

Dear Members of the SBPCA,

This is the long overdue report of our project that was funded with the assistance of the Santa Barbara Peace Corps Association. In early July, 2000, we received \$200 in cash, hand-delivered from Santa Barbara. This money we received as a small grant for a small project entitled “Library for the Preservation of Afghan Languages and Culture.” This project benefits Afghan refugees living in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. The books purchased with the small grant are held in the small library of the NGO “Fond Muhajir.” An estimated 250 people benefit from the use of these books. We are very grateful that this opportunity allowed us to expand our library.



In Autumn, 2000, the Refugee Center “Muhafir” purchased a total of 132 books and 4 video cassettes from local book stores in Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan. All books were purchased in new condition. These books fall under the categories of reference, language instruction, and literature. Books were selected with an educational purpose in mind.

Due to the fact that most of the refugee community speak Dari, the language native to Afghanistan (a dialect of Farsi) and with the local languages in mind, we selected books in Persian, Dari, Russian, and English. Currently at our NGO we offer the refugee women and children courses in Russian, English and Dari. This is reflected in the book list.

The purpose of expanding our library is to offer the refugee community literature which they otherwise can't access from local libraries. First, the Bishkek National Library is strict about letting even registered refugees check out books. Secondly, most of the literature in Farsi that we've purchased is not available in either the school libraries or the public libraries.

As a Peace Corps volunteer and a native Afghan I am well aware of both my sense of duty in helping Afghan refugees and the abundant amount of aid the world community has to offer. My main responsibilities have to do with connecting communities here to the world community. I play a small role in distributing the generosity of one community to the needs of another community. Although working at the Muhajir Refugee Center is a secondary project, I plan to extend a third year and make it my primary project. Knowing that groups of individuals such as yours exist makes our work here much easier. You have provided our NGO with resources that will benefit us for many years. We are very grateful.

Samia Karimi