The EMIE BULLETIN is published quarterly.

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Letter from the Chair

The 2006/07 fiscal year was ushered in with the Annual Conference in New Orleans in June. The conference was very meaningful for all of us in the American Library Association and especially for all of us in the Ethnic and Multicultural Information Exchange Round Table. We saw firsthand how the city of New Orleans and its libraries have made tremendous progress since Hurricane Katrina and yet how much still remains to be done to bring the city back to its grandeur as one of America's most treasured cities. Thanks to all of you who were able to attend and to all of you who, through your donations and volunteer spirit, have given part of yourselves to this worthy effort.

Let's begin this new fiscal year with a renewed sense of mission. This mission should permeate and drive all the actions we take, the decisions we make, and the programs and events we sponsor. The EMIERT Executive Board continually needs the ideas and thoughts of the membership to keep us on target and to ensure that your needs and wishes are addressed. I urge all of you to sign up for the EMIERT listserv (EMIE-L@ala.org). Share with the Board and the membership at large your successes and accomplishments working with multicultural groups and we will pass along the good news to others dealing with similar problems and issues.

This is our fourth quarterly issue of the *EMIE Bulletin* appearing as an insert in *MultiCultural Review* (*MCR*). The *EMIE Bulletin* continues to serve as an important forum for spreading the good news to librarians and library advocates that EMIERT is here to help. Always think of EMIERT as your one-stop source for information and support to help solve problems involved in getting multicultural materials in libraries and information centers for the benefit of those learning English and coping with the immigration and assimilation processes. Having the *EMIE Bulletin* insert in *MCR* has been an indispensable way to let the library community know that EMIERT is the new home of the Coretta Scott King Committee, which sponsors the internationally acclaimed Coretta Scott King Book Awards.

For those of you who are looking for opportunities to serve and to get involved in EMIERT, please check out the EMIE Web site (http://www.ala.org/emiert) as well as the EMIERT pages in the *ALA Handbook of Organization, 2006-2007*, to locate officers, chairs of committees, and representatives and liaisons. Thanks to Lyn Miller-Lachmann, who serves as EMIERT's liaison to *MCR*, Sarah Smith, EMIERT Webmaster and former *EMIE Bulletin* editor, and Roberto Delgadillo, new *EMIE Bulletin editor.*

Programs for the ALA Annual Conference included several sponsored by EMIERT, including "U.S. Immigration: Navigating the System @ Your Library," followed by the EMIERT General Membership Meeting, the EMIERT Children's Services Committee's program on "Latino Children's Literature Awards: Creation, Content, and Community," the EMIERT co-sponsored program with the Alternatives in Publication (AIP) Task Force of the ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) on "The Ethnic Press, Libraries, and Community Building: How We Can Strengthen the Ties," the Jewish Information Committee of EMIERT's program on "A Question of Tolerance," and the grand finale of the 37th annual Coretta Scott King Book Awards Breakfast, the first breakfast and awards ceremony since Mrs. King's untimely death at the age of 78 on Tuesday, January 31. A special thank-you goes to ALA Office for Diversity's Tracie Hall for coordinating the second "Many Voices, One Nation" program and to the dedicated EMIERT members who volunteered to assist in presenting this wonderfully diverse and multicultural event, notably former EMIERT Chair Victor Schill.

I would like to remind all of you who have served as officers or committee chairs in EMIERT throughout its history to send EMIERT materials for the use of library historians and researchers to the ALA Archives, housed at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. ALA Archives officials remind us that "it is each unit's responsibility to preserve the historical record of activities for future researchers by regularly transmitting unneeded archival materials to the ALA Archives in Urbana." Our founder emeritus, David Cohen, has collected and preserved EMIERT materials from EMIERT's beginning in 1972, when the Ethnic materials Information Exchange Task Force of the ALA Social Responsibilities Round Table (SRRT) was founded. He is committed to getting these invaluable historical records to the ALA Archives. For more information on the ALA Archives and how you can get EMIERT materials there, see http://web.library.uiuc.edu/ahx/ala/info.asp.

The EMIERT membership elected the following officers for the 2006–08 biennium:

Secretary: Rebecca Stuhr
Treasurer: Gail Schlachter
Members-at-Large: Bessie Faye Gray-Knox, Carole J. McCullough, Janice Faye Rosen, Sarah A. Smith

The term for all offices is two years (2006–08). Terms begin at the close of the ALA Annual Conference in New Orleans this summer. Thanks to all who were elected to the EMIERT Executive Board. May 2006–07 be a good year for us!

Always,
Plummer Alston "Al" Jones, Jr., Chair, 2005–2007

The Chinese Immigrant Experience in America: Selected Titles for Children and Young Teens

by Dr. J.B. Petty and Ms. Cherri Jones
Missouri State University

Children who grow up in only one culture have little concept of how it must be for a child to move from one country to another. Immigrant children leave behind the familiar: neighborhood, school, teacher, friends, family, holidays, language, customs, dress, and even weather. As these children move into their new culture, they often have little knowledge of the experiences of others like them who have had to adapt to a new life. Learning about these past experiences can give them a better understanding of their place in the new country.

The following books, dating from 2000 to 2006, look at a number of situations in which immigrants from China have had to adapt to American culture since their arrival in the mid-1800s. While there are many new and excellent titles of contemporary fiction about Chinese-American children and youth, this list focuses on the adjustments that new Chinese immigrants have faced. They provide background not only for new immigrants to this country, but also for the millions of Chinese Americans who have familial roots in China. And as adoptions of Chinese children continue to climb in the United States, titles such as these help adoptive families and friends learn more about their child's culture.

Cheng, Andrea. ***Honeysuckle House.*** Front Street, 2004. 136 pp., $16.95. Ages 10 to 12.

In alternating chapters, Sarah, an all-American girl with Chinese ancestors, and Ting (Tina), a new immigrant from China, share their feelings, frustrations, and growing friendship. Sarah and her best friend, Victoria, spend all their spare time in the Honeysuckle House, until suddenly, without warning, Victoria and her mother are gone. Sarah misses Victoria deeply and resents that her teacher assumes she will take Tina "under her wing" just because they look alike. Tina, adapting to a new environment, also feels a sense of loss. She is pleased to join her parents in the United States, but she misses her best friend, her grandfather, and her uncle still in China. Told in the first person (from the point of view of each character), Cheng captures the feelings of Sarah and Tina and allows the reader to share in the experiences the girls have as they become friends. Children will understand the difficulties that immigrant children face when they enter a new culture. Middle grade students, particularly girls, will find the book worth reading.

Fletcher, Susan. ***Walk Across the Sea.*** Atheneum, 2001. 212 pp., $16.00. Ages 10 to 14.

Thirteen-year-old Eliza McCully thinks that her life as the daughter of the lighthouse keeper near Crescent City, California, is probably the best in the world. Life changes for her, however, in 1886: She meets her first Chinese boy, learns that her father is in a group trying to remove the Chinese from Crescent City, faces the death of her prematurely born sister, and worst of all, finds that the family must move from her beloved lighthouse. Eliza questions her father's strict Christian beliefs, especially as they relate to the "heathens," as he calls the Chinese. In befriending Wah Chung, Eliza finds answers to many of her questions about God, but she knows that she must face her father's wrath. Surprisingly, her father relents and allows her to help Wah Chung flee to a safer environment in San Francisco.

Heisel, Sharon. ***Precious Gold, Precious Jade.*** Holiday House, 2000. 186 pp., $16.95. Ages 11 to 14.

Set in the imaginary town of Bounty, California, in the waning days of the California Gold Rush, this story introduces the reader to the cultural clashes between the white settlers and the Chinese immigrants through the friendship of Angelena, who is white, and Leeana, who is Chinese. The Chinese are hated and treated with contempt by most of the white settlers. Angelena's family, however, is tolerant of the Chinese, although they have little contact with them. Angelena and her younger sister become friends with Leeana, the only Chinese child in Bounty, and they help their family come to terms with their feelings and reactions to Leeana, her mother, and the Chinese men in Bounty. Through the use of powerful text and word pictures, Heisel paints hate and bigotry as they are—ugly, biased, and destructive—and tries to be true to facts about this historical period.

Lee, Milly. ***Earthquake.*** Illustrated by Yangsook Choi. Frances Foster/Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2001.1 volume (unpaged), $16.00. Ages 6 to 11.

A young Chinese girl recounts her family's flight from their home after the 1906 San Francisco earthquake. Vivid illustrations in double-page spreads show the confusion and worry of those who flee to the safety of Golden Gate Park. Although this is a welcome addition that shows details of a Chinese family's life, the information provided by the Author's Note is more revealing than the prose in the story itself. Still, this would be useful for units on immigrant life in the United States.

Perl, Lila. ***To the Golden Mountain: The Story of the Chinese Who Built the Transcontinental Railroad.*** (Great Journeys). Benchmark/Marshall Cavendish, 2003. 112 pp., $32.79. Ages 12 and up.

In her usual thorough manner, Perl describes the economic and political conditions in China that led to the exportation of Chinese labor in the 1840s, the jobs the Chinese found on the West Coast, and the work that led to the completion of the transcontinental railroad. While making the reader aware of the positive contributions of Chinese workers to the United States economy, Perl also includes the many forms of racism encountered by these workers: lower wages, organized efforts of whites to murder and scare away Chinese workers, and governmental attempts to curb and finally stop immigration. Well-placed photographs and illustrations and thorough notes, bibliographical information, and an index are provided.

Yee, Paul. ***A Song for Ba.*** Pictures by Jan Peng Wang. Groundwood, 2004. unp., $16.95. Ages 7 to 11.

Although neither the name of the city nor the year in which the story takes place are given, the reader can surmise that the story takes place in San Francisco around 1920. Wei Lim rarely sees his father, Ba, a singer in a Chinese opera troupe, because Ba is on the road performing most of the time. Wei Lim lives with his grandfather, who himself was an opera singer. Wei Lim wants more than anything to become an opera singer,

but his father discourages him, saying that the old men are returning to China and that there is no future in opera in the new world. Grandfather teaches Wei Lim many of the melodies of the Chinese operas, and because of this the boy is able to help his father learn how to sing the feminine parts of the opera. Although the picture book format might not entice readers on their own, this book could be used quite successfully as part of either a music appreciation lesson or as part of a study on the plight of early Chinese settlers in America. Wang's oil paintings are both expressionistic and fairly realistic and show the inquisitive nature of Wei Lim. Although not a must purchase, the book would be a good addition to libraries that support strong art and music programs.

Yep, Laurence. ***Angelfish.*** Putnam, 2001. 217 pp., $16.99. Ages 11 to 18.

In this sequel to *Ribbons* (1996) and *The Cook's Family* (1998), Robin (who has both Chinese and European ancestry) accidentally breaks the window of a fish store. She offers to work off her debt rather than have her mother find out—and refuse to let her dance in her troupe's upcoming ballet. The store's rude manager is offensive and abrupt, but Robin slowly learns that he is not the monster he pretends to be. Through her at times hilarious network of relatives and friends, Robin discovers that before the Cultural Revolution in China Mr. Tsow was a star dancer. How she handles this knowledge and brings Mr. Tsow back into the community makes a refreshing read.

Yep, Laurence. ***The Traitor.*** (Golden Mountain Chronicles: 1885). HarperCollins,2003. 301 pp., $16.99. Ages 11 to 14.

Drawing from historical records, Yep continues his saga of the Young family while depicting events surrounding the "Rock Springs Massacre" of 1885. Joseph Young and Michael Purdy both skirt the edge of their cultures. Joseph has never been to China, his father's home, and feels more American than Chinese; Michael and his mother have never been accepted in their small Wyoming town due to his illegitimacy. When the boys meet in a magical cave full of "star rocks," they become friends. Tensions are high in Rock Springs, where the railroad has replaced striking white workers with Chinese miners. When violence erupts, the boys' friendship saves Michael and his father and causes Mrs. Purdy to reevaluate her life choices. Young teens will connect to the boys' need for a sense of belonging in a hostile world, and the fast-paced plot, strong characterization, and alternate chapters showing each boy's view of events will appeal.

Yep, Laurence. ***When the Circus Came to Town.*** HarperCollins, 2002. 113 pp., $14.95. Ages 8 to 11.

Based on true events in Trembles, Montana, this is a tale of ten-year-old Ursula, a highly imaginative girl who has just discovered pirate tales and engages all of the area's children in pirate games, secret signals, and special missions. When Ursula's face becomes pockmarked through a bout of scarlet fever, however, she sees herself not as "Pirate Ursula" but as "Monster Ursula," and hides in her family's stagecoach stop. The only person outside her family she talks to is their new cook, Ah Sam. After months of self-imposed isolation, Ursula is enthusiastic about making a gift of warm winter clothing to Ah Sam for Christmas. In return, he enlists his cousins to come to town to produce a circus—something Ursula has always hoped to see. But the cousins have no music, and Ursula ends up playing her harmonica in front of the whole town, effectively ending her exile and bringing back her pirate self. When the cousins become stranded by a blizzard, Ursula decides the town can give their three friends a real Chinese New Year, and with their help organizes another huge celebration. The first-person narrative brings immediacy to Ursula's plight, while plenty of dialogue and action keep the story moving at a fast clip.

Many Shades Make a Beautiful Scene

by Ann S. Miller

Branch Manager, Libraries Divisions. A service of the Broward County Board of County Commissioners

The Broward County Library Sunrise Dan Pearl Branch enthusiastically embraces diversity within its community by incorporating multicultural elements among its various youth programs. Each of these activities is designed to expose our community's youth to different cultures, customs, and traditions in an entertaining, yet educational, manner. These programs, offered by the library's Youth Services department, often include a variety of activities, including bilingual story times and crafts from around the world such as learning origami and hieroglyphics. In the programs, we explain the history and cultures that correspond to each theme and encourage group discussions. One of the most memorable programs, which celebrated not only diversity but also the importance of uniting as a collective group, was held during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. In response to the devastation of the hurricane, the library held a tie-dye group project called "Blending Many Shades Makes a Beautiful Scene." At this event, children, teenagers, youth librarians, and adult volunteers worked together to tie-dye square pieces of plain white fabric. These pieces were sewn into a colorful quilt of rainbow colors. The quilt was then donated to the students of Benjamin Franklin High School in New Orleans, Louisiana, as a gesture of friendship and solidarity through difficult times. Throughout the program, the children of the community discussed the effects of natural disasters and the importance of helping others. The blended rainbow colors of the quilt represented how people of all backgrounds, races, and ethnicities cooperated for a specific cause, creating a beautiful gift for a city that serves as a prominent symbol of the extraordinary combination of cultures that make up our country.

Famous Asian Americans:
Books for Children and Young Adults

The New Americans Program of Queens Library serves Queens, New York, residents whose primary language is not English. The program works closely with ethnic community organizations and libraries to assess local needs, link residents with existing library services, and create new services. Currently the New Americans Program offers lectures, workshops, and cultural arts programs; purchases materials in over 25 immigrant languages; provides referral lists of English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) programs in Queens; and conducts demographic studies of the immigrant populations of Queens.

In honor of Asian Pacific American Heritage Month, the New Americans Program created a book list entitled "Famous Asian Americans: Books for Children and Young Adults." Five librarians searched for and compiled titles that feature Asian Americans. Younshin Kim, assistant coordinator of the New Americans Program, chaired the project. The process of creating the list, from searching for titles to refining and presenting results, was a learning experience for all involved and highlighted a gap in the library and publishing worlds.

The list was conceived by Ms. Kim last year. She was conducting Asian-American outreach in Union Square Park in Manhattan. While publicizing Queens Library's programs, services, and special collections, she noted that Asian Americans are the largest immigrant group in Queens after Hispanic Americans and live harmoniously with many other ethnic groups. She realized it would be useful to have some material to hand to library staff to fulfill the needs of parents and teachers with Asian-American children.

She invited a group of five public service librarians to join a team to select a list of famous Asian Americans who were U.S. residents, and currently popular or at least well known.

All books selected had to be in Queens Library's collection and in print. Members searched in Queens Library's catalog by subject. For leads on non-Chinese people, the team used entries in *Extraordinary Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders* by Susan Sinnott (Children's Press, 2003). It was difficult to find consistent search terms for South Asians. Team members searched Gale's *Biography Resource Center* for names of people to search, as this database can be searched by ethnicity (in addition to nationality). They asked library staff from South Asia about famous people they knew.

The team discovered that it was difficult to find South Asian and Korean Americans. They were unable to find books that contained information about Filipino Americans. They did use collective biographies where individual biographies were not available. People found in biographies were generally sports figures, artists, musicians, visual artists, and writers. No scientists were found, and very few political figures. Coverage was broader in collective biographies. Most books found were about Chinese Americans. For the sake of balance, not all books about Chinese Americans were included in the list. The final list contains eleven titles. Seven are about Chinese Americans, two about Japanese Americans, one Korean American, one South Asian American, and there is one collective biography that features immigrants from regions all over Asia.

It was a great experience for all to work on the list. During the process, team members realized that it was not necessarily easy to find the books, but it was vital that they complete their task in order to help non-Asian American library staff to more effectively work with our customers. In addition, team members exchanged information within the group about each member's particular background. All came away with deeper knowledge and passion for service to all residents in their respective service areas.

Based on the experience of building this list, I asked Ms. Kim what she would like to tell the library and publishing world about changes she would like to see. She said that by creating and publicizing this list, she is hoping to influence publishers. The United States is changing and now the population features faces from all world cultures. There is no one influx of immigrants from any particular area of the world, but from everywhere, and immigrant populations are found throughout the United States, not just on the coasts and borders. She wants publishers to recognize the need for materials that reflect contributions of people from the backgrounds of *all* children who live in the United States. Only then can the youth librarian's mission—to find the right book for the right child at the right time—be fulfilled.

—Caren Koh, Youth Services Materials Specialist, Queens Library, NYC

Queens Library Enrich Your Life™ Celebrates Asian Pacific American Heritage Month

Famous Asian Americans: Books for Children
and Young Adults

Books for 3rd to 5th grades:

Klingel, Cynthia Fitterer. *Korean Americans.* Child's World, 2003.

Tan, Sheri. *Seiji Ozawa.* Raintree, 1997.

Wellman, Sam. *Michelle Kwan.* Chelsea House, 1999.

Williams, Jean Kinney. *Asian Indian Americans.* Child's World, 2003.

Books for 6th to 8th grades:

Chippendale, Lisa A. *Yo-Yo Ma: A Cello Superstar Brings Music to the World.* Enslow, 2004.

Ishizuka, Kathy. *Asian American Authors.* Enslow, 2000.

Ling, Bettina. *Maya Lin.* Raintree, 1997.

Morey, Janet. *Famous Chinese Americans.* Cobblehill, 1992.

Riley, Gail Blasser. *Wah Ming Chang: Artist and Master of Special Effects.* Enslow, 1995.

Sherman, Josepha. *Jerry Yang and David Filo: Chief Yahoos of Yahoo!* Twenty-first Century Books, 2001.

Sinnott, Susan. *Extraordinary Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders.* Children's Press, 2003.

Uchida, Yoshiko. *The Invisible Thread: An Autobiography.* Beech Tree, 1995.

Yep, Laurence. *The Lost Garden: A Memoir.* Beech Tree, 1996.

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www.queenslibrary.org