

**RUSSIAN HERITAGE
NEWSLETTER**

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Russian Heritage
St. Petersburg, Florida

**С ПРАЗДНИКОМ!
ХРИСТОС ВОСКРЕСЕ!
ВОИСТИНУ ВОСКРЕСЕ!**





SECOND ANNUAL RUSSIAN SONGFEST APRIL 20TH MEETING AT MING GARDEN

Russian Heritage meets on April 20th for good food, fellowship, and singing! We will enjoy Chinese cuisine at the Ming Garden Restaurant (2901 66th Street North in St. Petersburg, Florida). Then we will enjoy singing Russian music accompanied by Boris Lebedinsky on the guitar and/or balalaika. We will sing in Russian, with song sheets provided in both Russian and English transliteration. We have had special requests this year for "In the Steppe" (Степь да степь кругом), "The Slender Mountain Ash" (Тонкая рябина), and "The Volga Boat Song" (Эй ух-нѐм!). If you have others you would like to include, please call 864-8235 and leave your suggestions. We would also like to have you RSVP to Zhana and Konstantin Sidorenko (367-2092) by April 18th so we will have a good idea how many to expect.



PETER DEMENS' EXHIBIT IN RUSSIA

(You can help make it a reality!)

Peter Demens, the Russian aristocrat who came to the United States and became the co-founder of St. Petersburg, Florida, was born on May 1, 1850 on his estates in the Russian provinces. In May, 2000 a 150th-Anniversary Exhibition will be organized in Russia to highlight the achievements of this "man of two worlds". The exhibition is scheduled to travel from the city of Tver (the capital city of the Russian province where his estates were located), to the small town of Vesegonsk (a place near his estates where he served in the local administration), to St. Petersburg (the capital of imperial Russia, where Demens served as a Guard's officer).

Acting as curator for this exhibition is Inna Povedskaya, a research scholar from the Historical Museum in Tver. She came to St. Petersburg, Florida in January 1999 as part of an exchange program with Eckerd College. While here she did work in the local archives of the St. Petersburg History Museum, and also visited the Demens Archives at the Library of Congress in Washington, D.C. She has taken back to Russia some materials that will be used in the Demens Exhibit there. She also provided information for the Peter Demens Exhibit at the St. Petersburg Museum of History in 1995.

We read in the newspapers about the difficult financial situation in Russia, and this is particularly true of educational and cultural institutions. Because of the help that our Russian colleagues have given us in the past in researching the Russian life of Peter Demens, and because we are trying to help make the story of his life in America better known to the Russians, we are trying to raise \$5,000 to help sponsor this exhibit in Russia. One member of Russian Heritage, John Galbraith, is interested in this project, and has offered to put up \$2,500 in matching funds, so that if we can raise \$2,500, we will succeed in raising the \$5,000 needed. Your support will be greatly appreciated. Contributions can be made out to RUSSIAN HERITAGE, and sent to P.O. Box 66123, St. Pete Beach, FL 33736, designated for the Demens Exhibit.

May Meeting: Presidential Address and Elections

The May 18th meeting of Russian Heritage will feature a talk by President Bill Parsons on "**Peter Demens and Russian Literature**" and will include elections for officers for 1999-2000. The meeting will be held at the All-State Campus of the St. Petersburg Junior College at 7:00 pm. The program is free and open to the public. Bring a friend who is interested in Russian Culture.

Peter Demens, the Russian who was responsible for naming our city and for bringing the railroad to St. Petersburg, was influenced by Russian literature as a student in Russia and he attempted to popularize Russian literature in America. Bill Parsons, Professor of History and Russian Studies at Eckerd College, will discuss Peter Demens and his views on Russian literature, including his speech on the 100th anniversary of Pushkin's birth in 1899.

I loved you once: of love, perhaps, an ember
Within my soul is not extinguished yet;
But let that be no prompting to remember,
Or be a cause of sadness or regret.
I loved you once, quite hopeless, dumbly tender,
By jealousy and diffidence oppressed;
I loved you once with such complete surrender
As may God grant you may again be blessed.

1829

“PUSHKIN IN THE PARK”

We have the day June 6th reserved for our celebration of Alexander Pushkin's 200th birthday. The place is Williams Park in downtown St. Petersburg, and the time is 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm. We have some volunteers who are ready to prepare foods; we have others who are ready to read Pushkin's poetry (in Russian and in English); we have others who plan to read poetry in English about Pushkin. We also have made some contacts with performers of music and dance who would be willing to participate.

What we need is a committee to make the final preparations and schedule the activities for this event. If you are interested in serving on this committee, or have ideas to share with the committee, please call (727) 864-8235. The committee will be organized at the next meeting of the Executive Board on April 9th.

It has been suggested that one feature of our celebration will be to feature some of the works of Pushkin that people consider to be their favorites. What are your most treasured works by this great Russian poet? Of course, *Evgeny Onegin* will be on everyone's list. Which of Pushkin's short lyric poems do you like the most? Which of his epic narrative works? Which of his prose creations? In the May Newsletter we will conduct a survey of our Russian Heritage members, and we will suggest a reading list for those interested in reading more about the man and the poet we celebrate on June 6.



[1829]

Я вас любил: любовь еще, быть может,
В душе моей угасла не совсем;
Но пусть она вас больше не тревожит;
Я не хочу печалить вас ничем.
Я вас любил безмолвно, безнадежно,
То робостью, то ревностью томим;
Я вас любил так искренно, так нежно,
Как дай вам бог любимой быть другим.

