



International Leads

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

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A Bulgarian and Colorado Library Project

By Nancy Bolt

In 1999, the Bulgarian Library Association (BLA) and the Colorado Association of Libraries (CAL) passed a resolution to form a partnership between Colorado and Bulgarian libraries. This report tells the major development of the partnership of the project.

The initial library visits

We were in Veliko Turnovo (VT), Bulgaria, the city where one of Colorado's partner libraries is located, participating in a conference on Library Services to Children and Youth. At the end of the conference, Library Director, Ivan Alexanderov, took Patty Gibbons, Library Assistant at the Eagle Library District in Eagle, Colorado, Kalina Ivanova, Assistant Director of the Veliko Turnovo Library, and Nancy Bolt, Colorado State Librarian, to an empty room. He waved his arm around and said: "We have received so many books from our partner library. This new Foreign Language Reading Room will be the newest branch of the Eagle Library!" This was one of the highlights of an extraordinary partner library program sponsored by the Colorado Association of Libraries and the Bulgarian Library Association.

In 1996, Colorado was privileged to host Iskra Mihailova, Continuing Education Consultant for the Bulgarian National Library, as an American Library Association Fellow. Mihailova's visit prompted Nancy Bolt to visit and lecture in Bulgaria. While there, Bolt met with Snezjana Ianeva, member of the BLA Board and Director of the

Library Project

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special. The Partner Project is designed to help those libraries that want to improve their library collections and services and begin a cultural dialogue. They need books and multimedia resources in English to help young people learn English and books on American history, culture, automation, economics, to help older students.

libraries of both countries; exchange of cultural information; sending books and information from American libraries to their Bulgarian partners; pen pals (and e-mail pals) between youth; visits of American librarians and municipal officials to Bulgaria; conferences on topics of interest to Bulgarian librarians and municipal officials; establishment of English reading rooms in Bulgarian libraries; cross-country friendships; and

A four-year partnership

Over the last three years, twelve public, school, and medical libraries in Colorado and Bulgaria have formed partnerships. From the beginning, we had listed only four requirements to become a Partner Library:

- a desire to learn about a different culture
- a willingness to frequently communicate with your Partner
- someone who speaks English (it is mainly a requirement for the Bulgarian partners!)
- an e-mail address because post office is too slow

Partner libraries engage in many activities, including regular communication by e-mail and postal mail; exhibits and programs in the

internships in each other's country. To date, books and other resource materials have been sent to ten of the twelve partner libraries. Over the last four years, we have taken librarians to Bulgaria and do conferences on library service to tourists; accessing to public information through libraries; lobbying town councils for increased funds; creating an Economic Information Center; creating a union catalog among academic libraries, and serving children and young adults.

City officials' visits

In 2001, Colorado city officials visited their counterparts in Bulgaria. In addition to topics of interest to city

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Message from the IRRT Chair

By H. Lea Wells

Not often do we take time to acknowledge the work of

IRRT and IRC Programs and Meetings at 2002 ALA Annual Conference in Atlanta (June 13 – 19, 2002)

Programs

Preconference “State of American Librarianship”

Friday, June 14, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
OMNI Hotel at CNN Center - Brampton

International Librarians Orientation & Welcome Reception

Friday, June 14, 4:30 - 6:00 p.m.
Georgia World Congress Center - Room A302

“Armenians and Cyberspace”

Saturday, June 15, 8:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon
Wyndham Atlanta - Olympic A/B

International Papers: “Partnerships in Libraries: Cornerstones of Access”

Saturday, June 15, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
Georgia World Congress Center - Room B311

International Poster Session

Sunday, June 16, 11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Georgia World Congress Center, Exhibit Area

“Building & Space Issues: The German Situation and Solutions”

Sunday, June 16, 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.
OMNI Hotel at CNN Center - Greenwood

“Libraries in South Africa”

Sunday, June 16, 4:00 - 5:30 p.m.
Hilton Atlanta - Cherokee

“Creating a Public Network of American Information Center In Russia: The American Corners Program”

Monday, June 17, 10:30 a.m. - 12:00 noon
Georgia World Congress Center - Room A403

“Librarians as International Ambassadors: At home and Abroad”

Monday, June 17, 1:30 - 5:30 p.m.
Hilton Atlanta - Salon A

International Librarians Reception

Monday, June 17, 6:00 - 8:00 p.m.
Freight Room, Georgia Railroad Freight Depot

Meetings

International Relations Committee Meeting I

Friday, June 14, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Hilton Atlanta - Madison

International Relations Committee Meeting II

Tuesday, June 18, 8:30 - 11:00 a.m.
Georgia World Congress Center - Room A310

IRC/IRRT All Subcommittee Meeting

Saturday, June 15, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Georgia World Congress Center - Room A302

IRRT- Executive Committee Meeting

Sunday, June 16, 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.
Georgia World Congress Center - Room B313a

Korean-Korean American Discussion Group

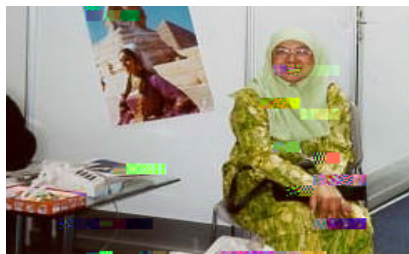
Saturday, June 15, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Georgia World Congress Center - Room B409

Russian-Russian American Discussion Group

Saturday, June 15, 2:00 - 4:00 p.m.
Georgia World Congress Center - Room B213



IRRT volunteers and international librarians at the International Visitor Center at 2001 ALA Annual in San Francisco.
(Photos: Sha Li Zhang, June 2001)



**Welcome New
IRRT Members!**

Hermina Anghelescu
Hampton Auld
Tania Bardyn
Elizabeth Bingham
Jacqueline Bryant-Barker
Janet Castelpietra
Benjamin Chan
Nancy Davenport
Jeffrey Gima
Shari Grove
Erica Hamm
Kathleen Higgs
John Hughes
Elizabeth Jackson
Robert Kent
Majed Khader
Barbara Klassen
Monika Landenhamer
Margaret Landrum
Sophie Lesinska
Phyllis Lyons
Suzanne Maryeski
Jerrie Merridith
Paul Miller
Janalyn Moss

Armenian and Georgian Libraries Celebrate First National Library Week

By Nerses Hayrapetyan and George Shatirishvili

Armenia and Georgia successfully celebrated their first ever National Library Week (NLW), April 14 - 20, 2002. These new advocacy initiatives were formulated during the "Strengthening Library Associations in the South Caucasus" workshop organized by ALA last year, and were supported by grants from the Carnegie Corporation of New York. The goal for both countries is that NLW will become an annual event.

The Republic of Armenia celebrated NLW, from April 14 to 20, 2002, under the aegis of the Armenian Library Association. The purpose of the week-long celebration was to spread the word about the importance of libraries in a civil society. The Armenian Library Association
