

# REFORMA DE FLORIDA

## Noticias del mes/News of the month

### Notes from the Editor

P. 1 & 5: Lucia's Presidential column has an important message, so be sure to read it. Don't forget to send Lucia your book titles for next month's *Lo-que-leo* column.

Pg. 2: It's May, which means it's time for the Florida Library Association (FLA) Conference where ReDeFL will hold an in-person meeting.

P. 3-4: Congratulations to the winners of our Pura Belpré Book Donation Grant.

P. 4-5: Candidates are running for the Executive Board. Voting begins May 1, and you must be a member of REdeFL to vote.

P. 6: Apply for REFORMA National's *Noche de Cuentos* \$500 Mini-grant.

P. 7-9: Check out Bibliotele's list of movies available for free to REdeFL members.

P. 9-10: David's *Latineando* column offers an array of ways to celebrate May at your library so, get your cuppa ready and start reading!

P. 11: Learn how to become a member.

Enjoy!

Alma Ramos-McDermott,  
Editor

### President's column

by Lucia M. Gonzalez



May is a month of festive celebrations for Latinos of every background. Let's explore *\*las celebraciones de mayo\**—the many May holidays beyond Cinco de Mayo that reflect the diversity of the Latino communities we serve and offer so many rich programming opportunities.

We begin with May 1, which has nothing to do with dancing around the maypole. *\*El 1.º de mayo\** is equivalent to the celebration of Labor Day. Throughout Latin America, it is a day of marches and demonstrations or a day for family gatherings. It is a holiday when no one works.

Cinco de Mayo, on the other hand, became an umbrella celebration of everything Latino in the U.S.—a simplified, generalized, and often misunderstood way to celebrate Latino culture. Many people confuse this date with Mexico's Independence Day. To clarify, Cinco de Mayo is celebrated only in parts of Mexico and in the U.S. to commemorate the Battle of Puebla, a military victory over the French forces of Napoleon III, more than 50 years after Mexico's independence from Spain.

Mother's Day, another important May celebration, is observed on different dates around the world. This is important to keep in mind when planning family programs, arts and crafts, and other activities. For example, May 10 is Mother's Day in Mexico, El Salvador, and Guatemala, while in Nicaragua it is a national holiday celebrated on May 30. Countries such as Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Ecuador, Venezuela, Uruguay, Puerto Rico, and others celebrate it on the second Sunday in May, just as in the United States. The Dominican Republic celebrates it on the last Sunday in May. There are also countries such as Argentina where Mother's Day is celebrated in October.

While June, July, and September are the months when many

*President's column (continued)*

Latin American countries celebrate their independence, some countries celebrate their Independence Day in May: Paraguay (May 14-15), Cuba (May 20), and Ecuador (May 24).

To conclude this May message, I want to remind everyone about our Annual In-Person Membership Meeting at the FLA Annual Conference (<https://www.flalib.org/news/2026-fla-annual-conference-registration-now-open>) in Orlando on Thursday, May 14, at 10:00 a.m. This is a time to meet, network, exchange programming ideas, and much more. Mark your calendar, join us, and bring a colleague!

¡Muchas felicidades a todos en este lindo mes de mayo!

Lucia



## ***Florida Library Association (FLA) Conference (May 13-15)***

The FLA Conference will take place at the **Hilton Doubletree Universal in Orlando** on May 13-15th. The conference committee has planned lots of exciting programs and events. This year's theme is "*Tell Your Story*."

There will be an in-person membership meeting on **Thursday, May 14th at 10:00** in the Mangrove Room (rear of the building behind the main courtyard). If you're attending FLA, bring your friends, stop by, and introduce yourself. The membership meeting will also be held online, with a ZOOM link sent to members that week.

We hope to see you there, either online or in person.



## **REFORMA de Florida 2026 Pura Belpré Book Donation Grant Winners**

The winners of the 2026 REFORMA de Florida Pura Belpré Book Donation Grant were recently announced via social media, email, and on our website. They were selected based on why a collection of Latinx Young Adult or Children’s books was needed by the institution and its community, how acquiring the collection would help the institution better serve the children and youth of their community, and the effectiveness of the institution’s plan to make the materials available in their communities. Each winner will receive a collection of YA or Children’s books, created by Latinx authors and illustrators in 2025, which portray the Latino cultural experience. The winners are:



- **Buddy Taylor Middle School / Kristine Smith**  
Palm Coast, FL  
*Young Adult Latinx books*
- **Clay County Public Library / Kaylee Benner**  
Fleming Island, FL  
*Children’s Latinx books\* (see photos below)*

REFORMA de Florida would like to thank the 2026 Pura Belpré Book Donation Grant Selection Committee:

- Eric Gomez, Community Library Manager, Pembroke Pines Branch Library/Walter C. Young Resource Center, Pembroke FL
- Lucia M. Gonzalez, Library Marketing Consultant at Spanish Publishers LLC, Miami FL
- Alejandra Rodriguez, Librarian, Kissimmee FL
- Ximena Valdivia, MLIS, MA, Cataloging and Metadata Librarian, Florida International University, Miami FL

The Program Coordinator is Alma Ramos-McDermott, REFORMA de Florida Vice-President/ President-Elect; 2025 Elizabeth Martinez Lifetime Achievement Award winner; REFORMA National Mini-Grants Committee Chair.

Thank you to everyone who applied for our 2026 Pura Belpré Book Donation Grant. Congratulations to our winners!

## *Clay County Public Library, Children's Latinx Book winner*

“We received the books this week and they look wonderful!! We loved the variety. Thank you so much!”



### *ReDeFL Executive Board Elections: Candidate Statements*

It's time to vote! Members received a ballot for our chapter elections, so fill it out and send it in before the May 15th deadline. Below are candidate statements for the positions of Vice-President/President-Elect and Treasurer.

#### **Eric Gomez, Candidate for Vice President/President Elect**

Eric wants to make a difference in the library profession at the local and Florida statewide level, particularly with serving Latino communities. Eric was born in Havana, Cuba and lived as a child in Madrid, Spain before immigrating to the United States. He calls South Florida home, takes care of his elderly aging mother, and received his Master's in Library and Information Science from Florida State University - Tallahassee. He has also been a former news assistant for the Miami Herald. Eric served on the ALA Intellectual Freedom committee from 2023-2025 and as an ALA Councilor-At-Large from 2023-2025. He is a member of the ALA Intellectual Freedom Committee Privacy Subgroup through June 2026 and a Member, Board of Directors, Government Supervisors Association of Florida (GSAF) O.P.I.E.U Local 100 since 2018.



*Candidate statements (continued)*

### **Isabel Castro, Candidate for Treasurer**

Isabel wants to continue in the role of Treasurer of the REFORMA de Florida Chapter. As an Assistant Director, she has managed budgets and grant funds. Since its incorporation Isabel has attended to the Chapter's finances, submitting documents to the IRS and the State of Florida to ensure the Chapter continues in good standing as a non-profit organization and a Florida corporation. She brings continuity and experience to the position and asks for your confidence.



## **LO-QUE-LEO!**

### **Welcome to the Book Sharing Corner**

*by Lucia M. Gonzalez*



Hi everyone. Welcome to the *LO-QUE-LEO* May Newsletter. Here are my top recommendations for this month:

#### **FOR ADULTS:**

***The House of the Spirits*** (*La casa de los espíritus*) by Isabel Allende (Knopf, 1985). Original publication in Spanish, 1982.

I rarely re-read novels, yet this month I found myself once again immersed in the magical realism of this classic. Before the new eight-episode series premieres on Prime Video at the end of April, I highly recommend reading the book.

While I have high expectations for the series, the most magical aspect of the story is Allende's literary excellence. The book is available in both Spanish and English; the translation is wonderful, but I recommend the original Spanish if you are comfortable with the language. This would be a perfect pick for your next book club!

#### **PARA NIÑOS Y JÓVENES:**

***Imperfectas: 50 mujeres excepcionales que han transformado nuestro mundo*** by Violeta Monreal (Editorial San Pablo, 2020).

Readers of all ages will enjoy learning about these exceptional women. I was thrilled to see figures such as Teresa de Jesús, Gabriela Mistral, María Moliner, and Clara Campoamor featured. By embracing their true selves, these women left a lasting impact on society through the power of their ideas and actions.

This book is a "breath of fresh air," and I would hope to see an English translation available. It is an excellent resource for school assignments and personal enrichment.

Happy reading!



*Apply for a chance to be one of ten winners of  
REFORMA National's Noche de Cuentos  
\$500 Mini-grants*

*by Alma Ramos-McDermott*

As a member of REFORMA de Florida, you're eligible to apply for REFORMA National's grants and scholarships. I am the Mini-Grants Committee Chair for REFORMA National. The mini-grants you can apply for each year include five \$500 mini-grants for an April DÍA (*Día de los Niños/Día de los Libros*) celebration (awarded in March) as well as ten \$500 mini-grants for your September-October *Noche de Cuentos* celebration (awarded in August).

*Noche de Cuentos* means "Night of Stories." Oral traditions are a big part of the Latino culture, and these \$500 mini-grants are for a *Noche* program with an emphasis on cultural literacy activities. The money will be used to hire a storyteller or performer to come to your library to tell stories that celebrate the Latino culture, as well as for decorations, publicity, and material. Twenty percent of the funds could be used for refreshments. More information is on the [Noche de Cuentos mini-grant page](#)

Apply to be one of ten winners of a \$500 mini-grant for a *Noche de Cuentos* program at your library. **Applications open mid-May.** You must be a member of REFORMA National to apply (and **YOU ARE if** you're a member of REFORMA de Florida).

Good luck!

## *Corporate Member Bibliotele May Highlights: Many Worlds, One Catalog A Global Journey through Identities and Ideas*

*by Javier Hidalgo*

May gathers a rich tapestry of global voices, highlighting **the cultural diversity that defines both our societies and Bibliotele’s catalog**. This month’s selection showcases a cross-cultural exploration of contemporary storytelling, bringing together works that probe themes of identity, labor, migration, mental health, and connecting with key observances including **International Workers’ Day, World Press Freedom Day, Africa Day, and Portuguese Language Day**.

### **New This Month**

Step into a diverse lineup of new titles that reflect the global scope of Bibliotele’s catalog. Different voices, different landscapes, different ways of telling stories. This month’s premieres invite you to travel across cultures and emotions, discovering films that challenge, connect, and linger beyond the screen.



#### **The Host**

*Feature Film · United States · 2013*

Set in a future where human bodies are taken over by alien “souls,” this sci-fi drama follows a young woman whose consciousness refuses to disappear, creating a unique coexistence within a single body.



#### **Vicky Cristina Barcelona**

*Feature Film · United States, Spain · 2008*

Two American women spend a transformative summer in Barcelona, where a passionate and unpredictable relationship with a local artist leads them to question desire, identity, and personal freedom.



#### **QAS**

*Feature Film · Kazakhstan · 2022*

Amid the devastating famine in 1930s Kazakhstan, a gravedigger embarks on a dangerous journey to deliver a letter that could alter his community’s fate. As he travels across the vast steppe, he will have to face survival, uncertainty, and the human cost of historical upheaval.



#### **Voices in Deep**

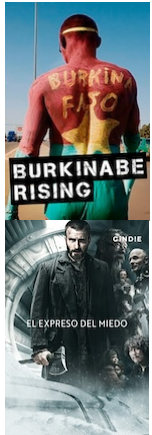
*Feature Film · Australia, Greece · 2023*

In post-crisis Athens, two orphaned brothers navigate life on the margins while a humanitarian worker struggles with her own emotional past. Their intertwined stories reveal the human dimensions of displacement, resilience, and the fragile balance between compassion and survival.

### **Global Stories, Local Roots**

These two films offer powerful reflections on how identity and resistance take shape across different contexts. In Burkina Faso, artistic expression becomes a tool for social change, while in a dystopian future, humanity’s diversity is compressed into a single train, exposing the fractures of inequality and coexistence.

*Bibliotele (continued)*



**Burkinabé Rising**

*Documentary · United States, Burkina Faso · 2018*

This documentary captures a vibrant movement of artists and activists in Burkina Faso who, rooted in the legacy of Thomas Sankara, use music, visual art, and ecological practices as forms of resistance.

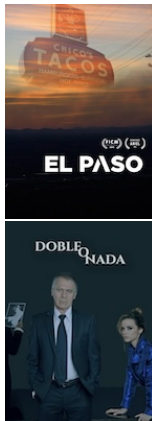
**Snowpiercer**

*Feature Film · South Korea, United States, Czech Republic · 2013*

In a frozen post-apocalyptic world, humanity survives aboard a train divided by rigid class hierarchies, until a rebellion emerges from the lower classes. From Bong Joon Ho, the Oscar-winning filmmaker behind *Parasite*.

 **Rights, Media, and Social Struggles**

Anchored in **International Workers' Day and World Press Freedom Day**, this block examines how labor, power, and information intersect in contemporary societies. The selected works reveal the tensions behind professional environments, as well as the risks faced by those who challenge injustice and defend the truth.



**El Paso**

*Documentary · Mexico · 2016*

This documentary follows Mexican journalists forced into exile after facing threats for their work, revealing the human cost of defending press freedom and highlighting the precarious conditions under which information is produced in the face of violence and corruption.

**Double or Nothing (Doble o nada)**

*Theater · Spain · 2021*

Set within a competitive newsroom, this tense theatrical piece portrays a power struggle between two professionals vying for leadership. As ambition, gender dynamics, and ethical dilemmas collide, the play exposes the structural inequalities and pressures that shape modern workplaces.

 **Mental Health and Inner Worlds**

Marking **Mental Health Awareness Month**, this selection brings together complementary approaches to mental health: a critically acclaimed film that has shaped public discourse, and a Bibliotele Original designed to support well-being through accessible, guided reflection.



**Silver Linings Playbook**

*Feature Film · United States · 2012*

After leaving a psychiatric institution, a man attempts to rebuild his life while forming an unexpected bond with a woman navigating her own emotional struggles. Widely acclaimed, it received eight Academy Award nominations, with Jennifer Lawrence winning Best Actress.

*Bibliotele (continued)*



**Mente sana, vida sana (Healthy Mind, Healthy Life)**

*Bibliotele Original · United States · 2025*

This Bibliotele Original series offers practical tools and guided reflections to support emotional well-being. Through accessible and community-oriented content, it creates a space where audiences can explore strategies for managing stress, strengthening self-awareness, and building healthier relationships with themselves.



**World Portuguese Language Day**

Portuguese, as a language, holds within it multiple geographies, histories, and ways of seeing the world. In honor of **Portuguese Language Day**, this **new release on Bibliotele** explores how those layers surface through family, memory, and the stories we choose to tell.



**Leviano**

*Feature Film · Portugal · 2018*

During a televised interview, three sisters and their mother revisit the events surrounding a controversial crime, gradually revealing hidden tensions, conflicting memories, and family secrets.

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

**Latineando**

*by David Hernandez Rivero*



Saludos a todos los reformistas.

Beautiful May is here to bring us some joy amidst a time of numerous challenges.

The month of May carries a special revitalizing energy, full of new life, goals and explorations later transforming into achievements. Nature is at its peak of renewal, flowers bloom; all around us is full of green and vibrant colors. May is the bridge between the renewal of spring to the full expression of life in summer.

Across numerous cultures and traditions, May is seen as a sacred month of fertility and abundance. The blossoming happening in nature has an inner symbolism in our lives. It's a time where those projects and goals that we have planted months before start blossoming now. May's color is green as its stone emerald that symbolizes nature, renewal, and tranquility.

We have plenty of action, activities, and programs in libraries as schools are in their final stretch before summer break. People in general are getting ready for summer vacations. Library staff are preparing a busy summer program full of events, and new challenges.

Numerous themes and celebrations will keep us busy. Among them are Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month, Jewish American Heritage Month, Mothers's Day, Cinco de Mayo, and Memorial Day. This diverse range of celebrations will keep us busy making book

*Latineando (continued)*

displays and colorful celebrations. It's an excellent moment to bring speakers, presenters, programmers, and make the library a place for community remembrance and unity.

As schools in the area you serve enter into their final stretch, this is the perfect moment to pay them a visit and promote your summer program. Families in general will appreciate hearing about your library summer lunches or snacks, numerous celebrations, STEAM programs, classes, or about the prizes offered as part of your summer program.

Another library theme is Mental Health Awareness Month. It offers you the prospect of an informational program about mental health presented by a non-profit or a mental health professional. Always make sure to include library displays and offer library resources as a supplement. Harvey Milk Day is an opportunity to celebrate diversity, and the history of the LGBTQ community struggles for their rights. Cinco de Mayo is another great celebration in Latino communities symbolizing not only a great victory by Mexicans but also a festivity of cultural heritage for Latinos in general. Include art and crafts programs, storytelling, and colorful decorations. Children's books might get in demand, so make sure you have some handy for your patrons. Among some suggestions of Latino Fiction to read for Cinco de Mayo is *Nobody's Pilgrims* by Sergio Troncoso, *The House of Broken Angels* by Luis Urrea, *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros, *River of Angels* by Alejandro Morales, *The Mexican Flyboy* by Alfredo Veá, and *Song of the Golden Scorpion* by Alma Luz Vila Nueva.

Star Wars Day is celebrated on May 4<sup>th</sup>, and you will have a blast decorating displays with numerous books and other resources. In popular culture, the impact of Star Wars is significant. A library program featuring a film, or arts and crafts might bring new patrons as well.

May will keep you busy exploring meaningful and diverse celebrations in your library. As you engage in all these events please reflect on the role of libraries in society. Today, libraries play a pivotal role by fostering community, literacy, and equity while providing information, technology, and safe spaces. Libraries act like civic centers offering makerspaces, internet access, job help, and diverse programming that strengthen connections and foster innovation.

Celebrate May's beauty and the amazing gift of having libraries in our lives.

Happy May to all Reformistas.

### ***Corporate members of REFORMA de Florida***

Corporate members are an important part of our chapter. Thank you *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 on "*Florida*." That's it! Once you check "*Florida*," you'll become a member of our familia. It's as easy as that!