



The NMCL Report

New Mexico Coalition
for Literacy

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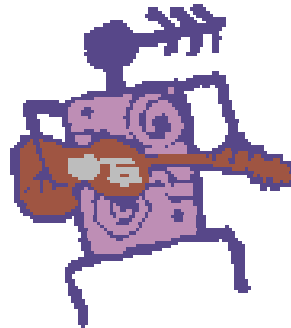
A NEW BOARD MEMBER FOR THE NMCL

Alvin Billie, Literacy Director for the Gathering Place in Thoreau, submitted the name of Charlie Long as a potential board member. The Nominating Committee and the Executive Committee unanimously accepted his application. Here is a little information about Mr. Long, as written by Alvin:

"Mr. Long is a lifelong resident of Continental Divide (he actually lives in Coolidge, which is about 10 miles West of Thoreau). He has been a Probate Judge for a number of years in the past, but has since retired. He has served as a local chapter official (Thoreau chapter president) at one time. He is very instrumental in voicing his concerns and ideas within the chapter and is still quite active as a chapter member. Many people, including myself, look up to him

for advice and kind words. Mr. Long has helped many people in the area with guidance in acquiring housing and land rights, along with other help that is requested of him. Mr. Long supports The Gathering Place and our literacy program with all we do. He has told me, 'we need more programs like this to help in our community.' I know he will be a valuable addition to the NMCL board with his views and ideas".

We are excited and honored to



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New Mexico Coalition for
Literacy
3209 B Mercantile Ct.
Santa Fe, NM 87505
505.982.3997
1.800.233.7587
Email: info@nmcl.org



NAAL Report

National news...the NAAL Report is out. We've sent notes and attachments to programs with perspectives from COABE and ProLiteracy, and there is little more we can add other than the fact

that the report stresses that 30 million adults are at "below basic" literacy levels. There hasn't been much change since the last report came from NAALS, which is troubling, given all the effort made nationally to serve

adults who aren't able to read well, and sounding the alert to educators. We will be purchasing the NAALS report and will peruse it carefully. In the meantime, the NMCL is look
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"CREATING A
PATHWAY TO
THE FUTURE FOR
NEW MEXICANS
THROUGH
LITERACY"



Professional Program Director's Association

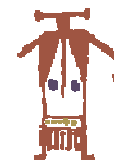
The mighty PPDA meets again! A meeting will be held in Santa Fe on January 26 & 27, wrapping up with our traditional visit to legislators. No, we aren't lobbying; only your volunteers and tutors can do that. All we are doing is letting legislators know that they have a literacy program in their community and that it is making a difference. That's it!

We will also address some questions that have

come up, such as: How to conduct your own in-services. We will share a report with you in the next newsletter.

Have you been making use of the program directors list serve we are providing? If you have questions, give Heather a call and she can get you involved.

Rena Paradis



Welcome Cathy Varney The Newest Member of Our Training Team!

Cathy Varney began to apprentice as an ESL contract trainer for the NMCL in September of 2005. By mid-November, she had already completed her apprenticeship, and landed a gig at Read "Write" in Moriarty – her first training, and one of many famous appearances, as she graciously allowed herself to be photographed for an article in the Mountain View Telegraph featuring Read "Write," and she also agreed to be featured here herself. Now that's jumping in with both feet.

Prior to this time, Cathy became a tutor for ReadWest in January of 2000. She also works part-time as their tutor training coordinator. According to Yvonne, her colleague, Cathy has tutored eleven students in ESL, all of which have met their goals. She is said to have an amazing rapport with foreign students; she uses her profound understanding of how it is to live in a world where one does not speak the language to instruct ESL tutors. She has given in-service Spanish phonics workshops and has cross-trained for the family literacy program. She was nominated as Volunteer of the Year by ReadWest for the

2nd Annual NMAEA & NMCL joint conference in 2004 and was ReadWest's Tutor of the Year in 2005. To add to her list of accomplishments, Cathy participates in Read Me a Story annual events at Hasting's, has helped find additional meeting places for tutor/student teams, and developed a picture book for ESL learners. From what I know of Cathy, she seems to have plenty of tricks in her bag as a tutor trainer from her years of experience as a volunteer. She is also full of tricks personally, not just professionally, with a sense of humor that is refreshing. A unique fact about Cathy is her love of flamingos. She collects them in her "spare" time, as she is a watercolorist and member of the New Mexico Watercolor Society, member of Rio Rancho Art Association, member and planner of special events for the Friends of the Library in Rio Rancho, member of the Rio Rancho Garden Club, AND is raising her granddaughter, Melissa.

In her earlier years, Cathy spent the first part of her life living in southern California, raised in a Navy family that moved often. She has traveled extensively and spent two years in Ja-



*Continued on page 3....
Cathy Varney continued....*

pan. She lived in England for five years with her husband, Ron, when he worked for General Dynamics as a test engineer. They have been married for twenty-seven years and settled in Rio Rancho when Ron retired. Ron has three sons.

Cathy holds an Associate's degree in Spanish from Southwest Junior College. She also studied interior design and set up mannequin displays when she worked for Sears. As you

can tell, she leads a very full and interesting life. Yet, Cathy notes that the most interesting thing about her career at ReadWest isn't her, but her students.



NAAL report continued....

ing into how these figures impact our counties. Unfortunately, we do not have updated numbers for NM counties, as NAAL only reviewed the statistics of several chosen states, ours not being one of them. There will be more later. We urge you to read and re-read the materials we've forwarded to you since the report came out, featuring the two perspectives that can help guide us in conversation. In terms of our own needs, we don't have much to go on for now, but I expect we will be able to provide some guidance very soon. In the meantime, since the new report doesn't reflect much change nationally, we will have to continue using what we have. Interestingly, the new report indicates a decided drop in literacy levels among college-students. One has to wonder how that is happening, where the weaknesses are. In economic terms, the NAAL report indicates that of those individuals with below-basic skills, 57 percent were not employed in 1992, and that is in comparison to 2003 when 51 percent were unemployed. Nationally there was a \$28,000 difference between the annual earnings of a below-basic literacy skills adult and one with proficient literacy skills. For obvious reasons, literacy skills were low-

est with those not in the workforce. Peter Waite, ProLiteracy America Executive Director, states that we have to not only move adults from below basic skills, but must move them up to intermediate and proficient. He says that it's only from those stages of literacy that people can expect to be employed with livable wages. The numbers from the NAAL report will be analyzed, recommendations will be made, and New Mexico will respond. We have always been in front of solutions in New Mexico, and that will not change. There's more to this problem than throwing money at it; there is something intrinsically wrong with how people are being managed; how we are expecting them to learn; how we are expecting them to teach. We know the approach we, as literacy providers take, works. The one-to-one approach is the best approach in beginning adult literacy. One to one is quite a luxury, made possible only because of well-trained generous volunteers. But what's happening to everyone else? There will be a long, hard look at this issue, and I hope it will transcend the usual old explanations and solutions. Yes, more funding is needed, but how must it be used?

Upcoming and past events



REGIONAL WORKSHOP CONFERENCES:

The NMCL is setting up the usual regional workshop conferences around the state, starting with Roswell March 18, Albuquerque TVI, April 1, Las Cruces in May and Farmington in June. We have some new workshops and a few always needed old ones. More details in the mail as the dates come closer.

Also we will be providing the *Bridges to Practice* two-day workshop at TVI February 3 & 4, Roswell, March 16 & 17, and Farmington two days before the Regional in June. If you aren't familiar with Bridges to Practice, it involves some incredible information on learning disabilities as relates tutoring and program management. You will be receiving details later if you are in one of the regions listed above.

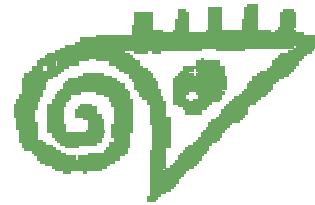
Rena



BUSY BOARD:

The NMCL Board of Directors Public Relations Committee, headed by Ellen Harbaugh, is giving us a little facelift. Nothing radical, just freshening us up a bit...*wonder if they'd do me while they're at it...* Look for some ads on TV and some catchy phrases!

Rena



Gilbert Zamora addresses SFCC, a group of volunteers and interested folks at the "Lasting Impression's Summer Reading Program."
Photo by Kate McGreevy



"Kiss A Pig" Annual Fundraiser for Literacy Volunteers of Socorro County.
Photos by Leo Murphy



Cynthia Izaguirre, NMCL Board Member, KOAT-TV anchor, kisses a pig....he looks rather happy about it.