

The NMCL Report

“Creating a pathway to the future for New Mexicans through literacy”

A Quarterly Newsletter

2nd Quarter, March 2009

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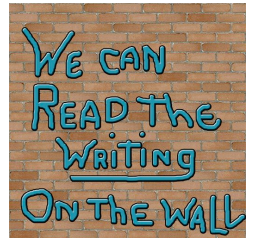
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New Mexico Coalition for Literacy
3209 Mercantile Ct, Ste. B
Santa Fe, NM 87507

505-982-3997
1-800-233-7587

Info@nmcl.org

Robust Turnout For Literacy Day At Roundhouse

By Zara Raab

The keynote speaker at the NMCL's Literacy Day celebration in New Mexico in Santa Fe was a native son, who addressed a large gathering in the Rotunda about the issue of illiteracy in America. It is a crisis this literacy advocate knows firsthand, for he is the subject of his own nationally acclaimed memoir, *The Teacher Who Couldn't Read*, as well as the author of the recently released *The Bridge to Literacy: No Child—Or Adult—Left Behind*.

Corcoran spoke with candor about his early school years in Santa Fe schools, where he was relegated to the slow learners' corner because of an undiagnosed learning disability.



Over the next forty years, Corcoran earned several academic degrees and was a teacher and a successful real estate developer before seeking out

Literacy Day keynote speaker John Corcoran signs his book *The Bridge to Literacy* for First Lady Barbara Richardson. (Photo: Michael Schneider)

tutoring from an adult literacy program he found through his local library. Corcoran’s story is that of a man who has felt helpless, anger, and challenged at having to create a complicated façade to cover his illiteracy in the high-powered worlds of education and real estate. His experiences learning to read and write as a fifty-year-old inspired Corcoran to write two books, make countless public appearances, and create a foundation that bears his name. The mission of the John Corcoran Foundation (<http://www.johncorcoran.com>) is to “facilitate the prevention and eradication of illiteracy in adults and children across America” and converges with the NMCL’s own vision to “create pathways to the future for New Mexicans through literacy.”

Corcoran has met with officials and educators at the White House and all over the country. He has appeared on *The Oprah Winfrey Show*, in other national forums, and works tirelessly on behalf of adult literacy. On Literacy Day this year, Corcoran was introduced by First Lady Barbara Richardson, and earned rousing applause as he told the audience, “Teaching children and adults to read, write, and comprehend is not only our essential duty and investment in America’s future; it is also an act of love.”



Dr. A. Elizabeth Gordon, President of the Board of Directors of the NMCL, introduces New Mexico First Lady Barbara Richardson on Literacy Day. (Photo, Zara Raab)



Friends of adult literacy gathered on Literacy Day in New Mexico in the State Capitol Rotunda (photo: Zara Raab)



Adult literacy advocate Marten Griego, author of *Leaving the House of Tears*, spoke of the pressing need for raising adult literacy levels. (Photo, Virginia Pulver)

WHAT THEY’RE READING...

Contributors to the NMCL’s 2008 Annual Appeal cited these books:

- Leave Me Alone, I’m Reading
- The Pillars of the Earth
- Say Goodnight to Insomnia
- The BIG Necessity
- John Adams
- Lake of Fire
- The Last Chinese Chef
- Three Cups of Tea
- The Messenger
- The Shack

The Ideal Tutor

- Should be willing to work when, where, and under whatever circumstances the student is available.
- Doesn’t apologize if you make a mistake; this lets your student know you’re not perfect.
- Tells Hispanic students that Spanish “is a beautiful language.”
- Builds student confidence.
- Grades students on *improvement*, not achievement.
- Follows student’s lead toward *his/her* goal.
- Reassesses frequently to offer student *encouragement*.

“Mitch” Mitchell, veteran tutor.

Annual Meeting 2008 in Socorro

By Zara Raab

On a warm day in early summer, good people from around the state gathered in Socorro to celebrate the NMCL's 21 years as an organization at its 20th Annual Meeting. Delicious food, hip music, wonderful speakers, and great workshops were enjoyed by all, with Dr. Tom Sticht as keynote speaker and featured workshop presenter and Senator Don Kidd as the luncheon speaker. A wide variety of exhibitors informed participants about literacy resources, from new publications to free legal advice.



Clockwise from left: NMCL board member Rosina Boyd, Sarrah Kidd, keynote speaker Dr. Tom Sticht, fmr. Senator Don Kidd, and VISTA volunteer Mariana Bornholdt



Bruce Donisthorpe, right, presents Virginia Leighten of the Literacy Center at UNM - Taos with the Exceptional Literacy Program Award.



NMCL Executive Director Heather Heurnmund presents Stan Nelson with the Board Member of the Year Award.



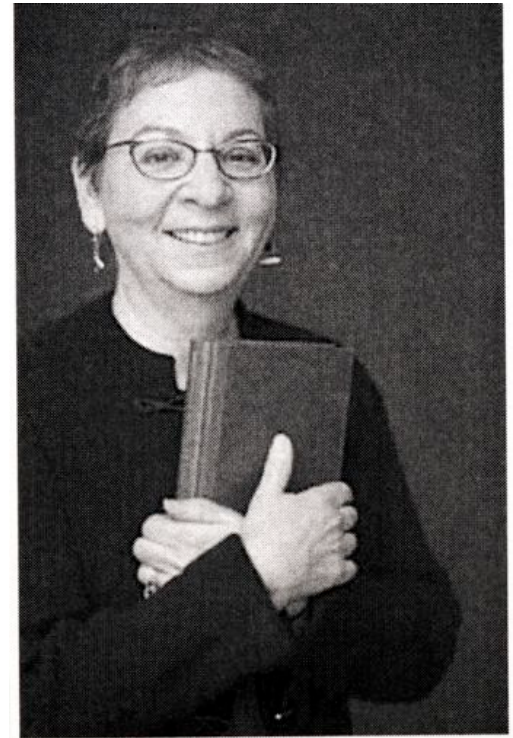
Dr. Tom Sticht delivers his keynote address as conference attendees listen intently.

Annual Meeting 2009: Save the Date!

By Zara Raab

Join the NMCL at the **Nativo Lodge** in **Albuquerque** on **June 18, 2009** for a reception, book signing, and **performance by Woof!** from **6 to 9 p.m.**, and **June 19** for its Annual Meeting from **8 a.m. to 4 p.m.**

Famed book lover and librarian extraordinaire **Nancy Pearl** will be our keynote speaker. Mark your calendar and spread the word! Stipends will be available on a first-come, first-served basis for students, tutors, and board members.



Acclaimed author Nancy Pearl will address the NMCL's Annual Meeting on June 18, 2009.

Learn more about the NMCL's critical work to promote literacy!

Come to one of its...

PATHWAY TO ADULT LITERACY
45-minute Program & Tour Events

the first Tuesday of each month
at 12:15 p.m.

April 7, 2009
May 5, 2009
June 2, 2009

RSVP is required—
call **Michael Schneider**
at 505-982-3997
or e-mail him at
resource.developer@nmcl.org

Carlsbad Literacy Program Reaccredited!

By Delora Elizondo, Program Director

Yes! Mark Cass informed us that we have received our accreditation from ProLiteracy America. I will admit that endless hours went into the project, including the preparation for mock and site visits, but it was well worth every minute! Of course, much recognition is due to Donna Aragon, Letty Naranjo, and Heather Heunermund for assuring me that everything would be okay. They were very encouraging. Mark Cass was our site reviewer. He met with Board members, students, and tutors. We enjoyed his visit and would encourage him to return. I would also like to thank our Board of Directors for their support, contributions to the program, and preparation for the accreditation.



PRIME TIME Reading

By Flo Trujillo
Director, Farmington Public Library

PRIME TIME Family Reading Time is a unique intergenerational six week family literacy program composed of reading, discussion and storytelling. There are only six participating library sites in the southwest. The Farmington Public Library has presented 24 family literacy programs to 360 families throughout San Juan County since 2001.

PRIME TIME and Bilingual PRIME TIME provide a unique program of reading, discussion, and storytelling at public libraries. After a dinner snack,

each 90-minute session also includes a five-minute "library commercial," presented in Spanish and English in bilingual PRIME TIME programs. Children aged six to 10 must be accompanied by an adult (parent, grandparent, etc) to the weekly sessions. Bilingual PRIME TIME programs are specifically tailored for Spanish/English speaking families. Three beautifully illustrated children's books are presented by a storyteller, and then a humanities scholar leads a discussion on the themes (such as greed, dreams, or fairness) that evening's books contain.

The parents do not feel humiliated or talked down to because the scholar is talking about the themes in an open-ended way that taps into ANY age (What did you dream about when you were little? What do you dream about now? How have your dreams changed?)



The end product in terms of truly changing attitudes and behaviors about reading are well worth the effort. PRIME TIME transforms families into lifelong readers. It creates the precondition for all learning and helps to end the cycle of inter-generational illiteracy.

Information for PRIME TIME Family Reading Time can be found on the web-page of the Louisiana Endowment for the Humanities (<http://www.leh.org>) or the Farmington Public Library at (505) 599-1261.

Mark Your Calendars for National Volunteer Week April 19-25

Unlocking the Doors to Learning

[This article was contributed by one of our program directors. Adam is not this student's real name.]

Adam brought an installation brochure for a lock set that he was installing on a door. We began to work through it. Because it is his profession, he knows how to install the lock. What he has been missing is being able to read the words. He relies on the pictures. As we began to read, he was happy to find that he had been installing the lock correctly. Over several sessions, we completed reading the installation brochure.



Adam is able to read better than he gives himself credit for. He just needs repetitive practice. I get the impression he is looking for a "magic formula" that will make reading easy. I told him that he knows these words. He just doesn't know what they look like. Only practice and repetition will change that.

Kidd Gift Funds Literacy Chair at New Mexico State University

By Zara Raab

The NMCL has been named as a collaborator in the new Don and Sarrah Kidd Endowed Chair in Literacy in the College of Education at New Mexico State University. Funds for the Chair were recently given to NMSU by Carlsbad banker and fmr. Senator Don Kidd and his wife, Sarrah, longtime friends of the NMCL and literacy. The chair will attract and reward high quality teaching, research, service and outreach to New Mexico's public schools by a faculty member in the Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

"Learning to read was the best thing that ever happened to me," Don Kidd said. "Reading was always my way of dealing with a lack of formal education. If you can read, you can learn."

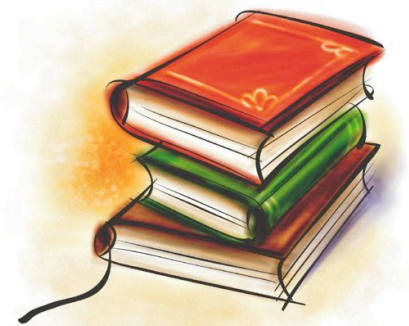
Kidd is president and chief executive officer of Western Commerce Bank in Carlsbad, N.M.; chairman of the board and chief executive officer of Western Bank in Alamogordo, N.M.; and president and chief executive officer of Western Bank in Clovis, N.M. Even before the establishment of the Chair, Senator Kidd has been a tireless advocate for literacy and education in New Mexico.



Heather Heunermund, NMCL Executive Director, presents Senator Don Kidd with the NMCL's Distinguished Service award at the NMCL's Annual Meeting in Socorro in June 2008.

**"If you can read,
you can learn."**

Senator Don Kidd,
banker and longtime
friend of literacy



NMCL Staff:

Heather Heunermund
Executive Director

Arlene Kinart
Business & Financial Manager

Michael Schneider
Resource Developer

Zara Raab
Administrative Assistant
Editor, The NMCL Report

VISTA Volunteers
07-08 & 08-09:
(We will miss you!)

Mariana Bornholdt
Data Consultant

Virginia Pulver
Recruitment Consultant

Bravo! to these accredited members of ProLiteracy...

- * Carlsbad Literacy Program
- * Deming Literacy Program
- * Lincoln County Literacy Council
- * Literacy Volunteer Tutor Program @ CNM Community College
- * Literacy Volunteers of Dona Ana
- * Literacy Volunteers of Santa Fe
- * Literacy Volunteers of Socorro
- * Read "Write" Adult Literacy Program
- * ReadWest, Inc.
- * Project Read: San Juan College
- * Valencia County Literacy Council



Letty Naranjo, Executive Director, Literacy Volunteers of Santa Fe, is an accredited member of ProLiteracy.

The NMCL encourages your program to seek national accreditation and can support your program throughout the process with professional consultation and mock site reviews. Contact heather@nmcl.org for more information.

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New Mexico Coalition for Literacy



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