We are proud to announce the addition of three new board members, all of whom have already made useful suggestions regarding the future of BDSC. They are: Kelly Raftery, who speaks fluent Russian (and teaches it!), has spent several years living in Central Asia, and has recently come off a few years working to advance the work of another non-profit; David Heath, who traveled to Tajikistan with us last summer, and who made a multi-media presentation of our trip at the Annual Meeting (can be accessed here); and Carolin Maertens, a German Ph. D. student who has made several trips to Tajikistan, and specifically to the Pamir region. Carolin also made a presentation at the Annual Meeting, and will be a valuable asset as we move forward.

The Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities held their annual general meeting in December and had a great turn out. The meeting celebrated the many great moments from the past year and discussed our hopes for the future. All participation was greatly appreciated in making the event a hit. We elected board members, presented the past summer’s trip to Tajikistan, including our visit to the Roof of the World Festival, and featured a talk by a new Boulder resident, Carolin Maertens, who has conducted extensive fieldwork in the Pamirs. Also we introduced the quiet Tajik artist that is restoring the Teahouse in collaboration with the University and the City of Boulder. The event was held at the University of Colorado’s Environmental Design program. The night was merry with food, drinks, and the company of our diverse community. Work of CU students who were enrolled in ENVD professor, Shawhin Roudbari and Khujand artisan Marufjon Mirahkmatov’s, class on Central Asian Design and Teahouse Restoration was on display as well. The event exuded the collaboration between the public, the community. Work of CU students who were enrolled in ENVD professor, Shawhin Roudbari and Khujand artisan Marufjon Mirahkmatov’s, class on Central Asian Design and Teahouse Restoration was on display as well. The event exuded the collaboration between the public, the university, and the city, in efforts to bring out community in local and international scales.

Maruf Mirahmatov, is a master artisan from Khujand, Tajikistan. He is a fifth generation artisan who works with traditional design motifs and their applications. His grandfather Mirpurat was one of the artisans in Tajikistan who helped design and execute the construction of our wonderful Teahouse (Chaikhana). Twenty years ago, Mirpurat and his team mate Abdul Manon helped with the final assembly of the Teahouse in Boulder. Maruf’s father, Haydar, visited us five years ago to work on restoration of the exterior painted decorations, interior gaunch, as well as two little tables and eight stools. He was not able to complete the very fine and detailed work in his time here. Maruf, his 30 year old son, father of two little girls, arrived here in August to work on completing the job. He is here as a visiting scholar sponsored by CU’s CEDaR program and the School of Environmental Design in collaboration with the City of Boulder. It is an extremely complicated arrangement (BDSC, the Teahouse, City, Maruf and CU are all players). He spent two days a week this Fall co-teaching a class on Central Asian design motifs and applications with CU architecture professor Shawhin Roudbari also a Farsi speaker. His 16 students eventually spent some time helping on the restoration. They each, also, produced a panel copying one of the design sections of the Teahouse. They are great. We want to thank them and Shawhin for their interest, study and help! It was fabulous. And, we want to thank Lenny at the Teahouse and his staff for hosting many of the morning classes and Maruf’s lunches and snacks. We would also like to thank Nate Jones at CU’s ENVD and Brian Mueller at CEDaR for envisioning the project and doing the massive paper work for Maruf’s visa application. If you can, swing by the Teahouse and take a minute to look at the north frieze. To see it well, you will need binoculars. It is amazing. Shortly, at least one of the beautiful low tables and four stools will be back in their home at the Teahouse. Perhaps there will be time for another to follow. Take a minute to carefully look at these gems! We have been fortunate to have had this talented young man working here restoring the Teahouse. He is maintaining the great tradition of Tajik artisans. Thank you Maruf!

On September 16th, 2018, BDSC and the Tajik community of Colorado came together and celebrated the the independence of Tajikistan. Tajikistan gained independence in 1991 on September 9th after the fall of the USSR. The celebration was held at the plaza next to the Boulder Dushanbe Teahouse, where there was traditional food, music, and crafts on display.
Six Boulderites visited Tajikistan last summer from BDSC: Sophia and Peter Stoller, Rett Ertl, Nathan Jones, David Heath, and Peter Kleinman. BDSC’s members flew into Tashkent, Uzbekistan and made their way to Khujand, Dushanbe, the Pamirs, the Roof of the World Festival in Tajikistan, and many other places in between. The group was in Tajikistan for part of July 2018 to August 2018. More photos, recaps, and a video by BDSC’s David Heath can be found on our website. Overall the trip was very fulfilling and immersive into the Tajikistan and its communities. The group was welcomed with open arms and had an experience of a lifetime.

While going on the trip, Nathan Jones, conducted a report to the board of BDSC on his trip to Tajikistan in 2018, which is now featured on our website. The primary activities while visiting Tajikistan consisted of establishing relationships with current and prospective Tajik partners to develop future collaborative projects associated with the mission of BDSC. A primary interest while undertaking this trip has been to conceptualize and draft a plan for the further design and construction of Boulder’s East Bookend. Nathan’s report explores this more in detail and has interesting findings through conducting his work while in Tajikistan.

The World Premier showing of “OSIMI”, held at the University of Colorado Denver last Summer, chronicles the life of a man called the “Nelson Mandela” of Central Asia. With our world in turmoil through cultural and philosophical differences, the story of one man- in a country most could not locate on a map - changes the paradigm of how to create peace. Filmed in Tajikistan and around the world, through Muhammad Osimi we witness the power of art, education and science.

This year marked the 20th anniversary of the Tea house opening. In celebration, an event was held at the Tea house where the BDSC community was able to come together and share stories of how our lively community had formed and the lasting impacts it has had. Origins and accomplishments of the Tea house was much celebrated, where personal stories and the actually people who helped it come together were honored on the teahouse walls. Visit the Teahouse and to see the name engravings first hand.

A group of young professionals from Tajikistan visited Boulder to study NGO Development. They visited the Boulder Community Foundation, observed a professional development session at an affordable housing complex, went to the Colorado Non-Profit Association, and attended a meeting of Rotary International. A report on this event was created and can be seen on our website, giving a detailed synopsis of programming of the Open World Events.

Renew or Join BDSC Today
It’s that time of the year: Annual membership fees are due! If you are a member, please renew your membership before the end of the year. If you are not a current member, we would be happy to welcome you! To receive future newsletters, event notices, and invitations, and to support our efforts, send a check for a $30 basic membership to: Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities - Membership 275 Brookside Ct. Boulder, CO 80302

Please include your name, address, phone, and email address with all correspondence. You can also pay online at the BDSC website: www.boulder-dushanbe.org. Click on “membership” and follow the instructions. Thank you for supporting Boulder-Dushanbe Sister Cities!