

The Newsletter of the Grinnell College Russian Department

WELCOME! The Russian Department welcomes returning students back to campus and extends a first welcome to students who are new to Grinnell. Welcome, everyone, and best wishes for a rewarding academic year!

Поздравляем всех с новым учебным годом!

Russian Department Picnic

The Russian Department will hold its annual Fall Picnic 5:30-7:00 p.m. on Thursday, September 13th at the home of **Todd Armstrong** (1132 Elm Street). We invite you to join us in marking the beginning of the new academic year, as well as welcoming to campus our Russian language assistant **Natalia Petrova**, as well as **Tatiana Golikova**, who comes to Grinnell from Voronezh, Russia on a new scholarship program. Russian food will be served.



РУССКИЙ СТОЛ

Russian Table will be held Fridays during the lunch hour in the new Joe Rosenfield '25 Center, in room 224A, which is one of the reservable dining spaces on the Mezz level of the new dining hall. All participants go through the line to reach these spaces. We invite speakers of Russian at every level to join us for informal Russian conversation individuals not on board as guests of the Russian Department.

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Interested in Study Abroad in Russia or Central Europe?

The Russian Department will host informational meetings to discuss study abroad in Russia and in Central and Eastern Europe. The informal get-together for study in Russia will be held Thursday, October 4, at 4:15 p.m. in ARH 227 (Russian Seminar Room). Veterans of off-campus study programs, including those who have just returned from Russia, as well as program advisors, will be on hand to share their experiences with students interested in future offerings of these programs. Refreshments will be served.

There will also be an informational meeting on study on the Lexia Program in Krakow, Poland. Students interested in this program can find out more at 4:15 on Thursday, September 27th in ARH 227 (Russian Seminar Room). Students interested in studying elsewhere in Central Europe are welcome to attend this session.

Grinnellians and Russia and Central and Eastern Europe

Welcome back to **Morgan Wajda-Levie '09**, who studied for the year in Russia, in both Moscow and Kazan. **Erica Garrecht-Williams '08** spent 10 weeks doing an Intern Abroad program in Yaroslavl, Russia. Her intern program involved volunteer work in a hospital for mentally disabled women, centers for low-income elderly, an orphanage and a

boarding school for children with learning disabilities. Erica also spent time in Mongolia, interning in a television studio. Two Grinnellians studied Russian this summer at the Beloit College summer language schools. **Mikel Shybut '10** and **Claire Comstock-Gray '09** received funding for their programs through the department's Anne K. Hanson '87 Memorial

Study Award.

Two Grinnellians are currently studying in Russia.

Christopher Farstad, '09 Russia Vassar College Semester in St. Petersburg

Dayna Hamann, '09 Russia Vassar Semester in St. Petersburg

SPRING 2008 Russian Department International Fellow, Spring 2008: Alexander Yurevich Militarev

Alexander Militarev is a noted scholar, translator, poet, and essayist. President of the Jewish University in Moscow and a distinguished member of the faculty there, Militarev is a world-class scholar in Semitic languages and literature, has translated poetry from many languages, written extensively on translation studies, and published original poetry. In addition, Militarev is an important figure in Russia's Jewish community and was recently lauded for "Meritorious Contribution to the Development of Jewish Community in Russia."

While at Grinnell College, Militarev will assist Kelly Herold in the teaching of Russian 498; his residency will take place in the six weeks after spring break. This year's seminar theme will be "The Other in Russian Literature." Militarev will also give a poetry reading in Russian and a public lecture in English.

Russian Department SEPC for Fall 2007

Each department at Grinnell has a Student Educational Policy Committee (SEPC), a group usually made up of Russian majors, that assists and participates in a number of departmental activities, including faculty reviews; faculty hiring and promotion; extracurricular events; and faculty-student communication. We invite any and all majors to join the Russian Department SEPC. If you are interested, please contact Kelly Herold [heroldk]

Welcome to Our New Russian Language Assistant, Natalia Petrova!

I come from a small town Pustoska, Pskov region in the North –West of Russia. Having left school I entered The Pskov State Pedagogical University and graduated in 2004. After that I was offered the position of an Assistant teacher of English at the University and I've been working there for 3 years already. I have always enjoyed teaching and I especially like teaching at the university because the students are motivated and eager to study all the time and it's very rewarding when you see the results of your work. Besides it's a sort of two-way traffic as I also get to know much from them, because teaching the language is not only imparting the knowledge - rules of the language, grammar, vocabulary and etc. – it's first of all COMMUNICATION and it can be successful only if both sides participate.

Being a teacher of English I have never been to an English speaking country before and I think that to learn the language you should live it through, that's why I decided to participate in the Fulbright Program

for language assistants and was lucky to get the chance of being at Grinnell. I think it's a great idea to help other people learn your language and understand the culture and on the other hand get their help in understanding their culture.



Russian, Central, and Eastern European Studies Concentration at Grinnell

The staff of the Russian Department and colleagues in other departments cooperate closely in promoting the study of the languages, culture, and history of the former Soviet Union and the lands which are usually designated as Central and Eastern European. This year, the Russian Department consists of the following members:

Kelly Herold, ARH 232C [HEROLDK],
Todd Armstrong, ARH 232D [ARMSTRON],
Raquel Greene, ARH 232A [GREENER],
Sara Stefani, ARH 232B [STEFANIS] and
Anatoly Vishevsky, [VISHEVSK] (on leave 2007-08).

In addition to members of the Russian Department, faculty in other departments have specializations in Russian, Central, and Eastern European Studies:

Robert Grey, Political Science, Carnegie 209 [GREY],
Ed Cohn, History, Mears 315 [COHNED], and
John Rommereim, Music, BCA 258 [ROMMER].

If you are interested in the Russian, Central and East European Studies Concentration, please contact Raquel Greene, who currently chairs the RCEES Concentration.

New Faculty in Russian/RCEES in 2007-08

The editors of *Novosti* welcome two new members of our community this fall: **Sara Stefani** and **Ed Cohn**.

Sara Stefani comes to Grinnell from Yale University, where she is completing her Ph.D. Her scholarly interests include early 20th-century Russian and Soviet prose; avant-garde Russian art; British modernism; Tolstoy, Dostoevsky, and Chekhov. She also has interests in feminist theory, women's writing, multicultural exchanges, and cultural history. Her dis-

sertation is entitled "Constructing the Other: Empire, Nationhood, and Self-Definition in Soviet and British Modernist Prose."

Ed Cohn comes to us from the University of Chicago. He will be teaching a class on Russian history before 1917 (in the fall) and a spring course called "Who Killed Kirov?", which will use the 1934 assassination of Leningrad party chief Sergei Kirov as a window into some larger themes in Soviet history.

Upcoming Russian Department ~ RCEES Events

RCEES/Center for International Studies lecture
by **Anna Kushkova**,
The Jewish Heritage Center, European University at St. Petersburg,
4:15 p.m.,
Tuesday, November 13,
Location TBA

Ms. Kushkova, who has lectured at Grinnell in the past, will present "Jewish Field Research within the Former 'Pale of Residence': Presentday Challenges. Memory of the Holocaust and Jewish Identity in Soviet and post-Soviet Ukrainian Shtetls."

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Questions addressed in Ms. Kushkova's talk: After the first systematic attempt at studying Jewish traditional life in shtetls (expeditions organized by S. Anskiy (Shloima Rappoport) in 1912-1914), Jewish field research was resumed only after the collapse of the Soviet Union. What major problems arise in connection with this broken continuity? What do we see in the present-day shtetl, and how it may be studied? What place does the Holocaust occupy in narrative practices of the Jewish population in the former shtetls? How are those practices formed and/ or modified for "external" listeners (Jewish charity organizations, local authorities, anthropologists)? Which are the principal motifs that constitute the "Holocaust narrative"? What role do practices of commemoration, both private and public, play for the construction of Jewish identity?

English Department Event With Russian Theme:

On Wednesday, Oct. 3rd at 8:00 in JRC 101, Rick Wirick will be reading from his memoir of international adoption called 100 SIBERIAN POSTCARDS. It is a gorgeous, gorgeous book, and the reviews have been fabulous (see below).

'Some years ago, Richard Wirick and his wife (who already had two children of their own) adopted a baby girl from a Siberian orphanage. One Hundred Siberian Postcards is a gift for her, evoking the scenic grandeur of her birthplace, alongside the ramshackle quality of much Russian life ... comprising folk tales, beliefs, customs, moments from Siberian history, extracts from Russian writers, reflections on childhood and consciousness, and dreams, with a touch of magic realism, as when someone watching a case being X-rayed at an airport sees "dozens of little men ... sawing timber inside the Samsonite".'

- Tom Aitken, TLS

'Compassionate and literate ... He has a mystic's confidence in the power of his imagination to prise bits of truth out of the frigid landscape.'

- Caroline McGinn, The New Statesman

'The best postcards are like poems: reptilian in a different way, they shed their excess skin of details and dates, and dart in on a little narrative, a clear image that speaks of the writer's experience. Richard Wirick has it down to a fine art. An insurance lawyer from Los Angeles, he and his wife travelled to Siberia to adopt a baby girl. Having immersed himself in the landscape and culture, he returned with enough stories and still lifes to make 100 perfect postcards.'

Opportunities in Russian:

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS is pleased to announce fellowship opportunities for U.S. graduate and undergraduate students to study for the spring semester in Vladimir, Moscow, or St.

Petersburg on the Advanced Russian Language & Area Studies Program (RLASP).

Applications for the spring semester program are due October 15.

A full-time U.S. resident director oversees the academic and cultural programs and assists participants in academic, administrative, and personal matters. Students may live with Russian host families or in university dormitories in Moscow and St. Petersburg; all students in Vladimir live with Russian families. During the semester, students may take advantage of volunteer opportunities or internship placements at sites including local public schools, charity organizations, international businesses, non-profit organizations, and international NGOs. Students are also offered the chance to meet for two hours per week with peer tutors recruited from their host universities.

Semester programs provide approximately twenty hours per week of in-class instruction in Russian grammar, phonetics, conversation, and cultural studies at Moscow International University, the Russian State Pedagogical University (Gertsen Institute) in St. Petersburg, and the KORA Center for Russian Language in Vladimir. Participants receive graduate- or undergraduate-level academic credit through Bryn Mawr College.

Full and partial fellowships are available through American Councils from U.S. Department of State (Title VIII) and the U.S. Department of Education (Fulbright-Hays) grant support. Many colleges and universities also provide financial aid for participation in American Councils programs. Recent participants have received substantial fellowship support from the Institute of International Education (IIE), the Benjamin A. Gilman International Scholarship, and the U.S. Department of Education Title VI (FLAS).

Programs also available for Heritage Speakers of Russian. Please contact the Outbound Office for more details.

Opportunities in Russian (cont.):

Application Deadlines: Spring Semester: October 15

Summer Program: March 1

Fall/Academic Year Program: April 1

Applications are now available for download at: www.acrussiaabroad.org. Applications are currently being accepted for spring semester programs.

For more information and an application, please contact:

Russian & Eurasian Outbound Programs

American Councils for International Education: ACTR/ACCELS

1776 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Suite 700 Washington, DC 20036

Phone: (202) 833-7522

Email: outbound@americancouncils.org

Website: www.acrussiaabroad.org

Warm Hello From Biysk!

It has been more than a year since I first got to know Grinnell – a green, sunny, and friendly place. When I only got there our world seemed so small with all those international students around, and our tiny college seemed tremendously large because of everything it had to offer.

I was lucky not to be lost there and managed to find the most precious thing – great people who made my life in Grinnell bright, productive and unforgettable. Those are the Russian Department students and professors.

My congratulations to those of you who have just joined this wonderful Family!!! Do know that you are in the right company, the company of professional, devoted and caring people.

It hurts to be a **former** language assistant, as my heart is still there with you, but it is a privilege to be **Grinnell** former language assistant.

A little update from me: I am back to Russia, back to work at high school with energetic and challenging teens (the job to keep me happy). I am also doing translations for a Moscow website (the job to earn money). Besides, I will be teaching a few short courses on Technology in Language Teaching at the University for the students, teachers of our town and Professors in November-December and some time in the second semester (the job to grow professionally). Not bad! But I think of Grinnell a lot...



Traditionally, a few links from me:

1) If you are considering going to Russia to teach you might find this useful:

<http://www.bkcih-moscow.com/jobs/>

<http://www.bkcih-moscow.com/teaching/small.html>

2) If you just want some fun, use these:

<http://muzic.spb.ru/>

<http://mults.spb.ru> - good collections of downloadable music and cartoons

As always, feel free to contact me! I'll be happy to help or just hear from you.

Your Vera