The largest remnant of the former Soviet Union, the Russian Federation, is overwhelmingly Russian in population. It does have enclaves of ethnic minorities, however, and Tatarstan is one of the largest. Its capital, Kazan, is situated midway between Moscow and the Urals on Europe’s longest river, the Volga. The city has a population of 1.2 million, roughly half Russian, half Tatar. Russian tsar Ivan the Terrible conquered the city for Muscovy in 1552. Tatarstan became an Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic in 1920, declared its independence in 1990, and voted for independence in a referendum in 1992. A treaty in 1994 recognized Tatarstan’s sovereignty but confirmed its association with the Russian Federation.

I visited Kazan October 4-12 as part of an exchange program between Rutgers and Kazan State University. A three-year State Department grant to support instruction and research in federalism, ethnicity, nationalism, and gender financed short visits in each direction by 24 faculty members. When the professors from Kazan arrived at Rutgers I provided them with tours and orientation in our Alexander Library. They were very pleased with our open stacks, array of database offerings, and free interlibrary loan with desktop delivery of articles. We established a small book exchange and gained online access to an excellent historical journal based in Kazan, Ab Imperio. During my visit I toured the libraries with the purpose of exploring the options for continuing the exchange and spoke to various groups of students and librarians.

Kazan State University is the second-oldest Russian university. Its foundation in 1804 took advantage of an opportunity in Central Europe, recruiting many German scholars whose livelihood had become uncertain as the result of the Napoleonic Wars. Russian scholars also distinguished themselves at the university, notably the mathematician Lobachevskii. Under his rectorship the huge main building that still dominates this urban campus was completed in the 1820s. Today the university has 16,000 students.

The university library is even older than the university. Its core was the collection of Russian bibliophile and statesman Prince Potemkin.
Message from the Editor

In this issue we take virtual trips to Russia and Central Asia through the reports from two correspondants based in the United States. Jim Niessen takes us to the libraries in Kazan, Russia, where he visited with colleagues at the Kazan State University library. Tatjana Lorković describes her experiences in the Central Asian countries of the former Soviet Union and a conference she attended there. It is wonderful to learn about the work being done by our colleagues in that area of the world and the improvements they are bringing to their patrons.

Another conference report comes from Sha Li Zhang, who attended the IFLA World Library and Information Congress last August in Durban, South Africa. I want to remind everyone of the future dates and locations of the next annual conferences:
- Quebec City, Canada, 10-15 August 2008
- Milan, Italy, August 2009
- Brisbane, Australia, August 2010

I hope that many of our colleagues in North America will consider attending Quebec next year.

Although the conference registrations are expensive, they are worth every dime for the opportunity to meet with librarians from all over the world. Go to http://www.ifla.org for more information about the conference.

I also want to draw your attention to the list of meetings for IRRT and IRC at the upcoming ALA Midwinter conference on page 5. As usual, the meetings are held primarily on Saturday and Sunday. During these meetings I will submit my proposal for changes to the publications of IRRT. The next issue of International Leads will have summaries of these meetings.

Finally, I want to bring your attention to a brief request for information from Blanche Woolls, IRC Chair. IRC is attempting to establish a network of ties between LIS students around the world, thereby enriching the learning experience for all involved. What an opportunity to strengthen the LIS profession!

I wish everyone a peaceful and joyful holiday season. I hope to see you at ALA Midwinter!

~ Rebecca Miller Banner

Call for Submission

Do you have news about...

International library activities?
People in international librarianship?
Upcoming international conferences?
International partnerships between libraries?

Then why not submit it to International Leads? Send your news to intl.leads.irrt@gmail.com for consideration.

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Message from the IRRT Chair

By Joan Weeks

As we look ahead to Midwinter in Philadelphia, I would like to focus on opportunities to participate not only in IRRT programs and activities, but also through IRRT in international librarianship.

For the first time at Midwinter, we will have an orientation session for our international librarians. We would also like to invite new IRRT members to this session to meet everyone. Everyone is invited to the all committee meeting on Saturday morning, January 12th, to visit committee meetings and see where they may contribute.

IRRT is taking an active role in the ALA Emerging Leaders initiative again this year, and we want to congratulate our participants in this round: Robin Kerr, our IRRT web editor and Kodjo Atiso, Head of the Animal Research Institute Library in Ghana. Susan Schnuer, immediate Past Chair, has proposed and gained approval for an IRRT-sponsored project to identify and organize free online tutorials and learning experiences that librarians around the world can tap to keep abreast of the latest and best practices in the library field. As this project unfolds, your recommendations and feedback are going to insure its success.

Have you seen the message posted by ALA president Loriene Roy on our IRRT blog at: http://alairrt.blogspot.com about the IRC initiative to match LIS students with their counterparts around the world with the goal of meeting in person at IFLA this summer? Do you know of library students who would be interested in this initiative? They may contact Dr. Blanche Woolls, chair of the IRC at: bwoolls@slis.sjsu.edu. Everyone can contribute comments to blog postings and, if desired, post to the blog by emailing me at: weeks@cua.edu to be added to the authors list.

Speaking of IFLA, this may be a very good time for many of us in North America to attend for the first time, as it will be held in Quebec, Canada August 10-14, 2008. Full details are available at: http://www.ifla.org/IV/ifla74/index.htm.

The Exchanges Committee has been very busy adding new opportunities for both short and long term exchanges. Explore funding opportunities at: http://www.ala.org/ala/irrt/irrtcommittees/irrintlexchangesupport.htm. Maybe you can’t leave your community but you can still participate in a Sister Library partnership. You can easily add your library’s information to the Sister Libraries’ wiki at: http://wikis.ala.org/sisterlibraries/index.php/Main_Page. Several Russian librarians attending the Open World programs in Washington, DC noted that there are many public libraries in Russia that would like to participate in a sister library relationship with a public library in the US.

Libraries in developing countries are in particular need of help if not in person then through fundraising and collaboration. Many of these projects are linked through the International Library Development Interest Group web page at: http://www.ala.org/ala/irrt/irrtcommittees/isld/isld.htm. I would like to draw special attention this time to the Lubuto Library Project and invite your support via their website at: http://www.lubuto.org/.

It is time to start thinking about an appointment to our IRRT committees. Just after Midwinter, Chair Elect Judith Lin Hunt will begin the process of appointing members to committees. You may use the committee interest form at: http://www.ala.org/ala/irrt/irrtcommittees/interestform.htm. Perhaps you know of someone who would like to run for office or you would like to run. Jeannette Pierce is chairing our Nominating Committee and can be contacted at:jpierc2@luc.edu.

In conclusion, I would like to invite everyone to get involved and make a difference in IRRT and globally through your active participation.
Unified Networks and Stronger Cooperation among Central Asian Libraries

By Tatjana Lorković

There are close to sixty million people and around 25,000 libraries in the Central Asian republics. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, many of the economic, cultural and information connections among these republics were discontinued. Cultural isolation became the order of the day. Each republic started to develop its own information and library networks. The relations between the republics were destroyed and the book exchanges were brought to a minimum. Librarians in these countries, however, always wanted to develop cultural and information relations. They are bound by similar languages, traditions and history. Nowadays there is a push towards a unified network system and for broad library cooperation. This new trend was evident at “Issykkul’ 2007,” a library conference attended by a large group of Central Asian library professionals.


The main ideas of the conference, prominently displayed on the walls in the meeting hall, were “Equal opportunity and equal access to knowledge and information in electronic environment” and “We need one another” (displayed in Russian as “My nuzhny drugu”).

Attending the conference were 53 delegates from Kyrgyzstan, five from Kazakhstan, six from Uzbekistan, five from Tadzhikistan, three from Russia, one from Armenia, and nine from the United States of America. The fifth Central Asian republic, Turkmenistan, was not represented despite the efforts of the organizers to invite their colleagues from that Republic. Apparently the (now deceased) former leader of the country, Saparmurat Niyazov, closed all libraries during his reign and thus effectively destroyed library organizations and their infrastructure.

It was not possible, unfortunately, to reach out to that country and bring any Turkmeni librarians to the conference. The delegates were for the most part leaders of the national, academic and regional libraries and directors of the Book Chambers of these Central Asian countries. Some children’s literature librarians and rural librarians were also represented at the conference.

These annual library meetings, started in the year 2000 and modeled after the Russian annual library “Crimea Conference,” were organized by the Kyrgyz Library Information Consortium, with the support of the Ministry of Culture and Information of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan. The conference was partially funded by the “Soros-Kyrgyzstan Open Society Organization,” The World Bank, EBSCO Publishing (USA), and the United States Embassy to the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, among others.

The work of the conference was divided into sections, round tables and master classes. The section subjects were:

- Collection formation & development and management of knowledge resources
- Organization of effective use of information in the electronic environment
- Cooperative interaction and collaboration

The round tables discussed:

- Young specialists in the libraries: achievements and opportunities
- Museum libraries, archives and general culture areas
- Central Asia’s information and library infrastructure: problems and decisions

A specially organized master class was devoted to “Rural libraries as a gateway to knowledge and information for remote areas far from the Republic’s cultural centers.”

The papers were given in the Russian, Kyrgyz and English languages. My presentation, entitled “Collecting Central Asian materials in large academic libraries in the United States,” was delivered in Russian. After a historical overview of the Soviet and post-Soviet era I explained the current situation and our difficulties in keeping up and developing the Central Asian collections. The essence of my speech was a plea to the directors of the Book Chambers and library colleagues to organize their own book exporting companies which would send their publications to Western research libraries without intermediaries and the resultant chronic delays. Why let companies from other countries reap the profits from their products when they could set up a book trade on their own? My recommendation underlined the need for the establishment of a book-export company for Central Asia, a company which would take over the function of the former Soviet “Mezhdunarodnaia kniga,” to procure Central Asian printed materials for world research libraries in a timely and systematic manner. This would also provide an opportunity for the employment of some librarians and it would be a step towards the business development among the library cadres.

Continued on page 8
**ALA Midwinter 2008**  
**Meeting Schedule**

### IRC
- **International Relations Committee I**  
  Friday, 1-11-2008  
  1:30 pm - 3:30pm  
  *Bogle Pratt Award Committee*  
  Saturday, 1-12-2008  
  8:00 am - 10:00am  
  *Humphry Award Meeting*  
  Saturday, 1-12-2008  
  8:00 am - 10:00am

### IRRT
- **Executive Committee Meeting**  
  Sunday, 1-13-2008  
  8:00 pm - 10:30am and 10:30 am - 12:00 pm  
  *International Librarians Orientation*  
  Friday, 1-11-2008  
  4:00 pm - 5:30pm

### IRC/IRRT
- **IRC/IRRT All Subcommittee Meeting**  
  Saturday, 1-12-2008  
  8:00 am - 10:00

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**It’s not too early to start thinking about ALA Annual... and opportunities to present!**

**Papers**

The 2008 International Papers Program theme is Re-Assess, Reassign, and Reinvent: Collection Building Without Global Borders. Librarians have long been interested in resource-sharing and collection enhancement on a worldwide basis. Political turmoil, economic restraints, and lack of professional personnel impede on collection development efforts of many libraries. This program explores global efforts to improve distribution of publications to library collections. The focus is on successful initiatives, and will provide helpful advise on assuring that library surplus materials reach their destinations on a timely, cost-effective manner.

Priority deadline for proposals is Friday, December 28, 2007. Final deadline is January 18, 2008. Proposals and final papers must be written in English and if accepted, presenters are expected to deliver their papers in English.

Proposals should include:

- Proposed title of presentation
- Abstract (400 -500 words)
- Name(s) of presenter(s)
- Employer or affiliated institution
- Mailing address
- Telephone/fax numbers
- E-mail address
- Short biographical statement and résumé of presenter(s)

Please submit proposal to:

- International Relations Office  
  American Library Association  
  50 East Huron Street  
  Chicago, IL 60611-2795  
  USA
- E-mail: intl@ala.org  
  Fax: 1-312-280-4392

**Posters**

If you have been inspired by the sample poster sessions that have been sent out and would like to participate in next summer’s ALA international poster sessions, the form is now open for submissions:

http://www.lib.jmu.edu/org/ala/

Proposals will be due on or before January 31st, 2008. If you have questions about submissions you can contact the main ALA poster session coordinator, Jody Fagan, at faganjc@jmu.edu
The 2007 IFLA Annual Conference, with a theme of Libraries for the Future: Progress, Development, & Partnerships, was held in Durban, South Africa, August 18 through 24, 2007. More than 3,000 librarians from 106 countries gathered in Durban. Among them, 1,100 participants were from African countries and more than 400 participants were from South Africa. It was a wonderful experience to be able to meet and network with many librarians from Africa during the conference.

Among many conference events in Durban, I have to say that the opening session was the most moving and compelling moment. Dr. Alex Byrne, IFLA President and Ms. Ellen Tise, South Africa National Committee Chair, presented congratulating ceremony speeches. Dr. Byrne told the audience that he and his Australian colleagues raised funds through lunches, coffee breaks, raffle tickets, and other small ways to sponsor 16 librarians from Australia to attend the IFLA Annual Conference in Durban. He challenged the librarians in North America to do the same for librarians in South America in the 2008 conference in Quebec and the librarians in Europe to help librarians in Middle East region in the 2009 conference in Milan. Dr. Z. Pallo Jordan, South Africa National Minister of Arts and Culture addressed to the audience that there was an urgent need of developing a reading culture in South Africa and elsewhere. The government of South Africa has undertaken several initiatives for funding libraries, for better staffing, more open hours, and better technology. Albie Sachs, Justice on the Constitutional Court of South Africa, presented a keynote speech. He was appointed to the court by then President Nelson Mandela in 1994. In his speech, Justice Sachs described reading as swimming in the oceans where one could get knowledge and inspirations. He called for recognition of oral traditions that have legal and medical values.

Several other sessions at IFLA are worthy of mentioning. One of them was a brainstorm session, “Libraries on the Agenda,” hosted by Claudia Lux, IFLA President-Elect. She asked the participants to formulate their strategies on the following items: figure out who is the first contact, how to present the plan, and how to follow up? The participants were also asked to identify key points of advocacy behavior, pitfalls (never do…); and cultural diversity in advocacy. It was an excellent exercise session.

The conference organized several library visits to university libraries, school libraries, special libraries, and public libraries for interested participants. I was able to visit the University of Zululand Library, a two-hour traveling by a bus from Durban. The university was established in 1960s, as a rural comprehensive university, mainly serving the Zulu and Swazi ethnic students until 1986 when it was open to students of all races. More than 10,000 students are at the university now. The six-story library was erected at the center of the campus in the 1980s. The building is quite modern and spacious. Though English is the instructional language at the university, the Library collects and provides access to a valuable Zulu collection. My overall impression was that the Library was well-maintained and kept updated. We were told that more computers were needed for the use of general student body for web surfing, checking e-mail messages, and other functions. An instructional room with more than 30 computers is reserved for staff training and instructional classes.

Sha Li Zhang is a university librarian at the University of North Carolina at Greensboro.
Continued from Page 1

Kazan

roughly 1700 titles in 3500 volumes and 33 manuscripts, including a seventeenth-century Torah scroll and a long manuscript history of Russia commissioned by Ivan the Terrible. Potemkin intended the collection for a university in southern Russia that was never founded. Then the collection traveled to Kazan, making the journey in 18 wagons under the guard of six soldiers. Lobachevskii built a separate facility for the growing library that was known in his time as the Temple of Books: specially designed hollow bricks were strong enough to support a galleried structure with shelves on the inside walls accessible by ladders and decorated by busts of the Muses. Later the university gained stack space by adding floors to the building. Special Collections boasts a Bookeye scanner that it is using to provide researchers with images from its rare manuscript and newspaper holdings.

Tatar and Arabic manuscripts supported the university’s early distinction as the center of Oriental Studies in the Russian Empire. The chief Tatar language collection in Kazan today is in the National Library of Tatarstan, located in two buildings not far from the university. It was founded as the city’s municipal library in 1865, then in the twentieth century became the chief public library of the autonomous republic and gained the title of National Library in 1989. Today it has a collection of 3 million volumes. Both the University Library’s Special Collections and the National Library have participated in archeographical expeditions to identify manuscripts in rural communities and transfer them to their repositories.

The size of the university’s collection reached two million volumes early in the Soviet period and continued to grow. There was a desperate shortage of storage space, and much of the collection was stored off site. Finally in 1979 the university gained a new, high-rise building for its main collections that is distinct from the old one. This is where the bulk of the libraries’ circulating collection of five million volumes, technical services, and reading rooms are located.

Most of the collection is in closed stacks and must be requested at the circulation desk on the basis of the several catalogs: a box catalog for the oldest materials, author and title catalogs, subject catalogs based on a subject heading system up till 1992 and alphanumerical classical classification afterwards, and an online catalog that is complete only from 1989 onwards. Current acquisitions of books include multiple copies of many textbooks and rely heavily on faculty selection and exchanges. All first-year students of the university attend a three-class sequence of lectures that introduce them to the library, its catalogs, and bibliographic tools in their major subject. In contrast to the closed stacks for most of the collection, there are a number of specialized reading rooms in the main library with materials on open shelves.

Copy cataloging, interlibrary loan, and online databases are less common than in the US, but change is afoot. The library is participating in a project to create a Russian union catalog. Two librarians are dedicated to this project. The authors of Russian theses summarize them in long abstracts (avtoreferaty) that are freely available online, and the theses themselves have been made available online since the inception of a (passworded) national service in 2003. During my visit I was able to provide a live demo for American Studies students of Academic Search Premier and America: History & Life that are available as donated subscriptions but, due to their English language, rarely used outside this small group.

One of the high points of my visit was a talk about the Rutgers University Libraries to a group of librarians from Kazan State and other universities of the city. For an introduction I showed how our system works with the help of screen images. There was a lively session of questions and answers, which I illustrated with online graphs of service trends in our libraries. They were fascinated to learn that, like elsewhere in the US, our circulation and reference statistics are down, but database usage and interlibrary loan are up.

Our colleagues in Kazan have relatively modest status, pay, and budgets. But they are proud of their history, play an important role in the lives of their institutions, and they are changing with the times.

Jim Nieseen is World History Librarian at Rutgers University Libraries, Pennsylvania. You can reach him at niessen@rci.rutgers.edu

Are you part of an international partnership? Have you recently visited or hosted your partner? If you have - please share your experiences with us! Send a description of your partnership or visit to intl.leads.irrt@gmail.com
Central Asian

Continued from Page 4

The conference ended with a session in which joint conclusions and suggestions for future action were presented by Marat Rakhmatullaev Alimovich, (The National Library of Uzbekistan). The main joint library effort, including Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan and Tadzhikistan, called for the implementation of CALINET—Central Asia Library Information Network. Participants discussed the possible strategies on how to achieve this main goal. They talked about education, international seminars, consultations with Western librarians, visits to the developed countries, the organization of book exchanges, dissemination of scientific and bibliographic information and so forth. One of the issues, rarely talked about, but present in the minds of many participants, was the necessity of technical support for Internet availability in small libraries in Central Asia. These libraries have experienced slow response times for their Internet systems which are also prone to intermittent collapses. The purpose of CALINET will be the development of the Central Asian republics’ information infrastructure which would provide the region with open access to many information resources. The project, if it is to be effective, should develop in several directions. It should encompass the Central Asia International Library Training Center, the Central Asia Union Library Electronic Catalog, the Central Asia WWW Library Portal (in Kazakh, Kyrgyz, Uzbek, Russian and English), and enhance library cooperation among the Central Asian republics.

Tatjana Lorković is Curator of Slavic and East European Collections at Yale University, United States

An Opportunity for LIS Students around the World:

The International Relations Committee is trying to connect library and information science students in schools in the United States with LIS students in other countries around the globe. We have been very successful in getting the names of students in the U.S. who are anxious to participate and we will have the new IFLA Directory of programs for our meetings at midwinter.

If you, personally, have a connection with an LIS program in another country, would you please send:

- your name
- the name of your LIS program
- your city and country
- your e-mail address
- the name of the other LIS program
- the city and country of the partner
- the name of the professor
- that professor’s e-mail address

to Blanche Woolls, Chair, IRC (e-mail: bwoolls@slis.sjsu.edu) so we can get this project underway immediately after Midwinter.