



a letter from the editor...

By **Arminda W. Lathrop**, IDEBATE Editor

Hello idebate readers,

Whew! What a busy summer! First, I must say, it was so wonderful to meet so many of you at Duino and the Youth Forum and hear what you've been up to this past year. I learned what it is to come away from an IDEA event with enthusiasm and a refreshed perspective—and many new friends (one of my favorites being Darrigan Iberri-Shea, pictured above and 2 year-old son of wonderful IDEA trainers, Danny and Gina Iberri-Shea). IDEA is fortunate to have so many dedicated organizational members, trainers, coaches, and debaters in our network. And, while we're on the subject, thank you again to everyone who helped to pull this summer's events off, particularly Ioana Cionea, Marjan Stojnev, and our hosts in the Czech Republic, René and ADK. I hope you have all caught up on your sleep by now.

This issue of idebate is a bit different from past issues, as it's mostly comprised of articles and reports on IDEA's projects and events this summer—most of which are written by participants. I received many good articles from Duino and Forum participants about their memorable experiences and lessons learned over the summer. Admittedly, I got a little weepy reading over stories of education, adventure, understanding, and newfound inspiration. But, then I watched the video of the Macedo-

nian delegation performing at Trest Idol, which is on idebate.blogspot.com, and my tears quickly changed to laughter. Seriously, Macedonia.

I hope you enjoy reading these articles as much as I did when I received them. You can also check the IDEA website and the blog at idebate.or/blog for articles and updates. We also have the IDEA Citizen Journalism pages, which feature stories and photos from citizen journalism students at www.idebate.org/citizenjournalism, and IDEA is now posting news, events, and pics on Facebook®. Our group is under "IDEA Alums." A word of warning: it's addictive. Our network and our communication methods continue to grow!

The next issue of idebate will feature updates on IDEA Forum delegations that don't appear in this issue as well as articles about the Serbia Youth Debate Human Rights Project, Debate in the Neighborhood, IDEA Exchange, and the TPS Global Debates (www.thepeoplespeak.org). As we gear up for another year of projects and events, I hope many of you will be able to join us for our international events of 2008. As always, please keep in touch, and if you have feedback about idebate or IDEA events, please send me an email at: alathrop@idebate.org. I am always happy to hear from members, answer questions, or better yet, receive articles for the magazine.

Happy Fall,
Arminda



Viorel Murariu

1953 - 2007

“Viorel was a coach, teacher and friend to many of us at IDEA. One of the teachers who joined the Open Society Institutes’ Karl Popper Debate Program in its infancy, Vio was a tireless promoter of excellence in debate. We will miss the smell of his pipe, his endless supply of quotes from English literature, his passion and his friendship. His passing is great loss not just to the debaters in Iasi, but to all of us whose lives he’s touched.”

-Noel Selegzi

A Summation Speech – In Memoriam Viorel Murariu

A reluctant ninth grader is approached by two of his classmates under the provision of seeming pretty smart. They ask him if he wants to do something really cool and if he’s willing to listen to the lectures of a really intelligent man and work a lot. The really cool thing is called debate and the man lecturing about it is beyond anything the ninth grader has ever experienced. The man’s name is Viorel Murariu and the boy is me. Up until this day, whether I felt he was right or not, his ways and ideas have always struck me with immense force. Seven years later, I find myself wondering what exactly was about him that acted with such power over other people.

I believe now it was being a debater at all times and for everyone. I’m sure others knew him better or more profoundly than I managed to, as one of his debate students or later on coaching along with him. At the same time, I’m pretty sure they would all agree with the above statement. Most debaters have a tendency to diffuse some of their debate thought patterns in their everyday life, but to do this as a constant way of living denotes not only passion, but absolute devotion too.

There are several trademarks that made this devotion clear for everyone around him. There was his stunning general knowledge, full of small specific curiosities and personal interpretations of already obscure theories and facts. There was his willingness to stand for any point of view, no matter his argument companions, and the readiness to

defend it until the last logical defense line would fall. Debaters especially would be familiar with his utmost respect for and enforcement of structure and clarity of speeches. Above all, there was time. Because the time he had to sacrifice for debate was never questioned. Perhaps this was not viewed as the best thing for some, but as far as his input to society goes in that sense, I find it incomparable to any other debater I’ve met, student, coach or trainer.

Many other instances of him I’ve left uncovered, and probably would have anyway. I’ve failed to mention many of his sayings and highly original and expressive analogies in giving feedback. For that matter, I feel I have failed to recreate even the smallest accurate image and energy Viorel was able to transmit to people. At the same time, I know for sure he didn’t fail at anything that was debate-wise. Most of his ideas related to the educational focus of debates, the necessity of mixed competitions, the imperative of structured cases and many more are by now deeply rooted within debate communities. As for the debate club he has established and empowered over years, I can only hope we have retained at least parts of his features and dedication. I hope that people will listen more often to the debater next to them. You never know when their speaking time might end.

-Liviu Gajora

For Viorel: Dedicated Coach, Trainer, and Eastern European Debate Pioneer... You Will Be Missed

“What a loss. I remember Viorel for an absolute insistence on the highest standards, a true love of logic, and the gift of being able to enjoy all moments of the spirited dialogues that make up a life. Oddly, I was thinking back on him this morning even before this bad news. I learned a great deal from him, as did so many trainers. But perhaps the best legacies he left are found in the pieces of his teaching – a respect for words, ideas, reasons, and cultures -- that now live in each of his students, to be passed along. He will be missed by many across a broad part of the world.”

- Ken Broda-Bahm

“I first met Viorel at the Youth Forum in the Czech Republic in the summer of 1996, where he was a coach of the Romanian team. Since then I had met him and worked with him on a number of projects together: curriculum development, trainings and certification seminars as well as debate tournaments and forums.

One of the best English teachers and English speakers, I have met, he constantly searched for something new to share with his students.

This is why, I think, Viorel loved debate. It re-defined him as a teacher and gave him impetus for new methodological and intellectual explorations. He was fascinated by one particular aspect of debate - logic and we devoted hours, both on email and in person, to discussing it and arguing over its application in debate and classroom teaching. Viorel’s knowledge of logic was impressive and he shared it with others through trainings and translation of a number of publications and articles on the subject into Romanian.

It is no surprise that Viorel chose logic as his favorite aspect of the activity, for he was a perfectionist - in teaching, training and debate. He expected high standards of others but also of himself.

I have been hoping that we would embark on new projects in Romania and internationally and that

Viorel will assist us again – with his knowledge, experience and ... friendship. Sadly this will not be the case.”

-Marcin Zaleski

“I’m so sorry to lose one of my best friends and colleagues for whom I’ve always had a lot of respect and admiration. We worked together for the Romanian debate movement from almost the beginning, in 1994...We trained the Romanian National Debate Team a few times. I was awestruck regarding his knowledge, his ways of communicating with people, and last but not least, his humour...Actually, I wish I could remember our last conversation...but certainly I can remember the first evening in Sinaia at the initial debate seminar for teachers when he cracked everyone up, for hours, with his jokes.

Viorel was a great teacher and will be missed by everyone that was lucky enough to be touched by his soul during his career. He will always be with us. His family has my deepest and heartfelt condolences.”

-Anamaria Rusu

“I met Mr. Murariu eight years ago. I was a young enthusiastic debater, with high hopes for the future. It was my first year of high school and my first national debate competition. I soon found out I had much to learn. The rounds were announced for the second day and my team was going to play “against” Mr. Murariu’s students. They had been exceptional and I was very nervous. Mr. Murariu came to me and offered to help. Indeed, he spent many hours coaching me, teaching me everything he could. I could not believe how kind, warm and selfless he was. I was from a different city, a different region and the competition always was a serious one. His help came totally unexpected. We still lost against his team, but I was never prouder of any other debate I participated in. The professor and his students became my friends and I will always cherish that. Four years ago, I won the prize for best speaker in the national rounds. I believe it was in part due to Mr. Murariu’s coaching over the years. His house was always open to me. His words were always kind. And he will always be in my heart, as a professor and as a very dear friend.”

-Tatiana Cernicova-Dinca

IDEBATE PRESS BOOKS

News - Fall/Winter 2007

The proceeds go somewhere good. IDEBATE Press is a non-profit publishing venture, and all proceeds from book sales are used to finance grassroots activities around the world—from creating debate clubs in Rwanda to teacher training in refugees camps along the Thai-Burmese border to organizing debates in maximum security prisons to youth media training in Kosovo. So help out IDEA, and get a lot more than just a book in the bargain.



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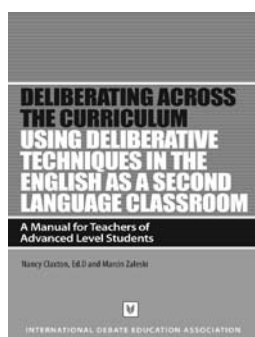
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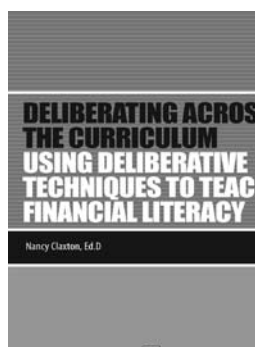


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