

## The Newsletter of the Grinnell College Russian Department

The editors of **NOVOSTI** wish you all a good finals week и поздравляем с наступающим Новым Годом! Желаем также приятных каникул, и до скорой встречи в будущем семестре!

### Farewells

The Russian and Theatre departments, and our entire Russian-speaking community bid a fond farewell to **Galina Aksenova** and **Veniamin Smekhov**. Galya and Venya enriched our campus this past semester in countless ways, and they will be sorely missed. Galya taught 3rd year Russian, our senior seminar (and will be working with students in Moscow this December, as is noted elsewhere in Novosti), and a course on the history of Russian film. Venya, of course, directed this semester's mainstage production of *Master and Margarita*, which was the artistic centerpiece of this semester's symposium, *The Politics of Russian Popular Culture*.

Желаем им счастливого пути, поздравляем с наступающим новым годом, и надеемся, что скоро вернутся! И благодарим от всей души за всё, что они делали и делают для наших студентов и выпускников.

We will also miss **Ilya Halieshevich '06**, who will complete his studies at Grinnell College and graduate this semester. Ilya will return to his home in Minsk. Желаем больших успехов!

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## Moscow MAP Seminar to take place in December 2006

This semester's Seminar on Russian Drama and Theater, offered by the Department in the fall of 2006 and taught by well-known Russian theater and film critic Galina Aksenova, serves as the foundation for a two-week winter internship in various theaters in Moscow for five seminar participants: **Amanda Smith '07**, **Robin Repko '07**, **Lindsey Martin '07**, **Leann Wilson '07**, and **Julia Yansura '07**. Each of the

students will spend two weeks at a theater studying its repertoire, directing and acting techniques, as well as its place in the general scene of contemporary Moscow theaters; they will complete research, conduct interviews with actors and directors, do technical work, and attend both rehearsals and productions of plays we have read over the past semester, as well as new works. They will intern at a number of

historically and presently important theatres around the city, and allow the students the opportunity to meet many interesting theatre practitioners. Among the theaters from which the students will choose are: Moss-ovet Theater, Pushkin Theater, Youth Theater, Theater of Satire and Stanislavsky Theater. The students will use this research in spring 2007 MAP projects.

## Good Luck!

We also wish the very best to **Morgan Wajda-Levie '08**, who has studied this past fall on an ACTR Moscow program, and who is taking a personal leave next semester, during which he will study in Kazan, as well as to **Sheahan Virgin '08**, who will also take a personal leave to study in Kazakhstan next semester.

## Welcome to New Majors and Concentrators!

The Russian Department extends a warm welcome to our newest majors **Claire Comstock-Gay '09** and **Emma Silverman '09**.

New Concentrators include **Jacob Schneider '07** and **Sheahan Virgin '08**.

Some of you are in the process of declaring, so if we've forgotten anyone, let us know!

## Welcome Back!

We extend special greetings to returning veterans of off-campus study programs.

**Claire Wenngren '08** has studied this semester on an American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACTR) sponsored program in St. Petersburg.

**Wyatt Montague '08** has participated in the ACTR fall semester program in Moscow sponsored by ACTR.

**Christine Boeckholt '08** has been in Olomouc, Czech Republic, on a program sponsored by the Associated Colleges of the Midwest (ACM).

**Quenna Lalonde '07** is finishing an ACTR program in Kiev (Kyiv), Ukraine.

**Sidonie Straughn-Morse '08** will complete her semester in Krakow, Poland, where she has been studying at Jagiellonian University in a program sponsored by Lexia International.

## Russian Department SEPC Members and Secretary

The Russian Department SEPC members this year are **Alica Assini '07**, **Robyn Repko '07**, **Jacob Schneider '07**, and **Leann Wilson '07**. (SEPC stands for Student Educational Policy Committee, and is a group of students who work with faculty members in the Russian department in organizing our co-curricular program, assisting in providing student input on reviews, and

representing the majors in our department to SGA.) The SEPC is open to anyone who wishes to take part; please contact Helen Scott [scotth] if you are interested in joining.

The 2006-07 Russian Department Student Secretary is Leann Wilson '07. In addition to helping in various ways around the department, Leann has been working

with Vera on the **RUSSIAN FILM SERIES**, where Screenings of Russian classics both old and new are held every other Saturday in the Cultural Education Center (a.k.a. the AV Center video lounge). All films are shown with subtitles; refreshments are always offered, and everyone is welcome. Watch for e-mail announcements and posters throughout the semester.

## Student Research Success!

Many of you will recall that this past summer, four students participated in a group MAP devoted to "Household, Family and God in Early Modern Russia." Under the direction of **Dan Kaiser** (History), students studied the confessional lists (исповедные ведомости) and parish registers (метрические книги) of the Church of the Exaltation of the Cross in central Tula in the last two decades of the eighteenth century. The Family History Library in Salt Lake City made available microfilm copies of these unpublished records, the originals of which are stored in the Tula Regional Archive.

Novosti is pleased to report that two of the four papers from Professor Kaiser's MAP last summer are now slated to appear in Известия Тульского государственного университета (История). [Proceedings of Tula State University (History).] **Leann Wilson '07** translated her paper on mortality into Russian. **Lindsey Martin '07** will be publishing her article on widows in English, but she did provide a Russian resume (abstract).

Finally, Leann, Lindsey and **Sophie Church '06** will present their papers at the annual meeting of

the Missouri Valley History Conference in Omaha, March 1. Professor Kaiser will chair the session, and A. M. Kleimola, University of Nebraska-Lincoln, will comment.

CONGRATULATIONS!

## РУССКИЙ СТОЛ

Russian Table is held on Fridays during the lunch hour in Cowles PDR. Participants go through the line in the dining hall to get their meals. We invite speakers of Russian at every level to join us for informal Russian conversation. Individuals not on board are guests of the Russian Department. **ПРИГЛАШАЕМ ВСЕХ ЖЕЛАЮЩИХ!** Let's make Russian Table next semester even livelier than it has been this semester!

## News from our Russian Language Assistant, Vera Bobkova

Apart from sitting in the office and helping some of you, I've managed to do some other things.

### Links

First of all, during some lonely office hours I enjoyed the advantages of free Internet and kept spamming you with helpful links, which I suppose can help you to improve your Russian. Here are my favorite ones:

<http://www.beeflowers.com/Metro/-Startfiles-/index.htm> - a superb site about Moscow Metro with brilliant artistic pictures and of course metro map. And one more thing - it's in English.

[www.waytorussia.net](http://www.waytorussia.net) - a perfect source of information for those who study Russian or going to travel to Russia. Check out the section 'Myths and Truth'. 'Russia is full of terrorists and drunk guys', huh :) I've also enjoyed the photo gallery in the section 'Trans-siberian' - looks so dear to my heart... And again - this is all in English. And what's good - it's an interactive site, so if you have things to say, you can do this.

<http://news.ntv.ru/itogi/98547/video/> - this is a great link for those who want to practice their listening skills. You can see video of Putin giving comments about Alexander Litvinenko's death (you probably heard - he's an ex KGB agent) and see the full script. You can just watch, practice your comprehension or train your intonation.

<http://auto.mail.ru/news?id=20515> - you have to see it! The article about three worst roads in the world! And it's in Russian, guess why? And in addition, more pictures of the road

number one. And again - you can leave your comments in Russian.

### Russian Hour

Because I've missed speaking my language, I decided that I should do it more. At least one hour more. That's why we had several Russian Hours in the Russian House. That was completely my pleasure - singing the Soviet anthem, playing the Russian card game 'Durak' (fool) which I never lost, talking about Russian geography and stereotypes about Siberia where I happen to live. And of course, learning cool conversational phrases. Here are some of them which, as it seems, were the most winning:

фигня - crap

фиговый (with the stress on the second syllable) - crappy

I wonder why these words became so popular... There were more cool ones, but the censorship won't let me print them :)

### Fortune telling

There is a really old and exciting Russian tradition of telling fortunes during 2 Christmas weeks. It's was pretty early we did that, but why don't you do this with your friends when you are back home for the break? Here's some information to tease those who weren't able to be there: Russians believed that there were evil spirits everywhere at Christmas time (7-19 January), that's why they believed that was the best time to know their fortune. When we together with some students and their friends got together in the Center of Spirituality and Religion we tried about 7 ways to do this. Just imagine us

sitting in a circle on the floor surrounded with candle light trying to find out the name of our future beloved one. Pretty impressive, I must say! And, as I know from some people (due to the reasons of conspiracy I can't tell their names), some of the things are already turning into reality. That's why I decided to share one way with you, those who were not with us:

You should take a candle, and relentlessly cut it into chunks. Then you light a different candle, take a spoon and put the ready chunks into it. Then comes the most interesting part - you try to melt the wax thinking about your future. The most fun part comes after you finally succeed (yes, it takes a while) - you should pour this burning liquid into a bowl with cold water which you should have ready for this procedure. And then your fortune is literally on your palm - you should interpret the wax figure you have. To encourage you - it works! The winter before I got my grant to go here I had the Eiffel Tower, which my friends and I interpreted as 'going abroad'!

There were some other minor things, but the ones above are worth mentioning. It was my pleasure to work with you all this semester. I wish you good luck with your Finals, and a happy and relaxing winter break! I promise, we'll do much more fun stuff next semester when we are back full of energy! See you then!

Your Language Assistant,  
Vera

## Upcoming Events

### **Russian-themed Falconer Gallery Exhibit The Space of Freedom: Apartment Exhibitions in Leningrad (1965-1986)**

**March 9 - April 22, 2007**

Approximately 60 paintings, drawings, and prints from the collection of the Museum of NonConformist Art in St. Petersburg, Russia. Artwork in the exhibition will be displayed in a fabricated Soviet apartment interior (circa 1970) that will be assembled in Falconer Gallery. Organized by the University of Richmond Museums, Virginia, the exhibition and tour have been made possible with generous support from the Global Partners Project, which is funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation.

### **Slavic Coffeehouse**

An annual Spring event in the Russian Department, the Slavic Coffeehouse is co-sponsored by Russian and Central and Eastern European Studies (RCEES). Students meet at kitchens on campus and in professors' homes, and prepare a variety of exotic treats from the Slavic kitchen, to be sold with coffee and tea that evening. Musical entertainment is a frequent tradition of the Slavic Coffeehouse, and performers have ranged from Russian bards to classical musicians. Proceeds from the evening are used to fund an event for Russian House. This year the Slavic Coffeehouse will be held in conjunction with the Falconer Gallery exhibit. Watch for more announcements next semester.

## ALUMNI NEWS

**Elisabeth Kruger '06** is currently in Irkutsk, Russia (Siberia) on a Fulbright grant. She is conducting research on the topic of "Siberian FolkTheatre in Irkutsk," which involves working with local theatres, attending performances, and interviewing local experts. Elisabeth is also taking history, sociology, regional studies, and art classes in the Department of Culture at the Irkutsk State Technical University.

**Avram Lyons '06** is currently studying Russian language and literature and mathematics at Kazan State University in Kazan, Tatarstan, Russia, on the **John Mohan Russian Study Award**. He's also coordinator of the one- and two-week Russian language programs at the Concordia Language Villages Russian village, Lesnoe Ozero. In the future, Avram's going back to the United States to teach whatever he can and probably pursue an advanced degree (in something, hopefully Russian or language-teaching related).

**Meghan Redd '06** is working for the Productivity Enhancement Program (PEP), the flagship program of the non-profit Center for Citizen Initiatives (<http://www.ccisf.org/pep/mision.htm>), which brings industry-specific groups of Russian small- to medium-sized business owners to the U.S. for business management training, cultural exchange and an introduction to civic organizations. The Russian

delegates are business owners or managers or decision makers in their companies and the future business leaders of the emerging free market Russian economy. In addition to transferring needed business management skills to Russia's future small business leaders, PEP gives American business owners an opportunity to share with the delegates civic club ideals and values. The delegates are from industries critical to the development of Russia's economy. The delegates' businesses keep regional economies alive by providing increasing amounts of consumer goods and services each year. Their numbers aren't large, but their impact is significant. This generation of business owners is well positioned to lead Russia's regions beyond crisis to capitalism. CCI makes it possible for them to travel to American communities for 2-3 weeks of intensive, industry specific, business management training. American civic clubs use their local contacts to set up a training program and provide exposure to American civic organizations. PEP has been in place for 20 years and has hosted over 500 delegations nation-wide. We continuously evolve our programs to serve the needs of the Russian people and to most effectively contribute to Russian economic reform.

Meghan writes:

"The other great thing about working here, though, is that I've definitely had the best Russian

practice since Moscow. I work with four native Russians (and about 15 other Americans that know Russian at varying levels), and although delegations are hosted in American communities by our organization all over the country, many of them come to the bay area and I get to interact with the delegates. Last night we had a going away party for a delegation of Russians and I ended up having a really long conversation with a woman from Novosibirsk who works for Cosmopolitan-Russia (the magazine). That's just one small example--it's really just a lot of exposure to Russians and their various roles in Russia's economic development, as well as to what Americans think about Russia and American foreign policy. We are also having endless discussions about how our programs are changing along with the Russian economy and trying to keep in tune with what the needs are on the Russian end. Most of the people that work here are Russophiles that were either Peace Corps volunteers in Russia/Eastern Europe/Central Asia, Rotary Ambassadorial scholars, or students of International Relations/Development. There is actually a Grain Production and Processing delegation traveling to Cedar Rapids, Iowa (my home town!) in late May, 2007."

## Alumni News (cont.)

**Amy Donahue '05** is working on getting her Master's in Library and Information Science at the University of Washington, playing Ultimate frisbee, and occasionally going to Russian Table at the UW.

**Benjamin Hanes '05** is in Ukraine teaching English with the Peace Corps in a village called Velyka Lepetykha, in Khersonska oblast. He speaks Ukrainian; Ukrainian there, which, being so similar to Russian, he says was pretty easy to pick up.

**Naomi Bethel '04** entered the graduate program in the UW-Madison Department of Slavic Languages and Literatures in Fall 2005. She received funding this past summer to study on a language program in Rovinj, Croatia.

**Coco Downey '04** is currently working towards earning a Master's degree in Regional Studies: Russia, Eastern Europe, and Central Asia at Harvard University's Davis Center, which she will complete in 2008. Before beginning her studies at Harvard, Coco spent the 8 previous months working as a proofreader in Prague, the Czech Republic, and the academic year before that on a Fulbright in St. Petersburg, Russia, studying the instruction of Russian as a foreign language by Russians to different groups of foreigners. Coco welcomes email from friends of the department at her Grinnell alumni account [downey@alumni.grinnell.edu](mailto:downey@alumni.grinnell.edu).

**Hilary Bown '02** successfully finished the NSEP/NFLI Russian Flagship program in St. Petersburg in May. After a summer of traveling and a brief stint at "home," Hilary is currently studying in a(nother) Master's program in Peace and Security Studies in Hamburg, Germany. Her studies are financed by a graduate scholarship from DAAD.

## John Mohan Russian Study Award

### Award Description, Selection Criteria and Process

The purpose of the Russian Study Award is to provide graduating seniors who have seriously pursued the study of Russian with an opportunity to develop their language skills in the Russian speaking world. The needs-based award is intended to enable Grinnell College students to pursue a study program or a project of their own design after graduation. The study program or project must be initiated within the year following graduation. For more information, go to: <http://www.grinnell.edu/academic/russian/award/>

*The following announcements are from SEELANGs, a Slavic listserv, and are listed in the order received. For questions about any of these programs or opportunities, please contact Todd Armstrong [armstron].*

# Opportunities

## Graduate Studies

### University of Wisconsin-Madison Master's Program

The Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia (CREECA) invites applications for its Master of Arts program in Russian, East European, and Central Asian Studies for fall 2007. Our two-year program provides interdisciplinary area studies training for students interested in the cultural, economic, social, and historical factors that have shaped the development of societies in Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia. Combining language study, broad interdisciplinary training, and knowledge of the methodological approaches in a given academic social science or humanities discipline, our program is ideal for students interested in pursuing professional careers in business, journalism, and law and for students planning further graduate study. Our students benefit from a varied program of lectures, conferences, and seminars with national and international experts. The members of our faculty are outstanding teachers and scholars. Every year applicants to our program are competitive for U.S. Department of Education Foreign Language and Area Studies (FLAS) fellowships. US citizens and permanent residents are eligible to apply for the FLAS; more information about the application may be found here: <http://www.intl-institute.wisc.edu/fellow/> Prospective students should visit our website to learn more about the program and to see the application requirements. The deadline to apply is January 1, 2007 (postmarked): <http://www.creeca.wisc.edu/students/grad/ma.html>

### MA program at Boston College

The Department of Slavic and Eastern Languages at Boston College invites applicants to its M.A. programs in Russian and Slavic Studies. The department offers up to two fellowships providing tuition remission and financial support. In addition to traditional training in Russian language and literature and Slavic linguistics, faculty in Slavic and Eastern languages specialize as well in general linguistics, theory and practice of translation, émigré literature, Jewish studies, and Balkan studies. For more information on the program visit <http://fmwww.bc.edu/SL/SL.html#grad>. Interested students should contact Prof. Michael J. Connolly, Graduate Program Director ([cnmj@bc.edu](mailto:cnmj@bc.edu)).

### Graduate Program in Slavic Studies at Brown University

The Department of Slavic Studies at Brown University invites prospective graduate students to apply to our program. We offer an M.A. and Ph.D. in Slavic Studies specializing in Russian culture and literature and in modern Czech culture. The program has a strong interdisciplinary focus, and students are encouraged to work with both our own faculty and with faculty in related fields, such as comparative literature, theater, history, art history, modern culture and media, and political science. The program trains flexible and innovative scholars able to address varying teaching and research needs in the future job market. Our faculty represents a broad range of interests and methodological approaches, including literary history of all major periods; poetry and poetics; intersections of literature, history, and politics; history and theory of film and theater; intellectual history, art and cultural studies; minority studies and discourse linguistics. The list of our faculty is available at our website: [http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Slavic\\_Languages/Department](http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Slavic_Languages/Department). Application deadline: January 3

If you have questions about the program please contact us: Svetlana Evdokimova ([Svetlana\\_Evdokimova@brown.edu](mailto:Svetlana_Evdokimova@brown.edu)), Chair, Slavic Department or Vladimir Golstein ([Vladimir\\_Golstein@brown.edu](mailto:Vladimir_Golstein@brown.edu)), Director of Graduate Studies, Slavic Department

## Opportunities (cont.)

### Employment Announcements:

Noble Street College Prep ([www.goldentigers.org](http://www.goldentigers.org)), a rigorous public high school in Chicago, seeks a relentless, knowledgeable, and caring teacher of Russian language for high school seniors. This full-time position begins in January. Please email Rocio Garcia at [rgarcia@goldentigers.org](mailto:rgarcia@goldentigers.org) with resume and cover letter.

Featured in the ACTR newsletter and Chicago Tribune, Noble Street College Prep's Russian program is a recipient of two Oppenheimer Teacher Incentive grants. It is based on a rigorous curriculum with the goal to prepare students for college. The students are expected to learn basic Russian conversation, develop deep understanding of the Russian history, master new Cyrillic orthography, and acquire appreciation for other cultures and languages. Students' interest and motivation is promoted by monthly Russian club activities which provide opportunities to participate in various Slavic events in Chicago. In addition, two educational tours to Moscow and St. Petersburg have been led during the summers of 2004 and 2006. These trips deepened students' knowledge and love for Russia and the Russian Language. At the end of the school year, an annual ceremony, "The Last Bell", is staged in the theater. It is a traditional Russian celebration during which the underclassmen bid farewell to the graduating seniors. During this event the entire junior and senior classes showcase their knowledge of the Russian language and culture acquired during their foreign language studies.

Bill Olsen  
Principal  
Noble Street Charter High School  
1010 N Noble  
Chicago, IL 60622  
(773) 862-1449 ext. 201  
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Job Opening at American Councils for International Education in Washington, DC  
Executive Assistant to the President  
Washington, DC

Position Description  
FLSA STATUS: Exempt

#### SUMMARY:

The Executive Assistant provides administrative and project support to the President. The Executive Assistant independently performs a broad range of tasks aimed at providing information to and on behalf of the President and works in cooperation with senior staff and board members, exercising attention to detail, tact and diplomacy.

Key among the functions of the Executive Assistant are: preparation of reports, correspondence, and presentations; travel expenses and administration; conference planning, including meeting logistics, travel arrangements, printed materials, and on-site coordination; external relations with officials from related organizations, embassies, foreign governments, U.S. Government agencies, multilateral development banks, and Capitol Hill; board and committee relations, including board meetings; coordination of travel

## Opportunities (cont.)

logistics for the President and associates, including visas; maintenance of the President's calendar and extensive contact list; and support to the Multi-Media department including handling sales and royalties, and editing of English language materials including textbooks, Russian language learning web site, and the Russian Language AP examination.

### QUALIFICATIONS:

Bachelor's degree required; area studies degree or knowledge of the region preferred;  
Progressively responsible work experience;  
Excellent research, writing, and verbal communication skills;  
Strong attention to detail and organization;  
Ability to work additional hours and occasional weekends;  
Demonstrated facility with internet and web-based research methods;  
Proficiency with word processing, and spreadsheet software;  
Effective interpersonal skills; and  
Russian language proficiency required.

### TO APPLY:

Send letter/resume and salary requirements to HR Department, American Councils, 1776 Massachusetts Avenue, Suite 700, Washington, DC 20036. Fax: 202-872-9178 or 202-833-7523; email: resumes@american-councils.org. Affirmative Action / Equal Opportunity Employer.

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS is an international not-for-profit organization working to advance education, research, and mutual understanding across the United States and the nations of Eastern Europe, Eurasia, and Southeast Europe. Its mission is to foster democratic development and civil societies by advancing education and research, cultivating leadership, and empowering individuals and institutions through learning. With a staff of 400 professionals in 17 countries, American Councils designs, implements, and supports innovative programs in education, community outreach, and scholarly research.

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## OTHER ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 8th ANNUAL ACTR NATIONAL POST-SECONDARY RUSSIAN ESSAY CONTEST

Students taking Russian in accredited colleges and universities are invited to participate in the eighth annual National Post-Secondary Russian Essay Contest sponsored by the American Council of Teachers of Russian.

Teachers whose students are participating in the contest will receive directions and the essay topic in late January 2007. Students will write their essays between Feb. 1 and Feb. 15, 2007 at a time selected by the instructor at each institution. Students should not receive the essay topic until the time scheduled to write the essay. Judges will review the essays in March 2007 and winners will be announced by April 16, 2007.

Grinnellians have placed well in this contest in the past; if you are interested in participating, please contact Todd Armstrong [armstron].