

BULGARIA/COLORADO LIBRARY PARTNERSHIP INTEREST GROUP
Colorado Association of Libraries
April 2002

The Bulgarian/Colorado Library Project has become the first, official, CAL Interest Group. The CAL Board approved it at the February meeting. The Bulgarian Library Fund (built through your generous purchase of jewelry) is being transferred to the Friends of the Littleton Library and Museum who will graciously manage the fund from now on. We are up to 13 partnerships now including a new one between the Vapcarov Folk Arts School in Bulgaria and the Denver School of the Arts.

Nancy Bolt will be selling Bulgarian jewelry at the following places this spring: Rocky Mountain Book Festival, April 13 and 14 at DU's Ritchie Center; High Plains Retreat in Estes Park, Arkansas Valley Retreat in Pueblo; Pathfinder Retreat in Crested Butte.

Since January we have sent books to:

- the Sofia Public Library from the Jefferson County Public Library
- the Silistra Public Library from the Aurora Public Library
- the Plovdiv Public Library from the Arkansas Valley Regional Library System
- the Zavets School and Public Library from the Ruth Holley Branch of the Pikes Peak Library District
- the Gotse Delchev Library from Arapahoe Library District.

In addition, the children at the Remington Elementary School and the Cyril and Methodius School Library have exchanged drawings.

Several of our libraries received "martinitzas", red and white yarn do-dads, from their partners on March 1 to celebrate the coming of spring. Nancy Bolt did a program at the Ruth Holley Branch of PPLD on "martinitzas". In the modern version, the red represents the color of the spring flowers to come and the white represents the snow that is leaving. Some of the old stories say the red represents the blood of the soldiers who died in battle and the white represents the purity of their cause. Nancy described items in a display about Bulgaria including pictures of Bulgarian children. Then the kids made martinitzas for their families and for kids in Bulgaria with whom they would like to be pen pals.

Our project is gaining some national attention. We have been asked to submit a feature article to *International Leads*, the journal of the International Relations Round Table. We will describe the program overall and Kalina Ivanova from Veliko Turnovo and Patty Gibbons from Eagle will describe personally how their program got started.

The trip to do library conferences this summer has been combined with a music trip and the date has changed to June 23 to July 7. The trip will visit Partner Libraries in Sofia, Plovdiv, Veliko Turnovo, and Varna. The site of the library conference hasn't been chosen yet. There will also be four concerts by a Colorado choir with four different Bulgarian choirs.

Finally, communication with our partner libraries ebbs and flows. Some partners seem to have no trouble communicating and others seem to have trouble getting started. Our Bulgarian friends sometimes feel unsure of writing to Americans. We received information this weekend that the economy in Bulgaria is not doing well and some of our partners can't pay their Internet bills. At least Colorado's economy isn't that bad yet.

We have requests from two libraries in Bulgaria for partners. The first is the Zavets School and Public Library. The town has about 3500 people. The public library has about 40,000 volumes and the nearby school library about 14,000. Their Colorado partner has had to pull out of the program and they would like a new partner.

The second library is the Yordan Yovkov School Library. It is both a primary and secondary school with students from the first to twelfth grade. Students from the school study languages such as English, French, German and Russian from the first grade. From the ninth grade they begin to specialize in humanities, math and natural science, or with no specialization. There are more than 6 hundred students studying at the school.

Please let me know if you are interested in being a partner to one of these libraries or want more information, please let Nancy Bolt (nancybolt@earthlink.net) know.

Thanks to all of you that participate in this program. Your contributions to Bulgarian libraries are appreciated.

Submitted by Nancy Bolt