Springtime in Taos: NMLA 2000 Conference

by: Laurie Macrae

Springtime in Taos with a theme of "Free People Read Freely," will mean a feast of literary and thought-provoking programs. Issues such as the continuing struggle to provide free internet access after the rejection of the American Civil Liberties Union challenge to filtering legislation in New Mexico, and with the increased usage, precipitated by the largesse of the Gates Foundation, will be discussed by a panel of librarians facing the challenge at the front desk. You can participate too by coming to the conference and speaking your mind.

The Land of Enchantment Book Awards luncheon and the Youth Services SIG will honor Avi, the ground-breaking children's author. John Nichols, Taos author of The Milagro Beanfield War, will speak at the awards banquet on the role of libraries in preserving intellectual freedom, as will last year's President of the American Library Association and Intellectual Freedom activist, Ann Symons.

There will be a series of book signings by authors such as Laura Hendrie, Stanley Crawford, Natalie Goldberg, James Doss and Chellis Glendinning, author of My Name is Chellis, and Off the Map. Books and authors all day Thursday in the exhibitors hall. Other programs include a book-making workshop with Aurelia Gomez, director of children's educational programming with the Museum of International Folk Art, focusing on the role of "journeying and fantasy in folk traditions."

The Museum of New Mexico will bring their new traveling exhibitions van to Taos for you to visit in the library parking lot. Plan on taking a tour with one of some of Taos' famous museums: the Kit Carson Museum, the Martinez Hacienda, the Millicent Rogers Museum, and the Harwood. Or take a self-guided tour of local galleries with a map provided by us. Plan on eating well! Taos has some of the best restaurants (Continued p. 3)

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include the text unsub nmla.

To send something to everyone who subscribes,
email it to:
nmla@nmsu.edu.

If you need any help with the listserv or have
questions about it, please email Gwen Gregory
(ggregory@lib.nmsu.edu) or call her at:
(505) 646-7488.

Attention Amigos Members!
The Amigos Fellowship Program is
pleased to announce its call for
proposals for the Year 2000.

Beginning in May 2000, the program
will award up to $7,500 to library and
information professionals in Amigos
member institutions to fund resource-
sharing research and development
projects.

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

For consideration, applications must
be received by 5:00 p.m. Central

Got a dream? We can make it real.
from the president’s pen

The Mini-Conference October 22 in Rio Rancho was a huge success. I would like to thank our Members-At-Large, Toni Beatty of Rio Rancho, Isabel Rodarte of Espanola, and Nancy Osterberg of Ruidoso for all of their planning, creativity and hard work. I believe the fashion show at lunch and the Y2K rap at breakfast were the big hits of the day. There is an article in the newsletter with the details.

Laurie Macrae and the Local Arrangements Committee in Taos are working hard toward the April 2000 Conference. There are many interesting programs and tours being planned. Start planning now for Taos April 27-29.

The New Mexico Task Force for School Libraries has almost completed its work on the state survey. There has been about a 62% return rate, and surveys are still welcome. The results will be published in the Hitchhikker.

(Taos continued from page 1)

anywhere with a range of prices to suit most budgets. All local hotels are offering special rates for the conference, but Taos is a popular destination, so make your reservations soon. Hotel information can be found on the NMLA website at: http://lib.nmsu.edu/nmla/conferences.html. There are many charming B&Bs to choose from as well. Rio Grande Air is offering a special round trip fare from Albuquerque to Taos for $150.

We invite you to come to Taos and experience the beauty and stimulation of one of New Mexico’s most historic communities. But we also want you to come and participate in making this conference a statement about the importance of intellectual freedom in the next millennium.

Laurie Macrae

There are two positions on the Board that have been filled since the last newsletter. Ben Wakashige has temporarily been appointed to the ALA Councillor position following Drew Harrington’s resignation. Lorie Mitchell has returned to being the Chairperson of the Public Relations Committee. She will be updating and enhancing the NMLA web page. I would like to welcome both of them and thank them for their efforts on behalf of NMLA.

The Board and a special committee have been working on guidelines for the NMLA e-list. They have been completed and approved. They appear in this newsletter and will be posted to the e-list itself. The committee did a splendid job. The Chair was Gwen Gregory and her committee members included Thaddeus Bejnar, Lorie Mitchell and Heather Gallegos-Rex.

Charlene Greenwood

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1999 Mini-Conference: A Spa for the Mind

While neither herbal wraps nor massages were available at the October 22 mini-conference, one hundred and forty-two librarians and support staff spent the day learning, networking, seeing old friends and making new ones at the Hilton Garden Inn in Rio Rancho. Two ideas drove the theme and content of the mini-conference this year. One was how we deal with the stress caused by the rapid changes happening in libraries today. The other was the desire to design a conference which could be enjoyed equally by both support staff as well as librarians.

As Members at Large of NMLA's Board, Nancy Osterberg of Ruidoso Public Library, Isabel Rodarte from Northern New Mexico Community College, and Toni Beatty from Rio Rancho Public Library were responsible for planning and organizing the mini-conference. Their goal was to provide workshops that would give library staff members some tools to not only deal with stress, workplace violence, and personnel issues, but also some time to meet by job specialty so as to allow people to establish a support network of colleagues working in the same field of library service.

The day started off with a foot-stomping rendition of the (soon to be famous) Y2K Rap, written by Vaunda Nelson and Lori Snyder, with assistance by Amy Weig-Pickering and Stephanie Kelly of Rio Rancho PL. The rap was written at the request of Rio Rancho's emergency management staff as a way to reach more members of the community and get them to pay attention to preparing for Y2K. Having performed their morning calisthenics, the crowd settled down to hear about work by the New Mexico Library Foundation. David Giltrow awarded Foundation grant checks to Taos Public Library, Magdalena Public Library, the David Cargo Public Library in Mora, and the Rio Rancho Public Library to enhance their programs, outreach, technology, and literacy efforts.

State Librarian Ben Wakashige updated conference attendees on the impact of the on-line ProQuest database in New Mexico, as well as plans for the expansion this program to include other databases.

After breakfast, attendees broke into groups to network by job specialty, after which there was a choice of four different workshops. These included ethicist Carolyn Silver speaking on "Finding the Spirit in the Workplace," a discussion of school/public library cooperation by the RRPL Education Team and Rio Rancho Public Schools staff, "Library Safety" with Officer Curt Voiles, and a library fundraising workshop by Sandra Lynn entitled "Show Us the Money!"

After grabbing a box lunch, we settled in to enjoy a fashion show organized by Nancy Osterberg which featured library fashions over the past 200 years, as well as what books those librarians may have recommended to their readers. Next on the agenda was a presentation by Candace Vigil on the Hartman Color Code, a method of understanding human behavior based on the core motivations of various personality types.

Afternoon events included a stress relief workshop with Susan Silverman of Aspen Behavioral Services entitled "Library Staff in the Pressure Cooker: Taking Care of Ourselves and One Another," and "Look to the Mountain: Reflections on Indigenous Ecology" with UNM's Dr. Gregory Cajete. "Interviewing for a Good Job Fit" with Dr. Leonard Stitelman and "Copyright in the Electronic Age" with law librarian/attorney Marsha L. Baum rounded out the workshop selection. After another networking session and meetings by the SIGS, the conference was adjourned.

Our thanks go to the volunteers from Rio Rancho's Board of Trustees and Friends of the Library, as well as to the NMLA Board members and President Charlene Greenwood:

Toni Beatty
Nancy Osterberg
Isabel Rodarte
NMLA Members at Large
Officer Nominations: NMLA 2000-2001

The Nominations and Elections Committee has composed the following slate of candidates for the offices of Vice-President, Secretary, Member at Large, and ALA Councilor. You should have received a nominations form and more detailed biographies of the candidates in the mail by now. If not, please refer to the NMLA website at http://lib.nmsu.edu/nmla. Your vote is important.

**Vice-President/President-Elect:**
- Paul Miller
  Director, Alamogordo Public Library

**Secretary:**
- Leslie Chamberlin
  Head of Tireman Library, UNM
- Kathy Matter
  Librarian, John Baker Elementary School
- Claire Odenheim
  Library Media Specialist, Onate High School

**Member at Large:**
- Norice Lee
  Branch Librarian, NMSU-Dona Ana Branch Community College
- Carol Merrill
  Librarian, Hubert Humphrey Elementary School
- Olivia Newfield
  Los Alamos County Library, White Rock Branch
- Rebecca Rich-Wulfmeyer
  Senior Librarian/Manager of Archival Collections, Museum of International Folk Art

*(Please note that Elaine Goodman has withdrawn her candidacy since the mailing.)*

**ALA Councilor:**
- Thaddeus Bejnar
  State Law Librarian and Public Records Commissioner
- Susan Deese-Roberts
  Director, Education Programs and Services, UNM General Library
- Teresa Naranjo
  Santa Clara Pueblo Community Library
- Sandra Spurlock
  Manager of Library Services for the Lovelace Respiratory Research Institute
Travelogues
A Chinese Journey -- Part IV of IV

With our meeting with the Ministry of Basic Education as background, we were ready for the real thing, a visit to Beijing #5 High School. They have students ages 12 to 18 years old. There are 2100 students in 42 classes. At class change time the halls were surprisingly empty; then we learned that the students stay put and the teachers change classrooms. The staff of the school were anxious to show us their library, computer lab, and observatory. At the end of the day the students did not leave until their classroom was clean and ready for the next day. This included their washing the boards, dusting, and mopping the floors. The students were eager to talk to us and practice their four years of English. This high school is considered a key school in Beijing and all the students we talked to were anxious to go on to the university. Nationally the rate of passing the University exam is 2%; at this school the rate is 99% - a key school indeed. After chatting with the students, we went outside to watch them play basketball and get their bikes for their trip home.

Our next school visit was the Xi'an Foreign Language University. Here students that were training to be teachers of English listened to presentations by members of our group and then chatted with us on an individual basis. There were many questions regarding teaching and anxieties similar to those of any education student in the United States.

Zhong Shan University has 16,000 students and 6,000 faculty on 300 acres in Guangzhou. It is one of only 30 schools in China that offers training to become a librarian. The Information Management Department was established in 1980 and has 300 undergraduate students working toward a degree in library science, information management, or archive management. They were anxious to trade professional tidbits with us and give us a tour of their library and campus.

The Guangzhou Kindergarten was next on our agenda. This private school for children of government officials was opened in 1950. They have 800 students ages 3 to 6-1/2 years. 600 of these students are boarding students which means they live at the school from Monday morning until Friday night with a possible visit home on Wednesday evening. It is a lovely facility with landscaped areas, play areas, a full-size puppet stage and rooms to play with clay, play with models, learn musical keyboard, read books and dormitory rooms with 40 beds in them. The cost of boarding a student was 400 yuan ($48) per month.

Our last day in China found us at LaSalle High School in Hong Kong. Because Hong Kong just became part of China in 1997, it was not surprising that this school followed the British pattern of education, or that its principal was Brother Patrick from Ireland. The school has 1740 male students ages 12 to 19. 96% of the students go on to the university. The day we were visiting the students were off on a school-wide picnic but we did get to visit with the librarian about the library, classes, clubs, and curriculum as well as have tea in the canteen.

Our very last meeting was with the president of the Hong Kong Teacher/Librarian Association. She is a strong-willed, out-spoken lady who has definite opinions on a number of issues. Her conclusions summarized what a lot of us were feeling regarding the importance of the teacher/librarian in reaching all the students, in cooperating with teachers and winning over administration, and providing a model for today's students so they will know how to act in their future lives.

Just as it is impossible to see all parts of the U.S. in 15 days, so is it impossible to study every aspect of China in the same amount of time. However, it was a wonderful trip, which I never expected to take. I have 540 slides to aid the memory process or to show others to try to convey a sense of what we saw and did. If you ever have the chance, spend the money, take the trip. China is worth the effort.

Bonnie Tollefson
Monterrey, Mexico

In mid-October, I took a brief but fruitful trip to Monterrey, Nuevo León, Mexico, where I taught a two-day seminar on basic reference services to a group of about 20 Mexican librarians. Monterrey is only about 150 miles away from my former home in Laredo, TX. While I was reference and ILL librarian at Texas A&M International University (formerly Laredo State), I got to know some of my colleagues in this third-largest city in Mexico. Monterrey is the national seat of high-tech industry and the most Americanized of Mexican cities. It has a 90% literacy rate, several universities, and a well-educated populace.

After connecting with these friends again at the FORO last spring in Mexicali, I received an invitation to be a part of their Second Annual Training Program for Librarians and Information Specialists. The program is scheduled to coincide with EnLínea (OnLine), a trade show for electronic products, and the Feria Internacional del Libro (FIL), or International Book Fair. Monterrey's FIL, while only half as large as its better-known counterpart in Guadalajara, is still sizeable, featuring over 400 publishers. All of these activities are sponsored by the ITESM (Instituto Tecnológico y de Estudios Superiores de Monterrey), or "Tec," one of the most respected universities in the country.

Library education is not nearly as well developed in Mexico as it is here. There, even in universities, many librarians don't even have a licenciatura, or bachelor's, in library science. They may have worked many years in the library field and learned much from practical experience, but they are unlikely to have the theoretical grounding and broader contextual knowledge of the field that comes from formal training. Many of my students in the seminar were in this situation. In fact, many of them had been working in libraries for longer than I have—

I got my first professional position 10 years ago. They were enthusiastic to discuss the larger issues at play in their jobs—the role of public services in general, inter- and intra-departmental communication, the art of the reference interview, ethical issues like patron confidentiality, etc.

Most of the participants were from university libraries, with only a few from special libraries. The lack of public librarians in the class serves to highlight how undeveloped that sector is in Mexico. As of the mid-1990s, there were only about 4300 public libraries in the whole country, with an average of around 5000 volumes per collection and 2.7 employees per library. Obviously, these struggling institutions would have a very hard time sending employees to a class, which cost approximately $100.

After my teaching duties were over, I took a day to enjoy the beauties of Monterrey itself. One of my favorite stops is always the Museo de Arte Contemporáneo, known as the MARCO, which is also a play on words since "marco" means "frame." This museum was designed by Legorreta, the same architect who designed the much-ballyhooed San Antonio Public Library. His use of color, space and light makes the building itself as much of a draw as the art it holds.

I'm so glad I was able to teach this class. It was a real joy seeing my students share information, experience and ideas, and to feel that I had contributed, in however small a way, to the development of the profession I love so much, in a country that I have grown to love as well.

By Verla J. Peterson
Assistant Library Director Branigan Library, Las Cruces
"Library Mural Plan Ridiculed. Local architects and artists decry mural plan; stupid, an act of vandalism.... Muralist Joe Stephenson is way out of his league when he proposed festooning its sides with giant murals." This text from the "Pleasantville Journal," quoted from actual newspaper stories and editorials, appears on a yellow sheet of newsprint emerging from a Gutenberg press in the center of Albuquerque's Main Library mural. The controversies surrounding the mural project reflected the volatile nature of public art, and made the summer of 1999 a unique exercise in art and politics for the staff at Main Library.

In April, Albuquerque Mayor Jim Baca announced that Main Library would get a mural as part of his Mayor's Arts Summer Institute. One hundred high school youth would be selected from 500 applicants to work on public art projects through interviews and portfolio presentations. Selected apprentices would be hired for the summer and be assigned to music, dance, sculpture, painting and mural projects under supervision of professional artists. Mayor Baca had indicated his desire to make the Public Library more visible in the community, and was enthusiastic in accepting the recommendation of muralists Joe Stephenson and Kathleen Sweeney that the east side of the downtown Main Library would be an ideal site for a large mural. In telling the Library administration about the project, the Mayor requested staff to assist the students in learning about the library so the mural could reflect its history and mission. As soon as school was out, the muralists assembled and began doing research. Library staff made presentations, gave tours of library facilities and assisted with a wide array of reference requests. The students and staff agreed on the theme "knowledge is power," portraying aspects of the history of ideas, writing, printing, books and libraries, represented on a time line from ancient Egypt to present-day Albuquerque.

Public controversy first emerged in a column in the Albuquerque Tribune by V.B. Price on June 11th, denouncing the lack of public discussion about the wisdom of putting a mural on the "award-winning" building. The local chapter of the American Institute of Architects expressed
concerns about painting on the brick surface. Retired architect George Pearl expressed surprise that anyone would want to put a mural on one of his best works. A full-page editorial in the Albuquerque Journal denounced the project and Mayor. Letters to the editor characterized the building as a "gem of regional modernism" which should not be defaced. City councilors made statements critical of the way that the project was handled. Television news crews came to the Library to interview the muralists, who were obliged to respond to the criticism. These talented youth discovered that participating in a public art project involved more than just a resume-enhancing summer job. They were dismayed at being portrayed as if they were at-risk graffiti gang taggers. Finally, a meeting was arranged between the muralists and George Pearl, with the press in attendance. The muralists accepted Pearl's suggestion that mural be painted on plywood panels mounted on steel girders attached to the wall, rather than on the brick. Local architects and businesses raised money to pay for the panels and girders. Meanwhile, the muralists worked together to design the subject matter. There were several meetings with library staff to discuss the design and hear suggestions. As a result, a portrait of self-educated American philosopher Eric Hoffer was substituted for a potentially controversial representation of a homeless man with a shopping cart full of books. A "generic librarian" in the section showing Main's reference desk was changed to a portrait of Miss Myra Durr, a recently-deceased longtime employee at the South Broadway Library and Cultural Center. Texts were researched to illustrate book and knowledge themes from the Bible, the Koran and Don Quixote. A final design sketch was presented to Mayor Baca for approval, and then presented to City Council. The panels arrived, and painting began in the Library's Community Meeting room.

In mid June, a scaffold was erected along the east side of the Library to install the girders and attach the partially painted panels. Someone contacted the City's Risk Management Division to express concern about having teenagers working on a scaffold. Several students who were under sixteen had to work on other aspects of the project due to child labor laws. There was ongoing press coverage as the mural progressed, but it focused on the positive aspects of youth doing art. The muralists invited library staff to participate in painting some background areas, and this was the subject of a television news feature. Maxine Huang, the librarian at the Special Collections Library, wrote and painted the Chinese text on a mural segment showing Ts'ai Lun, inventor of paper manufacturing. By mid-August, most of the mural was complete, and the apprentices returned to school. The two lead muralists, two assistants and one volunteer worked to finish the design.

The attention focused on the Main Library mural created an opportunity to publicize library needs. I sent a letter to the weekly newspaper Crosswinds appreciating their objective coverage. I wondered why Main Library's vocal architectural supporters hadn't raised objections to its deteriorating physical and mechanical condition. Without being critical of public officials, my letter identified a number of maintenance deficiencies. Several weeks later, Journal columnist Jim Belshaw called and asked for a tour. We spent almost two hours talking about the state of the Albuquerque's Public Library system and looking at the building. His column on August 9th entertainingly and succinctly summarized our budget and physical plant shortfalls. I made sure to note that the Baca administration's recent budget began to address some of the library's maintenance and staffing needs.

Toward the end of July, an apprentice artist from another of the Arts Summer Institute projects was transferred to the mural project. This student worked with lead muralist Joe Stephenson on a segment of the mural showing a Mayan Indian holding a codex. The Mayans and other Pre-Columbian civilizations made paper and recorded religious, historical and astronomical events. The first panel of the mural codex was illustrated with a drawing of a Spanish conquistador in armor, standing over an Indian warrior and stabbing him with a sword. The Indian is shown bloody from his neck to his trunk. Although this drawing was historically and stylistically accurate, it was made deliberately provocative by elongating the sword's hand-guard so that the sword resembled a Christian crucifix. Just so no-one would miss this point, a crucifix was also inscribed on the Spaniard's helmet. This drawing was towards the top of the mural, and partially obscured by the scaffold. The other artists noticed but did not comment on the subject matter. On September 10th, the
The dedication ceremony brought together all of the artists except Stephenson, to celebrate the completed mural. Mayor Baca, Kathleen Sweeney, artist Curtis Wilson and I made presentations. I expressed the thanks of my colleagues that the apprentices had "absorbed what they saw and heard, and proceeded to create a thoroughly researched, brilliantly conceived and beautifully executed work of art. Long after the controversies have faded this mural will be a beloved landmark celebrating Alpuquía's public library. Everyone who passes by this spot will see this mural and think, 'Oh, that's what they have in there; the entirety of human knowledge.' —J.S.

Not wanting a repeat of the spring controversy, Mayor Baca ordered the drawing to be removed. When Joe Stephenson refused to do so, Arts Summer Institute director Phil Baca painted it over. Stephenson called the press to denounce the censorship, and the television news crews came back in force. But the scaffolding came down with the image removed. Had it remained, it is likely that funding for future Arts Summer Institutes would have been jeopardized. The incident did inspire an exhibit of books about the Conquest, including reproductions of codex illustrations giving the Aztec version of the arrival of Cortes, just in time for Banned Books week.

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new mexico chapter of reforma

The New Mexico chapter of REFORMA: The National Association to Promote Library Services to the Spanish-Speaking, has elected new officers for 1999/2000. They are: Gwen Gregory, NMSU Library, President; Norice Lee, Dona Ana Branch Community College Library, Vice-president; Grace Gonzales-Small, NMSU Library, Treasurer; and Jean Dickinson, NMSU Library, Secretary. This year, the New Mexico chapter will build on the excellent foundations laid in past years. Planned activities include: sponsoring a program at the annual NMLA conference, conducting fundraising with the goal of creating a scholarship, and participating in the national REFORMA conference in August 2000 in Tucson.

For more information about the chapter and its activities, contact Gwen Gregory at (505) 646-1508 or ggregory@lib.nmsu.edu. To become a member of REFORMA, use their online membership form at http://c1net.ucr.edu/library/reforma/about/. Gwen Gregory

nmla newsletter contributions sought

The NMLA newsletter seeks news articles, ideas, interest groups, research, updates, etc. The deadline for the February/March 2000 issue is January 26, 2000. 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.

Future newsletter deadlines are:

January 26, 2000
March 8
May 10

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.

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