Jun-1998

Faculty Travel: Craig Cowles

Recommended Citation

Available at: http://vc.bridgew.edu/br_rev/vol17/iss1/9

This item is available as part of Virtual Commons, the open-access institutional repository of Bridgewater State University, Bridgewater, Massachusetts.
Craig Cowles

Craig Cowles of the Management Science Department has responded to President Kennedy's call to "ask not what your country can do for you, but what you can do for your country." While on sabbatical last year Professor Cowles entered the Peace Corps and traveled to the Russian Far East to teach management courses and consult with local businesspeople. With his wife Irene, Professor Cowles was stationed in and around Khabarovsk, a city of some 600,000 residents about 500 miles north of Vladivostok on the Sea of Japan.

Cowles joined other Peace Corps staffs for six weeks of intensive Russian language study at the University of West Virginia and six weeks further at the Ussurisk Pedagogical Institute, then began his assignment at the Khabarovsk Railroad University, the Russian equivalent of a teacher's college. His major task was to conduct six week seminars on how to start up small businesses and to consult with local businesspeople. With his wife Irene, Professor Cowles was stationed in and around Khabarovsk, a city of some 600,000 residents about 500 miles north of Vladivostok on the Sea of Japan.

Cowles joined other Peace Corps staffs for six weeks of intensive Russian language study at the University of West Virginia and six weeks further at the Ussurisk Pedagogical Institute, then began his assignment at the Khabarovsk Railroad University, the Russian equivalent of a teacher's college. His major task was to conduct six week seminars on how to start up small businesses and to consult with local businesspeople. With his wife Irene, Professor Cowles was stationed in and around Khabarovsk, a city of some 600,000 residents about 500 miles north of Vladivostok on the Sea of Japan.

Professor Cowles was the first to admit that the Peace Corps stint in the Russian Far East was difficult. Harsh weather, power outages, and Soviet style apartment complexes (cramped quarters and frequent breakdowns of the elevators, water and gas availability) made his stay challenging to say the least. Yet he never regrets making the trip. He is especially fond of the people that he met and the friendships that he developed. If he longed for the United States, he could always turn on the television set and watch the American soap opera "Santa Barbara", which was one of the most popular programs on Russian television.

Professor Cowles is back at his desk now, but he will be spending the summer in Romania working in a program that provides management training in that former communist nation. Professor Cowles has become something of a traveling trainer and consultant, providing his expertise to those people who are making the transition to a market system. Professor Cowles loves the travel and loves the opportunity to share his expertise. Like so many Americans who preceded him, he is a proud example of people helping people.