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REFORMA Oregon Chapter

Erratum

Correct capitalization in title of Fernandez's article, added IMLS grant support statement to Gitlitz's article 8/4/17

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Upcoming Issue

Spring 2017

*Come What May or Apocalypse
Now? The Evolution of
Oregon Libraries*

ON THE COVER
REFORMA Oregon Chapter meeting
at the Albany Public Library
February 28, 2015.



From the Guest Editor



Martín Blasco, *OLAQ Guest Editor*

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A native of Argentina, Martín Blasco has worked with underserved communities for many years. Before becoming a librarian, he carried out ethnographic and social research among drug users in New York City. Upon receiving his MLS from Long Island University, he began working in Peekskill, New York, where his outreach work began not as an official title, but by necessity to serve new immigrants. He is working now as an Outreach Librarian for Latino and Multicultural Services at Washington County Cooperative Library Services.

During the 2014 OLA Annual Conference in Salem, a group of librarians met informally for lunch to discuss the idea of creating a chapter of REFORMA (The National Association to Promote Library and Information to Latinos and Spanish Speaking) in Oregon.

In our second meeting at the end of 2014 in the Gresham branch of the Multnomah County Library (MCL), we formalized the creation of the REFORMA Oregon Chapter. By mid-2015, we became a Round Table in OLA. During this short period of time, we have increased in numbers, organized well-attended presentations during OLA conferences, held Mock Pura Belpré Awards, and scheduled quarterly meetings where participants have opportunities to share experiences and to network, as well as to present a different array of subjects related to our Latino and Spanish-speaking community.

Oregon is a state with its own characteristics. Some counties are diverse, others not. The Latino population in the state also has its own distinctiveness. As we work with this community, we become aware that there is a multitude of diverse stories, experiences, and traditions from both foreign and US-born Latinos.

We are half a million strong, make up 12 percent of the state population, and have the lowest median age. Almost one quarter of the Latino population consists of K–12 students; unfortunately a third of Latinos under the age of 17 live in poverty.

Of course, those Latinos who are foreign-born are more at risk due to the lack of knowledge of our country's customs. Immigrant families from south of the border use our libraries less, but they also appreciate them the most. What's preventing them from using libraries? They are definitely not averse to books and do not find libraries unhelpful, but the lack of information on what they can gain from the various libraries may be the issue.

In the current issue of *OLAQ*, five librarians coming from different cultural origins but with the same enthusiasm to serve our community are exploring some of the issues presented in this introduction. Their articles reflect two common tasks for every librarian working with Latinos: outreach and collaboration.

OLAQ

In terms of outreach, we must first establish connections with our local community. Collaborations with public agencies and social organizations are key. Patty Lara, from the Hood River County Library District, brings her unique, unorthodox ways, what she calls “nontraditional outreach services,” to successfully promote her library services and programs. Lara has been thinking outside of the box, and now she is reaping the rewards.

Gabriela Martinez Mercier is a student with a challenging work-study job as a library assistant at a “small, rural, Pacific Northwest community college,” the Columbia Gorge Community College. She calls attention to how we define library patrons, as referred to in library mission statements. She also writes about the importance of making professional connections and finding useful resources, and how an organization like the REFORMA Oregon Chapter and Round Table is helping her to offer better services to her academic community.

Our chapter President, Natalia Fernández, curator of the Oregon Multicultural Archives (OMA) at Oregon State University, is doing vital work to preserve individual and family stories with which we, as a diverse community, can identify. Her article emphasizes the importance of connections and collaborations between different libraries, in this case, an academic and a public one.

Keeping collaboration in mind, Deborah Gitlitz, Outreach Librarian at Wilsonville Public Library, has been working over the past year to establish connections in order to acquire quality materials in Spanish at the International Book Fair (Feria Internacional del Libro-FIL) in Guadalajara, Mexico. She focuses on the works of Latin American authors and illustrators which act as cultural mirrors or windows for library patrons, especially children. She began the Libros for Oregon project to help small and rural libraries develop collections which both reflect the lives of immigrants and/or U.S.-born Latinos, and open a whole new world to those who are not part of this diverse population. Gitlitz stresses the importance of reaching more library users by improving diversity in the library collections.

The demographic changes in recent years have been a reflection of many factors including an increase in the birth rate among so-called “minorities,” economic exclusion of immigrants in their original countries, and political destabilization which caused the migration of refugees affected, in most cases, by United States foreign policy. These events have caused the need for quality collections which reflect these changes. Patricia Morán, Youth Librarian at MCL, has been promoting Spanish language collections and connecting with professionals on both sides of the border between Mexico and the United States. Her contribution, again, is important to create more cultural mirrors or windows for Latino library patrons in our state.

These articles are just a fraction of stories by librarians working with and in this diverse population. The work of our chapter is an ongoing dialogue among us librarians as well as those who we serve. REFORMA Oregon, as a chapter of the national organization and as a round table of OLA, is open to anyone who works or would like to work with Latinos, or is interested in learning about this community. We know that our organization is crucial to Oregon — now more than ever. We have the responsibility to make sure that we are ready to serve our patrons as well as we can, especially in these uncertain times. REFORMA Oregon invites you to contact us or to come to our meetings. The doors are open to all.

We invite you to visit our website: <http://reformaoregon.weebly.com/> 



Impacting Rural Hispanic Communities by Reaching Out, Connecting and Providing Services at Different Levels

by **Patty Lara**
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PATTY LARA

Patty Lara has been the Outreach Specialist with the Hood River County Library District for over five years now. She graduated from Portland Community College in 2010 with an Associate of Applied Science Degree in Criminal Justice. Yes, that's right Criminal Justice. She loves her job as an Outreach Specialist and can't imagine doing anything else. Patty is excited to share her experiences and is open to corresponding with you.

In my role as an outreach specialist, I have created community events, partnered with various organizations, and participated in nontraditional programs in order to attract the vast Hispanic populations in the area to the various Hood River County libraries.

Hood River County is a rural community, and an estimated 31 percent of the population is Hispanic. The great thing about this community is that it has invested its efforts in honoring and accepting the Hispanic culture and bringing the community together as a whole. There is a little town named Odell, about eight miles south of Hood River, where I have focused my outreach efforts. Odell currently has an estimated Hispanic population of 65 percent.

When I think about my position at the library, my first thought has always been, "How would I get my parents to come to my events?" A huge influence on my creative thinking process was attending my first OLA conference. During the conference, I attended a session that focused on outreach to Hispanic communities. The two things that stuck with me were: always provide food, and try to focus on two or three big programs per year. That is exactly what I have done. I took the time to ask my parents what they thought of that advice, and they agreed. If they didn't have to cook and it was an event they could relate to culturally, they would participate.

I have been working for the Hood River County Library District since December 2011. After two years of working at the library, we were approved for an LSTA grant. That increased my hours from part time to full time. The grant help fund my position, and the focus would be to promote library services to the Odell Hispanic population. My first thought was to meet people where they currently were instead of expecting them to come to us. The ideas started flowing, and I dedicated my time and efforts to two big events: Día de los Niños and Día de los Muertos.

The Hood River County Library District has been celebrating Día de los Muertos and Día de los Niños in Odell for about four years now. Both celebrations are filled with Mexican culture.





Taking a picture at the photo booth (Me).



Group of kids at the photo booth.

Día de los Muertos is celebrated on November 1 and 2. It is a day to remember passed loved ones. I have been able to bring such a big event to this small town because of great community partners and community volunteers. This past November local sponsors helped provide a full dinner including dessert and coffee, live music, and crafts for kids. The feedback from the community was positive, and over 300 people attended.

In April 2016, I focused my efforts on Día de los Niños. I wanted to develop a fun and friendly celebration for kids and their families that would also serve as a resource fair. Over 20 organizations participated in the event. Each organization had their own booth. They were asked to bring a carnival themed game, and provide giveaways for the kids. Resources ranged from eye care, dental care, to immigration law services. We also had an organization give out and do trades on bicycles and helmets. This event attracted over 350 guests, and I was able to give out over 150 books. While planning these two events, I was also thinking of other creative ways of getting to know the public and how to offer my services on their time and level.

One of my creative and continuing efforts to provide outreach to the Odell community has been to offer library services at a Zumba class. I have been visiting the class for over two years. This opportunity came to be because of my little sister. She took me to a free community Zumba class offered in Odell. As I quickly discovered, this was a perfect opportunity to promote library services. I attended the next Zumba class where I presented my ideas to promote the library



Día de los Muertos celebration.





Kids lining up to get their free book.

to the instructors, and they were excited to partner with me. I now carry with me a crate of books, laptop and scanner. I have the ability to register new patrons and provide library services once a week.

Participating in the classes has been a humbling experience. Just last year, I had an older woman ask me for a library card. She was a little quiet and reserved, and she told me she was specifically looking for a certain book. I told her I didn't have it at that moment, but I would bring it to the next class. She came up to me during the following class, and I showed her the book. She was so happy and told me she would

have never been able to get a hold of a book like that because she didn't have the resources to get to the library. I knew then that my outreach efforts were truly making a difference.

Recently, I have also been representing the library as a DJ on our local radio station, Radio Tierra on 95.1 FM. With the encouragement of the radio director, I now have two shows. One is called *La Hora Infantil*, which focuses on children. For an hour I play *Rondas Infantiles* (Spanish children's songs), provide a story, and talk about the things the library is doing. I recently started a new thirty-minute segment called *Recursos Informativos*. During this time I have a special guest who talks about the services they provide to the Spanish speaking community. I have had over 15 organizations participate and have made connections with great people. I also give other libraries within broadcast range the opportunity to come on my show to talk about the services and programs they offer. It is a great way to stay connected and show the surrounding areas that our focus is all the same. Since I started appearing on the radio, the attendance at my programs has increased. Many people call in during my show to voice their thoughts and opinions, and so far, everything has been positive.



St. Francis Zumba class teaching kids some Zumba moves.






Taking a little time off air to take a picture with the Directors of the Migrant Summer School.

Finally, I would like to mention a program that the library has been involved in for a year now. With Ready to Read funds, the support of Wy'east Middle School in Odell and our Children's Services staff, the library has set forward another great project. We now provide bus transportation from Odell to Hood River and back; we call this the Odell Express Bus. With the support of the school, they send out an auto-call the night before the bus to families. When children and families arrive at the library, they get the opportunity to watch a movie, have a snack, and participate in story time. Each child leaves with a free book. The service is intended to provide transportation services to families that don't have the resources to make it to town.

For the past four years, I have used nontraditional outreach services to target my intended public. Through these efforts, I have reached out to a large population of non-library users. I have been able to measure my success by the number of people who participate in my events and by their positive feedback. I am truly grateful for the opportunity I have had to reach this great community, and I will continue to go out and be a voice for the library.

I cannot finish this article without giving credit to the support of REFORMA Oregon. I'm currently the Co-Chair of the group and have been involved with them since it became its own chapter. With the help of this group, I have gone outside my comfort zone and participated in things I would have never been a part of. This group has been guided me to further my success with my targeted population. Also, in attending the previously mentioned OLA conference session on outreach to Hispanic communities, I had the opportunity to meet some great people that led me in the right direction. I don't think I would be where I am today without their support and guidance. 



Change is the only Constant:

Serving the Latinx Community With Help From REFORMA Oregon

by **Gabriela Martínez
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GABRIELA MARTÍNEZ MERCIER

Gabriela is a Library Assistant at Columbia Gorge Community College. She earned her B.A. in Latin American Studies and, more recently, her MLS. She did not know growing up that she wanted to become a librarian. But then she did. Now she works every day to become a better one than she was the day before.

Part of the reason “change is the only constant” is cliché is because it holds true in many different contexts. Libraries are not what they were one hundred years ago. One could argue they are not even what they were fifty years ago. Societies evolve, populations fluctuate, and norms shift. As librarians, we are called to meet the needs of our patrons, though who or what falls under the umbrella term of “patrons” often depends on the library’s mission statement.

For the last few decades, the Latinx community has been seen as flourishing. Even with the recent decline in the growth rate following the recession discussed by Stepler and Lopez at the Pew Research Center (2016), the Latinx population continues to factor greatly into the changing social outlook of the United States. While not a perfect comparison, Columbia Gorge Community College Library (CGCC Library) has elements reflective of the phenomenon as a whole, though the evidence is more pronounced in the larger U.S. population. Compared to institutions in the Southwestern and Northeastern states, the Pacific Northwest, and rural Oregon in particular, appear to be taking longer to feel the fluctuations in Latinx demographics. This seems evident because public libraries in general have had a lengthier history of working with Latinxs than a very small, rural, Pacific Northwest, community college’s academic library like CGCC. Consequently, librarians like myself have an excellent opportunity to reflect more closely on what other libraries have accomplished so far and how it can be translated to institutions like ours.

The REFORMA tagline is “the national association to promote library and information services to Latinxs and the Spanish-speaking,” and its five primary goals include activities like “advocacy on behalf of the information needs of the Latino community” and “development of Spanish-language and Latino-oriented library collections” (“About REFORMA,” n.d.). REFORMA OR is one chapter of this larger organization. The people that make up REFORMA OR represent many types, sizes, and populations of Oregon libraries; their workplaces run the gamut from tiny county libraries to large public research university libraries and everything in between. This characteristic of the chapter and organization — the variation in the libraries that REFORMA OR represents — is one of the primary benefits.

People and Resources

With only three library staff members — the library director, an IT liaison, and myself — at this rural, academic library, there is a lot of library work distributed between the staff. As one might imagine, being part of such a small team comes with obstacles, one of which is undoubtedly time and duty management. Forming and fostering symbiotic, collaborative relationships is one way professionals can manage workload and streamline processes. By



participating in REFORMA OR, and thereby gaining and cultivating connections as well as resources from the wide assortment of participating libraries, I am more effective at my job. While this sentiment is likely true for any number of library associations, official and unofficial, I have found REFORMA OR to be particularly rewarding and necessary. Since REFORMA OR has a growing social media presence and website, as well as official meetings several times per year, it allows me opportunities for sustainable official and unofficial social interactions with colleagues. Importantly, the chapter works to disseminate directories and resource lists (particularly in terms of grants, collection development from publishers abroad, community organizations, and best-practices), all of which are shared publically on their website. Additionally, the national association has an active listserv full of enthusiastic and knowledgeable people constantly sharing, supporting, and reflecting on their work and how it serves their patrons. In short, these resources and people provide a wealth of information, experience, and ideas, all involved in and insightful about Latinx and Spanish-speaking patrons and what their needs might be.

Professional Development

I'm a new professional, and this is my first career. As such, I am particularly interested in areas in which I can expand upon and improve my professional and personal growth. REFORMA OR presents me one such opportunity. I have not found it to be unwelcoming or reluctant to accept newcomers. In fact, as a relatively new chapter, REFORMA OR has space for expansion and is always looking for new voices, interests, and best-practices. With several committees, annual events, workshops, and many on-going projects, there is room for broadening one's professional experience and network. To be blunt, not every member of REFORMA OR has a home institution with the capacity to provide a robust professional development budget. When one considers the potential for time and workflow interruptions, such as an absent team member, it becomes even more important that any "outside" time be relevant and full of opportunities to give back. In addition to volunteering and serving, REFORMA OR members are encouraged to publish, present, and do poster sessions. And because REFORMA OR strives to connect all types of library staff, working to assuage the disparity in professional development opportunities is something we work to improve constantly.

Institutional Shifts

As CGCC's student demographics continue to diversify, our administration has worked to have the college and institutional culture better reflect the shifting norms. One way the administration hopes to do this is by continuing to sustain the designation of a Hispanic-Serving Institution (HSI). It is a competitive process, and as of this writing, the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) lists CGCC as one of only two HSI designated colleges in Oregon, with four others well on their way to earning the designation ("Previous Lists of HSIs," n.d.). As CGCC makes strides to better align the institutional culture with its student body, the library has an amazing opportunity to avail itself as a leader in this effort. In connecting more closely with the REFORMA OR Chapter and REFORMA National, the CGCC Library has partnerships and resources with which it can better engage the needs and expectations of addressing the institution's culture shift and the



maintenance of the HSI label. Setting itself up as a co-leader and bridge between the larger student affairs and curriculum sides of the institution would keep the library staff at the forefront of the conversation.

Conclusion

In short, joining REFORMA OR for its people and resources, professional development opportunities, and platform in discourse about Latinxs in libraries is sensible and can also be extremely invigorating. I encourage you all to marry those practical and refreshing reasons and take part in this great library association. ¡Bienvenido! 🐼

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Las Historias de Latinos en Oregón: Canby, Oregón

An Oral History Project Collaboration Between a Librarian and an Archivist

by **Natalia Fernández**
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NATALIA FERNÁNDEZ

Natalia is the Curator and Archivist of the Oregon Multicultural Archives (OMA) and the OSU Queer Archives (OSQA) at the Oregon State University Special Collections and Archives Research Center. Fernández's mission for directing the OMA and the OSQA is to work in collaboration with Oregon's African American, Asian American, Latino/a, Native American, and OSU's LGBTQ+ communities to support them in preserving their histories and sharing their stories. Her scholarship relates to her work as an archivist, specifically best practices for working with communities of color. Fernández has been published in the *Oregon Historical Quarterly*, *Journal of Western Archives*, *The*

American Archivist, and *Multicultural Perspectives*. Fernández holds an M.A. in Information Resources and Library Science from the University of Arizona (U of A). She graduated from the U of A Knowledge River Program, a program that focuses on community-based librarianship and partnerships with traditionally under-served communities.

Introduction

In the spring of 2015, I began the oral history project *Latinos en Oregón* to document the stories of Oregon's Latino/a communities. As the curator and archivist of the Oregon Multicultural Archives (OMA) at the Oregon State University (OSU) Special Collections and Archives Research Center, my job is to assist in preserving the histories and sharing the stories that document Oregon's African American, Asian American, Latino/a, and Native American communities (Oregon Multicultural Archives, 2005). There are gaps in the historical record as it pertains to people of color in Oregon, and the OMA seeks to address those gaps and empower communities to share their stories. Because oral histories are the recorded life stories of the people who lived them, they are a unique addition to the historical record. Oral histories enable interviewees to share their perspectives, thoughts, and opinions about their lives and the communities in which they live. *Latinos en Oregón* began in Jefferson County as a collaboration between the OMA and OSU's Juntos Program, an after-school program that aims to prepare Latino/a high school students and their families for college. The project expanded to Yamhill County in 2016 as part of a yearlong county grant project. The grant included partnerships between the local historical society and the community-based, non-profit organization, Unidos Bridging Community. It was in the spring of 2016 that I embarked on a small, short-term oral history project in collaboration with the Canby Public Library, a collaboration that began through REFORMA Oregon. In this article, I will share the background history about the



Latinos en Oregon project, detail the collaboration between the OMA and the Canby Public Library, and provide information about the Canby oral history interviews and the stories the interviewees shared.

Project Background

I joined REFORMA Oregon in early 2015, shortly after its establishment in late 2014 as an official REFORMA National Chapter. Soon after, I began attending the in-person quarterly meetings. The meetings were always very inspirational as each of the attendees, mostly public librarians, shared updates on their various projects and community programs at the end of each meeting. Impressed by the connections and strong relationships the REFORMA Oregon members had with the Latino/a communities in their areas, I thought it would be a great opportunity to give an in-depth presentation about the *Latinos en Oregon* project. At the October 2015 meeting in Redmond, I shared information about the OMA, the project, oral history best practices and examples, and various scenarios for potential collaborations between the OMA and public libraries. As I noted in my presentation, beginning a community documentation project can be challenging. You must introduce yourself to members of the community and build a trusting relationship with them before you can gather project participants. From the perspective of an archivist, projects are most successful when we collaborate with community liaisons who are able to connect us with local communities. I encouraged the public librarians to consider the idea of oral history projects with their communities, as well as consider acting as community liaisons for the *Latinos en Oregon* project. Through REFORMA Oregon, I met with Angelica Novoa De Cordeiro of the Canby Public Library and together we worked on the *Latinos en Oregon: Canby, Oregon* oral history project.

Oregon Multicultural Archives and Canby Public Library Collaboration

The Oregon Multicultural Archives' partnership with the Canby Public Library (CPL) began in the fall of 2015. The CPL had recently received a Latino Americans: 500 Years of History grant (American Library Association, n.d.) to host a series of programs including movie screenings and discussions, a community-wide read followed by discussions, various kids' programs, and oral history interviews. Novoa De Cordeiro initially contacted me to request to use images from the OMA collections, and we soon began a conversation about the CPL's plans for the oral histories she thought would likely be conducted in the spring of the next year. In April of 2016, I traveled to Canby to meet with Novoa De Cordeiro and her colleague Hanna Hofer, Programming/Public Relations, to discuss the details of the collaborative project. They informed me that as part of the grant, CPL had committed to documenting the personal stories of at least six members of the Latino/a community in Canby. I shared examples of my oral history work with other Latino/a communities, and we brainstormed what workflow strategies would work best for an OMA and CPL collaboration.

Due to Novoa De Cordeiro's work providing services to the Canby area's Spanish-Speaking communities (Novoa De Cordeiro, 2016), she already had a number of potential interviewees in mind. Her criteria for selecting interviewees was to contact members of the community she thought had great stories to tell, had positively impacted the Latino/a community, and would likely be willing to participate in the project. I offered to train Novoa De Cordeiro in conducting oral history interviews and loan her audio recording equipment;



however, due to her limited time availability, we decided that I would be the interviewer. Novoa De Cordeiro's tasks as part of the project were to contact potential interviewees; explain the project; schedule the day, time, and location for the interviews based on a set of dates I gave her; and act as a liaison between myself and the interviewees as needed. One of the main challenges with any oral history project is scheduling the interviews. I tried to be as flexible as possible, and we both made sure to maintain regular communication in case of needed rescheduling. Novoa De Cordeiro also had the essential task of conducting very short, non-recorded pre-interviews. During the pre-interviews, she would share the interview questions, explain the consent form for interviewees to sign, and answer any questions or assuage any concerns. On the dates of the interviews, Novoa De Cordeiro would meet with both the interviewee and myself for an introduction and would chat with us for a bit to ensure that we were both comfortable until it was time for the interview; she would return at the conclusion of the interview.

In my role as the interviewer and archivist, I also had a set of tasks. First, I shared the list of interview questions, in both Spanish and English, which I had used in previous projects. Novoa De Cordeiro and I reviewed the questions together, and she shared them with interviewees during the pre-interviews and explained they could focus on certain questions or only answer the ones with which they felt most comfortable. She also let me know of any particular topics I should cover with certain interviewees based on information she had gathered as part of the pre-interview process. On the dates of the interviews, I traveled to Canby, provided the recording equipment, and conducted the interviews. Afterwards, I archived the digital files as part of the OMA collections and made them accessible online. However, prior to making the interviews accessible to the public, I would send them to Novoa De Cordeiro. Continuing her work as my liaison to the interviewees, she followed up with approvals or edits to the interviews. An OMA student worker wrote short biographies and interview summaries of the oral histories, in both Spanish and English, and I wrote a blog post on the OMA blog with all the interview information and links to the recordings (Oregon Multicultural Archives Blog, 2016).

Latinos en Oregón: Canby, Oregón Interviews

The *Latinos en Oregón: Canby, Oregón* oral history project includes the stories of seven Latino/as or Anglos who are involved with the Latino/a community. The Latino/a community in Canby has comprised about 20 percent of the population since 2010, up from about 15 percent in 2000 (Census Viewer, 2016). Novoa De Cordeiro selected interviewees who could not only share their personal experiences, but also speak to the changing dynamics in Canby regarding the town's demographics and the connections being made between the Latino/a and Anglo communities. The interviews took place between late April and May 2016 and vary in length between 45 to 105 minutes. Two of the interviewees agreed to be video recorded; the other five selected an audio-only recording. All but one of the interviews are in Spanish with one interviewee offering to conduct two interviews, one for each language. The questions asked were divided into various sections including family and ancestors, immigration to the United States (if applicable), life in Canby, a list of various topics and traditions, and closing thoughts. Each interviewee had the opportunity to focus on certain aspects of their lives and/or topics as best fit the stories they wanted to share.




The Canby, Oregon, oral history project interviewees included Melissa Reid, Miriam Pastrana, Sabino Arredondo, Charlie Gingerich, Margarita Cruz, Gudelia Villán Ramos, and Jorge Paz; the following brief descriptions are just a sample of the stories the interviewees shared:

- Melissa Reid, a teacher for many years in Canby schools, spoke about her experiences working with local Latino/a families, as well as stories from her time in Honduras, and her love of learning multiple languages.
- Miriam Pastrana, born in the United States, but raised in Mexico, shared her life story of moving to Oregon, her perspectives on the differences between living in Mexico and the United States, and her thoughts on the Latino/a community in Canby and how it has changed through the years.
- Sabino Arredondo, an accountant, talked about his childhood in Mexico, moving to the United States at the age of ten as a member of one of the first Mexican families in Canby, as well as his professional and personal experiences living in Canby for over 30 years.
- Charlie Gingerich, a businessman who has lived near or in Canby his entire life, discussed the community organization Bridging Cultures Canby, which was officially established circa 2010, but has its roots in a volunteer lunch program that began in 2000.
- Margarita Cruz shared stories of being raised in Mexico, life in Canby since her move with her family to the town in 2008, and her experiences as an agricultural worker.
- Gudelia Villán Ramos spoke about the hardships she endured growing up in Mexico, her decision to immigrate to the United States, and her life in Canby with many relatives that live in the area.
- Jorge Paz, an agricultural worker for many years who is currently retired, discussed his experiences working in his native country of Guatemala, as well as his time in Mexico, California, and finally Oregon.

Concluding Thoughts

As is represented in the Canby oral histories, Oregon's Latino/a communities have a deep and diverse history. New generations continue to contribute greatly to the identity of the state. With the Latino/a population in Oregon predicted to increase in the coming years, it is not only necessary to ensure those voices are recorded, but listened to by all communities to foster understanding and acceptance. *Latinos in Oregon* is a project dedicated to collecting and preserving the voices and stories of Latino/a communities in Oregon. My current plans for the project include continuing my relationship with the OSU Juntos Program and Yamhill County's Unidos organization, as well as expanding it to the Hood River area. I am in conversations to collaborate with the Hood River Museum Latino/a Exhibit Advisory Board,



which includes a local public librarian and fellow REFORMA Oregon member. Public libraries can play an important role in documenting their communities' history, and can make great connections via an organization like REFORMA Oregon. I encourage librarians who work with their local Latino/a communities to join in on the opportunity for a collaborative story gathering project with the OMA through the *Latinos en Oregón* project. 

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Libros for Oregon: Collections Connect Communities

A New LSTA Grant to Help More Oregon Libraries Take Advantage of the Guadalajara Book Fair

by Deborah Gitlitz
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DEBORAH GITLITZ and her sister Abby Gitlitz at the Chengdu Research Base of Giant Panda Breeding in Chengdu, China.

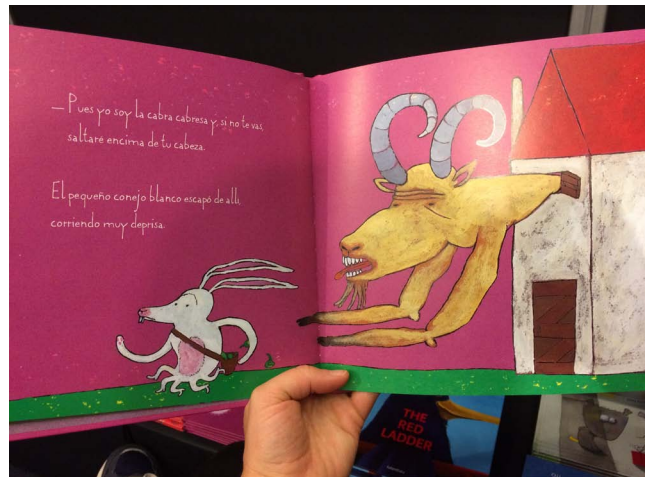
Deborah is the bilingual Outreach Librarian for Wilsonville Public Library. She received her MLS from Indiana University in 1995, began her library career as a Youth Services Librarian with Timberland Regional Library in SW Washington, and spent 15 years as a Bilingual Youth Librarian at Multnomah County Library (MCL), including two years running an LSTA-funded family literacy outreach program called Families Reading Together/Familias Leyendo Juntas. Deborah also works as a library consultant and literacy trainer. 2016 was her fourth visit to the Guadalajara book fair. During an earlier visit to the FIL for MCL she had the opportunity to make a presentation to the staff of 10 Guadalajara libraries on American-style early literacy library practices. They were thrown into giggles at the idea of reading to a room full of babies, and flat-out thought she was joking about Read to the Dogs.

Acquiring good books in Spanish for our libraries is a perennial challenge. We all want to enrich our collections with materials reflecting and honoring the experiences of people in our service populations, but this is often easier said than done. In the fall of 2015, a discussion arose on some Oregon library listservs (REFORMA and Libs-Or) about the challenge of connecting our patrons with culturally-appropriate, high-quality Spanish books. People lamented the comparative scarcity of satisfactory resources in the US and the difficulty of sending staff to the important Guadalajara book fair. Longtime Oregon library administrator and consultant Ruth Metz mentioned that she knew of libraries in California that had formed a loose book-buying collaborative to send representatives to the Guadalajara book fair. This caught my imagination. Why couldn't we do that in a way that would benefit all of Oregon? In the late fall, I gathered a team composed of interested parties from the listserv discussion, including members of OLA and REFORMA Oregon, and with the support of the Oregon State Library we raced to put together an LSTA grant proposal for review in early 2016. I'm very happy to report that we were awarded the grant. (Special thanks to Barratt Miller of Oregon City for her hard work on grant crafting!) In this article I'd like to explain the grant's goals and timeline, give a sense of the immense Guadalajara book fair, and encourage you to keep an eye out for the opportunity for your library to participate in this project beginning in the spring of 2018.





Grumpy Cat graphic novels.



Detail from *El pequeño conejo blanco* by Xosé Ballesteros Rey. <http://bit.ly/2p25fmu>



A busy weekend day (open to the public) at the FIL.

The project we put together is called “Libros for Oregon: Collections Connect Communities.” Its primary goal is to increase access to high-quality Spanish language books for the users of Oregon libraries, particularly users of smaller, rural libraries. Having received the grant, we have now embarked on our planning year (2016–17), to be followed by an implementation year (2017–18), and, I hope, an annual program that continues indefinitely.

Oregon libraries serve 500,000 Hispanic/Latino community members. Spanish is the second most-spoken language in Oregon, and plenty of those speakers read in Spanish, too. But finding high quality, culturally appropriate books in Spanish for our communities can prove to be a real task. It helps to have some selection and language expertise on staff, but even then, the biggest hurdle of all is still access.

Although an increasing number of Spanish and bilingual books are available through US-based publishers and distributors (*Library Journal*’s useful “Libro por Libro” column offers some recommendations, for example), it is still true that a vast number of books — especially books originally written in Spanish, books by Hispanic/Latino authors, and Spanish children’s books — are simply not available in the United States. So where





Entrance to the Expo Center.



Entrance to the Expo Center.



A state TV station interviews a knowledgeable comics vendor.

can we find a wide selection of diverse books appropriate for our Spanish-reading patrons? Guadalajara, Mexico!

The Guadalajara International Book Fair (la Feria Internacional del Libro, known as the FIL) had its 30th anniversary in 2016. With over 800,000 attendees annually (including over 20,000 “book professionals”), it is the largest Spanish-language book fair in the world, and it feels like it! In 2016 alone the FIL featured 2,042 publishing houses from 47 countries. Publisher’s stands can be as tiny as a tea shop or as vast as a warehouse, and they stretch for what feels like (and very nearly is) kilometers in every direction. Fabulous books for all ages (often from heartbreakingly short print runs), carefully shrink-wrapped to survive the onslaught of fair-goers, are arranged in elaborate geometric stacks two meters tall, like triumphal pillars and pyramids dotting the landscape. Authors give televised presentations. Publishers hold meet-and-greets. Book professionals from around the world converge in the vast International section and swap business cards. Librarians race around slapping sticky notes on coveted books and swap hot fair tips (*Pete the Cat* in Spanish at the Lata de Sal booth! Hot new adult romances! Books that approximate Easy Readers!) There are blocks and blocks of academic presses,





Mariachis perform at a publisher happy hour.

Mexican national presses, novelty book-sellers, publishers of youth materials, manga and comics, a whole transplanted used bookstore, and an entire wing for the headquarters of international publishers. There is color and activity everywhere, and the celebratory strains of mariachi music can regularly be heard, dazzling a private publisher party or leading a parade

throughout the byways to bestow prestigious prizes for best booths of the year. If Powell's is a City of Books, then the FIL is an entire principality of them.

There are already structures, scholarships and partnerships in place to help book-buying professionals participate in the Guadalajara FIL. The ALA/FIL Free Pass Program provides admission to the fair, three nights (six if you share a room) at a nearby business hotel, continental breakfasts, and \$100 toward the cost of airfare. Attendees must pay for the rest of the airfare, ground transportation, meals, and other costs. Some individual Oregon libraries and many large library systems already send a staffer or two to the FIL, but most libraries around the state, regardless of whether their staff has the language, culture and selection skills, can't easily swing the staff time and other resources to participate.

Our two-year LSTA project, Libros for Oregon, seeks to establish an affordable, realistic opportunity open to all public libraries (and possibly other kinds of libraries) statewide to access the resources of the FIL. The overarching goal is for Spanish-speaking Oregonians statewide — especially in rural areas — to have improved access to high quality, culturally relevant collections. We envision the project with three parts:

(1) Create the structure for an Oregon library book-buying cooperative, involving new participants each year, to purchase materials for participating members at the Guadalajara FIL.

- In early 2017, I'll be meeting with the project's volunteer Advisory Council to begin hashing out the logistical particulars, from the application and priority processes to the outreach requirements, documents for purchasing and accounting, and the specifics of project evaluation. The libraries of Washington County [WCCLS] were able to share some initial logistical advice; for three years, they have sent library staff to the FIL to buy materials on behalf of several libraries. We will also create a basic website to post project information, pertinent resources and reports.



- The Library Network of Clackamas County (LINCC), whose libraries serve many Spanish speakers, stepped up as the grant's fiscal agent to help launch Libros for Oregon in its initial phases. The project itself is open to participants statewide. In preparing the grant application we consulted with OLA. They are excited about the project and it is our mutual hope that OLA will be able to take on the project's administration once the two-year grant ends.

(2) Help participating libraries develop and implement outreach plans for connecting their enhanced collections with their Hispanic/Latino communities.


- It isn't sufficient to improve the relevance of the collection if that collection doesn't reach its users. Outreach is a crucial tool to connect Hispanic/Latino Oregonians with library collections, and the project will provide support to participating library staff, regardless of Spanish/Latino linguistic and cultural competency, in the form of outreach plan templates, online trainings, and guidance from OLA's Outreach Roundtable.

(3) Create an annual "Best of FIL" booklist, annotated to show US availability, for all Oregon libraries to use in collection development.

- My ambition here is to work with a library student each year who will compile booklists based on the purchases of participating libraries (plus, perhaps, lists from other Oregon libraries who attended the FIL) and post them on our eventual website. Ideally the student will also research the lists and make annotations indicating which titles are available to all through traditional US avenues.

How can your library find out more about the Libros for Oregon project?

- I gave presentations on Libros for Oregon at OLA this April 2017. Presentation slides may be viewed on NW Central here, <http://tinyurl.com/nxnnnw3> (under REFORMA's preconference workshop [entitled "The Latino/a Community and Your Library,"] and under "Libros for Oregon") and on the REFORMA Oregon website here <http://reformaoregon.weebly.com/blog/ola-pre-conference-workshop-2017>.
- Look for a Libros for Oregon session, with updated information on the project, at OLA in April 2018.
- When the project plans are more fully developed and the website is ready, I will post updates on the Oregon library listservs.

In the meantime, you are welcome to contact me with any questions. I am excited about this experiment to help more of Oregon's libraries access the treasures of the FIL! 

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Note

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Collection Diversity Has No Borders: A Librarian's Experience at FIL, CILELIJ and FILIJ

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PATRICIA MORÁN

Patricia, a Spanish Bilingual Youth Librarian for Multnomah County Library, develops and maintains relationships with the community, neighborhood organizations, and the great population served by the library. She has experience in selecting and promoting rich and diverse Spanish language collections. Since joining REFORMA in 2009, she has been a member of Bibliotecas Para La Gente, the Northern California chapter, and is currently a member of REFORMA Oregon.

Many public libraries in communities where Spanish is a language preferred by a significant percentage of the population have dedicated Spanish language collections and bilingual/bicultural staff that provides library services and programs. In Oregon, the Latino population is growing faster than the national average, and nearly half of Oregon Latinos are bilingual (Oregon Community Foundation, 2016). In alignment with best practices, and upholding the core values of our profession, libraries dedicate funds and shelving space to Spanish language materials to serve the informational, educational, and recreational needs of Spanish-speaking communities. Libraries that are dedicated to developing and maintaining rich and diverse collections that support thriving and empowered communities demonstrate this commitment through a holistic effort encompassing community engagement, strong relationships with vendors, as well as active participation in professional associations both locally and internationally.

In my work as a bilingual/bicultural librarian, previously in California and currently in Oregon, I contribute to selecting and promoting rich and diverse Spanish language collections. As part of this work, I have been able to expand my knowledge of Spanish language materials while connecting with and learning from professionals locally and internationally. In this article, I will share my experience at three professional development events held in Mexico between 2012 and 2016: FIL (Guadalajara International Book Fair), CILELIJ (Iberoamerican Congress of Language and Literature for Children and Youth) and FILIJ (International Book Fair for Children and Youth). Lastly, I will highlight the benefits of being an active member of a professional organization like REFORMA, and working to develop and promote library resources and services within the Latino/Spanish-speaking community.



FIL

GUADALAJARA INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR

The Guadalajara International Book Fair (Feria Internacional del Libro de Guadalajara) is considered the most important Spanish-language book fair in the world, surpassing 800,000 attendees in 2016. FIL is a public fair with a robust cultural and literary program that starts the last weekend of November and ends the first weekend of December, with three days open for professionals only so that librarians, publishers, agents, distributors, educators and book professionals can work unimpeded. In over 100,000 square feet of space, the Guadalajara Expo contains FIL Niños (a small scale version of FIL for children), over 1,900 national and international publishers from 44 countries, halls for lectures, and rooms that host professional gatherings like the annual International Librarians Colloquium (Coloquio Internacional de Bibliotecarios).

2017 will be the 18th year that U.S. librarians receive support from a partnership between the American Library Association (ALA) and FIL. The ALA-FIL Free Pass Program helps to support the attendance of public and academic librarians. In addition to saving costs, selectors are able to purchase copies of titles with limited print runs as well as publications that cannot be obtained in the U.S. Adán Griego from Stanford University presents an orientation for U.S. librarians attending FIL. The presentation includes an overview of the Spanish-language publishing market, the latest U.S. demographic statistics, a preview of noteworthy items at the fair, and information about working with vendors. The year that I attended, Griego noted that the top three publishing countries are Spain, Mexico and Argentina and that Spanish language publications average 1,000 copies printed per title and 5,000 copies if the title is a best seller.



Treasures found at the Feria Internacional del Libro (FIL) that will surely be popular among library readers.



While visiting family in Guadalajara in 2012, I had the opportunity to attend FIL for the first time and to take advantage of the fair's extensive literary and cultural offerings. I attended dozens of book presentations and panels and took my niece to FIL Niños, where we spoke with authors, looked at art, and attended a free concert with one of Mexico's best bands for children, Luis Delgadillo y los Keliguanes. I familiarized myself with the fair's layout and had a chance to review the latest publications from many of my favorite children's publishers: Ediciones SM, Kalandraka, Ekaré, Tecolote, CIDCLI and Fondo de Cultura Económica.

In 2014 I attended FIL on behalf of Multnomah County Library (MCL) to select materials for all ages for MCL's 19 locations. I prepared by talking to colleagues who had experience purchasing materials at FIL and attended a webinar hosted by Griego and ALA. A colleague from MCL and I were able to review material for children, youth and adults from hundreds of publishers from Spain, Mexico and Argentina. We searched for specific requests from library patrons and staff, including books on cooking and films from the Golden Age of Mexican cinema (the period between the 1930s–1950s when Mexico's film industry reached high levels of production quality). Being able to physically evaluate materials and exchange recommendations with other selectors was tremendously helpful since reviews are not as accessible for Spanish language materials. Books that are published in the U.S. and translated from English are the majority of the scarce review sources that are available.

In 2015, U.S. librarians attending FIL increased by 45 percent from 2014. In preparing for attending the FIL a second time, I reviewed circulation statistics for MCL's Spanish language collection and received feedback from colleagues about the needs at each location. Based on this information, and from learning the previous year how crucial it is to be strategic and stay focused during the limited time at FIL, our selection focused on juvenile materials and



A view of the entrance to the Feria Internacional del Libro Infantil y Juvenil (FILIJ) as school groups arrive at the fair. FILIJ outgrew its location and was relocated in 2016 to the Parque Bicentenario, receiving visits from over 42,000 students from 450 schools.



media. Soliciting suggestions from MCL staff and patrons prior to attending FIL helped us to be responsive to the needs and interests of MCL's Latino/Spanish-speaking community.

In addition to materials selection, attending FIL offered the opportunity to learn about a variety of government programs and community efforts to promote reading amongst children and youth. One idea, *picnics literarios*, involves hosting literary picnics in public parks where blankets and books for children are provided by a community group, local bookstore or library. In some cities, *picnics literarios* have expanded to include theatrical performances, puppet shows and readings by known authors. During the summer of 2016, MCL's St. Johns branch partnered with Portland Parks and Recreation to visit community gardens and host *picnics de libros*. Information about library services and resources, as well as blankets and books to check out, was shared in an effort to promote the library's Spanish language collection. Staff facilitated read-alouds and gave out books about gardening, cooking, food preservation, plants and insects.

As the Spanish-language publishing market expands, FIL attendance continues to grow, and so do its program offerings. Leyhla Ahuile of *Publisher Weekly* reported that FIL 2016 hosted 2,000 publishers with books in 23 different languages, including indigenous languages such as Tzotzil, Zapoteco, Nahuatl and Maya. During FIL 2015 I had the opportunity to attend a book launch of Sendak's *Where the Wild Things Are* translated into Maya. Due to the increasing geographic diversity of authors and publishers that participate in FIL, the fair has been called the "New Frankfurt" by Tomás Granados Salinas, *The Bookseller*, and others. Frankfurt is the largest and most important book fair in the world.



Las bestias danzan (The beasts dance) performed by a local theater group, La Liga — Teatro Elástico, during FILIJ 2016.



CILELIJ

IBEROAMERICAN CONGRESS OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH

The CILELIJ (Congreso Iberoamericano de Lengua y Literatura Infantil y Juvenil) is a professional gathering of authors, scholars, researchers and specialists interested in literature for children and youth. The first CILELIJ was held in Chile in 2010 and a second edition took place in 2013 in Colombia. In November 2016, more than 70 speakers from 16 countries came together in Mexico City for the third CILELIJ to discuss the history and current trends of Latin American literature for children and youth. The program included presentations by award-winning illustrators and renowned scholars, as well as a poster session displaying projects in different countries and cities that promote reading through community-led reading spaces and programs. For example, one project included a reading room used by taxi drivers while they wait for work, and another was a private home that was turned into a community library.

The opportunity to be a part of discussions that delved into the guiding values of my work as a youth librarian was profound for my professional development. Maria Elvira Charria, president of CILELIJ's academic committee, spoke to the driving purpose of the gathering and why we create and promote literature, "...The end is not to read to raise statistics or for companies to have greater sales, the aim is that we can exercise more, and more fully, our condition as readers of the world, to know ourselves and to understand the life in which we are in, who we are with and what we have to do to fulfill what we need to accomplish on this earth" (Toro, 2016). Presentations that were most memorable included those given by Colombian author Triunfo Arciniegas, whose short story "Super burro" was received with a standing ovation, and Francisco Hinojosa who reminded us that there is no subject that is inappropriate for juvenile or young adult literature.



The third edition of Congreso Iberoamericano de Lengua y Literatura Infantil y Juvenil (CILELIJ), held in Mexico City in November 2016, brought together over 70 speakers from 16 countries to talk about literature for children and young adults.



A recurring theme amongst authors, librarians and other professionals, including *promotores de lectura*, were the challenges presented by public education systems. Each country's educational system poses its own challenges, but several participants discussed the situation in Mexico and the impact that education reform has had on schools. For example, many students in schools throughout the country are not benefiting from the resources provided by the country's national reading program, *Programa Nacional de la Lectura*. Another major challenge, which was evident at an international level, is the struggle to liberate the act of reading from its didactic function imposed by the education system's increasing standardization. Comparisons could be made with the U.S. public school system and the lack of equity in resources, particularly in the areas of school libraries and librarians.

CILELIJ's three-day program included several breaks between presentations and lunch, allowing attendees to connect with participants from other states and countries. I met several book professionals and librarians with whom I had meaningful conversations about their work. A bookseller from A Leer/IBBY Mexico's bookstore *La Voltereta* was a great resource and made many recommendations for books for children and youth. A Leer/IBBY Mexico also publishes a very useful annual guide of book recommendations, *Guía de libros recomendados*.

Staff working in Mexico's National Institute of Indigenous Languages, *Dirección General de Lenguas Indígenas*, shared information about their latest publications, including materials for all ages in all of the indigenous languages that are documented in Mexico. Also in attendance were librarians and *promotores de lectura* who have worked in their communities for many years coordinating activities to promote literacy in popular non-traditional reading spaces. For example, *Amoxpoani Promotores de Lectura* leads story and craft hours at local markets every Sunday. They continuously explore using new materials and methods for storytelling, including performance, puppets and kamishibai theater. Those conversations inspired great ideas for culturally rich and entertaining literary activities that I would like to try in my work as a bilingual youth librarian.



CILELIJ provided educators, authors, scholars, and librarians the opportunity to connect with each other to learn from each others' efforts to promote literature for children and young adults.



FILIJ**INTERNATIONAL BOOK FAIR FOR CHILDREN AND YOUTH**


FILIJ (Feria Internacional del Libro Infantil y Juvenil) is an annual book fair that has been held in Mexico City since 1981. It encourages reading among children and young people. The date for FILIJ is set for mid-November, to coincide with the National Day of the Book celebrated on November 12. Similar to FIL, FILIJ brings together publishers, booksellers, distributors, librarians, teachers and other professionals working to improve the quality of publications in Mexico and to promote reading. The eleven-day fair is open to the public (no professionals-only days), and the program facilitates literary exchanges between countries that bring the public to national and international issues. FILIJ also hosts the annual International Seminar for the Promotion of Reading (*Seminario Internacional de Fomento de la Lectura*) though this year CILELIJ was hosted instead.

In 2016, FILIJ brought together over 420,000 attendees, 142 presenters and more than 1,400 cultural and artistic activities. The 36th FILIJ took place at *Parque Bicentenario*, a public park in a much larger space than in previous years. The fair was organized with various sections of the park named after kingdoms or names of places taken from children's literature. Attractions included a skate park and dozens of quiet and comfortable reading spaces for all ages. The activities and performances were similar to FIL Niños but at a much larger scale, including theatrical performances, concerts, book signings and readings. This year's guest country was Germany, and international guest authors included Anthony Browne, Satoshi Kitamura, and Sebastian Meschenmoser. FILIJ was decorated with public art spaces including murals throughout the fair that kids could take part in creating. People in oversized costumes representing literary characters like Alice in Wonderland, the Wizard of Oz, Don Quijote, and The Little Prince greeted attendees and posed for photographs.

Next Steps Towards Spanish Language Collection Diversity

Collaboration is integral to developing and maintaining rich and diverse collections. It is beneficial to have bilingual and bicultural staff selecting material and maintaining collections in a collaborative effort with both frontline staff and the community. Making full use of available tools such as circulation statistics and reports is important but trying or creating new ways of working towards community engagement can ensure that collections are reflective of users' needs and interests. Having a process in place, and dedicated staff, that regularly solicit feedback and suggestions from the Latino/Spanish-speaking community are helpful for improving collection diversity.

Participation in professional organizations like REFORMA provides staff with opportunities to learn from other libraries, share resources and exchange recommendations for Spanish language materials. REFORMA Oregon members worked together to create a list of 48 recommended publishers for the FIL, available for download from the REFORMA Oregon website. In addition to participating in local organizations, attending professional gatherings like FIL, FILIJ, CILELIJ and REFORMA National conferences provide spaces for reflection and an opportunity to form a global perspective of Spanish language collections.

REFORMA Oregon will host a workshop as part of the Oregon Library Association pre-conference on April 19, 2017. Presenters will cover resources and services for the Latino/Spanish-speaking community and strategies for building relationships and resources for collection development. Information about Libros for Oregon, a project that plans for an Oregon library book-buying cooperative, recommended Spanish-language publishers and exercises will give attendees the opportunity to evaluate their Spanish language collections and delineate concrete steps that can help improve them. 





Libraries working on improving their Spanish language collections with more diverse and inclusive materials can find professional resources at REFORMA Oregon's website: <http://reformaoregon.weebly.com/>

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OLA Quarterly Publication Schedule 2017

The *OLA Quarterly (OLAQ)* is the official publication of the Oregon Library Association. The *OLAQ* is indexed by *Library Literature & Information Science* and *Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts*. To view PDFs of issues, visit the OLAQ Archive on the OLA website. Full text is also available through HW Wilson's *Library Literature and Information Science Full Text* and EBSCO Publishing's *Library, Information Science and Technology Abstracts (LISTA) with Full Text*.

Each issue is developed around a theme determined by the Communications Committee and Guest Editor(s). To suggest future topics for the *OLA Quarterly*, or to volunteer/nominate a Guest Editor, contact the OLAQ Coordinator.

Vol./No.	Theme	Deadline	Pub. Date	Guest Editor
Vol 23 • No. 1 Spring 2017	<i>Come What May or Apocalypse Now? The Evolution of Oregon Libraries</i>	April 15, 2017	June 15, 2017	Jenkins Lumpkin Learning + Organizational Development, Senior Office Assistant, Multnomah County Library

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