

Robinsons on Parallel Studying Psychology in Romania

You did what? Yes, luckily, I had the opportunity to study the Individual Psychology of Alfred Adler at an Institute in Poiana Brasov, Romania, this summer. The Institute called ICASSI, which stands for the International Committee for the Adlerian/Dreikursian Summer School Institute, has served professional counselors, parents, families, and children for 43 years!!

ICASSI was held at the Alpin Resort Hotel which is nestled at the base of the Postavarul Mountain in an alpine village. Poiana Brasov was a unique combination of hotels, restaurants and hostels to house and entertain skiers from the European Community in the winter. The village is about a 20 minute ride through the Carpathian Mountains from the bustling historic city of Brasov. It was a perfect setting to study with skilled therapists from nearly everywhere on the planet.

The adventure began when my new friend, Priscilla MacDougall, whom I met at last year's ICASSI in Maryville, Tennessee, offered to share her room at the Rembrandt Hotel in Bucharest, the capitol of Romania, as part of our journey on the way to the alpine village. One extra day allowed us both to reset our body clocks for the 7 hour time difference. (Romania is 7 hours behind the eastern seaboard of the USA).

I was delighted to accept Priscilla's invitation since the Rembrandt Hotel is in the heart of the historic district of Bucharest. Priscilla and I enjoyed the city with a walk through a local bazaar and a fine dinner in a sidewalk café where we could people watch and refuse roses and handouts.

Priscilla, a professional Adlerian counselor and a broadminded ordained United Methodist minister, married to John MacDougall, also a United Methodist minister, lives in the St. Paul Minneapolis area---the “other” Twin City. Besides many titillating conversations, she and I shared very plush accommodations on the 10th floor of our ski resort hotel.

The funny thing was that 4 clever goats were grazing right next door to the hotel. They were staked with a long chain to a verdant pasture, unless they escaped, giving the farmer quite a chase. Each morning and evening their owner, from across the road would bring them out for the day and take them in to their shed in the evening. They kept us awake one night when their farmer/daddy didn't come to let them in the barn until very late.

Priscilla and I didn't miss a buffet breakfast either. The rooster who was in the farmer's family of animals, crowed every morning at sunrise. I could always hear him because I slept most comfortably under a blanket with the window open to the crisp mountain air.

In the village a mama sheep and her two lambs were roaming free to graze, as was the village mule, a source of photography for many of us tourists. One morning early I heard a clop, clop, clop, and discovered it was a horse drawn, heavy laden wagon of produce, moving through town, headed to the market. We weren't able to feed many mosquitoes because the barn swallows nesting in the corners of our majestic hotel kept them at bay. All of us enjoyed watching them swoop and catch their sustenance, cheering them on all the while.

Several of our lunch breaks were spent enjoying a picnic lunch and then standing in line at the bank to change money. The bank was a full service bank with ONE employee. He was very efficient, but

could only work so fast. We many times had to leave before it was our turn to get back to class. Priscilla and I didn't want to miss a minute of our grand educational experience!

The Romanian leu was the currency we needed for purchasing at the local businesses. Euros were also useful in some instances, but leus were what we stood in line for at the bank in town. The exchange rate for the leu was 1 dollar for 3 leu. Euros at the time of our travels were 1.3 dollars. As you can imagine, shopping was an adventure. I either divided by 3 or added $1/3$ to the listed price. Thankfully, my local Irmo B B& T Customer Service rep, Sandy Wood-Wilson, was able to order both currencies for me to have when I landed in Romania.

I was so very impressed by the Romanian people. According to the literature, they are world famous for their friendliness and hospitality. I am now a believer. They were so kind and helpful in every way. Our friendly little choir, directed by our experienced choir director, Richard Watts, learned the Romanian national anthem. Our host country counselors were thrilled with our tribute. They, of course, helped us sing loudly their own country's song in their own country's language.

Luckily, all of the Romanian folks we met at ICASSI spoke excellent English. They also spoke 3 other languages at least. Living in Europe, one needs to know a couple of languages to change from country to country. Those countries are as small as our states, and travel is very efficient by plane or train or bus.

