Libraries Cooperate! FledgNets are Born!

Ellanie Sampson

From informal "handshake" consortia to incorporated and funded networks, library cooperation in New Mexico continues to grow. These fledgling networks, or as I like to call them, FledgNets, are just one more example of cooperation between libraries of all types in our state.

Two years ago, representatives from several public and school libraries, and one academic library in the middle Rio Grande corridor met at the Los Lunas Public Library to discuss how to share limited resources. This group moved swiftly and joined together that day in the Rio Abajo Library Cooperative, pledging to meet at least three times each year in various locations, and to share resources through interlibrary loan.

RALC was a natural offshoot of the Rio Abajo ‘Electronic Library’ (RALE) available on the Internet through The Library Corporation and a cooperative grant from the New Mexico State Library. This branch of Beverly McFarland, director of the Socorro Public Library, allows all the holdings (in MARC format) of several of the Rio Abajo libraries to be posted on the Internet in searchable form, creating virtual online catalogs for those libraries. Requests can be e-mailed to the holding library and processed as interlibrary loans.

Librarians from all three types of libraries began to e-mail each other with requests for books, and drive-by deliveries began to occur as staff from the various libraries were "on the way" to take a child to school or to go to work.

In the southeastern part of the state, five Lea County libraries united to form an information and resource sharing consortium called ELIN—the Estacado Library Information Network. The five libraries—Scamnburgh Memorial Library at the College of the Southwest in Hobbs, Hobbs Public Library, Fannell Library at New Mexico Junior College in Hobbs, Lovington Public Library, and Woolworth Community Library—all worked together to form an incorporated nonprofit consortium to improve library services in Lea County.

Spokesperson Mary Lee Smith, director of the Lovington Public Library, said, "ELIN will offer the libraries and citizens of southeastern New Mexico a variety of benefits including:

[continued p. 8]
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"I just built a home-made ore extractor. Can you find me an owner’s manual for it on the Internet?"

This is just one of the many questions we’ve received at our small public library. I really don’t think this is just a small-town phenomenon. I’m certain that larger libraries get similar questions—and more of them. And isn’t it something that the Internet is viewed by the public as the ultimate answer to all questions and problems?! These are the kinds of things that make the daily life of a librarian so very interesting and challenging.

Of course, at my library, there are other situations as well. I meant to go to the Mini-Conference in Taos, but found that our work schedule and other commitments would not allow it. The day that I would have been in Taos I walked into my library at 6:00 a.m. to find 75% of the building an inch deep in water! A fitting on the small water heater in the custodian’s room had broken and we were flooded. I was very glad that our shelving has three inch bases!

Speaking of shelving, we recently were able to add some new shelving to help our overcrowded situation (even though I had to give up some of my book budget to buy shelves...). When the truck arrived one evening with the shelving, and my staff and I were unloading it, a patron stopped to ask what we were doing. "We're getting some new shelving!" I said. "Cool," said the patron, "what are you going to do with the old shelving?"

In 1989, I left a request for a fairly rare book at COAS: My Bookstore in Las Cruces. I knew the book would be hard to locate, and after some time passed, I just figured it was a lost cause. Imagine my amazement when the phone rang a couple of weeks ago and it was the bookstore letting me know they had just gotten a signed copy of that book with the original dust jacket! Our request had been on their list for nine years—there are some lists it is good to be on!

A list that needs more people on it is the list of Program Committee members. This new Special Committee of NMLA is designed to assist future Vice Presidents and Members-At-Large in conference program planning. It is the dream, desire, hope, wish and charge of the Program Committee to gather commitments from speakers and program presenters for at least two years in the future, and to create a list of programs that cover the needs of librarians and library employees in all types of libraries. If you would like to serve on that committee, please call or e-mail Charlene Greenwood (CGreen2224@aol.com, 505-256-1379). Charlene is looking for people from all types of libraries to serve on this committee, so don't be shy.

I hope the lives of other librarians are as full as mine is. And speaking of full, I saw a t-shirt in a catalog that had a big heart on it and lots of kitties inside the heart. The caption read, "there is always room in my heart for another cat." I'm a little afraid to get that one, although the sentiment is certainly true. Another shirt shows several kittens in a large bowl, and reads "kittens are like potato chips—you can't have just one". Maybe instead of "House of Purrs" I should call my home "House of Potato Chips"—the Multitude stands at 9, as of this writing.

Holiday Greetings to you all. Let's hope that 1999 is a good year for libraries!

Ellanie
New Mexico has one of the shortest state statutes in the country concerning tax-supported public libraries. As the Public Libraries Task Force of the New Mexico Municipal League discovered, it is time to update our legislation to reflect current practice.

Two statutes passed in 1965 form the current legal basis for public library service in New Mexico. These statutes reflect the visions of their era. Nationally, the Library Services and Construction Act provided states with funding to extend public library service to unserved and underserved communities. In 1965, fewer than 40 New Mexico communities operated public libraries. The State Library had established six regional libraries to offer rural bookmobile service, reference resources and training programs. Local libraries were encouraged to share resources through interlibrary loan networks and centralized processing cooperatives. Computers filled entire rooms, the American Library Association was promoting automation through the Library Technology Project, and OCLC was a group of Ohio college librarians trying to find a better way to do a union list of holdings.

Our archives from this period show significant legislative activity concerning censorship and the certification issue, but they do not illuminate the legislative history of these basic statutes. It is highly likely that they were initiated by the State Library Commission and presented to the Legislature as "technical updates" necessary to facilitate eligibility for federal L.S.C.A. funding. Perhaps they envisioned the Bookmobile Regions emerging as the hubs of multi-county public library districts. There are peculiar differences between the municipal statute and the county statute. The municipal statute opens with a simple statement that if a municipality wants to, it can operate a public library.

There is no corresponding text for county libraries, and the corresponding county section does not even mention municipal libraries, but enables counties to work with other counties and the State Library to create regional libraries. Remember that in 1965, the only counties operating library service were Hidalgo, Bernalillo and the City/County of Los Alamos.

Public librarians recently undertook a year-long effort to convince the New Mexico Municipal League to support legislation authorizing the establishment of library special districts with independent taxing authority, similar to library laws in many other states. This proposal was thoroughly debated and finally rejected by the Municipal League's Resolutions Committee. Several elected officials suggested that districting legislation is unnecessary because municipal and county libraries can already combine services using existing joint powers authority. This authority is not reflected in the 1965 New Mexico library statutes. Even without independent special taxing districts, we need a law that supports all of the following current practices:

1. A county contracting with a municipality for comprehensive service to an entire county. (Albuquerque/Bernalillo County)
2. A municipality contracting with a county for comprehensive service to an entire county. (Hidalgo County/Lordsburg)
3. A municipal/county library contracting with a municipality in an adjoining county for combined service operations while retaining individual autonomy. (Albuquerque/Bernalillo County and Rio Rancho forming the Rio Grande Valley Library System.)
4. Municipalities in adjoining counties establishing a resource sharing cooperative using an integrated catalog. (Rio Abajo Library Cooperative in Valencia, Socorro and Sierra Counties, the ELIN group in Lea County, and Tres Ritos in San Juan County). Note that each of these entities includes participation by academic libraries, and that Rio Abajo involves public schools.
5. Municipalities and counties contracting with the New Mexico State Library to provide Regional Bookmobile Service to 127
Presently, there are bookmobile stops in 25 municipalities which do not have local libraries; Additionally, the bookmobile stops in 7 municipalities which do have local libraries. In 1997-98, twenty three counties paid $22,728 to the State Library’s Bookmobile County Book Fund, with individual amounts ranging from $228 from Quay County to $4,500 from Catron County. Fifteen small municipalities paid an additional $2,600 for bookmobile service. The N.M.L.A. Legislation & Intellectual Freedom Committee will support a revision of the two statutes in the 1999 Legislature. The suggested new language attempts to reflect the growth of cooperative networks, and to anticipate future developments.

**PROPOSED NEW MUNICIPAL STATUTE**
3-18-14. Libraries; establishment; contract services; state publications; gifts and bequests.

C. Any municipality establishing a public library may enter into contracts and joint powers agreements with other municipalities, counties, political subdivisions and the library division of the office of cultural affairs for the furnishing of library services.

**PROPOSED NEW COUNTY STATUTE**
4-36-1. County public libraries; establishment; contract services; state publications; gifts and bequests.

A. A county may establish and maintain a free public library under proper regulation and may receive, hold and dispose of any gift, donation, devise or bequest that is made to the county for the purpose of establishing, increasing or improving the library. The governing body may apply the use, profit, proceeds, interests and rents accruing from any such property in any manner that will best improve the library and its use.

B. (Secretary of State, unchanged but renumbered.)

C. Any county establishing a public library may enter into contracts and joint powers agreements with other counties, municipalities, political subdivisions and the library division of the office of cultural affairs for the furnishing of library services. This language was suggested by N.M.L.A. Legislative Advocate Tom Horan. The phrase, “municipalities, counties, political subdivisions...” is inclusive of any type of local political entity, including school districts, community colleges and universities. Perhaps even tribal government entities. These entities can create whatever structures best serve them, and can call it whatever they determine is descriptive of the services provided. The State Librarian would no longer have the authority to approve or reject such contracts. However, the State Library can encourage the development of cooperatives through federal and state grant in aid programs. The Legislation Committee and the Municipal League are both supporting increases in the state grants in aid program, so that such experiments as union catalogs, multi-type sharing and courier delivery services can be funded. The Committee asks for your comments and suggestions, and asks that you discuss these proposals with your local legislators.
NMLA Joins MPLA!

Marilyn Hinshaw, incoming President of Mountain Plains Library Association, made a presentation on MPLA at the recent NMLA Executive Board meeting in Espanola, and invited NMLA to join. Mountain Plains Library Association, established in the 1950s, is an eleven-state association of libraries and friends of libraries in Arizona, Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming. With its primary purpose of improving present and future library services in the Mountain Plains region through development of librarians, trustees, and library employees, MPLA bases its success on its active, enthusiastic, and sharing membership.

Staffed in a similar manner as NMLA (one paid part-time administrative employee and all the rest volunteers), MPLA partners with the state library associations in its member states and meets at those library association annual conferences. There are MPLA awards, sections, and committees, and there are grants available to MPLA members for course work, institutes, and workshops.

The next MPLA conference will be held in conjunction with the Montana Library Association conference in Big Sky, Montana, June 13-16, 1999; the theme is "Making Certain It Goes On." Conference speakers will be Ted Turner, Terry Tempest Williams, and Dorothy Broderick, among others. Conference information is available at www.mtlib.org or from the conference planning co-chairs, Alice Meister (ameister@mtlib.org) and Susan Schweinsberg Long (krh05@digisys.net). For more information on joining MPLA, please write or call Joseph R. Edelen, Jr., MPLA Executive Secretary, I.D. Weeks Library, University of South Dakota, Vermillion, SD 57069-2390; 1-605-677-6082.

FRANK WATERS

The last words of the “Grandfather of Southwestern Literature” and five time nominee for the Noble Prize in literature.

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"[Waters] stands in relation to the civilization of the American West as William Faulkner stood in relation to that of the South - one of the great writers of the century ...." — The Bloomsbury Review

"... a collection of essays that is a joy to hold and a joy to read. — The Santa Fe New Mexican

"... the last words of the Grandfather of Western Literature, a man who was part Cheyenne and all heart. Those who share Waters' love of the West—and of humanity—shouldn’t miss them." — Tony Hillerman

This, Frank Waters’ last book, is a moving and powerful reminiscence of the Taos he knew and loved, and of the friends who peopled it, including Mabel Luhan, D.H. Lawrence and Dorothy Brett.

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library advocacy now!

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• Talk to those "above" you
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• Have hot tips for being noticed by the media
• Build a community advocacy network
• Speak in "sound bites"

If you answered yes to any of the above questions, you will want to hear Camila Alire speak on library advocacy. She will inspire you to want to be an effective spokesperson and legislative advocate for libraries, and mount a public awareness campaign.

This is a critical time for library advocacy. Decisions are being made at all levels of government about funding, copyright, telecommunications and other policy issues that will shape libraries and public access to information in the 21st century. This training aims to support librarians, trustees, Friends and other in representing libraries and the public interest at all levels of decision-making and in enlisting the support of legislators who will champion our cause.

The pre-conference (Wednesday April 28, 1999) to the annual conference in Carlsbad will feature Camila Alire speaking on "Library Advocacy Now!" She is the Dean of Libraries at Colorado State University in Fort Collins, Colorado. Do you remember the library and book store flood there? She will never forget it, just ask. She is a dynamic speaker and she does an excellent job on this ALA initiative. Look for the details in your conference packet. Camila will also be doing a presentation at the conference on "Services to Latinos"

Charlene Greenwood

Youth Services Special Interest Group of NMLA is working toward getting the message about librarians to those who may not be aware of the value of libraries and librarians. Our current project is to develop programs for conferences around the state, particularly for administrators and school boards, but also for content and curriculum areas that libraries can serve. Please send us names of contact people, and addresses, so we can get on mailing lists for calls for proposals for these conferences. Also, please consider volunteering to present a program, or give us names of people who are doing something that could be presented at a conference. The idea is to get several programs put together, and present them at whatever conferences would be relevant. We have two directions: "This is what libraries can do for you!" and "This is how libraries can support your curriculum."

Please send names and ideas to:

Clare Odenheim (522-8814, codenhei@lcps.k12.nm.us),
Rogers Barde (632-1661 or rbarde@sisna.com), or
Patricia Froehlich (827-3814, patricia@stlib.state.nm.us). If you prefer, write to Claire Odenheim at 715 Sundown Court, Las Cruces, NM 88011. Librarians do great work, and everyone should know about it. Help us spread the word.

Rogers Barde
full bibliographic access to the holdings of member libraries with provision for future expansion to include additional libraries
• increased opportunities to coordinate selection and acquisition of expensive print and electronic resource
• pooling financial resources to access online databases, enabling more digital resources to be available than could be purchased by each individual library
• first-time automation for Scarborough Memorial Library and Lovington Public Library, with needed upgrades for the other member libraries
• the same library system for all participating libraries, facilitating ease of use and providing 24-hour system access from remote locations such as home computers, other libraries, branch campuses, etc.
• full Internet and electronic information access for all Lea County residents, with expert instruction in electronic information search and use. Whew! That surely covers all the bases!

Not to be left out, spearheaded by Carol Brey, director of the Thomas Branigan Memorial Library in Las Cruces, and Margaret Becker, director of the Marshall Memorial Library in Deming, librarians, board members and city officials from Deming, Silver City, Lordsburg, Glenwood, Columbus, Anthony, Hatch, Las Cruces, and Truth or Consequences met in early October to discuss cooperation in that area of New Mexico. Ben Wakashige, the State Librarian, was present as well.

The Southwest Library System (just one of the working titles) steering committee will have met by the time this article is printed, will have selected a real name for the cooperative, and will have set forth guidelines for member libraries to follow. The steering committee faces what are now the “usual challenges” to library service in our spread-out state: funding, delivery, and “turf” issues—working with various city and county governments to allow the sharing of resources across governmental boundaries to occur. —E.S.

new mexico library foundation news

Jean Chamberlin As some NMLA members are aware, Jean Chamberlin, one of New Mexico’s earliest professional elementary school librarians, died in Albuquerque on September 15th at age 81. Her family graciously designated the Foundation to receive memorial donations in Jean’s honor. We specifically thank her daughter and NMLA member Barbara Van Dongen for that privilege. We are also grateful to Jean’s many friends who contributed generously in her name.

At their meeting in October, the trustees agreed to contribute a portion of the memorial contributions toward support of the annual Battle of the Books in Jean Chamberlin’s name. This continues the Foundation’s assistance to this statewide event while adding a meaningful way to make it a more personal tribute to a distinguished elementary school librarians and past NMLA member.

Giving Guidelines Over the course of a year, the trustees have developed guidelines which set out the Foundation’s policies and procedures for providing modest grants for library activities. These guidelines emphasize library projects (particularly with regional or statewide implications) rather than grants to individual librarians in recognition that NMLA has funds oriented for individual librarians, especially for educational purposes. While the likely maximum for an grant would be around $1,000, we hope other sources could provide additional funding of a proposed project. A copy of the guidelines can be obtained by contacting Dr. David Giltrow, NMLA Chair, PO Box 389, Santa Fe, NM 87504. Fax: (505) 983-1095 E-mail: dgiltrow@mcmail.com.
new mexico history traveling exhibit

The New Mexico Library Foundation will be working with NMLA and the NM State Library to submit an application to the New Mexico Endowment for the Humanities for a travelling exhibit based on One Book at a Time: A history of the library in New Mexico by Linda G. Harris. The proposed exhibit would include panels with illustrations and text with provision for local library history. Libraries hosting the exhibit would be encouraged to organize a program which explores their local history, as well as New Mexico's rich library history.

NMLA officers joined the Foundation trustees for an informal discussion over lunch about issues of mutual interest, including fund raising, future projects, and ensuring that lines of communication are kept open. This is part of the NMLA action plan.

The trustees would like to thank the many NMLA members who have contributed in many ways to the Foundation in 1998 and previous years. All best wishes for the holidays and the New Year.

David Giltrow

tribute to new mexico library book

syndicated column by Marc Simmons, Southwest Historian

I suspect that libraries get taken for granted by most people. And few of us have any idea of how they were founded and came to flourish in the arid precincts of our state, but Ms. Harris has engagingly pulled the story together in this oversized and beautifully designed volume. It is also well-sprinkled with historical photographs. My favorite of these is an image of young cadet Paul Horgan working at a desk in the New Mexico Military Institute Library in about 1920. Of course, that was long before he wrote his many books, including his two Pulitzer Prize winners on New Mexico history, Great River and Lamy of Santa Fe. The first municipal libraries in the Territory began to be organized in the last decades of the 19th century, usually by women's clubs, which provided the energy and raised the money. That happened at Albuquerque in 1891; shortly afterward in Santa Fe the Woman's Board of Trade announced plans for a library. Originally, public libraries in New Mexico were privately funded. The idea of a tax-supported library took a while to catch on. Early help came from the Carnegie Foundation. It provided dollars to small towns around the country wanting to build a library. Three New Mexico applicants received grants: Raton, Roswell, and Las Vegas. Today, only Las Vegas still uses its original Carnegie building. Here at the end of the century, New Mexico's library system flourishes, in spite of underfunding and shortages of staff. As a lover of old-style libraries, that is, book-oriented institutions, I can't help wondering what their fate will be as the electronic age deepens its hold upon us. Latin American author Jorge

allie beth martin award

Do you know a librarian with an extraordinary range and depth of knowledge about books and library materials—fiction, nonfiction, reference books, children's books, videos or serials? Does that person have an outstanding ability to share that knowledge through booktalks, presentations to community or professional groups, or written reviews?

The Public Library Association' s Allie Beth Martin Award honors such a person every year. The Award provides recognition and a $3,000 honorarium which are presented at the PLA President's Reception at the ALA summer conference.

Nominate a deserving colleague today!!! The deadline for nominations is December 1, 1998. Nomination forms are available from the PLA office in Chicago or on the PLA web site at http://www.pla.org/awards/index.html.

Sarah Rosenblum Collection Development Librarian Newport Beach Public Library 1000 Avocado Ave. Newport Beach, CA 92660 949-717-3860 949-640-5648 (fax) srosenblum@city.newport-beach.ca.us

new mexico library association newsletter

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Luis Borges has written, "I have always imagined that paradise will be a land of library." I don't believe he was referring to one stocked only with high-tech gadgets and no books. Yet, I have spoken to university library heads that have told me they are moving away from printed artifacts (books and magazines) and toward all-electronic or "virtual" libraries. They already regard books as a nuisance. Most surveys and news stories dealing with the future of the book are not encouraging. Nevertheless, a recent Gallup Poll, sponsored by the American Library Association, offered some hope. It found that 66 percent of Americans used their public library at least once a year. Of these, 81 percent actually checked out a book. And 90 percent thought traditional libraries will survive the inroads of computers. Throughout New Mexico we have access to splendid libraries, large and small. In Santa Fe, The State Library moved into spacious new quarters last May. Earlier this year, the Socorro Public Library dedicated a new three-story addition, doubling available space, and drawing hundreds of people for the celebration. Such events give a clear signal that we are not ready to give up books, reading, or our treasured libraries. As a professional historian, I have a special interest in promoting a readership for New Mexico history. Every library in the state has a section dealing with that subject, and the books are heavily borrowed. The picture is not so bright in our school libraries, many averaging 15 books or fewer per student, compared with 65 per student in Denmark. But working with what we have, it is necessary to get young people reading at an early age. New Mexico history, with all its drama, color and tragedy, is a fascinating place to start. Our rich literature has the capacity to inspire and teach. It also can nourish that proverbial hunger in the head, which arouses youthful curiosity and can lead to a lifetime addiction to reading.


10 good reasons to attend a professional conference

1. Meet and greet old friends and make new ones
2. Network with others to form relationships across fields and geographic areas
3. Learn new things
4. Find solutions to old problems
5. See new products
6. Revitalize your outlook or maintain passion or just keep you going
7. Find out about job openings
8. Visit other libraries
9. Visit a warm, lovely place
10. Relax and have fun while working hard

The NMLA annual conference in Carlsbad on April 29-30, 1999 currently has 29 great programs for your enjoyment. There will again be a job fair for any that are interested.
nmla newsletter contributions sought

The NMLA newsletter seeks news articles, ideas, interest groups, research, updates, etc. The deadline for the February/March 1999 issue is January 25, 19989. That issue should arrive in your mailboxes by mid-February.

Send submissions to Jackie Shane (UNM) at jshane@unm.edu ; phone 505/277-5327. Electronic submissions (e-mail or disk) in Word or ascii are preferred. The editor reserves the right to edit contributions.

New Mexico Library Association newsletter

The New Mexico Library Association Newsletter (ISSN 0893-2956) is published six times a year (February, April, June, August, October, and December) Submissions can be sent via e-mail (preferred), on disk, or printed (double spaced). Electronic format is highly preferred.

Send Newsletter submissions to:
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fax: 505/277-0702
phone: 505/277-5327

Send address changes, back issue requests and other requests to:
Linda O'Connell, Administrative Services Contractor
c/o NMLA, PO Box 26074
Albuquerque, NM 87125
e-mail: nmla@rt66.com
fax: 505/899-7600
phone: 505/899-3516 or 800/898-6652

Attention AMIGOS Members!

The AMIGOS Fellowship Program is pleased to announce its call for 1999 proposals.

Each year the program awards up to $3,000 to library and information professionals in AMIGOS member institutions to fund resource-sharing research and development projects.

To apply, please contact Linda Wimberley, 800/843-8482 or wimberley@amigos.org for an application packet.

For consideration, applications must be postmarked by March 26, 1999.

Got a dream? We can make it real.

Looking for the perfect holiday gift for your favorite librarian? Look no further! Order a copy of "One Book at a Time: The History of the Library in New Mexico." Send a $24.75 check [includes postage] payable to NMLF, Box 30572 Albuquerque NM 87190-0572.