

ICASSI 2019

Sibiu, Romania

The 52nd ICASSI summer school was pleasantly held in Sibiu, Romania, a modern city with an old town of medieval beginnings. Unique to Sibiu are the eyebrow windows giving ICASSI participants the watchful eye whenever they were in town. These elevated windows were originally designed to provide ventilation to dry crops brought in from the fertile fields surrounding the city.

On a walking tour of the city, arranged by the excellent local committee, participants saw the double walls with a ditch between for a moat when the invaders approached. In the surrounding area, fortress churches spoke to the fact that the villages also had to be prepared for invasions and pillaging.

ICASSI 2019 summer school was unique in that the local Romanians (participants and staff) numbered 118, one of the largest local participation groups on record. Skilled professionals contributed wisely in classes and conversations. Their Romania night was filled with local crafts, goodies, drinks, dances and demonstrations.

Participants came to the 2019 summer school from a total of 29 countries, making this a true international educational experience. Over 340 total participants attended. Bloc 0, with its lively early morning activities, had participants in a multi acre park enjoying their morning walks and runs, along with exercise equipment.

Bloc 1 plenaries provided ten excellent lectures and demonstrations. Faculty for the classes came from 13 countries. The opening plenary included a message from Eva Dreikurs Ferguson, who for the first time was unable to attend in person. She was nevertheless intricately involved with daily emails, keeping tabs on the business and educational workings of the ICASSI Board and Faculty. Staff responded with pictures and updates.

Bloc 1 plenaries and all institute-wide presentations were translated into Romanian and German, so all could benefit from the timely and valuable instruction.

Evening programs from cooperative game night, to the traditional and hilarious auction, to the Talent Show and bazaar brought the teens and children into the action for all to embrace.

A major Staff transition occurred, as Betty Haeussler retired after 31 years of service to provide invaluable administrative support, through various Administrators and Boards. All showed appreciation to Betty and wished Betty well.

Fresh ideas and novel approaches to the teachings of Dreikurs and Adler were provided by new and veteran instructors as well as in special interest sessions in the afternoons. Participants discussed how living the principles of cooperation, mutual respect, and equality was like living in a utopian bubble. All shared these values and savored the opportunity.

The challenge, of course, was to continue to live the values in the every - day world back home.

All persons who attended and participated found life-changing experiences, joy, and support at the 2019 ICASSI summer school. Most indicated that they plan to attend ICASSI in 2020. This will be held in Minsk, Belarus, for more enlightenment and social interest.