



Peter and Vera Deyneka with SGA staff in the early years

75 Years and Counting . . .

SGA On the Air . . . And Cyberspace

Bless our God, O peoples, and sound His praise abroad (Psalm 66:8).

Since the earliest days of our mission, SGA has used every available means to help evangelical churches take the life-changing Gospel across the lands of Russia. When communism ruled in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe, these countries were known as “restricted or limited access” in terms of ministry. That made radio outreach, especially powerful shortwave radio, vitally important.

Even today, we hear gripping testimonies from Russian believers who remember risking arrest by secretly listening to the forbidden Gospel broadcasts — lookouts posted at the windows of their apartments watching for surprise raids by the Soviet secret police. SGA president Dr. Robert Provost believes these testimonies are treasures of an historic

legacy. “I am really excited about how the Lord used SGA’s radio ministry. For Russian believers in the worst of times, it was their church, their seminary, their Bible institute, and their greatest source of encouragement.

And the sponsors of the radio ministry — both SGA partners and the supporters of the global Christian radio stations that aired our programs — served as a great army of prayer warriors who sustained our oppressed brothers and sisters. It truly is a powerful, God-glorifying story!”

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It All Started in South America

During a five-month tour of South America that began in 1940, SGA founder Peter Deyneka preached the Gospel in Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and Chile. Numerous Russian-speaking refugees had fled there from their homeland. His final stop was Ecuador, invited there by Mr. Clarence Jones, the founder of shortwave radio ministry HCJB. In March 1941 — at Mr. Jones' urging — Peter made history by delivering the first-ever shortwave Russian-language evangelistic program. Later, on June 22, 1941, the first regular Russian-language broadcasting schedule began emanating from HCJB's studios in Quito, beginning a long, fruitful relationship with this global Gospel powerhouse.

Seizing the Opportunity

SGA's leadership realized the powerful potential radio had in piercing through the impenetrable Iron Curtain, and quickly began developing programs to broadcast. In the years that followed, several thousand Russian-language Gospel radio programs were produced and broadcast into the closed Soviet Union. Missionaries Helen Zernov, Const and Elizabeth Lewshenia, Jack and Ruth (Deyneka) Shalanko, Stella Jarema, and many others followed Peter Deyneka on the air with Gospel programs. SGA broadcasts also emanated from TransWorldRadio transmitters in Guam, and in Monte Carlo, where Nick and Rose Leonovich served between 1962 and 1985.



Jack Shalanko on the air with Gospel programs.

TWR also used medium wave for these broadcasts to cover Eastern Europe. Add to that number the programs broadcast from Far East Broadcasting Company in Bonaire, Seoul and later Saipan Island, the Philippines and HLKX in Inchon, Korea. Voice of Hope and King of Hope — both in Lebanon —

and KICY in Nome, Alaska, also broadcast SGA programs, with the Alaska signal reaching into Russia's far northeast.

And They Listened . . . Eagerly and Secretly

By 1956, 25 half-hour shortwave radio broadcasts aired each week over HCJB, continuing the Russian-language Gospel radio ministry begun by Peter Deyneka. Eleven years later, Mr. Deyneka's son Peter traveled to Russia, reporting that Christian



Russian believers listened secretly in their homes

radio was reaching Russians with the Gospel like never before, with an estimated 25 million shortwave sets in use across the Soviet Union at that time. "I visited five cities while in Russia, and preached in six churches. Wherever I went, when people found out I was in Russian radio work, I was literally mobbed by those who just wanted to thank me and the others responsible for the radio ministry. We here in America have no idea how much the Christians of Russia appreciate and value these broadcasts." At the very peak, a total of 600 programs were broadcast each month, with 160 of them being new programs.

As SGA missionaries traveled quietly within the Soviet Union, like Peter, Jr. they heard first-hand just how much the broadcasts meant. About 95 percent of those listening had no Bible of their own and no way to obtain one, so one of the SGA programs featured the Bible being read at dictation speed. As the Russian believers listened secretly in their homes, many would copy by hand the words

from Scripture being read slowly over the air. This was the only access to the Bible that they had!

Defending the Faith and Feeding the Flock

There were numerous other programs designed for maximum impact among listeners living under atheistic communist regimes. One was called *Airmail*, a response to atheistic arguments that challenged unbelievers and encouraged the churches. According to SGA's Nick Leonovich, another popular program was the *Radio Academy of Science*, or *RADAS*. "Because the Soviet people were taught 'scientific atheism,' using science to argue that God does not exist, *RADAS* was very popular. It gave listeners a different viewpoint to the one they had heard all their lives. The program gave examples from science and nature to show that there is a God who exists and established the order in the universe — a God who is sovereign and active in His creation today." Other key programs were the *Seminary of the Air* and the *Bible Institute of the Air*, offering curricula adapted from the programs at the Russian Bible Institutes in Canada and Argentina. These were vital programs for training deacons and pastors, because such training was not allowed or available in the communist Soviet Union.

There were programs that addressed concerns of the family. And young people were not forgotten. The program *Amazing But True* was



Children in the Soviet Union listening to SGA radio programs

produced for junior high-age young people in the Soviet Union, and provided Bible-based answers for

those who were searching spiritually. For younger children and youth, there was *Nature World* — similar in manner to *RADAS* but specifically geared for youth. SGA missionary Constantine Lewshenia recorded key programs called *Bible Doctrines* and *Major Bible Themes*. Jack and Ruth (Deyneka) Shalanko not only recorded music and evangelistic programs, but for Russians who wrote letters to HCJB asking biblical questions, Jack had a special program called *Bible Questions and Answers*. On TWR, there was even a Russian-language version of J. Vernon McGee's *Thru the Bible* program, recorded by then SGA-missionary Alex Jaruchik in Spain.

And the thousands upon thousands of letters and testimonies! Nick Leonovich still has the letter written to him by a man in Kaliningrad, Russia, in 1992 . . .

"I especially thank God for you and remember your name so well because I was listening to you on the radio 30 years ago. You called people to repentance and the Lord spoke to me, and I came to trust him. Now I am always telling people to hear the Word of God on the radio — my way of witnessing to them. I am not well and cannot go to church. Oh, how many souls have come to Christ through your broadcasts?" SGA workers and missionaries heard this echoed wherever they went — thousands and thousands of people received the Lord through these broadcasts while sitting at their radios. It is truly a tremendous legacy for which we are thankful to the Lord.

SGA Radio for the 21st Century

Seventy-five years have passed and technology has changed, but the Gospel of Jesus Christ has not changed. And millions of people across the lands of Russia have yet to hear. SGA is still in the business of broadcasting Christian programs; only today we are taking advantage of the unrestricted power of the Internet — at *sgaradio.org*!

Through this new SGA website, Russian speakers around the world are able to hear great messages and lessons from our substantial library

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of radio programs built up over the years. Newer offerings include Russian translations of messages by Dr. John MacArthur and SGA's Dr. Roman Dechtiarenko, in

addition to Irpen Biblical Seminary president Dr. Igor Yaremchuk and Russian UECB youth leader Eugene Bakhmutsky. In time, portions of other

historic SGA programs will be made available, including Constantine Lewshenia's programs on the doctrines of the Bible.



Join with us in praising the Lord for the new opportunities this opens up to serve evangelical churches, and to proclaim the Gospel across Russia and her neighboring countries!

From Death to Life Eternal

A Tragedy Leads to an Answered Prayer

Valery Ohrimuk
SGA-Sponsored Church Planter in Belarus

In the course of his ministry in the Belarussian village of Ruzhany, church planter Valery Ohrimuk has seen many answered prayers. But God's answer to the prayer of a woman named Lyubov will be remembered for eternity — a powerful reminder of the Lord's promise that . . . *what is mortal will be swallowed up by life* (2 Corinthians 5:4).

The story began after a summer Bible school in the nearby village of Lyskovo, where Valery became acquainted with Lyubov and her family. She had four children, and while three of them were believers, Ivan, her favorite son, was not. Lyubov began praying that many would gather at her home for ministry, and that Ivan would repent of his sins and trust in Christ.

Ivan was employed as an international driver, a job that often took him far from home. One day, Lyubov received the fateful news. One of her son's colleagues said that Ivan had complained of not feeling well during their last trip. He had begun praying while riding in the vehicle, and was asking

God for forgiveness. Ivan asked his fellow drivers to take him to church, where he repented of his sins and placed his trust in Christ.

Shortly after they got back in the car to continue their journey, Ivan died. The company returned his body home to Lyskovo in a zinc casket. According to Valery, God's hand in it all was evident. "Lyubov's only comfort was that her son



had repented, and that God had fulfilled her dream. Ivan's funeral turned into a mass evangelistic event. Many neighbors and people from Pruzhany, Kobrin, Peski, Kornad, Volkovysk, Ruzhany and Brest came. Ivan's boss and a colleague were also present. The Gospel was preached, and people could

not have organized such a mass evangelization. Only our God can turn such sorrow into good."

Please pray for Lyubov and her family. Pray also for the many who heard the life-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ through Ivan's untimely passing. And join us in thanking the Lord for the ministry of Valery and his church, which is having such a powerful impact in Lyskovo, Ruzhany and the entire Brest region for the glory of Christ.

Ten Years of God's Blessings...

From Humble Beginnings to a Global Outreach

From the date of SGA's founding in 1934, God's hand of blessing has been evident on our mission, at first known as the Russian Gospel Association (RGA). The bulk of the 1930s was a time of building for Peter Deyneka and his small staff. The following are excerpts from the decade of the 1940s, when the Lord multiplied our outreach on a global scale.

1941 . . . During a five-month tour of South America that began the prior year, Peter Deyneka preached the Gospel in Brazil, Argentina, Uruguay, Paraguay and Chile. Finally, he visited Ecuador and delivered the first shortwave Russian-language evangelistic program into the Soviet Union. The program was broadcast, from the studios of HCJB in Quito, beginning a long, fruitful relationship with this global Gospel powerhouse founded by Mr. and Mrs. Clarence Jones and Mr. and Mrs. Reuben Larson.

RGA missionaries had the unusual opportunity in 1941 to distribute evangelistic tracts to Russian and Serbian soldiers in Europe. Permission had been granted from Geneva, Switzerland, to translate a tract from English to Russian, and from there, they were distributed under the direction of the chaplains among Russian and Serbian soldiers.

1942 . . . RGA founding vice chairman C.B. Hedstrom went to be with the Lord. On the mission field, Mary Beechik and Sam Fewchuk were sent to Argentina, while Constantine Lewshenia was sent to Ecuador to conduct a daily Russian-language broadcast from HCJB. Const's future wife, Elizabeth Zernov, would join the SGA team in Quito the following year.

1943 . . . *How shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?* (Romans 10:14) RGA

opened the Russian Bible Institute (RBI) in Toronto, Canada. The first classes were held in the educational building at People's Church, pastored at the time by Oswald J. Smith. There were 45 students enrolled and four professors teaching. In opening the school, Peter Deyneka began fulfilling his goal of training Christian workers to win the lands of Russia to Christ.

1944 . . . On April 1, RGA began classes at the new Russian Bible Institute in Rosario, Argentina.



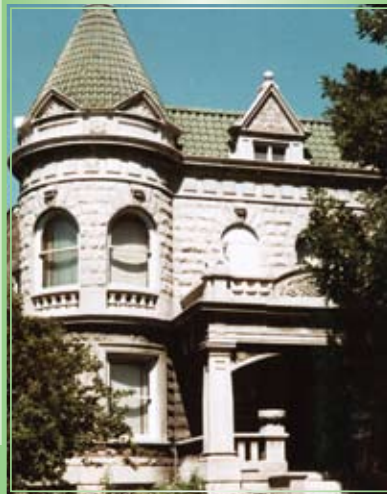
Later, the RBI moved to Buenos Aires, and when the RBI in Toronto closed in 1951, the Buenos Aires school became the only Russian Bible Institute in the world at that time.

1945 . . . After World War II ended in 1945, a host of refugees and displaced families from a Slavic background flooded into Toronto. This influx of Russian-speakers provided a tremendous ministry opportunity for the students of the Russian Bible Institute. Some of the refugees' children ended up as RBI students, and the vast percentage of the overall student body prepared themselves for ministry, and went out as missionaries to Russian-speaking people everywhere.

1947 . . . With the help of People's Church and Pastor Oswald Smith, Peter Deyneka opened the mission's first international office in Canada. Mr.

and Mrs. Charles Jeffries ran the Canadian office for many years out of their home in Toronto.

1948 . . . Now nearly 15 years old, RGA moved its offices from downtown Chicago to a new location at 2434 N. Kedzie Boulevard. Official opening and dedication services were held January 31, 1949, led by Rev. Deyneka and SGA chairman Dr. Paul Rood. In addition to our growing literature and



general outreaches, the larger facilities enabled SGA to provide accommodations for missionaries on furlough and those preparing to leave for the mission field.

1949 . . . The name of the Russian Gospel Association was officially changed to Slavic Gospel Association (SGA) by the mission's board of directors. Founder Peter Deyneka said at the time, "At present no foreign missionary from North America or Great Britain can go to the Soviet Union with the Gospel. Millions of Slavic-speaking people are living outside of Russia in many parts of the world, and our missionary work for this reason has become worldwide among the Russians and other Slavic-speaking refugees and displaced persons."

Celebrating **75** *years*

From a Christian Leader

For years, our church prayed for the millions enslaved to atheism behind the Iron Curtain.

We yearned for the dawn when the light would shine upon the great land of Russia. Later we learned that SGA had been laboring faithfully to reach this great land for Christ and all under great peril and obstacles. When God saw fit to tear down that curtain and allow the churches in the West to have an influence, we looked for that opportunity and God led us to SGA. We are pleased to be able to partner with SGA and the leadership of Dr. Robert Provost to plant churches and support seminaries to produce church planters. God has used SGA in the past and will continue to use SGA to reach the lands of Russia. First Fundamental Bible Church is proud to be partners with such a great organization. We join in their celebration of 75 years of faithful and effective ministry.



Alex D. Montoya
Pastor, First Fundamental Bible Church



Rev. Allan W. Vincent
Director, SGA Canada

Following WWII, God graciously granted SGA missionaries wonderful ministry opportunities among the Ukrainian and Russian refugees in Western Europe. Until the refugees and displaced people could be permanently resettled, they were forced to live in camps. SGA missionaries still fondly remember how in those early years the Lord simultaneously raised up new missionaries and the necessary support.

In many cases those early missionaries like *Frozina Kucher (Roz)* from Hairy Hill, AB (*Canada Connection* – Feb/09) willingly served in changing roles as the Lord opened new doors. Having arrived in England en route to the Western Europe refugee camps, Roz had to wait until a ministry partner arrived.

That interval allowed Roz to assist Rev. John W. Thomas, who organized SGA UK in 1950. While Brother Thomas spoke throughout Wales, Scotland and England, Roz lived with the Thomas family in Graves End, Kent, and worked in the SGA office that was eventually relocated to the Thomas' large dining room. We thank God for Brother Thomas, who now lives in Squamish, BC. On weekends, Roz was also involved in meetings on the outskirts of London at a large Russian colony. In those meetings she met Stuart K. Hine, who taught her to sing his Russian and English translation of the Swedish folk tune "*How Great Thou Art*". At the 1949 Easter celebration in the Russian Church, Roz sang the hymn in English and Russian. Since then, the hymn has spread throughout the world and is especially loved in Russia, where it has eight verses.

After England, Peter Deyneka arranged for Roz to serve with Pastor and Mrs. Paul Naidenko in Nice, France, where thousands of wealthy Russians lived along the French Riviera. Many of them had their own chateaux and bungalows, where they spent winters during the Czarist era. Roz later wrote that this was a most exciting experience, meeting aristocracy and seeing their hunger for the Word of God. One lady, Baroness Bistrum, came to the Lord and started earnestly witnessing to her aristocratic friends. Several times she personally baked a cake and invited Roz

and her friends to tea so that Roz could share Christ with them. For Roz, it was a joy to pray with those dear folks of noble birth and see their humility before Christ.

From France, Roz moved to Germany, where she was joined by *Ruth Deyneka Erdel*. Roz and Ruth worked well together, and the Lord wonderfully blessed their two years of ministry. In camps across Europe, Roz and Ruth were empowered by God as they shared Bible stories with hundreds of children, their parents and grandparents who for the first time heard the precious truths of God's Word. Roz vividly reported how God worked through them during a meeting in camp in West Germany.

"I stood on the platform – one young, rather tremulous girl, facing rows of haggard, sad, Slavic people. I had just finished speaking from the Bible and praying. I asked all of those who wanted to accept Jesus as Saviour to stand. In response, the entire audience rose! I began to weep at their evident heart hunger, feeling helpless to counsel so many. I had studied personal evangelism in the Toronto Russian Bible Institute, but I had never expected anything like this. My co-labourer, Ruth, was also choked with emotion. 'Pray, Roz, pray!' she whispered. 'Tell the people to repeat after you.' As I prayed, a roar of response resounded from the audience. Hearts were eagerly opened to receive the Lord!"

After marrying Nick Leonovich in 1952, Roz and Nick served in displaced people's camp for three years. Following ministry in France, they were involved in broadcasting until 1992. Since 2004, they have lived in Bermuda Dunes, California, ministering to Russians along the California coast.

Ministry Itinerary:

- Mar. 1 – Glendon Evangelical Church – Glendon, AB – A. & L. Vincent, Eugene Bakhmutsky
- Mar. 1 – Avonglen Gospel Mission – Irma, AB
- Mar. 3-5 – Shepherds' Conference – Grace Community Church – Sun Valley, CA
- Mar. 22 – Olivet Baptist Church – Meaford, ON
- Mar. 27-29 – Halifax Missions Fest – "Jesus to the Nations"
- Mar. 29 – Country Calvary Baptist Church – Milford, NS



How You Can Help

Partner With Us . . . Today!



SGA and Our Partners . . . Reaching Russia Together

The former Soviet Union is a huge territory. Taken together, Russia and her neighboring countries stretch from the North Sea to the Pacific, and from the Arctic Ocean to Iran and even to China. And across that vast expanse, millions have yet to hear the life-changing Gospel of Jesus Christ. During the dark communist years when open ministry was impossible, God used SGA radio programs to both encourage oppressed believers and proclaim the Gospel to the lost. Now that recent freedoms have begun to erode again, it is vital we help our Russian brothers and sisters reach as many men, women and children as possible before the door closes entirely.



Your gift can help make an eternal difference for many.

Your gift will impact untold lives through vitally important outreach ministries such as:

- Missionary work — through evangelism and church planting
- Pastoral training — through theological seminaries and Bible institutes
- Orphan ministry — through *Orphans Reborn*
- Bibles and Christian literature
- Children's ministry — through Sunday schools, summer camps and follow-up outreaches
- Christmas outreaches — through *Immanuel's Child* and *Christmas for Orphans*

Please prayerfully consider how you can help Bible-preaching churches reach Russian-speaking people with the Gospel.

Thank you!
Please return the enclosed reply form with your gift.



Your gift can help make an eternal difference for someone!

- Dr. Provost, here's my gift to express my partnership with SGA to help evangelical churches proclaim the Gospel in the lands of Russia. I'm enclosing \$ _____ (1000)
- I would like to stay better connected! Please e-mail me with periodic ministry updates, key prayer requests and needs. (4401)
- Sign me up to be part of SGA's special e-mail Prayer Team. (4403)
- My e-mail address is: _____

To make your gift by credit card, see reverse side >

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