Overview: A mere 4,500 miles from Beaverton, Birobidjan, with a population of around 80,000, is the administrative center of the Jewish Autonomous Oblast in Far East Russia. It shares a close border with the People’s Republic of China in a rather mountainous, yet surprisingly lush, region.

Fun Facts:
- Birobidjan is located on the Trans-Siberian railway.
- One of its two synagogues, the Birobidjan Synagogue, was the first synagogue in Russia to be built partly with state funded money.
- The name Birobidjan comes from the combination of the two rivers in the region: the Bira, which flows through the city, and the Bidjan.
- The Jewish Autonomous Region (JAR), where Birobidjan is located, was established in 1927 and was the first state territorial unit of the Jews, not only in Russia, but in the world. Israel would follow more than 20 years later.
- The Chinese resort city Sanya on the island of Hainan is a very popular vacation destination of Birobidjan citizens.
- For the Chanukah celebration of 2007, officials of Birobidjan in the Jewish Autonomous Oblast, claimed to have built the world’s largest menorah.

Please visit www.BeavertonOregon.gov/SisterCities for more information.
Did you know?
The capital of Russia is **Moscow**.
The national bird of Russia is the **golden eagle**.
The national animal of Russia is the **brown bear**.
The official flower of Russia is the **camomile**.
The national currency of Russia is the **ruble**.