



Letter from the Chair

Karen Evans-Romaine

I wrote in last year's newsletter that 2014 had been a year of tremendous change. The changes continue this year in directions we did not anticipate at this time last year. The University of Wisconsin is facing tremendous challenges, both fiscal and structural, that have made the national news, most notably a \$250 million cut in state support, with all departments having to take some portion of that cut. This is occurring in the context of particularly strong challenges both at UW-Madison and nationally to humanities departments, as student enrollments increase in STEM disciplines (science, technology, engineering, and math) and decrease in the humanities; the distribution of budget cuts reflects that shift in enrollments. These are not easy times.

Yet in light of these ground-shifting changes, I am particularly proud of the accomplishments of our department's faculty, graduate and undergraduate students, and alumni. Our faculty maintain outstanding research profiles, publishing seven books in 2014 and 2015 and continuing to make an impact on our discipline nationally and internationally. Our graduate and undergraduate alumni are being hired in excellent positions and are embarking on exciting new adventures. Our enrollments, particularly but



not only in language courses, remain strong, as do our undergraduate and graduate programs. We continue to contribute to the Wisconsin Idea in our numerous outreach missions. We have a great deal to be proud of.

In this newsletter you will become better acquainted with the newest member of the Slavic Department, Manon van de Water, who joined us officially in August, coming from the now restructured Department of Theater and Drama.

Accomplishments in outreach to Wisconsin and beyond are impressive. Professor David Bethea and CREECA Associate Director and Slavic Department alumna Jennifer Tishler won two major federal grants this year to support and expand the activities of the Pushkin Summer Institute: a renewed \$90,000 grant from STARTALK, funded by the US Department of Education, to support the Pushkin Summer Institute on the UW-Madison campus, which just started its fourth summer program in Madison, and a State Department-funded \$140,000 grant from the National Security Language Initiative for Youth (NSLI-Y) to establish a six-week Russian-language study abroad program in Daugavpils, Latvia. Both programs are staffed by our own outstanding students and alumni. The project manager of the Madison PSI is UW-Madison alumnus Benjamin Jens (Ph.D., 2013).

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Russian instructors in the PSI Madison this year include, as lead teacher, English as a Second Language lecturer Anna Nesterchouk, a graduate of our School of Education's department of Curriculum & Instruction, founder of the Madison Community Russian School, and a specialist in working with school-age students. Anna is joined by UW-Madison graduate student Matt McGarry and alumnus David Houston (Ph.D., 2014), who has been teaching at Stetson University. Their resident directors, watching over them in a UW dormitory and taking them on outings, include undergraduate Russian students Ashley De La Paz and Maxwell Stoffel-Rosales and two UW-Madison Russian Flagship students: UW-Madison alumnus John Lyell (2015), who just returned from academic-year study on the Russian Overseas Flagship program, and Savanna Rutas, who intends to apply for the academic-year Russian Overseas Flagship program next year. (More on that program anon!) Participating high schools include Pritzker College Prep and Noble Street Prep in Chicago, whose student populations include mainly minority students, and West Anchorage High School in Alaska. This program continues to inspire high school students through a combination of intensive Russian language instruction and study of Pushkin's life and work, together with work on their academic writing in English.

Fourteen PSI students, many of whom participated in last year's PSI in Madison, will study in Daugavpils under the direction of West Anchorage High School Russian teacher Michele Whaley; the resident assistant will be UW-Madison Russian Flagship alumnus Roy Ginsberg (2015). I will visit the PSI students in Daugavpils and observe their Russian classes at the end of July. It is a fascinating city in Latvia whose population consists of 96% native speakers of Russian.

Professor Bethea was among 21 outstanding UW-Madison faculty highlighted for his work on the Pushkin Summer Institute in a special insert of the Wisconsin State Journal on 22 March 2015.

Our outreach efforts on the Oakhill Project continue to expand, and to be recognized for excellence honoring the Wisconsin Idea. The Ira and Ineva Reilly Baldwin Wisconsin Idea Endowment grant awarded to Professor Emerita Judith Kornblatt in 2013 has been extended, and Manon van de Water has received a \$4,000 Baldwin grant in order to expand the activities of the Oakhill Project to include a theater component. José Vergara received the L&S Teaching Assistant Award for Outstanding Service, in recognition of his leadership in coordinating programs and teaching Russian literature at the Oakhill Correctional Facility. In addition, José received a Morgridge Center Graduate Award for Public Service Excellence in Engaged Scholarship. You can read more about our work at Oakhill in José Vergara's

article in this newsletter.

We are proud of training outstanding teachers, and delighted that our graduate students continue to be recognized for their accomplishments in teaching. Three of our graduate students won awards: Jesse Stavis received the L&S Teaching Fellow Award, which recognizes outstanding teaching and potential for mentorship of other teachers. He will guide new TAs in a pre-service workshop during the week prior to the beginning of the Fall 2015 semester. Melissa Warner received the L&S Early Excellence in Teaching Award.

Our faculty, always productive researchers, have outdone themselves, publishing seven books in 2014 and 2015. David Danaher's book, *Reading Václav Havel*, appeared with the University of Toronto Press and will soon appear in Czech translation. Professor Halina Filipowicz's book, *Taking Liberties: Gender, Transgressive Patriotism, and Polish Drama, 1786-1989*, appeared with Ohio University Press. Alexander Dolinin published an annotated translation of Vladimir Nabokov's *Transparent Things*, *Прозвучивающие предметы*, together with annotations to Nabokov's *Истинная жизнь Себастьяна Хайта* and an introduction; the combined volume appeared in St. Petersburg in 2014. Tomislav Longinović published *Vampires Over the Ages: A Cultural Analysis of Scientific, Literary, and Cinematic Representations* with Cognella Academic Publishing in 2014. He continued for his second of four years as Senior Fellow at the Institute for Research in the Humanities and will take a one-semester leave to teach at Harvard University next spring, following a one-semester research sabbatical. Manon van de Water published this year, with Mary McAvoy and Kristin Hunt, *Drama and Education: Performance Methodologies for Teaching and Learning*; the volume was published by Routledge. Irina Shevelenko's *Литературный путь Цветаевой: идеология, поэтика, идентичность автора в контексте эпохи* [Tsvetaeva's Literary Path: Ideology, Poetics, and Identity of the Author in the Context of the Epoch], appeared this year in a revised and updated edition through the Moscow publishing house Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie (New Literary Review). Finally, Professor Emerita Judith Kornblatt published, with co-editor Patrick Michelson, a collection of essays entitled *Thinking Orthodox in Modern Russia: Culture, History, Context*, at University of Wisconsin Press.

Our undergraduate and graduate students continue to excel in their studies, and to inspire us. At this year's awards ceremony we celebrated the accomplishments of outstanding students of Polish: three undergraduates were honored with Michael & Emily Lapinski Undergraduate Scholarships for students of Polish: Candace Campbell, Zuzanna Sztul,

and Samantha Walczuk. Graduate student Anna Borovskaya-Ellis won a Michael & Emily Lapinski Graduate Fellowship to support her study of Polish at Jagellonian University in Kraków and dissertation research in both Kraków and Warsaw this summer, as well as the Janet Dziadulewicz Brandon Award from the Polanki Polish Women's Cultural Club of Milwaukee. Two graduate students, Slavic Department first-year graduate student Brad Gordon and, for the first time, History Department graduate student Piotr Puchalski, who is writing on Polish history, were awarded Lapinski Graduate Fellowships for next academic year to support their study of Polish language, literature, and culture. An outstanding graduating student and previous Lapinski Scholarship recipient, Natalia Chreptowicz, won this year's Edmund Zawacki Award for Outstanding Achievement in the Study of Polish Language, Literature, and Culture. Undergraduate Dan Spika won the November Fund Prize for Outstanding Achievement in the study of Czech.

Our Russian Flagship program continues to thrive, with 49 students at the time of this writing, 12 of whom just completed an academic year of study not at St. Petersburg State University, as we expected, but at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University in Almaty, Kazakhstan. Because of increasingly strained relations between the United States and the Russian Federation, the funders of the Language Flagship, the National Security Education Program in the U.S. Department of Defense, decided last July to move the program out of Russia to Almaty. Thus UW-Madison's 12 participating students, 8 of whom received highly competitive Boren Awards for participation in the capstone Russian Overseas Flagship program, boldly changed their plans and went to Almaty in September. I myself visited the program site in Almaty and was very impressed with the city, the quality of the program,



Dan Spika with Professor David Danaher at the annual Department Awards Ceremony. Dan received the November Fund Award for Outstanding Achievement in Czech.



Janice Zawacki receives the Slavic Department Generosity Award for her continued support of our students.

the kindness of our Kazakh hosts, and the flexibility and resilience of our students, all of whom lived with host families and some of whom studied Kazakh as well as intensive Russian. Eleven of the 12 students achieved ACTFL Superior proficiency in Russian, with the 12th achieving the next highest Advanced High rating. They are now embarking on exciting new adventures in employment and graduate school, as you will see in their profiles in this newsletter. You can read more about the Russian Flagship Program at russianflagship.wisc.edu.

Our undergraduate and graduate students were successful in receiving Foreign Language and Area Studies awards for study abroad this summer: Slavic Department graduate student Zachary Rewinski for summer study of Russian in Daugavpils, Latvia, and Russian Flagship students Vera Swanson for study of Russian in Almaty, Kazakhstan this coming summer and Marisa Irwin for study in Almaty on the Russian Overseas Flagship program next academic year. First-year graduate student Leigh Wilson won a FLAS award for the study of Czech on campus next academic year.

At our awards ceremony we celebrated other accomplishments in Russian as well. Undergraduate Ainsley McNerney, also headed to Almaty on the Russian Overseas Flagship program next year, won the American Council of Teachers of Russian Postsecondary Laureate Award. Graduating senior Devin Hess, who just returned from Almaty, received the J. Thomas Shaw Prize for Undergraduate Excellence. Russian Flagship student Tiara Luckiesh was recognized for outstanding progress in Advanced Russian, and Tyler Juve for outstanding progress in Intermediate Russian. This year a number of our students were recognized nationally for their essay-writing abilities in Russian: 41 UW-Madison students participated in the ACTR (American Council of



Second-year Russian students Haixiang Liu and Patrick Lacey perform the song "Белеет парус одинокий" at the annual Department Awards Ceremony.

Teachers of Russian) National Post-Secondary Russian Essay Contest, in which student essays are judged by experts in Moscow. Two of our students, Rachel Burman and Andrew Hise, received Honorable Mention in Level 1, and two, Caleb Foust and Quin Stack, received Honorable Mention in Level 4.

Our graduate students continue to be recognized for their excellence not only as teachers, but as scholars. Through the generosity of our donors, we were able to award travel funds to help five of our graduate students present their work at national conferences. We celebrated outstanding presentations on campus as well: graduate student Sergey Karpukhin received his second J. Thomas Shaw award for his outstanding presentation at this year's AATSEEL-Wisconsin in October, and three graduate students received honorable mention: Megan Kennedy, Laura Little, and Jesse Stavis. Two doctoral candidates, Sergey Karpukhin and Sarah Kapp, won a



Professor Irina Shevelenko and Viktoriya Kononova at the annual awards ceremony. Viktoriya has accepted a tenure-track position at Lawrence University in Appleton, WI.

Mellon Wisconsin Summer Fellowship to support the completion of their dissertations. Sarah Kapp and José Vergara both received one-semester Graduate School dissertation fellowships to support completion of their dissertations in the coming academic year. Doctoral candidate Thomas Tabatowski, recipient of a J. Thomas Shaw award for his outstanding presentation at AATSEEL-Wisconsin in 2013, received a Graduate School fellowship to work on his dissertation during this past academic year. José Vergara's article, "Kavalerov and Dedalus as Rebellious Sons and Artists: Yury Olesha's Dialogue with *Ulysses* in *Envy*," appeared in 2014 in the *Slavic and East European Journal* (58.4).

Our alumni continue to find excellent positions in a highly competitive job market in Slavic. In this newsletter you will read a contribution by Molly Thomasy Blasing (2014), now Assistant Professor at the University of Kentucky. Lisa Woodson (2013) completed the first of two years as Visiting Assistant Professor at the University of New Mexico. Benjamin Jens (2013) and dissertator Colleen Lucey will be teaching this coming year at the University of Arizona. Viktoriya Kononova, due to defend her dissertation this year, will begin a tenure-track position as Assistant Professor at Lawrence University in Appleton, Wisconsin. Sergey Karpukhin, also defending his dissertation this year, will begin this fall as a lecturer at the University of Notre Dame. Matthew McGarry, who defended his dissertation in May, will begin a position this fall as a lecturer at the University of Oklahoma.

We were delighted to have one of our alumni return this spring to give a talk. Victoria Thorstensson (2013), now Assistant Professor of Russian Literature at Nazarbayev University in Astana, Kazakhstan, came to Madison for a week in April to conduct research, consult with colleagues, meet with graduate students, and give a talk entitled "The Inkwell of the Russian Messenger: Mikhail Katkov's Editorial Politics and the Serialization of Fedor Dostoevskii's *Demons* and Nikolai Leskov's *At Daggers Drawn* (1870-1872)." Her visit was part of an ongoing agreement between our university and Nazarbayev University, which just celebrated its first graduation.

We hosted or co-hosted stimulating lectures by other guests this year as well: Professor Boris Gasparov, Columbia University, gave the keynote lecture at AATSEEL-Wisconsin in October, entitled "Conquering the Present: Soviet Culture in the Wake of the Stalinist Epoch." Together with CREECA, we hosted a visit and lecture on digital humanities by Igor Pilshchikov, Moscow State University and Tallinn University, editor-in-chief of the Russian Virtual Library. With thanks to Professor Emeritus James Bailey, we welcomed Tatyana Skulacheva, Russian Academy of Sciences, who gave a talk on metrics.

Finally, we said a sad goodbye to Lori Hubbard, who retired on 19 December 2014 after 31 years of service. Lori spoiled us all. She took splendid care of faculty and students in our department for over a decade, making last-minute photocopies for frantic faculty, helping students over registration bumps and graduate students through various academic-administrative gateways, solving myriad problems major and minor, answering urgent emails at odd hours, leading our celebrations upon the birth of graduate students' children and greeting them during their parents' doctoral defenses, and helping us celebrate these and other career and life milestones. As the first point of contact for graduate applicants, Lori made new graduate students feel welcome before they ever came to Madison. Lori shepherded our graduate students through every stage of their careers here, from application to doctoral defense, helping them in countless ways along the way. Graduate students thanked Lori with a memorial plaque naming 1439 Van Hise the Lori L. Hubbard Mailroom; please come see it next time you come to Van Hise! Jane has been even busier than usual this year, courageously fulfilling Lori's duties as well as her own since January, for which we are enormously grateful.

We are deeply grateful to you, our alumni and friends, who support our outstanding undergraduate and graduate students, and who make possible the recognition of their accomplishments through the special awards we celebrated this May, through your generous donations. Please see information at the back of this newsletter, or on our website (just go to http://slavic.lss.wisc.edu/new_web/ and click "Donate to Slavic"!), about how you can continue to help us provide student scholarships and travel grants to help graduate students present their work at conferences



Lori Hubbard poses with the mailroom plaque she received from the Slavic Graduate Student Organization.

or to conduct dissertation research, and to support the many exciting projects that make our department unique. We are all the more grateful for your support in these challenging times. We wish you a peaceful and prosperous coming year. ■

Faculty Updates

David Bethea: First of all, I want to say hello (give a “shout out” as the younger generation says) to all former students: please let me know how you’re doing and what’s happening in your world. For my part, 2014-15 has been a good year, despite the draconian budget cuts we are experiencing as a department, college, and university. We are all pulling together and doing the best we can under the circumstances. Our current group of grads is really amazing in terms of esprit de corps and teamwork – we consider ourselves very fortunate in that respect. On the scholarly front, I am spending my time co-editing and contributing to a volume entitled *Nabokov in Context* for Cambridge University Press; doing different articles and hopefully eventually a book on the role of Charles Darwin in Russian cultural thinking (my grad seminar this fall will be devoted to Darwin and Symbolist thought); and consulting on a documentary film project about Pushkin’s African heritage and the African-American community that took me and a film crew to Moscow and St. Petersburg in April. I continue to teach the nineteenth-century survey of “greatest hits” and enjoy very much working with the TAs and that large group of undergrads. Finally, the Pushkin Summer Institute is expanding: we’ve received a grant from the American Councils/State Department (NSLI-Y) to provide a second level of summer study, this time abroad, in Daugavpils, Latvia (“Learn Russian in the EU”), for our high school students from underserved communities. This grant now works in conjunction with the STARTALK grant we received last year and again this year for the first summer of study in Madison. These two programs will have 26 and 14 students, respectively, in them and both now are on more solid footing in terms of funding, for which we are very grateful. Our hope is that, as time goes on, more students from the PSI will be accepted at UW and continue their Russian in the Flagship program. Personally I enjoy tremendously teaching these kids about Pushkin in the summer program – it is something I look forward to now every year.

David Danaher's book, *Reading Václav Havel*, was published in April of this year by the University of Toronto Press. A Czech translation is forthcoming from the Prague-based Argo Publishers.

Karen Evans-Romaine spent an exciting year not only steering the department through a maze of changes for the second academic year, but as world traveler. After a summer spent with family speaking Russian and enjoying the Baltic in Jurmala and Riga, Latvia, also visiting the Russian-speaking city of Daugavpils, she gave several presentations related to the Russian Flagship program at the University of Virginia and at the ASEEES annual meeting in San Antonio; participated in various capacities in the AATSEEL annual meeting in Vancouver; and spent two weeks in Kazakhstan in March. She sat in on classes and tutorials for one week and met with Russian Flagship students studying at Al-Farabi Kazakh National University in Almaty, also visiting one host family and two internship sites and seeing the beautiful mountains surrounding that fascinating and spectacularly situated city. The second week she visited and gave workshops on teaching methods to faculty members teaching Kazakh language, literature, and culture at Nazarbayev University in Astana. She was joined in that visit by Professor of German Monika Chavez, who gave workshops on assessment. In turn, Evans-Romaine and other UW-Madison colleagues hosted Kazakh-language faculty members from NU visiting the UW-Madison campus in November and June. She looks forward to a second quiet summer of breathing Baltic Sea air and writing on Pasternak, Tsvetaeva, and music, and on Russian language pedagogy. Her article on Marina Tsvetaeva and Music, the product of the previous Jurmala summer, will appear next year in a Brill volume on Tsvetaeva, edited by Sibelan Forrester.

Halina Filipowicz's new book, *Taking Liberties: Gender, Transgressive Patriotism, and Polish Drama, 1786-1989*, is out from Ohio University Press.

Judith Deutsch Kornblatt, who retired from the department in 2013, has successfully graduated from UW-Madison School of Nursing. Yes, she is now officially a Badger! Although she greatly misses her former students and colleagues, she looks forward to an encore career helping stamp out misery and disease. She figures she will never be at a loss for clients.

Tomislav Longinović has had another prolific year at the UW. He has published several articles, notably "The Sense of an Ending: Children of Yugoslavia Looking for Home" (in *Le silence et la parole au lendemain des guerres yougoslaves*, ed. Lauren Lydic, Limoges: Presses Universitaires de Limoges, 2015); "Post-Yugoslav Writers in Exile" (in *Rajka Gorup Festschrift*, ed. Slobodanka Vladiv Gorup, Bloomington: Slavica Publishers, 2015), and "Allergic Reactions: Danube and the Ex-centric Imaginary of

Europe" (in *Watersheds: Poetics and Politics of the Danube River*, Eds. Marijeta Božović and Matthew Miller, Brighton: Academic Studies Press, 2015). Professor Longinović has spent another exciting semester at the Institute for Research in the Humanities as a senior fellow working on his new book-length project and engaging with the amazing IRH community. Apart from other classes, he was happy to teach a very popular course on vampires in literature and film that regularly attracts three hundreds students. It was his great pleasure to lead a study abroad program in Croatia again, teaching course entitled "Conflict and Culture: the Case of Istria." He has also explored his old interest in performance art, having the privilege to perform at the University of Sorbonne in Paris in summer of 2014, as well as at the Art Institute of Chicago in spring of 2015. He is very excited to spend the spring semester of 2016 at the Slavic Department at Harvard University as a Visiting Professor, where he will teach two courses and engage in the lively Harvard community. He is very grateful to the Slavic community at the UW for all their help and support!

Andrew Reynolds has enjoyed teaching a number of graduate offerings for the first time: the Modernism component of our new foundation courses, and a seminar in the theories and practices of translating poetry. He also had fun teaching the Gogol' course for the second time, trying to prove his paradoxical maxim that a successful course on Gogol' is one where his work is even more of a mystery at the end of the semester than at the beginning! He has been busy collaborating with Russian colleagues on various bibliographies and articles for an edition of the collected works of Nadezhda Mandelstam, for the series *Сохрани мою речь: Записки Мандельштамского общества*, and for the *Mandelstam Encyclopedia*. He is looking forward to participating in and organizing various Mandelstam-related events in Russia and the US in 2016, the 115th anniversary of the poet's birth.

Irina Shevelenko: I enjoyed my sabbatical leave during 2014-2015. In fall I worked on making the last edits and then reading proofs for the revised edition of my book *Литературный путь Цветаевой*; the volume came out in January 2015 from Novoe Literaturnoe Obozrenie, Moscow. The rest of the year was devoted to completing my new book manuscript, *Модернизм как архаизм: национализм и поиски модернистской эстетики в России*; the manuscript will go to the same publisher in July. In addition, I started my work on an edited volume tentatively titled *Reframing Russian Modernism*; most of its contributors were participants at an international workshop on the same topic I organized at Madison in

May 2014. I look forward to completing this project in 2015-2016. (See the Slavic Department 2014 newsletter for a report on the workshop.) During the coming summer, the pleasures of the Baltic beach notwithstanding, I anticipate doing a lot of reading to prepare for teaching a new graduate course on Soviet, Émigré, and Post-Soviet Literature, the one that completes our new sequence of foundation courses in the history of Russian literature. ■

Introducing Myself

Manon van de Water

I am thrilled to have been welcomed as a faculty member in Slavic Languages and Literature in August 2014. In many ways it feels as if I have come full circle, making a mid-career change that brings me back to my roots and to what I set out to study 36 years ago, when fresh from high school I embarked on studying Slavic Languages and Literature at the University of Leiden the Netherlands. I was an “old-style” student, which meant that I would graduate with a doctorandus title 6 or 7 years later, a terminal degree, basically an ABD, all but dissertation. Interested in theatre, I took theatre studies as one of my three minors (the others were Comp Lit and Russian studies), completed a special graduate focus unit on the theatre of Mikhail Bulgakov, and wrote my doctorandus thesis on the drama of the Moldavian/Russian writer Ion Drutse.

During my studies in Leiden, our literature professor, Karel van het Reve, had an extra-curricular translation circle consisting of two groups: the older ones (many of whom had graduated already), and the younger ones — my cohort. For seven years he had been translating Gogol’s *Revizor* with the shifting groups during weekly meetings. Ours was in the morning, and we went to Barrera, the literary café on the other side of the canal, after class to drink coffee; the older group met in the afternoon and went to Barrera afterwards to drink beer or pernod.

In 1982 Reve decided to retire. We, his young and ambitious students, decided to publish and perform the new translation of *Revizor*. Joined by the literary world in the Netherlands we rehearsed; booked the Schouwburg, the 1705 municipal theatre of Leiden; casted some famous alumni and friends of Reve in the bit parts; got the costumes from the National Theatre in Amsterdam; and performed at the retirement gala. I played Khlestakov. The direction was modeled after Meyerhold’s famous 1920s production. It made the national news.

The 1980s were years of high unemployment in the Netherlands, but given that we were a socialist



country, nobody worried too much. Soon after graduation I found a job as a tour guide with a bus company that made “Eastern Europe” tours: East Berlin, Warsaw, Minsk, Smolensk, Moscow, Velikii Novgorod, Leningrad, Helsinki, Stockholm, Göteborg, Kiel, and back. Seventeen days’ travel through Eastern Europe, three days’ turnaround. I did this for three years, but the most memorable trip was my first one, for which I was actually hired specifically: round trips to the Caucasus with a special small bus, so that it could make the curves in the mountains. The second day we arrived in Kraków, and I received a call from the company, who asked how it went. I found that very attentive until they asked me if I had heard anything about an explosion. I had not, but when I hung up I asked the Polish guide. He told me the next morning that he heard from relatives in Warsaw that there was indeed something going on, but the bus company advised me not to tell the passengers for now and continue to Lvov. And so we did. After a four-hour search at the border we finally arrived in Lvov, where the phone was already ringing for me: “Do not go to Kiev tomorrow; stay another day in Lvov.” From that moment on it became a nightmarish conversation, via landlines, between the local Intourist, the Dutch embassy in Moscow, the bus company, and the passengers, who still had no idea what was going on but were happy to spend May 1st celebrations in Lvov. That night, minutes after the decision was made to go back, Intourist announced that we could go to Odessa and fly to Tbilisi. I said we had to go back. Intourist organized a farewell dinner. There the bus driver, who had been informed from the beginning, and I announced that we had to go back. The passengers were conflicted; if the Russians said nothing was wrong, why would we go back? Intourist nodded understandingly and broke out another bottle of vodka. When all passengers had left, they brought the final news: we could not leave the next morning; first we all had to undergo a medical test. After much conversation it came out that there was another way: we all needed to sign a paper that



Cafe Barrera in Leiden.

we refused the medical test. When I announced this the next morning and provided the translation, it sunk in: something was indeed going on. Everyone signed.

We went back via Hungary, were stopped and tested with detecting devices three times on our way to the border, and when we arrived at the Hungarian border a German tourist bus was waiting to enter the Soviet Union. The driver blocked anyone from going in and out of his bus and said he was on his way to Kiev. There was no chance to talk to any of the passengers.

After this I was put on the regular Eastern Europe tours, which unexpectedly paid off in my later career. When I was researching in Moscow and interviewing Drutse in 1985, Gorbachev came to power. As a tour guide I had the opportunity to witness and follow the impact on Russian society of Glasnost and Perestroika. When the Berlin Wall fell, I was at Penn State, doing an MA in theatre. The events in Eastern Europe brought an increased interest in Russian, however, and soon I was appointed as a lecturer in Russian I, II, and III at the Department of Slavic Languages and Literature.

Thus I had embarked on a dual career when I entered the PhD program in Theatre with an emphasis in Theatre for Youth at Arizona State University. I already knew my dissertation topic: no matter what, it had to be about theatre for children and young people in Russia. Eventually, informed by my tour guide experiences, my dissertation centered on the changes in theatre for children and young people that happened with Glasnost and Perestroika, a work that morphed into my first book, *Moscow Theatres for Young People: A Cultural History of Ideological Coercion and Artistic Innovation, 1917-2000* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

I came to the University of Wisconsin-Madison in 1997 with a joint appointment in Theatre and Drama and Curriculum and Instruction. Although my plate was full, I was excited to find out about the existence of a Slavic department and about CREECA, and to be asked to take over the cross-listed Russian Theatre

History course. Over the years my research remained for a large part focused on Russia and took me almost yearly to Russia for on-site research, festivals, or workshops. This increased after tenure when I was, among other activities, invited to give a workshop on teaching through dramatic/theatre methods to the teachers of Beslan, followed up with a research trip to Vladikavkaz and Beslan; served as a judge for the Velikii Novgorod International King Festival of Theatre for Young Audiences; was invited as an outside observer to *Большая Перемена*, the first international festival of theatre for children and young people in Moscow, organized by Golden Mask founder Eduard Boyakov; gave a lecture and a workshop culminating in a performance to 41 teens aged 13-17 from Rostov on the Don; and gave a lecture and workshop on theatre for social change at the Meyerhold Center in Moscow.

My current research project is a biography of Natalia Sats (1904-1993), one of the critical figures in Russian/Soviet professional theatre for children and youth, who spanned the entire Soviet period with all its triumphs, trials and tribulations. A first article on Sats's early career (1917-1932) has appeared in *Nationalism and Youth in Theatre and Performance*, edited by Angie Sweigart-Gallagher and Victoria Petterson Lantz (Routledge 2014).

Meanwhile, I still function as the Director of the Theatre for Youth Program for the Interdisciplinary Theatre Studies Program and remain active in the international scene. In 2006 I co-founded, with seven members from seven different countries, the International Theatre for Young Audiences Research Network (ITYARN). As Chair of the network I was responsible for (co)-organizing numerous international symposia and conferences, and I gave many keynote and guest lectures in, among other places, Japan, Argentina, Mexico, Italy, Austria, Germany, Ireland, Norway, India, Australia, Russia, and China. I was also responsible for editing several peer-reviewed publications resulting from these meetings. In 2011 ITYARN became the official research network of ASSITEJ, the International Association of Theatre for children and Youth, with national centers in over 90 countries world-wide. Since May 2014, I serve on the 15-member international Executive Board of ASSITEJ, the first time a researcher has served on that board in its 50 years of existence, and thus I continue to maintain an intensive travel schedule.

Even with all the traveling, I love to teach, and I am excited to do that here, in the department of Slavic Languages and Literature. I have many plans: a Russian play in Russian, a unit on how to use dramatic methods to teach foreign languages in my Drama for Teaching and Learning classes, infusing theatre in the Public Humanities Project at the Oakhill Correctional

Institution, teaching Russian language and literature, directing dissertations that focus on Russian theatre and drama. Next year I will teach my second FIG, a first-year interest group class on Russian Performance and Culture. I received my third Ira and Ineva Baldwin Wisconsin Idea Endowment grant, a seed grant, to introduce theatre at Oakhill. I will teach a graduate seminar in spring 2016 on Contemporary and New Russian Drama in English and Russian.

This summer, in teaching a three-week intensive course, I was able to use a new textbook I wrote together with UW alumnae Kristin Hunt and Mary McAvoy, *Drama and Education: Performance Methodologies for Teaching and Learning* (Routledge, 2015). The textbook synthesizes the methodologies I have been teaching in my drama courses for the past 17 years, and is among the first practical drama and performance textbooks that address neuroscientific research, making the argument that creativity is necessary in our lives, that embodied learning is natural and essential, and that contextual learning helps us find our place in society in relationship to other people and cultures. The course for which this book is written, Theatre and Drama/Curriculum and Instruction 362: Drama for Teaching and Learning, will be cross-listed with Slavic in 2016.

I will continue to walk both walks and talk both talks. I share the above introduction of my work to show that I am committed to Slavic studies and combine two areas of study, sometimes leaning more to one, sometimes more to the other, often overlapping. That I am now able to do this with a base in Slavic Languages and Literature, and with supportive and understanding colleagues, makes this all the more exciting. ■



Naomi Olson, who defended her doctoral dissertation in May, with her co-advisor, Professor Emerita Judith Kornblatt.

Grad Student News

Many congratulations to Jackie and **Brad Gordon** on the birth of their daughter, Eliza Grace, in April!



Jackie, Brad, and baby Eliza at the Department Awards Ceremony. At a week old, Eliza is quite possibly the youngest Slavic Department event attendee in history!

Colleen Lucey announces the publication of *About That Which Did Not Happen: A Story* by Victoria Tokareva (*Annotated Russian Reader*), coauthored with Evgeny Dengub and Petia Alexieva (Russia Online Publishers). Colleen also reports that she has been accepted to both the Summer Research Lab at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and the 2015 Discover Russian STARTALK Teacher Professional Development Program in Fairfax, Virginia. Colleen will join the University of Arizona's Department of Russian and Slavic Studies in Fall 2015 as an Instructor of Russian.

Melissa Miller: In the Fall, I will be Visiting Instructor of Russian at Gustavus Adolphus College in St. Peter, MN, and in the Spring, I will be Visiting Assistant Professor of Russian at Macalester College in St. Paul, MN. I will be sad to leave Madison and the UW, but I am very excited to be taking this next step. My heartfelt thanks to the Department for preparing me so well!

Naomi Olson successfully defended her dissertation, "The Problem of the Law: Nikolai Gogol and Nineteenth-century Russian Literature," in May. She is currently running the study abroad program at Regis College, a Jesuit liberal arts institution in Denver, Colorado. ■

Russian Flagship Program News

Alumni Updates



After completing the Russian Overseas Flagship program in St. Petersburg and graduating in May 2014, **Meagan Dunham** (2014) started working as an intern in Washington D.C. for the Center for International Policy's Security Assistance Monitor program, where she researched and wrote on U.S. military aid to Eurasia. Meagan now works for the National Democratic Institute, which is a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting the development of democracy and strengthening civil society abroad. She provides support for NDI's programs in Russia, Belarus, and Moldova by monitoring political developments in the region, drafting evaluations of program results, creating budgets and tracking expenditures, and contributing to discussions on security and legal matters related to programming.



Roy Ginsberg (2015): I recently returned to America from the Russian Flagship Overseas Program in Almaty, Kazakhstan. As a member of the inaugural group of Flagship students who studied in Kazakhstan, I had the opportunity to not only study Russian, but also experience an entirely new culture. I will be using what I learned during my time in the Flagship Program this summer as an Assistant Resident Director on the Pushkin Summer Institute - Abroad program in Daugavpils, Latvia.



Ben Hooyman (2015): My unexpected but invaluable Flagship year in Almaty has allowed me to take my academic dreams, in all their risks, delusions, and promise, one step further. Shortly, I will begin Middlebury College's Russian M.A. Program, which requires the completion of two summers on their Vermont campus and an academic year of study in Moscow at the Russian State University for the Humanities (PITV). I want to pursue my interest in Russia's great satirists, or, if the remarkably unfunny business of subjecting humor to academia proves tiresome, to study

surrealism and the absurd in Russian literature. I'm extremely pleased with where my education is leading me; one doesn't often get the opportunity to be young, broke, idealistic, and yet totally enchanted and immersed with the knowledge and people of so far off a place.



Julianna Jerosch (2016) has been accepted to the Accelerated Master of International Public Affairs program at the LaFollette School of Public Affairs at UW-Madison. She plans to complete her MA in 2017.



John Lyell (2015): This summer I'll be working at Pushkin Summer Institute and as a volunteer tutor for two study abroad students from Kazakhstan. In August I'm shipping off to study in Moscow for two years at The Higher School of Economics in a program called "Language Theory and Computational Linguistics". I'm really excited to go back to Moscow, although I'm cringing at the thought of living in an actual Russian dorm. ■



Russian Flagship student Leah Shapiro poses in front of Al-Farabi Kazakh National University in Almaty, Kazakhstan, the site of the current Russian Flagship overseas capstone program.

2015 Inaugural Flagship Kapustnik



Russian Flagship students Jerry Anders, Alex Idarraga, and Yasmin Schamiloglu pose with props from their skit, "Putin Comes to Madison."



Jacob Beebe leads a sing-a-long to "Позови меня тихо по имени" by the rock band Любэ.



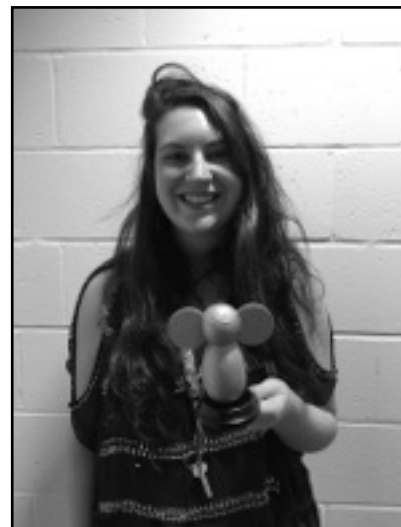
Henry Misa tries to figure out the word taped to his forehead (mampewka) during a guessing game at the Kapustnik.



Lillian Simmons performs a skit with Russian Flagship tutors Snezhana Zheltoukhova, Anna Borovskaya, and Jambul Akkaziev.



Erik Sohlden holds the "Chebur-Oscar" award he received for best attendance at Flagship events.



Tiara Luckiesh poses with the "Chebur-Oscar" she received for outstanding academic performance.

After Russian Class

Eric Rojo

I entered my first Russian class four years ago, mostly not knowing what I was getting into. Like many others, I instantly fell in love with the language. When I started my collegiate studies I settled on Biology as my major and started working on my pre-medical requirements. I knew I had a long road ahead of me if I really wanted to go to medical school and ultimately fulfill my dream of becoming a physician. As I wrap up my undergraduate career, and look forward to attending medical school here at the UW School of Medicine and Public Health in August of 2015, I can look back and appreciate what my Russian studies have given me thus far and will yield in the future.

The Slavic Department is a very tight-knit community, which welcomes incoming students with open arms. Here I found some of my very closest friends, mentors, and expanded my professional network. In the pre-medicine community, the ability to branch out is greatly underemphasized. As part of preparation for careers, graduate or professional schools, my involvement with the Slavic Department has been invaluable. Most days I would walk from hard science courses to my Russian class and be forced to switch my mental gears immediately. This practice in mental plasticity will certainly help me become a better student and a more apt physician.

While I was applying to medical schools, many were very interested in my problem-solving, time management, and communication skills. Participating in a study outside of the normal realm of what most medical school applicants experience allowed me a whole new set of skills, and talking points. There is large credit due to the Slavic Department in helping me become a marketable medical school applicant, and someday a marketable physician.

Ultimately, Russian has conferred to me friends, colleagues, references, intellect, and fueled my passion and interests. Russian has made me unique in a sea of highly qualified peers, and allowed me even more tools to pursue my future with vigor and vibrancy. ■

Reflections on My Time in Madison

Molly Thomasy Blasing

Greetings from Lexington, Kentucky, where I recently completed my first year as Assistant Professor of Russian in the Department of Modern and Classical Languages Literatures and Cultures (MCLLC) at the University of Kentucky. Since I left Madison in 2009 as a dissertator, my path to a tenure-track position at UK has included a 10-month Fulbright fellowship in Moscow, followed by short teaching stints at Florida State University, Wellesley College, and Oberlin College. Since we moved five times in six years, you can imagine the relief that my family and I feel, now that we are able to settle in one community for what I hope will be many, many years. This pattern of jumping from one visiting position to another before landing the coveted tenure-track job is becoming more and more common, I think, as dissertators and recent PhDs face intense competition for very few jobs in our field. This was certainly the case for me, and it turned out to be excellent preparation for my current position. As a visiting instructor, I was fortunate to have the chance to develop and teach my own courses, to be exposed to a wide range of student needs and abilities, and to begin to learn how to balance the demands of teaching, research, service, and family, all before hitting the tenure track. There are, of course, significant drawbacks to this kind of itinerant life, not the least of which is the time and anxiety involved in continually applying for the next job. My pursuit of a permanent position in academia has also been an enormous challenge for my family, because each move has involved a variety of tangible and intangible costs. Year after year, move after move, we've had to find new housing and day care arrangements, get established with new doctors, say goodbye to friends and colleagues, and seek out a new community in each new location. I cannot imagine how I would have managed this without the support of my husband, Keith Blasing (UW Slavic PhD, 2012), who established himself as a professional translator and editor and was able to work remotely from wherever we were living.

After spending two years teaching in small Russian departments at private liberal arts colleges, I now find myself in a very different institutional setting at Kentucky's flagship research university. I am part of a large department with 44 faculty members specializing in a wide range of modern and classical languages, literatures, and cultures, including four other Russianists in my department, as well as faculty members in history, anthropology, and

Alumni!

We would love to know where
you are now and what you're doing!
Please send updates to slavic@slavic.wisc.edu

2015 Department of Slavic Languages and Literature Newsletter

Co-editors: Karen Evans-Romaine and Halina Filipowicz

Editorial Assistant: Thomas Tabatowski



music who work on Russia and Eastern Europe. Most of my students are from Kentucky and represent a range of diverse cultural and educational backgrounds. As I begin work revising my dissertation into a book on the intersection of photography and Russian poetic writing, I am benefitting from formal and informal mentoring programs UK offers its junior faculty, as well as a reasonable teaching load of one or two courses per semester. This year I was responsible for the second-year Russian course, along with a survey course on Russian culture in the 20th and 21st centuries. In the future, I look forward to offering courses on contemporary Russian cinema and performance culture, a topics course on madness in Russian literature and culture, and perhaps a seminar on poetry and photography as part of the interdisciplinary Committee on Social Theory that I recently joined.

Having grown up in New England, I never imagined myself living in Kentucky, but it turns out that Lexington has a lot to offer. As Wisconsin fans are well aware, UK has one of the top NCAA basketball teams in the country, although you'll be pleased to know that my allegiance still remains firmly on side of the Badgers. My husband and I are involved in our vibrant local running club, and I'm getting schooled in the culture of horses and Derby and the historical significance of this year's Triple Crown victory. As it turns out, I love bourbon. In addition, Lexington has a burgeoning arts and culture scene, a great public library, a downtown farmer's market, and some terrific restaurants, local bookshops and microbreweries. I hope many of you will consider a visit at some point, perhaps in conjunction with the Russian & Slavic Studies section of the annual Kentucky Foreign Language Conference (<https://kflc.as.uky.edu>).

Looking back on my time in Madison, the academic and professional guidance and support that I received from the UW Slavic department and larger

UW network has been invaluable on the path to my current position. I continue to turn to my grad school cohort for advice, resources, and collaboration, and I have been deeply impressed by the warmth and generosity of Slavic department alumni I have met around the country at all stages of their careers. I also take to heart something that Professor Bethea said years ago at a panel discussion on what it takes to have a successful career in Slavic Studies: "If you want to be a Slavist, you have to have a life." There are not many graduate programs I am aware of that dedicate a bulletin board to celebrating new Slavic Department babies ("we are so *productive!*") and support their students in having a full life, in all of its possible definitions. As I look forward to the arrival of my second child this summer, I wonder if I would have had the courage to move forward with plans to start a family in these very early stages of my career without this kind of explicit demonstration that it can be done, and that you might just be better for it.

Molly Thomasy Blasing (PhD, 2014) is Assistant Professor of Russian at the University of Kentucky. She specializes in 19th- and 20th-century Russian poetry, the intersection of literature and the visual arts, contemporary Russian theater and political performance, and foreign language pedagogy. Her current book project is devoted to the influence of photography on modern Russian poetic writing. ■



Leo Christopher Blasing was joyfully welcomed by mom, dad, and big brother Isaac on July 6!

Oakhill Prison Humanities Project

José Vergara

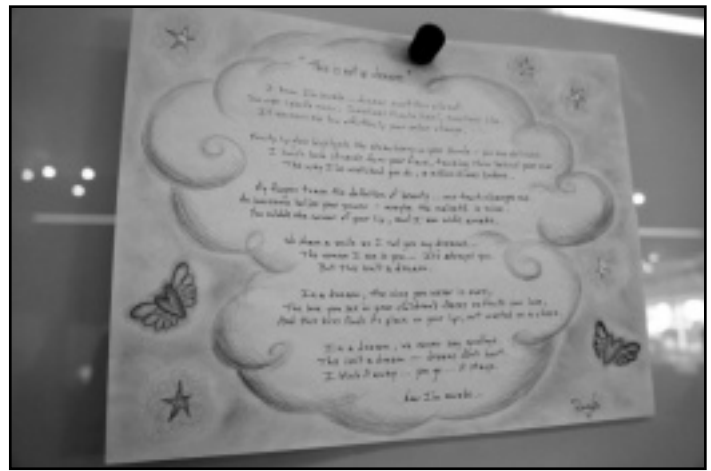
Now in its second year, the Oakhill Prison Humanities Project continues to expand its activities and to build its relationship with Oakhill Correctional Institution students and administration. Throughout the academic year we welcomed many new volunteers, launched two new classes, and held several outreach events outside the prison.

For those new to what we do, the Oakhill Prison Humanities Project is a group of volunteers from UW-Madison and the local community who offer free evening classes to inmates at Oakhill Correctional Institution, a minimum-security prison in Oregon, WI. Our programming covers topics such as history, creative writing (prose, poetry, memoir), African-American studies, drama/theatre, and fiction. Thanks to the tremendous work of Judith Kornblatt, we are currently funded by a number of sources including the Reilly Baldwin Wisconsin Idea Endowment, the Mellon Foundation, and the Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia. These grants have allowed us to create faculty mentor and project coordinator positions as well as to purchase materials for courses and promote awareness of the project and relevant issues throughout the community.

The roots of the Slavic Department's involvement go back to when Naomi Olson (2015) began a Russian literature class at Oakhill in 2009. Since then numerous graduate students from the department have designed and led courses at the prison, including Colleen Lucey, José Vergara, Jesse Stavis, Zachary Rewinski, Sergey Karpukhin, and Megan Kennedy.

In the fall we expanded our volunteer recruitment efforts and, as a result, launched a set of new classes (History and Drama/Theatre) to further diversify our programming. One of our primary goals moving forward will be to develop our theatre program to include dramatic readings and performances. New Slavic Department faculty member Manon van de Water will play a large role in making this happen. In the words of Manon, this exciting component will “in many ways serve for the inmate participants as a rehearsal for life, a practice of skills in a fictional world, and an exercise in perspective-taking that fosters mutual understanding and, at its best, empathy.”

The OPHP hosted a screening of documentary film *Dostoevsky Behind Bars*, devoted to the project, at Union South in collaboration with the Wisconsin Union Directorate in December 2014. We also partnered with Nancy Buenger's service learning class, Library and Information Studies 399/820: Topics



An Oakhill student's work on display at the Madison Public Library. Photo by José Vergara.

in Community Engagement, this semester to feature inmate submissions as part of the Dream Collectors Project hosted by the Madison Public Library's Bubbler makerspace. The results of these collaborations can be viewed on our website: <http://oakhillprisonhumanitiesproject.wordpress.com>.

We hope to build on these types of projects in the near future by bringing the inmates' work out from behind the walls of the prison. To this end, José Vergara and Megan Kennedy, along with SLIS student Sam Link, competed in the New Arts Venture Challenge to fund an exhibition featuring the writing, artwork, and music of our project's participants. While they did not win the top prize, their project was awarded some funds as a finalist. On a related note, with the expertise of two new volunteers, the OPHP will inaugurate yet another course, “Here I Am: A Mixed-Media Portrait Workshop,” in September 2015. All these efforts aim to attract new participants, provide them new outlets for self-expression, and increase awareness among the Madison community.

We would like to thank the Slavic Department for its continued support over the last several years as we established the OPHP. Our project would also not be possible without the help of the administration and staff at Oakhill Correctional Institution.

Please consider contributing to the program's UW Foundation account to help ensure its future success. All donations, no matter how small, will make a difference. For example, ten dollars will purchase a book that will be used (and greatly appreciated) by our participants. You can find information at the back of this newsletter. Finally, if you are interested in joining the OPHP, please contact José Vergara at oakhillprisonhumanitiesproject@gmail.com. ■

IN MEMORIAM

Thomas J. Butler

15 May 1929 - 21 January 2014

Scholar, writer, translator, and humanitarian, Thomas Butler was a faculty member in the Slavic Department at UW-Madison from 1969 until 1979. A graduate of Harvard University (A.B. in Romance Languages and Literatures, 1951; M.A. and Ph.D. in Slavic Languages and Literatures, 1955 and 1963, respectively), Mr. Butler served as an Army intelligence officer at the Pentagon during the Korean War. In the 1950s and 1960s, he spent several years in Yugoslavia. He was the first U.S. exchange student in Yugoslavia after World War II via a Yugoslav government grant. He returned to Yugoslavia on a Fulbright Research Fellowship. In 1969, he accepted a faculty position in the Slavic Department at UW-Madison. Here, he taught Serbo-Croatian, Bulgarian, and Russian linguistics and literature. During this time, he also translated Russian plays (including Gogol's *The Inspector General*, which had a hearty run at Boston's Charles Street Theatre) into English suitable for the contemporary American audience. In his spare time, he started a consulting firm providing scientific/technical translations for American companies doing business with the USSR and other East European countries, and was consultant/interpreter on air traffic control, interfacing with the USSR Ministry of Civil Aviation. A lifelong Democrat, he was elected to the Democratic National Platform Committee in 1976.

In 1979, Mr. Butler resigned his tenured position at UW-Madison for other pursuits, including scholarly editing and creative writing. The following year, he published *Monumenta Serbo-Croatica: A Bilingual Anthology of Serbian and Croatian Texts from the 12th to the 19th Century*, which was named a Book of the Year by the American Library Association. In 1996, this anthology was followed by *Monumenta Bulgarica: A Bilingual Anthology of Bulgarian Texts from the 9th to the 19th Centuries*, a volume of works in Old Church Slavonic that highlight the Byzantine/Bulgarian symbiosis. He spent 1986-88 as a Charter Fellow at Wolfson College, Oxford, where he organized the Wolfson Lectures on "Memory: History,

Culture, and the Mind." There he also pursued his interest in folklore, Jungian psychology, and East-West relations. In 1996, Harvard appointed him curator of the Milman Parry Collection of Oral Literature, comprised of Serbo-Croatian epics and lyric songs compiled in the field by his mentors Parry and Albert B. Lord. He organized and catalogued the collection on a pro bono basis, happy to give back a little of what he felt Harvard had given him. At the time, he was also active with the D.C.-based Institute for Multi-Track Diplomacy, concentrating on non-governmental initiatives for conflict resolution between nations and ethnic groups. In keeping with his interest in conflict resolution, he participated in conferences on the Cathars, branded heretics by the Catholic Church; he was signatory on a petition urging Pope Benedict XVI to apologize for the Albigensian Crusade and destruction of the Cathars' remarkable pre-Renaissance culture.

Mr. Butler was also actively involved in cultural exchanges with Eastern Europe. With the encouragement of Svetlana Broz (Marshal Tito's granddaughter), he founded a student association, Builders for Peace Bosnia, in 2002, to aid the postwar reconstruction of the region and to foster relationships between Catholic and Muslim youth. Reconciliation, cultural awareness, and sharing a sense of common humanity were its major themes. Student volunteers worked on construction, taught English, and restored ancient buildings such as the Franciscan Monastery of the Holy Spirit, where they cleaned, classified, and shelved 3,500 books (including 13 incunabula) that had lain on the floor since the war. In spite of a painful heart condition, he led hundreds of students on these summer projects. As he once wrote, "The Balkans are a love and not an interest for me. I hope that my teaching and writing have contributed to an understanding of the history and culture of Yugoslavia and Bulgaria." ■

Submitted by Halina Filipowicz

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