Winter Carnival in Pernik

Winters in Bulgaria can be frosty, foggy, and fadriehgt (that’s Yiddish for a bit mixed up). As an example of the fadriehgtedness we have perfectly sane Bulgarians dressing as childhood closet horrors and fever dreams come to life. This to lift the drudgery of the endless cold and wet and to celebrate any inkling of spring that may crack through the ice pack. We’ve got Punxsutawney Phil and fadreight Pennsylvanians and Bulgaria has the folks in Pernik. Same mishegas different continent (look it up).
http://www.novinite.com/photo_topic/100815/Surva+2015%3A+A+Day+among+Bulgaria+%27s+Kukeri/?photo_id=2312

A Bit More on Winter in Bulgaria

An exceptionally heavy winter in the American northeast and the Balkans. A reason why when the ice pack melts and the jonquils, hyacinths, and tulips break their heads through the frosty earth to inhale the freshening air and drink their fill of the melted snowpack people come out. And they turn to the sun (the French word for sunflower is tournsol). Birds and bees and flowers and trees we all turn to the sun to breathe a vitality that we’ve lacked during the months lived under the heavy hand of ice and snow and cold and fog. There’s a good reason why the School of Depressive Philosophers was made up of Europeans,
probably writing while gazing at crystalized fog through their windows. Heidegger, Schopenhauer, Sarte? Would they have had anything to say sunning themselves on the beaches of St. Tropez? Hardly. Thank goodness for the ice and snow and blinding fog. How would we know what we are without these glories of nature?

http://www.novinite.com/articles/166409/Temperatures+In+Bulgaria+To+Hit+New+Low

**Culture Happens in Winter**

And the glories of Western artistic culture including music, dance, and theater happen in winter. The nights are long, the venues elaborate, the radiators banging at full sauna, and the audiences grateful to experience timeless pieces from the cultural canon and grateful to be relieved of another Eurovision competition or some hackneyed television serial. Why, even opera is popular! And dance. Dance is most sublime in deepest winter. Tutus are about spring and revitalization and hearts pounding and blood coursing. Here’s a new ballet to the music of Prokofiev. What more could a Sofian want in February?!

http://www.novinite.com/articles/166351/Bulgaria%E2%80%99s+Ballet+Arabesque+Offers+New+Interpretation+of+Prokofiev%E2%80%99s+Cinderella

**Plovdiv to Host Tourism Conference**

Plovdiv is a grand place. Roman and Thracian ruins, an artistic mecca with galleries and ateliers, gelato shops and Cyrillic McDonald’s, and lovely fountains that beckon the local and
the garishly dressed tourist, although enough of the latter have been run off to change into something more appropriate that few are seen nowadays. We travel to Plovdiv for our first weekend excursion and visit the Roman amphitheater pictured above. What a glorious city! What grand gelato! What more could the traveler want? 

http://www.novinite.com/articles/166378/Bulgaria%27s+Plovidiv+Hosts+INDEX+Forum+To+Boost+Local+Tourism

Another Gondola Lift in Bansko in Spite of Environmental Concerns

The Pirin Mountains are a spectacular drawing card for winter sports aficionado’s. Located in southwestern Bulgaria the town of Bansko hosts world class ski and snowboarding competitions. Many Europeans that find the skiing venues in the alpine regions of France, Switzerland, and Italy too pricy are happy to experience terrain as challenging at a fraction of the cost. Catering to these sports tourists by building greater lift capacity seems the right thing to do as it generates hard currency, something that the government of Bulgaria desperately needs to finance economic growth. Build it and they will come. 

Lot’s Going on in Sofia

We have here the sweet magic of funk and soul music as performed by funky southern Europeans. Sofia has a very dynamic music scene and regardless of the funky season there are funky miracles happening in every funky nook and franny (that funking cranny for those of you beat challenged). Even more of the musical scene explodes during the temperate months of the year. June is a good month; the very same month in which the Bulgaria program happens. Come along with us or risk being tagged a funky square by us in-the-know beats.

http://www.novinite.com/articles/166436/Brazzobrazie+Music+Festival+Storms+Sofia+In+February

Comedy Festival??

Yes, a comedy festival in Sofia. And Bulgarians are allowed to laugh, at themselves, that’s certain, but also certainly at Romanians, and Greeks, and Serbians, not to mention the
Moldovans. Who wouldn't? The wreck of the Greek economy is laughter incarnate, what with austerity being piled onto the poor Greek taxpayer for the sins of the wealthy. All this doesn’t bode well for the Moldovans, citizens of the poorest country in Europe. There’s got to be humor bringing up the rear of the European hit parade knowing the kartofel you’re eating morning, noon, and night, become the steak frites in Parisian bistro. Hilarious!  
http://www.novinite.com/articles/166434/Bulgaria+Launches+Its+First+Comedy+Festival

**Sofia Property Prices Rising**

We advised purchasing Bulgarian property in the first volume of this newsletter which appeared in 2009. Here we are six years later and you haven’t bought any as yet. A lovely old apartment in center city Sofia, something immediately off the pedestrian zone in Plovdiv to enable you to bump shoulders with the ersatz movers and shakers in the arts community; something near the fortress in Veliko Tarnovo to give you the best of the old and new world. Now may be you last best chance at a piece of well-worn Bulgarian paradise. You heard it here.  
http://www.novinite.com/articles/166223/Sofia+Dwelling+Prices+Rose+by+3+in+2014

We are into February. If you are considering the Bulgaria study abroad program to the American University in Bulgaria in June then now is the time to complete the application process. Please don’t wait until the last minute to talk with significant others about your participation. We hope you decide to do summer study abroad with us in Bulgaria in June 2015. Compare our $2950 program fee which includes airfare with any other four week program to Europe and you’ll be astonished. How do we do it you wonder? Bulgaria hasn’t adopted the Euro as yet and we have strong connections in Bulgaria. The program application form is now included at the bottom of this newsletter. For more information please contact me at: philip.szmedra@gsw.edu; 229-931-2122 or any of the other faculty participants at the email addresses listed in the application below.

Until next time.
Dovizhdane,
Philip Szmedra
Summer Study Abroad in Bulgaria
Georgia Southwestern State University
The American University in Bulgaria, Blagoevgrad, Bulgaria
June 2–28, 2015

Cost: $2950
Directions: Complete all lines, sign the form, and return it with a check for $100.00 payable to Georgia Southwestern State University to:

Dr. Philip Szmedra
Director of Study Abroad
School of Business Administration
214 BHP
Georgia Southwestern State University
800 GSW SU Drive.
Americus, GA 31709

A. PERSONAL INFORMATION

Name: ______________________________________________________________

Last Name     First Name     Middle Name

Local Address: _______________________________________________________

Street name/number     Apt. number     City     State     Zip

Permanent Address: ___________________________________________________

Street name/number     Apt. number     City     State     Zip

Phone (Land/Cell):____________________________________________________

Area code + current number

Email: ______________________________________________________________

Date of Birth (month-day-year): _________________________________________

Social Security Number: ________________________________________________

GSW Identification number: _____________________________________________

Academic Major/Minor: _________________________________________________

Circle one:       Male       Female

Medical Information: List any chronic conditions, allergies, or other special health concerns including psychological and emotional problems and include information on prescription medications that you currently take for those problems:

1. ________________________________________________________________

2. ________________________________________________________________

3. ________________________________________________________________

4. ________________________________________________________________

Emergency Contact:
Name/ Relationship: ________________________________________________
Have you ever traveled outside of the U.S.? ______________________________________

If Yes, where_______________________________________________________________

**B. PASSPORT INFORMATION**

Country of Citizenship:________________________________________________________

I have a current passport:_______________________________

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<th>Number</th>
<th>Place of Issue</th>
<th>Date of Issue</th>
<th>Expiration Date</th>
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I am applying for a passport: Yes No (circle one)

**C. ACADEMIC INFORMATION**

College/University Attending:____________________________________________

Classification (circle one): Freshman Sophomore Junior Senior Grad Student

Major/Minor__________________________________________________________

Current GPA:_________________________________________________________

Are you enrolled in a program leading to a degree or diploma? Yes No

Will you be applying for financial aid? Yes No

Do you have a HOPE grant to attend college in Georgia? Yes No

**D. COURSE SELECTION AND REGISTRATION INFORMATION**

You may take a maximum of two courses for a total of up to six (6) semester hours. **Please select a first and second choice of courses** with the understanding that only those courses that enroll the most students will go. **Circle your first and second choices:**

**ARST 3102 (3cr)** – Ethics in International Photography. Ms. Tonia Hughes. tonia.hughes@gsu.edu.

**ARST 3170 (3cr)** – Beginning Digital Media. Ms. Tonia Hughes. tonia.hughes@gsu.edu.

**ECON 2106 (3cr)** – Principles of Microeconomics. Dr. Philip Szmedra. philip.szmedra@gsu.edu

**ENVS 1100 (3cr)** - Introduction to Environmental Science. Dr. Tzvetelin Iordanov. tzvetelin.iordanov@gsu.edu

**PHYS 1222 (3cr)** - Stellar Astronomy. Dr. Svilen Kostov. svilen.kostov@gsu.edu

Note: Transient students must apply to GSWSU and pay a $25 application fee. Out-of-state applicants will pay a $250.00 study abroad fee and in-state GA tuition.
AUTHORIZATION AND WAIVER OF LIABILITY

Read and Sign the Following Statement
I acknowledge that participation in a study abroad program involves some risk of injury, illness, or loss of personal property. I agree to release and forever discharge Georgia Southwestern State University and the Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia, its members individually, and its officers, agents, and employees, from any and all claims, demands, rights, and causes of action of whatever kind of nature, arising from and by reason of any and all known and unknown, foreseen and unforeseen bodily and personal injuries, including death, damages to property and the consequences thereof, resulting from my participation in the Maymester 2010 Study Abroad Bulgaria program and related activities.

I hereby agree to maintain accident and health insurance in force and effect for the duration of my participation in the Study Abroad Bulgaria program. I further acknowledge that the supervising faculty or program director has sole authority to make decisions regarding the continued participation of any individual in the program whose conduct may necessitate disciplinary action. I further authorize the supervising faculty or program director to obtain and provide medical treatment and/or services that I may require during the study abroad program.

Finally, I am aware that the deadline for submission of this application is February 24, 2012 and I agree to abide by the deadlines for fee payment as follows:

March 31, 2015: $100.00 non-refundable application fee due
April 14, 2015: First payment of $1425.00 due
April 28, 2015: Final payment of $1425.00 due

I further acknowledge and accept the schedule for refunds, should I withdraw from the program, and accept the penalties associated with late withdrawals, as follows:

Withdrawal before April 15, 2015: All but $500.00 will be refunded.
Withdrawal between before May 1, 2015: All but $750.00 will be refunded.
Withdrawal after May 15, 2015: No money will be refunded.

Note: All withdrawals must be made in writing to the Office of International Programs at Georgia Southwestern State University in order for refunds to be processed.

I understand that submitting an application for this study abroad program does not guarantee acceptance into the program; that candidates must meet program requirements and be approved by the program director; and that participation is subject to availability and is on a first come, first served basis.

Signature of Applicant__________________________________________________
Date________________________________________________________________

NOTE: APPLICATION FORM MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY $100.00 APPLICATION FEE