

Cabbage and more cabbage

Russian trip leaves aftertaste

By RON GARDNER

Her father still leaves her about the time she spent in Russia as a student, occasionally asking if she "would like to have some cabbage for dinner."

That is one of the many things tourists who just visit Russia for a short time are unable to see, says Karen Yesowich. A 25-year-old Farmington Hills resident, she holds a master's degree in Russian literature from the University of Toronto.

Russians eat cabbage all the time. It is amazing how you hear about tourists who have gone to Russia and only have the first things to eat and drink while they stayed at the fancy hotels.

"That is one of the attitudes that really upsets me about foreigners who visit the USSR. They travel as tourists and don't get to see what Russia is really like. They only see what the Russians want them to see and, in the process, miss a lot of what really goes on in the country."

One example of this is their eating habits. She says the Russian diet is centered around cabbage and rice, with little meat.

AFTER SPENDING two months in Russia, the same food every day was cabbage and rice and it was always overcooked.

"After a while, it really gets to you and you begin to long for some home cooking," explains Ms. Yesowich, who also received an undergraduate degree in Russian from Michigan State University.

She has spent time studying in Canada, Europe and Russia and says she enjoyed her stay in the Soviet Union the best.

She lived in Leningrad for two months during the summer of the city usually were played by tourists. Bread bakers in Russia had little difficulty touring parts of the city foreigners would have trouble reaching.

When the Russians found out you were an American, they would do anything for you. Otherwise, they were rude and probably would have bowled you over in the street," she says.

"One time I nearly smacked into an old lady. She wasn't about to move and I was tired of being pushed around by the older women of Russia. They will come up to you and tell you not to do this or not to do that."

Russians don't need policemen or an army because they have their grandmothers. They are the keepers of morality in the country. If they felt you needed to be corrected, they'll come right up to you and tell you so," she continues.

MS. YESOWICH says that of all the tour agencies she came in contact with during her stay in the country, Americans usually were the worst. They were always following the guides and didn't have any idea what the country was all about.

But the group I was with, a study group composed of students from five American universities, could go off on our own and see what we wanted to see. The Russian traveler says:

"It was really great that we could go out all the time. I saw things I only read about in books and experienced the places I had only heard about. These adventures were the most exciting parts of the time we spent studying in Russia."

A major problem she ran into was the Russian photography regulations. Officials gave tourists a list of things they couldn't photograph.

Foreigners can only take pictures of certain buildings or places. They cannot take pictures of Russians without their permission either. If they did, the Russian would come over and scream at the photographer.

I tried to blend in with the people while I was there, but they could tell right away that I wasn't Russian. My clothes were just too good to be Russian, even when I wore the grubbiest things I brought along.

"ONE TIME I was riding on the subway and felt everyone staring at me. I was because they don't often see a lady. So I stood a lot. But the only reason I could stand like that was because I was a lady."

My Russian was too good to be an American and not good enough to be from some region of the country where I could have a distinguishable dialect.

Since the Russians have a lot of different people, I thought that was why they were looking at me, she continues.

Another attitude Ms. Yesowich had difficulty understanding was the province the Russians have when it comes to their own people. They make Moscow and Leningrad the showplaces of the country.

Moscow to me was like a stamp sitting in the middle of the country, sucking the blood from every other city. When Moscow has left over, it gives to Leningrad. But there is a deep malady between the cities. The average tourist doesn't get

the chance to see this.

Leningrad is more for westerners. There is more culture and learning in this city. On the other hand, Moscow has all the nice things while the rest of the country suffers. Many of the students in our study group didn't realize this but they definitely saw a big difference in the experience.

While Moscow and Leningrad prosper and cater to tourists, people from the country need better housing, food and clothes, she says.

Russians aren't how foreign currencies, and when they were tourists leaving a foreign currency, they gave it to him with hatred.

ONLY FOREIGNERS could do in the times that had that expensive good. Whenever you would walk out of the store with a lot of yellow parking tags, everyone would point you and try to get something from you.

The kids would do anything for green. They would trade for bubble gum and give you a little pen in return, she continues.

But one thing that puzzled me in some of the countries men could not be understood in the black market. The government controls the price, but you would still see them selling their books.

"I was amazed how stupid they would be and asked if I wanted to go in one of the underground places to see the books. But I didn't like him and never knew where he lived."

If a Russian followed an American to the Soviet Union, he would become suspicious.

We're one of the few immediate communities that still has a downtown," he said.

"I THINK WHAT they're also saying is that government can also be a catalyst."

The city manager said he would prefer to see a small committee working to implement the changes. You can't get much

done in a large body," he said.

Although all council members voted for the proposal, Councilman Alan Bennett expressed some reservations about Green's report.

I was very much disappointed in the report," he said.

The recommendations were feasible but the report didn't give the city much options or reveal anything that wasn't already known," he said.

The report provides a development plan for the area but not a long-range goal. The long-range plan depends on whether we can implement the short-range plan, Tupper said.

If a major fashion apparel store, such as Jacobson's, could be introduced as a catalyst, a branch in downtown Farmington parking might become another problem.

You give them something with com-

ing to and then I find a place to park," Richardson said.

The city would like to provide a parking lot for the shopping center, but it's not sure if it can find a place to park, he said.

IT'S A GOOD study for the area, but it's not a report that can be used to make a decision, said Councilman Bennett. Green told the council.

While he supports the report, he said he doesn't think it should be used to make a decision. Jacobson's is the company that said Farmington would have to do more things before they could be introduced here, he said.

It takes an awful long time, he said. Green's suggestions were possible, he added.

The appearance of the city, the downtown area, and how it is perceived, he said.

The response, which was the first of its kind in the Grand Haven area, will not be a shopping area, but a place where you will have to be employed in some form of business, he said.

According to the report, the Green and Jacobson's development area was the best place to locate the retail and service center, he said.

The report said Farmington has a mix of all types of stores and should be able to attract a lot of business, he said.

The city manager said he made no decision on the report, but he said he would like to see it implemented.



Karen Yesowich believes many tourists miss seeing what Russia is really like when they stay at fancy hotels while traveling in the country.

City rushes to beat Novi shopping development

A meeting has been arranged between representatives of Howard L. Green and Associates, the Downtown Center Co. and City Manager Robert Headman to discuss the redevelopment of downtown Farmington.

Speed is of the utmost importance, Mayor John Richardson said.

The plan involves an attempt to in-

terduce major fashion apparel stores to the city before the Novi regional shopping center opens.

If in the immediate future, the Novi center gets a foothold, Green's plan may have the practicality it has now, said Councilman Richard Tupper. They are sure that we could support such a store, Mayor Richardson said.

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Farmingtonians join fight against tax reassessments

By JACKIE KLEIN

The combined homeowners coalition in the tri-county area of Oakland, Wayne and Macomb are urging representatives of civic groups to attend a tax rally Wednesday, Feb. 25.

The meeting will begin promptly at 8 p.m. in the First Baptist Church hall on the corner of Bates and Willet, a block north of Maple Road between Southfield Road and Woodward in Birmingham.

"It's time for the people to stand up and be counted in the fight to stop annual reassessment of property," said Greg Kennedy, president of the Southfield Homeowners Tax Association. "Ever since the 50 per cent of cash value law was passed for assessment of property and tax purposes, our taxes have been soaring sky high and we don't have a leg to stand on."

KENNEDY was referring to tightened guidelines imposed by the State Tax Commission a few years ago which require all properties to be assessed at 50 per cent of true cash value. Before that, assessors had more leeway in evaluating land and structures.

"If you buy a home for \$15,000 and it's assessed for \$27,000, you can complain to the city assessor, but has answer will be you got a bargain," Kennedy maintained.

"If you buy a home for \$3,000 more than it's assessed, every house in that neighborhood is reassessed for \$3,000 more. This rip-off should be stopped right now. If the state equalization board continues the game it's playing, you'll never come up with a winner. Let's get the odds a little better for us."

ALSO TO BE discussed at the meeting will be Gov. Milliken's tax-sharing program, Kennedy said. He claims with annual reassessment of homes, the annual tax bases of most of the suburbs have risen.

"We've lost part, or in some cases almost all of the annual state kick-back for schools," Kennedy claimed. "Now the government wants the southeast counties to share any wealth we get from new commercial buildings constructed outside of Detroit."

In other words, we the taxpayers must foot the bill for construction of bigger and better schools, wider streets, more expensive fire equipment, more fire and police personnel and other services just to take care of these new buildings. Detroit gets the gravy and we're left holding the bag. Hell no, we're not going to take that cutting down."

IF THE governor wants to bail out De-

troit, Kennedy asserted, he should make a state program and include his own county instead of a select few.

"Many issues must be corrected but first things first," Kennedy said. "We need people in large numbers to enable us to solve these problems, but no radicals please."

Representatives of homeowners' associations from Farmington, Farmington Hills, Southfield, Littleton Village, Birmingham and Bloomfield met last month in Farmington to voice opposition to the 1973 state law which increased property tax assessments. Oakland County homeowners groups blame the inability of state administrators to spend within limits for the annual assessment hikes.

JOE ALKATEER, president of the Farmington Hills Homeowners Association, said the group may decide to seek an amendment to the state constitution which would put a ceiling on property tax assessments.

President of the Birmingham Homeowners Association is Endre Meyer. Future sessions, he said, will include residents of all counties experiencing annual hikes in taxes through assessment increases. Homeowners are requested to confer with their civic organizations before joining the protest.



Four Farmington Hills youths recently received scouting's highest honor, the Eagle award. Members of Boy Scout Troop 263, the new Eagle Scouts are (from left) Greg M. Rapp, David G. Schafer, Stephen C. Crotty and Eric G. Priebe. Greg Rapp's brother, Mark, Stephen Crotty's brother, John, and Eric Priebe's father, Bernard, are also holders of the Eagle award.

18 and UNDER

Den 2 Webber from Oak Scout Park 48, put their "Help Your Neighbor" project into action this month with excellent results.

The boys and 18 friends from the Evangelical Home for Children in Detroit were the guests of the Detroit Red Wings at a morning practice session.

Each of the scouts sponsored a friend from the Evangelical Home and in total there was a group of 38 young folks and leaders.

The team members visited with the Farmington Hills scouts and friends, signed autographs, provided them with signed pictures, lucky picks, programs and Red Wing decals.

Dr. Monseigneur Agah is den leader. Others who went on the outing included Mike Agah, Jim Connors, Ken Goodwin, Robert Griffin, George Fontaine, Frank Kapiel, John Kelly and Pete Stail.

SCOUT TROOP 141 is anxious to enlarge

and welcome any boy 11 or older who is interested. The troop meets in the home of the First Presbyterian Church, Farmington at Keweenaw Hill, each Wednesday at 7:30 p.m.

Scouts from troop 141 have won awards on their uniforms. They are: Phil Spennell, Timberline, 1st Class, Second Class, Jim Nuttall, First Class, Buck Plank, Star, and Gerry Smith and Brian Curry, Life.

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