
U E L M A

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November 2004

President's Message - - Fawn Morgan

With Allies By Our Side

This past Halloween Eve I attended a performance of the Utah Symphony performing The Lord of the Rings Symphony. A number of young-at-heart patrons were dressed in the costumes of the novel and subsequent movie. The last musical note was met with cheering and applause.

Being the of the librarian mentality, someone who loves the hunt for information, I returned home to search the Internet for reviews of performances in other cities. The October 11, 2004 edition of the Chicago Sun-Times stated, "Friday evening many Chicagoans watched President Bush and Sen. John Kerry argue about taxes, war and the fate of the Middle East. Meanwhile, at the Auditorium Theatre patrons enjoyed an escapist symphony about elves, war and the fate of Middle-earth." Being a lover of Tolkien's works since my high school days, I objected to the peevish tone of the review. I had loved the symphony performance and didn't consider it at all escapist. Pity the poor critic who has never loved a novel of the Science Fiction or Fantasy genre.

The review did get me thinking about conflict, however. Yesterday at school the boilers which comprise the school's heating system had been shut down by a broken switch. The temperature in the library was 55° all day; today the switch is replaced but the temperature has soared to 80°. Sometimes, after a difficult week of fighting boilers, budgets, schedules, electronic systems, administrative policies, argumentative students, and other

annoyances both big and small, the school librarian may feel like he is in a battle, a battle for a strong library program. Fatigue, isolation and frustration can contribute to a sense of embattlement. Although we may not feel that everyone is actually against us, we, most likely, will feel that most everyone else is apathetic towards our concerns.

No one can expect to win a battle without determining who his allies and enemies are. Let us first define the enemy. Apathy can be an enemy, far more dangerous than any antagonist. People are often apathetic to those they don't know. You have heard the old Native American adage, "*Never criticize a man until you walk a mile in his moccasins*". (As a side note, when you are feeling particularly embattled you may need the following anonymous version: "*Before you criticize someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticize them, you're a mile away and you have their shoes.*")



How, then, do we help others become familiar with our library program? Several years ago the keynote speaker at our conference, Gary Hartzell, author of *Building Influence for the School Librarian*, Linworth Publishing, addressed the issue of the invisible librarian. The link below delves into the issue further.

http://www.librarian_image.net/

But what about our allies? One of the purposes of UELMA is to establish and contribute to alliances with organizations which provide assistance to school librarians. The liaisons from UELMA to current state-level organizations are listed on page two of this newsletter. Feel free to contact them if you have questions. We are also seeking UELMA members to become liaisons for other professional organizations. Additional information is also located on page two.

What Can I Do to Help?

UELMA needs two more liaisons to represent students, parents and teachers. If you know of a UELMA member who is also a member of PTSA, UEA, or AFT and would be a good representative, please contact me, Fawn Morgan, at fmorgan@dsdmail.net or call 801-402-4996. The primary job of liaisons is to convey information about the contact organization that would be of value to UELMA members but they also act as good-will ambassadors to organizations whose much-needed endorsement benefits the battle for strong school libraries.

Consider these opportunities to become a good-will ambassador on your own. Pick one area in which you are not already involved.

- Join ULA, AASL, UCET, and CLAU. Contribute to those organizations and then make your concerns known.
- Register with UEN. Respond to its request for evaluation of products and then promote those valuable resources. Not only can we school librarians receive support, we can contribute our own expertise.
- Work actively in your local PTA or PTSA. Become a card-holding member, then volunteer, or, at least, visit a board meeting to introduce yourself.
- Get to know on a first-name basis the children or young adult librarian at the closest public library. Invite the public librarians to participate with you in school library activities or to give a presentation at your next district library association meeting.
- Create a dynamic advisory committee or develop a Friends of the Library group.
- Develop a school library web site that reaches out to the public.
- Volunteer to present lessons to teachers in your own school, within your district, for other districts, and at UELMA.
- Research candidates for public office and become involved in their campaigns, getting to know your senators, representatives, and board members on a personal basis.
- Purchase from local vendors.

You can do much to further the cause by creating alliances for your own library and supporting the alliances formed by UELMA.

State-Level Liaisons

Technology Associations

UCET (Utah Coalition of Educational Technology)
Randa Bruce, Grandview Elementary, Ogden
brucer@m.ogden.k12.ut.us

UEN (Utah Education Network)
Brent Jones, Fremont High, Weber
bjones@fhs.weber.k12.ut.us

Library Associations

ULA (Utah Library Association)
Cindy Mitchell, So. Jordan Middle, Jordan
cindy.mitchell@jordan.k12.ut.us

School Administrations

ULMS (Utah Library Media Supervisors)
Jean Truman, Canyon View High, Iron
jean.truman@iron.k12.ut.us
USOE (Utah State Office of Education)
Georgia Loutensock, Library Media
gloutens@usoe.k12.ut.us

Reading Associations

CLAU (Children's Literature Association of Utah)
Linda Bethers, Greenwood Elem., Alpine
bethl161@alpine.k12.ut.us

Vendors

Vendor and UELMA Board Member
Jeff Cutler, ProQuest
jeffrey.cutler@il.proquest.com

Pick a Great Read

by Cindy Mitchell, South Jordan Middle School

find more online at http://www.sjms.jordan.k12.ut.us/MediaCenter/cdm_daily.html

For Younger Students

***The Various* by AuGrade** The cover does this book a huge disservice! "Midge" discovers that fairies and pixies really do live in her uncle's dark forest. In trying to save them from the forest being destroyed AND to save herself from a renegade fairy group, she finds strength and friendship in humans and "Various". This book is better than *Faerie Wars*. EL,MS,HS-ESSENTIAL

***Lily's Ghosts* by Laura Ruby** Lily and her mom have moved back to the creepy family home in Cape May, New Jersey. As weirder and weirder things start happening around the house, Lily and her new friend Vas are certain that ghosts are at the root of the problem. Kind of slow, but my favorite parts were the bits from the ghosts' perspectives. EL-ESSENTIAL, MS-ADVISABLE

***The Ugly Princess and the Wise Fool* by Margaret Gray** Princess Rose is the ugliest princess ever. Jasper is a wiseman masquerading as a fool. Against Jasper's advice, Rose wishes to be the most beautiful princess in the world so that she can win the heart of a prince she has never met. ES-ADVISABLE, MS-OPTIONAL

***Leon and the Spitting Image* by Allen Kurweil** Leon's fourth grade teacher is making them SEW!! And if Leon doesn't learn to sew, he may be back in her class next year. Between painful dodgeball, a witchy teacher, and two best friends who standby through thick and thin, this is a fun read. EL-ESSENTIAL, MS-ADVISABLE

For Older Students

***The Last Chance Texaco* by Brent Hartinger** Lucy is in her last group home; if she gets kicked out of this one, it is off the "Eat-Their-Young Island" for her. Lucy has to deal with rejection at school, pecking orders at the group home, and an arsonist. Excellent! MS, HS - ESSENTIAL

***Starry Nights* by Judith Clarke** Jess' family has moved to a new city. Her mother has had a breakdown; her brother spends all his time talking to a little girl; her sister is sure that a magic spell will cure all their ills. One of these people is not even really there any more. A good ghost story, but more the story of a family dealing with grief. MS-ADVISABLE

***Face* by Benjamin Zephaniah** After a moment of bad judgment, Martin is burned and his face is scarred for life. Now he learns who his true friends are, and where his true strength is. Very good read, even though it is written in dialect. MS, HS - ADVISABLE

***Rat* by Jan Cherpko** Last year Jeremy saw the boys' basketball coach molesting a cheerleader in his office and Jeremy had the guts to testify in court about what he saw. A new season with a new coach begins and Jeremy is feeling the heat from those who felt he should have kept his mouth shut. A good basketball book and a great book about doing what is right. MS-ESSENTIAL. (not for EL)

***Shadow of a Doubt* by S.L. Rottman.** "Shadow" Thompson has lived for the last seven years under the shadow of his runaway older brother. Now Daniel is in trouble with the law and the family is thrown into chaos again. I am so happy about the large number of books that I have read lately that deal with the disenfranchised, the off beat, the on the edge groups of society. This is another excellent book for hard to please kids. ESSENTIAL

Dragonlance originators Tracy Hickman and Laura Curtis Hickman have been publishing game designs and stories together for over twenty-five years – nearly as long as their marriage. In fact, it was Laura who introduced Tracy to the Dungeons & Dragons game – and thus started them both on a life of adventure and imagination.

Tracy Hickman was born in Salt Lake City, Utah on November 26th, 1955. He graduated Provo High School in 1974 where his major interests were in Drama, music and Air Force JROTC. In 1975, Tracy began two years of service as a missionary for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints. His initial posting was for six months in Hawaii before his visa was approved and he moved on to his final calling in the nation of Indonesia. There, he served as a missionary in Surabaya, Djakarta and the mountain city of Bandung before being released honorably in 1977. As a result, Tracy can still speak conversational Indonesian and occasionally bases his magical phrases on that language.

Laura Curtis was born in Long Beach, California on December 7th, 1956. She and Tracy first met in the lunch room of Farrer Junior High School in Provo, Utah. Laura was Tracy's first dance, first date and first kiss. They dated off and on through high school. Laura is also a Provo High School alumnus, graduating in 1975 where her major interests also included drama and music. In 1975, following an automobile accident returning from visiting family on the west coast, Laura moved to California to take care of her mother and be closer to her extended family. Throughout this time, however, Laura and Tracy kept up their correspondence half a world away.

Tracy married his high School sweetheart, Laura Curtis, within four months of his returning to the United States. They have been married twenty-one years now and are the parents of four children: Angel, Curtis, Tasha and Jarod.

Tracy has worked as a supermarket stockboy, a movie projectionist, a theater manager, a glass worker, a television assistant director, and a drill press operator in a genealogy center. It was in 1981 — between jobs and wanting to buy shoes for his children — that he approached TSR about buying two game modules that Laura and Tracy had self-published . . . and ended up with a job instead. Laura and Tracy packed up their family and moved to Wisconsin and to a new career. That job led to Tracy's association with Margaret Weis and their first publication together: the Dragonlance Chronicles.

Since that time in 1985, Tracy with Margaret jointly authored over forty book titles. Tracy is a NYT Best-Selling co-author (with Margaret Weis) of many Dragonlance novels including the original Dragonlance Chronicles, Dragonlance Legends, Rose of the Prophet and Darksword trilogies as well as the seven-book Deathgate Cycle. Co-authored and solo, Tracy has over fifty books currently in print in numerous languages world-wide.

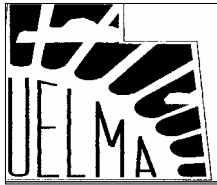
Tracy and Laura are remembered together for their role-playing game designs in Dragonlance and the Oasis of the White Palm series but are perhaps best known for their classic adventure, the original Ravenloft. Life now has provided them the opportunity to fulfill a dream: to write novels together. Their first joint fantasy trilogy – The Bronze Canticles – is currently available through Warner Aspect Books.

Tracy and Laura remain highly active in their church and pursue a number of hobbies including guitar, singing, piano, models, DVD movies, computer games, television production and animation. Tracy loves to read biographies, histories and popular science books. Laura collects cookie jars, loves knitting crocheting, movies, reading, an occasional sewing project and creating new worlds -- on film, stage and in books, poetry and song -- with Tracy.

Tracy and Laura live in St. George, Utah working from adjoining offices in their home.

*Our Featured
Authors:
Tracy Hickman
and
Laura Curtis
Hickman*





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In This Issue... ...Alliances & Connections..... Upcoming Conference Info Awards Nominations....

Come join with fellow librarians and register for the UELMA Conference which will be held on March 3, 2005 at the new Davis County Convention Center in Layton, Utah. It is a new location with new opportunities. There will be plenty of parking. It is easy to get to, close to shops and malls. There are fresh, spacious, accommodations, with the latest technology to handle all our needs.

Alliances and Connections is the conference theme. Organizers are arranging for lots of information that will fit the needs of all Utah school libraries. There will be technology updates, the latest in books, critical information on funding and grants, sessions on library skills, and special treats from area authors, just to name some of the exciting things you will get from this year's gathering. Among presenters already making preparations for the conference include Steve Zsiray, Brent Jones, Cindi Mitchell. Representatives from the Utah State Library, Utah Educational Network, and the national organization, American Association of School Librarians are planning to

participate. A large group of vendors, covering all areas of school library needs, are being scheduled to show their wares.

And, plans are being considered for a special gathering of Utah authors for our attendees to greet, book sign and share stories..

A special treat will be the keynote guest authors, **Tracy and Laura Hickman**, husband and wife team, who have authored over forty books, including the very popular Drag-onlance series. Read more about them in this edition of the newsletter.

In our planning there is still room for your input and suggestions. If there is an issue you feel needs addressed or a presenter proposal that we should know about, please call or email Burke Belnap, Conference Chairman at 435 634-1967, or burke@schs.washk12.org, or you can contact one of the UELMA Board members.

Look for the registration form in this mailing and send it in early to secure your place.

Mark your calendar. Circle March 3, 2005. **Come get connected.**

*Alliances
&
Connections*