

Cottage with ‘stuffing’ on the family courtyard

Pukhovichi District residents try to find best approach for building their own house

By Nikolay Korolevsky

Who doesn't want to have their own cottage with a nice piece of land? The question is rhetorical, although, the answer is not so simple. You must, keep in mind that the maintenance of such house becomes more expensive from year to year: how to equip the cottage with the necessary facilities, how to heat it, to provide other communications. There are a whole chain of other problems that must be decided if you want to have your own family yard.

The people in Pukhovichi District tried to answer some of these questions, and find the best approach for building their own home. So a relevant exhibition was organised there.

“The support of the Minsk Centre for Environmental Solutions came at a good hour because,

thanks to that, the district came into the *Promotion of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy at the Local Level* programme,” says the Deputy Chairman of the District Executive Committee, Marina Kirienko. “And the exhibition, called *House of the Future*, is only a part of a wider project. But it will bring new interest in energy-efficient housing.”

Dmitry Burenkin, an employee of the Centre's energy programme, said that they are engaged in the promotion of fuel-efficient technologies for the non-commercial sector. The Centre obtains money by participating in international projects, as well as receiving European grants. For example, a programme relating to Maryina Gorka is funded jointly by the EU and the Swedish Development Agency. Expert advice is provided by one of the Danish companies.

I asked Mr. Burenkin if he was



Visitors study new projects

the conductor, the agitator of the developments there.

“In this sense, we can agree with this statement,” confirmed the specialist. “We are studying all the best energy saving options and trying to bring them to Belarus. This is not the promotion of materials, equipment and products of some companies, but really the spread of the idea of energy efficiency, as well as getting greater involvement of people in this area.”

The mobile *House of the Future* exhibition, which was created in co-operation with experts from Germany as a part of another project,

was suitable for many activities and was shown at several expo-forums. Services of the centre are used by the Department of Energy of the Republic of Belarus.

With the help of accessible formats such as drawings, diagrams, and models, the exhibition shows how to build low-cost housing, how to strengthen the roof and walls, how to choose the most suitable construction materials or how to use the solar energy for water heating, etc. The exhibition also addresses how to successfully resolve these issues specifically here in Belarus.

In addition to Maryina Gorka,

the centre will conduct development of energy strategies in Shchuchin and Braslav. These cities have been chosen on the basis of competition, as the most typical where the construction of individual housing is actively conducted. At the very least, after visiting the exhibition, the residents of Maryina Gorka became more interested in the topic of energy saving and some became interested in the acquisition of low-cost energy houses. The credit can be attributed to the local government, because the interests of the citizen and the state in such cases are the same.

Interior with national colour

Belarusian cookery specialists to surprise World Ice Hockey Championship fans

with meat and mushrooms and pyzy (filled potato cakes). Local chef Alexander Chikilevsky is a master when it comes to national dishes. He tells us that, in the time of the Radziwills, Belarusians were buckwheat eaters rather than ‘bulbash’ (‘potato eaters’). Accordingly, he plans to offer buckwheat on the menu during the tournament, believing that visitors are more likely to return to Belarus if they have good experiences of being well-fed. Aginski restaurant's cuisine includes tea made from Belovezhskaya Pushcha herbs: especially popular with Russian tourists.

Moderate prices essential

The Trade Ministry believes that most public catering facilities should enlarge their menus — especially those in small towns. Meanwhile, restaurants and cafés are realising that menus should be written both in



ALEXANDER RUZHECHKA

Belarusian draniki — best delicacy

Russian and English. Lyubov Maximova, of the Tourism Department, notes, “Many tourists will be coming to Belarus by car, so road-side services should offer English language menus, to make them feel welcome from the outset.”

Many public catering facilities are already selling souvenirs, while their waiters and barmen are busy polishing their English. A special phrase book has been published for such staff, in readiness for the World Championship.

Minsk's IT-novelties

By Dmitry Voronov

Loudest world premieres of Oracle Open World 2013 international conference

Belarus is the first country within the CIS to enjoy the presence of the Oracle American Corporation — the world's biggest software developer. Its team of top management consultants are a welcome addition to the Belarusian IT industry,

acknowledging its high level and potential.

The forum dealt with a range of issues, looking at how specific innovations can bring businesses into the 21st century: raising productivity and embracing the latest opportunities. Such developments are finding their niche in the banking sector and with transport and telecommunication companies, as well as at research centres and industrial enterprises.

Virtual communication with congratulations

By Irina Stasova

First international veteran online Skype-bridge organised in Minsk

A Skype tele-bridge has been organised to mark Ukraine's liberation from Fascist invaders, joining veterans from Minsk, Kharkov, Kiev, St. Petersburg, Sevastopol and Odessa. Belarusian veterans were thus able to congratulate their fellow soldiers on the occasion of the 69th anniversary of liberation.

The television bridge was

held in Minsk, with the help of the Belarusian State University of Informatics and Radioelectronics. Mikhail Batura, Rector of the University, noted that such events are an example of how contemporary technologies can be used for truly noble purposes. “With the help of the television-bridge, we've congratulated Ukraine on the great day, marking its liberation from Fascist invaders. This is our first experience of congratulating veterans in such a way. I think that such virtual communication should become a regular event.”



In welcoming foreign guests, we need to offer not only the warmth of friendship by tasty cuisine. During the Championship, Minsk's Prospekt café plans to dress staff in uniforms bearing Belarusian national motifs, as well as decorating its interior like a cosy village tavern.

Menu for hockey lovers

Pizzas, hamburgers and sushi are unlikely to surprise visitors from Europe or Russia, while most would probably like to try Belarusian cuisine. Gambrinus restaurant is offering such national dishes as zhur soup, vereshchaka, dumplings