

# City welcomes mayor's group from Yaroslavl

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Burlington officials and businessmen Monday greeted with open arms a three-member delegation from Yaroslavl, an ancient city in the Soviet Union.

Yaroslavl Mayor Alexander Ryabkov, along with Yuri Novikov, director of Yaroslavl's medical college, and Sergi Verkhovets, director of a machine factory, arrived at Burlington International Airport early Monday morning. They will be in the area until Sunday.

The trip was arranged as part of Mayor Bernard Sanders' effort to set up a sister-city relationship with the Soviet community. Burlington and Yaroslavl officials are scheduled to sign an agreement Friday.

Sanders and several city officials visited Yaroslavl on a trip to the Soviet Union in June, in the midst of the superpower summit. The 1,000-year-old city sits on the Volga River about 150 miles northeast of Moscow. It has a population of about 640,000 people.

The trio of Soviets paid for their airfare from the Soviet Union to New York City. Their weekend stay in New York and their airfare to Burlington was paid with city funds out of the mayor's discretionary fund and in Burlington the Radisson Hotel is providing them with rooms.

The Soviet delegation Monday was taken to City Hall for an official welcoming reception with city department heads and other officials, and later toured several stores on the Church Street Marketplace.

Ryabkov, in a brief speech at City Hall, said a better relationship between the United States and the Soviet Union is what made their trip possible.

"Frankly speaking, three years ago we didn't dream that we would come here to the United States of America," Ryabkov said through interpreter Alexander Rozman, a Burlington resident.

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JYM WILSON, Free Press

**WELCOME, MAYOR:** Burlington Mayor Bernard Sanders, left, Yaroslavl Mayor Alexander Ryabkov and Burlington Alderman Terry Bouricius, PC-Ward 2, tour the Church Street Marketplace Monday after the arrival of a three-man Soviet delegation.

# Yaroslavl delegation hits town

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dent originally from the Soviet Union.

Ryabkov told city officials that despite ideological and political differences between the two societies, "we have the possibility to meet with each other and to develop a relationship with each other."

Sanders pointed out that there are already changes taking place to improve relationships between the two nations. "I am extremely proud that in the city of Burlington and in the state of Vermont we are going to be part of that process," Sanders said.

Sanders said he hopes the new relationship will develop into a permanent exchange between people from all walks of life from one city to the other.

The tour of downtown stores was enlightening and full of surprises for the three Soviet officials, who are on their first visit to the United States.

The three Soviet men were taken to Bertha Church, a store that specializes in women's lingerie. The three men stood in the store, looking somewhat puzzled, as camera crews knocked a couple of inti-

mate items to the ground.

Jeanette Racine, who along with her husband owns the store, gave the delegation one of the warmest welcomes. But in doing so, as she was hugging Ryabkov, his glasses fell to the ground and one of the lenses popped out.

The seeming diplomatic disaster instead became a lesson in American consumerism: Ryabkov learned that in the United States, one can get a pair of glasses fixed within 10 minutes.

The Soviets received souvenirs from the merchants they visited, but at Pickwick & Perkins in the Burlington Square Mall, they were in for a treat. Co-owner Bill Black told each of the three men to pick a \$37 shirt and a \$25 tie to take home.

Perhaps an easy thing for Americans to do, but not for them. Through the interpreter, they said their wives pick their clothes in the Soviet Union.

At that point, Sanders turned to his wife, Jane, and said, "OK, Jane you help them pick a shirt."