

SHEILA SWEITZER

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Foreign Born Spouse Issues

- “Home” assignment for her is culture shock, not re-entry
- Importance of network of foreign born spouses
- Cultural adaptation for all foreign born spouses comes during U.S. assignments
- Easier for a foreign born spouse to adapt overseas
- Must adapt to using English

Foreign Born Spouse Network

- Organization and logistics of the network
- Post article response
- Network provides counseling, information, and referral as needed
- Network refers professionals in areas of mental health
- Growth of network during SS’s tenure
- Started newsletter for network
- Organized White House tour and other special events
- Started organizing people from early age
- Social life is in helping
- Worked on two newspapers
- Helped to start Spanish speaking group in Belgrade

Choice

- Frightening experience in Yugoslavia with newborn
- So active with network that family suffered
- Resigned leadership position
- Network coordinator a full-time job

Feelings Regarding Network

- Loved doing it, but feels guilty neglecting other roles
- Helping people resolve problems
- Position of coordinator
- Importance of newsletter
- Out of pocket at least \$1000 to fulfill voluntary leadership role
- Network has several male members who are becoming active