



*International Leads* (ISSN 0892-4546) is published quarterly by the International Relations Round Table of the American Library Association in March, June, September, and December. The first issue was published in 1957. IL contains news about international library activities, the international work of ALA and other organizations, and people and publications in the field. IL is indexed by *Library Literature* and *Library and Information Science Abstracts* (LISA) and is sent free to all members of IRRT (dues \$15); non-ALA members can subscribe for \$12 per year by writing to International Relations Office, American Library Association, 50 E. Huron Street, Chicago, IL 60611. Materials for IL should be sent to *International Leads* Editor, **Heath Martin**, Hunter Library, Western Carolina University, Cullowhee, NC 28723, U.S.A., e-mail: [hmartin@wcu.edu](mailto:hmartin@wcu.edu)

At the Midwinter meetings in Seattle, IRRT members were actively engaged in planning and discussing

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# **Incoming ALA president invites participation from IRRT members, international community**

**By Loriene Roy**

At the 2007 ALA Annual



# Sofia 2006 draws from more than 30 countries

By Jim Agee and Jacqueline Solis

Librarians from more than 30 countries gathered in Sofia, Bulgaria, for the fourth Globenet conference in November 2006. Michael Gorman, immediate past president of ALA, gave an insightful keynote address “The wrong path and the right path: the role of libraries in access and preservation of cultural heritage”. In his keynote address, which is available at <http://slim.emporia.edu/globenet/Sofia2006/GormanSpeech.htm>, Gorman emphasized the right way to preserve cultural heritage. In his recognition of the value of the book, Gorman said very succinctly, “My devotion to the text is transcendent, my devotion to the book utilitarian” and so explained that while the text as created by the author is paramount, the book in its traditional format is the best method for accessing and preserving that scholarly account.

This was all good to hear while in an audience of librarians from many nations. The countries represented had long historical traditions of scholars, educational systems, libraries, and the book. Gorman believes that we are losing ground rapidly when contemporary societies go the ‘wrong’ direction and begin to value celebrity, visual media, and transitory information over literacy, the rigor of scholarship, and enduring knowledge. He found many gathered at the Sofia University who were in agreement with his values, and with his concerns for the path to be taken as the librarians were to discuss methods and practices for cultural preservation in the days ahead.

“SOFIA 2006: Globalization, Digitization, Access, and Preservation of Cultural Heritage” was the sixth conference in the Globenet series, and was once again organized by Dr. Herbert Achleitner, professor in the School of Library and Information Management at Emporia State University, and Dr. Alexander Dimchev, Dean of the Faculty of Philosophy, and professor in the Department of Library and Information Sciences at Sofia University “St. Kliment Ohridski.” These two professors have been the principal organizers of all of the Sofia

Conferences. The first Sofia conference was in 2000, and one has been held there biennially since (2000, 2002, 2004, 2006).

The theme of this conference allowed many views from the more than 70 presentations, and encouraged formal and informal discussions among the 225 registered participants. This fourth Sofia conference continued the tradition of an excellent multinational exchange. Approximately 50% of participants were from North America and West Europe, and 50% were from

## Participation

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Circle to help organize events during the year. Students in our School of Information at The University of Texas at Austin and at the School of Information Resources & Library Science at the University of Arizona are members of a Student Action Circle; they assist the task forces and the Events Planning Circle in accomplishing their tasks.

### Circle of Literacy

The Circle of Literacy Task Force is planning activities to illustrate support for literacy across cultures and across the lifespan. Plans focus on services for and with indigenous peoples, services for immigrants, and outreach to those who are incarcerated, such as the following.

- A Gathering of Readers virtual celebration of indigenous children's reading and culture will take place in April 2008, during the fiftieth anniversary of National Library Week in the United States. Fifty to one hundred schools around the world that enroll indigenous children will be invited to participate by sharing information about their cultures and/or by visiting a content-rich website. Students will receive incentives. A prototype of the website is available at <http://www.ischool.utexas.edu/~gathread>.

- A website will provide capsule descriptions of notable library services for immigrant populations.

- ALA recently received two years of funding from the Dollar General Literacy Foundation for "The American Dream Starts@Your Library," an initiative supporting English-language literacy in public libraries. The initiative will create programs at ALA, mini-grants to libraries, a toolkit of resources, highlights of successful programs, a website, and regional training. The Circle of Literacy Task Force will help with these efforts.

- WBGH-Boston is developing "We Shall Remain," a five-episode television series of 90-minute programs on American Indian history to air on public television in January 2009. We will help promote library programming around this television series.

### Workplace Wellness

Members of the Workplace Wellness Task Force are planning the following.

- A wellness fair will take place at the 2008 ALA Annual Conference in Anaheim, California. The fair will provide information and sample products supporting and promoting library workers' health.

- An environmental assessment scan document will help assess the condition of the workplace in supporting library workers' health.

- A stay-healthy-at-conference plan will include literature, exercise, and a conference food guide.

- A website showcasing examples of library workplace wellness programs will be launched on National Library Workers Day, April 2008.

### Supporting Library and Information Science (LIS) Education Through Practice

This Task Force explores the bridge between formal education in LIS programs and supporting students in these programs with practical experience. They are working on several projects as well.

- A national/international database will consolidate fieldwork/capstone/practicum opportunities for students.

- We will support the continuing forums on education at the 2008 ALA Midwinter Meeting and the 2008 ALA Annual Conference, with a focus on doctoral student and master's student experiences.

- We will host Poster Sessions to feature students' fieldwork.

- Student service-work will be highlighted on a project website.

- Several members will cooperate in producing a special monograph on fieldwork in LIS education. The Task Force will celebrate its publication at the 2008 ALA Annual Conference.

- The Task Force will edit a special issue of the Journal of Education for Library and Information Science on service-learning.

### Ways to Stay Involved

We invite you to attend the events and participate in our efforts. Here are some ways to stay involved.

1. Nominate a school to participate in the 2008 "Gathering of Readers."

2. Add anniversary events to the timeline calendar. Complete the online form linked from <http://www.lorieneroy.com>.

3. International libraries are also eligible to receive a John Cotton Dana Library Public Relations Award. Consider nominating a library with a public relations campaign supporting an initiative in alignment with task force efforts in literacy, workplace wellness, or LIS student service-learning.

4. Send examples of how libraries are involved in services for immigrants, workplace wellness, services for those incarcerated, and fieldwork for LIS students.

5. Watch for the launch of the national/international service-learning capstone database.

6. Consider planning an event related to our initiatives. We would be happy to suggest topics and/or speakers.

6. Follow news about these projects at <http://www.lorieneroy.com>.

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I will attend several international gatherings in 2007 including AMBAC (La Asociación Mexicana de Bibliotecarios, Asociación Civil) in León, Guanajuato, México (May), the Fifth International Indigenous Librarians Forum in Brisbane, Australia (June), IFLA's World Summit on the Information Society in Durban, South Africa (August), and the LIANZA (Library and Information Association of New Zealand Aotearoa) Conference in Rotorua, Aotearoa/New Zealand (September). I look forward to meeting you as we Celebrate Community, Collaboration, and Culture!

Fellow IRRT members, we invite you to review:

[http://wikis.ala.org/sisterlibraries/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://wikis.ala.org/sisterlibraries/index.php/Main_Page)

of our web presence, particularly the information contained within these links:

- Search the Sister Libraries Database
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The committee aims to improve the functionality of its portion of the website. In conjunction with this goal, at its 2007 Midwinter members committed to verify the current content

At the most recent Midwinter IRRT Executive Board meeting, a amendment to the Bylaws was reviewed by the Board and the Board recommended that it be sent to the membership for vote. This announcement is a notice that the Bylaw amendment below will appear on the next IRRT ballot.

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Proposed IRRT BYLAW Revision

1. Current BYLAW

Article V. Meetings

Section 1: Annual Meeting

The regular membership meeting of the Round Table shall be held at the time and place of the annual conference of the American Library Association.

2. Revised BYLAW

Article V. Meetings

Section 1: Annual Meeting

The regular membership meeting of the Round Table shall be held at the time and place of the annual conference of the American Library Association **when needed.**

1. Discussion

This change will allow us to clarify that IRRT is not obligated to hold a membership meeting every year. Currently the regular membership meeting is held at the beginning of the Chair's Program on Monday afternoon of Annual conference. The revision will allow the IRRT Board to have more flexibility in determining the need for and the timing of an IRRT membership meeting.

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Postage