

#7

Newsletter

# MENU

We want to share with you a delicious  
Peace Messenger meal, starting with:

## Apetizers

PM of the month

Special announcement

## Main and side dishes

I heard the phrase:  
"I want to make a difference"

with contributions by  
Milica, Ivana, Mariana, Tina

## French Cheese

PM workshp in London

Desert  
(organic fruits from the garden)

'SHOCK' The French government  
closes INJEP!

## Champagne

Babblicious plans for the future



[www.spaceforpeace.net](http://www.spaceforpeace.net)

[peacemessengers@gmail.com](mailto:peacemessengers@gmail.com)





One month ago, 21 participants from Asia, Latin America and Europe arrived to Marly-le-Roi, near Paris, to take part to the Peace Messengers training seminar. During this week, they deepened their understanding of peace, learned how to build Peace messengers workshops ; then, in smaller groups designed and ran their workshops. They all went back full of inspiration and motivation.. and some of them decided to help building the Peace Messengers network at various levels. So I'm very glad to introduce the new newsletter team : Mariana (SCI-Catalunya), Mehdi (AYAFE-Azerbaijan) and Teodora (SCI-Romania), who have produced the dramatically improved newsletter you are reading now. This is only one of many signs that shows that after this seminar the Peace Messengers network is blooming!

Sylvie Gosme



Laetitia





My name is Mariana Gavris, I am 26 years, Romanian, but I live in Barcelona (Spain) since 2005 :-)

My profile area is: psycho-pedagogy, social psychology, international relations, new technologies of information and communication, digital education, social network analysis and design; international NGO networks, photography.

*"Be the change that you  
want to see in the world"*

Your biggest surprise as a PM?

When I first heard about the idea of the PM in the working camps I was not sure what it was about. Also, since I was new in SCICat I had quite fresh in my head the SCIint philosophy and the values promoted, I was quite sure that the peace education contents are obvious to be given the most important target that defines the purpose of SCI: **the people** participating in the work camp (general population, not necessary specialists).

I like that in SCIint there are specific working groups specialized in different topics, but this group I see it as transversal because take into practice the philosophy and the beginning reason of SCI from 1920. I was really impressed how the ideas of PM come up and how people from different places embraced it, make it theirs and participating in the growing up of the common network. The genuine enthusiasm to share and to collaborate is impressive; especially for almost everyone participation is volunteer-based. I'm surprised that this network of volunteers that was born last year, has already a sustainable structure and people interested to contribute to PM to grow and to connect with the other group on the SCIint.

After the training from Marly-le-roi (France) I surprised myself with the way to propose the PM here. I work in peace education in the last 5 years (work, volunteer, internships) in different projects and countries, but this proposal is special: has the genuine enthusiasm to know, to work and enjoy the wonderful intercultural world.

Your biggest joy/best experience as a PM?

The SCI promotes the idea of **working directly at the grassroots level of the societies** and this way knowing people in a familiar and safe space. In this space, the PM proposal promotes the idea to enjoy by observing (not judging differences) and giving the tools for intercultural nonviolent communication.

The direct task of the PM-er is to make the study camp and give seminars, courses, etc. in base of the need of the context, reason and characteristics of the group. The PM-er is not intervening in a conflict in the work camp, community, etc., but (s)he is there to **facilitate communication** and not to make conflict resolution. The final decision is taken in group, and the PM is just the facilitator.

My biggest joy is that also PM-ers' lives and the people involved are touched, they start to listen actively and realize how important is to communicate, to be simple and to learn to enjoy to share.





## PM of the month

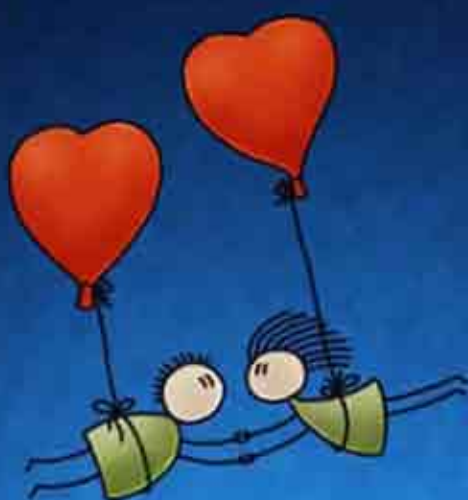
### Your biggest hope as a PM?

I really hope that these enthusiasms will imply more young people from different countries Also that the PM has an important radiance the international community level, at least where SCIint has working camps :-)

I would love work in the development of the Spanish/Catalan PM proposal and to collaborate with my colleagues from SCICat to develop more the proposal of PM also in work camp, but also in the local community especially with YUWG. Also, to get in contact with SCIRomania to help and participate in the development of the Romanian PM proposal.



*Thank you for your interest and a special thanks to my SCICat colleagues for involving me in this :-)*  
Mariana Gavris



Lorena & Philipp

We are glad to announce that one of the most active PM, Lorena, got married in June, with Philipp from SCZ Switzerland. We wish them lots of happiness and many little Peace messengers!



**WHO IS THE NEXT? :-)**



PMessaging in photos

Mike



## An account of the PM training in Marly



I think what impressed me about this seminar was the participants' commitment. A commitment to group learning, a commitment to group living, and a commitment to developing the role of Peace Messengers within their organisations.

The participants came from three continents, 19 countries and spoke many languages. In such a diverse group dynamics and group communication can be difficult but I don't think this was the case at this seminar because of the participants' determination and energy.

*I heard the phrase 'I want to make a difference'*

The programme at the seminar included peace education, SCI history and philosophy, conflict transformation, intercultural learning, communication etc. I think for most participants the most useful part of the seminar was the opportunity to develop and practice their workshops on delivering peace education inputs on work camps. It proved a very practical and positive learning experience. Other highlights of the seminar were the excellent French food at lunch and dinner! Also the half-day trip to Paris and the party at the apartment of the SCI France president, Rémi. I am not sure if he had volunteered or had been 'press ganged' into hosting the party but he seemed very relaxed and happy about having nearly 30 people descend on his apartment!

So what next? I heard the phrase 'I want to make a difference' a lot at the seminar. I think being a Peace Messenger can 'make a difference'. Maybe not a big difference but collectively I think Peace Messengers can have an impact and play an important and positive role in developing peace education in SCI and its partner organisations.



*'It is a better  
to light a candle  
than to curse  
the darkness'*

Finally, we need to acknowledge we have to operate in difficult times. We heard at the seminar that the place where the seminar was held, the Institute for Youth and Communication Education (INJEP) was closing. Apparently the French government had decided that the centre was not cost effective. This was strange, because, apparently, it made a profit every year. Maybe the reason was more overtly political. Maybe the French government felt uneasy to have a grassroots education project and preferred to deal with a more commercial and submissive organisation. It's not just INJEP that is 'at risk'. On a global level wars are raging in many parts of the world and poverty and injustice are rife. On a more local level people are losing their jobs, their homes and entering a period of uncertainty. In such circumstances there may be a tendency to 'batter down the hatches' and become insular and detached from the world. To blame others and retreat into isolationism. I think this would be a mistake. As the Chinese proverb goes 'It is a better to light a candle than to curse the darkness'. Maybe Peace Messengers could be the candle of light we need right now!

Mike Burkett



I have to admit, I didn't know what exactly to expect from this training. Of course, I knew the topic and the reason of our meeting but anyway I was curious about it.

I came to Marly as an educated camp leader with a little experience. I realized that other participants have similar or richer background in this area of work. That was very useful for me because I got the opportunity to share some ideas and learn from others.

About the sessions - I liked the part when we, as participants, had to be active and creative, make workshops and present our skills.

The group was highly motivated so this wasn't a problem for us, just the opposite, it was a great chance for cooperation and expressing creativity.

I have to mention the atmosphere during the sessions and in our free time - it was very friendly and I felt like I know those people for years.

As for my future PM work, I got inspired and more motivated for taking actions in this direction. My organization is willing to support me.

Tina



Since the first training for peace messengers took place in Novi Sad, Serbia, and in a way the whole idea started from there, I felt the great desire to participate (being a part of that cause became my idea of my own future).

My origins being from Balkan (which is a very specific and post conflict area of Europe) I considered peace messaging very important (and needed) for building peace here. I didn't know what to expect from the training, but I knew I was receiving an interesting opportunity to improve myself, which, in the end, I did. The training was great! Since all the participants were from extremely different countries, it became a place of intercultural exchange on many levels. The training helped me expand my knowledge and raise my self-awareness of responsibility as a peace messenger.

Particularly, the best part of it for me was the PM workshops where different groups presented their impressive new methods of peace messaging. I think this training really helped me prepare for my work in the future, thanks to the trainers, their knowledge, methods of education and great enthusiasm! After every session I felt awakened, and each of them made me think and motivated me to find my place in this cause. I also have to add that good French wine and cheese was very inspirational for further working ☐ and I'd also like to thank the local prep team for their hard work and energy.

I think that, for each of us, our way of living is very important, meaning we have to live as peace messengers 24 hours a day, and constantly be aware of our responsibility in society. Deeds, not words!

After this experience, I felt like a bird which has finally learned to fly!

Milica

*We are the change I want to see in the world!*



PMessengering in photos



Sonja



Define your personal vision about PM?

I haven't defined one clear personal vision about the PM, but I would rather like to see them peace messaging in a lot of SCI projects in the future...



What PM can bring in your community / country?

Depends from which perspective we are looking. For sure they will be an example of intercultural dialogue and how non-formal education and peace activism, even though a small workshop can make slight difference in your life and bring some new thoughts. As well this will be a motivation for the people to initiate changes and improvements in the social life and society in general.

How do you see the idea of the PM network?

The PM Network from the moment it was created functioned very well. At the moment I see it as hardcore group of the PM that is providing recourses, advices, etc. to the Peace Messengers around the world. The hard core group is dynamic, supportive and its members change from time to time. That's the idea I have on my mind :- ) - I think is how it's working even now, no?



How was the PM training in Marly? Positive / negative perspective.  
How do you see the implementation of the training in the field?

The PM Network from the moment it was created functioned very well. At the moment I see it as hardcore group of the PM that is providing recourses, advices, etc. to the Peace Messengers around the world. The hard core group is dynamic, supportive and its members change from time to time. That's the idea I have on my mind :- ) - I think is how it's working even now, no?



## What is a Peace messenger?

"Peace messenger": I define it as a quite young, but a wonderful initiative of peace education implemented by youth. The proposal came from the need to transmit and share peace education tools between volunteers and non-volunteers, working on awareness rising, deepening of the nonviolent communication concepts and the application in the work camp and in the daily life.

The first formal meeting as Peace messenger as SCIint working group it was during the training in May 2009, in Marly-le-Roi (France). The training of PM meets together enthusiast volunteers from different countries; with the propose to develop a common vision for transmitting the values promoted in the philosophy of SCIint.

*I like the nice energy and the enthusiasm of all the PM-ers and I started to work with Sylvie and Mehdi on the newsletter and with Bogi and Jenny on the proposal of mission and vision. The process is under construction...*

*PM involves especially international SCI volunteers- working in network- for promoting the work in cooperation, intercultural dialogue and nonviolence, using the nonformal education methodology.*  
*Two of the basic proposals of the PM work are: empowerment of the people (work camp, local level, daily life) to implement and promote pacifist values in their lives. Also, the awareness raising and the application of the SCI philosophy*



The training was structured in 2 parts: The first one, focused on the training of trainers, which had a part of peace education theory and alternatives to respond to conflict and connected with other concepts and furthermore on how to apply them: how to design one training, how to facilitate, how develop a creative behavior in different environments and the importance of an active communication.

The other part was based on the definition of the network and the steps forward for the implementation of the PM in the work camps and daily life. I liked the open approach of the training and the proposal to meet together experience and enthusiasm! One of the best parts it was to have time to know and work with the amazing people of this group.

Besides of being photographer =), I enjoy the design and the debriefing on the trainings and the wonderful time spent together in Marly and with some of them in Paris.

In SCIcat we made the proposal to apply now the PM proposal in the training of the outgoing volunteers and the camp leaders. The idea of the peace education transmitted throughout this alternative proposal raised interest especially to the young people.

During the session I used the game of life (design by SCI Austria) based on the personal position in front of a concept, on the axis peace-war. The game and especially the debriefing it was inspiring to be aware and respect to the other personal vision.

Also, in connection to another game - based on the work in group on a work camp case situation, where they have to find solutions together- the debate on the role of the volunteer in a local community and the promotion of the importance of the active communication and mutual respect.

Mariana Gavrís







Teodora, Yahu, Olga and Marianna

PMessaging in photos



Mike (IVS-GB) came back from the Peace Messengers seminar in Marly-le-Roy, hardly took a pause to breathe and started already his Peace Messenger mission the following day. On the 9th of May, at an information day organised by IVS-GB in London, he ran a PM session for about 12 people interested in doing work camps this summer. Thinking about peace was the main topic : first a brainstorming session on 'what is peace', then a 'Peace barometer' activity, and finally a quiz about Peace Messengers he had already done in his workshop in Marly. The session was a success : at the evaluation at the end of the day people said they found the session interesting and enjoyable.

Mike also found the time to brief another IVS member: both of them have run PM sessions in June, so if you took part to a work camp in Great Britain, you may have crossed their paths...

Mike Burkett





Marly - Le - Roi

PMessaging in photos



# SHOCK!!!

## THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT CLOSES INJEP!!!



*During the seminar, our local reporters heard that INJEP, who has been hosting French and international volunteers for years, will be closed by the French Government. Shocked, we decided to investigate and meet the locals to find out more. The closure of a non-formal education centre is an obstacle to build a culture of peace, and it was important for us to reflect on the impact of such a political decision. We decided to act on a conflict situation and to be the journalist peace messengers.*

Towards Marly-Le-Roi town centre, Samira, Milica and Karine were aiming to meet with inhabitants of the town in regards to the INJEP closure situation, their feelings if any, potential impacts on their day to day life and about links with current French government politics.

Three p.m. in town, no much people around, we stopped at the Rallye bar in the old Marly.

An old lady passed by, with a broken arm. We asked: "Do you have 5 minutes for us?" – A

answer: "No. And I have no time, I've got an appointment with the tax officer".

– Thanks you – bye –

Paul, a young guy of Marly knew about INJEP, but did not know about the situation. We explained our limited knowledge about it and then, Paul left us.

The manager of the Rallye knew about the INJEP and its closing, but did not have a clue of the reasons. He even told us that he tried to get some information from the INJEP, but did not receive any...

His point of view was that the closing of Injep will stop dynamic flows of people in the town, which could contribute to the economical life of the shops, cafes and restaurants.

Meanwhile, according to him, it seems that Marly inhabitants were not interested to meet others because they just would like to keep peace at home.



Samira, Milica and Karine

In general, people in Marly Le Roi are very negative about the political situation at the moment in France, especially the students

They all think that it should be a bad idea to close INJEP at present economy situation because many people will lose their jobs. Many of them actually did not know what is INJEP but they were concerned for all those people that are employed in the centre.

Our proposal about INJEP was to aware them, especially the local people, and with collective lobbying to make an effort to prevent closing INJEP.



## International institute in local context



Trying to complete our task as creatively as it's possible and making it easy for locals, we decided to do a survey. Although we had difficulties to make us understood, findly we managed to interact with approximatively 20 people and raise awareness about the closure of INJEP and political connections.

We didn't have a specilaised target group, however most of the people we asked were students and parents.



It was intersting to see that only that only 53.2% thought education policies had an impact on their lifes. 73,4% were following more or less political issues related to education. It was 13,4% higher than the percentage of the ones political-ly updated in general. Opinions and the support they expressed towards the education policies of the current government varied a lot but we can say they weren't especially unsatisfied with it, maybe also due to the lack of information they possessed.



About INJEP, surprisingly almost no one knew anything from the side of the locals. They were generally interested and found youth centers very important

They were missing information about it and proposed to make bigger publicity of this institute, but because of the non-existing personnal connec-tions they didn't feel that with the closure of it something could have been taken from them personally .



Maybe, in the future it would be interesting to make a bigger effort to make locals well informed and involved in the life of the institution even if it works on the international level.



Sylvie, Bogi, Olga, Karine, Mehdi



PMessaging in photos



# And now? What's next?

The network is waiting for you, to hear about your experiences as Peace Messengers, and support you..and if you want to go further, there re many ways you can help us!

Newsletter: articles, pictures and artworks are always welcome! And if you want to join our editorial committee, be welcome! (peacemessengers@gmail.com)

Website: a group is now being constituted to build a PM -dedicated website. If you want to help with the contents, the architecture, or the technical aspects; contact Mehdi: (mehdi.ahmedov@gmail.com)

Projects: the newsletter will inform you about ongoing projects, but if yo have ideas, the network is here to help you- don't hesitate to contact us!

Peace Messengers will meet in Budapest, Hungary, on 24 and 25 October, to discuss future plans. If you want to join our meeting, you're welcome!"



We will conquer the world! :-)