Day in Central Asia and the Caucasus a Great Success!

By Lara Kain
CREECA Outreach Coordinator

The day started off with an introduction from our very own Professor Uli Schamiloglu, Chair of Central Asian Studies. Then Jen Brick, a PhD student in Political Science, fired up her PowerPoint and led the group on a fascinating journey through the regions of the Southern Caucasus and Central Asia, in a ‘Central Asia and the Caucasus 101,’ to prepare them for breakout sessions later in the day. Our large-group session ended with a mesmerizing 30-minute presentation by our Kyrgyz musicians in residence at the UW during that time. The performers, Rysbai Isakov, a laureate epic singer, and Akylbek Kasabolytsov, a virtuoso folk musician and member of Kyrgyzstan’s Tengir Too Ensemble, shared their country’s unique nomadic musical traditions with the audience. To learn more about these performers, see pages 4-5.

Area high school students listen to opening remarks at Day in Central Asia and the Caucasus

Kyrgyz musicians prepare to perform for students

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Newsletter of the Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia:

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CREECA Staffers Say “Farewell”

By Alisha Kirchoff, CREECA Events Coordinator

When I look back on my years as an undergraduate at UW-Madison, I realize that many of my memories are in some way associated with my time at CREECA. CREECA has been far more to me than just a job. CREECA has been an opportunity for growth, full of life-lessons, and fellow staffers much like a family to me. At times, I have felt more at home perched behind my computer than anywhere else. Friends knew that, unless I was at class, I could always be found at CREECA.

More than anything, my time at CREECA is most defined, not by the job I had, but by the people I met along the way. I owe so much to CREECA and the opportunities that being the Events Coordinator has afforded me. I have had the chance to meet academics and professionals from all over the world who have shared their insights on the politics, culture, religions, and other various aspects of the region with our community, and also had the chance to develop deeper relationships with faculty and staff in the region here at UW. I have learned so much and been exposed to lessons far beyond that which could be taught in the classroom.

First of all, I want to thank Rita Krueger for hiring me when I was a naive and overly-enthusiastic young freshman, and to Benjamin Rifkin for recommending me to for the job. I also want to thank Bob Kaiser, Kathryn Hendley, Lara Kain, Maki Raymo, David Weber, Brady Potts, Gretchen Aiyangar, Noah Buckley-Farlee, and Laura Weigel. These folks all contributed to making the office environment so enjoyable. Work was never really work when I had such fantastic people to share it with. I would especially like to thank Jennifer Tishler for making my last year at CREECA such a good one. Jennifer welcomed me back to the CREECA team after my year in Russia and has been incredibly supportive through what has been an otherwise very hectic year. I thank Jennifer for her enthusiasm and for being so open to new ideas and for her commitment to CREECA and the broader community.

This fall I will be starting a new phase in my education as a Master’s student at the University of Toronto. Although I am sincerely looking forward to what awaits me in Canada, I will certainly miss UW and my days at CREECA. I would like to wish everyone in our community, and especially my fellow graduating senior, Noah, all the best in years to come. Thank you so much. Do vstrechi!

By Noah Buckley-Farlee, CREECA Webmaster

I’ve had a fantastic year getting to know people in the CREECA community and doing my part to keep the office running smoothly. Perhaps my greatest accomplishments were helping with collecting and organizing information for the Title VI grant and teaching the UPS guy how to say “Sign here, please” in Russian, but who can say, really, after all the fun times this year? This year has truly impressed me with what great things can get done by a few people willing to really work hard and give it their all, as long as there’s enough coffee involved. I wish everyone, especially fellow outgoing CREECA-ite Alisha, all the best and future successes in showing the world (or at the very least Wisconsin) just how great Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia really are. Sto lat!
For the rest of the morning students learned about other aspects of Central Asian politics, history, current events, and culture in small-group sessions led by UW graduate and undergraduate students as well as other community volunteers with expertise in Central Asia. CREECA was fortunate to have as guest presenters three Kyrgyz Fulbright Scholars in residence at universities in the United States. Dr. Saltanat Mambaeva visited us from UW-Milwaukee and presented “Kyrgyz Cinema” to her students. Narynkul Chorobaeva came from the University of Kansas to present “Kyrgyz Culture Before and After the Independence.” Sabyrkul Kalygulova arrived in Madison from the University of North Dakota to present “Ancient Relics and Monuments of Kyrgyzstan” to our group. The other sessions included interesting topics such as “Bride Kidnapping in Kyrgyzstan,” “Rivers of Gold-Tales of Ecological Change in Central Asia,” “Peace Corps Service on Lake Issyk Kol: The Pearl of the Tien Shan,” “Afghanistan: A Troubled Past and Uncertain Future,” and “Armenia: Then and Now.”

Next year CREECA will move westward to ‘Day in East Europe,’ coming in spring 2007.

To learn more about this and other CREECA Outreach Events, please contact Lara Kain at outreach@creeca.wisc.edu

By Laura Weigel, CREECA Office Assistant

Families for Russian and Ukrainian Adoption (FRUA) is an organization that supports adoptive families who are considering adoption, are in the process of adopting, or who have returned home with their children from Russia and neighboring countries. As part of this mission, FRUA organizes a biennial Heritage Camp to help children (and their parents) learn about the culture and customs of their birth countries.

CREECA was invited to help with this year’s camp, which took place on March 3-5, 2006 at the Osthoff Resort in Elkhart Lake, Wisconsin. This year’s theme—“Once Upon a Time… Folktales and Fairytales”—used folktales from Russia, Ukraine, and other Eastern European countries as a way to share information about the cultural heritage of these lands. Lara Kain, Jennifer Tishler, and Laura Weigel of CREECA, joined by volunteers from the Russian Educational Association of Madison, attended the program and led the children and their parents in a variety of activities including storytelling, greetings in Russian, coloring, and Russian music. continues next page
March 19-24—CREECA hosted three notable specialists in Central Asian Music: Rysbai Isakov (epic singer), Akylbek Kasabolotov (musician) and Helen Faller (anthropologist). This Central Asian Residencies Program presented students and the greater Madison community a unique opportunity to learn about Central Asian culture directly from two immensely talented Kyrgyz performers (Isakov and Kasabolotov), with translation and cultural background information provided by Faller. During the course of their week-long residency in Madison, the performers gave guest presentations in university classes in History, Ethnomusicology, and Languages and Cultures of Asia.

They also performed for elementary and high school audiences, at a conference of high school social studies teachers, and gave a public concert for an enthusiastic crowd of music lovers at the Great Hall of the Memorial Union. Throughout the week, the performers used music and epic singing as a way of engaging their audiences and teaching them about Kyrgyz history and culture.

On Monday March 20, the first day of their week-long residency in Madison, the Kyrgyz musicians journeyed to Oregon, WI for a visit to Netherwood Elementary. The musicians had not performed in front of such a young audience during their residencies around the U.S., so they were unsure of what to expect. About 350 K-4th graders filed in to the gym with their teachers, filling up most of the bleachers. The students gave the musicians a warm welcome and were an excellent audience.

The presentation began with Faller speaking to the students about where Kyrgyzstan is, who lives there, and what the land is like. Then Kasabolotov shared his country’s unique nomadic musical traditions with this young audience. The students were especially fascinated with the steel mouth harp, or temir comuz which is a metallic, plucked idiophone.

Children of different ages from all over Wisconsin participated in this event. During the camp, children were divided into similar age groups and then presented with age-appropriate activities. For example, the 1-5 year-old group learned animal sounds in Russian and then sang an original version of “Old McDonald had a (Russian) Farm.” Meanwhile, the 6-10 year-old group was entertained first by listening to the Russian folktale “The Firebird,” and then by participating in an art activity where children decorated their own magic “Firebird feathers.” Teenagers, in contrast, listened to contemporary Russian music and discussed this form of modern folklore.

The children and parents not only made a connection with the culture, stories, language, food, and music of Russia and Eastern Europe, but also made some important personal connections as well. Reported one family, “Our kids…were able to socialize with other adopted children and see they are not the only ones who are adopted. Heritage Camp was definitely memorable for us.”
After the musical demonstrations, much to the amusement of our Kyrgyz guests, the school principal had all the students stand up and ‘shake the wiggles out.’ Then it was Rysbai Isakov’s turn to amaze the students with his epic singing from a selection of the Manas. Faller told the students about the Manas, how it is the longest poem in the world and that Kyrgyz children sit still for two days to listen to the story. This got quite a reaction out of the crowd. She then explained that this section of the epic is about a famous battle between great warriors and a giant Cyclops; this got the students very excited. She told the story in English and then had Rysbai tell the story in Kyrgyz. At the end of the performance the students clapped and cheered enthusiastically. They also spent about 10 minutes asking the performers some really great questions. The musicians were very pleased with their experience at an American elementary school.

On the evening of March 22, our Kyrgyz friends gave a public presentation of their art. Again facilitated by Faller, the group played to a sizeable, and appreciative audience of community members. Faller made an excellent presentation on the background and significance of Manas that had appeal to the entire audience.

Akylbek Kasabolotov began the musical portion of the presentation with a number of folk melodies that he performed on various wind instruments including the wooden flute (choi), clay flute (chopo choi), and the wooden mouth harp (jigach oz komuz). Kasabolotov can now add the United States to the extensive list of nations where he has performed. Which includes Kazakstan, Hungary, Russia, and Turkey. After Kasabolotov, Ryspai Isakov regaled his Madison audience with portions of the Manas epic. As one of Kyrgyzstan’s most renowned virtuoso singer of the epic, Isakov has carried his voice throughout the world and certainly did not disappoint on his visit to Madison. We at CREECA were glad to have had the opportunity to host these talented guests!

This Central Asian Residencies Program was supported by the Embassy of the Kyrgyz Republic, the Silkroad Foundation, and the Soros Foundation. Generous on-campus support was provided by the Kemper K. Knapp Bequest. CREECA is especially grateful to the Central Asian Studies program and to the students of the Central Asia Student Association (CASA), notably its president, Heather Sonntag (LCA), for its support. During the week, members of CASA assisted with orienting the performers and showing them around campus and provided logistical support for Day in Central Asia and the Caucasus as well as the public concert.

**UPDATE:** CREECA, in collaboration with FOCCUS, and the Stasiuk Program for the study of Contemporary Ukraine, sponsored a conference on March 23-25 at UW to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Chernobyl Disaster titled “Chernobyl Here and Now: Global Engagement, Local Encounters.” The conference proved to be a well-attended and highly educational event. Stay tuned for a full story and further details in our fall newsletter!
Halina Filipowicz (Slavic Languages and Literature) has been invited to participate in an international interdisciplinary project, *Wartime Shakespeare in a Global Context, 1939-1951*, directed by Professor Irena Makaryk, Department of English, University of Ottawa, Canada. Participants in the project include Shakespeareans, historians, theatre and drama scholars, trauma specialists, and political scientists. Professor Filipowicz is also one of the editors of a new volume of Polish literary studies by American and Canadian specialists. Titled *Polonistika po Amerikansku* (2005), the book contains articles by several alumni of the Slavic Department, including Megan Dixon, Stuart Goldberg, Ann Komaromi, and Alyssa Dinega Gillespie.

David Bethea (Slavic Languages and Literature) was invited to deliver the 2006 Bluhm Memorial Lecture in European Literature at Boston College on March 30. The topic of his talk was “Pushkin at the Imperial Lyceum: A Sentimental Education for an Unsentimental Upbringing.”

Ali Igmen (History), the Kemal H. Karpat Visiting Assistant Professor in Central Asian Studies, has accepted a tenure-track assistant professorship in History at California State University at Long Beach for fall 2006. We at CREECA wish Ali all the best in his new position.


An article titled: “Reform of Drug Control Policy for Palliative Care in Romania,” written by Dr. Daniela Mosiou of Romania and 3 members of the University of Wisconsin Pain & Policy Studies Group: Karen Ryan, David Joranson, and Jody Garthwaite was published in *The Lancet* and is available online. The report can be viewed at: http://www.thelancet.com/journals/lancet/article/PIIS0140673606684821/fulltext

Beginning with the 2006 meeting in Philadelphia, Dianna Murphy (UW-Madison Language Institute) will be organizing the annual conference of the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages (AATSEEL).

CREECA’s own Associate Director Jennifer Tishler recently appeared on the Wisconsin Public Radio show “Here on Earth with Jean Feraca” in a program titled “Russian Fairy Tales.” Jennifer was joined by Professor Harold Scheub (African Languages and Literature) for a discussion exploring the world of Russian fairy tales, and other stories from around the globe. The audio stream of the presentation can be found online at: http://www.wpr.org/hereonearth/

Michael J. Mikos (Foreign Languages and Linguistics) of UW-Milwaukee published *Polish Literature from 1864 to 1918. Realism and Young Poland, An Anthology* (Bloomington: Slavica Publishers, 2006).

CREECA is a Department of Education Title VI National Resource Center. It was established in 1993 to unite the efforts of two longstanding University programs—Russian and East European Studies and Central Asian Studies. CREECA consists of roughly 100 members including many nationally and internationally known experts in their fields.
Congratulations to undergraduate students who have received UW awards to study abroad next year! **Michelle Jordan**, majoring in Russian, Biology, and Social Welfare received a Pritzer-Pucker Award for study in Saint Petersburg. **Benjamin Harguth**, a political science major, also received a Pritzer-Pucker award and will be traveling to Budapest in the fall. **Amanda Volbert** (undeclared major) is the recipient of a UW Study Abroad Alumni Award for study in Prague.

Congratulations to **Heather Sonntag** (**Languages and Cultures of Asia**) who has been granted both IREX-IARO (Individual Advanced Research Opportunity) and Fulbright IIE awards in Uzbekistan for archival and field research on early photographic representations of Central Asia under the Russian conquest.

Call for papers for the 
2006 AATSEEL-Wisconsin Conference

Abstracts for twenty-minute papers on any aspect of Slavic literatures and cultures (including film) and on issues in the learning and teaching of Slavic languages and literatures are invited for the annual conference of the Wisconsin chapter of AATSEEL (the American Association of Teachers of Slavic and East European Languages). Comparative topics and interdisciplinary approaches are welcome. The conference will be held at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, on Saturday, 21 October 2006.

Recent conference programs and guidelines for preparing abstracts are posted on the AATSEEL-WI website:  
http://palimpsest.lss.wisc.edu/~danaher/aatseel-wi/

Send proposals by e-mail (no attachments, please) to: Benjamin Jens, bj Jens@wisc.edu

*All submissions will be acknowledged.*

Congratulations to **Kelly Cormier** (**Development Studies**), who is a recipient of an American Association of University Women (AAUW) Fellowship! This award is designed to support women doctoral candidates completing dissertations or scholars seeking funds for postdoctoral research leave from accredited institutions. Candidates are evaluated on the basis of scholarly excellence, teaching experience, and active commitment to helping women and girls through service in their communities, professions, or fields of research.

Congratulations to **Danielle Berman** (**Sociology**)! She has been offered both a Fulbright-Hays DDRA Fellowship and an IREX-IARO Fellowship for 10-12 months of field work in Russia next year. She will be conducting dissertation research on the transformation of Russian agriculture and the role of foreign actors in shaping the direction of change in that sector. Danielle plans to spread her research between Moscow, St. Petersburg, and Vladivostok.

**Caroline Baker** (**REECAS**) was accepted to participate in the ACTR Russian Flagship Program in Saint Petersburg for the 2006-07 academic year. She will leave for Russia after completing the REECAS MA Program in August 2006.

Study Elementary Ukrainian!

In agreement with University of Michigan, CREECA anticipates offering Elementary Ukrainian as a distance-education course in fall 2006. UW students, who will register for credit through the Dept. of Slavic Languages, will meet together to receive instruction via videoconferencing from an experienced Ukrainian instructor. *For more information on how to register, please contact Jennifer Tishler at 262-3379 or jtishler@creeca.wisc.edu*
Outreach Feature: The Memory Project

By Lara Kain CREECA Outreach Coordinator

In the fall of 2005 CREECA began an exciting new project with FOCCUS (Friends of Chernobyl Centers, US) and The Memory Project, two Madison-based non-profit organizations, to implement a service learning project with high school art students across the state. The Memory Project was started by Ben Schumaker, a UW graduate student in Sociology, in order to provide children living in orphanages with permanent mementos of their childhood in the form of portraits. This is important for these children as, due to their life circumstances growing up in an orphanage, they usually have no mementos of their childhood once they leave the orphanage at age 16 or 18. They have no baby books or photo albums, so in many cases these portraits may be the only visual memory they have of being a child. The project links advanced high school art students and their teachers with orphanages around the world. The orphanages send digital photos to the teachers and the students use different mediums to produce a portrait. The school then laminates the portraits and sends them back to the children living in the orphanage. FOCCUS works with the community centers in Ukraine set up by the UN after the 1986 Chernobyl disaster to help rebuild and support the affected communities. These centers work with local orphanages as part of their community outreach.

One program that FOCCUS initiated this year is TEACH (To Educate About Chernobyl) in order to encourage and facilitate the inclusion of Chernobyl and the disaster there into the science and social studies curriculum. As CREECA outreach coordinator I work with the TEACH project and the partnership between TEACH, CREECA, and The Memory Project seemed a natural collaboration. FOCCUS contacted the community centers in Ukraine to ask their help in working with the local orphanages and provided the funds for purchasing a digital camera. CREECA created and sent a mailing announcing the project to all high school art teachers in the state. Last but not least The Memory Project provided--well--the project!

The results have been better than we could have imagined. We had all four of the Ukrainian orphanages respond with great digital photos of the children. Our recruitment letter went out to over 120 art teachers in Wisconsin with 26 responding. At this time there are over 220 portraits being painted by high school art students all around the state. When all the portraits are finished and laminated they will be sent back to the orphanages in Ukraine. Many of the schools have gathered additional items to include in the boxes including art supplies and health care items.

For more information about the Memory Project and FOCCUS, please visit:
http://www.thememoryproject.org/
http://www.foccus.org/
Adam Goodberg (Urban and Regional Planning) arrived in Peace Corps Moldova in September 2005. He is grateful to CREECA for the fact that he arrived knowing so much Russian and Romanian, that the language staff did not know what to do with him. After giving a speech in these languages at Moldova 17’s swearing-in ceremony, he began work in Chisinau, Moldova’s capital, in December. At that time Moldova’s Jewish organizations were moving to a brand-new, North American-funded building that will soon operate similarly to an American-Jewish Community Center (www.jewish.md). Adam’s time with UW’s Urban Planning department has already helped him in his work with youth leadership development, staff and volunteer development, and fundraising capacity building.

Adam primarily works within the realm of FSU Jewish Politics trying to help develop the Jewish community and establish a board of directors at the Kishinev Jacobs Jewish Center (pictured left). Adam sums up his work there as, “I show English movies and help to teach English, and I also do various translating work. As I work with the Director of Resource Development and share and office with her, much of my work is writing grants.”

Despite his hard work at the Jacobs Jewish Center, Adam is finding time to spread a little American culture in his new home abroad. “Thanks to the Milwaukee Peace Corps Association, we received $150 to buy good German harmonicas so that I can bring some American blues here and spread the idea of live music.” Adam adds, “[Since] the Soviets banned Jazz for the creativity it inspired, the lack of live music and especially improvised music now shows a lack of development in society.” For more information on the Milwaukee Area Peace Corps Association, please visit their website at: www.milwaukeepeacecorps.org

Congratulations to Adam and all of his efforts in Moldova. We wish him all the best as he continues his tour of duty in Chisinau.

CREECA-affiliated students and alumni are doing amazing, innovative things all over the world. If you would like to share your story with our community, we at CREECA would love to hear it. For more information, or to write an article for our newsletter, please contact Associate Director, Jennifer Tishler at assocdir@creeca.wisc.edu
Author Hugh Pope Visits Madison, Lectures on Turkic World

By Alisha Kirchoff, CREECA Events Coordinator

Hugh Pope, an acclaimed journalist and author, visited Madison for a number of speaking engagements to help promote his new book and to present his experiences of living in Turkey, Central Asia, and the Caucasus. Pope, educated at Oxford University in journalism as well as Arabic and Persian, wrote the acclaimed book *Sons of the Conquerors* (Overlook Press, 2005). His book has been hailed as one of the most comprehensive works to date on the history and culture of Turkic people. In his book, Pope recounts the incredible history of Turkic peoples and argues that, despite their past, they remain largely unstudied and misunderstood.

Pope served as Bureau Chief for the *Wall Street Journal* in Istanbul for eight years and in his book draws on his experiences traveling through the Turkic world. Throughout the course of his career, which spans twenty-five years, Pope has written from thirty different countries. He has served as correspondent for a number of news outlets including the *Los Angeles Times*, the BBC, and Reuters.

During his visit to Madison, Pope made an appearance on Wisconsin Public Radio’s, “Here on Earth,” a weekly program hosted by Jean Feraca, and he presented a public lecture, after which he offered a book signing. These events were sponsored by the Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia in partnership with the Madison Association of Turkish Students, Central Asia Student Association, the Middle East Studies Program, the Center for Turkish Studies, and the Associated Students of Madison. To hear Pope’s radio interview, an audio stream may be accessed at http://www.wpr.org/heronearth. Pope’s public lecture was taped by C-SPAN to be aired on “Book TV;” check local listings for show times.

For more information on this and all CREECA events, please contact our Event Coordinator at events@creeca.wisc.edu.
Come Join Us!

Summer Teacher Workshop

Outside Looking In: Citizenship in the New Europe

June 18 - June 23, 2006

Teachers, earn one graduate credit! Tuition is covered!

University of Wisconsin - Madison

Sponsored by:

Center for European Studies (CES)

Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia (CREECA)

This workshop, intended for teachers of grades 7-12, will focus on issues of inclusion and exclusion in the New Europe. Who is a citizen? What does it mean to be European when the boundaries of Europe are expanding? Who is a minority? What types of discrimination occur and to whom? How have identities been realigned and redefined in the region?

Workshop Addresses PI-34 Teacher Standards 1, 4, 7, and 10

Topics include:

*Human Trafficking

*Ethnic Conflict

*Gender Discrimination

*Language Minorities

*Youth Issues

*Teaching about the former Yugoslavia through comic books

Sessions will be conducted by faculty from the University of Wisconsin-Madison as well as other national experts. Participants will have the opportunity to attend curriculum-building sessions as well as information sessions on resources available through the UW Library system and other collections. Throughout the week the participants will develop a lesson plan to be used in their classroom based on knowledge gained during this course, at the conclusion of the workshop lessons will be presented and shared with the group.

§ Earn one graduate credit through the UW-Madison!

§ Tuition is covered by a US Department of Education Grant!

§ Housing is available on a limited basis for those traveling from outside the area!

§ Total workshop fees are only $55! (This includes a $30 workshop fee and $25 administrative fee to the UW)

For Details & Registration Information Contact Lara Kain (608) 265-6298 outreach@creeca.wisc.edu Or visit our website at www.wisc.edu/creeca
Contributions to the Center for Russia, East Europe, and Central Asia are always appreciated. If you wish to join in supporting CREECA, please send your contribution to:

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Please indicate that it is intended for CREECA. For more information about making a gift to CREECA, please contact Kevin Krapf at the UW Foundation by email (Kevin.Krapf@uwfoundation.wisc.edu) or at (608) 890-0946.