



# The Progressive Librarian Bulletin

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## Cuban librarian visits California Libraries

During the summer 2012, long-time Cuban library supporters **Rhonda Neugebauer** (University of California, Riverside) and **Dana Lubow** (Los Angeles Valley College) arranged for a shipment\* of books to Cuba's libraries via the annual Pastors for Peace Friendshipment Caravan\*\* that left Los Angeles in July. They also hosted a visit by **Cuban librarian MSc. Miguel Viciado**. Viciado, had been accepted to present a poster session at the 2012 ALA annual conference in Anaheim. However, the perpetually-antagonist US Interests Section in Havana did not give Viciado his US visa in time to attend the ALA conference. Nevertheless, even with a month delay, Viciado finally was able to travel to California -- with the assistance of international librarians and friends -- to conduct a cultural/professional exchange program with the University of California, Riverside Libraries, directed by Neugebauer. While in California, he visited many libraries, including a busy high school library, the Riverside Public Library, the Los Angeles Public Library, the UCLA Powell Library and the UCR University Libraries. Miguel conducted professional research, including a review of library literature and the UCR holdings on library science. He also gave a presentation on the history of public libraries in Cuba from 1959 to 1989. The audience was composed of faculty, students and librarians who engaged the speaker with comments about the Cuban literacy campaign that taught reading and writing throughout the island, the country's educational system and the introduction of school and public libraries, Cuban culture and its role in society, and the Cuban library profession and its support of education and culture. The presentation about Cuban librarianship brought to light the many similarities and challenges we share with our counterpart librarians in Cuba.

Neugebauer and Lubow packed and sent an additional 16 boxes of Spanish-language children's books (grade 4-6 primarily) to the 1868 Library in Bayamo for use in the Bookmobile (sent with the 2008 Pastors Caravan). These new books will replace the very well-read/worn books that have circulated out of the Bookmobile in Bayamo for 4 years and will provide the older children with a greater selection of titles for their age group.

The California librarians also report that in summer 2011, they completed a unique library support project -- to send prize-winning young adult titles in Spanish to the Teen Wiki Club at the Old Havana provincial library, the Ruben Martinez Villena Public Library (called la Villena for short). The 11 boxes of Spanish-language materials were driven by volunteers to Tampico, Mexico, arriving as part of the Pastors for Peace Friendshipment to Cuba, and were then taken by ship to Havana. (continued on page two)

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Upon receipt of the books, the young adult librarian at La Villena Library, Adrian Guerra, reported back that the selections were excellent and that the books were received with excitement and eagerness by the young adult readers who immediately utilized their Wiki Club to disseminate their own reviews of the new titles for other young adults in the Villena Library. The young adult Spanish-language titles donated to the Villena Library are listed here: <http://yacubaproject.wordpress.com/titles-received/>. Also as part of the 2011 Caravan, Neugebauer and Lubow sent 15 boxes of books to the Center for Studies about the United States, and a third set of books to the National Library, Biblioteca Nacional Jose Marti, for distribution to provincial libraries.

\*PLG donated and many members contributed books to this effort.

\*\*From Pastors for Peace on Caravan to Cuba: The IFCO/Pastors for Peace US-Cuba Friendshipment is a bold challenge to the decades old US blockade of Cuba. "By not seeking or accepting a license from the US government to collect and deliver aid to our brothers and sisters in Cuba, we prove that the US blockade is not merely unjust and immoral as the United Nations has affirmed overwhelmingly year after year but it is



Miguel Vicedo during his visit to California

Remember, the Bulletin needs updates from the PLG membership so we can spread the word about all of the good work that we are collectively doing! Got an update? Send it to **bradenkcannon@gmail.com**



The London (Ontario) PLG reports that as a part of their campaign against the University of Western Ontario signing an agreement with access copyright and the Federal Governments cuts to Library and Archives Canada, they have made a series of buttons and have been distributing them throughout the community. We also made a small run of PLG themed buttons.

For more information and statements about these issues, please check out the PLG London blog at <http://plglondon.wordpress.com/>

## **A Message from the Editor**

Correction notices are inevitable and I am surprised that it took this long for me to make such a blatant over-sight. But an over-sight was indeed made when I thanked the designer of the new PLG site, Sarah Henriksson, in an earlier Bulletin. In doing so, I over-looked the much-appreciated work of PLG Coordinating Committee member Susan Maret, who re-designed the navigation, helped convert files, arranged payment for web hosting, and coordinated changes of management to PLG databases. This work was no small task by any means and I regret the over-sight in my first round of thanks. Please join me in thanking Susan not only for her hard work on the new PLG site (which is fantastic, by the way) but also for all of her efforts on the Coordinating Committee.

Speaking of the Coordinating Committee, I plan to step down from my position with the body at the end of this year. My tasks on the Committee consist primarily of editing the Bulletin and updating the Union Library Workers blog. If anyone has an interest in managing these tasks, please let me know!

Thank you,  
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