

Salerno 20.07-03.08.03

In the dreamscape of Amalfi, Capri, Ravello and Palinuro, AEGEE-Salerno saw the outcome of the long and hard work of a group of friends who at a crazy moment decided to do something fantastic. Both staff and participants had the same desire: to have the time of their lives and to make friends with everybody. Hence the mixture of desires exploded!

The challenge of spending five days camping proved formidable, with dancing, singing and drinking until sunrise, and AEGEE-Salerno proved themselves a 'bag of nuts' whose only purpose is to enjoy entertaining people. A theme song and dance were prepared for the occasion, which the participants never stopped dancing or singing, even at the railway station on the sad day of departure. It all reflects the success to which everyone contributed.

People  
of the  
past

**Paolo Balistieri is a 33-years-old Italian, who joined AEGEE in 1995. He's been active both on local and European levels of AEGEE. In 1996 he became President of AEGEE-Milano and co-founded the Network Commission. The year after, elected as Network Responsible in the CD, introduced the concept of Network Trips, coordinating the AEGEE campaigns in France and the UK, as well as the project on Cyprus. Later he became member of the MemCom and helped in organising many AEGEE events. Currently he is a member of AEGEE Alumni organisation - Les Anciens. He graduated in political science and is currently Coordinator for the Southern European operations of a Dutch non-profit coalition in Milan.**



Apart from being a hard working CD member, you were known as a fun loving person. How did you manage to combine those 2 things?

AEGEE is a student association and students like to party. The unique opportunity to socialise with young people coming from all over Europe is also a great added value of AEGEE. All active AEGEE members started with a joyful and less serious approach and indeed everybody in his or her first events wasn't so involved in organisation and working. After few events, one was coming back home and starting to help AEGEE people at the local level. Then, step by step, we all became more and more involved.

I believe socialising doesn't necessary mean working less: I've learnt how to work and be organised in AEGEE and I worked a lot, besides having fun, because I put all my enthusiasm and commitment in both things. It was particularly important for me, being in charge of the Network matters, to know "all" our members and to involve them in the association. I remember Agoras' and PMs' European Nights as the best places for lobbying for AEGEE projects (sometimes "party" meant mainly "working"!)

What was AEGEE's influence on your current life style and life ideology?

Travelling was already one of my passions before knowing AEGEE. Ever since I joined AEGEE, it has become a lifestyle rather than a holiday planning. Thanks to AEGEE, I acquired a very big network of friends, contacts and experiences useful either to travel for my own pleasure or to develop an internationally inclined professional profile.

AEGEE helped me in discovering the consciousness of a real European Identity. Now, I feel a citizen of Europe besides being Italian. I lived in Belgium working for AEGEE; in Barcelona working on a Leonardo Pilot Project on Vocational Training Schools; after getting involved in AEGEE project in Cyprus I decided to write my thesis on the political problems of the Mediterranean island, where I stayed for a period of research. When I graduated, my AEGEE background certainly helped me to find a job in Amsterdam, where I stayed for almost three years. All the above wouldn't be possible without AEGEE. Of course AEGEE may not be the only way for a student to travel, get internationally minded and professionally skilled, but it is certainly a perfect tool to have it all and even more: great number of European friends.

Real international friendships are after all what I value the most of my AEGEE experience. Active AEGEE members have been meeting so many times during their AEGEE life that unique friendships could naturally grow.

It is not easy to get away from AEGEE. I am still visiting Agoras sometimes but my latest and future events are actually weddings of the above-mentioned AEGEE friends. Times change but AEGEE remains alive and kicking in our lives for a long time

## AEGEE-Salerno

Fifteen years ago, on 3 February 1989, a new baby was born: AEGEE-Salerno!

Since that time it has grown up healthy and proved able to organize events important for the whole AEGEE Network: an Agora (1989), a European School (1991), 14 Summer Universities, the first Summer University & Fund Raising Training Course (2002) and a Regional Meeting (2003), in addition to several social and cultural exchanges with other associations and antennae of the AEGEE network.

The efforts we made towards the integration of foreign students who study at the University of Salerno gave our new Antenna the chance to improve our relationship with the University and other Patrons. AEGEE-Salerno is also famous for our unforgettable parties: fireworks, free drinks and music all night long. Together with our outstanding hospitality, these are some of the things that helped us to be awarded the prize for 'Best Summer University of 2003'!

AEGEE-Salerno is involved in a number of different issues, such as disability rights. We raised the problem of the involvement of disabled people in AEGEE and now we are helping to promote a new project called 'AEGEE and disability'. We strongly believe that disabled people should have the chance to take part in all AEGEE events, not only Summer Universities. Most of all we do our best to feel part of the network and overcome the long distance; we have been working on this for about 3 years, and now at last we're reaching our aims!

So AEGEE people, remember: if you happen to pass by Salerno, come along; there will always be a place, a warm welcome and a smile for you.

Introduction

What is AEGEE?

Fields of action

Focus on training

What AEGEE means to me