Library remembers Hispanic veterans at Memorial Day event

At a special Memorial Day weekend Walter Presents event, the library explored the sometimes overlooked role that soldiers and sailors of Hispanic heritage have played in the defense of our nation.

Guereros Americanos: The Valley at War drew about fifty veterans and local residents, as well as students, to the Walter Stiern Library for the final Walter Presents event of the academic year. The film and discussion focused on Hispanic participation in American conflicts since World War II.

“Today, when we see the small flags that are traditionally placed on the graves of the dead who served, it reminds us that war is close to us and that the people who fight in them come from us,” said Curt Asher, library dean and a Navy veteran.

Veterans Bert Marquez, Wesley Barrientos, and Francisco Javier Llamas discussed their experiences on Memorial Day.

This event was sponsored by the American Library Association and National Endowment for the Humanities and is a collaboration with Bakersfield College.

Francisco Javier Llamas, a library staff member, local historian, and Army veteran of the Bosnian conflict led the event, which kicked off with the hour long film, War and Peace, 1942-1954, which is part of the Latino Americans series from PBS. Llamas was the main organizer of the event, working with CSUB archivist, Chris Livingston, and Bakersfield College historian, Dr. Oliver Rosales.

“I’m gratified that we could bring some of the local veteran community to campus. The event gave us a chance to discuss and reflect on some of the experiences of our veterans,” said Bert Marquez, a veteran of the Vietnam War.

Westlaw added to library

In 2016/17, the Westlaw Campus Research database will be available to CSUB library users. West’s legal sources have been around a long time. Owned by Thomson Reuters, all the Westlaw sources used in law schools, courts, and law libraries will now be available online to CSUB students, faculty, staff, and community users. Westlaw Campus Research includes both primary and secondary law sources, law reviews, business information, and many news publications. Similar to LexisNexis, Westlaw Campus Research has been added to the CSU’s Electronic Core Collection so that all CSU libraries will have access to this database. Library staff are currently receiving training and the database should be available by the 2016 fall term.

Westlaw is replacing LexisNexis. The library determined that Westlaw has better coverage of news and law than Lexis Nexis and was easier to use.

Some Changes in the Law Area

You may have noticed some changes happening in the library’s law area. Some legal reference books have been relocated to the reference collection on the east side of the reference area. In the summer, more student study areas will be created in what is now the law area. There will still be a law collection but with the addition of Westlaw Campus Research online database, CSUB students, faculty, and staff will have even greater access to law materials.
Librarian Christy Gavin receives Emeritus award

Christy Gavin

Retiring librarian Christy Gavin has received the Emeritus award in recognition of her exceptional performance and meritorious record in the areas of teaching, scholarship, and service. Ms. Gavin began her career at CSUB in 1977. She holds two master’s degrees, one in Library Science and the other in English. Nominated by the library faculty and the Dean of the Library, Curt Asher, her colleagues state, “Christy is a gifted and outstanding teacher who has educated a generation of students, as well as her library faculty colleagues at CSUB. Christy has been the library’s Coordinator for Information Literacy for some thirty-two years, developing and building the library’s instructional program from its infancy to a program of credit courses, library research labs for composition students, and subject orientation programs. Christy is an outstanding librarian and valued colleague, who has made lasting contributions to the library, the university, and community.”

Ms. Gavin has served as the department subject liaison for Anthropology, Art, Communications, English, Music, Social Work, Sociology, and Theatre, among others. She also has served on numerous library, campus, and Academic Senate committees.

She has been a leader in scholarship and research among the CSUB library faculty, authoring five academic and refereed publications as well as other articles and projects. Ms. Gavin has served as the curator of the library’s California Odyssey: Dust Bowl Migration Archive and in that capacity for the last thirty years, has expanded and developed the collection into a dynamic and accessible digital archive that has received wide notoriety, and is sought after by many renowned scholars, researchers, teachers, and filmmakers.

Writer in Residence Workshop slated

Brian Evenson, the Walter Stern Library PG&E Writer in Residence, will be holding a creative writing workshop on June 30 in the library’s Ablin Conference Room.

Evenson is the author of a dozen books of fiction, most recently the story collection, Windeye, and the novel, Immobility, both of which were finalists for a Shirley Jackson Award. His novel, Last Days, won the American Library Association’s award for Best Horror Novel of 2009. His novel, The Open Curtain, was a finalist for an Edgar Award and an International Horror Guild Award. Other books include The Wavering Knife (which won the IHG Award for best story collection), Dark Property, and Altmann’s Tongue. He has translated work of numerous literary artists from Spanish and French. He is the recipient of three O. Henry Prizes as well as an NEA fellowship. His work has been translated into French, Italian, Spanish, Japanese and Slovenian. Previously the Royce Professor of Teaching Excellence in Brown University’s Literary Arts Department, Brian now teaches at the California Institute of Arts.

This is the fourth year that the library’s partnership with PG&E has brought the campus a well-known author. In the past, we had writers Angie Chau, Marisa Silver and John Hampsey. The Writer in Residence provides the community with a spring reading and a public creative writing workshop in the summer.

Memorial Day Event (Cont’d from page 1)

local veterans,” Llamas said.

The film focused on the paradoxical events of World War II, which opened the doors of equal opportunity for Latinos, but did not assuage racist attitudes. Particularly poignant was the story of Macario Garcia, who earned the Congressional Medal of Honor for his heroism in Europe, but returned home to racial segregation and was refused service in a café.

Llamas led a discussion following the film with panelists Wesley Barrientos, an Iraq war vet who lost both legs in combat and is now a community leader and activist on behalf of veterans, and Korean War veteran Bert Marquez. Both men are members of the Order of the Purple Heart, an organization of combat wounded.
History of Kern ag presented

The library is commemorating 150 years of Kern agriculture with a new exhibit in the Historical Research Center (HRC) that opened spring quarter and will remain open through the summer.

The exhibit includes photos, interpretive panels, and artifacts from the county’s earliest pioneers to its most modern farming methods.

California FARMS Foundation Board members toured the exhibit at a reception in May. The group of valley growers has been generous in its support of a library intern project. The interns have helped arrange and organize a large collection of historical materials for them at the Shafter Agricultural Research Station.

The ag exhibit was built by student volunteers from the HRC’s exhibit committee, led by intern Kim Kartinen.

Archivist Chris Livingston, curator of the HRC, said he was happy with the way the exhibit came together.

“Kern agriculture is too big a topic to tackle in this small exhibit space, but I am proud of Kim and the other students, who pulled it together and created a narrative,” Livingston said. “It is a great effort at presenting a big topic like this.”

The HRC was established to both preserve regional history and give students opportunities to get experience in public history projects like exhibit construction, conducting oral history interviews and preserving historical materials. This is the fourth exhibit in the growing HRC, which also houses rare books and provides a range of volunteer opportunities.

Exhibit in HRC tells the story of 150 years of Kern agriculture.

Library to celebrate poetry month all year

Poets are presenting their work in the library in a new, permanent exhibit known as Poet’s Corner and aficionados turned out on April 19 to hear local poets read from their work.

“We want poetic expression to have a home here. Poetry is meant to be shared and there is no better venue for poets to present their work than here in the library,” said Library Dean Curt Asher.

Both the Poet’s Corner and the Local Poets event are collaborations with the English Department. Dr. Marit MacArthur worked with the library to establish the Local Poets event three years ago. This year Professor Matt Woodman took over that duty.

Woodman also worked with the library to launch the Poet’s Corner this spring.

Woodman is a widely published poet who teaches writing and promotes poetry in the community. He recently worked with the Art Department in an art/poetry collaboration that exhibited student work in the library during winter quarter.

Woodman collected and edited the works of all the poets who read at the event and published them in a chapbook called Writing the Drought: A Collection of Poems by Kern County Authors, which he made available to everyone who attended.

The poets read and interpreted the drought in a variety of ways. Some saw pain in thirst, others saw renewal, and others saw spiritual metaphors.

This year’s poets included Don Thompson, who was named Poet Laureate of Kern County by the Kern County Arts Council in April. Thompson read his poems “Prodigal” and “Oak Grove Cemetery.”

In addition to Thompson and Woodman, other major regional voices at the event were Nancy Edwards, Portia Choi, Annis Cassells, and Geoffrey Dyer. Poets selected to read for the first time at the event were Greg Bolanos, Jeff Eagan, Shelley Evans, Anthony Jauregui, Chyna Parker, Bailey Russell, Sidney Russell, and Susanna Vera.

In a new permanent exhibit in the library, on the west wall of the first floor near the elevators, selected student poets will be able to have their poems displayed. Woodman will select a few poems for the exhibit on a rotating basis.

“People who write poetry expose their feelings. Sharing those words takes a certain amount of courage, whether it’s in an exhibit or at a public reading,” Asher said. “I think all the poets who are willing to share their work in these ways deserve a lot of credit.”

The Poet’s Corner Exhibit is an effort to make student poetry part of the life of the library and to encourage students to learn about and create literary art.
Tales from the Vault #7
By Chris Livingston, Archivist

This year marks the sesquicentennial of the establishment of Kern County. To commemorate this, the HRC has been busy researching photographs that document the history of the county for the exhibit 150: The History of Kern County Through Photographs, now on display in the Walter W. Stiern Library. While researching this exhibit I happened upon a timeline of the development of Kern County by former Kern County Museum Director, Richard C. Bailey. He noted that in 1866, Peter Gardett was the first naturalized citizen in the county. This piqued my curiosity and sent me on a quest to find more information about this Kern County pioneer.

After consulting a variety of sources located in the Historical Research Center, I found that Gardett was born in Danzig, Prussia on December 22, 1825. He came to the United States on a ship that sailed “around the Horn” in 1851 and landed in San Francisco. Instead of chasing the dream of discovering gold, Gardett pursued his riches in business and farming. He owned a general store on Greenhorn Mountain and owned over five hundred acres of land, much of which was devoted to producing grain and alfalfa.

Gardett was a pillar of Kern County pioneer society, however, he was not the first immigrant to legally naturalize to the county. A review of the United States Naturalization Records located in the Stiern Library Archives reveals that Gardett was officially recognized as a U.S. citizen on September 7, 1868. So this begs the question: Who was the first officially naturalized citizen in Kern County? The answer lurks behind the doors of the vault and is….

TO BE CONTINUED

Do you want to learn more about Peter Gardett and Kern County’s first pioneers? Their story and others are available in the Historical Research Center. Come visit us! You never know what you’ll discover!

The Art of Literature
Art students turned books into sculptures in a project led by art professor Joyce Kohl. The works were exhibited in the library during Spring quarter.
The Brief

Library loses a dear friend

The library was saddened by the loss of friend and benefactor Rayburn “Ray” Dezember, whose philanthropy and long-time support for the library left a lasting mark that will benefit generations of students.

He passed away at home Monday, March 14, at age 85, surrounded by family.

The beautiful Dezember Reading Room is named in honor of Mr. Dezember and his wife, Joan, for their profound generosity during the library’s construction in the early 1990s. Mr. Dezember was a long-time member of the Stiern Associates. Mr. and Mrs. Dezember generously supported the library with an annual gift.

The room that bears the Dezember name is modeled loosely on the Morrison Room in Doe Library at Berkeley and has been called one of the most beautiful spaces in Kern County. CSUB President Horace Mitchell often describes the space as “the university’s living room.”

Saying “no more” to sexual assault

The library collaborated with the campus Equity, Inclusion, and Compliance Office and developed an exhibit highlighting the problem of sexual assault, an issue that has plagued campuses around the country.

April was Sexual Assault Awareness Month. The library joined organizations and businesses around the country working to bring awareness to the issue.

CSUB Library Dean elected to chair system wide council

CSUB Library Dean Curt Asher was elected vice chair of the CSU Council of Library Deans (COLD) for the 2016-2017 year. The person elected vice chair serves as chair the succeeding year, so Asher will chair the system wide council in 2017-2018.

COLD meets four times a year and establishes policies and practices on issues and projects that affect libraries system wide.

“It was an honor to be elected to this position,” Asher said.

One example of a COLD accomplishment is the Electronic Core Collection, a centrally negotiated collection of periodical databases and other resources that are shared by all 23 campuses and paid for centrally. The core collection provides students at smaller or less well-funded schools with access to important databases and provides centralized purchasing power. The Unified Library Management System is another example. It is currently in development.

Amanda Grombly continues to lead system development project for campus

Amanda Grombly, who returned to CSUB last year after working for several years in another library, continues to lead the campus library in its move toward a CSU shared library system, that will alleviate the need for each campus to maintain an individual system. Library systems are resources that allow physical and electronic resources to be purchased, cataloged, managed, shared, and circulated.

The CSU libraries will share a single system being specially developed by the Ex Libris company using their Alma interface, which will allow for expansive resource and project collaboration. It is anticipated to be the largest library system shared by universities in the nation. Its implementation is resulting in many hours of collaboration and work between CSU campuses but is expected to increase efficiency dramatically.

Amanda recently attended a conference in Oklahoma, where she underwent further training in the development of the shared system.

Activist educator offers moving talk about school inequities

A veteran public education activist whose books are part of the teaching profession’s canon spoke in the library on May 11. The School of Social Science and Education and the CSUB Institute for Social Justice brought Jonathan Kozol to the Dezember Reading Room. Kozol is a National Book Award winning author, who has been fighting for equality and equity in public education since 1960s.

Mario Garcia draws large crowd

Chicano studies scholar and historian Mario Garcia drew a capacity crowd to the Dezember Reading Room on May 5. Garcia, hosted by the History Department as part of the History Forum series, which the library cosponsored, spoke about the historic Southern California component of the Chicano Movement.

It was Garcia’s fourth visit to the campus, each of which has generated large crowds. Garcia is a professor at UC Santa Barbara.

His books, which were being provided by Russo’s at the event, completely sold out for the second year in a row. Garcia is considered one of the most significant scholars in Mexican-American history. His most recent book, The Chicano Generation: Testimonios of the Movement, draws on interviews with famous activists.

Professor Stafford Betty discusses his book

Stafford Betty read from and discussed his novel, The Severed Breast, at a Walter Presents lecture on May 19. Dr. Betty, who has been a Religious Studies professor at CSUB since the early 1970s, holds a Ph.D. from Fordham, is a Vietnam veteran, and is considered a leading scholar in afterlife studies. He sponsors the Betty Creative Writing Awards annually. The book he presented is a revision of his novel, Thomas, which was published by Penguin India. The novel tells the story of Apostle Thomas in India.

Library recognizes faculty alternative text adopters

Librarian Sandra Bozarth, who wrote the Affordable Learning Solutions grant that was awarded to the library, held a luncheon on May 20 for faculty who adopted alternative materials in their teaching. Sandra’s work promoting alternatives to expensive textbooks in the classroom has saved students tens of thousands of dollars.
Walter W. Stiern Library Associates

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