CHAIR’S CORNER

Welcome back to another semester filled with a variety of exciting and interesting international events! It started with Slavic Studies’ sponsorship of a talk on Soviet crime and related tattoo culture by film-maker Alix Lambert and criminal justice expert Joseph Serio and continues with our fall International Film Festival with its “coming of age” series and the German Film Festival, each showcasing an assortment of films free and open to the public. Come join us! Details inside…

This fall brings some faculty changes: Dr. Robert Summers, CLIC’s manager, accepted an offer from the University of Alabama, and Dr. Jacinto Fombona, Visiting Assistant Professor of Spanish and Dr. Karin Hamm-Ehsani, German lecturer, also left UAlbany. We welcome Dr. Ilka Kressner as a new Assistant Professor of Spanish, as well as two new full-time lecturers, Ms. Sefa Dorronsoro (Spanish) and Dr. Undine Giguere (German) who are both liaisons with the University in the High School program.

August 19 brought the sad news of Professor Emeritus Jack Richtman’s death. Prof. Richtman retired from teaching French at UAlbany in 1995 after having chaired the department of French Studies and serving as Assistant Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences. A specialist of 18th century French literature, he also enjoyed teaching the language and introduced business French into the curriculum. A congenial and generous colleague and friend, he loved the good life. Those who knew him will never forget his hilarious imitations of French singer Charles Trenet at department festivities (see article within).

A concerning note to all friends of LLC is the current financial crisis which is forcing states to make difficult budgetary choices that negatively impact education, which is particularly stressful to foreign language instruction. Teaching foreign languages requires small classes to be effective. Smaller classes mean more instructors and thus greater cost, something closely examined in times of fiscal constraint. This, combined with an American culture of reluctance to learn foreign languages explains why a number of institutions are downsizing or eliminating some programs. Ironically this is happening when the acceleration of globalization makes the need for foreign language literacy more crucial than ever. The world is not within reach if you can’t understand what others say or understand how they think. Now is a particularly good time to show, in every way, your support of the study of foreign languages and cultures. Be an advocate for foreign languages wherever you can. Raise awareness, vote, write legislators, submit editorials, voice your concern at local school and town hall meetings, teach languages, give presentations, and share your own love of the languages and their respective cultures with your community! Your financial support of language and culture instruction is also much appreciated. Donations to LLC or our specific programs are always welcome (see the back of the newsletter). These funds are used to support a variety of academic activities such as visiting speakers, workshops, student travel to conferences, etc.

Best wishes to everyone for an excellent semester and a wonderful holiday season!

Jean-François Brière
Chair
Did you know that…?

…in May 1936, Spain’s political environment was a hostile, post coup d’état jumble of chaos? Old political philosophies had taken over an already modernized society. The Second Republic (1931) followed by the short lived Popular Front (an electoral coalition and pact dated January 1936) was a time when women held equal standing in society and high political positions in the government as well as in parliament. In a matter of months after Franco becoming Spain’s dictator, women were reduced to working full time with a big restriction. Once married, they were forced to leave their employment as Franco decreed that the most honorable roles for women were as mother, wife, nun or widow. Those who were already married were fired from their positions.

Creating a period of absolute economic dependency on husbands and men in general, these new laws coincided with higher rates of domestic violence. The threat of starvation coupled by divorce being illegal forced many women to stay in situations that were detrimental to their health and well being.

In the early 1980’s, which marked the end of the Francoist period, many women who had lost their jobs filed class action suits that were awarded because according to the newly implemented constitution, they were most certainly discriminated against. This meant that women who were now too old to return to their original positions received long awaited pensions and others were readmitted into their previous employment positions.

From Joana Sabadell-Nieto
Professor of Hispanic Studies

OOPS! A quick correction to the last newsletter:

Nabokov was misspelled and Catherine Wolkonsky’s birth year was actually 1895.

Feeling overwhelmed by piles of books you don’t use or need? Why not donate them to those who could use them? LLC recently donated 105 books to the Vilbrun Community Research Center, Inc. (www.vcrclibrary.org), a newly formed organization that plans to establish public libraries throughout Haiti. Their first installation will be in Carrefour, (pronounced “Kafou” in Creole), a suburb of Port-au-Prince. VCRC is a non-profit organization, comprised of Haitians that immigrated to the US who wish to give back to their home country by providing a place of study to many who are in desperate need of modern facilities to assist them in their quest for knowledge. Currently there are 21 universities in Haiti. Unfortunately, a handful of libraries are limited to well populated regions, which leaves citizens in smaller, suburban towns with little to no access. A good place to start a search for where to send books is: http://www.adoptalibrary.org/ or you can e-mail adoptalibrary@aol.com. They have extensive lists of libraries across the globe that would be delighted to receive your donations.

Save a Tree, Donate Books
Jack Richtman, Professor Emeritus of French Studies passes away

LLC received this sad news from Sorrell E. Chesin, Associate Vice President of University Development at the beginning of September:

“I’m sorry to report that Jack Richtman, Prof. Emeritus of French died on August 19, 2009. His brief obit appeared in the NY Times on Tuesday, Sept 1. Born in New York City on March 15, 1927, he received his A.B. from Brooklyn College in 1959, M.A. in 1961 and Ph.D., both from Columbia. He served at the UN from 1950-53, lived in Spain in 1953-54 and Paris in 1961-62, when he had a Fulbright. During World War II he was a civilian employee in the Military Intelligence Division of the War Department in Washington, DC. In retirement, he lived in Manhattan and Provincetown, MA. The obit notes that gifts may be made to the Provincetown Public Library Endowment Fund in his memory.”

Friends and colleagues shared their fond moments of Jack. LLC Department Chair, Jean-François Brière fondly recalls Jack’s ability to tell a good story, “Prof. Richtman was fond of telling stories that happened to him. One of these was about a meeting he had in Paris with a woman friend of his. As he recognized her and was approaching her at the meeting spot in the Quartier Latin, an unknown man suddenly came to him and started to frisk him without saying anything. What was going on? Then his friend came to him with a big smile and told him not to worry; she was working for the CIA (obviously not as an undercover agent) and anybody with whom she met had to be checked for weapons. He was flabbergasted and this emotion was relayed in the retelling of the tale, making it quite a humorous story.” Professor Mary Beth Winn of French studies had this to share, “A theatre-lover and opera fan, Jack could perform famous arias -- from soprano to bass!-- with the panache of a diva. He could be the life a party, regaling us with stories in his rather raspy voice. His book on Adrienne Lecouvreur: The Actress and the Age attests to his theatrical interests, and his work in gay studies brought new courses in that field to the department.” Joan Savitt, Associate Director, Office of International Education remembers “Jack Richtman was already part of the department when I came for my interview in the spring of 1974. In addition to making a presentation to the department about my research, I was also interviewed one-on-one by a number of the senior faculty. When I got to Jack’s office, he had my resume in hand, and he started to ask me about the Fischer School, a private school in New York City at which I had given English lessons, having been hired there after a rather hilarious interview, because at the time, I had been trying to get hired to teach French, and so had used my French-influenced accent rather than speaking good New York dialect in the first place. As I started to explain what that school was like, Jack told me that he, too, had taught there! So we had an instant bond from then on. He was a good friend, a great cook (when I gave him a ride to NYC, he provided the food – he couldn’t see well, and so could not drive), and I think he was the first person on campus to teach courses that dealt with gay issues. He was also a wonderful teller of personal stories, such as one about chasing down Eleanor Roosevelt when she had left behind her pocketbook. If you knew Jack, you can visualize him carrying her bag and calling out her name as he followed her down the hallway.” For Professor Emeritus of French, Ray Ortali, Jack’s spontaneity yielded plenty of fun times. He shares, “It was many and many years ago, in a kingdom by…the Hudson River.” That was at a time the Department of French Studies had enough money to bring, once in a while and for a few weeks, a French celebrity in connection with a graduate course that one of us was going to teach. That semester, Jack Richman was due to teach one of his favorite subjects: “Theatre of the Absurd.” “Why not invite Ionesco?” –“You mean Eugene Ionesco, the most famous French playwright alive, who had just been elected to the Academie Francaise?” Yes! And we soon welcomed Ionesco on this campus. Jack had met him first, and he then introduced him to me: “Monsieur Ionesco, if I have learned anything from your plays, it’s that questions are more important than answers.” Ionesco looked at me and said: “We are friends!” That’s how Jack and I became Ionesco’s friends. We also became friends with Rodica, Eugene’s wife, but for a very different reason: When having lunch, Jack and I made sure that the bottle of wine would be placed as far as possible from Eugene… Thank you for your friendship, Eugene, Rodica--and Jack!” Francine Frank, Professor Emerita of Hispanic Studies recalls Jack’s ability to bring laughter into her life, “Jack was a valued colleague in the Department of Romance Languages at SUNY Albany. His office was down the hall from mine on the second floor of the Humanities building and I often stopped to chat. He was a walking history of the University and a wonderful story teller with a talent for making his listeners laugh.

continued on next page
Farewell to Jack  continued from page 3

I continued to view him as a colleague after the department split into two along language lines (French, and Spanish and Italian). He was passionate about French Theater and I loved hearing about his trips to Paris. Then, when I was Dean of the College of Humanities and Fine Arts, he served for a time as an Associate Dean. As I remember, he designed the College Newsletter and other publications. Jack also regaled us with his stories of people and events at the University and in Albany, and amazed us by his talent for singing. I kept in contact with him for a few years after he retired, but we had not been in communication recently. I was saddened by the news of his death; he will certainly be missed.” For Bob Greene, Professor Emeritus of French Studies, it was Jack’s talent with song that stands out in his mind, “In May 1994, after more than three decades of faithful service to the Department of French Studies at SUNY Albany, Jack Richtman retired. By that time, Jack and I had been colleagues and friends for 20 years. In the spring of 1987, Jack and I drove back to Albany from the Ambassade de France in New York City where, representing the Department, we had attended the ceremony awarding Martin Kanes the Palmes Academiques. As we rolled along the New York State Thruway, Jack treated me to a recital of Broadway show tunes from the 1920s to the 1980s. He gave his improvised performance the perfect title: “From Romberg to Sondheim.” His rendition of Cole Porter’s “Begin the Beguine” was unforgettable. To me, that was Jack. He was always fun to be with, and that made him a very special person.” Rest in peace dear friend!

Language Acquisition and Study Abroad: two sides of one coin

Ever wonder just how important study abroad really is? LLC often hears stories of wonderful study abroad experiences, but what’s the bottom line? Is study abroad essential to language acquisition? Here’s what LLC faculty have to say.

Yes, study abroad is essential to the language learning process. It’s important to spend time living in another country where the culture, mindset and target language differ from your own. The consensus is that total immersion, not just being abroad, is the best method as it’s the most reliable means of assimilating all aspects of a foreign language due to social interactions with native speakers in their natural environment. Faculty agree that some characteristics of culture are absorbed rather than taught. Without the benefit of immersion, students are disconnected from the living source of the culture and history they are studying. While classrooms attempt to create real-life situations, living in the midst a different country’s art, beliefs, food, humor, music and politics is a surefire way to improve language and culture acquisition. Everyday language isn’t something that can be learned from a textbook. Daily exposure to syntax in its natural context is ideal for developing listening comprehension and gaining confidence speaking. The richness of the experience at every level, from observation to participation, just cannot be replicated. With time, communication is no longer stilted by a mental hunt for verb forms and vocabulary, but rather, it flows smoothly from constant practice.

But then there’s reality: the cost. While some programs (Canada, Mexico) are not too far away, overseas travel can be prohibitive to some. What can you do if you can’t afford to study abroad? Is there a way to fill the gap? While it’s not the same, you can benefit from experiences in a language-rich environment, such as language immersion camps. On average, it takes at least a week to begin to benefit from immersion experiences and overcome feelings of having to grasp for everything and not functioning successfully. Caveat emptor, an “all Spanish weekend” that doesn’t actually involve a large group of native or near-native Spanish speakers in its activities will have limited benefit. Outside of such experiences, here are a few suggestions to help fill the gap:

- Take as many language, culture and literature courses involving the target language as possible.
- Go online! Surf the web for offerings in that language: listen to music, podcasts, webcasts, newscasts, YouTube, television programs, etc. The CLIC (Center for Language and International Communication) is an excellent resource for where to find good information.
- Use Skype in the second language and communicate regularly with native speakers. UAlbany’s CLIC offers courses with telecommunication components where students interact with native speakers in other countries.
- Participate in groups that meet to speak the language. LLC’s language tables, for example, are open to all who are interested.
- Attend foreign film festivals. LLC hosts a variety of foreign films every semester (see our website for details: www.albany.edu/llc/NewsandEvents.htm) and sometimes local theaters offer foreign films.
- Read books, newspapers, magazines in the target language and listen to radio or television broadcasts.

Continued next page
Language Acquisition and Study Abroad: two sides of one coin, continued

- Seek opportunities to volunteer in a country, region, or even a neighborhood where the target language is spoken.
- Working abroad is an excellent opportunity to get paid for your time abroad. Those making the effort to engage native speakers and partake of the culture should have an excellent learning experience.
- Possibilities range from schools and institutions seeking English teachers or tutors, to summer or short-term visas for work during tourist season.
- Get involved in extra-curricular activities with native speakers. Albany has a variety of language/culture clubs and discussion groups.

Of course, it takes more than taking classes and studying abroad to really own the language you have chosen to study. You must be consumed with a passion to assimilate the target language and its culture, regardless of where you live. That said, determination and good foundations in coursework coupled with taking opportunities to study abroad, are an excellent start to mastery of a second, third or fourth language. If you’re interested in mastering another language, LLC would be delighted to help you advance through coursework, identify study abroad opportunities, and welcome you to the many activities we host on campus every semester. Come talk to us!

Faculty News

Brett Bowles’ article titled “The Politics of French and German Cinema, 1930-1945,” as well as the June 2009 issue of the Historical Reflections journal which he guest edited, will be published in expanded format as a book in 2011 by Berghahn Books, an independent publishing house.

Ilka Kressner presented a paper on “El libro cubano de los muertos: lecciones de reencarnación en ‘El Cristo de la Rue Jacob’ de Severo Sarduy” at a conference in June, organized by the Universitas Castellae (Valladolid, Spain) and McGill University (Montreal), held in Valladolid. The conference was titled ‘Necrofilia-necrofobia: Representaciones de la muerte en la literatura hispanica actual.’ She was also recently notified that an essay of hers has been accepted for publication. The title is “‘Imprólogo’ de Octavio Paz – Apuntes poético-poetológicos sobre la poesía de Vasko Popa.” She is analyzing the intertextual references to the works of the Serbian poet Vasko Popa in Octavio Paz’ long poem. It will be published in the Revista Chilena de Literatura.

Mary Beth Winn’s article on an illustrated Dance of Death printed in a book of Hours ca. 1515 has been published in the Papers of the Bibliographical Society of America, (June 2009), 141-197. Her article on Vérard’s Editions of Tristan also appeared this year in Arthuriana. While in Germany on a fellowship at the Herzog August Bibliothek in Wolfenbüttel, Professor Winn discovered a deluxe copy of a 1514 edition of the Chroniques de Bretagne which, judging from the hand-painted coats of arms and illustrations must have been made for Queen Claude de France, wife of François Ier. How and when this royal book passed from the French queen to a German prince’s collection is one of the mysteries still to be investigated, but Mary Beth’s article on the book will be published next spring in the Wolfenbütteler Notizen zur Buchgeschichte. In collaboration with historian Elizabeth A.R. Brown, Professor Emeritus at CUNY, she has also completed an article on Jeanne de France, founder of the order of the Annonciades, for the on line encyclopedia produced by the Société Internationale des Etudes sur la Femme de l’Ancien Régime (SIEFAR).

Death strikes its victims, from a book of Hours printed in Paris by Gilles Hardouyn ca. 1513
The Tangible Francophone World

Students learning French at UAlbany now have yet another way to hone their speaking skills. Not only do they have access to a variety of regular French classes, foreign film series, informal French language speaking groups, the Francophone Living & Learning Community (a dorm residence option), the French Honor Society, Pi Delta Phi and a variety of great events throughout the year (such as an immersion weekend at Camp Dippikill, a trip to Montreal, Mardi Gras celebrations, and Francophone museum visits), but those with a sufficient grasp of the language can now talk online with students just like them at a university in France, and get college credit for it! An independent study course designed by Professor Eloise Briere helps students fine-tune their French-speaking skills by engaging regularly with students in another country, while simultaneously helping those students develop their English skills, so everyone benefits. Who knows, relationships built now may reap life-long dividends later. It’s just another way LLC is committed to our students and helping bring the world within reach.

Recuerdos españoles

What really stood out to me in Madrid while I was there, and what still leaves a lasting impression today, were the sheer number of cultural and social activities; I had never lived in a city of that size and after the first month I realized I could never complain of being bored! There was always a movie, art exhibit, play, festival, market, etc. to see. This cultural richness is something I always try to convey to others when they ask me about Madrid, but I do not think you can fully comprehend it, unless you see it for yourself.

~Ashley Whipple
Graduate Teaching Assistant
Hispanic Studies

Una amistad infinita
(Lifelong Friend)

I first met Ana Triay Muñoz in Málaga, Spain. I was studying abroad my third year of college and had just arrived to the residencia where I would stay for the next year. A crowd of girls began to form around me. Enter Ana. ¿Te llevo la maleta? she asked. Maleta. Maleta. Sí gracias, I managed to answer as she took my suitcase. It occurred to me then that I hadn’t met any other international students yet. ¿Solo hay estudiantes españoles? I asked her, fighting back the tears. “Sí, somos doscientos,” she replied. I came under the assumption that I would live with other international students learning Spanish, not that I would be alone with two hundred Spaniards…Before long, Ana began to refer to me as her sister, hermanita. She was very loyal and, at times, brutally honest as she did her best to turn me into an española. If anyone ever referred to me as a gringa she took personal offense. We often went to her casa on the weekends where she exposed me to Spanish traditions. On one occasion I gave in to letting her dress me up in a traditional costume worn by Spanish girls. I had to pose sitting down because the dress was too short for my 5’9’’ frame! I will never forget our long conversations atop the cool tile floors of the terraza in her Andalusian home. In time I acquired another identity in a second language and way of life that I had grown to know intimately. Accepting Ana’s invitation to experience life as a young Spanish woman made me feel less like an outsider and her compassion taught me the importance of being a cultural ambassador. No matter how brief a time we spend with someone from another culture, we make an impact. It is our chance to break down unnecessary barriers.

~Kate Ringer-Hilfinger
Teaching Assistant
Hispanic Studies
When studying abroad in Spain, I benefited greatly from the warm welcome of my host family, intensive language immersion, and travel experiences in other parts of Europe. However, having heard my grandparents' stories about Spain under Franco, I was surprised to find that mainstream Madrid culture meant staying out until 6 am at smoky clubs with blaring techno music and where the cheapest drinks were equivalent to $10 US. Americans would gather with other Americans and not speak Spanish. I managed to escape the latter problem, but the former was almost essential if I wanted to socialize with Spaniards and practice my language skills. On the other hand, I found when traveling in Latin America that the culture was much more appealing to me. Having friends over for dinner wasn't abnormal and going out at night until you are tired and ready to go home was just fine with my peers. Hiking, biking, and other outdoor activities were more popular than shopping and clubbing. I learned quickly that Madrid culture was not all of Spanish culture (compare New York City to all of New York State) and that Spanish culture was not Latin American culture. While some aspects might be common to both, there are important differences that make them each unique.

~Amy Savage (MA 2008, Spanish)  
Alumna, Instructor

After a year in Madrid, Spain, I left with tantas memorias, so many memories, yet the time I spent with my host family will always stay with me. My señora, María José, welcomed me with open arms and the customary dos besos as soon as I arrived on her doorstep. She became like a second mother and her three college-aged children quickly became my siblings and best friends. Arantxa, Begoña, and Gonzalo soon invited me out and before I knew it, I had a vast network of madrileño friends and conversation partners dragging me all over the city and country. It was probably the best and craziest year of my life. Although the time I dedicated to studying and in the classroom while abroad was hugely beneficial, I truly believe I learned more Spanish and more about Spanish culture in the countless hours I passed chatting and laughing with my familia española.

~Gregory Jabaut (MA 2007, Spanish)  
Alumnus, Instructor
Emeritus/Alumni News

Working in the field of educational exchanges with Russia at the Citizen Exchange Council (an international arts organization specializing in the promotion of communication and understanding through collaborative art projects), which is now known as the CEC Artslink, alumnus Christopher Minarich (MA Russian, 1992), found his favorite part of the job was working directly with students, helping them to prepare for and reflect on their international experiences. While working in the field, Chris was ordained a Reader at St. Mary Magdalen Orthodox Church, in New York City where he directed the choir for eight years. The career choice clarified for him that he had always wanted to teach, so he left the CEC to pursue that career in the late 90s. After which he completed an MA in Music Education at Hunter College in spring 2009 and taught K-6 Music for two years at the Jersey City Golden Door Charter School. He is currently the Director of Music at the Episcopal School where he teaches 32 classes of 2½-5-year-olds each week. Chris also holds a Level II Certification in Orff and Early Childhood Music Learning Theory, plays the Baroque Violin and performs with a trio named Claremont Baroque.

Edith Cruz graduated from UAlbany and started working for the NYS Education Department in 1979. She never thought she’d still be there, but the interesting work kept her involved. She works for the Office of Bilingual Education and Foreign Language Studies as well as with Limited English Proficient Students/English Language Learners (LEP/ELLs) and grade K-12 immigrant students. One of her responsibilities is working with 14 Bilingual Education Technical Assistance Centers situated throughout the state. These centers provide technical assistance to school districts, support the raising of their standards with LEP/ELLs to ensure that these students are provided with opportunities to learn English as well as achieve the same educational goals and standards as the general student population. Helping these centers advocate for equal access to all district programs and services, regardless of the student’s age is a fulfilling aspect of Edith’s position. The diverse student roster brings a valuable resource to the community, a more meaningful world that is increasingly interconnected by language and culture. “These are resources on which we can and should capitalize and support, and help the young become better world citizens.”

In 2004 shortly after finishing his Masters degree in Russian (with an emphasis in translation), Slava Boitchenko got married and moved to New York City, where he worked mainly as a freelance translator while also interpreting for the New York City courts system and the Attorney General’s office. Before his son was born, he and his wife moved to Massachusetts. He was searching for an apartment to house his family when he found a position with Lionbridge Technologies, one of the world’s leading localization companies. He was offered the position as a Russian Language Lead and then packed up his family a week later and relocated to Massachusetts. Language leads at Lionbridge are usually responsible for outsourcing large projects to freelancers, vendors and delivering localized files to the next level in the production chain. However, the job that he is doing now would best be described as a Linguistic Quality Specialist, which involves quality assurance, editing, proofing as well as urgent in-house Russian translation tasks. What makes his job all the more interesting is that he is able to work with various CAT and translation memory tools as well as work on projects for major software and industrial companies. The MA in Russian literature and his translation background were the key factors for getting his current job, but being at the right place and time helped.
**Sophie in the City**

Professor Emerita Sophie Lubensky has signed an agreement with Yale University Press for a revised (updated and expanded) edition of her dictionary of idioms. The dictionary was first published in 1995 as Random House Russian-English Dictionary of Idioms. That edition was followed by two editions in Russia: 1997 (Shkola: Jazyki russkoj kul’tury) and 2004 (AST-Press). In addition to a print version, Yale UP is also considering a searchable electronic version.

In 1981, Joseph Meschino (MA Russian, 1981) and his wife were able to land jobs on the new US Embassy Construction Project in Moscow, where they lived and worked for 5 years. This to him was the high point of his professional life as he and his wife were able to completely immerse themselves as well as travel extensively in Russia, make lasting friends and learn a great deal about construction. In 1986 he entered Carnegie Mellon’s MBA program, graduating in 1988, and later that year, found a position in a small export company’s medical equipment department. For 3 of the 7 years he was with the company, he and his wife resided in Moscow, once again enjoying Russia and learning a great deal professionally. In 1995, he and a Russian employee left to try their hand at their own little company, which had varying success until 1998, when the rouble collapsed and trade with Russia was sharply reduced. From 1998 to 2008, he had multitude jobs and in January 2008 he received a call to work as a contractor at GE on 2 power plant projects in Russia. He mostly does support work for the project managers and handles a good amount of Russian translation. He does not get to travel as he used to, but does get to use his language skill by interacting with GE’s Russian visitors. He also tutors at the new Russia Cultural Center in Albany. Teaching keeps him active with the language and he enjoys it. In his spare time, he enjoys daily reading of original works in Russian and feels that this is a good discipline.

**Ruth Scipione**, a PhD candidate in Spanish Linguistics, has been continuing to advance her research on language contact between Spanish and Copala Triqui, an indigenous language from Oaxaca Mexico. In March 2009, she was accepted into the University of Pennsylvania Linguistic Colloquium where she presented her paper, “Variation in Loan Phonology: The Case of Spanish Loanwords in Triqui.” In July and August she continued her writing and fieldwork in California by participating in the Linguistic Society of America’s Summer Institute at Berkeley and collecting additional material in the Central Valley with a community of Triquis in diaspora. She is currently writing up her analysis and hopes to defend her dissertation in the early months of 2010.

Upon graduating with a Master’s Degree in Spanish Linguistics in the Spring of 2004, Tonya Burandt Hansen entered the translation industry as Director of Production for a local translation firm, LinguaLinx, Inc. While there, she was often called upon to review submitted translations for content, cultural appropriateness, and suitability for the targeted audiences. Having taken several courses on sociolinguistics, grammar/linguistics and pragmatics, she was able to help determine if the right message was being expressed in the documents that were released. She also continued teaching Elementary and Introductory Spanish at both the UAlbany and St. Rose, a task which helped keep her up-to-date with the various and changing language teaching methodologies. Tonya is currently working as the Production Coordinator for the Energy Learning Center at GE, which allows her to combine her teaching/language/project management skills. She handles all the online learning courses requested by the various GE sub-businesses. They range from the correct techniques to be employed by employees while using large machinery such as cranes, aerial lifts, and turbines, to teaching employees to be aware of policies regarding travel, security, and health issues worldwide. The courses are currently translated into 20+ languages, including both Peninsular and Latin American Spanish variations. She feels that the faculty and resources of the LLC Department have afforded her the knowledge to effectively use her language skills in the real world, where there are opportunities for bilingual individuals everywhere. She hopes to add a few more languages to her list in the near future, as she is most happy communicating with others – regardless of their native language.

**UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY**

State University of New York

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**Sophie Lubensky**

Sophie Lubensky has signed an agreement with Yale University Press for a revised (updated and expanded) edition of her dictionary of idioms. The dictionary was first published in 1995 as Random House Russian-English Dictionary of Idioms. That edition was followed by two editions in Russia: 1997 (Shkola: Jazyki russkoj kul’tury) and 2004 (AST-Press). In addition to a print version, Yale UP is also considering a searchable electronic version.
Emeritus/Alumni News continued

Late, but Great News

Noris Gilbert (currently A.B.D.) was awarded the 2008 Commissioner’s Award for Outstanding Achievement by the Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance for her contribution to the development and implementation of the Working Families Food Stamp Initiative. She is currently employed as a Spanish translator for the Translation Unit.

Food, Culture or Entertainment

Dinner, Dessert ou Crêpe?

JoAnne Sifo, former French major found her calling in life while sitting in a crêperie located in Montreal back in 2001. Picture two friends who are about to graduate from college, sitting at a table and planning a trip abroad to France, all while contemplating their future. JoAnne gets the idea that Americans are missing out on a marvelous treat and that they would do well to have a crêperie in their midst. She and her friend even came up with a name. Fast forward a few weeks later and JoAnne is in Lamballe, France trying to enjoy the trip, but finds herself immersed in thoughts of crêpes and how to make it work as a business in the US. Upon her return, she sets out to make her thoughts a reality and Chez Daisie, American Crêperie is born. After three years of serving the Jay Street shopping district in Schenectady, NY, Chez Daisie has carved a unique niche for itself in the Capital Region’s food industry.

The menu is based on food enjoyed by the American culture with a twist of JoAnne’s personality and a pinch of France and French culture. From the Choco-Chocolat to the vegetarian Printemps (bottom photo) or the health conscience Galete (Buckwheat), there is a crêpe for every palate. You can even watch her create a smooth, even leveled crêpe in a matter of minutes (center photo). It looks so easy, but if you are a Hell’s Kitchen fan and saw the episode on crêpe making that aired in September, you know that it’s an acquired skill.

When you walk in the door, you are greeted by an ambience that is warm and inviting, coupled with the sensation of having just entered a French country kitchen. You can place your order and either enter into a small Parisian style café or sit outside to enjoy the sights and sounds of Jay Street. If you’re seeking more than just a meal, why not practice a little French on French Table night. A venue created just for those wanting to improve their conversation skills, it’s held every third Wednesday of the month. If you’re lucky, you may even get to see JoAnne perform with her band, Dyer Switch, a bluegrass/acoustic music band who have been performing together since 1992. Bon appétit!
Lebanese, Please!

Ready to try something different and expand your culinary horizons? The new Beirut Restaurant in Troy is a delightful small family business with an extensive menu featuring delicious Lebanese foods with some Greek dishes added in, like everyone’s favorite, the gyro. Vegetarians have excellent options here too, such as the tasty falafel and amazing baba ghanouj. I tried the falafel, baba ghanouj, shish tawook, and shish kebob. Each dish had its own excellent flavor and the tastes were authentic to Lebanon—like something you might actually find on a street corner in Beirut. Prices are reasonable (a shish kebob sandwich is $6.99) and desserts are a must try assortment of sensational themes of honey with phyllo and nuts.

~Sohab Chekima  
Arabic instructor

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Tortilla Española de Patata

This traditional recipe with slight modifications has been around for hundreds of years.

Ingredients

- 4 large eggs
- Salt, to taste
- 3 to 4 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 large potatoes, peeled and thinly sliced about 1/8" thick
- 1 onion, peeled and finely chopped

Directions

Crack the eggs into a bowl. Beat with a fork until well combined and add a pinch of salt. Heat oil over medium heat in a frying pan. When the oil is hot (when a tiny drop of water sizzles when it hits the oil) add the potatoes. Fry the potatoes over medium heat for about 7 minutes. Stir often. Add the onion and lightly fry. Stir occasionally and do not let the potatoes and onions stick to the bottom of the pan or burn. When the potato starts to brown a little on the edges and when it can be pierced by the tines of a fork (about 15-18 minutes total cooking time) reduce the heat to medium low and add the eggs. Be sure the potato and onion are both fully covered by the eggs. Poke the potato to allow some of the egg to seep into the potato mixture. Fry gently on low/medium low heat. While cooking, shake the pan to loosen the tortilla from the base and tidy the edges up with a heat-safe spatula. When the egg is almost fully set on the sides place a plate over the pan (should be large enough plate to cover the pan) and flip the tortilla onto the plate. Gently slide the tortilla back into the pan immediately so the other side cooks. Keep shaking the pan lightly so the tortilla does not stick to the bottom. Once it feels firm on the edges and soft in the middle (after about 1 minute) then slide the tortilla back onto a plate. The tortilla tends to taste best when served at room temperature but is also very tasty when hot. Put between 2 slices of crusty bread for a hearty meal. Buen Provecho!

Professor Elizabeth Lansing  
Hispanic Studies

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http://www.blog.timesunion.com/tablehopping
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