in my home in the center of the United States this spring. I know Imam Amir will identify with the Bosnian-like connection to the earth, wheat, cattle, and corn that Kansas citizens understand. Then in May and June 2004, my wife, Kathleen, and I will visit Bosnia with

many more AA "Big Books" to take to each of the previous Bosnian groups and to encourage more ethnic interaction and faith-based therapy work. We will then serve as volunteers with Friends of Bosnia and stay with a Bosnian family during our visit.



Colonel Cobb meeting with Father Benedict in Papraca

*Memories of Bosnia: The 35th Division and the SFOR 13 NATO Peace Keeping Mission*, the book I have nearly finished writing, has caused me to ponder many things about Bosnia. Good things are happening there. Freedom and free trade are slowly developing. Minefields are being cleared. Shattered buildings are being repaired. What is most important, however, is that through people like Chris Bragdon, Glenn Ruga, and you as volunteers, and through the very hard work of the Bosnian people, human lives are being mended in practical, therapeutic ways and inner and outward peace are coming in small but steady steps. Thank you for caring about your fellow human beings who continue to need your help in Bosnia.

Ron Cobb is the author of a soon-to-be-published book, *Memories of Bosnia: The 35th Division and the SFOR 13 NATO Peace Keeping Mission*, which will be available through FOB's on-line bookstore: [www.friendsofbosnia.org/resource\\_books.html](http://www.friendsofbosnia.org/resource_books.html).



L to R: Mirza Kusljagic, Stephen Walker, Edita Tahiri, John Shattuck, International Institute Director Westy Egmont, FOB Director Glenn Ruga, and Global Citizens Circle Managing Director Theo Dunfey.

## FOB Marked 10th Anniversary of the Wars in the Balkans

In early April 2002, FOB organized a series of speakers, exhibits, concerts, and videos to commemorate the 10-year anniversary of the siege of Sarajevo (which began on April 6, 1992) and the wars in the former Yugoslavia. The program, "From Requiem to Renewal: A Decade of Balkan Conflict," was sponsored by Friends of Bosnia, the International Institute of Boston, Boston College, the Global Citizens Circle, and Physicians for Human Rights. It included a number of events over several days, which are briefly described below:

### Sonatas of War & Peace

Music composed by Vuk Kulenovic. Kulenovic was born in Sarajevo and studied in Belgrade and Ljubljana. A former professor at the Belgrade Faculty of Music, he is currently a professor of composition at Boston's Berklee College of Music.

### Requiem or Renewal — A Decade of Balkan Conflict

A panel discussion with three experts on the former Yugoslavia: Mirza Kusljagic,

Bosnian Ambassador to the United Nations and former Dean of Electrical Engineering Faculty at the University of Tuzla; John Shattuck, former Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor and currently CEO of the Kennedy Library Foundation; and Edita Tahiri, negotiator for Kosovo at Rambouillet, former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Kosovo, and former member of Presidency, LDK.

### Writing the Siege of Sarajevo: Poetry and Prose on the Bosnian War and Its Aftermath

An evening of readings by writers Muharem Bazdulj, Sarajevo, author of *One Like a Song*; Christopher Merrill, director, International Writing Program, The University of Iowa, author of *Only the Nails Remain*; Dubravka Ugresic, Amsterdam, author of *The Culture of Lies*; and Fahrudin Zilkic.

### War Crimes, Forensic Science, & International Justice

A discussion featuring Samantha Power, executive director of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy at the Kennedy School of Government, Harvard University, and author of

*Problem from Hell*; Susannah Sirkin, deputy director, Physicians for Human Rights; and Anne-Marie Slaughter, then professor of International, Foreign and Comparative Law at Harvard Law School.

### Film Festival

The festival featured showings of the films *Bosna!*; *Calling the Ghosts: A Story of Rape, Women & War*; *Postcards from Peja*; *Pretty Village*; *Pretty Flame*; *Before the Rain*; and *Shot Through the Heart*.

### Exhibits

*Paintings by Deryk Houston from Echoes from the Square*, a book by Elizabeth Wellburn about Vedran Smailovic, the Cellist of Sarajevo.

Sarajevo War Posters: Posters made by artists and designers in Sarajevo during the first two years of the siege.

Selections from two documentary photography exhibits produced by Friends of Bosnia: "Zones of Separation: The Struggle for a Multi-ethnic Bosnia" and "Reconstructing Kosovo."



### Emir Nuhanovic

In August 2002, FOB hosted Bosnian

conductor and clarinetist Emir Nuhanovic at Sabur Restaurant in Somerville in a fundraiser for FOB's reconstruction work in Bosnia. Nuhanovic is the principal clarinetist of the Sarajevo Philharmonic Orchestra. He was in Boston at the invitation of the Boston Landmarks Orchestra, with whom he played three free public concerts. Nuhanovic won the April 6th Prize for his achievement in the organization of music life in Sarajevo during the 1992-95 war.

## Information Technology

Continued from page 5

sciences master's graduate, through Engineers without Frontiers' internship program, contributed to FOB programs in Tuzla, Bosnia. Doug Mitarotonda, who is now a Ph.D. candidate in Cornell's economics department, helped Friends of Bosnia develop a continuing education program for both university students and adults and helped establish Friends of Bosnia's computer software training program at the Medresa School in Tuzla. Through 2004, Friends of Bosnia and Engineers Without Frontiers plan to expand internship programs to build upon the 2003 internship.

In the realm of education and development projects, Friends of Bosnia has a long-standing relationship with Cornell's Bosnia Coordinating Committee (BCC). In 1999, FOB's director of Bosnia projects, Chris Bragdon, taught English as a Second Language at Tuzla University through BCC's "English-for-Bosnia" program. FOB contributed \$1,000 to a BCC intern, who taught English at Tuzla University in 2000. And from 2001 to the present, BCC has helped Friends of Bosnia promote its World Bank-funded community development project, The New Initiative.

## Women Waging Peace

### FOB Leads Balkan Roundtable Discussion

On Friday, November 7, 2003, in Cambridge, Massachusetts, a group of experts on the Balkans — including representatives from the United Nations, the United States, non-governmental organizations, journalists, and foundations — gathered for a roundtable discussion at the Women Waging Peace Policy Day.

Glenn Ruga, FOB's director, facilitated the discussion. Women Waging Peace ([www.womenwagingpeace.net](http://www.womenwagingpeace.net)) is a nonprofit organization promoting innovative and inclusive approaches to social change at local, national, and global levels. Its Annual Policy Day, the culmination of the annual Women Waging Peace colloquium, brings together participants in small roundtable discussions on a wide range of issues. Among those participating in the Balkans roundtable were Vjosa Dobruna, former minister of democratization and former head of the Department for Democratic



Glenn Ruga, Ike Williams, and Vjosa Dobruna at the Balkan roundtable during the Women Waging Peace Policy Day in Cambridge.

Governance and Civil Society in Kosovo with the United Nations Joint Interim Administrative Structure; Edmund Beard, dean of the John W. McCormack Graduate School of Policy Studies at the University of Massachusetts, Boston; Nerissa J. Cook, director of the Office of Policy and Global Issues in the US Department of State's Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs; and Slavica Indzevska-Stojanovic, deputy executive director for joint programs of the Open Society Institute in Skopje, Macedonia.

The discussion covered much ground, but the participants agreed on several points, one of the most important being that the region must embrace the concept of "Unity in Diversity," as articulated by well-known

Bosnian philosopher Rusmir Mahmutcehajic. Unfortunately, several barriers to this unity remain, including the realities that people in the Balkans continue to be locked in history, traditional roles, and hatred;

and that distrust on all levels — among different ethnic groups and between citizens groups and the government, as well as distrust in the pillars of power — remains widespread.

#### Hopeful signs include growing cross-border cooperation, particularly among women's groups.

Participants noted that one necessary step in addressing these problems is to provide a forum for discussion of the difficult and tragic periods in the region's history, rather than avoiding them and acting as if they never happened. An honest, open, and equitable process for rebuilding civil society is imperative. Hopeful signs include growing cross-border cooperation, particularly among women's

groups, and the establishment of a Center for Women Leadership in Pristina, Kosovo.

Ultimately, the participants agreed, if one takes the long view, there is always hope. Progress is being made, and enough people care about and are engaged in creating change and waging peace that eventually — and maybe sooner rather than later — it will happen.

## FOBbriefs

Published by Friends of Bosnia

2 Clock Tower Place, Suite 290  
Maynard, MA 01754

T | 978.461.0909

F | 978.461.2552

[info@friendsofbosnia.org](mailto:info@friendsofbosnia.org)

[www.friendsofbosnia.org](http://www.friendsofbosnia.org)

Newsletter editor: Jan Reiss

### Board of Directors

Glenn Ruga  
Director and President  
Concord, Mass.

Mary Ellen Keough, M.P.H.  
Secretary  
Winthrop, Mass.

Veton Kepuska  
Treasurer  
Newton, Mass.

Smajl Cengic  
Quincy, Mass.

Sheri Fink, M.D.  
New York, N.Y.

Gina Vanderloop  
Arlington, Mass.

Stephen Walker  
Yorkstown Heights, N.Y.

Rob Wilson  
Hatfield, Mass.

### Staff

Christopher Bragdon  
Director of Bosnia Projects

Emilija Knezevic  
Bosnia Project Coordinator

## FOB Needs Your Support!

YES, I want to support all of FOB's efforts to bring peace and reconciliation to the Balkans.

Enclosed is my tax-deductible contribution of:

\$25    \$50    \$75    \$100

\$250    \$\_\_\_\_\_

Please add me to your mailing list.

FOB is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Fax \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Please make checks payable to  
**Friends of Bosnia**  
2 Clock Tower Place, Suite 290  
Maynard, MA 01754  
[www.friendsofbosnia.org](http://www.friendsofbosnia.org)