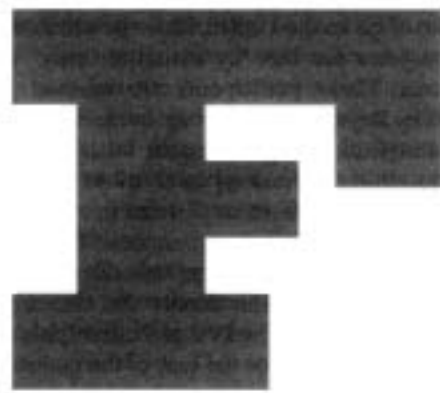


CITIZEN DIPLOMACY IVC OF PHILADELPHIA

MAKE FRIENDS, MAKE CONTACTS, MAKE PEACE

BY ARLINE JOLLES LOTMAN



ifty years ago a group of leaders in Philadelphia got together to create an organization to “make peace.” They were worried about the Cold War, having just survived World War II and the Korean War. What’s more, they were prescient in recognizing that Philadelphia needed to have an international identity and an entity devoted to welcoming citizens, tourists, and present and future leaders of foreign nations. We were the third-largest city in America. If we wanted to become a leader in business, a welcoming place to exchange cultures and expertise across oceans and disciplines, we needed an organization to make it happen.



Princess Grace, (ABOVE, FROM LEFT) Prince Ranier and Jack Kelly attend an event hosted by the IVC of Philadelphia. At an IVC reception held in his honor, Willy Brandt, then mayor of Berlin (BELOW, RIGHT), receives a Liberty Bell from Philadelphia Mayor Richardson Dilworth. Brandt later became chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany.



The U.S. State Department had a new approach: a partnership between American and foreign cities to bring this mission about through its "citizen diplomats." That's how it all began. Only "globalization" then was shorthand for reaching out. Barbara Greenfield, one of the first ladies of culture and business in Philadelphia, then and now, was one of the founders of the International Visitors Council of Philadelphia (IVC). Later, Frederick Heldring, Philadelphia's iconic internationalist, and many other movers and shakers, gave their support, time and talent to let these visitors touch and feel not only democracy's American roots but also the warmth and generosity of Philadelphians. The International Visitors Council estimates that the value of its in-kind services from volunteers is more than \$750,000 annually. It is an extraordinary number that reflects the allegiance the IVC's pro bono participants feel toward the program, the talented staff and the experience of "outsourcing." It is Americanism right from home.

In 1954, the IVC of Philadelphia partnered with the U.S. Department of State to locally administer its high-level exchange program. This isn't just any exchange organization, but one of 98 in the United States in which the IVC competes for the "by invitation only" participants. These participants are selected by the State Department, having been identified as future leaders in government, business, the arts, education, technology and other professions who will learn from us in order to affect positive changes in their native countries. This program has been rated the "most valuable tool" by the U.S. embassies who choose the citizens to be guests here, and the IVC of Philadelphia is considered a model for the rest of the country. The program requires a vast pool of Americans, both Philadelphians and regionals, who have the experience and talent to be matched with program visitors. Willy Brandt came through this program as a future leader of Germany when he was still mayor of Berlin. Royalty and close to 2,000 cabinet-level or current and former heads of state from around the world also have come here through this program earlier in their career.

In addition, the IVC partnered with Philadelphia's Sister Cities Program in 1997, when Pennsylvania's "first lawyer," Governor Edward G. Rendell, was still our city's "first lawyer."

It's now fifty years later and Philadelphia has finally become a major, international destination, and globalization can make or break a presidency. But the International Visitors Council now has a much broader mission. It wants to be branded as "IVC of Philadelphia: MAKE FRIENDS - MAKE CONTACTS - MAKE PEACE." And it is very successful even though many of us aren't familiar with its role in building Philadelphia's international partnerships.

More on the international scene, the business world, the arts and economic development, IVC has a new program, "Growing Companies." It is an initiative for those who like to mix more business than pleasure. This program is set up to create jobs here, through exporting. IVC of Philadelphia has the only mentoring and networking opportunities with the IVC delegations. The trade mentor and mentoring organizations give Philadelphia's potential exporters expert guidance in all aspects of trade for the beginner. The American Export Training Institute, PNC Bank, the Women's Business Development Center and dozens of others provide support services.

Philadelphia lawyers are among the local professionals who have steadfastly supported IVC of Philadelphia; other supporters are clients of Philadelphia lawyers, including the City of Philadelphia and Wachovia Bank.

So what is this program, really? And why don't more lawyers know about it? After all, the present chair, C. Baird Brown, is one of Ballard Spahr Andrews & Ingersoll, LLP's distinguished attorneys. Noted international lawyer Richard D. Atkins, a sole practitioner, is vice chair. Well-known environmental lawyer and IVC board member Thomas J. Jennings of Saul Ewing LLP and his family are leading hosts for home stays of visitors through the "Community Connections" program. Community Connections is a State Department training program designed to strengthen the democracies and economies of the former Soviet Union through intensive three-to-five-week training programs in Philadelphia for businesspeople, legal professionals and government officials from Russia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Kyrgyzstan. F. John Hagele of PJM Interconnection, LLC and Patricia Hunt are record-breakers for entertaining these visitors and many from the other IVC programs. Others include Richard P. Brown Jr. of Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP; John W. Goldschmidt Jr., intellectual property attorney at Reed Smith LLP; Michael E. Kunz, clerk of court of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania; and Richard T. McSorley of the Philadelphia Criminal Justice Center Court Administration.

Nancy J. Gilboy, president of IVC of Philadelphia, is a talented, warm and energetic individual who has been the paradigm for leadership for the past fourteen years. Nancy brings together everyone: the future heads of nations; the leaders in business, government, the arts and education; students; volunteers; and interns. They have made IVC of Philadelphia a favorite of departing guests from the State Department. Having served as chair during Nancy's tenure, I can understand why IVC was chosen to administer the Philadelphia's Sister Cities program, which links our city with seven cities worldwide: Florence, Italy; Tel Aviv, Israel; Torun, Poland;

Mayor Edouard Etonde Ekoto of Douala, Cameroon, (TOP LEFT) meets with Philadelphia Mayor John F. Street in 2003. Pennsylvania Governor Edward G. Rendell (CENTER) meets in Harrisburg with governors from Bhutan, in the eastern Himalayas. Richard Atkins (BOTTOM LEFT) and Thomas Jennings chat with other IVC members at a First Wednesday reception.



Becoming a Citizen Diplomat HOW TO JOIN THE IVC

As an IVC member you'll play an important role in promoting a positive U.S. image abroad while making friends around the world. As a "citizen diplomat" you can host visitors in your home for dinner or lunch, take them sightseeing to the Liberty Bell, become a mentor to an entrepreneur from the former Soviet Union, chat with members of parliament at "First Wednesday" receptions (which are free for members), and learn about exporting at trade seminars. IVC members enjoy learning about other cultures and meeting some of the most interesting people in the world.

Professional memberships and memberships for individuals, families and young professionals are available. For more information, contact Alan Hatfield at 215-683-0992 or at alan.hatfield@phila.gov. Visit IVC on the Web at www.ivc.org.

Tianjin, China; Incheon, Korea; Douala, Cameroon; and Nizhny Novgorod, Russia. The program's three partnership cities are Kobe, Japan; Abruzzo, Italy; and Aix-en-Provence, France.

What everybody likes best about Nancy Gilboy is how she keeps broadening the IVC family. Once you volunteer for any part of its constantly expanding services, you will be hooked forever. For example, IVC has added a member program, "First Wednesday," a monthly reception for members and their guests to exchange information and meet guests from the State Department, local universities and corporations to learn and to socialize. It is a real hot "insider" event held at the Radisson Plaza-Warwick Hotel Philadelphia.



C. Baird Brown (LEFT) currently serves as chair of the IVC of Philadelphia and Nancy J. Gilboy (RIGHT) is its president.

First Wednesday is like the "meet-up" that politicians have adopted. But for IVC and Philadelphians, it's strictly non-partisan and the best way to meet IVC invitees from all over the world. This is where you make "contacts, friends and peace," just as the invitation states. You just might:

- Discuss papyrus with guests from Egypt and Cyprus.
- Hear firsthand from representatives of Pakistan, Nigeria, Korea, Denmark, Egypt, China, Chile, Gaza and Israel.
- Really get to know their cultures and help our visitors get to know a piece of America.

These are often lifetime friendships. According to Ann Stauffer, IVC vice president and its Community Connections Program director, this is "not the formal, State Department diplomacy, it's 'citizen

diplomacy’.”

Richard D. Atkins of International Recoveries, LLC, the vice chair of IVC, is an international law practitioner who serves his clients through a legal hotline for the travel and travel insurance industry. He comes to the rescue of mostly Americans who have been arrested overseas or involved in a serious accident. Atkins has helped families free their loved ones in faraway places such as Madagascar, India, Japan and Thailand. Most recently, he helped a 14-year-old American boy charged with murder in Oman, on the Persian Gulf. Atkins’ more than fifteen years of interacting with foreign leaders through IVC came back to him, unexpectedly. Years ago, he entertained the chief of police of Oman, who came through the program. Now, he is the first prosecutor general of Oman, and responsible for handling this case.

“The principles of democracy are best identified in Philadelphia’s IVC program,” Atkins said. In spite of Philadelphia’s hate/love affair with itself it also is “apparently more memorable to our visitors because it’s considered a friendly city,” he added. Atkins believes IVC’s home hospitality program is one of the reasons. He has had a chance to give back, too. He referred a matter to the president of the African Bar Association, who was here as a delegation member.

The Connections program provides the opportunity to be involved in building legal systems all over the world. As a bonus, in all of IVC’s programs, a family membership is available that lets your children and significant other participate in meeting these visitors and make personal contact with counterparts here and in their native lands. Once you meet these foreign guests, it can be like a custom-designed platinum American Express travel experience.

Participants also can lend their expertise for just one hour. Guests of IVC’s International Visitor Leadership Program are in

the United States for stops in various cities according to their individual program objectives. Ronald F. D’Alonzo, IVC’s senior program director, matches 400 to 500 visitors a year with the Philadelphia region’s network of human resources. He recently matched Jamaican visitors—here to look at transparency in government to combat corruption—with media on reporting of organized crime, the City of Philadelphia’s Office of the Inspector General and several other relevant watchdog entities and law enforcers. Among the visiting group members are assistant attorneys general, members of the grassroots organization Jamaicans for Justice, the secretary-manager of the Commission for the Prevention of Corruption, the former producer of a leading public affairs radio show and the anchor of a nationwide FM station.

To cap the IVC’s fifty-year celebration, the State Department is adding an International Visitor Alumni Leadership Portal for alumni worldwide to communicate with all of the participants in this amazing, ongoing journey of democracy and friendship through the network of International Visitors Councils nationally and their connections internationally. This Web portal will be state-of-the-art, using the Internet for one of its original purposes—as a communications highway—and featuring streaming video, threaded discussion groups, news groups and more.

See you at First Wednesday? MAKE FRIENDS – MAKE CONTACTS – MAKE PEACE. ■

Arline Jolles Lotman, a solo practitioner in Philadelphia, is chair of the Philadelphia Bar Association’s Bar-News Media Committee and a former chair of the International Visitors Council of Philadelphia. She received the IVC’s Partners Honor Award in January 2004. She writes on public policy and the law.