

# First Year in Russia

News Letter — *The Other Donald-Night Writer (03/13/2026)*

(On March 13,2025 I arrived in Russia. March 15, 2026 is my one year anniversary living in Sochi)

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## Bureaucracy Dance

Migrating to another country isn't for the faint of heart. It comes with many challenges. During my initial months here, before submitting the application for my temporary residence permit, everything felt like a scavenger hunt written in a foreign language. In September of 2025 phase one of the hunt finally ended. It was then that I picked up the permit.

A couple of months ago, I started studying the Russian language again. I am concentrating on reading, grammar, and making unusual noises. With yearly improvements, I hope to be proficient in dialog within ten years.

Until Heaven and Earth pass away, taxes shall remain. So I will soon learn about them. Then by May, I plan to move farther north along the Black Sea. It seems that God is sending me to Gelendzhik. As it turns out, one of the defining features of Gelendzhik is the Worship Cross, which sits on the hill overlooking the city. By September, I expect to have my permanent residence permit. Then I can import personal items from the USA. It will be interesting to see how that will work with all the sanctions against Russia. I hope the bureaucratic dance will be over by the end of 2026. Then, I can focus primarily on paying taxes, writing, and learning to read Russian. However, as I encounter more mysterious events, I am likely to learn that there is more to do.

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## Selling Condo

I had my condo listed with a realtor for over a year. It didn't sell, so I contracted with the auction service. The bidding closed on March 5, 2026. I am happy with the price. It will close within the next 30 days.

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## Health

Living a mostly sedentary life in St Louis due to sickness and education severely weakened my body. Before I left St Louis, I started climbing stairs in the high rise that I lived in. This pathway back to health started with excruciation pain. Since I've known that I would move to Russia, I've anticipated living a healthier lifestyle that an old man can have here. I don't own a car, and I rarely use public

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transportation, so I walk to almost every place I go. Walking the foothills of the Caucasus Mountains in Sochi has strengthened my legs and lungs. Living on the 11th floor also helps, as I almost always use the stairs. Several months ago, when I was in Krasnodar, I walked 15 miles in one day. Outside, gym equipment that looks like adult playgrounds is common in Russia. Maybe I'll work on my arms this summer. Overall, I am happy that I lived in Central Sochi for my first year in Russia. It has been an enjoyable place to live.

I've also struggled to recover from energy crashes. Modern farming methods have resulted in the depletion of many essential minerals from the food supply needed for a long and healthy life. God instructed me to implement the advice of my health coach by including copper-rich foods in my diet to improve my APT. As a result, even though my energy isn't perfect, it has greatly increased. This is helping me get past the writing burnout and has enabled me to study the Russian language again. I've put off seeing a doctor and dentist, but now that it's getting warmer, I will soon, make an appointment to see the doctor.

Since I started writing this, I went to Dr Google and scheduled a blood test online. If it comes back positive, it will explain symptoms I've had for twenty years.

When it's impossible to make large steps, I make a point to keep making small steps. That way, God's vision for my life is always moving forward. When we are on the path God chooses, all the needed provisions will appear. I believe if I keep going, my health will also improve. Already, I am stronger in 2026 than I was in 2025.

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## Technology

If Peter and John can have their own books, then I think it's ok to start the Book of Don. I now have a personal wikipedia at <https://worldviewsofamerica.com> . I am using it as a writing aid.

The internet here is evolving. In 2022, the last time I was in Russia, the internet was normal. That has since changed. When I arrived in March, YouTube and Meta, which includes Facebook, were throttled. Recently, they have become blocked. Telegram, which is owned by a Russian, is now throttled. The government will completely block Telegram on April 1, 2026. The government says this will protect children from terrorists that these companies refuse to police. In Russia, they also want to protect the children from Western lasciviousness, namely Western LGBT narratives. Russia's blocking technology is said to be stronger than China's. The blocks are being met with considerable resistance, and they can be legally circumvented by logging into another network. Although this is legal to do it is not legal to advertise how to do it.

The house internet almost always works. On the other hand, the mobile internet goes down frequently due to missile and drone alerts. During this time, a few essential apps will work. I am sure that Russia is also learning how to block Starlink internet terminals, as the CIA recently used it in Iran to organize protests to overthrow the Iranian government. The Iranian government successfully blocked the terminals.

To do banking and communicate in the USA, I had to learn how to buy and sell crypto and circumvent the internet blocks. Trading crypto with an online exchange requires me to transfer large amounts of money, trusting that the exchange will send the needed money to my bank account. Russia continues to counter the technology that I use for getting onto other networks, so I am occasionally blocked

until the technology is upgraded. Keeping up with technology is time-consuming, and with Russia's countermeasures and the consequences of the USA and Western sanctions, this process becomes more interesting and challenging. Currently, everything works well. I have a word from above that there will always be a way.

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## House Guest

I just had a 71-year-old house guest from Michigan. I call him “ Biker Mike the Intelligent Biker.” I met him on Telegram in a Russian expat group and advised him about a trip to Russia. He arrived at 23:30 at the Sochi-Adler Airport. That was two days before I thought he was coming. At 7:00, I was informed by a member of the chat group that he had been stranded all night at the airport. We just had our fourth air raid siren of the morning, and I didn't know if public transportation was running. After preparing to stay all night in Adler, I rode the bus to the Sochi Central train station. The mobile internet was off, so the bus was operating without the normal payment system. At the train station, the attendants rushed me through the gate without paying. I boarded 30 seconds before the train departed. Then I paid for my ticket. I arrived at the airport at 10:00, where I did a quick search of both levels of the terminal. At 10:45, I boarded another train to the Adler Train Station. The station is three stories tall. It was built large enough to host the 2014 Winter Olympics. To my astonishment, in half an hour, without mobile internet, I found a man whom I had never met before.

It was obvious that Michael had his Dorothy moment when he could have said “Toto, I've a feeling we're not in Kansas anymore. We must be over the rainbow!” I understand that feeling well, as in 2022, I stepped outside of the Sochi terminal without a working cell phone. This prevented my translator from working, and I couldn't find anyone who spoke English. I was carrying all the money I needed to live on for a month and to buy my airplane ticket out of Russia. With the sanctions in place, the Russian money system was as it still is today cut off from the West. It was impossible to get more money. At night, I rented a capsule bed at the airport. Today, the capsules have been replaced with miniature sleeping rooms that fill up fast due to delays caused by drone activity. The fact is, there are many nights when people use blankets and mats to sleep on the hard floors, waiting for their delayed flights. So, in Michael's case, instead of a bunch of Munchkins popping out of the bushes singing follow the yellow brick road, Michael heard me calling his last name. What a surprise to him. We then waited at the food court for our train back to Central Sochi, where we rode a bus to my house. I changed his train ticket so he could leave at 9:47 the next morning.

Pray for Biker Mike, the carpenter. God led me to invest in him. When he was younger, he went to Bible School, where he studied counseling. He is an educated teacher and was a top speaker in Toastmasters. I knew I would meet him months before I did. I believe he has been called, and God wants Mike to work for Him. This will require some changes.

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## Drone Attacks

In the 1990s, I instinctively knew that I would go to a war zone. A pamphlet about the Yugoslav Wars arrived in my mailbox. As I looked at pictures of soldiers and war-tattered buildings, in a desire to see the violence stop, these words went through me, “I will go to a war zone. People need to know about God's love.” It was only after I became aware of God's love that I could begin to love people. I then dedicated my life to non-destructive, good works. I wanted the soldiers to have the same experience.

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Occasionally, the words about going to the war zone came back to me, but by 2008, during the Great Recession, I had forgotten about it. Amazingly, as I followed after God, I not only found myself prepared for it, but I am here.

Ukrainian drone and missile attacks on Russia are very common. As I was traveling to Russia on March 13, 2025 Ukraine responded to President Trump's peace talks by launching its largest drone attack on Russia to date. My flight from Turkey that arrived in Moscow around midnight was the first one of the day. All prior flights were canceled. Then my first encounter with drones occurred on March 15, 2025. At night, as the train was making its way from Moscow to Sochi, I saw a drone fire in a field. The train later made a stop in Taupse, Russia. One of the huge oil storage tanks was burning.

Surprisingly, Ukraine also attacks Sochi, which doesn't have any military or energy targets, as it is a resort city. In the Adler district of Sochi, the drones destroyed fuel tanks close to the airport. This is about 20 miles from where I live. They also blew up a fuel tank at FT Sirius. FT Sirius is the Federal Territory connected to Adler, where the 2014 Winter Olympic Village is located. A friend knew a girl who was killed in that drone attack because a drone also blew up a motorcycle shop. North of Sochi on the Black Sea and in other places of Russia, Ukraine continually attempts to attack oil terminal ports, oil tanks, and refineries. Many of the attacks are repelled. However, there is some damage and fires. Ukraine has also attacked and damaged oil tankers in the Black Sea. Russia has heavily retaliated against Ukraine by destroying energy and heating infrastructures in all of Ukraine. Many Ukrainians are now in the cold. It is reported that Belgorod, Russia, is in the same condition. I had previously gone through Belgorod on the night train in 2020

Many attacks are repelled, but it is not legal to talk about or video defense operations unless they have already been published. They will prosecute for this, and jail time would be expected. There are three categories of warnings. They are drones, rockets, and falling debris from drones and missiles that are shot down. On the Sea, they also have attacks by unmanned sea drones. These are electronically controlled boats that explode. Military shooting drills at the harbor are common. We are constantly warned about falling debris.

Air raid sirens are common, but so far the drones haven't hit anything in Central Sochi. The most serious attack on Central Sochi just occurred 2/14-15/2026. It lasted over 8 hours. I heard a double explosion. Maybe it was a rocket launched. I don't know for sure. I also heard other explosions and aircraft flying. It was reported that these were defense aircraft. I have only heard explosions on two other nights. One night, a single source reported that drone debris fell in Central Sochi, but I don't necessarily believe it is true because information is sometimes skewed to protect military operations. People can also get spooky.

Even though I am not afraid I can't say that drones don't bother me. The loud explosion stayed with me for 24 hours, but I haven't been close enough to an explosion that rattled my bones, so I am not afraid. Also, statistically, automobiles cause more harm than drones do in Sochi. However, as a builder, I don't like to see useful property destroyed, nor do I like to see people wounded or killed. They could live a better life. Judging from social media posts, people shooting off fireworks during warnings have made it obvious that women are more affected by the warnings and explosions. This is something the authorities are trying to curb.

Russians often vacation in the UAE, Turkey, and Sochi. I guess many of them desire a real adventure as well as a place to get out of the cold, as they still flock to Sochi for vacation. Since I started writing this, the attacks have escalated into more, larger attacks. There have been several instances where the airport was closed for 8-13 hours, and warnings in Krasnodar Kria have lasted over 24 hours. As drone and missile swarms increased, I wouldn't be surprised if the tourist season slows down this

year. If so, it will be an opportune time to buy property here. A potential risk diminishes when done in God's timing.

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## Iran

Please pray for my friend, Ali. I haven't been able to talk to him since April of 2025. This was just before Trump's first bombing campaign. As a result, the latest internet restrictions have blocked me from talking to him. A few weeks ago I called his number using a regular phone. I heard his voice, but I don't think he could hear mine. Maybe I will talk to the phone company about adding Iran to my calling area. It seems like I should be able to talk to him from Russia.

Since he returned to Iran, he has experienced a country that has excess violence, drought, and high inflation.

- During Trump's first bombing in June 2025, he heard the bombs close to his neighborhood. Family and children are dear to him. He mentioned that Israel and the USA promised that children would be excluded from injury, but he soon learned that promises don't matter as bombs and missiles don't discriminate.
- The recent protest in Iran, like the failed and deadly Arab Spring, was coordinated using the internet. I read that the protest was similar to the one in 1979 when the Shah of Iran was deposed, in that the merchants were involved due to high inflation. The CIA distributed Elon Musk's Starlink terminals then coordinated the protest using the internet. Unexpectedly, the Iranian government blocked the Starlink terminals, which resulted in many deaths and the lack of protesters needed to overthrow the Iranian government. Without the internal mechanism, the USA government had to change plans.
- Trump then sent a massive amount of military assets into the region including two aircraft carrier groups. Whether it was by design or not, Israel took advantage of the military buildup and struck Iran. The USA supported Israel through a massive missile and bombing campaign. Iran stood stronger than expected. Evidently, things are out of control as the USA is sending in a third carrier group. With the Iranian government in survival mode, they now seem to be challenging the USA with a war of attrition. If they can drain the USA of overpriced weapons, they can win their place in the world as a greater power.
- The USA and Israel need ground troops, and it is better to arm proxies rather than send their own troops. Israel has worked to get the Gulf States into the war. After all, Iran is destroying targets in their countries. There was what seemed like a false flag operation in Azerbaijan, which has a large Jewish population and has shared interests with Israel. Azerbaijan, which now appears to be reluctant warriors, first seemed to take the bait and prepared to retaliate against Iran. The USA wants to arm the so-called stateless Kurds against Iran, but Trump betrayed the Kurds during his first term, so trust is an issue. People I have talked to on this side of the world say that most Kurds are integrated into other countries, and the stateless factor is exploited by the USA to propagate wars. People on this side of the world are more informed about politics than Americans. They need to be because this is where the action is. So far, Trump doesn't have anyone who will be the boots on the ground in his fight against Iran.
- This leaves American or Israeli troops. Someone will be needed to attempt to open the Strait of Hormuz. Without it, the world loses twenty percent of its oil and natural gas production. Trump must be desperate because the longer the Strait is closed, the longer it will take to restart

production as unused equipment quickly deteriorates. This will put Russia back in the driver's seat as its oil and gas will be in higher demand. However, if Russia continues to make intelligent decisions, the West will not be its favored customer. This whole scenario could enhance the defeat of Ukraine and Europe and strengthen China.

- Don't get overly optimistic about the outcome here. Keep in mind that USA neoconservative wars consistently fail, and Trump is a high-risk taker (he built two casinos that failed) who led his country into something that looks like a catastrophe. One thing that is predictable, Trump will stay true to his nature and get richer at someone else's expense. Trump is also very braggadocios and wants all the glory so he doesn't have a good relationship with allies. Anyone with family in the USA military should be concerned. Many believe the USA will lose this war but what's new?
- salt, security for gulf, petro dollar

This is a difficult time, and God always has a plan for His people. Pray in hope, listen to get faith, and obey by taking action in love. Be calm in the peace of God when the world is volatile. You will then be light to those who want to see. Please don't forget to pray for my friend and the many people who are and will become Christians that already live in these difficult circumstances.

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## Don't Follow the Stanger

***1“Truly, truly I say to you, the one who does not enter by the door into the fold of the sheep, but climbs up some other way, he is a thief and a robber. 2But the one who enters by the door is a shepherd of the sheep. 3To him the doorkeeper opens, and the sheep listen to his voice, and he calls his own sheep by name and leads them out. 4When he puts all his own sheep outside, he goes ahead of them, and the sheep follow him because they know his voice. 5However, a stranger they simply will not follow, but will flee from him, because they do not know the voice of strangers” (John 10:1-4 NASB).***

Here we go. Trump can start any war he wants, and many pulpit preachers will surround him with divine blessing, in a way that they project to the whole world that President Trump can do what he wants and that God is with him.

What happened to the Christian words of Paul?

*For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places (Eph 6:12 NASB).*

God sure gets blamed for a lot of things when Christianity is not represented by the true Christian teachings.

*If a person who is blind guides another who is blind, both will fall into a pit. (Mat. 15:14 NASB)*

Be careful who you follow least you fall in the ditch with a blind man.



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