

Greetings, Luba,

My wife Ulrike and I returned to the US in early May, and now we take the opportunity to greet you via e-mail, and to note once again our appreciation.

The meetings and activities in Bratislava and the Slovak Republic were well organized. We were pleased to meet many nice and interesting people. It was a pleasure to meet you and hear you speak of your experiences and local government.

The trip to the High Tatra region was very special. We were so hospitably received! The area is exceptionally beautiful. And the many local government officials we met and spoke with impressed us deeply. The officials devoted time from their busy schedules to our visit and discussions. I trust they found it worthwhile.

As a local government professional, the following especially struck me in the Spis area:

- the level of regional collaboration among local governments
- the openness of the officials
- the substantial apparent role of city manager professionals
- the diversity of the existing economic foundations, and the potential for further economic diversification and development.

These are summary professional observations. The personal impressions are however the most vivid. It is the people who are most memorable. The warmth, openness and grace of the people will be my strongest impression of the time in the Spis Region and the Slovak Republic. Please accept our greetings and appreciation, and relay our personal regards to our hosts.

Sincerely,

Lloyd and Ulrike Halverson
(City Administrator, Camas, WA, and artist)