



Message from the IRRT Chair

By Nancy Bolt

It was cold—very cold—in Boston, but the IRRT Board managed to stay warm and discuss lots of topics to ensure that IRRT runs smoothly in providing programs to our international visitors at the ALA Annual Conference in Chicago. Here is a list of our key actions.

- The IRRT Nominating Committee presented a slate of candidates, which the board approved, for IRRT officers to be elected this spring. The candidates are:

Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect

Martin Kesselman
Susan Schnuer

Secretary/treasurer

Rebecka Lindau
Sha Li Zhang (incumbent)

Member-at-large

Mary Boone
Kurt Cumiskey

- The Publications Committee presented recommendations for the positions of Web Editor and International Leads Editor, which the Board approved:

Heath Martin is the new International Leads Editor, effective immediately.

Joan Weeks is the new IRRT Web Editor, effective in July 2005.

- We heard from both candidates for ALA President, Christine Lind Hage and Leslie Burger, and subsequently received thank-you notes from both. We asked both if they would support a full-time Director of the International Relations Office (we now share Michael Dowling with Chapter Relations) and both said they would look at the budget and consider it.
- The IRRT Continuing Education Committee is planning to webcast the first part of its pre-conference at ALA annual to sites in Central America, Africa, Europe, and North America. The content focus during the webcast, which will last about 90 minutes, will be on advocacy. The second part of the pre-conference will deal with the state of American librarianship.
- The IRRT Chair's Program will be called "Becoming a Global Librarian: Making Connections and Developing

Travel Plans." The program will introduce attendees to people who have worked overseas and to organizations that offer such opportunities.

- The theme of the International Papers Session this year will be "Shaping the future: library services for youth." There will be four international librarians speaking on library services for children and young adults in their respective countries.
- The Humphrey/OCLC/Forest Press and Bogle Pratt International Library Travel Fund Awards will be presented at the IRRT Chair's Program.
- The Board and Committee chairs discussed the ALA Strategic Plan for 2010 and decided to provide feedback that urges ALA to add more about international relations to the plan. We suggested several places where the strategic goals apply as much to international librarianship as to American librarianship. We discussed these with the International Relations Committee and will support each other in making these suggestions to ALA.
- The IRRT office will be doing Certificates of Appreciation for retiring IRRT Chairs. I suggest these be made at the IRRT Membership Meeting at the IRRT Chair's Program.
- The Board looked at the IRRT Memberships brochure that will be issued. We want to make it clear that, based on the vote last year, membership in IRRT is free to international (non-U.S.) librarians.
- The Board was asked to establish the ability for student groups to form international relations chapters. Some student chapters can only form international relations chapters if there is a national organization with which they can affiliate. We will consider a formal recommendation from the membership committee at the annual conference in Chicago.
- Finally, we are working on an update of the Officer's Manual. The new version will be on the IRRT website and not in print. This will make it easier to update.
- Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect Jeannette Pierce is beginning the appointment process for next year's IRRT Committee chairs and members. If you are interested, please contact Jeannette at pierce@jhu.edu.

Sofia 2004 explores libraries and globalization

By Meredith Solomon and Sam Wallin

“Sofia 2004 – Libraries, Globalization and Cooperation” was the latest in an ongoing bi-annual conference series designed to explore issues involving the impact of globalization on libraries and other information agencies. The conference began on November 3 and concluded on November 5, in Sofia, Bulgaria. The hosts of the conference were Emporia State University in Kansas and The University of Sofia, Bulgaria. Presenters came from all over Western Europe, the Balkans, Thailand, and the United States to speak about a multitude of issues including education, information technology, cooperation, national and academic libraries, policy, and current issues. Present at the conference were many exhibitors of database software and publishers specializing in materials for library professionals.

On November 2, before the main conference began, a pre-conference student session was held and attended by American and Bulgarian students, as well as faculty representatives from the main conference. Topics covered American and cosmed

From ALA's Information Desk

**Welcome New
IRRT Members!**

Herbert Achleitne

Audra Adomena

Jane Barrer

James Bierman

Rebecca Brey

Stacia Burnham

Mary Cox

Craig Cruz 202 Tc(S)50aax

Report from the International Relations Committee

By John W. Berry, Chair

Tsunami Library Relief Efforts

In a meeting of representatives of the U.S. national association members of IFLA with Alex Byrne, IFLA President-elect, the associations agreed to pursue a timely 're-purposing' of the 501c3 organization (The U. S. IFLA 2001 National Organizing Committee) to be used as a permanent library organization to deal with the December 2004 earthquake and tsunami in South Asia and future relief efforts resulting from natural disasters or acts of war.

The IRC unanimously passed the attached "Resolution on Rebuilding Libraries and Archives Damaged or Destroyed by the Earthquake and Tsunami in South Asia" for Council consideration. The Asian/Pacific American Librarian's Association (APALA) endorsed the resolution at this Midwinter Meeting. ALA Council passed the resolution unanimously:

Resolved, The American Library Association express its deepest sympathy to library associations and national libraries and archives in the region; and

Resolved, That the American Library Association work in coordination with other U.S. Associations, IFLA and its members, and UNESCO on the international response to this disaster, and

Resolved, That ALA publicize and provide information to the library community and the public on the damage to libraries in the region and the importance of rebuilding affected libraries and their collections; and

Resolved, That ALA publicize and provide information on how and where the library community and the public can contribute to these rebuilding efforts.

World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS)

The World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) Working Group met on Thursday, January 13, for updates since its last meeting on September 15, 2004, at the ALA's Washington Office.

Discussion centered on the continuing excellent work of Robert Martin, Marsha Semmel and Nancy Weiss (IMLS) who meet regularly with several other U.S. government agencies in planning for the November 2005 WSIS Phase 2 Summit in Tunis.

The working group has added a few additional players (besides representatives of the U.S. national library associations, IMLS and NCLIS) to include the U.S. State Department, CLIR and OCLC.

Another meeting will be held in April 2005 at the ALA's Washington Office.

UNESCO Convention on Cultural Diversity

Nancy Weiss, IMLS legal counsel, is participating in drafting language for the UNESCO Convention which is an extension of the "Universal Declaration Resolution on Cultural Diversity" passed by UNESCO member states in 2001.

We recommend interested members see the following piece on the UNESCO website for background on this set of issues: Cultural Industries: A focal point for culture in the future. <http://unesco.org/culture>.

Campaign for the World's Libraries

The Salvadoran Librarians Association, Library Association of Ireland, Norwegian Library Association, Nova Scotia Library Association and Library Boards of Nova Scotia

Tsunami

Kalavanchikudi (Batticaloa) and their four community libraries were

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This school comes under the World Bank's General Education Project – 2 (GEP2) Programme. It has 1,453 students and conducts classes from years 6 to 13. The main library of the school was not affected much, but the collection and the furniture of the English Library were totally damaged. The building has to be repaired.

Several public and community libraries were severely affected by the tsunami. The Children's Library of the Batticaloa Public Library was also badly damaged. This heavily used children's library has around 2,000 members. The library housed approximately 5,000 books and magazines at the time of the disaster. Around 60 percent of the collection was severely damaged and cannot be used. In addition, water entered the room where books for the mobile library were kept, and those books also were damaged.

As a nearby hospital was washed away, the Sainthamaruthu Public Library had to be converted into a temporary hospital. The collection was severely damaged during transportation necessary to accommodate this transformation. The buildings, collections and furniture of the public libraries of Kaluthavalai and

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Postage