



# ISAR IN FOCUS

Initiative for Social Action and Renewal *in Eurasia*

Autumn 2003

## Comings and Goings at ISAR: A Time of Change and Redirection

I have decided to use the vehicle of *ISAR in Focus* to let you, ISAR's friends and members, know about my decision to retire from ISAR at the end of this year. I have been at ISAR since January 1988, 15 wonderful, rich years of supporting grassroots organizations in the former Soviet Union and encouraging links between environmentalists and other citizen activists in the US and FSU. In the process, I have met and worked with many remarkable people across the expanse of the FSU and in the United States and seen real growth in the capabilities and achievements of people at the grassroots level.

I feel extraordinarily lucky to have been part of this effort to create change and connection. It came as the perfect next step after spending four years in the Soviet Union, learning about the closed society and the human rights activists who were trying to reform it. (My husband's job as Moscow Bureau Chief for the *Washington Post* took us and our three children to Moscow from 1977-81.) ISAR provided the opportunity to go back after the region opened up and play a role in encouraging a new generation of activists eager to protect the environment and reach out to the West. I can't think of anything that could have given me more satisfaction or reward, and I am grateful to all those who have helped and supported ISAR—and me—over these busy years.

The board has asked Alice Hengesbach, ISAR's Russia Programs Officer, and Lucy Henry, the Partnership and Exchange Program Officer, to take on the challenge of leading the organization into the future. As Co-directors, Alice and Lucy are developing new, more advocacy-based directions for ISAR, ones that build on the work of the past but frame the activity in a way more applicable to the demands of the present. They have designed the Environmental Advocacy Project, which will focus on four areas of consistent concern to us: nuclear safety, alternative sources of energy, natural resource extraction and environmental effects on human health. The Environmental Advocacy Project, which will involve monitoring and research, advocacy training and information exchange, will enable ISAR to direct its NGO support efforts in a new, more focused way. Alice and Lucy will describe their plans to you in more detail in future issues of *ISAR in Focus* and other venues.

I informed the ISAR board of my decision to retire in July and plan to leave at the end of December. However, I will continue my association with the organization as a volunteer in any way I can be helpful. I certainly plan to stay in touch with the marvelous friends and contacts that have been such an important part of my fifteen years at ISAR.



Eliza K. Klose, Executive Director, will retire this year after 15 years of leading the organization.

Eliza K. Klose, Executive Director



## PBS "Visionaries" Program Will Profile ISAR in November

Friends of ISAR should check their local public television station listings in November. "The Visionaries," a TV series about organizations making positive social change throughout the world, selected ISAR as one of the handful of US nonprofits it will feature this year.

This March, a Visionaries film crew followed nuclear safety activists involved in a grassroots program in Russia and the US and produced an 11-minute documentary on women who are calling attention to the deadly legacy of the Cold War.

ISAR will premiere the film in Washington, DC at its 20th Anniversary Celebration (see below). For more information visit [www.visionaries.org](http://www.visionaries.org) or write to Lucy Henry at [lucy@isar.org](mailto:lucy@isar.org).



Nuclear safety activist Cathie Sullivan, filmed by Visionaries crew in Russia.

### Come Celebrate ISAR's 20th Anniversary!

On Thursday, November 20, ISAR will honor Eliza Klose, Harriett Crosby and Nancy Graham, who have led ISAR through two decades of grassroots support and partnerships between the US and FSU.

The event will also mark the transfer of leadership to Alice Hengesbach and Lucy Henry, who are launching ISAR's next decade of environmental action (see story, right). The celebration, held from 6 to 9 p.m. at the Cosmos Club, 2121 Massachusetts Avenue NW, will feature the US premiere of a film on ISAR's nuclear safety exchanges (see above). Please RSVP to ISAR at (202) 387-3034 or write Olga Segars at [olga@isar.org](mailto:olga@isar.org).

### New Funding to Continue ISAR Partnerships

ISAR has won funding from RESOLVE, a citizen monitoring initiative, to organize a project in Paducah, Kentucky and Portsmouth, Ohio that builds on ISAR's past exchanges. Two activists from these communities, Corinne Whitehead and Vina Colley, who have traveled to Russia as part of ISAR's nuclear safety program, invited scientist Sergei Paschenko, a Russian expert in environmental monitoring, to work in their communities. Dr. Paschenko will travel to Kentucky and Ohio to monitor some of the effects of the uranium enrichment plants in both communities. Paschenko has conducted environmental monitoring in Russia and the US. To learn more, please write Lucy Henry, [lucy@isar.org](mailto:lucy@isar.org).

### ISAR: The Environmental Advocacy Project

In this second decade after the fall of the Soviet Union, a new moment of opportunity for US-FSU environmental cooperation has opened. Many members of small grassroots organizations who started their work ten years ago have today evolved into regional NGO leaders. ISAR's partners, increasingly skilled at managing grant programs and working with international partners, now require a different kind of relationship with ISAR-DC. We have grown from nurturer and mentor into partner and colleague.

Beginning in 2004, ISAR's Environmental Advocacy Project will serve these needs through collaborative work with our partners. ISAR will build advocacy skills, galvanize international campaigns, increase public participation and influence public policy on environmental issues. The project will concentrate on four key issues: nuclear industry, natural resource use, environmental health, and sustainable and alternative energy. Planning is well underway on environmental programs to develop advocacy training, monitoring and research, and media and information campaigns in Eurasia and the US. More information about ISAR-DC's new direction will be forthcoming.

### Visit us online at [www.isar.org](http://www.isar.org)!

Your tax-deductible ISAR membership of \$35 (\$50 for organizations) supports ISAR's work in Eurasia! For more information, write to [membership@isar.org](mailto:membership@isar.org).