



Number 10
(September 2006)

"It is the function of some people to be a lamp and some to be a mirror. I have been very pleased to function as a mirror of others' work." – Arne Nixon

Ada and Campoy: featured speakers in October

The Arne Nixon Center Advocates invite everyone to their annual meeting on Saturday, October 7, at 11 a.m. at the Student Recreation Center at California State University, Fresno. This program is co-sponsored by Jumpstart for Young Children and Associated Students. The featured speakers will be Alma Flor Ada and F. Isabel Campoy (pictured at right respectively), writing partners and the prolific authors of hundreds of prize-winning children's books.

Alma Flor Ada is a renowned author, translator, scholar, educator, and advocate for bilingual and multicultural education. Born in Cuba, she obtained her Doctorate at Universidad Catolica del Peru. This Emeritus Professor at the Education Department of the University of San Francisco now lives in Mill Valley.

The author, whose Web site is www.almaflorada.com, has won many literary awards for her 200+ children's titles. Her books, published in English, Spanish, and bilingual editions, include *Dear Peter Rabbit*, *Gathering the Sun*, *The Lizard and the Sun*, and *Where the Flame Trees Bloom*. Her autobiography, *Under the Royal Palms: A Childhood in Cuba*, won the 2000 Pura Belpré Award, presented by the American Library Association and REFORMA, the National Association to Promote Library Services to the Spanish Speaking. This award honors Latino writers and illustrators whose work best portrays, affirms, and celebrates the Latino cultural experience in a children's book.

(See October on page 2)

Mark your calendars!

October 7, 2006

*Alma Flor Ada and Isabel Campoy,
Student Recreation Center, 11 a.m.*

October 21, 2006

Margarita Engle, Arte Américas, 1-3 p.m.

March 2, 2007

*ART, Authors/Reader's Theatre
with Avi, Sharon Creech,
Walter Dean Myers, and Sarah Weeks.
Roosevelt High School Auditorium, 6:30 p.m.*

March 27, 2007

*Lemony Snicket (aka Daniel Handler),
Satellite Student Union, 7:30 p.m.*

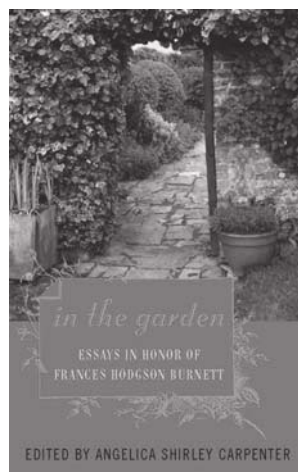
April 15, 2007

Secret Garden Party, 3-5 p.m.



In the Garden

A new book to be published in October celebrates scholarly activity in the Arne Nixon Center. *In the Garden: Essays in Honor of Frances Hodgson Burnett*, edited by Angelica Carpenter, will be published by Scarecrow Publications, Inc. The book was inspired by the Center's 2003 international conference about Frances Hodgson Burnett. This first-ever conference about the famous author brought scholars and fans to Fresno from many parts of the globe.



Frances Hodgson Burnett, author of *The Secret Garden*, *A Little Princess*, and *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, was one of the most successful and controversial women of her time. Her flamboyant persona and unconventional lifestyle made her a contentious figure in Victorian society, and for generations after her death, her own family refused to acknowledge her. She began her career writing best-selling adult novels with serious themes: working women, abusive

(See Burnett on page 6)

F. Isabel Campoy is the Spanish-born author of more than 100 children's books on poetry, biography, art, culture, and language acquisition. Her poetry and plays appear in dozens of anthologies in both English and Spanish. She received the Reading the World Award from the University of San Francisco and the San Francisco Library Laureate Award in 2003. Her books include *Rosa Raposa*, *Authors in the Classroom*, and the collections *Gateways to the Sun* and *Celebrations*. With Alma Flor Ada she has written the Harcourt Language Arts series in Spanish and many books including *Colors of Mardi Gras*, *Mamá Goose: A Latino Nursery Treasury* and *¡Pío Peep!: Traditional Spanish Nursery Rhymes*. Their newest book is *Tales our Abuelitas Told*. Isabel Campoy's Web site is www.isabelcampoy.com.

Both authors have agreed to donate their papers to the Arne Nixon Center and Alma Flor Ada has made a good start by giving 15 boxes of materials which are currently being processed for use by researchers.

The Kennel Bookstore will acquire and sell the authors' books at this event. There is no admission charge and no reservations are required. Seating is

available on a first-come,

first-served basis. Children aged 8 or older are welcome if accompanied by adults. The authors' books will be available for sale and autographing starting at 10 a.m. The talk will be from 11 a.m. to noon. The authors will continue signing after the talk.

The event will be held in the Peters Educational Center Auditorium in the new Student Recreation Center, directly west of and adjacent to the Save Mart Center. The street address is 5010 N. Woodrow Avenue (northeast corner of Woodrow and Shaw). Enter the Recreation Center on the west side of the building. Free parking is available in Lot V, just west of Woodrow Avenue.



Tales & Tidbits from ANCA

(Arne Nixon Center Advocates)

by Denise Sciandra, ANCA President



Can stories published in 1865 and 1901 be enjoyed by 21st-century children? Two literary societies think so.

The Lewis Carroll Society of North America sponsors the Maxine Schaefer Memorial Reading, named for a longtime secretary of the club who loved to get *Alice in Wonderland* into the hands of children. The reading is offered twice a year in different cities to two 4th grade classes, often at a school in a low economic area. Every child receives a hardback *Alice* book to keep.

This program had its beginnings when professional actor and society member Andrew Sellon was a senior in graduate school and had to create his own Carroll play. For the readings, he performs a scene from *Alice*, such as the Mad Hatter's tea party or Alice's dialogue with Humpty Dumpty, changing voices with each character. After the reading, Sellon adeptly draws questions and concerns from the children regarding Alice's predicaments and her interactions with the often rude inhabitants of Wonderland. They leave the session reading, hugging, and even stroking their new books.

The international Beatrix Potter Society sponsors a Reading Beatrix Potter (RBP) program. The society considers this program to be one of its most important activities. Readers receive a 14" by 18" big book of *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* plus items to give to the children.

As an RBP reader, I arranged a Scottish and English reading of *The Tale o Peter Kinnen* and *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* in April at the Norelma Walker Youth Library at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Fresno. Linda Spalding, a Scots woman who has portrayed Beatrix Potter, would read one page in Scottish and I would follow her reading the same page in English.

Spalding was born in Edinburgh and grew up speaking English with an old Scots influence. *The Tale o Peter Kinnen* is written in old Scots, and since its publication, has been touted as "a powerful literary ally" in keeping this ancient language alive.

On April 23, 2006, she was dressed in plaid kilt, vest, and tam o'shanter. The audience of 42 children and adults listened attentively to her delightful accent, laughing over sentences such as: "dinna git intae deviltree" and "Peter got doon verra quate-like aff the hurlie-barrow."

The audience left smiling, and in their newly learned Scottish, were saying things like, "Am gaun oot" and "Rin along noo".

Three passionate performers brought *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *The Tale of Peter Rabbit* alive for children and adults more than 100 years after they were first published.

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One of America's most valuable exports can't be measured in dollars, bushels, or tons. L. Frank Baum's classic American fairy tale, *The Wonderful Wizard of Oz*, is known and loved around the world. As the bestselling children's book of 1900, it inspired a hit musical that took Broadway by storm in 1903. When L. Frank Baum walked into a hotel dining room in Cairo, Egypt, in 1906, the orchestra greeted him with selections from the show and he was approached for an autograph by a shy little girl who had carried her precious copy of the book across the desert in a camel caravan, never dreaming she would find its author at her journey's end.

Though American critics were mind-bogglingly slow to recognize the story's literary value (a mistake that has been righted in the last twenty years), kids loved *Oz*. Parents loved *Oz*. Puppeteers, playwrights, and political cartoonists loved *Oz*. Toy manufacturers, advertising agencies, and Baum's publishers really loved *Oz*. Sequel followed sequel as new adventures continued the series.

Baum died in 1919, 20 years before M-G-M released its movie version of his first *Oz* book. Many believe that this film is the most-watched movie in history. But it is important to remember that without Baum's story, some other film would claim this title.

The Wizard was first translated into French in 1932. By the 1940s it was available in Bulgarian, Hebrew, Italian, Portuguese, and Spanish. Even comic-book editions of the story went global; a 1957 "Classics Illustrated Junior" version appeared in Danish, Dutch, Finnish, German, Norwegian, Swedish, and in eight different languages in India. Private collector Richard Rutter owns *Oz* books in 47 languages including Macedonian and Albanian; he's looking for Burmese and Tagalog.

Oz is especially beloved in Russia. Alexander Volkov first translated Baum's tale in 1939 and soon published a retelling of the story crediting himself as its author. Volkov's work was further translated into Armenian, Chinese, Czechoslovakian, German, Kirghiz, Latvian, Lettish, Lithuanian, Serbo-Croatian, and Ukrainian. Next he wrote original sequels, mixing Baum's characters with creations of his own. In this alternative *Oz*, the Munchkins really munch; they are the chewing people. Volkov's stories, which were made into stage, screen, and television productions, became even better known in Eastern bloc countries and China than Baum's. Since Volkov's death in 1977, Russian author Sergei Sukhinov has continued the series with 20 original titles. The Soviet Union broke up, but *Oz* kept right on going!

In 2006 the Russian *Oz* Club joined the American-based International Wizard of Oz Club (www.ozclub.org) in celebrating the 150th anniversary of L. Frank Baum's birth. As President of the American Club, I've been on the Yellow Brick Road all summer, attending many *Oz*-related events. No one person could attend all the public *Oz* festivals, academic symposia, art exhibitions, conventions, museum talks, and library lectures that were scheduled.

New York State Senator Hillary Clinton has joined the campaign to get L. Frank Baum, native son of Chittenango, New York, and the *Oz* books (not just the movie!) onto a postage stamp.

Oz has morphed into many formats: Muppet musicals, Australian ballets, a Turkish movie, French graphic novels, and, 100 years after the first, another hit Broadway show, "Wicked." But let's not forget the original book and its brilliant author in this his sesquicentennial year: Happy birthday, dear Frank!

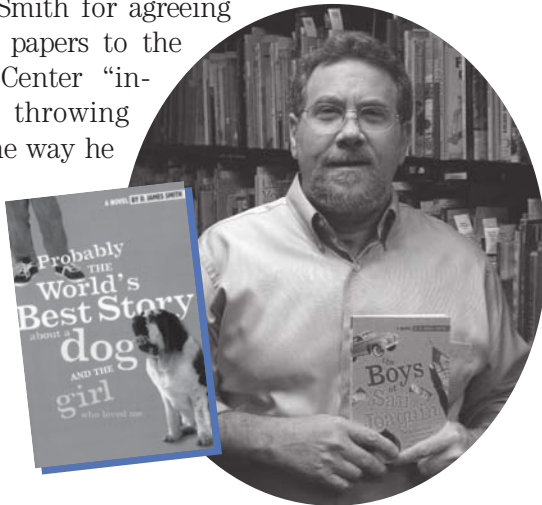
Happy reading!

Local author wins Edgar Award

Congratulations to D. James Smith (the “D” stands for “David”) whose book, *The Boys of San Joaquin* (Simon & Schuster, 2005), won the 2006 Edgar Award, presented by the Mystery Writers of America for the year’s best juvenile mystery. Smith, whose book topped Carl Hiassen’s *Flush* in the category, was pleasantly surprised by the win, especially since he did not write the novel as a mystery.

This touching, hilarious story is set in Smith’s home town of Fresno (called Orange Grove City) in the summer of 1951. It begins when Rufus, the O’Neil family’s dog, comes home with part of a twenty-dollar bill stuck to his teeth. Twelve-year-old Paolo tracks the bill to its source, sometimes scared spitless, flirting with danger and girls. “With this book,” said the Washington Post, “Smith joins Richard Peck and Bruce Clements in the select company of latter-day YA [Young Adult] writers who can be mentioned in the same sentence as Mark Twain.” In the sequel, *Probably the World’s Best Story about a Dog and the Girl who Loved Me*, Paolo solves a dog-napping (his publishers are keen on mysteries now, Smith reports) and a third book in the series is in the works.

Thanks to Smith for agreeing to donate his papers to the Arne Nixon Center “instead of just throwing them away” the way he usually does!



Answers to quiz:

- 1 *The Boys of San Joaquin* by D. James Smith
- 2 *A Little Princess* by Frances Hodgson Burnett
- 3 *Under the Royal Palms: A Childhood in Cuba* by Alma Flor Ada
- 4 *And Tango Makes Three* by Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell

Donations of books and materials

(January through July 2006)

Cyril P. Athans: 36 books
Lisa Black: 1 book
Nick Bruel: 1 original “Bad Kitty” art piece
Marjorie Burgeson: 236 *Cricket* & 39 *Ladybug* Magazines
Angelica Carpenter: 21 books
Michael Cart: 130 boxes of books
Children’s Book Press: 5 books
Mirja Covarrubias: 1 book
Sharon Creech: 40 foreign language editions of her books
William Crumpacker: 5 books & 39 figurines
Louise Feinberg: 8 books
Michael Gorman: 1 book & 1 statue
Henry Holt: 24 books
Holiday House: 38 books
Houghton Mifflin: 47 books & 5 posters
Rosellen Kershaw: 10 books
Kathy Kline: 6 books
Lerner Publishing Company: 13 books
Terry Lewis: 2 books
Peggie Morgan: 1 poster
Blossom Norman: 5 books
Oakland Public Library: 44 books & 6 pamphlets
Bette Peterson: 1 book
Linda Peterson: 401 books
Tamora Pierce: 8 books
Paul Politi: 51 Leo Politi postcards
Random House: 81 books
Roaring Brook Press: 12 books
Sagaponack Books: 1 book
Scholastic: 58 books
Denise Sciandra: 2 books
Science, Naturally!: 1 book
Byron Sewell: essays & parodies of the works of Lewis Carroll
Shenanigan Books: 2 books
Dr. and Mrs. Allan Shields: 2 books
Gary Soto: 3 books
Ray Steele: 12 German books
Al Stein: 1 decorative cat tile
David Ezra Stein: 1 copy of his book, *Cowboy Ned and Andy*
Edith Stock: 13 German books
Ten Speed Press: 2 books
Tricycle Press: 11 books
Dave Tyckoson: 4 books & 5 posters
Johan T. Van der Noordaa: 5 books
Jacklyn Williams: 6 of her books

Thank you,
all!



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marriages, and single motherhood. For many years these books have been overshadowed by the fame of her children's stories, but recently scholars have rediscovered them and they have written about them in this book.

It begins with the conference's keynote speech, by Gretchen Holbrook Gerzina, whose biography, *Frances Hodgson Burnett*, was published in 2004, and ends with an interview with Penny Deupree, Burnett's great-granddaughter, who has inherited the family archive. In between are essays by Pulitzer Prize winner Alison Lurie and Burnett's first non-family biographer, Ann Thwaite. The articles, which are both scholarly and conversational, are in chronological order, based on the publication of Burnett's books or on the production of plays and movies adapted from them. The book, which includes photographs and illustrations, costs \$46 and can be ordered from bookstores and online booksellers or from www.scarecrowpress.com.

San Souci donates papers

Thanks to Robert D. San Souci, the prolific author of more than 90 books, who announced recently that he will donate his papers to the Arne Nixon Center. "It's an appropriate choice," he said. "Arne Nixon gave me and my brother [Daniel San Souci, the well-known illustrator and author] our first invitation to speak outside of local schools, and our first connection to the wider world of children's literature." The brothers spoke at a Fresno event organized by Nixon in 1981 and they returned as speakers for the Arne Nixon Children's Literature Festival in 2002.

Robert D. San Souci, who goes by "Bob," is pleased that he was able to dedicate his book *The Faithful Friend* to his friend Arne Nixon shortly before Nixon passed away. His titles include *Cinderella Skeleton*, *Little Gold Star*, *Two Bear Cubs*, *Sukey and the Mermaid*, *The Legend of Scarface*, *Cendrillon*, *The Talking Eggs*, and many other picture books, often based on traditional tales from varying countries and cultures. His newest publications are a hardback reprint of *Sister Tricksters* and paperback editions of *The Hired Hand* and *Feathertop*.

The author's Web site is www.robertsan-souci.com.

Margarita Engle to speak in Fresno on October 21

Margarita Engle's first children's book, *The Poet Slave of Cuba: A Biography of Juan Francisco Manzano* (Henry Holt, 2006) has won starred reviews in *School Library Journal*, *Booklist*, *The Horn Book Magazine*, and *The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books* and was praised in the *Chicago Tribune*, *Baltimore Sun*, and many other publications.



Manzano, who lived from 1797 to 1853, was born the slave of a wealthy woman who denied him an education but appreciated his talent for poetry. Manzano's verses reflect the beauty of the world and they also expose its hideous cruelty.

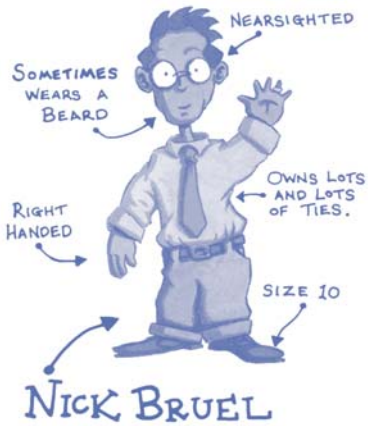
Margarita Engle tells his story in free verse, using many voices—the poet's, his mother's, his father's, and also those of his owners. The book, illustrated by Sean Qualls, includes examples of Manzano's poems in Spanish and in English translation.

Meet this Clovis, California, author at an event co-sponsored by ANCA, the Arne Nixon Center Advocates, on Saturday, October 21, from 1–3 p.m. at Arte Américas, 1630 Van Ness, Fresno, California, 93721. Admission is \$3 for adults; \$2 for seniors and students; free to children under 12. The Web site is www.arteamericas.org.

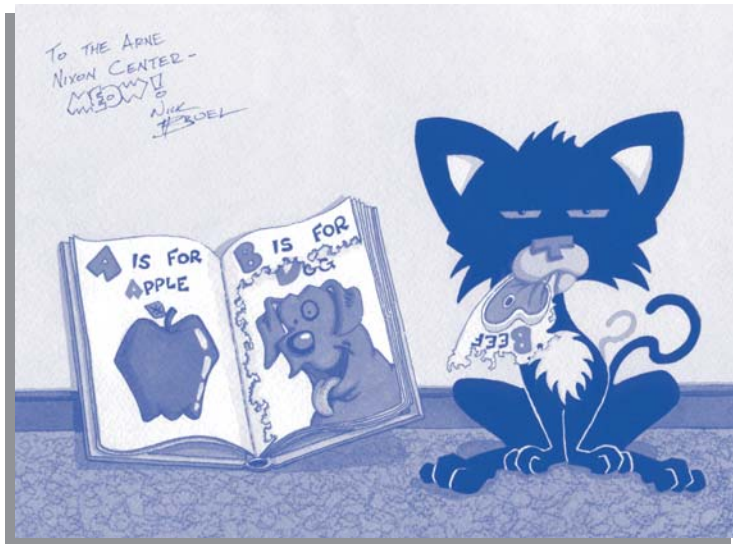
Margarita Engle is a botanist, agronomist, and the Cuban-American author of two adult novels about the island, *Skywriting* (Bantam), and *Singing to Cuba* (Arte Publico Press). Her books will be available for sale and autographing at the event.



Nick Bruel donates art



Thanks to Nick Bruel, author/illustrator of *Bad Kitty*, for donating an original piece of *Bad Kitty* art (below) to the Arne Nixon Center. Bruel's newest book is *Who is Melvin Bubble?*, about a boy who strongly resembles his creator, shown at left in a self-portrait.



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I/We would like to join the Arne Nixon Center Advocates and enclose a donation. (Donations are tax deductible as allowable by law.)

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Michael Cart donations

Michael Cart, the well-known author, librarian, *Booklist* columnist, and founder of the Printz Award for young adult fiction, holds the all-time record as a donor of books to the Arne Nixon Center. In the past four months he has donated 130 boxes of books, including many valuable first editions. Each box holds about 50 books but the exact number is not yet known as staff and volunteers are working box by box, making lists of titles and sorting out other materials like files, newspaper articles, and video cassettes.

Michael Cart is a founding member of the Arne Nixon Center's governing board and he has been one of the Center's strongest supporters since its inception. His leadership, expertise, and now his collection are invaluable to the Center's mission.

Featured illustrations from our collections

Front page: *Mamá Goose: A Latino Nursery Treasury*, selected by Alma Flor Ada and F. Isabel Campoy; illustrated by Maribel Suárez.

Page 3: *Mamá Goose*

Page 4: *Rosa Raposa*, written by F. Isabel Campoy, illustrated by Jose Aruego and Ariane Dewey.

Page 4-5 center: *¡Pío Peep!*

Page 7: *Who is Melvin Bubble?*, written and illustrated by Nick Bruel.

Back page: *With Love, Little Red Hen*, written by Alma Flor Ada, illustrated by Leslie Tryon.

Can you identify book titles from these first lines?

(Answers on page 4)



Now, this is a story as true as I know how to tell it. There are those that would say it's not true, then, but they'd be wrong. I have a reputation for stretching things toward the interesting, but only as to make my point, so you'll understand that if this isn't exactly the whole truth, it is as close as you want it to be.



Once on a dark winter's day, when the yellow fog hung so thick and heavy in the streets of London that the lamps were lighted and the shop windows blazed with gas as they do at night, an odd-looking little girl sat in a cab with her father. . . .



Daily life in La Quinta Simoni started very early in the morning. The placid night fragrances of jasmine and gardenias, which entered my bedroom from the garden, were quickly overtaken by the acrid but friendly smell of coffee brewing.



In the middle of New York City there is a great big park called Central Park. Children love to play there. It has a toy-boat pond where they can sail their boats. It has a carousel to ride on in the summer and an ice rink to skate on in the winter.

Best of all it has its very own zoo.

Every day families of all kinds go to visit the animals that live there.

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