Librarians on Bikes: A trip across the United States

By John Boyd, Information Literacy Librarian, and Beth Cramer, Catalog and Liaison Librarian, Appalachian State University, USA

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Editors note: Beth Cramer was Chair of IRRT 2016-2017. Rebecca Miller caught up with Beth and John to bring us their story.

Rebecca: What inspired this idea to bike across the country and visit libraries along the way?

Beth & John: For the last ten years, we have completed many bicycle tours that lasted one to three weeks. We always planned on cycling across the country, it was just a question of finding the time. We did not want to wait until retirement, since that is still a few years away and there are no guarantees about one’s health. Fortunately, we work at a university library that offers the option of a nine-month contract, allowing us to have our summers off. We’ve reached a point in our lives and careers that time is more important than money.

And why visit libraries along the way? Even though we’re academic librarians, we are big advocates of public libraries. We feel that public libraries are one of the few public places where all are welcome without having to purchase anything. During our visits, we would talk to the library staff, ask them about their library resources and services, both for residents and non-residents (including bicycle tourists such as ourselves). We wrote about the libraries on our Library Blog.

We also have very fond memories of our childhood summers spent riding bicycles and hanging out at libraries. This bicycle trip allowed us to recapture some of that summertime magic.

Rebecca: You rode from Washington, D.C., to Astoria, Oregon, passing through Pennsylvania, Ohio, Kansas, Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho. How did you decide on your route?

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Beth & John: We pieced together sections of various pre-mapped routes. The first half of our trip was based on the Eastern Express Route, a route that includes the C&O Canal Trail, the Great Allegheny Passage Trail, and the Katy Trail. In the second half of our trip, we cycled the iconic TransAmerica Bicycle Trail, created in 1976 to commemorate America’s Bicentennial. The trail, which follows secondary roads across the U.S., passes primarily through small towns.

Rebecca: I would imagine it is easier to bike on country highways. How many miles did you log?

Beth & John: We cycled 4,380 miles, traveling from Washington, D.C. to Astoria, Oregon.

Rebecca: That’s a long ways to go, even taking over three months to complete the trip (May to August)! It is also a lot of opportunities to visit public libraries. Which was the most memorable library you visited?

John & Beth: We visited around 31 libraries over the summer. If we had to pick one library, it would be the Robert Hoag Public Library, in Pueblo, Colorado. It is a new, beautiful, and vibrant main library with outstanding programming and children’s services. It is central to downtown Pueblo and really demonstrates how much this historically economically challenged city values their library.

Rebecca: If you had to summarize what you learned on your trip in one sentence, what would you say?

John: Traveling by bicycle is a great way to meet people, be part of the landscape, and travel the backroads of America.

Beth: By traveling through small town America, I realized how little I know about small town America.

Rebecca: Sounds like something a visitor to another country might say - discovering new places. Any advice for other aspiring long-distance bikers?

John & Beth: You can do it! You meet so many other long-distance cyclists, young and old, from all over the world. They all carve out the time and expense to make the journey. There was something special about waking up each morning knowing we get to ride our bicycles. Read the stories of other long-distance cyclists—they will inspire you.

Rebecca: Thank you for sharing your story with us. We hope readers will be inspired to visit libraries when touring new cities, even if just passing through!

Beth & John: Read about Beth and John’s adventure at https://www.librariansonbikes.com/ and learn interesting facts about public libraries in small-town America, such as which library has a taxidermized lion, which library employs the town’s mayor as its head librarian, and how many were formerly banks.
Message from the Editors

We welcome you, our readers, to the beginning of another ALA year that we hope will be the best yet. We are eager to write all about your groundbreaking, breathtaking, life changing, and thrilling projects and initiatives. Contact us!

With many projects in the pipeline, IRRT is in need of more volunteers. If you are interested and able to volunteer, we encourage you to email the Chair, Muzhgan Nazarova, at mnaz@loc.gov. Volunteering is a rewarding way to support IRRT’s work.

In this issue we spotlight the round table’s new Executive Board and report on the ALA annual conference. We continue to recognize the international scope of librarianship in the recurring feature articles on partner libraries, libraries outside of the U.S., and fellow librarians from around the world. If you fall into one of these categories, please contact us so we can share your story.

Want a scoop on what the Chair and Chair Elect have in the works for the year? Be sure to read their columns.

Happy reading!

Meet the Editors

Rebecca Miller

Rebecca is an independent library consultant, focusing on libraries in developing countries. She specializes in research, strategic planning, outreach, administration/management for libraries. She offers tailored professional development trainings and presentations on these and other topics. Rebecca has over 20 years of experience with libraries, as a practitioner and professor.

Florence Mugambi

Florence is the African Studies Librarian at the Herskovits Library of African Studies, Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois, USA. She has over 10 years of experience as a librarian, and has a strong interest in literacy & establishment of libraries in rural communities of developing countries. She serves as the chair of the Africa Subcommittee, International Relations Committee.
As we start a new ALA year, I am extremely excited and pleased to serve as chair of IRRT – one of the largest, strongest, and most diverse round tables of ALA - whose strength lies not only in its size (third largest, with 1,724 members) but its people as well.

My theme for the year is Serving Communities: Globally and Locally. Libraries today continue to serve the ideals of free and open access to ideas, information, and intellectual freedom, while attuned to meeting the needs of their communities. One of IFLA’s 10 global vision opportunities states that “We need to understand community needs better and design services for impact.” Given its international focus, IRRT is in a special place for understanding diverse community needs.

Last year was a terrific year under Loida Garcia-Febo’s leadership. The IRRT Endowment reached its $50,000 goal and the first Mission Enhancement grant was awarded to The Chromebook Lab at the Axumite Heritage Foundation Library (Ethiopia). IRRT sponsored a group of Emerging Leaders to survey IRRT membership and identify means for engaging international members. The group presented the results of the survey in a white paper and a poster session at ALA Annual. It was a real pleasure and privilege to work with Loida and other Executive Board officers, including Beth Cramer, Jeremiah Paschke Wood, Sandy Hirsh, Julia Gelfand, and Richard Sapon-White. I welcome Florence Nthiira Mugambi as our new member-at-large and Richard as our new chair-elect. I also look forward to working with Delin Guerra and Michael Dowling of the International Relations Office.

Thank you to everyone who responded to the call for volunteers and to all the members who agreed to continue serving. However, we are still in need of more volunteers due to the many projects ahead.

Through the committee nomination process, I learnt a great deal about IRRT’s international membership. The results of the Emerging Leaders survey also provided detailed information about our membership. For example, we have quite a representation of countries like Romania, Moldova, Italy, Greece, etc., but we have not been able to engage those members in IRRT activities. In addition, there are many international members of ALA who are not members of IRRT. We will look for innovative ways to recruit international members to participate in IRRT and I believe this year is a perfect time to do so.

I consider Loida Garcia-Febo the most international oriented ALA President of all time. Please see the information about her newly announced international resources and her international initiatives including “I am ALA International Spotlight,” which highlights and recognizes members from different regions around the world every month. Members of Loida’s International Advisory Board—Ray Pun, Barbara Ford, and Robin Kear—work closely with IRRT, and I thank them for their support.

For information about our activities, I encourage you to regularly check the IRRT blog, Facebook page, and website, which are maintained by the members of IRRT’s Publications Committee. My deepest gratitude and appreciation go to the Publications Committee for their continued commitment in keeping these points of contacts running. These include Joan Weeks, a longstanding member of the Publications Committee, for her ongoing work to refresh and enhance the IRRT website; and Rebecca Miller and Florence Mugambi, editors of the International Leads newsletter. Echoing Loida, Rebecca and Florence “took this publication to a higher level.”

I encourage you all to submit your stories and articles to International Leads and share them with the IRRT community. Each story is as unique as each of you, and the impact of your work – no matter how big or small - is tremendous.

I am really looking forward to working with all of you to bring IRRT and our work in international arenas to a different level. This is a time of great transformations and changes for IRRT and we should go for it all together!
By Richard Sapon-White  
richard.sapon-white@oregonstate.edu

I am writing this column, my first for International Leads as IRRT Chair-Elect, a few days before departing for the IFLA World Library and Information Congress in Kuala Lumpur. Travel to the other side of the world is not easy. I am worrying about how to get from the airport to my lodging in the middle of the night in a city I have never been to before – after 3 plane trips that total over 24 hours in the air! I also know that my first few days may be a little foggy due to the 15-hour time change. Naturally, I am asking myself: Why am I doing this?

For me the answer is obvious. I have been involved in various groups, projects, and exchanges which promote a world view of libraries. As with the air we breathe and the money we spend, everyone on this planet is dependent on everyone else for their well-being. Libraries, too, are a part of that web, so it is imperative that we librarians be mindful of all the ways in which we can contribute to and benefit from this interconnectedness.

We can contribute to good international relations when we send books abroad, when we correspond with colleagues overseas about mutually important issues, when we donate to help rebuild libraries devastated by floods and earthquakes. We benefit when we learn that libraries abroad do things differently – and sometimes better – and bring those new ideas and perspectives back to our home institutions. IRRT provides many opportunities for building bridges to libraries around the world.

By the time you read this, I will have returned from Kuala Lumpur where I have two specific obligations to fulfill.

First, I was appointed to the IFLA Form/Genre Working Group, which will meet during the conference. I hope to contribute to promoting the use of form and genre terms to help users better search for resources. I believe that we all have expertise that is needed somewhere in the world. While we spend much of our work lives helping our local institutions and users, we have an obligation to seek out opportunities to use that expertise in other places, both far and near. I am looking forward to participating in this work group, whose membership hails from four continents.

Second, I will be delivering a lightning talk about a project I started last year to ensure that all Oregon Indian tribes were represented in Library of Congress Subject Headings (and adding or correcting subject headings for them in WorldCat). I wondered how relevant this topic would be to an international audience until I realized that the project is incredibly relevant. Indigenous peoples around the globe have been marginalized; my hope is that the project will show a way that librarians can bring those peoples into our catalogs and better serve them as library users. IFLA’s Indigenous Matters Section will offer longer presentations in Kuala Lumpur about indigenous groups in New Zealand, Malaysia, and North America that may inform some of the work that I do.

Travel may not be to everyone’s liking, but the value for me definitely outweighs any temporary hardships. Any difficulties make for good stories eventually, but focusing on the more positive experiences I know will bring balance to any trip. I hope in my future columns to continue my contemplations on international librarianship.
Meet Your IRRT Executive Board

The IRRT Executive Board provides governance oversight to the round table. It consists of a Chair, Chair Elect, Past Chair, Secretary/Treasurer, Councilor, and two Members At Large. The presence of the Past Chair, Chair, and Chair Elect on the board concurrently ensures continuity in leadership from year to year, supported by the two-year long Secretary appointment. The Councilor acts as liaison between IRRT and ALA governance, and the Members at Large provide additional representation to membership.

Dr. Muzhgan Nazarova’s career as a seasoned international library and information science professional and educator spans almost four decades and a variety of library types. Currently, she is the Turkic Languages Librarian (Asian and Middle Eastern Division, Acquisitions and Bibliographic Access Directorate) at the Library of Congress. She gained previous library experience in administration, management, reference, and collection development at Duke University Library, University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign), University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill), Cleveland Public Library, Azerbaijan State Medical Library, and US State Department Information Resource Center. A native of Azerbaijan, Muzhgan received her PhD from University of Illinois (Urbana-Champaign), and MLS from the University of North Carolina (Chapel Hill). She also holds a Certificate in Management with concentration in Information Management from the Nottingham Trent University Business School (Great Britain).

Muzhgan is an active leader in the library profession, with a long record of engaging in and supporting library advocacy and international librarianship through over two decades of involvement with ALA as a member of IRC and IRRT, as well as an ALA Councilor at Large for 2016-2019. Muzhgan has also worked closely with international librarians from over 40 countries from Africa, Asia, Europe, Latin America, and Middle East at the Mortensen Center for International Librarianship, as well as IFLA. She has been active in ACRL and served as chair of Slavic and East European Section’s (SEES) Automated Bibliographic Control (ABC) committee and group leader for Slavic Cataloging Manual project. Muzhgan is one of the founders of the Azerbaijani Library Association (AzLA) and was one of the initiators of the partnership projects between ALA and library associations in the South Caucasus, in which she also coordinated and participated in a number of joint projects and professional workshops.

Richard Sapon-White is currently Head of Cataloging and Metadata Services at Oregon State University Libraries where he has worked for the past 22 years. He previously was Catalog Librarian at Virginia Tech. An active member of both the American Library Association (ALA) and the Oregon Library Association (OLA) International Relations Round Tables, Richard has served on numerous committees of the Association of College and Research Libraries and the Association for Library Collections and Technical Services as well as the ALA International Relations Committee. For the past 10 years, he has been coordinating the OLA Horner Exchange with Fujian Province, China and had the opportunity to participate in the exchange in 2016. Richard is also a member of Beta Phi Mu, the library science honor society, and received Fulbright fellowships in 2005 (Czech Republic) and 2012-2013 (Poland). He holds the MLS degree from Southern Connecticut State University.

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Loida Garcia-Febo
Past Chair

Loida Garcia-Febo is currently President of the American Library Association (ALA), Immediate Past Chair of the ALA’s International Relations Round Table, and served as Governing Board member of IFLA from 2013-2017. She is an international library consultant, researcher, and expert on topics such as human rights, advocacy, and services to multicultural populations.

Loida has served communities as academic, public, school, and special librarian in Puerto Rico and Queens, New York. She has taught in 21 countries and has advocated on behalf of libraries at the United Nations, US Congress, NYC City Hall, NY State Senate, and on streets and sidewalks of New York.

Sandra Hirsch
Councilor

Dr. Sandra Hirsh is Director and Professor of the School of Information at San José State University. Prior to that, she worked in the Silicon Valley in R&D and consumer product development for more than a decade at major technology companies: Hewlett Packard Labs, Microsoft, and LinkedIn. She received two U.S. patents for her projects at Microsoft. She has held numerous leadership roles in professional associations, including having served as the president of the Association for Information Science & Technology. Sandra is currently serving as the co-chair of the IFLA Continuing Professional Development & Workplace Learning standing committee; the American Library Association Council representative for the International Relations Round Table; and advisory board member for the Center for the Future of Libraries. She is the co-chair of the global virtual Library 2.0 conference series which she co-founded in 2011. Her research interests and publications are focused on information seeking behavior, online education, and LIS education. The second edition of her foundational library and information science textbook, Information Services Today: An Introduction, was published by Rowman & Littlefield in March 2018. Sandra holds both a Bachelor’s degree and Ph.D. from UCLA and the MLIS degree from the University of Michigan.

Jeremiah Paschke-Wood
Secretary/Treasurer

Jeremiah Paschke-Wood is an Assistant Librarian for Research & Learning at the University of Arizona Libraries (UAL). Prior to that, he served as the Manager of Reference at UAL and was the Head of Instructional Services at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. Jeremiah has been a member of IRRT since 2013, serving as the Secretary/Treasurer since 2017 and Chair of the Chair’s Program Committee since 2014. In addition to his work with IRRT, Jeremiah has been an active member of the Library Instruction Round Table and ACRL. An avid traveler, Jeremiah lived in China for a year and is traveling to Netherlands and Belgium in November.

Julia Gelfand
Member-at-Large

Julia Gelfand is the Applied Sciences & Engineering Librarian at the University of California, Irvine where she has been on the staff serving in many capacities since 1981. Part of her responsibilities and activities reflect participating in the California Digital Library through its shared collections and services division and digital scholarship promoting the eScholarship repository. Julia has been involved in international activities her entire career and has worked abroad in different regions and travelled extensively, always visiting libraries and librarians. Even before receiving her MSIS from Case Western Reserve University, she was a Thomas Watson Fellow in Europe studying national libraries and attended the College of Librarianship Wales. In 1992-93 she was the US-UK Fulbright Librarian based at Imperial College & the Science Museum Libraries in London and visited many institutions throughout the UK and hosted one of the first conferences on Scholarly Communications in the Sciences in London in Spring 1993. Later in
her career, she became involved in the International Association of Technological University Libraries and hosted the second of those meetings in North America at UCI in 1996. Her first IFLA conference was in Barcelona in 1993 and she joined the Science & Technology Libraries Section in 1999 and chaired it from 2001-2005. She joined the Acquisitions & Collection Development Section after that and has now returned to the Science & Technology Libraries Section, where she has served one term as Secretary and done extensive conference planning. Active for nearly three decades in the grey literature movement, Julia has published widely and spoken at many international conferences and consulted for libraries, consortia and publishers around the world. Also active in ALA, Julia served as a member of the ACRL Board of Directors from 2013-2017 and became a Member-at-Large for IRRT in 2017, after being a member for many years.

Florence Mugambi
Member-at-Large

![Photo of Florence Mugambi]

Florence Mugambi is the African Studies Librarian at the Herskovits Library of African Studies at Northwestern University in Evanston, Illinois. She has previously worked as Public Services Librarian at Anderson University and Instruction and Information Services Librarian at Purdue Fort Wayne, both in Indiana. Florence has a keen interest in and participates in projects that create enabling environments that promote literacy and academic achievement in rural communities particularly in Africa. She founded and directs the Ontulili Literacy Project. Author of several publications, Florence currently serves as the chair of the Africa Subcommittee of ALA’s International Relations Committee, the Co-editor of International Leads, IRRT’s newsletter, and on the board of Zongo Story Project. She has also served on the Board of the Anthony Wayne Rotary Club in Fort Wayne and is a Paul Harris fellow of Rotary International. Florence holds the MLIS degree from Louisiana State University.

Call for Submissions to International Leads

Do you have news or stories about …

♦ International library activities
♦ People in international librarianship
♦ International conferences
♦ Grants, workshops, partnerships
♦ International projects
♦ Sister Libraries?

Submit to International Leads. Email us at ala.intl.leads@gmail.com

Interested in serving on an IRRT Committee?
Learn more: http://www.ala.org/rt/irrt/irrtcommittees/committees

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♦ Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/International-Relations-Round-Table-244416388965473/
ALA Annual Conference: 2018 Report and 2019 Plans

By: Muzhgan Nazarova

ALA Annual 2018 in New Orleans offered a wide array of interesting international programs within and outside the IRRT Chair’s theme. The following programs illustrate the breadth of the options for attendees:

- **IRRT Preconference:** Give us your tired, your poor, your huddled masses: How libraries are serving immigrant and refugee populations (28 attendees, 15 presenters);
- **IRRT Chair’s program:** Libraries saving lives: Serving immigrants and refugees (3 presentations: Malmö, Sweden; Cologne, Germany; and Kentucky, U.S.);
- **IRRT Papers and Projects session:** Libraries supporting social inclusion for refugees and immigrants (40 attendees, 3 presenters);
- **Developing the next generation of library leaders in Africa;**
- **Central American connections;**
- **Support for services to immigrant and refugees through sister libraries;**
- **Equality, diversity and inclusion in Southeast/East Asia and Pacific Libraries.**

In addition there was the orientation for international visitors and the International Librarians Reception. The orientation session included: speaker Jessica Styons, deputy director and Assistant City Librarian of the New Orleans public library who provided useful information about the city so attendees could easily explore; special tours of the New Orleans public library; and a presentation by longtime ALA attendee Ray Pun on getting the most out of the conference. There were many more prizes for raffle this year, which is always added fun for the orientation.

The International Librarians Reception, which is always a highlight of the Annual Conference, took place in the BB King’s Blues Club. ALA President Jim Neal recognized the winners of the Presidential Citation for Innovative International Projects, the Bogle Pratt Award, and the Humphry/OCLC/Forest Press Award for International Librarianship.

- Four libraries were awarded the **2018** American Library Association (ALA) Presidential Citation for Innovative International Library Projects: Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan, Canada; La Biblioteca Móvil, Guatemala; Suzhou Library, China; and Inner Mongolia Library, China.
- Anne Mlod is the **2018 recipient** of the Bogle-Pratt International Library Travel Fund.
- Dr. Ismail H. Abdullahi, professor of Global Library and Information Science at the School of Library and Information Sciences at North Carolina Central University, is the **2018 recipient** of the American Library Association International Relations Committee’s John Ames Humphry/OCLC/Forest Press Award.

**Looking Forward to ALA 2019 in Washington DC**

We have already started planning interesting international programs for ALA Annual 2019 in Washington, D.C. IRRT Chair’s program will showcase my theme of “Serving Communities: Globally and Locally,” by addressing how different types of libraries develop innovative services and programs to meet the needs of the communities they serve: locally, nationally, and globally. IRRT pre-conference will be an interactive session with representatives of different types of libraries around the world who will share their experiences of serving community needs by performing different functions: Libraries as third spaces; Civic Engagement; Libraries as educational places; Libraries as business incubators; Libraries as performance and creation places; New realities (digital and social media).

The International Papers & Projects’ theme is “Critical Literacies for a Changing World: New Skill Sets that Libraries Facilitate in Communities.” Speakers will share about international library projects, trends, and issues relating to new skill sets that have become critical in our world today, ranging from health and new media literacy to dialogue and negotiation.

The Sister Libraries Committee program is “Bringing Global to Local: The Horner Fellowship Arizona-Japan Librarian Exchange” during which the Horner Fellowship Committee representatives will present about the evolution of the fellowship, discuss the experiences and professional benefits for the Arizona and Japanese library professionals who have traveled with the support of the Horner fund, and elaborate on how the communities they serve have been impacted.

The International Connections committee will have two programs. 1) **Learning International: Stories from the Field**, the

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third iteration of a program I started while the International Connections Committee chair a few years ago. This program is a platform for the library professionals who have served abroad as well as international librarians to share their experiences and tell stories of their work including outreach services. 2) The International Leaders Forum: Visions for the Global Community of Libraries.

Once the program proposals are approved by the ALA conference jury, there will be a call for proposals for some of the programs, watch for the announcements and submit your proposal. We are working with ALA’s International Relations Office to set a deadline for the submissions that will allow enough time for the selected international participants to plan their trips.

ALA annual in Washington, D.C. is a big deal. It has been almost two and half years since I moved to Washington and started work at the Library of Congress. But I still remember my first ALA in DC in 1998, after I had just completed my MLS. I presented a paper titled “Cultural Differences in Libraries: US and Azerbaijan” at the International Papers session. I also attended the inaugural banquet for ALA’s incoming President then, Ann Symon, at the Great Hall in the Library of Congress. I remember going back to the Library’s Jefferson building the next morning to take a public tour and get to know more about the history of the library.

If you are ever in Washington, DC., I recommend you tour the Library of Congress. Free public tours of the Thomas Jefferson Building are available on a first-come, first-served basis without prior reservations every hour starting 10.30 till 3.30 (Monday-Friday) and until 2.30 (on Saturdays) (for more details please visit https://www.loc.gov/visit/tours/guided-tours/thomas-jefferson-building/).

For other LOC events please visit the event calendar at https://www.loc.gov/events

If you are interested in visiting a specific LOC unit or meeting with a specific specialist please contact me at minazarova@gmail and/or mnaz@loc.gov, and I will try to put you in touch with the desired unit/person.

I look forward to seeing you all next year.

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ALA Midwinter is around the corner!

Highlights include:

- Symposium on the Future of Libraries
- Networking Uncommons
- Andrew Carnegie Medals announcements

Early Bird registration opens September 12.
Register at https://2019.alamidwinter.org/
The 2018 IRRT International Reception was held on June 25 at the B.B. King’s Blues Club in New Orleans. The rustic setting of the venue added a touch of informality to the event, as over a hundred librarians from the U.S. and abroad gathered to meet, mingle, and celebrate the recipients of the ALA Presidential Citations for Innovative International Projects, the Bogle Pratt Award, and the Humphrey/OCLC Forest Press Award for International Librarianship.

**ALA Presidential Citations for Innovative International Library Projects**

http://www.ala.org/rt/irrt/alapresintlibraryaward

Established by Dr. Loriene Roy during her 2007-2008 presidency, the award recognizes library services and projects in other countries that are innovative and inspiring.

This year’s winners were:

**Darakht-e Danesh Library**, Canadian Women for Women of Afghanistan (Canada)

Recognized for creating a sustainable and replicable model of collaboration between non-governmental organization and governmental educational system; participating in global open education conferences; providing transparency on its website; and raising the literacy and educational levels of Afghans.

**La Puerta Abierta Library and Learning Center**, La Biblioteca Móvil (Guatemala)

Recognized for promoting excitement about reading; providing a variety of books and classroom interactions with a librarian; and providing training to teachers on how to incorporate literacy education.

**Little Migratory Birds Project**, Suzhou Library (China)

Recognized for serving as a model for Chinese public libraries to expand services to socially and economically disadvantaged populations; understanding the special needs of migrant children; and working strategically with community centers to develop programs.

**Digital Culture Enters Mongolian Yurts**, Inner Mongolia Library (China)

Recognized for providing online services to different generations, and serving as an inspirational model for innovative digital services in China.

**Humphry/OCLC/Forest Press Award for International Librarianship**

http://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/iro/awardactivities/humphryoclecforest

The John Ames Humphry/OCLC/Forest Press Award for International Librarianship was established in honor of John Humphry on his retirement as Executive Director of Forest Press, publisher of the Dewey Decimal Classification, to recognize his work to internationalize the English language editions of the DDC. The award with the $1,000 prize is given to an individual who has made significant contributions to international librarianship.

Dr. Ismail H. Abdullahi, Professor of Global Library and Information Science at the School of Library and Information Sciences at North Carolina Central University, is the 2018 recipient. Dr. Abdullahi has been a member of IFLA for 25 years and of ALA for 33 years, and established an IFLA special interest group on LIS education in developing countries, as well as chairing many committees in both associations. He edited two seminal books on global librarianship, published by IFLA, and currently serves on the editorial board of four international journals. He is widely known and respected for his long-term efforts to improve LIS education everywhere, teaching and encouraging global librarianship.

Dr. Abdullahi gave a motivational speech about the role of international librarianship today, recognizing the efforts of ALA and IFLA to promote librarianship around the world and calling for more support.

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Dr. Ismail H. Abdullahi, winner of the Humphry/OCLC/Forest Press Award (second from left) joins the winners of the Presidential Citation for Innovative International Library Projects at the International Librarians’ Reception.

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In early 2017, the Sveučilišna Knjižnica u Splitu (University of Split Library) and Penn State University Libraries established a sister library relationship, and over the last two years the relationship has quickly developed into a strong and fruitful partnership. Established in 1903, the University of Split Library is the second largest library in Croatia and serves as both a major research library and as a cultural heritage repository for the city of Split and surrounding region of Dalmatia. The library provides university students, faculty, and local residents with access to a wide variety of research resources, study spaces, and library services. Within the University of Split Library’s space and programming is a very large, multi-story gallery space, which supports an impressive, creative, and prolific exhibit program.

Similar to other Penn State sister library relationships, the partnership with the University of Split Library emerged from a wider university-to-university partnership that is being developed as a part of Penn State’s Global Engagement Network (GEN). Working within the wider GEN partnership has allowed the two libraries to streamline the partnership’s setup by working under the overarching memorandum of understanding and provided funding opportunities. The partnership began with a video-call between Margita Mirčeta Zakarija, Head of Serial Publications and Irena Urem, Research and Development Librarian representing Split and with Chris Avery, Senior Director of Commonwealth Campus Libraries and Strategic Projects, and myself, representing Penn State. In this initial meeting, we learned about each other’s libraries and found areas of common interest, especially library-based instruction. The partnership began with a video-call between Margita Mirčeta Zakarija, Head of Serial Publications and Irena Urem, Research and Development Librarian representing Split and with Chris Avery, Senior Director of Commonwealth Campus Libraries and Strategic Projects, and myself, representing Penn State. In this initial meeting, we learned about each other’s libraries and found areas of common interest, especially library-based instruction. Within the first couple of months of the newly formed partnership, the University of Split hired a new director of the University of Split Library, Mirta Matošić. For the partnership, Mirta was a very fortunate hire as she had spent many years living in the United States hence she is able to move between the two cultures easily.

The partnership began to take shape with the establishment of a library-based instruction discussion group with librarians from Penn State Beaver, Penn State Shenango, and the University of Split Library. This group shared information about instructional practices in our respective contexts and discussed challenges and opportunities for library instruction in higher education. This group’s discussions resulted in an invitation for Penn State participation in a four-day University of Split Library workshop focused on library-based instruction. For the workshop in early June, Penn State sent three librarians to Split and five additional Penn State Librarians presented via web conferencing. In addition to Penn State, the University of Split Library invited other Croatian librarians to participate in the workshop as well.

The partnership has also benefited from additional travel between the two institutions. In January of 2017 Mirta Matošić visited Penn State’s University Park campus to meet with various groups within the Penn State Libraries, including a day at the Penn State Altoona campus. As part of the visit, Mirta gave a presentation to the Penn State staff on Croatia, Split, and the University of Split Library. This visit was reciprocated by a visit I made to Split in April to become familiar with their library, give presentations about Penn State, and prepare for the Penn State participation in the University of Split Library workshop.

These initial visits and meetings have resulted in the identification of various areas of common interest. As with other international partners of the Penn State Libraries,
**Bogle Pratt Award**

Anne Mlod, School Librarian from Geneseo Elementary School, Auburn, New York, is the 2018 recipient of the 2018 Bogle Pratt Award.

She shares her experience of attending the International Association of School Librarianship conference.

I received the Bogle Pratt International Library Travel Award this year and used it to travel in May to the IASL (International Association of School Librarianship) International Conference in Istanbul, Turkey. In addition to meeting librarians and scholars from all over the world, I heard keynote speakers, including:

- Professor Diljit Singh, past president of IASL and professor in Sri Lanka whose interests focus on the effective use of information for socio-economic development
- Joyce Valenza, faculty member at Rutgers University and author of the NeverEndingSearch blog, among many other things
- Professor Teoman Durali, a Professor in the Philosophy Department at Istanbul University
- Dr. Cem Gencoglu, Director General of the Turkish National Ministry of Education

I also attended a variety of workshops on innovation and technology in libraries, as well as presented my action research paper on the development of my library maker space (my first international presentation!). The general assembly meeting took place during a dinner cruise on the Bosporus Strait, where we were able to view the shores of Istanbul on both the European and Asian continents! There was time built in to the conference to explore the cultural and historical sites in Istanbul, and on Friday, we toured two local schools and visited a public library. The most valuable part of my trip was talking with librarians from around the world, representing 32 countries. I have established connections with some of them that will continue into the future, on both a personal and professional level.

I thank the committee members for this incredible opportunity.

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The Bogle Pratt award is named for Sarah Comly Norris Bogle, a notable American librarian who contributed to international library service, including as the Director of the Paris Library School from 1923 to 1929. The award is designated to assist American librarians traveling to their first international conference.

More about the award on the website:

http://www.ala.org/aboutala/offices/iro/awardsactivities/boglepratthistory

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**Sister Library Profile continued**

establishing a sister library relationship with the University of Split Library has reinforced a key lesson: the importance of in-person visits for strengthening a partnership. We have been very successful in using online communication to effectively move the partnership forward, but we have seen the most progress emerge out of face-to-face international exchange.

We are only a couple of years into the sister library partnership, but it has already produced strong results and we are excited to build upon the sturdy foundation that we have established.

University of Split Library's exhibit gallery
International Library Profile: Centero de Investigaciones Regionales de Mesoamérica, Antigua, Guatemala

By Sirous Monajami, cmonajemi@gmail.com

Editor’s note: Sirous Monajami has been involved with the CIRMA Library since 2003, when he visited on a library tour while he was a cataloger at the City College of San Francisco (he retired in June 2017). He volunteered to help with the library’s cataloging backlog, and has been in touch with the director, Dr. Francisco Ralon Afre, since then. He wrote about his first volunteer experience for International Leads in 2003. Now he shares about his second volunteer experience with CIRMA.

I have been given a great job opportunity to work as volunteer at CIRMA (Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Mesoamerica) in Antigua, Guatemala. Declared a World Heritage site by the UNESCO in 1979, Antigua is the best-preserved colorful colonial city in Latin America. The City was founded in 1542 as the capital of the Captaincy-General of Guatemala, which included the Mesoamerican region of Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua and Chiapas. Returning to such a beautiful city, my second volunteering experience at CIRMA allowed me to take a fresh look at this research center and reevaluate its progress and its contributions.

It was a very joyful moment to go back to CIRMA after so many years and meet the library director Dr. Francisco Ralon Afre (a former student of City College of San Francisco), who was excited to see a cataloger knocking on the door of his library. One obvious thing from our meeting after many years was that we both got much older. Dr. Afre, as friendly as always, was pleased to give me a tour of the library and the rest of the research center. He also introduced me to the staff of CIRMA: the director, Ms. Guisela Asensio; and library staff, Ms. Marta Elena de Casellas, Ms. Sofia Sanchez, and Mr. Julio Cesar Cortez. Then he showed me boxes and boxes of books; most of them donations waiting to be cataloged. Dr. Afre told me that with so many donations they needed many catalogers to do the job. When I told him there are not too many catalogers left in the world, he laughed.

CIRMA Library Staff: Marta Elena de Casellas, Francisco Ralon Afre, Sofia Sanchez

Me han dado una gran oportunidad de trabajo para trabajar como voluntario en CIRMA (Centro de Investigaciones Regionales de Mesoamérica) en Antigua, Guatemala. Declarado Patrimonio de la Humanidad por la UNESCO en 1979, Antigua es la colorida ciudad colonial mejor conservada de América Latina. La ciudad fue fundada en 1542 como capital de la Capitanía General de Guatemala, que incluía la región mesoamericana de Guatemala, Belice, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua y Chiapas. Volviendo a una ciudad tan hermosa, mi segunda experiencia de voluntariado en el CIRMA me permitió ver de una nueva manera a este centro de investigación y reevaluar su progreso y sus contribuciones.

Fue un momento muy feliz regresar al CIRMA después de tantos años y conocer al director de la biblioteca, el Dr. Francisco Ralon Afre (un antiguo alumno de City College de San Francisco), que estaba emocionado de ver un catalogador golpeando la puerta de su biblioteca. Una cosa obvia de nuestra reunión después de muchos años, fue que ambos nos hicimos mayores. El Dr. Afre, tan amable como siempre, se complació en darme un recorrido por la biblioteca y el resto del centro de investigación. También me presentó al personal de CIRMA; la directora, la Sra. Guisela Asensio, y el personal de la biblioteca, la Sra. Marta Elena de Casellas, la Sra. Sofía Sánchez y el Sr. Julio Cesar Cortez. Luego me mostró cajas y cajas de libros; la mayoría de ellos donaciones esperando ser catalogadas. El Dr. Afre me dijo que con tantas
Working in the library of CIRMA also means enjoying a beautiful architectural environment. All departments are located in a lovely colonial setting that opens into a peaceful courtyard with a fountain in the center. There are two black-bellied whistling ducks (called “pijije” in Spanish) to represent peace, freedom, and harmony. The CIRMA building is one among hundreds of significant colonial buildings in Antigua. The institution’s door is always closed. A smiling guard usually opens the door for you and no matter how long you work there, asks you to sign in. Many of Antigua’s wandering tourists are attracted by the beauty of the colonial architecture. They come in to take pictures and ask questions (mostly in English). During my stay, a number of students from Northern Europe were visiting almost every day with their teacher to do some kind of research. Since they didn’t speak Spanish, the library staff politely helped them with their research in English. As a matter of fact, patience, courtesy, and politeness are qualities shared by all Guatemalans. It probably has its roots in the Mayan culture, an ancient civilization that dates back more than 7,000 years. The staff in CIRMA treats each other with friendly respect and also incorporates a healthy sense of humor into their daily work. They show special respect toward their superiors and are proud of their institution and their country, which has a rich culture.

As a non-profit Guatemalan institution, CIRMA has dedicated the last 40 years to collecting educational, cultural and historical memory materials and making them available to world researchers. CIRMA was founded as a small library in 1978 by the historian Christopher H. Lutz and the archaeologist William R. Swezey. The Photo Library and Historical Archive departments were founded in later years.

The library of CIRMA has more than 45,000 monographs, 7,000 documents and a considerable number of maps, pamphlets, and historical videos and microfilms. The library’s collection has benefited from an exchange program with other institutions and countries of Latin America. The Center was closed in 2014 for remodeling and repair.

The CIRMA library was automated in 1996 when WIN ISIS and later, GREENTONE was introduced (programs distributed free of charge by UNESCO). In the year 2013, the library migrated to GLIFOS, a software sold by a vendor called INFOLIB. This software has been developed in Guatemala but now is used in donaciones necesitaban muchos catalogadores para hacer el trabajo. Cuando le dije que ya no quedan muchos catalogadores en el mundo, se rió.

Trabajar en la biblioteca de CIRMA también significa disfrutar de un bello ambiente arquitectónico. Todos los departamentos están ubicados en un encantador ambiente colonial que se abre a un patio tranquilo con una fuente en el centro. Hay dos patos silbadores de vientre negro (llamados PIJIEJE en español), mantenimiento de la paz, libertad y armonía. El edificio CIRMA es uno entre cientos de importantes edificios coloniales en Antigua. La puerta de la institución siempre está cerrada. Un guardia sonriente generalmente abre la puerta y no importa cuánto tiempo trabaje uno allí, le pide a uno que se registre. Muchos de los turistas que se pasean por Antigua se sienten atraídos por la belleza de la arquitectura colonial. Vienen para tomar fotos y hacer preguntas (principalmente en inglés). Durante mi estadía, un número de estudiantes del norte de Europa visitaba casi a diario con su maestra para realizar algún tipo de investigación. Como no hablaban español, el personal de la biblioteca les ayudó cortésmente con su investigación en inglés. Es un hecho que la paciencia, la cortesía y la amabilidad son cualidades compartidas por todos los guatemaltecos. Probablemente tiene sus raíces en la cultura maya, una antigua civilización que data de más de 7,000 años. El personal de CIRMA se trata con respeto amistoso y también incorpora un saludable sentido del humor en su trabajo diario. Muestran un respeto especial hacia sus superiores y están orgullosos de su institución y su país, que tiene una rica cultura.

Como institución guatemalteca sin fines de lucro, CIRMA ha dedicado los últimos 40 años a recolectar materiales de memoria histórica, cultural y educativa, y los ha puesto a disposición de investigadores mundiales. CIRMA fue fundada como una pequeña biblioteca en 1978 por el historiador Christopher H. Lutz y el arqueólogo William R. Swezey. Los departamentos de Biblioteca Fotográfica y Archivo Histórico se fundaron en años posteriores.

La biblioteca de CIRMA tiene más de 45,000 monografías, 7000 documentos y una cantidad considerable de mapas, folletos y videos históricos y microfilmes. La colección de la biblioteca se ha beneficiado de un programa de intercambio con otras instituciones y países de América Latina. El Centro se cerró en 2014 para remodelación y reparación.

continued on page 16
other Latin American countries. The library uses LC classification and is slowly moving toward cataloging using RDA.

The CIRMA library has a comprehensive collection of books and documents on the Mayan civilization. More than two million Maya still live in Central America. Many still use their old language. The largest Mayan linguistic group is the Quiche, who live in the highlands of Guatemala. An estimated half million people speak this language. With such a rich cultural heritage, CIRMA’s contribution to preserving materials on the Mayan civilization is beyond imagination.

During my one month working at CIRMA, I enjoyed cataloging a rich collection of monographs on the history, cultural history, anthropology, ethnology, cultural geography sociology, politics, and the art history of Mesoamerica. Most of these books were in Spanish and English, but there were also materials in French, German and Mayan language.

As a volunteer, it was a welcome change for me to return to a traditional library setting where I could do the original and copy cataloging in Spanish and English. I enjoyed this work immensely and treasured the opportunity to get to know my coworkers who appreciated my contributions.

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CIRMA’s website is at http://cirma.org.gt/glifos/index.php/P%C3%A1gina_principal
cirma@cirma.org.gt

Sirous Monajami, MLS, Ph.D., is a retired librarian from City College of San Francisco, California.

La biblioteca de CIRMA se automatizó en 1996 cuando se introdujo WIN ISIS y más tarde, GREENTONE (programas distribuidos gratuitamente por la UNESCO). En el año 2013, la biblioteca migró a GLIFOS, un software vendido por un proveedor llamado INFOLIB. Este software se ha desarrollado en Guatemala, pero ahora se usa en otros países de América Latina. La biblioteca utiliza la clasificación LC y se mueve lentamente hacia la catalogación mediante RDA (Descripción y Acceso de Recursos).

La biblioteca de CIRMA tiene una colección completa de libros y documentos sobre la civilización maya. Más de dos millones de mayas aún viven en América Central. Muchos todavía usan su idioma natal. El grupo lingüístico maya más grande es el Quiche, que vive en las tierras altas de Guatemala. Se estima que medio millón de personas hablan este idioma. Con un patrimonio cultural tan rico, la contribución del CIRMA para preservar materiales en la civilización maya está más allá de la imaginación.

Durante mi trabajo de un mes en la biblioteca disfruté catalogando una rica colección de monografías sobre la historia, la historia cultural, la antropología, la etnología, la sociología de la geografía cultural, la política y la historia del arte de Mesoamérica. La mayoría de estos libros estaban en español e inglés, pero también había materiales en francés, alemán y maya.

Como voluntario, fue un cambio que es bienvenido para mí regresar a un entorno de biblioteca tradicional donde podía hacer la catalogación original y copiada en español e inglés. Disfruté inmensamente de este trabajo y atesoré la oportunidad de conocer a mis compañeros de trabajo que apreciaron mis contribuciones.

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El sitio web de CIRMA está en http://cirma.org.gt/glifos/index.php/P%C3%A1gina_principal
cirma@cirma.org.gt

Sirous Monajami, MLS, Ph.D., es una bibliotecaria jubilada del City College de San Francisco, California.

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Dr. Sirous Monajami working on cataloging at CIRMA.
A check in with Librarians from around the world

Raymond Pun is an IRRT member and the first year student success librarian at Fresno State. He supports first year students in their research and information literacy. He is an active member of ALA, ACRL, SLA and IFLA. He interviewed Szymon for this issue of International Leads.

An Interview with Cataloger Szymon Cierpisz from the National Library of Poland

Ray: Thanks for interviewing with us! Can you briefly tell us about your role in the library?

Szymon: I work in the Subject Cataloguing Department of the National Library of Poland. I am responsible for cataloguing art history books that our library receives every day from publishers within legal deposit. Apart from books we catalogue also articles form chosen periodicals and joint publications. This is the main part of my daily activities, but I need to add that I also work with a new cross-domain controlled vocabulary that we have started implementing in 2017. And this is undoubtedly the most interesting part of my job.

Ray: How did you get into librarianship and what (if any) formal education or training did you receive?

Szymon: I had finished Art History at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków and shortly after I had started my PhD, I found a job offer for an art historian in the Polish National Library. As it is rather hard to find satisfactory job for an art historian I simply had to take that opportunity. Our library’s main aim is to create the cataloguing language that on the one hand would be as professional as possible, and on the other accessible for an average reader. Besides me, a geologist and an economist also started at the same time. We had two weeks of training of formal book description and one year of everyday proof-reading of our records with consultations.

Ray: What is a library trend/library hot topic in your country currently?

Szymon: It would not be very surprising when I tell you it is digitization, implemented and coordinated in two projects by the National Library. The aim of the first project, called OMNIS, is to create one platform of access to all library catalogues in Poland and in future, to archives, museums etc. This means of course that we have to create one research vocabulary and this is what I do too. The second project, called PATRIMONIUM, is focused on cooperation with the second biggest library of Poland, the Jagiellonian Library in Kraków. The aim is to digitize and share openly hundreds of thousands of books, newspapers, leaflets, drawings, manuscripts, maps etc. All those documents will be accessible online through the digital library POLONA.

Ray: Why is international librarianship important in your work?

Szymon: Well, we are working on putting the knowledge in one place and on making it accessible for those who want to get it. Working with others is inevitable as for example I consult the VIAF, the Congress Authorities or the Getty catalogue almost every day to find data I need. Last year Poland hosted the IFLA WLIC in Wrocław where I met many interesting people from around the world, including you! And that led us to this interview where I can say something about the fascinating projects we are currently working on in Poland.

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For more about the National Library of Poland, visit their website at https://www.bn.org.pl/en/.

The POLONA digital library is available at https://polona.pl/

Raymond Pun is an IRRT member and the first year student success librarian at Fresno State. He supports first year students in their research and information literacy. He is an active member of ALA, ACRL, SLA and IFLA. He interviewed Szymon for this issue of International Leads.