SlavFile

Winter 2002
Vol. 12, No. 1
SLAVIC LANGUAGES DIVISION
AMERICAN TRANSLATORS ASSOCIATION
www.americantranslators.org/divisions/SLD

Буримейная буря

From the Editor: The following poems represent the entrants in our Burimé[1] contest all of which were read with great gusto at the ATA "Game Show Session" in Los Angeles. Whatever plans the moderators had to judge among them were overtaken by circumstances, overwhelmed by the veritable storm of literary talent, the moderators and audience decided to award five first prizes.

Искушение

Masha Entchevitch

Принявши клюквенного jelly
Во след вчерашнему вину,
Себя спрошу я: «Неужели
Я уподобилась бревну?
And how could I be that mean
To that adorable блондин,
Who sends me messages and faxes,
But never thinks to send red wine,
And very rarely relaxes
Unless I meet his dead deadline.
I think I need to run away
From troubles falling like Niagara.
I've heard that joining ATA
Works even better than Viagra,
But I won't know that till I try it...»
«Опять же, чем не шутит черт! –
Коллега слева намекает
With little and suspicious snort. –
Ведь все поправки Конституции
Нас не спасли от проституции».
«О сгинь ты, бес высокопарный!
Заройся лучше в перевод
И, пробурив исходный текст бездарный,
Поймешь, почто ослеп тот крот
(Because he found out that the future
Unfailingly brings что-нибудь покруче).
If you emerge with your intact facility,
Я, пережив первичный шок,
Meek as the meekest lamb, in all humility
Приму твой белый порошок».

[1] The rules of Burimé, for those who don't yet know, are very simple: write a poem using a stipulated list of rhyming words as end rhymes.

ATA Burimé

Larissa Kulinich

Переводчик перевёл поэму, –
Сделал он отличный перевод –
Ночи напролёт кропал, как крот.
Тотчас же заказчику отправил факс,
Радостно сказал себе: "Relax!
Уложился ты в deadline,
Можно выпить и red wine!"
Но не впрок пошло вино –
Одеревенел он, как бревно,
Рифмы странные пошли ему на ум:
Революция – конституция,
Резолюция – проституция.
Ужаснулся наш герой: "Что же будет в future?
Не дай бог что-нибудь покруче!?"
Впал он в настоящий шок,
Для успокоенья выпил порошок.
Мысль растеклась его, как jelly.
Спросил он слабо: "Неужели?
Да неужели есть facility,
Чтоб сладить помогла с таким humility?"
И вдруг стрелой пронзила мысль-маршрут один: ты должен run away
В Лос-Анджелес на conference of ATA!
Тут переводчик наш воскликнул триумфально: "Чёрт!"
И с облегчением он выпил водки snort.

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SlavFile is published four times yearly.
Letters to the Editor, short articles of interest, and information for the calendar are invited.
Submissions become the property of *SlavFile* and are subject to editing. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Editor or of the Division.

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FROM THE ASSISTANT ADMINISTRATOR: ADVICE FOR NEWCOMERS

Alex Lane

Back when my college income consisted of tips collected doing close-up magic in one of the better bars in New York, I recall sitting at the table reserved in the kitchen of the place for between-show magicians and listening to an old-timer hold forth. This fellow was a seasoned pro, who needed only a pocket full of change - and perhaps an ordinary deck of cards - to keep people amused for hours.

What I learned, listening to him talk about the craft of prestidigitation, has served me in good stead over the years; though many would call what I learned simply good, common sense.

1. Master the action, then the sleight.

To be believable, every motion a magician makes must be completely natural. Therefore, if you're going to put a coin into your hand and make it disappear, you've got to spend time *actually putting a coin in your hand*. Most amateurs skip this boring phase and start learning how to *make it disappear* from the get-go, and end up with an effect that looks "wrong."

By analogy, in translation, where one strives to write fluently in one's target language, I might suggest doing some additional writing that has nothing to do with translation. Keep a journal. Write letters. Pen a column for a local publication. The easier it is for you to write, the easier it will be for you to translate.

2. Practice until you get it right.

Good magicians practice continuously. They analyze their movements. If something feels "wrong," they work at it until it feels "right."

For translators, practice consists of (a) using the dictionary a lot when one is translating, and (b) using the dictionary a lot when one is not translating. Some translators I know spend time analyzing their work way after the invoice has been sent off. Others read dictionaries. While there is no need to dedicate every waking minute to one's craft, dedicating every working minute to it is probably a good idea.

3. Education is cheap compared to ignorance.

Magicians sell each other ideas (and hardware) for effects all the time, and some make a good living at it (does the name "Houdini" ring a bell?). Some ideas work out; others, don't. But if *one* idea out of, say, fifty included in a book that sells for $100 works out for you, it will likely repay the cost of the book many times over.

The same general principle applies to translation. For example, I have a number of dictionaries on my shelf I bought long ago, but which I have never used in the course of a translation. Mind you, it's a shrinking set of books, as my practice has ramped up over the past year. Without this "reserve" investment made some time ago, some of the translations I have undertaken would have been, well, much harder to do.

Education includes marketing (which can be viewed as customer education). Dollars invested in a Web site membership, or membership in a professional association (and not just ATA), or even having one's business cards professionally done can repay themselves easily.

* * *

The March 15th deadline for submitting ideas for presentations at next year's ATA Conference in Atlanta is fast approaching! What interests *you?* What kinds of presentations would *you* like to see? Drop me a line at words@galexi.com.

OFFERS OF WORK FROM EMPLOYERS AND CLIENTS ARE PUBLISHED FREE

SLD MATTERS: FROM THE ADMINISTRATOR

Nora Seligman Favorov

I know there are some of you who—suspecting (rightfully) that this column will be devoted mainly to the conference in Los Angeles and administrative matters discussed there—will be tempted to skip over it and look for something else to read in the *SlavFile*, something that deals with what we're all *really* interested in: language and culture. Ironically, it will be those of you who weren't in Los Angeles who will be the least interested in hearing about it. Even if administrative matters bore you and you skip over everything in the *Chronicle* that doesn't deal directly with your language pair, yet still pay your ATA dues and are a long term member, you may want to read on. I'll try here to bring you up to date as briefly as possible on some things happening within ATA that may affect you down the road.

There are changes brewing in the way ATA handles accreditation—changes that have some people upset, but more people excited. The board elections at this conference, although they proceeded with minimal fuss and bother, were in some ways the most significant elections in many years. The elections held in Los Angeles came at a crossroads: a new direction had been proposed and it was time to decide whether or not we, as an organization, would take it. In electing a slate of candidates who support the changes to our system of accreditation proposed by newly-ex-ATA-President Ann Macfarlane and the board serving under her, we voted to take this new path. Although the details are still being worked out, the basic idea behind the changes is to make our language pair accreditation a more meaningful credential. In order to achieve this, it is felt that we have no choice but to open up the certification process (the term for the process will be officially changed at some point from accreditation to certification) to non-members. Those already accredited will be "grandfathered" in to certification. Soon it will no longer be true, however, that all you have to do to keep your credential is pay your ATA dues. There will also be a continuing education requirement (details still being worked out). If you have not been reading about this question in the *Chronicle*, I would recommend you get out your issues from June, July and August, 2001 and read the "From the President" columns (also available on line). These will answer most of the questions that may arise in the minds of those of you who have yet to focus on these changes. Stay tuned to the *Chronicle* for further developments.

Personally, I salute the "high road" approach ATA is taking. It is, indeed, consistent with the ATA bylaws and our status as a nonprofit organization (as Ann points out in her June, 2001 column) that ATA serve not only its members, but the profession at large. If ATA were run by a stagnant bureaucracy it would surely prefer to blackmail its membership into paying its annual dues under threat of losing accreditation. Now the incentive to maintain membership is the desire to remain a part of a top notch organization, paving the way to a higher level of professionalism and standards, and one that will work hard to help its membership meet the new demands.

On another, but related subject: I attended the meeting of division administrators in Los Angeles thinking that I knew it all and wasn't going to learn anything there. I came away wiser. For now, I'd like to share with you just one thing that I learned. The interpreters among you are probably aware of this "hot" issue, but I was not.

It turns out there is a great deal of unhappiness among interpreters over the fact that they—to an inexperienced peruser of the Translation Services Directory—may look somehow inferior to their colleagues working in written translation because their names are not followed by the colorful ATA logo signifying accreditation in a language pair. The fact that ATA does not offer accreditation for interpreters is explained on the page introducing the TSD, along with the fact that it offers accreditation in 25 languages (so that someone looking for a translator working in Tagalog, or Ukrainian for that matter, might not be surprised that a translator is not accredited), but most prospective clients probably don't spend a lot of time reading or pondering the introductory page; they are in urgent need of a translator or interpreter. I cannot inform our SLD interpreters that a solution to this problem has been found. I can only say that a lot of smart and assertive ATA members are "on the case." Perhaps in conjunction with other changes made to the accreditation process, this problem will somehow be addressed.

Finally, I have to say we had a great conference in LA. Our own SLD sessions were wonderful in every way, our Susana Greiss lecture was spellbinding, but I think most of us left the city of angels with fondest memories of the banquet, which you can read about elsewhere in this issue of *SlavFile*. I'll tell you: the SLD knows how to have a good time!

ATTENTION UKRAINIAN TRANSLATORS!

Do you believe the Ukrainian language deserves consideration and respect no less than Russian or Polish, not to mention Hungarian or Finnish? Well, there is one thing our Division can do – set up ATA accreditation (soon to become certification) for English-Ukrainian and/or Ukrainian-English translators. This idea has been around for several years already, but that is no reason to continue to procrastinate!

However, to proclaim is much easier than to accomplish. And the first step should be to make up a list of those wishing to be accredited and those further willing to work to set up a program. We are thus asking all those interested to send an e-mail to Vadim Khazin, our Contributing Editor (Ukrainian), at vadkhazin@cs.com stating your willingness to start the accreditation process. Please do not forget to mention the accreditation direction (E-U, U-E, or maybe both) that you would like to pursue.

Thank you!

Fifth Annual Susana Greiss Lecture: The Good, the Bad, and the Beautiful. Presented by Patricia Newman

Reviewed by Larissa Kulinich

Let me begin by saying that this was my first ATA conference and that I appreciated each presentation I heard. However, the annual Susana Greiss lecture stood out as an exceptional treat! According to standing tradition, Susana Greiss was there in person to greet the audience and to introduce the speaker, Patricia Newman. This added a special significance to the presentation. The list of Patricia's accomplishments is incredibly long and strikingly impressive. To mention but a few, she is Past ATA President and Gode Medal Laureate. For ATA, she revised the concept of special interest divisions and wrote the bylaws that have served as a model for the ATA's divisions ever since. With her Canadian and Mexican counterparts she founded the Regional Center of North America under the International Federation of Translators. What I found most appealing, though, was Susana's characterization of Patricia on a personal level: "She has a very special gift—when you meet her, you feel like you've known her for a long time."

Patricia spoke on two topics: a customer's viewpoint of translators and interpreters; and the *Callaham Russian-English Dictionary of Science and Technology*. Her background has given her a great deal of experience with the customer's perspective of translators' and interpreters' work. For approximately 20 years, she worked at Sandia National Laboratories, an engineering, research and development facility, as the only official linguist in an organization of 8,000 people. She translated Russian, German, French, and Spanish into English and was responsible for distributing translation work among contractors. Patricia is an engineer, and though she made it known that she has no formal training in translation or interpretation—no Master's Degree, or Ph.D. in Linguistics—her grasp of the subject matter, her long experience, and the wisdom of what she has to say suggest a high level of proficiency and competence in the area of languages.

Translation and Interpretation —The Customer's Point of View

The first part of the speech provided insights into the logistics of translation requests and ways of handling them. The speaker distinguished between two types of requests from the customer. One type of request is made by research scientists who want to know what a particular article says. The other type is made by scientists who are working on a collaborative program, or who want their own presentations translated into a foreign language.

Customers who make these two kinds of requests tend to use different criteria for evaluating the translation. The first is usually concerned with saving money, whereas the second is typically interested in saving time. In most cases a finished translation goes directly to the requester—there is no editor, no reviewer, no formatting. Then the real problem arises: how can a monolingual scientist judge the quality of the translation? Patricia's experience taught her that sometimes a scientist's evaluation is based on the least important of the criteria. She identified the following 3 criteria scientists are guided by: cost, speed, and readability. And speed, she said, is frequently more important than cost. Completeness and accuracy are of course critical, but a monolingual scientist cannot judge them. Patricia provided an example illustrating how a monolingual scientist might judge a translation. Once she sent an evaluation form about a certain translation, and it came back marked "bad translation". She read the job, and found it rather good. When asked what was wrong with the translation, the scientist replied, "He didn't cite my work." Patricia called such critics and critiques ludicrous.

There was one point she made very explicit—a translator has a lot of power, especially in a situation where a scientist is using translated slides, speaking to an audience that is very well qualified to judge whether the information presented is correct. All the poor customer has to defend himself with is the work done by the translator.

The next important issue on which she focused was, What makes a good translation? A clear and incisive answer followed—The Three C's: **Cost, Cooperation, and Competence.** It would be nice to believe that the first C, **cost,** refers to the cost/quality ratio—as cost goes up, so does the quality. But clearly this is often not the case. Citing her experience, Patricia said that the worst translation she had ever seen, pure gibberish, was presented to her as a sample of a certain translator's work, and had an outrageous cost. The second C, **cooperation,** is an essential component of the relationship between the translator and the customer. As an extreme example of bad cooperation the following situation was described. Once Patricia dealt with an absolutely wonderful translation agency—they were friendly, outgoing, "can-do" people, and their product was excellent. But their invoices was another matter—they did not match the jobs, they were months late in coming, they had arithmetic errors, and it created havoc in her business office. So, good service should be provided both at the front end, and at the back end of a project.

The third C is **competence**. How do you judge competence? Patricia's answer to this question is my idea of a perfect translator's motto—"competence is the translator's triumph over his own ignorance." This may sound slightly intimidating, but Patricia made it clear that to err is human—we cannot all know everything about every field we are asked to translate. The thing to do is to know when you are ignorant and to find some way to compensate for it.

Summing up The Three C's—cost, cooperation, and competence—the speaker provided clear and definitive guidelines for the translator from the viewpoint of the customer. As a translator, make your product perfect, as perfect as it can be: spellcheck it, number the pages, make it easy to use, make it look pretty, in a nutshell—make your customer's job easier. The primary advice

Patricia provided was this—as a translator your goal is to become the customer's strategic partner, so that he will think of you when he needs translations. Considering the relevance of each of the Three C's, Patricia reversed the order in which she first introduced them. If you are not competent, it does not matter what you cost. Competence comes first, and the cost sometimes is the least important factor.

Next, Patricia spoke about the customer's perception of interpreter performance. Again she provided three evaluation criteria. This time there were Three P's—**presentation, professionalism and precision.** Presentation means the way an interpreter presents him- or herself. Patricia's customers were seldom displeased with an interpreter's appearance, but sometimes they complained about women interpreters who wore hiking boots, a tank top, and flapping pants, or male interpreters who had a ponytail, or an earring, though technically they were very good interpreters.

Professionalism covers all the things that an interpreter does at a meeting besides interpretation. The following examples served to illustrate a low level of professionalism. There were interpreters who left the premises by themselves to go shopping, who interrupted the speakers to argue terminology, who took a break at luncheons and suggested hiring somebody else for that time, who began every sentence with "well...," "in other words...," "actually...," etc. Customers appreciated and thought highly of those interpreters who helped them with arranging transportation, buying tickets, or took them shopping. All this was especially important for monolingual customers when they traveled abroad, particularly to Russia.

Concerning precision, Patricia provided a very accurate description of this concept—it is not what you don't know that will hurt you; it is what you do know that isn't so that will hurt you. There may be many ways to judge precision, even if a customer is monolingual.

Patricia again arranged the Three P's—presentation, professionalism, and precision, in the reverse order of their introduction. If you are not precise or not professional, it does not matter how you dress. Another very telling point she made about the perceived role of an interpreter was that the purpose of the meeting is not for the interpreter to display his skills, but to help the participants in *their* discussion.

The Dictionary — A Personal View

The second part of the presentation was devoted to the *Callaham Russian-English Dictionary of Science and Technology*, and the speaker's contribution to it. Patricia called it "my dictionary," and gave a wonderful, emotional talk, permeated with the utmost admiration of and deep respect for Ludmilla Callaham, and her formidable work. Patricia called her "my heroine," "lovely lady," "remarkable person," and affectionately called her "Milla." She said that when she first became acquainted with the dictionary, she felt as though she had come out of the fog, onto a mountaintop.

Patricia provided ample biographical data about Ludmilla Callaham. She was born in the US to Russian parents, but was raised by her grandparents. Her grandfather was a teacher, her grandmother, an editor. They taught her high standards and principles; she never had to wonder what was right or wrong—they made it clear. With such grandparents, one either learns to speak correctly, or doesn't speak at all. Callaham received her university degree in chemistry in 1933. There were no jobs for chemists then, so she learned typing and shorthand, working as a translator before she became a lexicographer. She created the first Russian-English dictionary for scientists, subject specialists, and translators.

Patricia presented her lecture to allow Ludmilla Callaham to speak directly to the audience, reading from her letters and other writings. Two portraits of Callaham were projected onto a screen during the lecture—Ludmilla as a young woman, and Ludmilla in her advanced years. There were also pictures of her small simple house at Springhill, in rural Pennsylvania.

Ludmilla Callaham devoted 40 years of her life to work on her dictionary. She still had a long way to go when she was diagnosed with leukemia. In 1989 her doctor told her that she had less than a year to live. She asked Patricia for help. Patricia tried to do her best to find somebody who could stand up to that challenge, but she could not talk anybody into it. Ludmilla called her one day, frantic, almost in tears, and said she needed somebody to help her finish. Patricia answered that she would love to help, but didn't know anything about dictionaries. "Wonderful!," Ludmilla exclaimed. So, the two of them began to work together in January of 1990. They would get up at 4 o'clock in the morning, and begin working before the day started. Patricia started at the end of the alphabet, and Ludmilla continued from the beginning. Over the next 9 months, said Patricia, Ludmilla taught her a great deal, and gave her more love and encouragement than she could possibly have imagined. Ludmilla, herself, must have been going through tremendous suffering. She died on November 8, 1990.

Patricia described how the work was done—it was a truly heroic undertaking! Ludmilla used her grandfather's ancient typewriter and kept her terminology on little slips of paper rather than index cards, which she found too thick. She listed the sources in different colors in the upper hand right corners of the cards. Patricia referred to it as the most colorful research she had ever seen. If a word was followed by 4 checks, it was found in 4 sources. Callaham's favorite sources, by the way, were all Russian dictionaries and encyclopedias. She would disassemble an unbound copy of the old version of her dictionary, cut it apart, and paste up part of it on a sheet of paper, roll it into the typewriter, type in the new entries she wanted to add, roll it out of the typewriter, tape on the next piece, roll it back into the typewriter, etc. She found the selection procedure the most demanding and painful job. She could only take one word out of ten. Her husband, John Callaham, composed a rhyme for her that she used very often: "When in doubt, throw it out!" All her words are referenced to a specific discipline. At the front of the dictionary, prefixes and suffixes are provided. Ludmilla felt that they were an invaluable aid in word construction.

Continued on page 7

FALSE FRIENDS MEET TRUE FRIENDS IN THE SLD

Review of Steve Shabad's ATA Conference Presentation

RUSSIAN-ENGLISH COGNATES THAT GO THEIR OWN WAY

Reviewed by Mira Beerbaum

After confessing the he was not sure if he could fill 90 minutes of discussion time, Steve Shabad proceeded not only to fill the space, but to provide fodder for a lively debate on his topic of Russian-English false cognates. He divided these words into three categories: different definitions (e.g., актуальный /actual); similar definitions different usage (e.g., база/base); and same definitions, different usage (e.g., катастрофа/catastrophe). Audience members added several words to groups I and II; while group III was considered to be the most difficult, it evoked the least controversy. Several of the false cognates Steve cited also appeared in Bob Taylor's financial seminar.

Steve provided an excellent chart with the Russian word as defined by Ozhegov and Shvedov, the English word as defined by Webster, an example in Russian and finally, a proposed solution (i.e., noncognate English translation). In Category I suggestions were added to контроль and концепция. In category II, авантюрист, динамика; реализация and (Русская национальная) идея provoked the liveliest discussion and most suggestions. Steve's seminar provided a good forum for interaction between the native Russian speakers and translators and interpreters whose native language is English with regard to words we encounter all the time, but may have difficulty with.

Some Examples of Russian terms in the three categories with their proposed translation (other than English cognate):

Category I: Different Definitions

концепция — framework, strategy, outline; plan; doctrine

политическая технология — political strategy

публицист — public-affairs writer

Category II: Similar Definitions, Different Usage

версия — theory, scenario

пропаганда — publicity, promotion, dissemination (of knowledge)

специальный — specialized, specific

Category II: Same Definitions, Different Usage

агитация — campaigning

деградировать — deteriorate, decline

информация — news.

Mira Beerbaum is an accredited Russian>English translator, specializing in various fields of engineering, oceanography and physiology. She lives in Pentaluma California and can be reached at hansb01@hotmail.com

Editor's Note: In the past we would have devoted significant space in the SlavFile to providing our reader's with the complete cognate chart. However, we can now make this valuable reference information available in downloadable form on ATA's website and can use the space we save to publish Steve's very interesting and professionally pertinent introductory remarks to the material he presented in LA.

RUSSIAN-ENGLISH COGNATES THAT GO THEIR OWN WAY

Steve Shabad

I am going to start with a confession. Until last year I had vaguely heard the term "cognates" from time to time, but I didn't really know what it meant. The funny thing is, I've been translating for more years that I will admit to here—and like all of you, I have a whole history with cognates (without knowing the proper term for them). When I was learning Russian as a teenager in a Soviet high school, I encountered a surprising number of words in Russian that sounded just like the words I had grown up with. It was always comforting to find these presumed friends in an unfamiliar environment, and of course I assumed that they had the same meanings as in English. Every time I informed a Russian friend of mine that a word in Russian—invariably with a Latin or Greek root—was essentially the same in English, he would remark with tongue in cheek, in that time-honored, "we-invented-everything" tradition that we attribute to the Russians, "Еще одно русское слово у вас!"

Even when I began to translate professionally (Russian to English except for a handful of interpreting assignments), I only gradually achieved enlightenment about the differences between these similar words in the two languages. In fact, to this day, the number of those words in Russian—which I have finally learned are called "cognates"—that I would categorize as false or "near false" has continued to grow.

As I thought about what I wanted to say today about cognates, I was struck by the almost human qualities that can be assigned to them. I know my colleagues refer to them as "false friends." It would probably be a stretch to call them adversaries, but if you think about them, they are a little like coworkers who seem perfectly pleasant and cooperative on the surface, but then, as you begin dealing with them, seem to undercut you when you're not looking. They are beguiling, insidious, deceptive and challenging—always ready to lull you to sleep if you aren't alert.

With all due respect to the thorny technical terms, slang and colloquialisms that we all run across, I would argue that cognates test our translating skills every bit as much as those other words and phrases—precisely because of their subtlety, their "wolf-in-sheep's-clothing" quality. Of course, *looking out* for the nuances is only the first step; you must also have a *sense* of their meanings. In a sense, I could almost measure the improvement in my translating skills over the years by the number of cognates that I *don't* translate by using their "equivalents" in the other language. But I am always learning, and they are still a challenge.

The man who first hired me as a professional translator, Leo Gruliow of the old Current Digest of the Soviet Press, once told me that a good translation obviously should not be so literal that it is awkward to read, but it should also not sound too much like something originally written in English. I think some of us might disagree with that second point. It depends, for one thing, on what kind of material you are translating. If you are translating fiction, needless to say, you don't want a Russian to sound like an American, and you don't want a denizen of the 19th century to sound like one of the 21st. (Even here, though, there may be a difference of opinion; one doesn't want the translation of an old novel to be so archaic that we lose the reader's interest.)

Now, if you're doing a technical translation for commercial purposes, you probably do want it to sound as much as possible like an original. If you are translating historical material that is being edited by scholar who is also fluent in Russian, then cognates may well be a key battleground. I have—to my exasperation—found this out in my recent translations of Soviet documents.

Here are just a couple of examples. For years now, I have generally translated спекулянт as profiteer. But despite my argument that "speculator" has a different meaning in English, my editor overruled me. She even wanted to translate эшелоны—the special trains that were used to transport kulaks to their places of exile—as "echelons." (Fortunately, I was able to persuade her that this would make no sense in English.) She said these terms are "traditional" in the literature. My response was that the fact that a translation is "traditional" doesn't necessarily make it correct. The editor, however, was adamant. Another justification she used was that this was "Marxist lingo." I replied that this was Marxist lingo *in Russian*. Of course, it did no credit to that language, but it at least came to be understandable to Soviet citizens; the task of a Russian-English translator is to make it understandable in English—while retaining the meaning. But in most of these cases, the editor overruled me.

I don't know how these renderings became "traditional." It's even possible that they had more resonance in English many decades ago. The problem, I think, is that scholars who are proficient in Russian spend years poring over original Russian writings but do not go through the mental process of rendering a smooth translation. As a result, they overlook linguistic nuances and the Russian cognates become ingrained in them as their English equivalents—a kind of "Russinglish." That is, they take the attitude, "Well, these words clearly have the same root; they even have the same definition. Obviously one should be translated as the other."

But in fact, Russian and English are not merely neutral codes that have developed in a vacuum. They have evolved in vastly different environments, under a myriad of different historical, cultural, sociological, psychological and other influences. This, of course, is not the place to explore those influences—nor would I be the person to do that. It's obvious, though, that like any other immigrants, cognates in the two languages have truly followed their own courses. As time has gone on, I have begun to think that more cognates are false or "near false" than true.

Steve Shabad, an associate editor for *Newsweek* magazine, has been a freelance Russian-English translator for more than 30 years. He has translated hundreds of articles and several books on a vast range of subjects. He recently translated two books for a series published by Yale University Press, based on declassified Soviet archives. He can be reached at Steven.Shabad@Newsweek.com

Fifth Annual Susanna Greiss Lecture

Continued from page 5

Speaking of her own contribution to the dictionary, Patricia said she felt humble about it. She did what she could—an honest and comprehensive literature search. But, listening to what she said about her own work, I thought she was also a heroine. She demonstrated true commitment, incredible persistence, and love, of course. Several times she mentioned that one doesn't get rich producing dictionaries. Patricia devoted six years of her life to this dictionary. She literally read whole reference books. It took her 2 years to read the 4 volumes of the *All Russian Dictionary of the USSR Academy of Sciences*. It should be noted that while working on the dictionary, Patricia was working full time. She would work on the dictionary from 4 to 5:30 in the morning, get ready for work, work 8 to 10 hours at Sandia National Laboratory, come home, feed her husband and four children, and fall into bed, only to begin again in the morning.

When Patricia finally finished the dictionary, she went through Ludmilla's part, trying to make things consistent. Finally, she called John Callaham and said, "I am ready to take it to the publisher." When they met in New York and put the manuscript on a luggage cart, it consisted of 12 reams of paper. The publisher's mouth dropped to the floor, as Patricia put it. Galleys started to arrive about the time Patricia accepted a 6-month assignment at the US Embassy in Moscow. She did all the proofing while she was overseas and sent the dictionary back. Eventually the dictionary was published. As Patricia puts it, "It is a fantastic book!"

When Patricia Newman finished her talk, there were tears in her eyes—the audience too was visibly moved. It took some time for everybody to recover before a flurry of questions began. One of them was, "Do you feel we need a 5th edition of the dictionary?" Patricia's answer was this: "A dictionary is never finished. It is obsolete the moment it is published. Would I ever finish it? No! Getting up at 4 o'clock in the morning is beyond me now!" Who could blame her for that?

By way of conclusion, I will quote Ludmilla Callaham on her own feeling for dictionaries. "I love my Webster's in a very personal way. Every time I look something up, I smile at him. In fact, I get a warm feeling every time I use any of my favorite dictionaries. It's like communicating with a dear friend." Patricia Newman expressed hope that whenever any of us uses Ludmilla Callaham's dictionary, we will see her smile over our shoulder.

Larissa Kulinich is a freelance English<>Russian translator and interpreter working in the areas of medicine, business, law, education. She also teaches Russian. Larissa can be reached at larajim@earthlink.net

DIVISION BANQUET A COLOSSAL SUCCESS

Christina Sever

The Slavic Languages Division has been holding banquets every year since the 1993 Conference in Philadelphia. At that conference, when the Division was born from the ashes of the Russian Special Interest Group, Emerson Virden found us a delightful Russian restaurant, The Russia House, complete with live music and wonderful food for the handful of us who attended. We've been trying to emulate that success ever since. We've had some delicious dinners. We've had a lot of fun and gathered to sing Russian folk songs together even when we couldn't find a Slavic restaurant, but not until 2001 in Los Angeles (of all places) did we match and even surpass that first triumph in every way.

Alas, we slavophiles are full of proverbs, and this one—good things come to those who wait [на всякое хотенье есть терпенье]—was written for the forty or so valiant SLD members who chose to take the hotel bus to the restaurant, as well as one carload who, to their sorrow, chose to follow the bus. Theoretically, the restaurant was 30 minutes from the hotel. Forty-five minutes later, we were on the right street, but going farther and farther away from the restaurant address. Rumbles of back-seat driving began to be heard. We strove to drown them out with Russian folk songs. We even threatened to teach our Slavic colleagues to sing "99 Bottles of Beer on the Wall." Finally, the driver pulled over, consulted his map, and, perhaps persuaded by the rumblers, turned around and headed back the other way, then took an unexplained detour, but finally, more than an hour after leaving the hotel, we arrived at the Black Sea Restaurant.

Grumbling but grateful, we entered the restaurant, and were immediately assailed by the tantalizing fragrance and beautiful sight of two long tables absolutely filled with zakuski of every description. There could not have been a better reward for our "patience" than to not have to wait at all once we arrived. Our grumpiness was banished and our hunger immediately appeased by crab, herring and salmon, cold meats and cheese, garlic and eggplant dips and mushrooms, cabbage and other vegetables, pickles and many other tasty treats, washed down with several kinds of wine. As we ate and chatted, the staff kept bringing more platters heaped with Slavic delicacies. And we had the restaurant all to ourselves.

The inevitable toasting began, superlatives flowed freely, and finally we went around all of both tables, giving speeches. We even had the privilege of having our ATA immediate past president and our own first assistant administrator, Ann Macfarlane,

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Первая попытка в стиле буриме

Bill Keasbey

Охотно защищаем конституцию,
Которая позволяет проституцию.
Наши руководители – люди бездарные,
Но идеалы у них высокопарные.
Большой мы претерпели шок,
Когда бетон превратился в порошок.
Виновно в том, я думаю, вино,
Что в стройке той отсутствует бревно.
Что сказал наш старый чёрт?
Ничего, just gave a snort.
You thought that he was mean,
Но хуже всех был тот блондин.
Хотя он выглядит как крот,
Он делает удачный перевод.
На связь он так намекает:
You'll like it, just try it.
I threatened to turn him into jelly;
В ответ улыбнулся он — неужели?
You make your moves with great facility,
I must admit with sad humility.
No need for you to take Viagra,
Your manhood's stronger than Niagara.
Forget about the looming deadline
And savor Olga's potent red wine.
Now for sure you can relax
And just ignore that nagging fax.
And when they mention ATA,
Just close your ears and run away!
When we asked about the future,
Нам сказали — будет круче.

The Rush Job

Alex Lane

Just as the time nears to relax,
A ring... a click... my God! A fax!
All sober sense says: "Run away!"
But I'm a pro; I'm "A-T-A."
Rush job, dear! Да, перевод!
(Живу я как несчастный крот!)
Убираю я вино,
Сижу спокойно, как бревно.
I read. I cough. At last, I snort.
This mad text *proves* there is a чёрт.
A snap? A breeze? Oh, неужели?
Then why've my guts turned into jelly?
Автор, ох! Высокопарный!
Составлял лишь чушь бездарный.
The challenge, though, assaults humility.
Letting fly misjudged facility!
О том, о сем текст намекает,
"Oh, what the hell," I say, "I'll try it!"
Текст – касаясь проституцию –
Ухудшает конституцию.
I write. The words form a Niagara.
(The author must have chewed Viagra.)
Tell me, dear, what does this mean:
"Он долба ... what the hell? ... блондин"?
Конец! Не распался я в порошок!
Ах, блеск! Какой приятный шок!
I'm just so glad I made deadline.
Time to pour and drink red wine!
But just remember, in the future,
Look up what is meant by "круче"!

take her traditional place standing on a chair to speak to us. Vadim Khazin compiled, created and recited one of his admirable burimes (see below). We sang many old Russian folk songs. By the time the main entrees were served, we almost couldn't eat them we were so satisfied. And finally, the desserts were served, and amazingly we found a bit more room in our bellies to taste them and were well rewarded for our struggle.

A Russian band took the stage. There was a dance floor, complete with revolving disco ball and moving colored lights. The lead singer was beautiful in body and in voice, and we danced and danced, and the bus came to fetch us, and we kept dancing and dancing, till we were danced out the door and reluctantly returned to the hotel... in half the time it took us to arrive. This evening will be a hard act to follow in Atlanta. Emilia Balke and Nora Favorov were responsible for finding the restaurant and organizing the event, and all who attended are very grateful to them, as well as to the management and staff of the unforgettable *Black Sea*.

Christina Sever is a graduate of Monterey Institute of International Studies and works as a freelance translator in Corvallis, Oregon, specializing in commerce and law, medicine, environmental protection and archaeology, as well as literary. She can be reached at csever@proaxis.com

Нежданный гость

Masha Zarlengo (submission mailed in)

Зарывшись в словари как крот
Я завершала перевод,
When suddenly I heard a snort:
Передо мной явился черт.
Он был потасканный блондин.
His eyes were green as sweet mint jelly,
Немного arrogant and mean,
И мне сказал он: «Неужели
Вам не претит сей текст бездарный,
Его язык высокопарный?
Мадам, я с вашей конституцией
Занялся б лучше проституцией».
He brought with him some nice red wine
And told me that I should relax.
"Who cares – forget your dull deadline!
Just drop those pages in your fax!"
В камин подбросил он бревно
And talked a lot about the future.
В стаканы наливал вино,
А планы становились круче.
He wanted us to run away
And rent a cabin near Niagara.
He said: "Forget the ATA –
We'll place an order for Viagra,
И этот дивный порошок
Даст нашим чувствам должный шок."
I woke up in a locked facility.
I felt remorse, chagrin, humility,
Но кто его знает, на что черт намекает.
Perhaps, you know, I still should try it.

Vadim Khazin's more fanciful take on the same event.

(Note: in the interests of full disclosure, Vadim wants us to mention that once again the interfering editorial staff has meddled with some of the English lines of his work.)

БУРИМЕ

на ужине Славянской дивизии ATA
Los Angeles, November 2, 2001

Сегодня отдохнуть решили мы по-русски,
И в ресторане мы, где всякие закуски:
Здесь и грибы, и русская селёдка,
Хотя не подана «Столичная» нам водка.
Although we've not yet gotten any beer,
Зато имеются и ветчина, и сыр,
И огурцы, и помидоры, и капуста,
Чтоб на тарелках и во рту не было пусто.
Just now they brought in something pretty hot,
That comes straight from a native Russian pot.
Играет здесь пускай и не квартет,
Зато вино всегда готов подать буфет.
Не подали российского нам хрена,
Зато дивизии Славянской все мы члены.
Translation's our profession, not a hobby,
We want to move up far beyond the lobby,
Или, по-русски, дальше коридора,
И не бросали чтобы вслед нам помидоры;
We want to earn a wage that's over fifty cents
And to avoid a life of nasty pestilence;
Хотим, чтоб был всегда отточен карандаш,
Чтоб «Мерседесом» был украшен наш гараж,
Which always shall remain with virgin fender –
No dents, no scratches and no bender.
We'd hate to have someone call us a fool
Or ask us if we'd ever been to school?
We'd hate to find out that we're trapped or caught,
Хотели в масле бы кататься, словно кот,
Или порхать, как беззаботная кукушка,
Чтобы не выстрелила вражеская пушка.
Мы не хотим проходить в деле как свидетель,
Хотим, чтоб наша процветала добродетель...
But if at times, instead of strictly textual,
Our dreams become exorbitantly sexual,
И, пожевав укроп или петрушку,
Посмотрим эдак вдруг на милую подружку,
And rather than admiring her finesse,
We touch her butt (пардон!) or else her breast,
We'd take the risk that something awful would ignite
And she'd say words too ghastly to recite,
А от удара по мозгам сковородой
Останемся с одной лишь бородой...
Instead I wish us all pure happiness and sun,
And lots of jobs, combined with lots of fun!

Vadim Khazin, SlavFile's Editor for Ukrainian and resident burime master, lives in Colts Neck NJ and can be reached at VadKhazin@cs.com.

SLAVFILE LITE: NOT BY WORD COUNT ALONE

Lydia Razran Stone

In early September, during the last week of the Golden Age, when the *Washington Post* still had the space and inclination to publish mildly amusing human interest stories in their *International News Section*, I was reading one about Yuri Luzhkov. It seems that the mayor of Moscow, was, in an attempt to create the meteorological equivalent of a Potemkin village, seeding clouds over Moscow's outlying suburbs on days of parades and other forms of ceremonial pomp, so that they (the clouds not the parades) would discharge their payloads before they reached Red Square. I was about to stop reading, discarding this article as unworthy of inclusion in this column, when I discovered that the U.S. expert the *Post* had chosen to interview on the feasibility of this enterprise was none other than my first husband, Bill, er, Dr. William Hooke, now a senior fellow with the American Meteorological Society. Proving that even in my virtual childhood (we were 17 when we met) I was discerning enough to pick a partner of lightning wit and with the ability to size a complex situation up instantly, Bill's first words, faithfully recorded by the *Post's* reporter, were: "You have got to be kidding!" Not content to leave it at that, he further displayed the depth of his scientific and political acumen with the analysis, "One rule of politics is don't do anything that will cause people to chortle. This doesn't pass the test." Reached at home later, Dr. Hooke provided this exclusive advice to *SlavFile* readers: "It is never safe to assume any question is a practical joke or that any remark you make to a reporter will not end up, attributed to you, in the next morning's paper." Lest readers think that I have written of this incident in order to make my ex-husband look foolish, let me assure you that this is far from the truth. I have included it. because I love coincidences and the fact that Bill, whose last direct contact with Russia ended when we divorced, was consulted as an expert on Luzhkov's scheme and that I happened to read about it, is a lovely example. Second, it seems to me marvelous that there is still at least one person left who, when asked to give his expert opinion, reacts not with a high falluting analysis, but with a well-justified appreciation of the ridiculous.

Thanks to everyone who answered my inquiry about the лестница in the last issue of *SlavFile*. Evidently if I had been a native speaker of Russian, when my friend Oksana told me that she had broken her *foot* by falling down the *stairs*, I would never have thought that she had broken her *leg* by falling off a *ladder*. My follow-up query is this: why do certain questions, like the one cited above, as well as many in Raphy Alden's column, provoke such gratifying responses, while other queries and particularly requests get no responses at all?

Here, at any rate, is another question. I have no idea whether it will fall into the category of questions receiving no response or those receiving gratifyingly numerous ones, but I truly want to know the answer and I hope readers will send in their suggestions. There is a certain, seemingly simple and straightforward, usage of the Russian word включая that I encounter fairly frequently but am unable to translate gracefully. I will give the example solely in English to avoid confounding the issue by making grammatical errors in Russian. A Russian sentence might say something like: *I like to travel, including on business*. Now, for some reason, this is not a completely normal English sentence, although sentences in which *even* or *particularly* is substituted for *including* are. The best I can usually do is something like: *I like to travel for any purpose including on business*. Does anyone have a better solution, or, even more interesting, an explanation for this inconsistency. Clearly *including* requires an explicit noun antecedent, but why should it if *even* and *particularly* do not?

Earlier this fall, I was asked to redo an English translation, produced abroad, about the design of an Environment Protection System. Because the formatting was fairly complex and had been done well in the original translation, I elected to translate over the first job, rather than start on a new file. (By the way, I think this was a mistake and that in cases of a bad translations it is probably much faster to start afresh.). At any rate, my choice allowed me to become intimately familiar with one of the worst translations I have ever seen. To give it its due, in some sections it managed to ascend to the level of mediocrity. However in other sections it was so bizarrely wrong that I found it difficult to believe that the person responsible for the mediocre job could have seen the other sections and let them stand. For example, the points of the compass were, frequently but not always, referred to as East, West, Boreal and Austral. The only hypothesis I could come up with was that the whole thing was done initially by machine and then some of it was left unedited. The two funniest (as well as most inexplicable) errors I found were *ardent*, instead of *flame* (*пламенный*), *spectroscopy* and what should have been the biological class *Reptilia* (or simply reptiles*)* translated as the *kowtowing class*. It is true that the Russian word for reptiles, *пресмыкающиеся,* means crawling along on your belly, or metaphorically, being sycophantic. But how could a human translator have come up with this word in a biological context? Even if a human being or a computer dictionary chose randomly from a menu of possible definitions without regard to context, wouldn't the most frequent word have been suggested first?

Some of my colleagues do not approve of publishing egregious translations for the sake of laughs, thinking this tends to demean the entire profession. But note that, in this case, the story has a moral. The translation manager recognized that the original was unacceptable and was able to convince her supervisor and the client that it was worth a considerable sum to have it redone. Furthermore, a second translator was found who, at the very least, is demonstrably able to name the normal words for the points of the compass and to distinguish, with at least 90% accuracy, between reptiles and sycophants. Thus we see here that such people as translation managers and their supervisors, and even clients, are at times capable of distinguishing between poor translations and decent ones, and, even more striking, are willing to pay extra to get the latter. A very happy ending indeed to a story about our long-suffering profession, In his column in the last issue, SLD Assistant Administrator, Alex Lane, suggested that some of us might find it gratifying and useful to visit secondary schools and discuss the profession of translator/interpreter with language students. I have a further "back to school" suggestion. If you are looking for a very satisfying volunteer opportunity or even a source of some additional income (in spite of what they say about teacher's salaries, they do get paid considerably more per hour than, for example, sales clerks), consider becoming involved in a community ESL (English as a Second Language) program for adult students. Volunteers are always in demand and, if competent, are often offered paying jobs. Though you will probably not have many Slavic-speaking students, there are always a few, and, in any case, knowledge of students' native languages is not a requirement for teaching ESL. By immigrating and enrolling adult students have already demonstrated their motivation and there is rarely any discipline problem; indeed, such students tend to be almost embarrassingly appreciative. The amount one learns about language in general and English in particular is striking, and the perspective translating types bring to the classroom can be extremely beneficial. Teaching can get those of us who slave over a hot computer 40+ hours a week out of the house and interacting closely with people on an individual and a group basis. The descendants of immigrants (and aren't we all?) get to feel that we are giving something back.

Ever vigilant for references to Russian literature in American culture, I found the following in the comics section the other day. Broom Hilda, the witch, returns a package to a store exchange counter, complaining that its contents leaked all over the living room carpet. The clerk, taken aback, exclaims; "*War and Peace* leaked on your carpet?" Broom Hilda, in an aside to the readers, explains: "I couldn't tell him I didn't understand a word of it. Obviously, this has a great deal more to do with the stereotype of the book than the book itself. In popular Anglophone culture, Tolstoy's masterpiece is stigmatized as the apotheosis of the dark, dense and difficult nineteenth century novel, or baggy monster, as Henry James described the Russian prose classics, which has highbrow snob appeal, but which no normal entertainment-seeking reader would ever want to read for its own sake. How unfortunate, when *W and P*, or at least *P*, is about as readable and entertaining as any "human drama" novel I can think of! It must be some fatal combination of all those Russian names and the work's length that has given it this lethal reputation.

Continued on page 13

Member Profile

Urszula Klingenberg

New Contributing Editor for Polish

Editor's note: Starting with the next SlavFile *issue, Urszula Klingenberg of Saint Paul, Minnesota will be replacing Tomasz Poplawski as our Contributing Editor for Polish. We are very grateful to Tomek, who served in this capacity for two years. writing and procuring for us a number of extremely well-written and interesting articles (see page 14 for example) and presiding over our Polish focus issue in Summer 1999. Urszula's name should be known to most of you for the impressively comprehensive articles on Polish<>English dictionaries she wrote for the* SlavFile *and for the SLD's first ever presentation on Polish delivered at the last ATA conference. We have asked Urszula to introduce herself to our readers.*

While feeling very flattered to be considered worthy of following in the footsteps of my predecessor in this position, I realize that as a relative newcomer to the ATA and its Slavic Languages Division I owe everyone some information about where I come from and what can be expected of me.

In common with many fellow translators born in a Slavic country, my educational background is in university level English studies, which in the Polish academic curriculum come as a comprehensive package of courses in language proficiency, literature, linguistics, and language pedagogy, in my case, with a special emphasis on sociolinguistics. Even though I graduated from the alma mater of Stanislaw Baranczak, the dean of Polish literary translators, renowned for his renditions of Shakespeare's plays and British and American poetry, during my student years I was unable to take any course specifically on translation, since none were offered there. Thus, translating and interpreting took second place to my main occupation as an English language instructor in Poland.

Since my arrival in the United States, my focus has changed to include more commercial translating, as well as community and legal interpreting, but it was not until I joined the ATA that I realized that this could be turned into a full-fledged profession. The advantages of association membership became fully evident during my first conference appearance last year in LA, where I experienced firsthand the ATA's organizational acumen, availed myself of educational opportunities, networked with the nation's foremost translation companies, and enjoyed meeting scores of like-minded individuals. I was delighted to meet some fellow Polish translators, who I rarely encounter in the flesh since I am based in Minnesota. As a direct result of those encounters even in the few months since the conference I have become much more active professionally and enjoy being a part of an extended network of people involved in different aspects of language communications.

As one who benefited from the opportunities offered by the ATA and, more directly, by SLD, I would like in turn to contribute to the running of its newsletter. From the beginning, I have appreciated *SlavFile* as a valuable resource and to enjoy it for its appealing editorial style. I would like to add to it by presenting information and introducing people of special interest to our small community of Polish translators, and I hope to other SLD members as well. Among other things, I will draw on my recent experience with the changing status of the translation profession and language use in Poland. Readers are also cordially encouraged to suggest topics to be considered in subsequent issues by sending them to vaukling@msn.com.

I look forward to working with *SlavFile's* wonderful editorial staff on future issues filled with exciting features and articles in the New Year 2002.

"DOUBLE JEOPARDY: A BILINGUAL GAME SHOW FOR R< > E TRANSLATORS AND INTERPRETERS"

Review by Masha Entchevitch

The first annual *Bilingual Game Show for Russian <>English Translators and Interpreters* was moderated by Vadim Khazin and Lydia Stone; Nora Favorov assisted and generally helped to maintain a note of sanity; prizes were distributed by Larissa Kulinich. Thanks are due to Laura Wolfson, who contributed many of the prizes from her store of interpreter's souvenirs (given to her by clients from farflung corners of the Russian-speaking world) and to Tanya Gesse, who contributed a bottle of South American wine she had evidently received from an admirer. The session consisted of three games, which, because time passed so rapidly, represented a mere fraction of the activities planned by the organizers.

The first game, *О, переводчики!*, challenged contestants with the formidable but entertaining, task of finding the best idiomatic translations of a number of Russian and English figures of speech. The contestants were teamed in pairs: one native Russian and one native English speaker. Teams consisted of Masha Entchevitch and Jim Walker, Galya Raff and Steve Shabad, Larissa Kulinich and Joel Stern, and Kostya Lakshin and Ben Franchi. The teams were given a **paltry minute** to come up with each translation, which they wrote down and then displayed to the audience. The audience voted for the version they preferred. Victory was shared by Larissa and Joel and Galya and Steve. Everyone in our profession knows that it is often difficult to come up with a good translation of an idiomatic expression. It is especially difficult in interpretation, when one has only a fraction of a second to think. Many of us try to learn as many idiomatic pairs in advance as possible, but, alas, life continuously surprises us with unexpected ones. Oh well, if there is nothing we can do about it, we can at least try to have fun, as we did in this first game. The unfortunate ones who weren't there can try it at home. Here are some of the expressions presented and their winning translations as I remember them:

Ни богу свечка, ни черту кочерга~ For the birds;

One man's trash is another man's treasure ~
Чья потеря, моя находка;

Выйти сухим из воды ~ Emerge smelling like a rose;

Pie in the sky~ голубая мечта;

Перебиваться с хлеба на воду ~ To live from hand to mouth;

Wash dirty linen in public ~ Выносить сор из избы;

Одна нога здесь, другая там ~ Lickety-split.

The next game the organizers called *Verbarium*. Each person had to list as many words as possible that could be formed from the letters of an assigned word, choosing either the Russian *производительность* or the English *certification*. Only words that appeared on no other contestant's list earned points and longer words won more points than shorter ones. We are dreadfully sorry that we are unable to remember the winner of the English competition — if that person will contact us we will be overjoyed to acknowledge his or her glorious achievement in the next issue of *SlavFile*. The victory for the Russian word was so overwhelming that it evidently drove everything else from our minds. Boris Silversteyn received a staggering 69 points for words formed from *производительность* that no one else had listed — and, because of the time constraints, he did not get beyond words beginning with *п*. Lest you doubt this unbelievable achievement, here is Boris' list: *производитель, повесть, пилон, произвол, поворот, пилот, постель, провоз, подзол, плен, полоз, провод, подзор, плод, перо, продел, поле, плот, перс, пронос, полис, плоть, перст, просо, привод, плеть, повидло, проситель, полость, плед, портье, протеин, полезность, половодье, придел, полено, песо, плеврит, приз, полив, пест, пролив, привоз, понос, период, притон, пони, песнь, просвет, пост, пень, проседь, посол, привет, противень, присловье, привес,престол, пирс, пион, порт, пиво, подвес, позор, пистон, поднос,повод, пионер, подрост.*

In the final event, those who had composed burimés for rhyme pairs listed in the last issue of *SlavFile* read them to the audience, or in the case of Masha Zarlengo, who did not attend the conference, had them read. It is always striking to see how the same rhymes can result in such different creations. Although this too was supposed to be a contest, the five poems, which you will find starting on the first page of this issue, were so delightful that it was decided unanimously to award them all first prizes.

Note: I, the author of this review, myself am an old fan of burime and have to confess that a couple of my close friends and I have spent many hours in college sitting in the last row of the auditorium writing burime and playing other word games during especially boring lectures. Some of my poems of that time have become material for inside jokes and citations that I have to endure from my friends and have brought me no other fame; nonetheless, I love writing burimes and recommend it to anyone as a wonderful pasttime.

The first annual game show was such an unmitigated success that it will be featured again next year. Larissa Kulinich who was an active participant in all three games, as well as bringing enormous elan to the awarding of prizes, has agreed to be the MC next year. Anyone with suggestions for games can contact her at larajim@earthlink.net.

Masha Entchevitch (mashlink@fatnet.net) is a freelance Russian and Bulgarian interpreter and translator specializing in simultaneous and court interpretation. She is a registered Interpreter of Non-designated Languages (Judicial Council of California) and a contractor for the U.S. Department of State. When not on the road, she lives in San Francisco.

The Slovist

Raphy Alden

Hi everybody:

Here are some words and expressions that represented various degrees of challenge to me while I was interpreting (causing a pause that was a bit too long) or translating (a word seemed simple enough, but I couldn't find it in my dictionaries or wasn't satisfied with my translation).

My best guesses:

- **Ratpack** - **"Коробочка"** (a well known character from Russian literature).
- **Умник** - **smartass.**
- "I can only offer you black coffee. No cream or sugar.
  No problem. I **am not particular**.
  Я не привередлив."
- **"**Ничего**, переживет**.
  That's ok. **He'll live."**
- Ему тоже **досталось** (от начальства).
  He took a beating too.
- Playing video games is one of my **guiltiest pleasures.**
  Люблю играть в видео игры — **грешен**.
- I expect you to be there. **No excuses**!
  Никаких отговорок!
- **Могучая кучка (**a group of famous Russian composers headed by Balakirev) is translated as **The mighty handful.**

A manager was making a proposal, which met with severe criticism from Board members. Frustrated, he started tearing up the proposal.

What are you doing?

What does it look like I am doing!

My suggestions **Разве не видно?** Or **А вы как думаете?**

I was wondering if:

- "Seems like I **got the name without the game"** (said by someone who was rumored to be having an affair with a woman he hardly knew working at the same company) can be interpreted as **Без меня меня женили?**
- *"Might as well* ***go out in a puff of smoke****,"* said someone who has just been fired and planned to do/say something in public can be interpreted as ***Уходить так с музыкой****?*
- There is a Russian equivalent for **The Happy Hour** (at a restaurant)? Suggestions please.
- There is a nice (or maybe not so nice) Russian equivalent for the word **abuser.** Any suggestions?
- Он такой **запасливый** can be translated as He is very **resourceful?**

I need your help translating the following into Russian/English:

- **Life is a bitch! (and then you die).** My suggestion: **Жизнь стервозная штука.**
- He is an undisputable **master of understatement.**
- **Отдел по борьбе с американскими банками** (from a newspaper).
- Что он такой злой? **Прямо как с цепи сорвался.**

Ciao, ***RA***

Raphy can be reached at raffialden@aol.com

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Finally, in my search for English references to Russian literature, I came upon the following, excerpted from a longer poem, by Judith Ortiz Cofer, a Puerto Rican feminist novelist and poet, who writes in English as well as Spanish.

Who Will Not Be Vanquished

1
I named you for a snow princess
in a Russian novel,
a woman of noble bearing
who would not be vanquished
by war nor passion; not Lara,
the other one – the quiet aristocrat
who inspired no poems from the man
but for whom he walked the frozen miles

3
On the fall day of your birth
in a city not far enough north
of the equator for my fantasy,
I held onto Doctor Zhivago
so hard, that when the first pain came,
I broke the spine. While the hot wires
announcing your arrival shot through
me,
I imagined a sleigh pulled
by strong white horse, gliding
over a landscape of powdery snow.
In the distance: an ice palace.

Happy New Year everyone!

ATTENTION SCIENCE FICTION BUFFS, LITERARY TRANSLATORS

A Dutch agency, *The Visual Language Company*, is seeking literary translators for the translation of two Russian science fiction novels written by Russian novelist Sergey Lukyanenko. The books are to be translated from Russian into what the company calls "American" English. One book titled "Labyrinth" has 90938 Russian words, the second book, "Dreamline," contains 85559 Russian words.

Award of the translation contract will be competitive and based on the quality of sample translation (quality of the American English and accuracy), time line and price.

The agency requires a free test translation of up to 3 pages for each book. If you are interested please quote them your fees and time schedule. The closing date for applications will be January 30, 2002*. Please contact them at: gs@visuallanguage.nl

**If you are interested but receive this issue of SlavFile too late to reasonably make the deadline, we suggest you contact the company anyway. They seem to be flexible.*

SPELLCHECKERS FOR YOUR LANGUAGE

Tomasz Poplawski

I am not a big fan of Microsoft Corporation but I have to admit they have done a very good job with their Proofing Tools for the Office suite. Moreover, while the product is not available in stores in the US, you can order it online for $79 (with taxes and shipping charges, the total is slightly over $91, for either Office 2000 or XP) and I believe it will pay for itself within a week or two, providing that you are still getting reasonably steady work in these hard times.

I may be preaching to the converted here, but if some readers still do not use this tool, I would like to point out its two great advantages:

1. Time savings: the most time-consuming aspect of editing my own work is getting rid of typos. Obviously, no spellchecker is foolproof, and I still print out the hard copy and read the text carefully, but if I see little red lines pointing to silly typing errors on the screen and I take care of them before printing out the file, I estimate that I save about an hour on the average 10,000-word project.

2. Face saving: this is even more important. I am not sure if this issue is equally important in other languages, but Poles are very sensitive to spelling errors, and a single misspelling is often seen as proof that the writer/translator is a caveman (or caveperson if you want to be politically-correct). Cavemen do not get translation work, and have to make a living killing big, hairy animals. Aren't you willing to spend a hundred bucks to avoid that fate?!

The Polish spellchecker is remarkably good at identifying different forms of a word. As Microsoft puts it: "Spellers can perform more sophisticated tasks than simply comparing terms from a database. For some languages, inflectional information (i.e. variations of a word) is introduced in algorithms to fine-tune the output."

I have not used the Thesaurus function very often, but I have to admit that it, too, handles different forms of a particular word very skillfully. Again, in Microsoft's words: "Special algorithms in thesauri extract inflectional information (i.e. variations of a word) from a stem word (i.e. base word) to provide a series of synonyms with the same inflection. For example, looking up the word running, would yield the possible synonym jogging."

The Proofing Tools package will work with any version of Office 2000: Premium, Professional, Small Business, Standard, or Developer. It does not even require the full suite—if you just have Word, for example, it will work in it just fine. However, spelling correction is just as useful when translating software strings in Excel or training materials in PowerPoint.

Technical details:

If you want to buy a localized version of the Office suite (most likely it is available, check the Microsoft Web site), there is no need to invest in this product. All language versions contain spellcheckers for that particular language, plus English, and one to four more other languages. For example, the Polish version has Polish, English, and German. Most translators working in the US are perfectly happy with the English interface of the software, but then they only get Proofing Tools for Spanish and French. If that is what you have, order the Proofing Tools online.

Currently three versions are available, the first two from the Microsoft website:

1. Proofing Tools for Office 2000. Here is the URL, and believe me, it is not easy to find on their huge Web site:

http://shop.microsoft.com/Referral/ProductInfo.asp?siteID=771

The package includes the following languages: German, Italian, Spanish, Norwegian, Swedish, French, Catalan, Dutch, Japanese, Danish, Brazilian, Czech, Turkish, Chinese Simplified, Chinese Traditional, Korean, Finnish, Russian, Polish, Ukrainian, Portuguese, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Estonian, Slovenian, Greek, Bulgarian, Serbian, Slovak, Basque, Romanian, Croatian, Bulgarian, Serbian, Arabic, Hebrew.

2. I am still using Office 2000 because of the Trados 5 / Office XP compatibility issues. If you know how to make them work together, or if you do not use Trados, you may purchase the most recent version of spelling tools (hopefully, this one will not flag the word "Internet" as a misspelling!) at:

http://shop.microsoft.com/Referral/ProductInfo.asp?siteID=10989

The list of supported languages has grown in XP to about 48.

3. The Office 97 version of the Proofing Tools (if you have older Trados versions you know why this is important!) is no longer available directly from Microsoft but some other vendors still sell it. Alki Software even allows you to download it upon paying $76 with a credit card. Here is the URL: http://shop.store.yahoo.com/alkisoftware/downloadpolish.html. Substitute the language you want for "Polish" of course. But beware: this version is for one language only so if you translate into several, things might get expensive.

Mercifully, older versions of Microsoft Proofing Tools are compatible with newer versions of Office but you have to perform a small trick to make them work. Here is the relevant piece of tech advice from Microsoft itself:

"If you have Office 2000 with Proofing Tools for Office 2000 installed, and you upgrade to Office XP, your proofing tools will continue to work. If, however, you install Office XP and then Proofing Tools for Office 2000 afterward, your proofing tools

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DESKTOP PUBLISHING OF WORKS ON RUSSIA'S RAILWAYS

John Deckerv

When I was seven years old, with several neighborhood friends in New Jersey, I organized the Oak Hill Book, Book Marker & Card Company. No one in the fifties would have used the term "desktop publishing," but in our childish minds, my friends and I were envisioning just that. Almost nothing came of our elementary school effort, but technology, given enough time, has the power to remedy many shortcomings.

In 1995, I established the publishing arm (financially, a chronically sickly infant compared to translations) of my freelance translation business, Languages of Montour. It's the love of seeing deserving works in print in English that drives me on in desktop publishing. I am also motivated by a love of railway history, which also can be traced back to the fifties of last century.

The first two books brought out by Languages of Montour Press were biographies of civil engineers who made major contributions to Russian railways: Pavel Petrovich Melnikov and Franz Anton von Gerstner. Later came a biography of aeronautics pioneer Nikolai Alekseyevich Rynin (1877-1942).

The third rail-related work was more ambitious, and, when submitted to pertinent journals for review, earned higher praise. In Russian, it began life in 1994 as *История железнодорожного транспорта России, том 1, 1836-1917*, written by a *коллектив* consisting nearly entirely of professors from St. Petersburg State Transportation University.

Taking full and sole charge of a book publishing project can be arduous. Winston Churchill's words best describe the process: "To begin with, it is a toy and an amusement. Then it becomes a mistress. Then it becomes a master. Then it becomes a tyrant. And the last phase is that just as you are about to be reconciled to your servitude, you kill the monster and fling him out to the public." The trouble is, the last phase is usually the compilation of a subject index, if the work is non-fiction, and that *really* provokes fantasies about killing the monster.

Nonetheless, the history of Russia's railways is an absorbing story, every bit as dramatic as its counterpart in the United States and Canada. When the St. Petersburg institution took up the matter in the early 1990s, it realized that no single volume could cover the subject in detail, so a second volume has emerged on this same subject, covering the railways' history from 1917 to 1945, a supremely troubled time. A third volume, this time assigned to Moscow transport scholars, will take the story up past the breakup of the U.S.S.R. to 1995.

My actual personal experience with rail transport in Russia is minimal: a visit to the waiting room of the terminal station in Vladivostok on September 1, 1995; a ride on that city's streetcars; and a top-to-bottom ride on its gaily painted *фуникулер* (inclined plane cable car).

Lance Metz, one of the best-known experts in America in the field of transport history, wrote the following flattering words about my English translation of volume 1, entitled *Russian Rail Transport*, in a review he wrote for *Industrial Archaeology,* volume 25, no. 1, 2000: "*This book presents many rewards for its readers. Its comprehensiveness makes it an excellent place to begin the study of railroad development in the world's largest nation...*Russian Rail Transport *also imparts to the reader a sense of the tremendous geographic and climatic difficulties that confronted railroad engineers and laborers. Although this volume was originally written in Russian, its translator has managed to create a clear, readable and informative English text...the flaws of this book are far outweighed by its virtues, and scholars in Anglophone cultures should be glad that it exists at all. The book fills an important need as a primer on a subject that has often intrigued American scholars who did not know where to begin their study of Russian railroad development.*"

So desktop publishing can be rewarding, if one really loves the subject and is willing to go through Churchill's above-mentioned phases of relationship with the book in question. You just have to keep a sense of perspective; don't expect to do much more than break even financially. But one review like the Metz one quoted above can make it all worth it.

John Decker founded his freelance technical translation sole proprietorship, Languages of Montour, in September 1991. Prior to that, he was a full-time technical indexer on the staff of the Technical Information Service, American Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics, for close to seventeen years.

Data on books offered by Languages of Montour Press:

Russian Rail Transport, by a consortium of academic Russian authors. Domestic orders $32.00, outside U.S. $36.00

Pavel Petrovich Melnikov and the Creation of the Railway System in Russia 1804-1880, by M. I. Voronin and M.M. Voronina. Domestic orders $28.00, outside U.S. $32.00.

Franz Anton von Gerstner, Pioneer Railway Builder, by M.I. Voronin and M.M.Voronina. Domestic orders $28.00, outside U.S. $32.00.

Nikolai Rynin and Russia's Beginnings in Aerospace, by B. F. Tarasov. Domestic orders $28.00, outside U.S. $32.00.

All prices postpaid. U.S. dollars only, write to
Languages of Montour
112 Ardmoor Avenue, Danville, Pennsylvania 17821.

Proofing Tools *Continued from page 14*

will not work in Office XP." The same also applies to Proofing Tools 97 in Office 2000. I was not able to check if the 97 version works under Office XP.

Finally, I want to mention one more source of proofing tools with the disclaimer that I have never used them. Fingertip Software sells something that supposedly works in Word 97, 2000, and XP. Please note that you cannot use it with other Office programs. The following language modules are available at http://www.fingertipsoft.com/proofing/: Basque, Czech, Estonian, Greek, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Polish, Romanian, Russian, Slovak, Turkish.

FIRST CLASS MAIL

SlavFile
Newsletter of the Slavic Languages Division
of the American Translators Association
225 Reinekers Lane
Alexandria, VA 22314

РАЗГРОМ

Эдуард Успенский

Мама приходит с работы,
Мама снимает боты,
Мама проходит в дом,
Мама глядит кругом.
- Был на квартиру налет?
- Нет.
- К нам заходил бегемот?
- Нет.
- Может быть, дом не наш?
- Наш.
- Может, не наш этаж?
- Наш.

Просто приходил Сережка,
Поиграли мы немножко.
- Значит, это не обвал?
- Нет.
- Значит, слон не танцевал?
- Нет.
- Очень рада.
Оказалось,
Я напрасно волновалась.

Mama came home from her job,
Gave a gasp, more like a sob,
Looked again and shook her head;
Wrung her hands, then Mama said:

"Did our house get bombed today?"
"No way."
"Did a hippo come to stay?"
"No way."
"And this **is** our house, I guess?"
"Oh yes."
"Have you something to confess?"
"Well, yes.

Tom came by for just a bit,
We played a game or two, that's it!"

"Then we're not the dump's new site?"
"That's right!"
"Then, no circus spent the night?"
"That's right!"
"Well, I'm much relieved to know
I'd no need to worry so."

translated by Lydia Razran Stone