



Soldotna, Alaska Magadan, Russia



International Exchanges 1989-2005



Allan Miller was the first Russian language teacher in the Kenai Peninsula School District, starting the first program at Soldotna High School in 1992. Within two years the program had over 150 students and was one of the largest Russian programs in the entire country. At the same time, the Soviet Union was collapsing and the new Coalition of Independent States, including Russia, was opening its doors. Magadan had been a “closed” city during the Soviet era, as it was the central processing center for the entire Far East system of gulag prison camps - but due to the thaw in east / west relationships the door opened and Kenai Peninsula Russian students were some of the first non-Russian ever to visit the city. Over a span of 16 years over 500 students and community members participated in a variety of educational and cultural exchanges. The program came to an end when Allan retired from Alaskan teaching and moved to Vermont to become a school principal.