



# International Leads

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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 Information Resource Center at the American Embassy, and met with Dr. Alexander Dimchev, then President of the BLA and Professor in the Library Science Department at Sofia University. During this meeting, Bolt, Ianeva, and Dimchev discussed ways that libraries in Bulgaria and Colorado might work together to the benefit of both. Toward that end, both BLA and CAL adopted a Resolution of Cooperation. The library staffs from both places started informal correspondence in March 2000.

### Libraries in Bulgaria

Bulgaria and its libraries are recovering from fifty years of Soviet domination. They are moving from some support received from the central communist government to minimal support from local governments. Most are managed by professional librarians with limited or no book budgets. There are both undergraduate and graduate library programs in Bulgaria. New books (and good used ones) tend to come from donations from other countries and from a publishers' book deposit program that benefits the largest of libraries. Bulgaria, surrounded by countries with troubled politics, sees itself as a model of peace in the Balkans. Its Eastern Orthodox, Jewish, Muslim, and Roma populations live in peace.

Libraries in Bulgaria include public, college and university, school, community (called *chitaliste*), technical, and



Ivan Alexanderov and Kalina Ivanova of the Veliko Turnovo Library, Patty Gibbons from the Eagle Library District, and Ivan Panayotov, Vice Mayor of Veliko Turnovo City.

(Photo: Nancy Bolt, June 2001)

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## 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.



The Conference on Library Services for Children and Youth was opened by these young Bulgarian dancers. (Photo: Nancy Bolt, June 2001)

### 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

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

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 officials, we also discussed at length

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## *Message from the IRRT Chair*

By H. Lea Wells

Not often do we take time to acknowledge the work of volunteers in the library world or to call attention to the leadership role that American librarianship plays in strengthening developing nations. Librarian volunteers often share their expertise with colleagues in countries struggling to hold together libraries weakened by governmental policies, wars, and survival needs. We must recognize the volunteers who keep IRRT and the American Library Association moving ahead. We can be proud of the strong leadership American (and English-speaking) librarians provide by spreading good practices around the globe. I invite you to consider how you may play a role as a volunteer librarian at home or abroad.

I have visited libraries in other countries where an online public access catalog is but a dream and the catalog cards we think of nostalgically, or perhaps no longer think of at all, are the only bibliographic record there. They may be handwritten in pencil and may or may not represent real books on shelves. Functioning library associations are in but beginning stages and collaborative agreements are only starting to be of interest. To help address some of these problems, ALA members (and I hope they are members of IRRT also) are going abroad to share their expertise.

Do we American librarians realize the mantle we carry? In times of political unrest and wars around the globe, we are the keepers of some of the very best libraries in the world; we maintain the largest and strongest library association that exists anywhere; our models of cooperation and collaboration are admired everywhere; our classification and preservation systems are unequalled. We have much to share, much to give colleagues who want to educate their populations for citizenship in a changing world.

If you are interested in international opportunities for sharing your expertise, for a few weeks or a few years, come to the IRRT program at the ALA Conference in Atlanta, "Librarians as Ambassadors: At Home and Abroad," 1:30 p.m. on Monday, June 17 at the Hilton Atlanta, Salon A. The Honorable Robert L. Gallucci, former Ambassador at Large, and Dean of the School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University, will speak on "International Security, the Impact of 11 September, and America's Place in the World." Librarians Carla Higgins, Jane Birks, and Fiona Hunt, who are currently working abroad, will make presentations as well. You will learn about several programs that recruit librarians for international service. Later join us for the IRRT Reception for International Librarians at the historic Freight Room. Enjoy

the festivities, food, jazz, and meet colleagues from around the world. Tickets can be purchased at the ALA International Registration Desk. We are grateful to corporate sponsors like Blackwell's Book Services and Swets Blackwell, and to the reception's additional sponsors, Elsevier and VTLS, who helped underwrite the expenses of this wonderful gathering. We expect librarians from more than fifty countries to be present! Come share your American hospitality.

Dedicated volunteers keep IRRT going year round amidst normal and extraordinary workloads, relocations, job changes, family joys, travel, daily life, and crises. We enjoy the rich array of international programming at annual conference because of those members who squeeze in that extra duty beyond the usual workday. Since I named names in last September's issue of *International Leads*, I refer you to that issue at the website <http://www.ala.org/irrt>. My debt—actually our debt—is huge. Much that is accomplished by the American Library Association is achieved by volunteers. Yes, we have a marvelous staff, too, and together we accomplish many goals. Thank you each and every one.

Among the accomplishments of IRRT librarian volunteers in 2001-2002 were the following:

- Development of a clearinghouse for ALA programs with an international theme
- Updating of the IRRT logo for *International Leads*, our stationery, and the website
- Improvement and expansion of the IRRT website
- Planning for an orientation and mentoring program, a visitor's center, a continuing education effort, and the reception for international librarians
- Development of a program for the conference
- Completion of an officers' manual
- Solicitation, selection, and arrangement for International Papers and Posters sessions at the conference
- Growth of the IRRT membership
- Publication of four issues of *International Leads*
- Participation in joint formalized planning with the ALA International Relations Committee

How can you be a library ambassador? Invite a friend to join IRRT; volunteer for a committee job; consider making your expertise available in another country. You know so much more than you even dream. Share that expertise with a world neighbor! Bring your worldview to bear at home! You are a librarian, an ambassador, here and abroad!



## **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)



## Chapel Hill Conference on Globalization of Library and Information Science Education

By Evelyn H. Daniel and Jordan M. Scepanski

Twenty-three educators, administrators, and students representing eleven countries on four continents met in Chapel Hill North Carolina on April 7-9 to consider issues of globalization of Library and Information Science Education. Sponsored by the University of North Carolina's Center for International Studies, the United States Department of Education Title VI program, and UNC's School of Information and Library Science, the conference was an important part of the school's 70th anniversary celebration. In a series of general and small group sessions, participants explored barriers to pursuing an international approach to LIS education and opportunities resulting from increased mobility, expanded technological capacity, and greater awareness of the value of comparative and multicultural study of the information professions. In addition to the working sessions, the conference included remarks by James Peacock, Kenan professor of anthropology, professor of comparative literature, and director of the Center for International Studies at the UNC at Chapel Hill, and a dialogue with Robert Miles, director of the university's Study Abroad Program.

Among topics covered were types of international programming that would be most beneficial for faculty members and students; benefits that increased globalization brings to LIS education; how LIS schools can prepare their graduates to be leaders in a global society; means through which information technology can enable greater global connections; research collaboration among faculty from various nations; funding to support globalization efforts in various countries; what individual faculty member can do to increase consideration of international issues in LIS education on a specific campus; and the role of LIS educators in developed countries in assisting their colleagues in the developing world.

Specific action items ranged from the formal to the informal. At the formal level, the group recognized the value of exchange agreements between institutions across country boundaries. These agreements facilitate faculty and student exchanges, study tours, and conference attendance. Memberships in international organizations, such as IFLA (the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions), or in national organizations with an international arm, like the American Library Association with its International Relations Office, were recognized as means of connecting people and developing standards (for example, IFLA's Guidelines for Professional Library and Information Education Programs). These organizations also offer

mechanisms for overcoming barriers to LIS globalization efforts, such as those associated with course and degree equivalency. A named individual on a school's faculty with responsibility for coordinating international activities would formalize individual efforts within a school and provide a point of contact for further development.

At the informal level, the value of personal contacts was reaffirmed. Suggestions for individual activity included collaboration on research projects (deemed relatively easy in this electronic age), exchange of syllabi and reading lists (perhaps through a clearinghouse), and web-based co-teaching. Publicizing successful efforts will draw attention to new possibilities and encourage others to pursue additional ways to internationalize their programs.

On the final day of the conference, participants identified broad areas of agreement and direction and began framing a statement of principles and goals. Upon completion, the statement will be shared widely and endorsement will be sought from LIS educators and other interested parties. It is expected that there will be additional meetings following on the Chapel Hill initiative in order to build on the initial consensus achieved. More information about the conference can be found at: <http://ils.unc.edu/global-lis/> (Evelyn Daniel is professor at the School of Information and Library Science, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill and Jordan Scepanski is the executive director of the Triangle Research Libraries Network.)



Participants from eleven countries at the Chapel Hill Conference on Globalization of LIS Education, April 7 – 9, 2002. (Photo: Jordan Scepanski, April 2002)

## INFO 2002, Havana, Cuba

By Robert Seal



ALA members with their Cuban colleagues participating in the INFO 2002 in Havana, Cuba, April 22- 26, 2002.

A contingent of more than 30 American librarians, information specialists, and library trustees participated in INFO 2002, the International Congress of Information, sponsored by Cuba's Instituto de Información Científica y Tecnológica (IDICT), April 22-26 at Havana's International Conference Center. Among the group were several members of ALA including President John Berry, President-Elect Mitch Freedman, and Bob Seal, Chair of the IRC Subcommittee on Latin America and the Caribbean. Mr. Berry gave one of the keynote addresses at the opening session: "The Shock of the New: The Future of Libraries in a Networked World."

Several members of the U.S. delegation gave papers, appeared on panels, and offered poster sessions. In addition, there were a number of formal and informal meetings between American and Cuban colleagues, discussing cooperation, sharing experiences, and learning about each other's library world. On Monday, April 22, Marta Terry, President of ASCUBI, the Cuban Library Association, hosted a meeting of Cuban and U.S. librarians at the Biblioteca Nacional. With more than 40 in attendance, Ms. Terry and John Berry moderated a discussion of library issues with a focus on possible collaborative projects. Among the many ideas presented were exchanges of materials and personnel; reciprocal delegations at our annual meetings; the translation of our professional literature into Spanish and English; and seeking ways to publish articles in each other's professional literature. In Cuba there is a particularly acute need for up-to-date publications on librarianship and library education.

At a meeting later in the week hosted by Enrique Suárez, President of SOCICT, the Cuban society for information science, similar conversations occurred. Rhonda Neugebauer,

from the UC Riverside and leader of a tour of American librarians before and after the conference, made a presentation on the topic of importance of Cuba-U.S. library cooperation which were well received by both sides. In the end, librarians from ALA, ASCUBI, and SOCICT stressed the value of the meetings during the conference and emphasized the need to continue to communicate until INFO 2004, during which additional meetings of librarians should occur.

American librarians, most in Cuba for the first time, also took advantage of being in Havana and visited libraries, bookstores, the Casa de las Américas, and the University of Havana and its library school, as well as museums, shops, and the streets of Havana Vieja (Old Havana). The friendliness of the people, the Cuban food and music, and the warm, sunny weather, made this conference one to remember. Most importantly, new friendships were made, old friendships renewed, and exciting ideas and plans for collaboration emerged. It was beginning of a new era of Cuba-U.S. library relations, one in which all attendees hope to play a role in the future.

### 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  
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Phyllis Lyons  
Suzanne Maryeski  
Jerrie Merridith  
Paul Miller  
Janalyn Moss  
E.R. Muhammad  
Carol Murdoch  
Jean Packard  
POSTECH Library  
Gayle Reeves  
William Robinson  
Carol Stukey  
James Wellvang  
Sarah Wenzel  
Catherine Wojewodzki

### 2003-2004 Fulbright Program

The Fulbright Commission in London has again announced an award for a librarian to assist the Memorial Trust of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Air Division (8<sup>th</sup> Army Air Force). The award is for 12 months, beginning September 2003. Deadline for application is August 1, 2002. For specific queries, contact Daria Teutonico (202)686-6245 or Holly Williams (202)686-6232.



## 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.



Armenian official delegates participated in the NLW celebration held from April 14 – 20, 2002.

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 coordinated and publicized all activities, including a special Web page linked to the Association's home page <http://www.iatp.am/ala>. Promotional materials included posters and the publication of a special issue of the Association's annual, under its new title: Armenian Library.

The official opening ceremony took place in the National Library of Armenia on April 15. More than 230 librarians, information specialists, and government officials participated in the event. In his opening address, President of Armenian Library Association Nerses Hayrapetyan welcomed all Armenian librarians. Participants also included well-known Armenian writer Sylva Kaputikyan, Vice President of the RA National Academy of Sciences, Vladimir Barkhudaryan, U. S. ambassador to Armenia John Ordway, and others.

More than 100 libraries and library systems in the Republic of Armenia participated in National Library Week, with a variety of more than 200 different programs and other activities. On April 25, Chair of the National Assembly Mr. Armen Khachatryan hosted Armenian Library Association's delegation. Librarians and RA Parliament Speaker discussed issues and tasks of library development in Armenia. Khachatryan highly valued National Library Week initiative and encouraged librarians more actively participate in efforts of library networking and management.

In Georgia, the Association of Information Specialists (AIS) teamed up with Georgian Library Association and others to create their first ever National Library Week, which actually included celebrations that stretched the entire month of April nationwide. Over 100 libraries also participated in the National Library Week in Georgia which included exhibitions, presentations, press conferences, seminars, meetings between famous persons and readers and librarians, one-day free Internet access in the Association of Information Specialists Lab at Tbilisi State University, and awards to librarians and library users. Three different posters were created for National Library Week, along with t-shirts, pens, and notepads with @ Your Library. The U.S. Embassy in Georgia also actively supported National Library Week, helping to promote and hosting a reception at the Embassy, which was covered by the mass media. For more information please visit the AIS site at <http://www.ais.org.ge/>



One of the posters created for celebrating the National Library Week held in Georgia, April 2002.

## Library Project

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the role of libraries in the economic development of a community and in creating Economic Information Centers through libraries. Local libraries are now funded from city funds and the support of mayors and vice-mayors is critical to that happening.

The Partnership between the Eagle Library District and the VT library is an example of what the best partnership can look like: a steady stream of good used and new books to the VT library, pen pals, programs, and finally, a commitment from VT to form the English language reading room and from the Eagle Library District to pay for a computer to be delivered to the VT library from a local computer store. Investigation into options showed that wiring funds directly to the computer store was the fastest and safest way to deliver a computer to the library.

The partner project is not without its challenges. As might be expected, some partnerships have communicated more than others. We have begun to learn what makes a project a success.

- Someone other than the library director takes the responsibility for the project in the library. Library directors are too busy. Library staff members are capable to take a more intense interest in activities of the project.
- Americans have to be persistent and committed. There is a real cultural difference between Bulgarians and Americans. For many Bulgarians, communicating with an American is an exciting, intimidating, and IMPORTANT activity. They have had to do it in English. We have a sound and reliable translator in Bulgaria

who will translate e-mail messages on a daily basis.

- The partnership is not without expense. We import Bulgarian jewelry and crafts and sell them at ALA and other library conferences. The part of the profits is used to send books donated by Colorado libraries to their partners. Donations are expected and some library vendors have been generous with their support.

The most wonderful part of this whole project is the warmth and friendships we have forged with a people and a country rich in history, strength, and beauty. The Bulgarian people love their country and heritage. We are so happy to look to the ongoing friendship with our Partner Library, Kalina, Mr. Alexandrov, our pen pals and all the librarians there. For more information about the Partner Library Program, go to [www.cla-web.org](http://www.cla-web.org).

## International Relations Office

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