

REFORMA DE FLORIDA

Noticias del mes/News of the month

Notes from the Editor

Today is April 1, the day submissions are due for our Pura Belpré Book Donation Grant. How do you apply by 9 pm EST so you don't miss out on getting FREE books published in 2025, written and illustrated by Latino authors, for your library or organization? Pg. 2 has the answers.

It's Election time! Nominate yourself or a colleague for a position on the Board. Vice-President/President-Elect and Treasurer are open. You must be a member of REFORMA de Florida to stand for office. If you're not sure of your membership status, send me an [email](#). More info. is on pg. 2.

David has interesting ways to celebrate April at your library. Read *Latineando* on pg. 3 for tips.

President Lucia's *Lo-que-Leo* has good books to read. [Email her](#) with your titles for next month's edition.

Check out Bibliotele's amazing list of movies available for free if you're a [ReDeFL member](#).

Lots to read. Lots to do. For real. No joking. Ready. Set. Go!

Alma Ramos-McDermott,
Editor

President's column

by Lucia M. Gonzalez



Early in my career, I learned that the way to move forward, effect change, and make a difference in providing just and equitable library services to our communities is through active involvement in our professional organizations. I learned this in library school from my lifelong mentor, Dr.

Henrietta Smith (May 2, 1922 – April 21, 2021). A life member of REFORMA, Dr.

Smith was a tireless collaborator and an inspiration to all of us who had the privilege of being her student. On behalf of REFORMA de Florida, we honor her memory on the fifth anniversary of her passing.

This month, REFORMA de Florida will focus on planning for the 2026 Chapter elections. Starting April 1, we invite members to consider running for one of two positions on this year's slate: Vice President/President-Elect and Chapter Treasurer. The deadline for submitting candidate nominations is April 18. Filling these positions is vital to the life of the organization, and serving in a leadership role is both a unique learning experience and a significant professional accomplishment.

As we prepare to celebrate National Library Week, Earth Day, El Día del Idioma, El Día de los Niños, and many other April celebrations, I want to invite our members to volunteer and become actively involved in Chapter activities. You can help by recruiting new members, sharing information about your communities and programs, running for office, and contributing to the REFORMA Newsletter with book reviews or articles about what is happening at your libraries. We must learn from one another, and resource sharing is at the core of our mission.

I also want to invite anyone attending the 2026 FLA Annual Conference in Orlando, FL (May 13-15) to join us at our in-person REFORMA de Florida membership meeting on Thursday, May 14, at 10:00 a.m. This annual meeting is a valuable opportunity to network, discuss Chapter business, and connect with colleagues from across the state who serve Latino communities. ¡A todos, un feliz mes de abril!

The DEADLINE is TODAY for the 2026 REdeFL Pura Belpré Book Donation Grant

Applications for the 2026 REFORMA de Florida's Pura Belpré Book Donation Grant opened **February 2nd**, Pura's birthday. **The deadline** for submitting proposals is **April 1st**. That's **TODAY!** You do **NOT** need to be a member to apply for the grant, so apply before 9 pm EST to win a collection of Children and YA books, among titles written in 2025 and submitted by publishers for consideration to the 2026 Pura Belpré Award Selection Committee, created by Latinx authors and illustrators portraying the Latino cultural experience in the lives of children.

All types of Florida libraries, including Little Free Libraries, Bookmobiles, and public/private Organizations are encouraged to apply if you serve a Latino population. Be sure to indicate on your application if you want to win Children **OR** Young Adult books. Information on how to apply is on our website. We hope to see your application before 9:00 pm EST **TODAY!**

2026 Chapter Elections: Call for Nominations

by Alma Ramos-McDermott

It's that time of year to nominate yourself or another member for a role on your Executive Board. The Board meets remotely once/month to plan ways our chapter could help you reach your Latino communities. We need your help to keep our chapter going and growing. Please get involved. Full descriptions of the positions can be found on our website.

Open positions are **Vice-President/President-Elect** and **Treasurer**. All current ReDeFL members received an email with a link to the Nomination form. If you didn't get the form, please email me. The deadline for nominations is April 18th. **Don't wait! Nominate!**

Latineando!

by David Hernandez Rivero



Saludos a todos los Reformistas en este inicio de mes de abril.

We are now officially in spring.

April is associated with warming temperatures, blooming flowers, budding trees, longer days, and great colors all around us. The name April is derived from *Aperire*, the Latin word for opening, which symbolizes the way flowers open in Spring.

Numerous cultural and religious celebrations are associated with April. Among them Easter often falls in April. Easter's symbolism for resurrection and renewal is celebrated in numerous countries and cultures. Passover is an important Jewish holiday that celebrates the liberation of Israelites from Egyptian captivity. As is Easter, this holiday often falls in April. Passover symbolizes renewal, freedom, new beginnings, etc. Earth Day is a more recent cultural celebration that invites us to create environmental awareness. Earth Day promotes sustainability and engages people in activities to protect the planet. Earth Day also correlates with numerous cultures around the globe that celebrate harvesting and spring.

April is prolific in library themes used as a base and foundation for our programs, outreach, book displays, community events, and other library initiatives. This year National Library Week is celebrated April 19-25, and is an excellent opportunity to create library appreciation events, customer and volunteer appreciation, etc. An event to celebrate National Library Week at your branch can bring numerous new patrons who will appreciate learning what your library has to offer. Make sure you have great book displays to show. You can also come up with nice initiatives

Latineando (continued)

such as creating a board where patrons can tell staff how much they love their library. In the past I made special displays for children to show their special drawings of the library.

National Poetry Month is also celebrated in April. It is a great opportunity for book displays and library events such as poetry recitals, poetry slams, or concerts that combine poetry and music. Do not forget that April 23rd is World Shakespeare Day and libraries can use it to highlight the importance of literature and culture in our society. With the help of the Friends of the Library, you might host a book fair or book donation area for your community.

Other great themes are: National Humor Month, Math Awareness Month, Stress Awareness Month, Passover, and Easter Day. Some ideas include book displays for these themes where you can combine them all. Math or STEAM events at your library are also a great idea. You might also have an Easter Egg Hunting event after your Story time. Just make sure you take into consideration liabilities and other concerns.

April 30 is Día de Los Niños and libraries celebrate with arts and crafts, piñatas, clowns, magicians and others. Colors and crafts are appreciated by children and families, and at such party events you can promote your current and upcoming programs. Use this opportunity to promote your upcoming summer program.

Earth day is also celebrated in April, more specifically on April 22. Library programs such as arts and crafts and STEAM might provide environmental-friendly initiatives.

Do not forget this is a great time of the year to do outreach in your area. In a few weeks we will have summer vacations, and libraries will be ideal places for families to visit. So, make sure you go now to schools to promote library programs.

Libraries make a significant contribution to society and have positive impacts on people's lives. As library professionals we appreciate those communities we serve. Let's make April the ideal moment to celebrate our libraries. Let's also celebrate arts and culture and their roles in our lives.

Storytelling is so crucial in our lives and it's the most precious treasure when we can share a story with others.

Que abril sea un mes lleno de sorpresas, aventuras y celebraciones en sus bibliotecas.

Bendiciones a todos los reformistas de Florida.

You are invited!

Every month, the Executive Board of REdeFL holds an online meeting to discuss chapter business, ways to encourage growth, and fine-tune our community involvement.

The next Board meeting is scheduled for sometime in April. A ZOOM link will be sent to members the day before the meeting, so check your email. We hope to see you there.



LO-QUE-LEO!

Welcome to the Book Sharing Corner

by Lucia M. Gonzalez



The Grand Paloma Resort. Cleyvis Natera. Ballantine Books (Random House). 2025.

When Laura was fourteen and Elena was four, their mother committed suicide. Laura did everything to meet the needs of her sister and, after ten years of hard work, rose to the position of Manager at the Grand Paloma Resort for the extremely rich. Seventeen-year-old Elena hated her job as a resort babysitter so began abusing pills. While babysitting the young daughter of rich parents, she got high and the girl was severely injured. To leave the DR and avoid arrest, she traded two young local girls to a tourist child abuser for thousands of dollars and ran away, assuring herself the girls would be fine. They weren't.

The Dominican Republic's history is shown through the lens of racial prejudice, infiltration by rich Americans, and extreme poverty. Through it all, the people's strength and resilience shine through love for their island, its history, and each other.

I Give You My Silence / Le dedico mi silencio. by Mario Vargas Llosa. Translated by Adrian Nathan West. Spanish edition published by Alfaguara (October 2023). English translation published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux (February 2026).

Mario Vargas Llosa, one of the most prolific and influential writers of the Latin American Boom, has accompanied me as a reader for decades. I first encountered him in high school through his debut novel, **La ciudad y los perros,** an experience that left a lasting mark on me. Now, forty-five years later, I just finished reading his posthumous final novel, **I Give You My Silence*.*

I opened this book with a mix of eager anticipation and apprehension; aware I might be starting his last work. To my delight, **I Give You My Silence** turned out to be an unexpected gift. The novel narrates the history of Peru and its people through their music, focusing on the native Peruvian vals. Vargas Llosa combines humor and sarcasm with brutality, empathy, and lyrical beauty, blending history and fiction with ease. It's a powerful novel and an excellent choice for a book club discussion.

Corporate Member Bibliotele

April Highlights: Stories, Art, and the world around us

Honoring the written word and the voices it inspires

by Javier Hidalgo

April invites us to celebrate the power of stories and the vital role of libraries in sharing culture across communities. From the written word to performance, this month's selection highlights voices that inspire creativity and dialogue.

In honor of World Book Day and other key observances, this curated selection offers engaging works for audiences of all ages and educators seeking rich cultural and educational experiences.

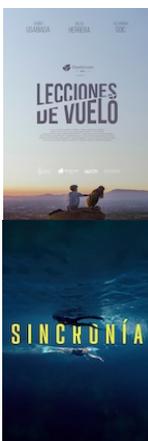
New this month

Explore Chile through three powerful short films and a striking documentary that blend emotion and reflection. From Mapuche storytelling to contemporary rural dilemmas—and from ancestral waters to the icy limits of the southern ocean—each story opens a window into Chilean life and culture.

Bibliotele (continued)



The Written Voice (*La voz escrita*) Documentary Short · Chile, 2024
Based on 888 letters from the Chilean Pro-Emancipation Women's Movement (MEMCh), the director traces the descendants of the writers and reconstructs the history and memory of a multi-generational feminist movement that remains relevant today.



My Granny's Bark (*La corteza de mi abuela*) Short Film · Chile, 2017
In southern Chile, Young Ayelén shares a winter with her ailing grandmother, who guides her in discovering Mapuche cosmovision and ancestral stories. Through these lessons, Ayelén begins to understand her identity and cultural heritage.

Flying Lessons (*Lecciones de vuelo*) Short Film · Chile, 2017
Seventeen-year-old Tomás from rural Chile is accepted into the Air Force pilot school, but his girlfriend's pregnancy forces him to choose between following his dream of flying and embracing his family responsibilities.

Synchronicity (*Sincronía*) Documentary · Chile, 2024
At the far edge of the southern ocean, two Chilean women from different generations share a profound relationship with the water. One, an island fisher who swims among sea lions; the other, an extreme athlete who challenges glaciers and polar currents in search of her limits. Synchronicity weaves their stories into a meditation on resilience, nature, and the enduring bond between humans and the sea.

 **Where Stories Begin**

This selection celebrates literature as the grounds for almost every contemporary narrative form. From intimate memoirs to explorations of historical memory, these films and plays reveal how books have shaped our understanding of storytelling throughout History.



Millennium Trilogy Feature Films · Sweden/International, 2009–2011
Based on Stieg Larsson's best-selling novels, the original adaptations starring Noomi Rapace dive into mystery, power, and social critique, exploring investigative journalism, gender issues, and the darker corners of contemporary society.



The Glass Castle (*El castillo cristal*) Feature Film · USA, 2017
Jeannette Walls grew up in a nomadic, dysfunctional family marked by poverty and chaos. Now, she must reconcile her desire for stability with the lessons of freedom and resilience instilled in her childhood.

Bibliotele (continued)***The Blue Hour (La hora azul)*** Feature Film · Peru, 2014

Adrián Ormache discovers that his father, a former military commander, was involved in torture and executions during Peru's internal conflict. His search for truth leads him to a survivor who confronts him with the shadows of his family's past.

***Men and Mice (Hombres y ratones)*** Theater Play · Argentina, 2021

In 1960s La Pampa, two farmhands struggle to rent their own land. This loose adaptation of Steinbeck's classic highlights the persistence of social inequalities and the cost of trying to change one's fate.

 **Art in Motion**

On World Art Day (Apr. 15), we celebrate the lives and works of artists who dared to see the world differently. These films highlight the relationship between life, emotion, and art, demonstrating how artistic vision can inspire, challenge, and illuminate society.

***Gauguin*** Feature Film · France, 2018

Feeling stifled in Paris, Paul Gauguin travels alone to Tahiti to renew his art. Filmed on location, the production captures the landscapes that shaped Gauguin's masterpieces, and Cassel's preparation reflects his immersive approach to the painter's philosophy and technique.

***Munch*** Feature Film · Norway, 2023

Edvard Munch's turbulent inner world and groundbreaking artistic journey come alive in this four-part biopic, in which four actors vividly portray the painter at different stages, reflecting his emotional and creative evolution with a visual style evoking the textures and tones of Munch's iconic works.

***Dance of the Songbird (La danza del zorzal)***

Documentary · Peru, 2013

During the 2013 Huancayo carnival, the Huaylarsh dance comes alive. Dancers and musicians express cultural identity through music and movement, demonstrating how regional heritage continues to thrive in the 21st century.

***Behind the Myth (Detrás del mito)***

Documentary · Uruguay, 2015

This documentary explores how early 20th-century Uruguayan intellectuals used national heroes to construct identity. A contemporary forensic artist reconstructs the true face of José Gervasio Artigas, questioning the idealized portrayal by Juan Manuel Blanes, "the painter of the fatherland."

Bibliotele (continued)

Rhythm, Body, and Music

Dance, music, and performance converge in these films to celebrate both International Dance and Jazz Day (Apr. 29 and 30). Each work reflects culture, aspiration, and emotion, showing how music and dance express identity and shape human connection.



A Poet in New York (Poeta en Nueva York) Dance · Spain, 2024

During his stay in New York (1929–1930), Federico García Lorca wrote a fierce critique of society's dehumanization. Flamenco choreographer Rafael Amargo translates Lorca's words into a visually striking ensemble performance, blending diverse artistic languages with natural rhythm, lyricism, and poetic intensity.

Band (Banda) Documentary · Mexico, 2019

In a small Oaxacan town marked by poverty and migration, a group of young musicians reinvents itself. Their journey to the Jalisco Jazz Festival shows how improvisation transforms both their music and their lives, while exploring migration, local identity, and hope.

Vulgar Experimental Short Film · Argentina, 2021

Three bodies explore boundaries of the forbidden in a ritual of dance and physical expression. The piece becomes a visual poem, traversing desire, uncertainty, and everyday materiality.

Perspectives on the Planet

April 22 marks the International Mother Earth Day. From the forests of Tierra del Fuego to the Caribbean coast, these works highlight environmental crises and local responses. Through vivid storytelling, they examine how humans shape—and are shaped by—our home planet.



What Happened to the Bees? (¿Qué les pasó a las abejas?) Documentary · Mexico, 2019

Millions of bees die in Campeche, threatening Mayan beekeepers' livelihoods. The community investigates the causes and challenges authorities, highlighting the impact of transgenic soybean cultivation. Indigenous knowledge emerges as a key tool of environmental resistance.

Stalking Chernobyl Documentary · Ukraine, USA, 2020

Three decades after the Chernobyl disaster, “stalkers”—extreme sports enthusiasts, artists, and tourists—explore the exclusion zone. The documentary examines human fascination with disaster and how nature gradually reclaims the territory, creating a living laboratory of resilience.

Najil Áak (The House of the Turtle) Documentary Short · Mexico, 2019

In the Mexican Caribbean, a filmmaker documents how tourism and plastic pollution are destroying sea turtle habitats, showing the urgent need to protect these ecosystems through minimalist visuals and community interviews.

Bibliotele (continued)



Beaverland (Los castores) Documentary · Chile, 2014

A young biologist couple investigates an invasive beaver population in Tierra del Fuego that threatens local ecosystems. The film explores the ecological consequences of introducing non-native species and the increasingly complex relationship between humans and nature.

All these titles - and many more - are available on Bibliotele, supporting libraries in their cultural programming, community conversations, and seasonal outreach initiatives throughout April.

Corporate members of REFORMA de Florida

Corporate members are an important part of our chapter. We thank *Bibliotele, Cinco Books, MakeMake, Penguin Random House, The Shelf Media, and Spanish Publishers* for being part of our chapter!

What's happening?: Northern, Central, or Southern regions

What's happening in your library or region? Email your name, region, title, library name, a short summary of your event, and photos. Your news could grow membership in your region, so we look forward to hearing from you.

Were you forwarded this newsletter but are not yet a member of the Florida chapter of REFORMA National?

To join, go to REFORMA National's Membership page and make sure REFORMA de Florida becomes your local chapter by checking "*Florida.*" We'd love to have you join our familia.

Is your membership expiring?!
Are you a Member-at-large, and not a member of the REFORMA de Florida chapter?

If you're not sure if your membership is expiring, email us.

If you're a REFORMA **Member-at-large** (not associated with any chapter), **join the REFORMA de Florida chapter.**

Log into your membership account, and check "*Florida.*" That's it! Once you check "*Florida,*" you'll become a member of our familia. It's as easy as that!