

Newspaper of the Bulgarian-Canadian Society of British Columbia

Issue 1
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Vancouver, Canada
www.bcsbc.ca

**This issue is dedicated to May 24,
The Day of the Bulgarian Enlightenment and Culture, and of the Slavonic Alphabet**



Happy May 24!

On behalf of the Board of Directors of the Bulgarian-Canadian Society of British Columbia (BCSBC) and on my behalf, I extend my best wishes on the occasion of the most beautiful Bulgarian spring holiday, May 24, the Day of the Bulgarian Enlightenment and Culture, and of the Slavonic Alphabet. For four years now BCSBC has been working hard to promote Bulgarian culture in Canada, and particularly in British Columbia.

I would like to express our heartfelt gratitude to the past two BCSBC presidents - Violeta Decheva and Frantz Arguirov, and also to Jeli azko Andreev, Zdravka Slavenova, Stefan Ivanov, Veneta Vulcheva, Natalia Manolov, Anna Levy, Margarita Trifonova and everyone else who have devoted their time, efforts, and energy to the preservation and promotion of Bulgarian heritage and culture. Their volunteer work is greatly appreciated!

I am happy to share with you that the time and efforts invested to develop the Bulgarian-Canadian Society of British Columbia and especially its communication and marketing, are starting to show results. Many new people, with a variety of interesting ideas, are joining in and starting to work hard which will make the activities organized by the society more attractive, and will facilitate our cooperation with one another.

I cordially invite everyone to join the Bulgarian-Canadian Society of British Columbia and share with us your abilities and interests so we can turn our dreams into a reality. Remember the story of Khan Kubrat and the arrows...

Finally, here is a line from my daughter's poem, written two years ago when she was 8 years old: "One cannot help many but many can help one!"

Please accept my best wishes for lots of health, happiness, personal and professional success, and a joyful and sunny holiday!

Vania Ganacheva
President of the Bulgarian-Canadian Society of British Columbia
vania@bcsbc.ca, vaniag@shaw.ca



BULGARIAN SPEECH – THAT’S US...

Associate professor, Dr. Rusi Rusev
Dean, Faculty of Pedagogy
Rousse University "Angel Kanchev"

Every year on May 24 the voice of Bulgarian speech starts to sound charged with emotion and proudly reminds the world that based on the old Bulgarian literary tradition the third European literary civilization was born in Bulgaria in the Middle Ages, as early as the IX-X Century.

On this day Bulgarian speech eagerly experiences the joy that it WAS, IS, and WILL BE. Its spirit and flesh start shining and singing its radiant anthem of praise and gratitude to the Saint brothers Cyril and Methodius, and the deeds of those who self-sacrificed and followed in the steps of the First Teachers throughout the ages.

In the Old Bulgarian language, sacred and classical for the Orthodox Slavic community, the word LANGUGE was used to mean PEOPLE, TRIBE, which shows that we are interwoven in the flesh and spirit of Bulgarian speech, that the gene of our ethno-cultural personality speaks in it and through it. That is why, in complex and hesitant times like today’s, our honest dialogue with Bulgarian speech is a vital necessity. A dialogue with Bulgarian speech is a dialogue with ourselves, with the truth about us. The revelations of this truth are the messages of the Bulgarian spirit, which have brought to a focus an inner strength and meanings we have always needed, especially today.

One of the most sagacious quotes by Vasil Levsky is: “As to everything Bulgarian, we are within time and time is within us, it turns us over and we turn it over.”

We know these words well, but we have not understood their deep meaning yet and we and have not turned their wisdom into our basic principle of living. Hence, our relations with Time are constantly stained by IMPERFECTION. That is also why, often, way too often, we move outside of the Main road of mankind. Yet the Apostle's speech relentlessly utters the simple truth that our dignified place in humankind depends on our ability to live at the height of our Time – not YESTERDAY and TOMORROW, but TODAY, if we want our past to be glorious and our future exciting.

The unforgettable Dimcho Debeljanov made a confession:

I am dying and I am being born in the light –
A disorganized soul with multiple faces,
During the day I tirelessly create,
During the night I mercilessly destroy.

In the hierarchy of meanings of this captivating and ruthlessly honest lyrical revelation, it is not hard to recognize one of the most destructive stereotypes of our social behavior, which caused us and is continuing to cause us lots of trouble and suffering to this day.

Speech

sprouting from the reading of Debeljanov's poetry in the silent field of self-assessment, invokes the CREATIVE POWERS within us.

Our trip in Time is a painful Sisyphean rise from darkness to light, from slavery to freedom. That is why, the dimensions along the vertical axis of our native space “down-up”, and “field-



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mountain” make salient a most cherished historical and geo-psychological meaning in our ethnic consciousness. And we can never remain indifferent to Hristo Botev's verses:

But it's already dawn! And on the Balkan
The hero lies, his blood flowing,
While the wolf licks his vicious wound,
And the sun bakes on ... and on!

The wolf represents the poet's subjective aesthetic vision of this wild animal. “When he was in Zadunaeveka,” writes Zachary Stoyanov. “Botev put many animals of various breeds to live in the same place. He wanted to experiment with them, to help them get closer with each other, to teach them to be brothers and coexist peacefully, not to fight and eat each other. Among them were several wolf-cubs, which he tried to tame. He felt the greatest affection for them, because they did not make any compromise with their freedom, they would rather die in the ditch.” These words by Zachary help us understand better why Botev left to the wolf the right and the privilege of being the only living being by the hero's side in the last verse of the poem. The wolf is the symbolic

image of the love of freedom which breathes life to Bulgarians' mythological notion of the wolf as a leader, and tribe keeper and freedom guard.

Blood, light and warmth symbolize life. The running blood connects the hero with the people. And this is an eternal connection made through the idea of a free and dignified life. The poet instills in us the thought that the strong Bulgarian I is an end in itself without the united Bulgarian WE and vice versa.



From the highest point of our ethno-cultural space, where the boundary between Earth and Sky gets blurred to give rise to the immortal, from the highest poetical peak Speech makes us swear in FREEDOM and UNITY, so that we can be one in our joy and suffering alike.

Speech also makes us swear in the
ORTHODOX
BULGARIAN FAITH.

In his deathbed, St. Konstantin-Cyril turns to God with the following words of prayer:

Look after your Church in peace,
Mate all people into one soul,
And make people perfect,
United in their just faith
And in true confession.

And sinful Sophrony, the persecuted, beaten, and humiliated Sophrony Vrachanski, who was forced to convert his faith under death threat, on the verge of losing his mind, manages to ask just one question, “Effendi, can you kill faith with a gun?”

Aleko Konstantinov opens his book “Baj Ganjo” in the following way: “They helped Baj Ganjo take off his Turkish hooded cloak, he threw on a Belgian mantle, and everyone said that Baj Ganjo is already a true European.” As early as that point in time, the wise Aleko warned us that with foreign clothes thrown over our shoulders we will have to take a long trip to Europe. Professor Ivan Shishmanov succinctly expresses the essence of Aleko’s “teaching”, “Respect your native language, be a Bulgarian as Paisij has taught us, but at the same time be a man of culture, be a European!”

Hristo Botev is categorical: “Our people have a special life, a special character, a special face which distinguishes us as a people. Let us develop according to our own native roots!...”

Bulgarian speech protects zealously our honor and dignity. It champions a development for us which is “according to our own course” and is in an active dialogue with the other ethnic groups and cultures.

In his novel “Tobacco”, Dimiter Dimov depicts the following symbolical fact. The Managing Director of the tobacco company “Nicotiana” is dead. In an instant the foreign Greek land will take in his dead body. Kostov writes the personal name Boris Morev on the cross with a chalk, and the Greek pastor full of malicious joy promises to order the inscription of the name with oil paint but vows to himself, “I won’t ever look at this grave. And I won’t read a requiescat on it either. And the rain will wash out his name and there won’t be a trace left of him... Anathema to all dogs which brought hunger, lechery, and illnesses here.” Together with Boris, his name will die. There can hardly be a more cruel and merciless sentence than this . It is equal to damnation. The basic idea embodied in the text is that a personality and a society without a high moral and humane binding rule in its way of living are doomed by History to demise.

Bulgarian
speech makes us take
an oath in humaneness
and in the eternal moral
values of mankind.

BULGRAIN
SPEECH – that’s US,
written down and
constantly being written
as a unique text in the
endless book of
Eternity.



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All mistakes are the editor’s fault

Translated by Ivelina Tchizmarova, Ph.D.

The Joy of Spring May 24 concert

On May 14, 2006 in the Shadbolt Centre for the Arts, Burnaby, BC, Ars Musica and the Bulgarian-Canadian Society of British Columbia presented an evening concert celebrating May 24, the Day of the Bulgarian Enlightenment, Culture, and of the Slavonic Alphabet.



Varna Chamber Choir directed by Natalia Alexandrova-Manolov opened the celebration and created a festive mood with performances of works by Verdi and Mozart and Bulgarian folk songs.

What added to the atmosphere were visual aids prepared by children from the Bulgarian School in Vancouver, and the exhibition by Bulgarian artists living in British Columbia: Zana Nedelcheva (oil painting), Donka Georgieva (black and white painting), and Veneta Vulcheva (fine art photography).

Children from the Bulgarian School in Vancouver touched the audience with their presentation “Bulgaria – Unique and Beautiful” in which they talked about the Bulgarian flag, the Bulgarian rose, famous Bulgarian athletes, and the Bulgarian rulers since the foundation of the Bulgarian state.

The musicians Cvetozar Vutev (violin and viola), Natalia Manolov (violin), Dimiter Terziev (piano), Antonia Daskalova (piano), Anna Levy (piano), and Gueorgui Harizanov (guitar) performed works by Brahms, Bach, Schubert, Ravel, Gueorgui Harizanov, and Pancho Vladigerov, which thrilled the audience.



The hall virtually exploded when the sounds of Vardar Rhapsody by Vladigerov filled the air. Time and again, the performers made us feel proud that we have such talented musicians, yield to the rhythm of the Bulgarian folk song, and feel small yet spiritually elevated by the power of the sounds, created by our Bulgarian genius Vladigerov.

Ivelina Tchizmarova, Ph.D.
editor in chief of the BCSBC Newsletter

The Bulgarian School in Vancouver was founded more than 10 years ago. Its main objective is to preserve the national identity and Bulgarian spirit in our children. We strive to fulfill this task by:

- ◆ Working to expand their everyday conversational vocabulary;
- ◆ Helping them acquire reading and writing skills in Bulgarian;
- ◆ Introducing Bulgarian traditions and ethnographic customs that have been followed since ancient times;
- ◆ Broadening our children's knowledge of Bulgarian history and geography.



The Bulgarian School 2000

Since the foundation of the Bulgarian School in 1993, tens of Bulgarian children have learned to read and write in the language of their ancestors. We have been able to accomplish that due to the commitment of our volunteer teachers.

The school has won the complete support not only of the students' parents but also of all Bulgarians who wish to preserve the spiritual connection with

their home country. Thanks to donations and voluntary work, the Bulgarian School in Vancouver has turned into an extremely successful and fruitful initiative.

The School has its own book collection. Most of the books have been donated by students' parents and the State Agency of Bulgarians Living Abroad.

The School regularly organizes traditional gatherings in celebration of Christmas and the Advance of Spring (1st of March), as well as celebrations of May 24, and other events in cooperation with the Bulgarian-Canadian Society of British Columbia.

School classes are held once a week in periods of 2 hours. We rent premises in libraries or churches which sometimes imposes limitations on our class schedule. Classes are taught according to an approved school program and include a variety of topics as well as interactive games. Student groups are formed in accordance with the children's level of fluency in Bulgarian and the topic of the particular session.



The Bulgarian School 2004

The main subject taught in the Bulgarian School is Bulgarian Language. Each student group has a curriculum, which follows the standard educational programs of elementary schools in Bulgaria, and has been adapted to the specific conditions and knowledge level of the children.

The second subject in our curriculum is Native Country (learning about Bulgarian history and traditions). Classes depend on the children's age and take into account major events from the national calendar. Some traditional holidays are celebrated with bigger events and a wide range of guests.

The Bulgarian School is a member of the National Language Association of British Columbia which gives us an opportunity to get an insight into the activities of similar schools, including some which have already been licensed by the Ministry of Education of British Columbia, Canada.

Photos courtesy of the Bulgarian School

Vania Alexieva
teacher in the Bulgarian School



These are the answers of some of the children from the Bulgarian school, participants in the May 24, 2006 celebration, to the question:

"Why did you choose this topic?"

Pavel, 10 years old: "For my May 24 PowerPoint presentation I chose the topic "Sports", because we played "Rock-paper-scissors" with a friend of mine from the Bulgarian School and he won. At the beginning, I thought that I should do my project on Artistic Gymnastics and Tennis, but later I changed my mind and I did my research on chess and wrestling"

Chris, 12 years old: "I picked this topic for a few reasons. The first is that I like a lot of different sports. The second and third reasons are that I've done a few projects on soccer already and that my whole family enjoys watching figure skating. The last but certainly not least reason is that Bulgaria has a lot famous weight lifters."

Cveta, 15 years old: "I chose to talk about the rulers that created and established the first Bulgarian kingdom. It was not easy to decide on a topic. However, history somehow was a logical choice for me. I am sure that this presentation will be informative and engaging both for parents and children alike. It is of great importance for every Bulgarian to know the facts about the founders of our country who governed it to magnificent glory. Khan Asparuh united the proto-Bulgarian tribes and laid the foundations of the Bulgarian Kingdom. Tsar Simeon expanded our territories to border on three seas. Tsar Boris the First established Christianity as the sole religion in Bulgaria. Those are probably the three most significant figures in Bulgarian history and all Bulgarians should learn about them. This knowledge will allow us to preserve our national identity and spirituality and pass it on to future generations."

Alex, 9 years old: "I chose to write about the Bulgarian Flag, because it is the first thing that comes to my mind when I think of the name Bulgaria."

Silvia, 16 years old: "The topic I chose to present is: The Bulgarian Rose and the Rose Festival in Kazanlak. I like this topic, because roses are my favorite flowers and Bulgarian Rose Oil is used in the production of many world famous perfumes."

Photo Gallery
May 24 Celebrations at the Bulgarian School



students 2002



teachers 2002



students 2003



students 2003



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students 2006



students 2006

Unless noted otherwise, photos are provided by the Bulgarian School

You are invited to a
Spring Party



Organized by *Manuela Lazarov*
in association with the
**Bulgarian-Canadian Society of
British Columbia**

on the occasion of the

**National and Religious
Spring Holidays in Bulgaria**

March 25 - Annunciation
April 15 - St. Lazar's Day
April 16 - Palm Sunday
April 23 - Easter
May 1 - Labor Day
May 6 - Day of the Bulgarian Army and St. George's Day
May 11 - St. St. Cyril and Methodius' Day
May 21 - St. St. Konstantin and Elena's Day
May 24 - Day of the Bulgarian Enlightenment and Culture and the Slavonic Alphabet
June 1 - St. Spas' Day




When: **Saturday, May 27, 2006 from 7:00pm**
Dinner-buffet: 7:30 - 9:30pm
Show & Dance: 9:30pm - 1:00am

Where: **Balkan House Restaurant**
7530 Edmonds Str., Burnaby, BC V3N 1B4
Phone: (604)-524-0404

Fee: Adults: \$22;
BCSBC members: \$20;
Children 11-16 years old: \$17;
Children 5-10 years old: \$9;
Wine and beer specials.

**For tickets order and information,
write or call Manuela:**

 e-mail: bgparty@shaw.ca
ph.: (604)-720-5795.

Event tickets are available for sale on
14 May and 21 May, Sunday, in the following locations:

from 11:00am to 12:30pm, North Vancouver
Daniela's Cake Boutique, 323 Lonsdale Ave.,
from 1:00pm to 3:00pm, Burnaby
Blue Café, 140-6200 McKay Ave., Station Square,
Metrotown (near Future Shop)
from 4:00pm to 6:00pm, Downtown
Ambrozia Restaurant, 911 Denman Str. (2nd floor),

Only on 14 May: from 7:00pm before and after the concert
in the Shadbald Centre for the Arts, 6450 Deer Lake Ave.,
Burnaby.

**If you are a part of a bigger
group, please pay for the
tickets at the time you order
them, since seats are limited
and tickets will be sold on
"first come, first served"
basis.**



Varna Chamber Choir

invites

new members

The Varna Chamber Choir, founded in 2004, is a diverse mixed choir comprised of committed singers who are dedicated to excellence and expressiveness in the study and performance of a variety of choral works of all periods. Its repertoire includes world choir classics, Bulgarian folk songs, and song in Church-Slavonic.

Under the guidance of its conductor and founder, Natalia Alexandrova-Manolov, the choir is quickly gaining popularity and every season it participates in a several festivals and concerts. This season the choir made its first tour and the singers performed one of the most beautiful choir works – Mozart's Requiem. The choir is developing constantly and is looking for new singers.

Rehearsals are held every Friday, 7:00-9:00 p.m. at Douglas College, New Westminster Campus.

If you would like to develop your talent and get more information, contact Natalia Alexandrova-Manolov at (604) 294-1212, e-mail: nmanolov@gmail.com.



The Bulgarian Soccer society of Lower Mainland & the Bulgarian-Canadian Society of British Columbia invite all who are addicted to the Big Game to join us at the “green carpet” and chase the “leather ball”...

Day: every Sunday from 10:30 a.m.

Place: Hume Park (or Sapperton)

As usual, there won't be disappointed or turned down enthusiasts.

For more information, call or e-mail:

Plamen Velikov cell: (604)-992-3503,
e-mail: plamvel@yahoo.com

Pepi Kiriakov cell: (604)-825-7565,
e-mail: info@peter-homes.com

Deyan Dyakov cell: (778)-238-2929,
e-mail: deyan.dyakov@gmail.com



The soccer team “Bulgarian Lions” 2003

Photo courtesy of Pepi Kiriakov

p.s. This is another opportunity to get away from ... Sunday household chores;)

The Newsletter
of the Bulgarian-Canadian Society of British Columbia

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- is distributed over the e-mail free of charge to society members and all who have subscribed for the newsletter on our website;
- is issued in Bulgarian and in English twice a month or before certain holidays and events;
- contains materials which correspond to the goals of the society, namely to promote, support, and preserve Bulgarian culture;
- if you wish to have your materials about Bulgarian culture, education, and sports considered for publication in the Newsletter, please send them by the 5th of each month, when there is a forthcoming issue, to Ivelina Tchizmarova, Ph.D., a BCSBC director and editor in chief of the BCSBC Newsletter, at this e-mail address: ivelina@bcsbc.ca;
- written materials should be sent in English as well as in Bulgarian (in the Cyrillic alphabet);
- if you send photos, select only quality digital images and send a note with the date, author and description of the photo;
- please send comments and suggestions about the Newsletter to the editor in chief at ivelina@bcsbc.ca;
- use this link to [subscribe](#) or [unsubscribe](#) from the BCSBC Newsletter;
- forward a copy of the Newsletter to your Bulgarian and Canadian friends and anyone interested in learning something about Bulgaria.

Thank you very much for your help!

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The Bulgarian-Canadian Society of British
Columbia www.bcsbc.ca

Seeks two volunteers to work as assistant editors of the BCSBC Newsletter. Candidates should have an excellent command of Bulgarian and English, and the necessary skills to edit and translate written texts in both languages for the BCSBC Newsletter.



The job will allow you to set your own working hours and will give you an opportunity to gather useful Canadian experience, enhance your resume, and receive valuable references for work. For information, write to ivelina@bcsbc.ca.



The Bulgarian-Canadian Society of British
Columbia www.bcsbc.ca

Would like to thank everyone who contributed or helped find materials for the first issue of the electronic BCSBC Newsletter dedicated to May 24:

associate professor, Dr. Rusi Rusev (University of Rouse)
senior assistant professor Daniela Kamarincheva (University of Rouse)
Vania Alexieva (Bulgarian School in Vancouver)
students, parents, teachers (Bulgarian School in Vancouver)
Natalia Alexandrova-Manolov (Varna Chamber Choir, Vancouver)
Manuela Lazarova
the Bulgarian Soccer Society of Lower Mainland