

GUEST SPEAKERS JULY 18, 2018



Rotary Hosted Russian Students - Ellina, Natasha, and Yurii



Ellina, Natasha, and Yurii are business students from Irkutsk, Siberia, Russia who are being hosted by Rotarian families in Toronto. They are in Canada for several weeks to learn about our culture and business practices. Their time in Canada is almost at an end and they took this opportunity to publicly thank their host families for their generosity. They enjoyed getting to know Toronto and made many new friends. They all agreed Toronto is a beautiful city and Canadians are very friendly.



Ellina, Natasha and Yurii took questions from the audience.

What surprised you about your visit?

Yurii was surprised by the size of Toronto. It is much larger than Irkutsk and very lovely. It's also very multicultural, which Irkutsk is not.

Natasha was surprised by how willing Canadians are to volunteer to help others. She also thinks we are very industrious and productive.

Ellina was surprised by how progressive and high tech it is here. She estimates that Irkutsk has about 10% of the technology of Toronto.

Tell us about your university.

Irkutsk has several public and private schools. Their university is private and has approximately 160,000 students.

Has this trip changed you?

Yurii and Ellina learned more English. Natasha said the trip has helped her decide on her career choices.

How did you learn to speak English?

Children in Russia start to learn foreign languages starting in kindergarten and many different languages are taught. This includes Chinese, Spanish and German. They also learn English through TV and the internet.

What are the similarities to home?

Irkutsk has a very similar summer climate to Toronto, and like many people here, they enjoy going to their cottages in the summer. Young people share many things in common with Canadian youth. They like the same music, use social media, smart phones, and even enjoy many of the same TV shows including the Simpsons and Family Guy.

What is Irkutsk like?

It has a similar climate to Toronto, but is much smaller at only 600,000 people. It is not ethnically diverse like Toronto, but many of the buildings, shops and cars look the same. Main industries in Irkutsk are hydroelectric power and mining.

