

GEORGIA

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Sunday, May 19, 2002--Sunday, May 26, 2002

Visit #27

Tbilisi Proposal Groundwork

Appendix: Lifestyle Georgia 2000

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<http://www.emory.edu/MED/EXCHANGE/HKW/>

Sunday, May 19, 2002

Out of Atlanta at 2 pm, New York at 6:30 pm for a foreshortened flight to Moscow due to a tailwind of 150 mph: a bit over eight hours, instead of the usual nine and one-half. Left Jenny, the wirehaired terrier who is the light of the household, quite indisposed. I had noticed she was this morning, but in an egocentric fashion had attributed it to her perception of my imminent leave taking. Turned out she had a spontaneous hemorrhage of her ear which was swollen and obviously quite painful. This had happened to the other ear a month ago, and to my amazement the vet had treated it with steroids. The vet said the other way was to drain it, but it simply recurred. The steroids keep it from getting inflamed and forming the kind of cauliflower ears associated with boxers. So I left her on steroids and making a visit to the vet tomorrow. On the plane about one hour out "is there a medical doctor on board?" I have had some experience with this clarion call over the years, and never know what to expect. The last time it was unstable angina, which kept me concerned during the remaining four hours of a flight from Frankfurt. This time, thankfully, it was a man who had forgotten his captopril and was anxious about not taking his bedtime dose. I inferred an infrequent flyer. Sat next to a man who, after he asked me what I did, rather grudgingly in answer to my question said he was on the advance team for Bush's visit to Putin in St. Petersburg next week. I was quietly thankful I had voiced no opinions one way or the other on politics beforehand.

Going to Tbilisi to do some preparatory work for our proposal, for which we got a Congressional earmark, and I described at some length the last report in January. We have heard US AID is contemplating giving us \$500,000 this year. We will use it for a nursing school, healthcare management education and distance learning center. All of this to be focused in a "mini-NIH" campus where the Ministry of Health is building a new 200 bed Western level hospital.

Monday, May 20

Noon arrival at Sheremetevo 2 airport. Snowing and 30° F. Surprise! Picked up by my friend Levan's driver, Sergei, for the usual breathtaking ride into Moscow. Greeted at the door by Ika, the five year old, outfitted in his Batman costume. Had just spent two weeks in Tbilisi with the grandparents, and reportedly had worn his Batman mask continuously; his colleagues never saw his face. His father says he views me as an authority figure because I only speak English. A four hour nap to repair the overnight trip devastation. Caught up on email using "Webmail" on the Internet; a never failing source of amazement. Quiet dinner and conversation with Levan about his job.

Tuesday, May 21

Up at 6:30, off to Sheremetevo 2 to go to Tbilisi. Had splurged on VIP at the airport, which costs \$160. In actual service worth about \$25, but in terms of an American without a word of Russian and having to deal with customs, ticket agents, baggage handlers and the like, it is worth every cent. Plane two hours late, but uneventful flight. Host of Georgians had waited patiently for me. Sergo Kobaladze, Archil's son. George Turkia, Dean of the Caucasus School of Business. Guram Lezhava, Georgian Telecom. Buba Lezhava and Giorgi Kavtaradze, of the Caucasus School

of Business. Zviad Kirtava, our partner over here. Tbilisi was fairly hot. I hear the last two months have been solid rain. Good for the reservoirs and hydroelectric power in the winter.

To the new Betsy's. A marvel and jewel of a new small hotel sitting on the side of the mountain, with splendid views of Tbilisi. Betsy has done an incomparable job of decoration. Splashy new colors--reds, eucres and the like--that come as close as possible to being too much, but not quite. Beautiful old furniture, a plethora of Turkish rugs (a passion of Betsy's) and a host of interesting paintings. But the same wonderful people. My room was at the very top--a suite, not a room. Huge sun porch overlooking the city on one side and the mountain on the other. Reeks of tranquility and serenity. Internet connections in every room, although I can't get mine to work due to uncertainty about the TC/PIP settings. Tomorrow I'll fix that.

Met Steve Johnson, who is involved with Betsy in the new project. About 45 or so, has a hugely successful bookstore in downtown Tbilisi. He has a brother Eric. Both speak fluent Georgian, married to Georgians. Levan Metrevelli came over. Faculty member at Tbilisi State Medical University. We brought him to Emory as part of the first partnership group, to spend two months in anatomy. He is working now to establish a Public Health School, and we are looking to a joint effort, since that is also part of our proposal.

To dinner with Zviad in the "Old House." A new riverside restaurant that utilizes very old Georgian buildings. Far ranging talk about our proposal, US AID, the new hospital, etc. Back to Betsy's, and met my colleagues from Emory Carlos del Rio and Deborah McFarland. With Ken Nelson, from Hopkins Public Health. They are working with Tengiz of the AIDS Institute this week. Workshops on research ethics and STD's. Joint paper with Tengiz in the works. We discussed a strategy of setting up a public health institute, which in part would be a public health school. One difficulty is there are no jobs for pure public health people, or very few. We think a focus on prevention and outcomes research in the new hospital might be a good place to start.

Wednesday, May 22

Up at four a.m. with jet lag. Worked some on this, sat out on the porch and looked out over Tbilisi. Finally back to bed and sleep. Up and had a brief breakfast in the dining room with a splendid view of Tbilisi, and then to the Turkish baths with Sergo Kobaladze and Levan Kacharava. Sergo just returned to Tbilisi from Atlanta a few days ago.

Sergo is Archil's son. Twenty, just finished his sophomore year at Emory. Majoring in Economics. Straight A's. Unique among the young Georgians I know in Atlanta in that he has as many or more US friends than Georgians. Going to spend his junior year abroad, at the London School of Economics. A future leader of Georgia.

A meeting with Marina Gudashauri, Executive Deputy Minister of Health. She is in charge of the new hospital, which will be named for her father, a famous trauma surgeon. She showed us in the newspaper the tender that was put out yesterday for nursing staff in the new hospital. She says she is enormously worried because there are almost no properly trained nurses. A highly relevant concern is the salary for nurses. She says all the applicants will ask "how much will I be paid?" and the answer will be unsatisfactory. She wants the best, and they are hard to come

by. "No problem at all to get the unemployed people, but they largely are not the quality I want." Another concern is the long term financing of the hospital, including paying off the low interest World Bank loan. She estimates \$6 million a year. It will be a line item in the state budget, but in a country where the entire budget is less than \$100 million the chances of getting the money are doubtful.

I suggested we ask Laura Hurt, the chief medical-surgical nurse at Grady (and who has worked extensively with Georgian nurses) to come over and set up the nursing structure from scratch. Marina was ecstatic about this, and asked us to go to the World Bank for funding.

To the NILC to answer email, then lunch at a Georgian style fast food place. A visit to Ramaz Khurodze, the rector of Tbilisi State University, to apprise him of the status of our proposal to US AID. He is quite involved in the Caucasus School of Business, and consequently has a vested interest in the proposal.

Back to the NILC, where I found an email from Don Harbick, the associate director of the American International Health Alliance. It was his review of our proposal. Not surprisingly, he felt the AIHA way of doing business (volunteerism by the universities) was better than our proposing that the faculty be paid for what they do. Some points about whether it is the right time in the history of Georgian nursing to establish a baccalaureate degree program, and other points all of which are very worthy of discussion and have no right answers.

Visited David Saganelidze, a rising young businessman politician who is Archil's son-in-law. Talked at some length about our proposal in the context of present politics in Georgia. David would be quite willing to make a political issue out of the proposal, as being very much needed by Georgia. Zviad and I told him we did not think it was the time to do this, since the auguries at least at the moment look decent. (Later during my visit I heard a rumor that President Shevardnadze is planning on stepping down in September and finagling the constitution so former Minister of Health and current State Minister Avto Jorbenadze will become president.)

Noted the traffic is much greater than even one year ago. As good a sign as any that some progress is being made. To Betsy's for a jet lag repairing nap. A supra at David Gordeladze's. David is Dean of the medical school at Tbilisi State University. Bright, articulate, erudite. He had about five of his key faculty, and we discussed some of their challenges. (I am the chair of the board of the medical center of TSU.) He leaves at 3 a.m. for a week's stay in Paris. Giving a lecture. Although he is fluent in French, protocol requires him to speak in Russian and a French person translate it.

Visited Minister of Health Amiran Gamkrelidze, just back from a visit to Washington, where he met Tommy Thompson the secretary of HHS. A new dialysis unit is being funded, he said, by a German group, complete with vascular surgeons and nephrologists. Transplants will be done. We talked about our proposal. A primary concern of his is that the money will be taken away from other programs. I told him we had heard this was surplus or unallocated money in the AID budget.

Went with Levan Kacharava (whose brother Andro was the first Georgian physician that we took into the residency program; now on our cardiology faculty) to see a friend who has had several

'spells' recently. The history was suggestive of anxiety or panic attacks. I reviewed a CT scan and EEG, which were normal, and was told a Holter monitor had been normal. Age 30. I reinforced his physician's reassurance.

George Arveladze came over. George has just finished Wichita Falls Calls, majoring in business. Now is working in Tbilisi, plans to get his MBA after a couple of years of experience.

Thursday, May 23

Breakfast with Deb McFarland, Emory School of Public Health, and Carlos del Rio of our department of medicine. Levan Metrevelli of Tbilisi State Medical University ate with us in order to discuss a potential school of public health in Tbilisi. This is in our proposal, but US AID has let us know it is not a priority for them. "No jobs for such people." Levan pointed out there is a desperate need for public health officers in each of the rayons (counties) of Georgia. AID maintains a number of MPH's have been funded by Muskie fellowships, but only one or two have returned. We think the reason is that Georgia has not set up a position for public health officials throughout the country, and that in fact there is a desperate need for them. Levan has gotten some money from Soros, who came down and talked to us in Atlanta. Also money from a number of other sources. The Japanese are quite interested, and have in fact designed a four storey building for a public health school. We all agreed this is something we would chip away at, and sooner or later anticipate success.

A meeting in my room with David Sheshelidze, who works with Zviad Kirtava in the NILC. Had a two year fellowship, funded by the National Library of Medicine, in informatics in Vanderbilt. Agreed with me that he would then work two years in the NILC. At Vanderbilt met a beautiful German woman, who was doing a molecular biology post-doc in pharmacology. She returned to Germany, he to Georgia, and they got married in Germany about six months ago. He is leaving at the end of this month to live in Germany with her. She has just been offered a research position at Vanderbilt for three years, and David will go with her July one year from now. I agreed to help him find a job in Vanderbilt. After her three year stint there he hopes they can both return to Georgia. He has a deep sense of commitment to his country.

George Arveladze brought a friend of his, also George, to see me. Wants to get my help with the local AIHA office to get a job for George. I was impressed by him, took his resume and offered to speak to Nata Aviliani, who heads up the office.

Ia Kamkhadze from the Kaspi region came to see me. Some years ago we sponsored her to work with echocardiography with John Merlino of Crawford Long Hospital, for three months. John gave her an ECHO machine, which she set up in Kaspi. We also gave her an x-ray machine, donated by Jacinto del Mazo, a practitioner at Crawford Long, which arrived a few days ago. She now wants to come to Emory again and study fetal and abdominal ultrasonography, since she has the equipment. John Merlino has agreed to help. She and I agreed she would come shortly for three to four months.

Levan Bakanidze came by. He came to Emory for six months of junior clerkships some years ago, now is a head and neck surgery resident in the Institute of Oncology. He and I have been trying hard to get him a research fellowship of one to two years with Grant Carlson of Surgery at

Emory. We think we have identified a fellowship given by the American Cancer Society, and Levan will apply for this. He gave me proudly the thesis for his PhD, which he has just published.

To the NILC where I saw three students from Ayety Medical School: George Tserediani and Maia Nizharadze, husband and wife. Graduated in 1998, made 76 and 77 on Part II of USMLE, will come to US next month to take a Kaplan course to take Part I in September. If they pass that, they would like to work on the wards at Grady for one to two months to prepare them to take the Clinical Skills Assessment test in Philadelphia later in the year. I agreed.

Saw Dato Mrelashvili, also of Ayety, and a friend of Nicholas Chitaia, a PGY III resident with us. Dato made 251 or 98th percentile on Part I of the USMLE, and I encouraged him to come to Grady and spent two to three months doing a subinternship on the wards. We will work this out. I will find the money to pay his dorm and tuition.

I had lunch with a likely candidate to be our "chief of party" in Tbilisi if we get the AID grant. This is one of those odd (to me) terms used by the Federal bureaucracy to describe the expatriate who is in charge of an overseas AID project. I was very impressed by him. About 39, has lived in Georgia almost ten years, and speaks fluent Georgian--not to mention about five other languages. We had lunch at the newly opened Marriott Hotel in downtown Tbilisi on Rustaveli Avenue. The renovated Tbilisi Hotel. Beautifully done. Reminds me of the Willard Hotel in Washington.

Bought my Aeroflot ticket to Moscow. Had a meeting with the World Bank, who were excited about the possibility of Laura Hurt coming to Tbilisi and setting up the nursing service at the new hospital. We agreed we would send her CV, and they will propose it to Washington, and I will propose it to Laura. I sounded her out before I left and she is enthusiastic also. I met Levan Lazazrashvili, and George Nickolaishvili, who work with the implementation side of the Bank loan.

I had a good meeting with Guliko Chepidze, who got the funds for the cardiac catheterization laboratory here. She is physician to the Shevardnadzes, and I have worked with her many times during the last ten years.

Some years ago I met a young student at Georgian Technical University, Lado Kvilitaya. A sophomore or junior at that time. He was proudly introduced to me by the rector, Ramaz Khurodze, who said he was a "computer genius." A couple of weeks ago I received this email:

Date: Wed, 15 May 2002 02:08:34 +0400
> From: Lado Kvilitaya <lado@greenet.ge>
> To: kwalk04@emory.edu
> Subject: Hello from Georgia!
>
> Dear Prof. Walker,
>
> This is Lado Kvilitaya, a "young computer genius" You've met once at
> NILC. It was 1997 as far as I remember. I was browsing the internet
> looking for my name and I've found Your 1997 Autumn trip report on Emory

> website. It was a real pleasure for me to find myself in Your report.
> And I really enjoyed reading the report.>
> How are You, sir? How are Your projects going on?
>
> It's been almost 5 years since we've met. My life has changed a lot
> since then. I run a company called GREENNET, which is the only Apple
> Dealer and the first Cisco Systems Premier Partner in Georgia. I've
> been all into networking and internetworking since our meeting, changed
> couple of jobs (systems administration at Soros Foundation and Internet
> Center), graduated the GTU (I'm doing my Master's now), have got couple
> of Cisco certifications, gathered the best and the largest team possible
> in the Caucasus region. My English (as You have already understood) is
> getting worse and worse :-). Well it is already 3 years I work at
> GreenNet, meeting sometime Zviad and Dato at ISP meetings (We are proud
> to serve more than a half of Georgian Internet Service Providers).
>
> Well, I hope that I'm not too boring now :-).
>
> I'd really appreciate if we will be contacting each other in the
> future. And I would like to invite You to my office on Your next visit
> to Tbilisi.
>
> With All Due Respect,
>
> Lado Kvilitaya
> CEO
> Green Networks Ltd.
> 14 I.Abashidze str.
> Tbilisi, Georgia 380079
> Tel: +995 32 251501/230446
> Fax: +995 32 259534
> Mobile: +995 77 453795
> EMail: lado@greennet.ge
> Web: www.greennet.ge

I also went back to my "autumn 1997" visit:

Back to the NILC and met with the computer genius Ramaz Khurodze had put us onto. Lado Kvilitaya. Age 17. Fluent English. Very much at ease with me in an appropriate fashion. Majoring in "economic informatics." I discovered Dato had already sized him up, and pronounced his blessing. We arranged for him to participate in the NILC internship program. Dato and I will talk to Gia Bokuchava in Atlanta about having him over for 2-3 months in 1998.

So I went to see him. Found him in a small four room office crowded with other computer people working intently at computers. He now has a networking company, with Cisco, as he notes above. Has set up some large networks in Georgia. Older, plumper, still as bright and effervescent as he was five years ago. A Georgian success story, who will become even more so, I suspect.

David Sheshelidze and I met with Olga Asatiani, who works with Dito of the Center for Disaster

and Emergency Management adjacent to the NILC. The three of them and Zviad have been working on a project for PIMS (Partnership for Peace Information Management System), which supplies the NILC with a satellite and wireless connections with several other hospitals in Tbilisi. They have completed several parts of the project, one of which is titled: Existing Structure and Resources of the Military Medical Service with Reference to Disaster and Emergency Preparedness. I was quite impressed by their final document. David says Olga is world class. She did much of the writing, and after reviewing it I agreed. I spoke with Zviad about the possibility of us getting her involved with the NILC.

Zviad and I went to the US Ambassador's reception at the Marriott. The tenth anniversary of the opening of the US Embassy in Tbilisi. My first visit was in August of that year. The new ambassador just arrived a week or two ago: Richard Miles. Impressive credentials, excellent reputation. The Marriott staff put on a truly stupendous affair. Every delicacy imaginable. Reminded me of what the Ottoman sultans must have had--dishes made of humming bird tongues and the like.

Late drinks with Sergo and two of his friends, Vato and Timiko. We are working on a plan for getting Timiko over to Atlanta to finish his college, or to get an MBA degree. Speaks excellent English, and comes across as very bright.

Back to Betsy's around eleven, and had a late night conversation with Steve Johnson. He is Betsy's new partner, and is there daily from about 10 am to midnight. Has been in Tbilisi around eight years or so, owns a highly popular bookstore on Rustaveli Avenue. Ended the evening with drinks with Buba Lezhava, Gio Kavtaradze and Beatrice at Csaba's, a popular pub. The three of them are faculty members at Caucasus School of Business, and spent the fall semester in Atlanta.

Around 1 a.m. called Laura Hurt at Grady in Atlanta, and told her about the World Bank and the possibility of setting up the nursing service of the new hospital. She was enthusiastic.

After going to bed I reflected upon the day's meetings. Two groups: with young people, such as Sergo and his friends, who are striving mightily to improve themselves. And with representatives of institutions such as the World Bank, who are doing their best in a barren environment to bring this about. A good kind of business to be in.

Friday, May 24

Breakfast with Carlos del Rio, Deb McFarland and Tata, who is one of the two or three MPH's who returned to Tbilisi. We discussed at some length how to go about setting up a public health institute, modeled after the one in Mexico, that will contain a public health school.

A "supra" at 10 a.m. with the family of Mukhran, a young Georgian in Atlanta. He started out at Brevard and then came to Atlanta. I had told him I'd like to meet with his family in Tbilisi. He is an accomplished musician, and I met his brother George, who plays the guitar. They had wanted me to come to the usual supra, at night, but this is the only time I had. So of course, the honored guest had to be entertained at a supra, even at 10 am and we all had just had breakfast. Nice people.

In Washington a week ago at a wedding I had met David Anable, who is the director of an NGO that teaches journalism. He had introduced me via email to his people in Tbilisi, and this morning I went to visit Bob Ortega, who is the director of the journalism unit here. A fascinating meeting. They teach local journalists how to set up a newspaper, cover the news and make money with the paper. He told me that journalists in countries like Georgia don't know how to make money in the business. He showed me several Georgian papers, and pointed to the almost total absence of advertising, which in the US accounts for 70% of the revenue. Advertising, of course, simply wasn't done under the Communist system. Then he said the only reporting was about politicians and what they did and said. Nothing of general interest. His group did a survey of 1400 Georgians, who said they did not read the papers because there was nothing of interest in them. In the US, of course, there are all sorts of topics covered: food; movies; books; life style; family values; etc. They have a three year grant from AID. They teach reporters, plus they have set up a masters degree program in journalism, which is attended by sixteen Georgians and five Azeris. We agreed to keep in touch, and that I would make contact with Margie Freaney, who runs the journalism school, on a future visit.

A meeting with Roin Metrevelli and Temur Khurodze, rector and provost of Tbilisi State University. They are deeply interested in our project, since the nursing school will be at their university. We agreed that when we get AID's comments next week they will write a detailed letter of commitment, listing what they will bring to the table.

To the NILC where I met with Akaki Kapanidze. Graduated from Ayety medical school in 2000, now teaching there. Made 79 and 80 on his USMLE. Wants to spend a month or two at Grady polishing his clinical skills before taking the clinical skills exam.

A brief lunch at the Metechi Hotel, then upstairs there to meet with Kent Larson, director of the health projects of US AID, and his staff. I wrote this memo to all our people after the meeting:

Just finished meeting with Kent Larson, Catherine Fischer and Gegi for one hour. Affable, friendly, nothing lost. I stated at the outset that we were waiting for their comments, and this meeting was to say hello since I was in town. These items:

-they would like for us to meet with them the first week of July for a detailed discussion. We will get their comments next week, and they would like to have our response at least a week before the July meeting. As many of the people involved in the project as possible.

-they will look forward to getting detailed letters of support by then. I told them we were waiting for their comments, and then our supporters would come up with their detailed letters. (We met with TSU about the nursing school around noon, and they indicated they would take AID comments and work with us to come up with a letter of support from them that would give in detail the resources, such as space and the like, that they would contribute. They also suggested they would cut down the salaries to Georgian faculty in our proposal.)

-jousting back and forth about AIHA, with comments I am sure that were similar to those made in the earlier meeting. It would be easier for them. We were both working in

the same spheres, and it would be easier to have indicators of results, and they would be better able to interact with one ngo rather than two. AIHA and we had worked closely together before, so why couldn't we do that again. They liked the model of volunteerism. If a university were willing to work free in a country for AIHA, it was more likely to continue the work long afterwards, while if money were the only object, the university would stop when the money ran out. To this I made several comments. That there was no difference to AID in paying money for university salaries than paying for salaries of AIHA staff. That there was no doubt but that AIHA staff would not continue working after the money stopped, but there was considerable likelihood a university partnership would continue, and that we were good examples of that. Etc.

-I told them we had met yesterday with the World Bank, and they accepted (with great happiness) a proposal we made that Laura Hurt set up the nursing part of the new hospital. I pointed out this had several important implications: the nursing would follow an outstanding Western model, with job descriptions, quality control, administrative setup, and the like; we are thereby assured that the new hospital will be set up in a way that will be ideal for the nursing school. This resonated with them.

-Catherine Fischer spoke at length about there should not be a baccalaureate nursing degree. Georgia wasn't ready for it, the nurses here now didn't bathe patients, yada, yada, yada. She has been in one hundred hospitals and they are abysmal. The thing to do is set up a hospital nursing school (I found out yesterday AIHA has done exactly that in Armenia). I said her points were well made and in fact supported perfectly our proposal to set up a nursing school at TSU. That there were no hospitals in Georgia where one could establish a nursing school. That the only stable place one could count on to be around fifty years from now was TSU, and Judy Wold had worked with them four years designing a splendid nursing school perfectly suited to Georgian needs.

-they said once again \$500,000 was what was there. Kent did explain that it was money that had been allocated to another project, but that project had been discontinued. (This is vital news for the Minister, who worried yesterday that money for us would be money taken away from other projects). In fact, when he made the sentence he said "\$500,000 each year." I couldn't be sure this was a slip or was in fact what he meant. And that we would have to scale back our proposal, and they were looking forward to seeing how we did this. I said we were looking forward to their comments, that our proposal was started a year ago and things had changed, and their input would be quite valuable.

On the whole the atmosphere was affable. There was no new news. Their comments will be a key factor in what will probably need to be a considerable reorganization of our proposal. There was a clear statement that these items were very important: nursing; new hospital; distance learning.

Visited the site of the construction on the new hospital, so I could get my own feel of when it would be open. The construction manager, who was quite credible, said all construction would be finished in mid July. Then the equipment will have to be installed. The man from the Ministry said tentative plans were to have President Shevardnadze open the facility in October. I privately estimated January would be more likely. I was quite impressed by the quality of the work. It will truly be a Western type hospital in terms of the building.

We met again with the Minister, and reported upon our meeting with AID. We agreed that their

comments next week would be key.

Dinner with Archil Kobaladze's family: wife, son Sergo, daughters Salome and Tiniko, and mother Tina. I thought they were handling his grief well, and remarked so to Sergo later, who said: "Georgian women have a habit of concealing their grief very well."

Beer with Batu Kutelia and his friend George. Batu is a rising young star in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the brother of Rashden Kutelia, who spent time with us at Grady. He works in the department in the ministry that deals with Russian military affairs. He has been offered a posting to the Georgian embassy in Vienna, and is debating whether to take it for three years. Tbilisi is more interesting career wise at the moment, while Vienna will be better for his future.

Met with Kakha Shengelia, dean of Caucasus School of Business, and the mother of Rezo Kacharava. Rezo is living in my house now, preparing to take English courses in order to get into MBA school.

Professor Keshlava came up to see me around midnight. Father of George, who has a research position at Emory and is trying to get a residency position. Professor of Persian culture and history at TSU. Highly learned and erudite.

Saturday, May 25

Breakfast with Carlos del Rio and Deb again; they are leaving today also. We talked about setting up a preventive medicine and outcomes research department in the new hospital. Marina Gudashauri would like this a lot. This a way of introducing highly functional public health into the system. Carlos has a Fogarty grant which could fund someone who could run it to get a Masters of Medical Science degree at Emory. This degree is aimed at teaching research methods to clinicians, and would be an excellent match.

Met Mamuka Lortkipanidze. About 34 or so, is a rheumatologist teaching on the faculty of one of the medical school. Has 'given up' on Georgian medicine for the present, and is trying to decide whether to become an anatomist in Georgia or try to get his training in the US. His girl friend is in New York and is encouraging him to come to the US. We agreed he would continue to think about this and would meet further on my next visits. I found him to be extremely smart and think he has a lot of potential.

Went to the cemetery to visit Archil's grave, meeting up with his wife Nona and mother Tina. A brutal reminder of what was lost when he died December 24th in Atlanta.

To the Ministry and a meeting with Marina Gudashauri, going over their plans for the hospital in detail. With Marina was Nicholas Lominadze, the chief surgeon. The hospital will have 200 beds and 225 physicians. Inpatient and outpatient. Divisions:

- a. Surgical Block: 100 beds;
 - Traumatology & orthopedics: 43 physicians
 - Surgical serviced: general; vascular; neurosurgery; GU; endoscopy; laparoscopy; etc.

-Some of staff, especially most senior, may be part time at this hospital.

b. Internal medicine: 15 beds; 25 physicians

-cardiology; neurology; nephrology; endocrinology; rheumatology; genetics

c. OB GYN Neonatology: 74 beds; 27 physicians

-OB GYN: 12 physicians; 49 beds

-Midwives: 10

-Pediatricians + neonatologists: 15; peds beds 15, neonatology 10.

d. Emergency medicine/Center for Disaster Control: 20 beds

e. Diagnostic services (radiology, clinical lab): 22 staff

f. ICU beds: 10 adult; 10 neonatal (included above)

No isolation beds; cancer; gastroenterology; dialysis. Marina wants a rehabilitation service and home health care. I will talk with the Shepherd Spinal Center in Atlanta about helping with the former, and Laura Hurt about the latter.

A quick visit back to Betsy's and a wild dash to the airport, where of course the plane was late.

Uneventful flight to Moscow, and a good stay with Levan and Nino Vasadze and their children.

Sunday, May 26

To Delta for 2 pm departure to New York, then Atlanta.

APPENDIX

I have been reviewing a report by Georgian Opinion Research Business International (GORBI) about various opinions of the Georgian people. Quite interesting. I will reproduce some excerpts from it:

Lifestyle Georgia 2000

The Lifestyle Georgia Survey represents GORBI's latest work of independent research. Lifestyle provides a comprehensive and in-depth look at every aspect of life in Georgia – from eye color to political opinions, favorite foods to religious beliefs, the survey offers a wide array of data to provide one of the most accurate and timely views on how the Georgian population lives. The Lifestyle Georgia Survey features valuable demographic data and covers topics as far ranging as leisure, health, employment, marriage values and consumption habits.

The Lifestyle survey's sample was composed of roughly equal portions of men and women (48% males and 52% females). The age distribution was evenly spread with a small peak in the 25-34 year old age bracket. Nearly three out of every 10 respondents was over the age of 55. Urban residents were more likely to have completed higher education (30%, as opposed to 14% of rural respondents). The distribution of frequencies by main demographic characteristic (gender, age, education, and nationality) accords to the official data provided by the Department for Statistics of Georgia.

AGE GROUP of respondents in this survey

Freq.,	%
18-24 years	15.6
25-34 years	23.8
35-44 years	15.4
45-54 years	15.5
55 +	29.8

-Respondents were asked about their **employment status**: two thirds (66%) reported that they were officially unemployed, about one quarter (27%) had full time employment, while less than one tenth (7%) were part time workers. One quarter of the respondents (26%) reported that they were temporarily unemployed, while one fifth (20%) were retired and 14% were housewives. Most who did have jobs worked as civil servants (9%) or for a state owned enterprise (8%).

-The most frequently cited **monthly household income** varied between \$8-\$50 USD (55%). Only 4% of the respondents reported monthly household incomes of more than \$150. The average monthly incomes were higher in urban areas (\$60, as opposed to \$38 in rural areas).

-Respondents were asked if they spoke any **second languages**: nearly two thirds (64%) reported that they spoke Russian, while much smaller portions spoke English (6%), Armenian

(4%) or German (3%).

In Georgia, where the economy and transition process are rife with problems, the work values of the population are of special interest. Interestingly, the survey results indicate that the Soviet era's most popular professions (doctor, lawyer, teacher, etc.) remain parents' top choices for children today. There was also a notable desire to work among the respondents – most unemployed respondents reported that they wanted a job, and the employed tended to say that they would choose to work even if they didn't need the money. But while most of the employed reported being at least somewhat satisfied with their jobs, few were happy with their salaries. Low pay was found to be a significant problem for workers, and it was also the most important concern among those looking for a job. This

-The **most popular professions for sons** were doctor (15%), judge (11%), and lawyer (8%). The least popular were advertising agency representative (0.1%), tradesman (0.2%), veterinarian (0.1%), and investigator (0.1%). Most of the respondents reported that their child was free to choose his or her profession (29%).

-The **most popular professions for daughters** were doctor (32%), and teacher (13%). The least desired professions were advertising agency representative (0.1%), businesswoman (0.1%), tailor (0.1%), and designer/painter (0.1%).

- It appeared that most of the respondents (43%) got to their jobs on foot. The next most frequently cited **mode of getting to work** was the bus (18%); some reported using their own cars (12%), others used the subway (5%), and a small number commuted by trolley-bus (1%). Few respondents (1%) got to work by taxi.

-The respondents were asked about their **most serious problem on the job**: a majority of the respondents (61%) reported "low pay" as their major problem at work; most of such respondents had completed higher education.

The Beliefs, Values and Morals section is perhaps the most interesting and content rich section of the Lifestyle Survey. This section provides much material for looking at the future development of Georgia. It is not surprising that the majority of the respondents did not place much trust in any of the state institutions – or that the police, Security Services and Customs Administration were among the least trusted services. But while most respondents felt that Georgia was a country where events were upsetting, the majority reported feeling happy and optimistic about their day-to-day lives.

-The respondents were offered a list of institutions and asked to report how much trust they placed in each entity listed. In general, respondents older than 55 tended to feel more trustful towards nearly all institutions except private television channels and large private enterprises. For all other institutions, respondents over the age of 55 tended to place more trust in the listed entities than did members of other age groups. In addition, none of the respondents with incomplete higher education (students) "very much" trusted any of the institutions. And, in general, rural respondents expressed greater trust than did urban ones.

-Attitudes towards the **Tax Administration** were the least trusting and most of the respon-

dents reported that they “somewhat do not trust” (53%) or “do not trust at all” (22%) in the Tax Administration. The minority trusted this institution either “very much” (3%) or “somewhat” (17%).

-Most of the respondents (45%) “somewhat” distrusted **Politicians** and 17% didn’t trust them at all. Less than one third (30%) trusted politicians “somewhat” and only 3% trusted in them “very much.” Five percent had no opinion on the issue.

-Three fourths of the respondents (75%) reported that they **feel that they are living in a country where events upset them and make them feel unconfident**. Only one quarter (25%) agreed with the statement that their country was governed steadily and where events inspired confidence.

-The respondents were split over whether **sex education in high schools** should be allowed (45%) or not (42%). Respondents over the age of 55 tended to feel that sex education should not be allowed in schools (43% of those who answered negatively were older than 55) and respondents with incomplete higher education (students) were the most positive towards the issue. More than one tenth of the respondents (13%) did not respond to the question.

-Respondents were asked about the **intensity of their religious beliefs**: a majority of the respondents reported that they consider themselves to be quite religious (55%), less than one third (32%) reported being somewhat non-religious, only 5% reported being very religious and 9% considered themselves to be completely non-religious. Almost two thirds of the latter respondents were rural respondents.

-The majority of the respondents reported that they were **Orthodox Christians** (87%). The minority was made up of Atheists (7%), Muslims (4%), Jews (1%), Jehovah's Witnesses (1%), Sun Worshipers (0.3%), Buddhists (0.1%), Gregorian Christians (0.1%), and Belonging to 50 (0.1%). Most who identified themselves as atheists were males (80% of atheist respondents).

-The vast majority of the respondents (94%) reported that **religious lessons at school** should be obligatory.

-Respondents were asked about their **confidence in the quality of products from other countries**. The majority of the respondents admired the quality of goods from Russia (65%) and Germany (57%). Less than one third (31%) mentioned products from the USA (31%), 30% cited France as an origin of high quality goods, 29% mentioned Japan, 27% England, 20% Italy, and 16% Spain. Less frequently cited countries included China (8%), Iran (5%), Georgia (7%), and Turkey (4%). Urban residents tended to mention more countries than did rural ones. [It should be noted that foreign imports for sale in Georgia are often counterfeit or of poor quality - top quality goods are rarely brought into the country commercially and many “Made in France” labels, for example, mark products of dubious origin.

- When asked to name **which country Georgia should give a priority to**, most respondents named the USA (43%), Germany (33%), France (25%), and Russia (21%).

-Nearly half of the respondents (46%) consumed **wine** once a week, while others drank wine twice a week (22%), three times a week (13%), or every day (11%). More than two thirds of wine consumers were men (72%).

-Nearly half of the respondents reported drinking **vodka** once a week (47%), while one fifth (23%) consumed it twice a week, and one tenth (12%) drank vodka three times a week. Seven percent (7%) consumed vodka every day. Most vodka consumers were men (79%).

-Two thirds (67%) of the respondents were non-smokers (of non-smokers, most were urban inhabitants [67%] and women [71%]). One tenth of the respondents (10%) reported **smoking** 16-20 cigarettes a day, another tenth (10%) smoked 11-15 cigarettes, 8% smoked 6-10 cigarettes, and 2% 1-5 cigarettes a day.

-The **most frequently consumed alcoholic beverages** were wine (81%), vodka (35%), and liqueur/schnapps (11%).

This section covers the eating habits of the Georgian population – where, when, how often, and what people eat. Because of poor economic conditions in the country meat has become something of a luxury, and while meat was the most popular dish among respondents, few reported eating it more than twice a week. Bread, a much cheaper staple, was consumed in far greater quantities than meat. Despite the well-known image of Georgians as wine drinkers, it is not traditional to drink alcohol with household meals, though as observed in the Consumption Section, most respondents drink wine or other alcoholic beverages on at least a somewhat regular basis. Tea is the most popular breakfast beverage, and tea in Georgia is generally served plain with sugar. The home canning of jams, pickles, and preserves is a common practice. In the majority of cases Georgians eat three times a day, mainly at home, as dining out is not common. They often eat in kitchens, which is to be expected considering the housing conditions of former Soviet countries, where apartments were generally built with small kitchens and no dining rooms.

Respondents were asked to report how often they engage in **dining out**: the majority (79%) reported that they never eat at restaurants or cafés. Among those who do eat out, the majority dined at restaurants less than once a month.

This section provides a detailed look at the respondents' homes. It covers home ownership, heating, remodeling, decorating, and even bathroom fixtures. Most respondents lived in dwellings that were quite small. But in Georgia, as in other former Soviet countries, most members of the population own their homes, and few live in rentals. Heating is a problem, as almost none of the population receive central heating. In rural areas the main source of fuel is wood, while urban populations often use oil stoves. Recent improvements in the gas supply have lead to the use of gas for heating in winter among a portion of the population. Typical bathrooms in Georgia contain bathtubs, while shower stalls are rare. Most walls are wallpapered, while some are painted – usually with acrylic paint. Kitchen and bathroom remodeling is not common here, most likely due to economic conditions. One quarter of the population owns dachas (winter or summer-homes other than the ones they live in).

As a traditional country, marriage and children are important parts of life in Georgia. Most respondents had been married in their late teens or early 20's, and the widespread support for

early marriages could be attributed to the general sense of disapproval towards sexual relations outside of wedlock. The respondents offered seemingly conflicting views on gender roles within marriage - most supported married women with careers and few felt that housewives were more respectable than working women. The majority reported that domestic chores in their households were at least somewhat shared between men and women, and both male and female respondents appeared to be pleased with the distribution of housework. But respondents also supported the subordination of wives to their husbands, and most felt that husbands sometimes needed to punish their wives. Nonetheless, marriages and even engagements were found to be widely celebrated, as most had celebrated their wedding with a party as well as a ceremony. As noted, children are important, and most respondents wanted to have either two or three children. The care and support of the elderly is also a family matter, and most expected that their children or spouses would care for them when they got older. But, perhaps as yet another indicator of the country's weak economy, significant minorities either expected to take care of themselves in their later years or simply did not know who would support them.

-Among married women, the most frequently named **age of marriage** was 18 years old (15%), while among men it was 22 years of age (15%). More men (32%) than women (11%) got married at 26 or older. The minimum age for marriage - 14 - was the same for both genders (0.9%-men and 0.5%-women). Marriages tended to take place at younger ages in rural areas.

-Regarding **sex before marriage**, most (43%) felt that couples should be married both officially and in church before engaging in intimate relations. One quarter of the respondents (24%) reported that couples did not need to be married at all to have sex, while one out of five (22%) believed that official marriage was sufficient and one out of 10 (11%) thought that religious marriage was enough to enjoy intimacies.

-One half (52%) of the married respondents (mainly men [69%]) refused to discuss **birth control methods** with the interviewers (who were female). Two fifths (39%) of the respondents reported that they never used any form of birth control. Among the methods used, the most frequently cited was the calendar method (5%).

-The vast majority of the respondents (97%) did not have **cleaning help** to assist with daily housework.

This section looks at ownership of a wide variety of goods - from electronics and appliances to dining tables and alarm clocks. Considering the poor economic conditions in Georgia, it is not surprising that ownership of many goods that are common in more prosperous countries tends to be low here. Nearly one third of the respondents still had black and white television sets, and very few owned products such as walkmans, CD players, answering machines, or personal computers. More surprisingly, most respondents did not own refrigerators with freezer compartments or even basic telephones. The Soviet government had once provided hot water to most households, now a significant minority have purchased their own water heaters. But most households had a car (usually a Russian model), and majorities owned furniture sets.

-Most respondents owned **laundry appliances**, but the majority owned manual (50%) rather than automatic (9%) washing machines and only four respondents had dryers.

-Three out of 1000 respondents had a **computer** at home and none had laptops. Fourteen respondents had old-fashioned typewriters.

Nearly half of the respondents reported that they never take a holiday, and few seemed to vacation more often than once a year. Furthermore, more than a third of the respondents reported that they had never traveled outside of Georgia on a holiday, and the vast majority had no plans to go on a holiday either within Georgia or abroad in the near future. Among those who did take vacations, most were family trips taken to relax.

-Every day, 15% of the respondents read a newspaper. The higher the education of the respondents the more frequently they reported reading newspapers. **Newspaper readership** is largest in urban areas - 20% versus 7% of rural residents.

-The **average household size** in Georgia was 4.06 persons in urban and 4.5 persons in rural areas.