

The EMIE BULLETIN is published quarterly.

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Hello EMIERT Colleagues,

Our ALA Midwinter meeting is fast approaching. The 2008 conference will become part of our Round Table's history as we hold our first fund-raiser, an event we anticipate will become an annual opportunity to raise the visibility of EMIERT, grow our financial reserves to fund culturally diverse programming and initiatives, and have a great evening socializing with our colleagues. So please, don't forget to register . . . and pass on the information about our fund-raiser to your colleagues!

At Midwinter we will continue with our tradition of "Sunday Is EMIERT Day." The Executive Board is scheduled to meet Sunday, January 13, from 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m., followed by the All-Committees session, scheduled from 10:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. Both meetings are open, and I invite each of you to attend one or both sessions to meet other EMIERT members, learn more about the organization, and identify ways that you might be interested in participating actively with EMIERT. At this time I am beginning to form the Executive Board agenda. High on the agenda are items that reflect my priorities for my two-year term as EMIERT's chair: (1) raise EMIERT's visibility; (2) add to EMIERT's membership base; and (3) support EMIERT committees in working together to develop and offer programs and projects that speak to the inclusiveness of culturally diverse groups and communities.

EMIERT officers and committees share these goals, and everyone over the past months has been working hard toward their attainment. The EMIERT Executive Board approved an initiative to sponsor a contest for an official EMIERT logo. Marty Goldberg, a long-time EMIERT supporter and currently a member-at-large, will head a small group of EMIERT members who will draw up contest guidelines, publicize the contest to ALA members and library schools, review contest submissions, and select the winning design. The EMIERT logo will head the *EMIE Bulletin* pages, the EMIERT web site hosted by ALA, our correspondence, our publicity announcements, and other publications or communications coming from EMIERT committees and the Executive Board. With a well-designed logo we will be able to establish a more solid identifiable presence for EMIERT in print, electronically, and psychologically. Stay tuned for future news about the competition from Marty and his committee. And we certainly welcome submissions from any of you who are talented graphic designers!

In the workplace each of us has used technology and the Internet as tools to help promote our institutions and make our libraries more accessible. In EMIERT we also are looking at the importance of having a vital web presence. Planning has begun on designing a more dynamic EMIERT web site that will offer members valuable content ranging from bibliographies and journal articles to resource lists. We are looking forward enthusiastically to the impending migration of our ALA-sponsored web site to new software and technology. Once the migration is complete and the new features have been added, you might want to consider bookmarking or linking to the EMIERT pages. Again, we invite your participation by suggesting to us the content that you would find useful on an EMIERT web site, or by volunteering to work with us on the redesign project. Please contact Sarah Smith (ssmith@saclibrary.org), our webmaster, if you are interested in participating. EMIERT, like ALA and many of our own libraries, now has a Facebook presence. Over the next few months we will be exploring how best to use social networking to publicize EMIERT and to encourage broader participation. Please share your suggestions with Roberto Delgado (rdelgado@lib.ucdavis.edu), our *Bulletin* editor.

In closing, I want to convey how much I am enjoying working with our EMIERT Executive Board, our committees, and our membership. This is a very exciting time for EMIERT, and I look forward to each new milestone that we reach together.

Respectfully Submitted,

Myra Appel, Chair
Ethnic and Multicultural Information Exchange Round Table

BOOKS MATTER

by tatiana de la tierra

fresh out of prison, the man was looking for his ex girlfriend. nine years had passed. “she lived in a downstairs apartment on eucalyptus,” he said. but she wasn’t there any more; no one in the building had a clue. her first name was wendy. her last name? there were several possibilities, but that didn’t daunt him. “i heard that now, on a computer, you can find anything in just a few seconds.”

after years perched in the ivory tower of a research one university, i was promptly brought down to earth.

welcome to the public library, where people’s needs have a direct correlation to the bare essentials of their lives. a young immigrant mother is worried that her 7-year-old won’t pass into second grade. are there books in english easy enough for the mother to read so she can help her daughter study? a man who works from 7:00 am–4:00 pm each day needs to know how he can get around the library’s 10:00 am–2:00 pm schedule to process passport applications. the man of the house needs to fix the family’s plumbing. is there a book that can walk him through it? the pregnant woman wants a book of baby names in spanish, and her back hurts. do we have books on doing yoga during pregnancy?

all those library materials that i thought were beneath me—self-help guides, recipe books, romance novels, english as a second language kits, children’s books, renter’s rights pamphlets, general education diploma study guides, religious tomes, animated videos, the very basic *encyclopedia britannica* and the fluffy *vanidades*—they are now my world. just months ago i was an information literacy librarian at the university at buffalo, freewheeling with databases; i had 372 to choose from on the databases by title page. inglewood public library, where i now work, lists a mere 13. and to be honest, they don’t get that much use. there’s no onslaught of undergraduate students with english composition research papers due tomorrow. students from the neighborhood walk in to do their homework. children come for story time. parents and working people come for basic resources. and in large part, people’s needs are met the old-fashioned way, with books.

books matter.

oh, how i remember books. before becoming a librarian i thought, as many people do, that as a librarian i’d be working with books all day, flipping through pages, caressing the spines, cruising the covers. i’d read a paragraph or two here and there, becoming immersed in the text on occasion. i’d be intrigued by plots. i’d marvel at metaphors, converse with classic authors, discover new ones.

instead, i found myself wracking my brain with one database after the next. the circulating collections in the undergraduate library where i worked were on different floors. the non-circulating books were by the reference desk, but most reference questions cata-

pulted me to the online subject guides. i nearly forgot all about books as i became enamored with databases. i felt privileged to have those quick and incredible (and expensive) resources at my fingertips. i sang their praises to students and faculty. i focused many a bibliographic instruction session on research strategies for databases and talked up my favorite ones. i even lobbied for specific products for my constituents when it came time to crunch numbers in the libraries’ acquisitions meetings.

but the books, at least on a quotidian basis—i had to let them go. i could stroke all the books i wanted at the international book fairs i frequented. could cite them from worldcat or from bibliographies. could appreciate them in catalogs, on amazon, from reviews in our professional literature. could order them by request from faculty and students and by recommendation from trusted vendors. could envision them from the bibliographic records on the online catalog. but were they at arms reach? was i tripping over them? were cartfuls of books blocking the path in my office? hardly. aside from my personal collection at home and the books i sought for my own research at the university library, my job as a librarian was pretty book-less.

now, in my first gig as a public librarian, books are in my hands every day. they’re laying in wooden bins; packed in cardboard boxes; standing up on the shelves; in stacks on my desk, on the floor, on top of every table. i am getting intimate with books again. the dust, the yellowed pages, the circulation record, the subject headings, the call number. i am ordering books for the collection from my office on the first floor and watching them arrive through the delivery door on the parking level in the back. i am thinking about marc records and subject headings for the incoming books.

i am getting slowed down by books. i am looking, feeling, even reading. i’m being taken back in time with illustrations and word play in children’s books. remembering authors i once knew well. checking out a few i’d heard of but never met personally.

yes, books are back. at times i miss those databases, elitist academic darlings that they are. who wouldn’t enjoy a fancy little race car? but for the working class folks in the vicinity of my library, and for me at this moment, books are just fine.

i missed books, and i’m glad to have them back.

tatiana de la tierra is director of hispanic services at inglewood public library.

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Recent Children's Books on Arabs and Arab Americans: A Selected Bibliography

By Lyn Miller-Lachmann

Al-Rawi, Rosina-Fawzia B. (2006). *Midnight tales: a woman's journey through the Middle East*. Northampton, MA: Interlink Books.

The author's travels through her native region offer insights into Arabic history, culture, and language as well as daily life in the Middle East today. (High School)

Alshalabi, F. & Drexler, S. (2003). *The sky changed forever*. Boulder, CO: Aunt Strawberry Books.

After the attacks of September 11, 2001, a Kuwaiti-American girl living in Colorado is shunned at school, and her family receives threatening messages. (Middle/High School)

Balouch, K. (2006). *Mystery bottle*. New York: Hyperion Books for Children.

A magic bottle whisks a seven-year-old Iranian-American boy from his home in Brooklyn, New York, to his grandfather's village in Iran. (Primary)

Beardwood, M. (2007). *The children's encyclopaedia of Arabia*. London: Stacey International.

A large array of facts in text and pictures gives readers an overview of the geography, flora and fauna, history, and cultures of the Arabian Peninsula. (All ages)

Clinton, C. (2004). *A stone in my hand*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press.

A Palestinian teenager living during the First Intifada (1987–1993) copes with the death of her father in a bus bombing while working in Israel and her brother's growing involvement in the militant groups that recruit in their impoverished village. (Middle/High School)

Discovering world cultures: The Middle East. (2004). Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

An excellent choice for school and library reference, this encyclopedia offers country-by-country overviews, covering the people, geography, major cities, climate and natural resources, history, politics, economy, religion, and daily life. Conflicts and challenges are addressed in the context of each topic. (Intermediate and up)

Ellis, D. (2004). *Three wishes: Palestinian and Israeli children speak*. Toronto, ON: Groundwood Books.

Thought-provoking interviews conducted among Palestinian and Israeli children in 2002 reveal how the violence of the Second Intifada has affected them. (Middle/High School)

Farmer, N., & De Marcken, G. (2006). *Clever Ali*. New York: Orchard Books.

The author and illustrator offer a historically accurate portrait of Sultan Al-Azeez and his homing pigeons in twelfth-century Egypt, in the process revealing the history, politics, language, and culture of the time. (Intermediate)

Laird, E., & Nimr, S. (2006). *A little piece of ground*. Chicago, IL: Haymarket Books.

A twelve-year-old Palestinian boy living on the West Bank clears a rubble-strewn patch of ground to make a soccer field and is trapped there with a friend when the Israeli army imposes curfew. (Middle/High School)

Leone, A. T. (2007). *Swimming toward the light: A novel*. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.

Set in Washington, D.C., in the 1950s, this novel told from the point of view of a rebellious teenage girl's older sister captures Lebanese-American parents and children navigating between two cultures. (High School)

Marston, E. (2005). *Figs and fate: Stories about growing up in the Arab world today*. New York: George Braziller.

Five short stories filled with rich descriptions and compelling characterizations portray the lives of teenagers from Egypt, Lebanon, Iraq, and Syria. (Middle/High School)

Mead, A. (2007). *Dawn and dusk*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux.

A Kurdish refugee recently arrived in the United States recalls the circumstances that forced him, his mother, and his sister to flee Iran in 1982, including his father becoming an Iranian police informer and Saddam Hussein's forces gassing his village during the Iran-Iraq war. (Middle School)

Nye, N. S. (1997). *Habibi*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.

This is the semi-autobiographical story of a young Arab-Ameri-

can teenager who returns for a year with her American family to live in her father's hometown near Jerusalem. It shows her difficulties in adjusting to attitudes different from the ones she grew up with in America. (Intermediate/Middle School)

Winter, J. (2005). *The librarian of Basra: A true story from Iraq*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt.

The author/illustrator tells the story of Alia Muhammad Baker, who on the eve of the 2003 war salvaged 30,000 books from Basra's public library by smuggling them out and into private homes all over the city before the library was destroyed. Her efforts high-

light the love of learning and literature that the Iraqi people have possessed since antiquity. (Primary/Intermediate)

Wolf, B. (2003). *Coming to America: A Muslim family's story*. New York: Lee & Low Books.

This charming photo essay introduces a recently immigrated Egyptian family, showing family members' daily lives and the triumphs and struggles of new immigrants learning a new language and culture while holding on to their cherished traditions. (Primary/Intermediate)

MULTICULTURALISM AND U.S. LIBRARIES 1876-2007

By Plummer Alston "Al" Jones

This chronology is the third installment (1982-1992); later ones will appear in subsequent issues of the EMIE Bulletin.

1982	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Sanctuary Movement, estimated at about 100,000 participants, establishes a network of approximately 250 churches, synagogues, and Quaker meeting houses to provide transportation, shelter, and protection for hundreds of Central Americans who would otherwise have been departed to an almost certain death in their native lands. • The Ethnic Materials and Information Exchange (EMIE) Task Force of the ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table, founded by David Cohen, is granted Round Table status at the ALA Annual Conference in Philadelphia and continues to address issues of multiculturalism and ethnic studies that affect the development of ethnic collections to serve the increasingly diverse clientele of all types of libraries.
1983	The Midwest Chinese American Librarians Association, established in 1973 at Rosary College (now Dominican University) under the leadership of Tse-Chung Li, and the Chinese American Librarians Association, established at Stanford University in 1974 by Irene Yeh, merge under the name of the Chinese American Librarians Association (CALA).
1986	Immigration Reform and Control Act, also known as the Simpson-Rodino Act, authorizes permanent resident status for illegal immigrants who have resided in the United States since January 1, 1982.
1988	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • U.S. Congress appropriates \$1.5 billion to provide restitution to Japanese-Americans interned during World War II. • Kennedy-Donnelly Act, also known as the Irish Bill, extends permanent resident status for illegal Irish immigrants who have arrived in the United States since 1982.
1989	The Transborder Library Forum (Foro Transfronterizo de Bibliotecas) is founded to provide a forum for better communication between libraries in Mexico and the United States in the borderlands region, which extends nearly 2,000 miles across the states of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California in the United States, and the states of Nuevo Leon, Coahuila, Tamaulipas, Chihuahua, Sonora, and Baja California Norte in Mexico.
1990	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immigration Reform Act provides safe haven to Salvadoran refugees and eliminates barriers against the entry of homosexuals, sufferers from AIDS, and communists. • The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) prohibits discrimination against persons with disabilities regardless of racial or ethnic background. • The National Literacy Act establishes the National Institute for Literacy to aid between 21 and 23 percent of the adult citizens of the United States who are unable to read or write.
1991	Delegates to the second White House Conference on Library and Information Services held July 9–13 in Washington, D.C., endorse 95 recommendations calling for strengthening and expanding existing LSCA, HEA, and ESEA legislation, expanding networks and access to information, affirming the need for educating and hiring ethnic and minority librarians, and calling for the establishment of a national coalition for information literacy.
1992	The ALA Ethnic and Multicultural Information Exchange Round Table (EMIERT) publishes the first edition of <i>Ventures into Cultures</i> .