

Making Connections News No 1 July 2017

Please circulate to all Servas members

If you are interested in finding out more about one of the opportunities listed below make contact via the country@servas.org address.

Ann Greenhough SI Vice President makingconnections@servas.org

One of the aims of the Making Connections project is to link interested Servas travellers with host families who can offer a variety of opportunities for an extended stay or more in-depth visit to their country.

Volunteering, work experience, language learning, sharing skills and knowledge and connecting with local peace organisations are examples of potential activities that could be arranged in this way.

It was planned to post information on the open area the new SI website. Instead it now seems more appropriate for it to be in a members' only area. This is still under development so in the meantime contributions from the countries who are taking part are listed in this bulletin.

Although some countries have offered specific opportunities, others invite travellers to make contact if they are interested in planning an extended stay in their country or want to pursue a particular interest.

Future editions will look at ways of linking Servas families including proposals for an international tree-planting project. Also linking Servas members with a shared interest.

Help Wanted

This first issue of *Making Connections News* is presented in a basic format only. We are looking for help to design the next issue so it can be set out in a more useful and attractive way. If you are able to help with this task let us know at makingconnections@servas.org

Please Note

Servas International is committed to promoting *Making Connections* as a way of linking hosts and travellers. However contributions are only offered as possibilities without any guarantee that they will lead to a definite arrangement.

Any programmes or activities agreed between hosts and travellers remain the responsibility of the individuals involved without any liability to Servas International.

There should be full discussion about expectations on both sides before arrangements are confirmed. This is especially important where an extended stay is planned for a traveller.

Some guidance for hosts and travellers planning an extended visit

- Plan well ahead.
- Check out each other's expectations before confirming the visit.
- Agree a programme in advance.
- Be precise about dates and length of stay.
- Check out that you share a common language and whether the traveller needs some knowledge of the local language to do the planned activity.
- Discuss any financial costs that the traveller will need to meet such as transport, food, accommodation, if not with hosts. The traveller should have sufficient resources to cover any unexpected expenses.
- The traveller should have a current letter of introduction and travel insurance with medical cover.
- Hosts are advised to avoid getting involved in any arrangements a traveller may wish to make for paid employment.
- Following the visit consider sending a short report to makingconnections@servas.org so your experiences can be shared with others.

Some ideas for contributions to *Making Connections*

If you are a Servas national group or host interested in offering a contribution to Making Connections send your ideas to makingconnections@servas.org.

Some activities will involve a longer stay, from a few days to a month or more with one or more hosts. However by planning in advance other worthwhile experiences could be offered during a two-night stay.

Suggestions include:

- An observation visit for one day or more to a local social, environmental or human rights project known to the host.
- A cultural programme for a few days or longer to give a traveller an appreciation of the history, diversity, language and heritage within the host's community.
- Consider offering a language learning experience with a focus.
For example an interest in music, art, dancing, the environment, helping with a community event.
- Linking a traveller with a local peace or human rights organisation.
- Skill sharing: a host sharing skills in their field of expertise or special interest.

- Servas families with children and young people wanting to link with other host families.
- Exchanging ideas between hosts and traveller who share an interest, skill or profession.
- Host families offering a language experience in exchange for help with learning the traveller's own language.
- Observation visits or work experience to contribute to a young person's training in a specific field.
- Volunteering
e.g., in local projects known to the host, at a community event, help during harvest time - from a few days through to a more extended stay. Highlight what skills, experience or interests a traveller might need.

MAKING CONNECTIONS BY REGION

MAKING CONNECTIONS IN SOUTH, CENTRAL AND NORTH AMERICA

Brazil, Canada, Chile, Costa Rica, USA

SERVAS BRAZIL Contact address: brazil@servas.org

Servas Brazil would like to introduce Brazil to Servas travelers, beyond beaches, Sao Paulo and Iguacu Falls. See these projects:

santiagoocoliving.blogspot.com and rendeirasbrasil.blogspot.com

There is the possibility for Servas travellers to take part in a two week programme that includes Salvador da Bahia, the first capital city, an environmental project in Santo Antonio de Jesus, Bahia State and Petrolina and Juazeiro, twin cities on the border of Bahia and Pernambuco States.

In Petrolina you will visit the Women Association (http://mulheresrendeiras.blogspot.com.br/p/blog-page_68.html) and vineyards and may also cruise the São Francisco River. There are also volunteer opportunities at the University.

Come with a willingness to learn and teach and share!

There are also possibilities for Environmental International Day in June each year.

We expect that you will write us a small report about your experience to share with the Servas community and the blog of both projects.

For more information contact Alvany S. at brazil@servas.org

SERVAS CANADA Contact address: canada@servas.org

Servas Canada is interested in contributing to *Making Connections* with possibilities for language and cultural experiences for Servas members of all ages. For more information contact Julie D. at canada@servas.org

SERVAS CHILE Contact address: chile@servas.org

Servas Chile offers the possibility of a language and cultural experience for Servas members of all ages. Hospitality would be offered in various cities in Chile for up to one month. More information from chile@servas.org

SERVAS COSTA RICA Contact address: costarica@servas.org

Servas Costa Rica has connections with a number of social projects that travellers could visit during their stay. For more information contact costarica@servas.org

SERVAS USA Contact address: usa@servas.org

Servas USA would like to participate in the Making Connections project. Contact usa@servas.org for more information about possible programs and projects.

MAKING CONNECTIONS IN ASIA

India, Indonesia, Thailand

SERVAS INDIA Contact address: india@servas.org

Welcome to India.

We are happy to receive Servas travellers to learn, to enjoy, to connect and to share. We are of many diversities, religions, culture, climates, languages, food etc. If you would like some help to explore possibilities for your visit that can offer a more in-depth experience and understanding of life in India please let us know. Contact Abhay S., National Secretary at india@servas.org

SERVAS INDONESIA Contact address: indonesia@servas.org

To Servas Travellers who are already exploring Indonesia or those who plan to visit Indonesia. We in Servas Indonesia are happy to have you staying longer with us to work in one of our projects.

Our members would like to promote the *Making Connections* programme through the activities we can offer such as teaching English, working on an Outward Bound project, learning the Indonesian language and appreciating local cultures by learning about nature and traditional arts. So far we have 4 places with different projects, that is, in Temanggung, Ngadirejo, Solo and Ambarawa. So you could change places during your stay. These projects take place throughout the year, so it's possible for you to come at any time.

If you would like more information contact Indonesia@servas.org

Thanks and Welcome, Amin S., Servas Indonesia National Secretary

SERVAS THAILAND Contact address: thailand@servas.org

Servas Thailand would like to welcome you to the land of smiles. Rich in culture, natural beauty and vibrant socio-political development, Thailand has much to explore during a longer stay. We have almost 50 hosts for day visits and overnight stays across our different regions in the country. We are ready to help you interact with our local communities, spend time with you over our world famous street food or perhaps a boat trip along the river, trekking over the mountain or camping in the forests.

Let us know if you would like to be a volunteer. Possibilities could include working in a wild-life sanctuary, at a meditation camp, helping in a hospital or in the paddy fields. Drop us a line and see you soon! July 2017

MAKING CONNECTIONS IN EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA

Austria, Britain, Czech Republic, Georgia, Hungary, Iceland, Italy, Poland, Romania, Spain

SERVAS AUSTRIA Contact address: austria@servas.org

Austria is offering longer stays for both adults and young people; an individual programme would be developed by host families, through discussion with each Servas traveller. Depending on the age of the visitor, a variety of language learning experiences could be offered. Travellers would be able to take part in everyday activities with their hosts. We have several families with children and young people who are very interested in youth exchanges with other countries.

For several years Servas Austria has been associated with an integrative intercultural organisation in Vienna: <http://brunnenpassage.at/> Visitors would have a chance to participate in their activities.

In general the offers are from one to two weeks but some hosts may offer longer stays. One week stays with three or four different hosts might also be possible. Some day hosts would be willing to take part in a visitor's program for example through sports activities, language learning or visiting places of interest. The majority of our hosts are found in Vienna and surroundings as well as the region of Linz in Upper Austria. The local language is Austrian German. All hosts speak English, and many speak Italian or Spanish. Some financial contribution to the costs of the visit would be expected according to the circumstances of individual hosts and travellers.

If you are interested in finding out more, contact us at austria@servas.org

More information about Servas Austria can be found on the website at

<http://www.servas-austria.org>

SERVAS BRITAIN Contact address: britain@servas.org

Contact britain@servas.org for more information about the following:

- Servas Britain offers help to travellers who are interested finding out about possibilities for volunteering or work experience, especially for young people, during a visit to the UK.

- A number of hosts are involved in supporting asylum seekers and refugees and would welcome contact with travellers who are involved in similar projects in their own country.
- A host in the south of England is able to offer insights into the cultural and social life of her diverse local community.
- Each year there is an opportunity to join hosts as a volunteer for a week-long village summer festival in the north of England.

Skype language friends:

For those not able to travel to Britain a group of hosts offer an opportunity to practice speaking English via Skype. One member of the group would be interested in linking with an Italian speaker to also practice Italian.

SERVAS CZECH REPUBLIC Contact address: czechrepublic@servas.org

Servas Czech Republic is interested in offering Servas travellers opportunities to experience the language and culture of their country. For more information contact czechrepublic@servas.org

SERVAS GEORGIA Contact address: georgia@servas.org

Servas Georgia would like to offer Servas travellers opportunities to explore the culture, diversity and heritage of Georgia. For more information contact georgia@servas.org

SERVAS HUNGARY Contact address: hungary@servas.org

Servas Hungary would like to be involved in the *Making Connections* project. Contact hungary@servas.org if you are interested in visiting Hungary for an extended stay or want to explore a particular interest.

SERVAS ICELAND Contact address: iceland@servas.org

Servas Iceland is interested in being involved in *Making Connections*. The National Secretary Kristofer J. has experience through Servas of a work exchange with someone doing the same job in another country. Contact him at iceland@servas.org if you are planning an extended visit to Iceland or interested in the idea of organising a work exchange through Servas.

SERVAS ITALY Contact address: italy@servas.org

Servas Italy has experience of offering language experiences for several young people. They would also like to offer the possibility of a cultural and language experience for members over 30. For more information contact italy@servas.org

SERVAS POLAND Contact address: poland@servas.org

Servas Poland would like to be involved in the *Making Connections* project although has no

specific programme yet to offer Servas travellers. If you are interested in visiting Poland for an extended stay make contact at poland@servas.org. Dariuz D., a host in Poland is offering support and advice to anyone wanting to explore their family origins in Poland. Contact him at poland@servas.org

SERVAS ROMANIA Contact address: romania@servas.org

There is an opportunity to help construct an eco-house whilst also finding out about life in in the Romanian countryside and its environment. Contact Bogdan I., National Secretary for more information at romania@servas.org

SERVAS SPAIN Contact address: spain@servas.org

Members of Servas Spain are keen to experiment with possibilities to bring hosts and travellers together through *Making Connections*.

To make a start they make some suggestions for Servas travellers of all ages coming to Spain. Even if you cannot visit Spain there is also an offer to build your Spanish language skills through making a Skype language friend.

If you would like to find out more or if you have other ideas you would like to explore for a visit to Spain make contact at spain@servas.org

A LANGUAGE EXPERIENCE:

- **Joaquim de la Mata:** Servas member from Girona, Catalonia, Spain. Girona is the capital of the province right above Barcelona, situated just 60 minutes by car north from Barcelona. We offer you many things to do here, cultural or activities, including a language exchange Spanish/Catalan – English. If you would decide to come and stay with us, I can offer you also some sports activities in natural surroundings: walking, cycling and play pitch and putt. Also I would show you the two-thousand-year old city of Girona: Roman City and walls, Mediaeval Quarter, Jewish Quarter...

AN ARTISTIC EXPERIENCE

- **Pilar Gutierrez Beired** (you will find me also in Facebook) and I have a painting studio, and I can offer during your stay some artistic leisure time.

SERVAS SPAIN IS CREATING A TEAM TO PRACTICE SPANISH with all our Servas friends all around the world. If you would like to practice your SPANISH so you do not forget it or want to improve your language skill, please contact our GRUPO DE ESPAÑOL para Servas del mundo at spain@servas.org:

- **Jesus Tabares.** Para hablar en español, contáctame en (to speak Spanish with me please contact me at) spain@servas.org. I live in Getafe, near Madrid.
- **Lucía Peralta.** Interests: Nature, Meditation, Discussing with people, dancing Lindy Hop. Place of residence: Heras (Cantabria, North of Spain). Languages: English (low intermediate), French (basic). Skype: lucia.peralta.munguia. / Aficiones: Naturaleza, Meditación, Conversar con gente, Bailar Lindy Hop. Lugar de residencia: Heras (Cantabria, Norte de España). Idiomas: Inglés (intermedio bajo), Francés (básico).
- **Pilar Beltrán.** I live in Madrid and you can contact me at spain@servas.org (Also I would love to chat in English).

MAKING CONNECTIONS IN AFRICA

Botswana, Burundi, Cameroon, Gambia, Ghana, Malawi, Rwanda, Tunisia, Uganda

SERVAS BOTSWANA Contact address: botswana@servas.org

As National Secretary in Botswana I invite Servas travellers to visit our country. We have NGO organisations, schools, hospitals that you can visit. There are also opportunities to be a volunteer such as teaching. We can offer a cultural exchange and visits, so you can know more about our Botswana.

A visit could be for few days or longer if staying with more than one host or perhaps elsewhere. Travellers would need to cover some of their own costs including transport - some projects are outside the main town. We use our local language and English.

If you are interested in knowing more contact me at botswana@servas.org

Keletso M.

SERVAS BURUNDI Contact address: burundi@servas.org

Members of Servas Burundi are interested in being part of the *Making Connections* project. If you are interested in coming to Burundi please contact us at burundi@servas.org

SERVAS CAMEROON Contact address: cameroon@servas.org

Servas Cameroon would like to be part of the *Making Connections* project. Please contact us at cameroon@servas.org if you are interested in visiting our country.

SERVAS GAMBIA Contact address: gambia@servas.org

Servas Gambia would like to be part of the *Making Connections* project. Please contact us at gambia@servas.org if you are interested in visiting our country

SERVAS GHANA Contact address: Ghana@servas.org

Servas Ghana would like to offer a language and cultural experience to Servas members of all ages based in Accra, the capital. This trip includes the possibility of ethnic skills learning and volunteering. For more information contact Yawa Sellaise A., the National main contact, at ghana@servas.org

SERVAS MALAWI Contact address: malawi@servas.org

Over a number of years Servas Malawi has offered a language and cultural experience that is open to Servas members of all ages.

For more information contact Demelza B. at malawi@servas.org

Length: 1 month.

Programme includes:

- On arrival stay 2 days with National Secretary then 2 nights each with 5/6 Blantyre hosts. Hosts will: a) Take you to work with them for a day. b) Orientate you to taking

minibuses, etc. c) Help you study Chichewa.

- A longer-stay with hosts while completing voluntary work with an allocated NGOs that could be: Queens Hospital – accountancy, finances; Namasimba Day Centre – teaching 3-8 years; Open Arms Care of babies/feeding/play; Chichiri Prison – Ladies section – English.
- 2 weeks self-funded travel around Malawi finishing with debriefing with National Secretary.

Requirements:

You must: be 18+ years and a “model” Servas-traveller; have experience as a Servas traveller/host; be able to communicate well/okay in English; cover costs of travel to Malawi; have sufficient funds to cover cost of lunches and local travel, Chichewa language lessons, travel insurance, pocket money; give a PowerPoint presentation about your life and country; buy food and cook dinner each week for your “long-stay” hosts.; have funds to travel in Malawi in your last week.

SERVAS RWANDA Contact address: rwanda@servas.org

Servas Rwanda hosts welcome Servas travellers and would like to offer opportunities for them to experience and understand the culture, history and environment of Rwanda. For more information contact rwanda@servas.org

SERVAS TUNISIA Contact address: tunisia@servas.org

It will be my pleasure to discuss with you some opportunities to deeply visit and discover the beauties of our country. Adel A., National main contact at tunisia@servas.org

SERVAS UGANDA Contact address: uganda@servas.org

Servas Uganda would like to be involved in the *Making Connections* project and to offer Servas travellers possibilities for a cultural programme and volunteering. For more information contact uganda@servas.org