



International Leads

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

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El Día del Bibliotecario in El Salvador

By Marcy Carrel

On May 25th of each year, El Salvador celebrates “El Día del Bibliotecario” (Day of the Librarian) with a week of cultural activities and professional events for library workers. I was fortunate to receive an invitation to present at the conference from Ana Martha Ramirez, president of the country’s professional association, ABES-Asociación de Bibliotecarios de El Salvador.

El Salvador is the smallest country in Central America, bordered by Guatemala, Honduras, and the Pacific Ocean. El Salvador is also the most densely populated country in Central America, with a population of about 7 million in a land area comparable to the state of Massachusetts. The 1992 Peace Accords marked the official end to a devastating 12-year civil war. The country is also subject to frequent and sometimes destructive hurricanes and earthquakes.

My relationship with El Salvador goes back to 1998, when I arrived in the country as a Peace Corps volunteer. I served three years as a volunteer and then stayed in the country for most of the next five years in various jobs. Although none of these jobs were library positions, I had made contacts within ABES and attended many of their meetings. I also completed my MLIS online. In August 2006, I returned to the U.S. and accepted a position as an academic librarian at the University of South Florida – St.



Participants in the cataloging workshop, which ran concurrent to the conference, pose for a photo with the instructors, Joseph Hinger from St. John’s University and Ángel Villalba Roldán from the Hemeroteca Nacional de México.

Petersburg, but my ties with El Salvador remained. So, when the opportunity arose to present and share with my Salvadoran colleagues, I was more than ready to accept.

The theme for this year’s 18th annual professional event was “Bibliotecas y Cultura de Paz” (Libraries and a Culture of Peace). ABES and other local organizations and professionals had put together a very full week of presentations, workshops, forums, and other professional events. The majority of the events were held in the Centro Cultural Salvadoreño and other locations in and around the capital city of San Salvador. For

many librarians in El Salvador, this event is one of the few professional development opportunities they can rely on each year.

The opening ceremony for the week was held on Monday, May 21st at the National Library in the center of the city. Manlio Argueta, internationally renowned author and current director of the National Library, spoke about “Books and a Culture of Peace”. The annual ABES Librarian-of-the-Year award was also announced and presented to Ana Yensi Vides, director of the high school library at the Academia Británica Cuscatleca.

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Message from the Editor

Welcome to the first issue of International Leads under new editorship! It is my pleasure to take over the reins from Heath Martin, who has successfully edited IL for the last few years. I look forward to working with IRRT membership and leadership to bring you the best publication possible.

As the new editor, I believe it is a good time to review the purpose of IL and its role in communication to the membership. Currently, IL is a quarterly publication. Many members have pointed out that this frequency has some downsides, particularly concerning breaking news and current events. At the Executive Board meeting at ALA Annual, the idea of a blog for IRRT was proposed and discussed. Joan Weeks, the new IRRT Chair, introduces the IRRT blog in her column in this issue. The blog will allow membership to communicate with each other quickly on matters of importance, instead of waiting for publication of IL.

In my opinion, the IRRT blog ought to work hand in hand with IL - each has a niche to fill. To this end, I will be working with IRRT leadership and

the Publications Committee to redesign IL and offer more current information through other communication tools, like the blog.

I want to redesign IL to better serve the membership's need for in-depth information on pertinent topics in international librarianship. I envision IL as a quarterly publication that delves deeper into specific topics related to libraries and librarians in a globalized world as well as keeping membership abreast of news and events. Each issue of IL will include an in-depth report about a significant issue or activity in international librarianship, a profile of an international partnership, and announcements of upcoming professional events of interest to IRRT members, as well as the Chair's Report and other newsworthy items.

To this end, if you have suggestions for topics that you would like to see addressed, or that you have addressed yourself and would like to share with the membership, please drop me a line at our newly established e-mail address: intl.leads.irrt@gmail.com

I look forward to hearing from you soon!

~ Rebecca Miller Banner

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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.

Message from the IRRT Chair

By Joan Weeks

I just want to give a couple of reflections on the Annual conference and then look ahead to some new ventures for IRRT in the year ahead in my first message from the chair.

Not only did the Washington conference set ALA records, it also broke IRRT records for attendance and participation thanks to the hard work and dedication of so many of our members. Everyone got off to a great start with the pre-conference program, "Adult Literacy: Foundation for a Digital" The orientation for international librarians and International Visitors Center provided the record setting number of international librarians with conference tips, problem solving, logistics and an abundance of hospitality. The Poster Session captured the attention of many attendees with the diversity and quality of the presentations, while the chair's program on "International Library Partnerships: Walking side by side" and the International Sustainable Library Development Interest Groups program on "Opportunities to Participate in Global Library Development" provided participants with valuable information and follow-up opportunities.

As I looked out over the view of New Orleans from the World Trade Center at the 2006 International Reception, I had a sudden inspiration that it would be an amazing experience for everyone if the 2007 International Reception could be held at the Library of Congress with tours of the Area Studies collections. There are so many people to thank for making the tours and the reception in the Montpellier Room at the Library of Congress a reality. On the Library side, I want to thank Drs. Mary Jane Deeb, Chief of the African and Middle East Division and Angel Batiste,

African Specialist for co-sponsoring the International Reception with IRRT, and Jane Gilchrist and her special events staff for the arrangements. From the IRRT side, International Reception Committee under the leadership of Kurt Cumiskey did a wonderful job with very complex logistics and Michael Dowling and Delin Guerra from the ALA International Relations Office provided invaluable support both behind the scenes and at the reception. We also want to thank our corporate sponsors this year: Blackwell Book Services, OCLC Web Junction, Elsevier and Innovative Interfaces. Many librarians had their pictures taken from the rooftop with the U.S. Capitol in the background just as the sun was setting, and one

captured the moment when she said, "I feel like I am in a dream."

Looking ahead, it is time to implement the strategic goals and objectives that Susan Schnuer, immediate past chair and the Executive Board laid out in the planning session during mid-winter in Seattle and prioritized at Annual in D.C. One of the overarching goals is to increase participation of all members around the globe in IRRT in this process. With the new technology tools available to us, we hope to achieve more active engagement via blogs, wikis and hopefully at some point web conferencing. Several of the strategic goals and objectives lend themselves to the blog forum.

Goal 1: Advocacy and Value of the Profession

Objectives:

- Increase awareness in the U.S. library community of library services and activities from other countries.

- Highlight U.S. Library projects ongoing in other countries to garner support for ALA's international efforts.

- Help mobilize, support and sustain grassroots advocacy for libraries and library services internationally.

Goal 2: Education

Objective:

- Be educated as world citizens with an understanding of cultures and issues facing libraries world wide.

Goal 3: Influence Public Policy

Objective:

- Utilize technology and the IRRT website to increase the understanding of international issues affecting library and information services and generate support for international partnerships that strengthen library and information service.

To this end I have set up a blog at : <http://alairrt.blogspot.com> with a link from the main IRRT home. Please share your ideas and challenges with

your colleagues in the spirit of collegiality and help all of us benefit from the collective expertise of IRRT members worldwide.

Successful CALA 2007 Summer Seminar Projects in China

By Lisa Zhao and Guoqing Li

Four Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA) teams, led by Haipeng Li, CALA Immediate Past President, Xudong Jin, CALA Vice President/President Elect 2008-2009, and Guoqing Li, Co-Chair of the CALA International Relations Committee, successfully conducted training seminars during the month of July at four institutions in China: Northeast Normal University in Changchun, Jilin Province, Shanxi Agricultural University in Taigu, Shanxi Province, Yunnan Normal University, and Yunnan Provincial Library, both in Kunming, Yunnan Province. The goal of the project is to promote collaboration and exchange between American and Chinese libraries.

Sixteen CALA members, including former president of ALA, Barbara Ford, participated in the projects as presenters. The projects focused on the practical aspect of librarianship. Topics covered included a wide range of issues, from reference services to digital libraries, library consortia to

virtual library services, information literacy to future of academic librarianship, among many others. More than 50 presentation sessions were conducted and over 20 discussion sessions were held. More than 300 attendees from all over China benefited from these seminars this year.

Feedback from participants was overwhelmingly positive at all four sites. Particularly noted in the evaluations were the lively presentations, enthusiastic discussions and new ideas and practices in academic librarianship. Participants very much appreciated the opportunity for exchanging ideas on librarianship with Chinese American librarians, and the efforts of CALA and its members who devoted time to this meaningful and important project.

Many representatives from other library institutions in China that were present at this year's seminars expressed interest and requested that

more similar projects be conducted, if possible, at other locations in China. Since the CALA Board has approved this project to be an ongoing CALA event, we expect more projects of this kind to take place every year.

If anyone is interested in getting involved or more information on the project of CALA 21st Century Librarian Seminar, please contact:

Haipeng Li, Oberlin College:
haipeng.li@oberlin.edu

Xudong Jin, Ohio Wesleyan University: [xdjin@owu.edu](mailto:xjjin@owu.edu)

Guoqing Li, Ohio State University:
li.272@osu.edu

*Lisa Zhao and Guoqing Li are
co-chairs of CALA*



Horner Library Staff Exchange Still Going Strong

By Gretta Siegel

The Horner Library Staff Exchange Project is an exchange of library staff between Fujian Province, China, and Oregon, for the purpose of sharing professional knowledge about library and information science. It was established through a generous gift from the late Dr. Layton Horner to the Oregon State Library, and continues through a partnership between the Oregon State Library and OLA's International Relations Round Table. Our international partners are the Fujian Provincial Library and the Fujian Library Association. Fujian is Oregon's sister province in China and the Fujian Provincial Library maintains a sister library relationship with the Oregon State Library.

Professor Rosalind Wang was a Social Sciences Librarian at the Portland State University Library for 18 years, until her retirement in 2002. In 1987 she accepted an invitation to conduct several workshops in Fuzhou, Fujian, China. During that time, library directors and librarians of Fujian requested her assistance to bridge and establish the sister library relationship between the Oregon State Library and the Fujian Provincial Library. Carrying this mission back to Oregon, Rosalind worked on this project with the Oregon-Fujian Book Exchange Committee, chaired by Frances Lau. On July 20, 1989, an agreement for the sister library relationship was signed by both the Oregon State and Fujian Provincial Libraries.

Under the leadership of the State Librarian, Jim Schepcke, a number of books were collected from various Oregon libraries and shipped to Fujian Province. In October 1993, a special Book Donation Ceremony was held in Salem, while Rosalind simultaneously attended an official

Acceptance of Book Donation Ceremony in Fuzhou. In addition, she was able to persuade the Director of the Fujian Culture Department who supervised the operation of the Fujian Provincial Library to appropriate extra funding for book collection and an automation system for the new Fujian Provincial Library building, which was completed and dedicated on October 1, 1995.

This year, the Horner Library Staff Exchange hosted four library delegates from Fujian Province, who visited Oregon for three weeks in August and September. The delegates from Fujian Province were Ms. Yunzhang Fang, Chief of the Research and Assistance Department and Deputy Research Librarian at the Fujian Provincial Library; Mr. Xinsheng Wu, Chief of the Lending Department and Deputy Research Librarian, also from the Fujian Provincial Library; Mr. Yansheng Ruan, Deputy Director and Deputy Research Librarian from Fujian Normal University Library; and Ms. Liping Lin, Deputy Director of the Xiamen Municipal Library.

These Chinese librarians spent three weeks touring Oregon and visiting various libraries. They saw both large and small academic and public libraries and visited some special libraries such as the Nike Design Library, the Hatfield Marine Science Center Library, and the Oregon Health and Sciences University library. They toured much of the state with trips to central Oregon, the coast and throughout the Willamette Valley.

In the fall of 2007, three Oregon librarians delegates will spend three weeks consulting with libraries in China. The Selection Committee of the

Oregon Library Association's (OLA) International Relations Round Table has chosen Teresa Landers, Deputy Library Director and Extension Services Manager at Corvallis-Benton County Public Library; Gretta Siegel, Science Librarian at Portland State University; and Rosalind Wang, Professor Emeritus and past Social Science Librarian at the Portland State University Library.

Teresa Landers has been the Deputy Director of the Corvallis-Benton County Public Library for almost 8 years. She is active in OLA and she is currently Chair of the Oregon Digital Library Consortium. Her interest in going to China extends from a variety of international experiences earlier in life and her strong belief in the value of cross-cultural understanding.

Gretta Siegel has been a librarian and OLA member for close to 23 years, the past eight as Science Librarian at Portland State University. Professor Siegel has a longstanding interest in international librarianship, having studied and worked with Cuban libraries for several years, and through her involvement with the international grey literature community. While in China, she hopes to meet information managers or scientists who are connected to national or provincial grey literature.

The Oregon delegates will spend one week at each of three libraries in China – the Fujian Provincial Library and the Formal University Library, both in the city of Fuzhou, and the Xiamen University Library, in the city of Xiamen.

Editor's note: We look forward to a report from the American delegates about their journey to China in an upcoming issue of IL.

Status of the Round Table

By Sha Li Zhang

The 2007 ALA Annual Conference held in Washington, D.C. marked the end of my two-term tenure as IRRT Secretary/Treasurer, from July 2003 to June 2007. It was a privilege to be elected by IRRT members to serve on this post. I want to express my genuine appreciation to all who supported my work in this capacity. During my tenure, I worked closely with four IRRT chairs, Karen Starr, Nancy Bolt, Jeannette Pierce, and Susan Schnuer. I also worked with numerous IRRT committee chairs, liaisons, and representatives on issues relevant to the roundtable.

Most importantly, it has been gratifying to see the rapid growth of our membership. Most of this growth has come from ALA international members. The roundtable passed a proposal from its Membership Committee to offer a free membership to ALA international members in the spring 2004 election. Since then, the membership has increased rapidly, from 799 in 2003 to 1,861 in 2007 (see Chart 1). The increased membership enabled the roundtable to elect its own roundtable councilor in the 2006 election to the ALA Council. The IRRT councilor will represent the membership's voice on international issues.

The IRRT members also voted for a raise in membership fees from \$10 to \$15 in the spring 2004 election. With this dues increase, the available fund balance for the roundtable increased from \$9,250 in August 2003 to \$17,203 in August 2007. The additional funds have enabled the roundtable to do more for its members than before (see Chart 2).

With increased interest in global library issues among ALA members, the IRRT Executive Board is working on strategies to aggressively recruit more U.S. librarians into its membership and to address long-term funding issues. I encourage all members to support the IRRT Strategic Goals refined at the 2007 ALA Conference. Ongoing support

from all members, domestically and internationally, will be very critical to sustain the continuing growth of the roundtable and its programs and services to ALA members on international issues and interests.

Sha Li Zhang is the out-going IRRT Secretary/Treasurer

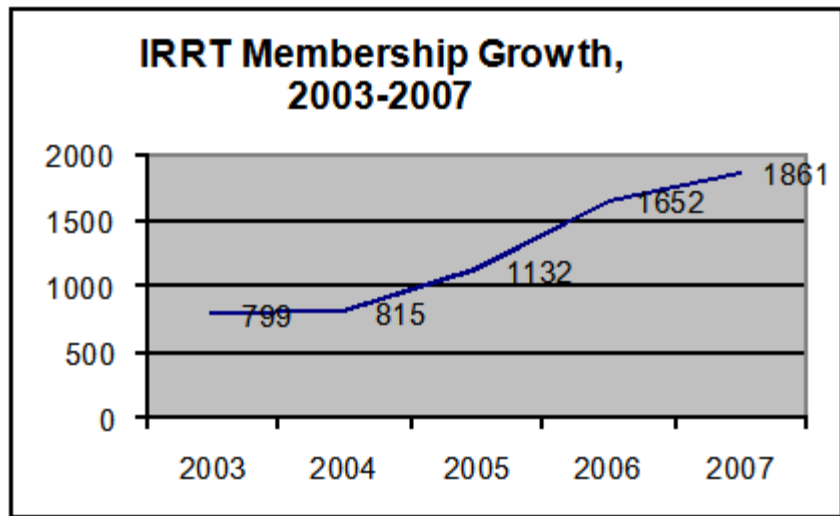


Chart 1: IRRT Membership Growth, 2003-2007

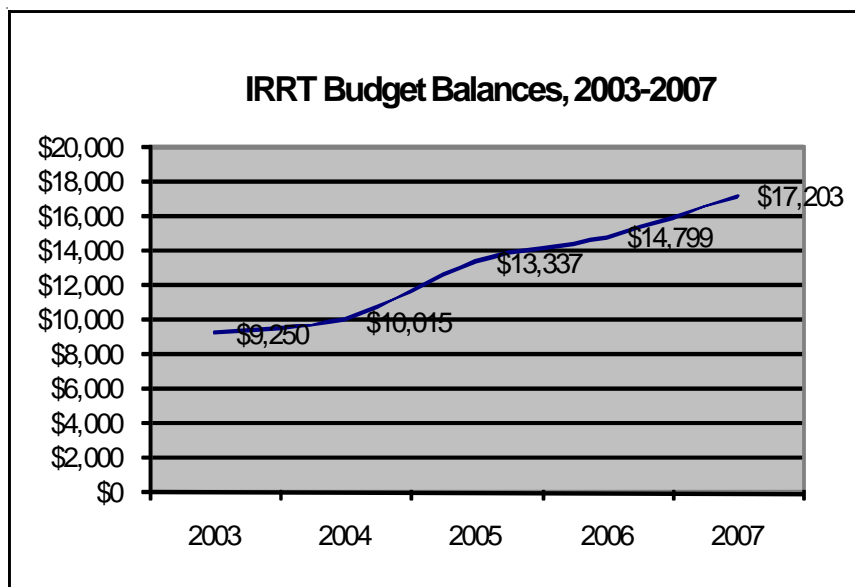


Chart 2: IRRT Budget Growth, 2003-2007

El Salvador

Continued from Page 1

Program content for the conference was directed at library workers of all types – from schools, universities, government offices, and non-governmental organizations around the country. Because of staffing and resource issues, most attendees were only able to attend selected days or half-day sessions of the week-long conference.

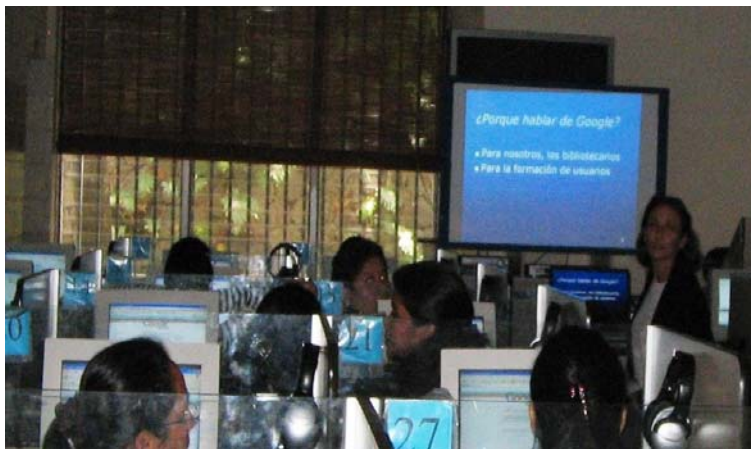
I was one of three U.S. librarians to speak on Tuesday morning on widely varying topics. Rachel Barreto, former director of the regional USIS Library in México City, spoke first about the preservation of a historically important local newspaper. Martha McPhail from San Diego State University followed, presenting SLA's "Competencias para Profesionales de la Información del Siglo XXI" (Competencies for the 21st Century Information Professional). I concluded the morning with a presentation and hands-on session entitled "Google en la Biblioteca". Other topics during the week included user education, promoting reading, innovation in the library, health databases using LILACS technology, and information resources for analyzing the Salvadoran labor market, as well as a participatory leadership workshop.

Concurrent with these sessions were four days of cataloging workshops, co-taught by Joseph Hinger of St. John's University and Ángel Villalba Roldán of the Hemeroteca Nacional of México. Also, during a visit to a university in San Miguel city in eastern El Salvador, Richelle van Snellenberg from the International Labor Organization in Geneva, Switzerland spoke about her library and its publicly-available resources. Back in the capital, Ms. Van Snellenberg also participated in a forum on user education with two local librarians, academic and public.

The cultural week of professional events concluded on Friday, May 25th, the actual day of the librarian in El Salvador. The organization proudly announced and previewed its new web site, now with its own domain: <http://www.abes.org.sv>. ABES also now has a database of its active members, currently numbering about 70. The Día del Bibliotecario events concluded with a reception for ABES members and guests.

Next year, ABES will celebrate 50 years of existence – a remarkable milestone for a professional organization in a developing nation that has overcome numerous challenges.

Marcy Carrel is Reference and Instruction Librarian at USF St. Petersburg Pynter Library



The author's presentation on "Google en la Biblioteca" was held in a computer lab at the Centro Cultural Salvadoreño.

Sister Libraries

Focus on...

Bulgaria & United States

By Rebecca Miller Banner

The partnerships between libraries in the United States and Bulgaria are well known, thanks to the tireless efforts of Nancy Bolt, former State Librarian of Colorado and current U.S. Director of the American Bulgarian Library Exchange (ABLE). Starting from grassroots partnerships between libraries in Colorado and Bulgaria, the project has grown to encompass more libraries in Bulgaria and Colorado, as well as adding libraries in Iowa, thanks to a United States Department of State grant.

Although the grant has ended, the partnerships live on and have even expanded. As the evaluator of the project, I became familiar with its mission and goals. I took this message to libraries in Nebraska, where I was residing, and was met with a positive response. So far one partnership has been established and many other Nebraskan libraries have expressed interest. The growth in interest from American libraries has allowed for more Bulgarian library involvement and the call has been issued to encourage their participation. Although there has been some attrition of participating libraries, the ABLE project remains strong.

Nancy Bolt presented on the ABLE project in the IRRT Chair's Program at the 2007 ALA Annual Conference. More information about ABLE can be found at <http://www.ableportal.bg>.

Are you part of an international partnership? Send a description of your partnership to intl.leads.irrt@gmail.com

First Lubuto Library opens in Lusaka, Zambia

Jane Meyers of the Lubuto Library Project announces the opening of the first Lubuto Library in Lusaka, Zambia. The term "Lubuto" signifies knowledge, enlightenment, and light in the Bemba language spoken in central Africa. Lubuto is an innovative and widely acclaimed library project that has been established to meet the needs of orphans and street children in sub-Saharan Africa.

At a time when so much of the aid community's focus is on the medical aspects of the AIDS crisis, the social and educational needs of the many orphans left behind often get forgotten. The Lubuto Library Project has been set up to offer such children a welcoming place where they can read, listen to stories and connect with others who are there to help them.

The Lubuto Library Project is hosting a celebration of this first library on September 21, 2007, at the Fountain of Hope Street Kids Drop-In Center in Lusaka. The first president of Zambia, Dr. Kenneth

David Kaunda, is the Guest of Honor and will read a children's book to the assembled diplomats, street children and other guests.

The program for this event will feature story telling in both English and Zambian languages, drama and musical performances and art activities by and for the street children. The ceremony will include a welcome from Jane Kinney Meyers, President of the Lubuto Library Project, remarks from Zambian Government representatives and reading of a congratulatory message from the UN Special Envoy for HIV and AIDS in Africa, Mrs. Elizabeth Mataka. Laura Bush, First Lady of the United States, contributed books to the library and sent a congratulatory message that will be read by the U.S. Ambassador to Zambia, Carmen Martinez.

More information on the Lubuto Library Project can be found at <http://www.lubuto.org>.

Sister Libraries Wiki

The Sister Libraries wiki is up and running! ALA's International Relations Office and IRRRT are cooperating to produce a "one-stop shopping" opportunity for anyone interested in:

- *learning about sister libraries*
- *looking for a sister library*
- *sharing experiences and activities*

The interactive nature of the wiki allows everyone to post about experiences, share tips and tricks, or request a partner.

There are many libraries around the world looking for a partner - why not you?

For more information, go to <http://wikis.ala.org/sisterlibraries/>

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