

ISSN 0892-4546



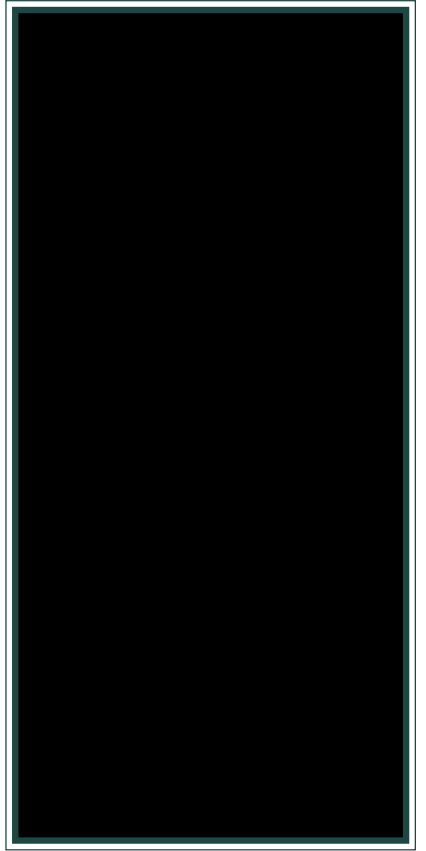
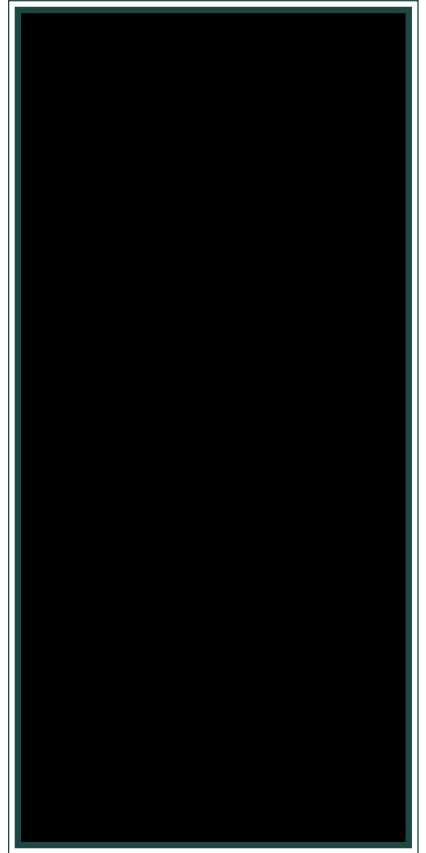
International Leads

A Publication of the International Relations Round Table of the American Library Association

Volume 15

December 2001

Number 4



Message from the IRRT Chair

By H. Lea Wells

Never have librarians needed to know more about peoples and nations of the world. Never have citizens needed information more than during times that baffle and confuse, that challenge the status quo and our spirits. Now is the time to strengthen ties with colleagues beyond our borders and to share with local folks what we learn through travel and conferences. Our connections made with librarians and citizens beyond U.S. boundaries and the exchange of information prompted by friendships created through travel and exchanges will help our constituencies at home better understand the larger world we inhabit.

As I email committee members who are hard at work planning the 2002 IRRT Reception and Program, I cannot help wondering if we will see the numbers of international and American librarians who have gathered to celebrate during past ALAs. I can assure you that plans are proceeding for a wonderful program focusing on opportunities for travel and working assignments abroad. A venue has been secured in Atlanta for our popular reception and details are being settled to assure a good time

for all. Committee work proceeds and securing new members, especially members from abroad, takes on a new urgency.

Librarians, through their selection, display, and distribution of materials, influence opinions and stretch minds. In uncertain times, the need for information is even more urgent than under normal circumstances. Librarians fill a need for solid information, contrasting opinions, and diversion. We have a calling to provide what people request and to influence their perceptions through the provision of varied points of view. I am proud of the work many librarians have done abroad and I encourage IRRT members to seek international experiences and to share those experiences with library users at home.

I invite you to join us in New Orleans for Midwinter and to make your plans for Atlanta. At every opportunity invite colleagues to join IRRT. We need to grow our membership of world-savvy people. Our communities, citizens, and students need our perspectives. They need informed sources of information. Won't you invite one librarian to join IRRT?

**IRRT and IRC Meetings at the 2002
ALA Midwinter Meeting in New Orleans**
SaturdSd a e t u r d S

From ALA's Internaitonal Desk by Michael Dowling

Well it's taken some time but the new Global Reach international participation website is live. The website will allow us to capture the variety of international activities that libraries and librarians are participating in. To access the site and create your own profile please visit <http://www.ala.org/work/international> , and click on the Global Reach link.

I want to thank all of those who participated in sending information to the test database and for their comments and suggestion to improve it. Trying to create a functional form that captures accurately all international activities has not been easy. We will continue to improve the site and the form as we analyze the input into the database.

We hope that this database will be a useful tool for those looking for information on projects and programs in specific regions and countries, identify resource people, and showcasing the amount of international activity that librarians are engaged in. So please take the time to fill out your profile. Thank you.

In reviewing the list of subscribers to ALAWORLD subscribers there are less than 300 on the list. I'd like to

encourage all IRRT members to sign up for the list to make it a vehicle to reach all of the members. ALA has a new registration procedure for signing up for discussion lists that takes a little time but it makes signing up and managing your participation on various lists a lot easier:

- 1) To join ALAWORLD go to <http://lp-web.ala.org:8000/>
- 2) Go down to options and click on "register for a full account"
- 3) Fill out the registration form and respond to the email

**Welcome New IRRT
Members!**

Shamima Amin
Robert Bibbee
Daniel Blewett
Suzanne Castroman
Gary Flanagan
Jill Gage
Elizabeth Grefe
Wallace Koehler
Thomas Leimkuehler
Harriet Lightman
Gay Loesch
Particia Luthin
Catherine Marsicek
Mary McCarthy
Richard Murray
Alvin Negron-Paez
David Oldenkamp
Lyn Petrie
Doug Phelps
Tammy Rabideau
Red River Community-
College Library
Donald E. Riggs
Bryon Sitler
Barbara von Wahlde
Hong Wang
Zheng Wang

location, and check the list against the books on the shelf. Books not on these printouts will need to be pulled and the information entered into the database.

Time and other factors did not permit me to train the person entering and verifying data on any but the most basic bibliographic methods essential for any library catalog. A high school student did most of the work and fortunately, he was very bright and a fast learner. What he lacked in background, he made up for in eagerness to learn. He explored Microsoft Access enough to see that in a small catalog such as this one, there are several ways to find any book.

In addition to building the foundation for a usable online catalog and meeting some wonderful people, the trip afforded me an opportunity to learn Spanish. Antigua is a center for Spanish language tourists. It is a small town, not the crowded, dangerous metropolis that so many international capitals have become, yet it is just 30 minutes away from an international airport. Spanish language schools are abundant and therefore quite competitive in price. Generally one week of study (4-8 hours per day) costs between \$100-\$150 and homestay is available (and suggested) for \$50 or so above that.

Report from the International Relations Committee

By Nancy John, Chair

The ALA International Relations Committee (IRC) has been quite productive since its June 2001 meetings. We are now getting organized for the January 2002 meetings so I will report on activities of the past three months and inform you of coming attractions at midwinter.

The IRC spent time preparing for IRC activities at the IFLA

