

# INTERCAMBIOS

Volume 11 No. 2

Spring 2006

## District Sharing is Win-Win for All

by Gail Cline, Iowa Communications Network

Brooklyn, Iowa -- Faced with the prospect of losing a foreign language program, one East Central Iowa school administrator took the challenge and, using the Iowa Communications Network (ICN), created a unique teaching model, providing a financial incentive for a teacher and maintaining an academic option for his students and others.

“We’ve learned to share,” says Brooklyn-Guernsey-Malcom High School Principal Rick Radcliffe.

Iowa and the nation struggle with a foreign language teacher shortage. However, in a period of just three days in May 2005, the BGM district saved a teacher’s job, rescued the Spanish program and those of other districts, and kept the possibilities open for almost 200 Iowa students to meet foreign language requirements.

BGM Spanish teacher Nicki Maestre submitted her resignation for monetary reasons. The high school had already phased out French and was receiving German over the ICN.

“I was faced with losing a program for 120 kids,” said Radcliffe.

Scratching out some figures, Radcliffe proposed to the school board and incoming superintendent, an incentive plan for the teacher to teach over the ICN.

“If I could get 60 students from other schools and the schools would pay \$250 per student to us, I could

give her (the teacher) a percentage,” said Radcliffe, creating a stipend to entice the Spanish teacher to stay. The board and superintendent said “go with it” and Maestre rescinded her resignation and agreed to try it.

With the assistance of the Department of Education’s Iowa Learning Online program, the BGM district advertised the availability of the Spanish classes over the ICN and the contacts started coming in. North Mahaska couldn’t find a Spanish teacher, East Marshall was overloaded in Spanish and couldn’t fit in students, and Bedford lost their shared Spanish teacher from Lenox.

While scheduling is sometimes cited by schools as an obstacle to using the ICN, North Mahaska simply changed their daily schedule to coincide with BGM’s. They pushed their start time up by 10 minutes and both schools have a common start and end date for the school year.

Maestre has almost 200 Spanish students in seven class periods, six sections of which are taught over the ICN. The stipend she earns helps to cover the out-of-class time she spends updating her web page, scanning notes for students, tracking grades, and recording classroom notes for one visually impaired student, among other things.

“It takes a lot of extra time to put papers online and we didn’t want her doing it during our time. So the stipend is to cover the extra work she has to do,” said Radcliffe.



# Del Presidente.....

Estimados colegas

Finalmente llega la primavera. Con ella llegan los últimos proyectos en nuestras escuelas, los exámenes, y, por supuesto, las vacaciones. Como presidenta de AATSP, Iowa, les traigo las últimas noticias de nuestra Asociación. El Café Latino es un programa que ya tiene sus adeptos en diferentes partes de nuestro estado. Los AEAs nos han dado su apoyo logístico enviando las invitaciones para las diferentes fechas y tomando providencias para arreglar lugar y horarios. Alrededor de 100 profesores de español (ocasionalmente hasta profesor de francés) ya participaron desde que empezó en abril de 2006. Hay cuatro AEAs involucradas- AEA1, Dubuque, que hace las citas a través de ICN, AEA8, Pariré Lakes, que realiza el Café Latino en diferentes pueblos para tener diferentes anfitriones y acceso a diferentes maestros. AEA14, Creston, and AEA 15, Ottumwa,

Los tópicos de discusión han variado: juegos, análisis de libros textos, actividades para 5 de mayo, navidad, día de los muertos, tecnología en el salón de clase. Lo que hay en común es el entusiasmo por compartir éxitos, dudas, soluciones y prácticas exitosas.

Si Ud. está interesado/a y todavía no está participando, contátenos [evieira@storm-lake.k12.ia.us](mailto:evieira@storm-lake.k12.ia.us) o Rosa Bailey (vicepresidenta) [bailey@AEA15.k12.ia.us](mailto:bailey@AEA15.k12.ia.us) que le ayudaremos a organizar el Café Latino en su región, como también ahí estará un miembro de la directiva de la Asociación para apoyarles.

Sugerimos que verifique los eventos del “Discover Languages” desarrollado por ACTFL junto al sitio en la WEB de ACTFL . Hay ideas interesantes y prácticas.

Sin duda , este año los National Spanish Exam transcurrieron muy bien con la experiencia que adquirimos con el examen del año pasado. Muchos detalles y problemitas que surgieron en el pasado fueron resueltos- como posibilidad de retomar el examen si hubo problemas con las computadoras, o por otros problemas de ejecución.

Deseo a todos mis colegas una feliz primavera

Esther Vieira  
Presidente



1. Network with colleagues at the Annual Meetings-the next one is in San Diego, California.
2. Stay informed with our publications, *Hispania*, *Enlace*, and the Portuguese Newsletter.
3. Your association dues include chapter membership. Get involved at the local level and network with your peers.
4. Travel and study with our scholarships and awards.
5. Improve your career with professional development programs.

Maestre has 60 students from North Mahaska (the district's entire program), 15 students from East Marshall and 5 from Bedford. She has been able to originate her classes from two of the other schools and travels at her own expense because of the stipend. When she travels to the other districts the substitute for her BGM classroom is paid from the extra income derived from the sharing.

"I love the technology," said Maestre about the ICN classroom, which has more technology than she has in her regular classroom.

"I can pull up pictures on my computer, use videos, music, DVDs. It's all right there at my fingertips," she added.

Maestre understands the importance of interaction when teaching over the ICN. She has seating charts, which all the students use, and in learning games and classroom participation they can call on anyone from any school.

"The students have a good relationship between schools. They like to call on each other. They are actually very supportive of each other's schools and teams," said Maestre.

She says things have been slightly more challenging than her previous ICN teaching experience. She spends time each day scanning class notes and making them available online for students and parents to access and currently has 14 grade books organized in Excel, because the state is waiting on WebCT licenses. WebCT is the online learning system Maestre will eventually be able to use for administering tests and recordkeeping.

"It's been a lot of work because of new textbooks and organizing everything for 200 students," said Maestre, "but eventually the program will run itself, which will free me up to go to the other schools more."

Maestre said the relationship she has with the assistants in the other classrooms is very important. She e-mails lesson plans to the principals at the other

schools, and the aides, who use them to keep the students on task, when there are conflicting school schedules. She has four different administrators she deals with, different term dates, different early days and days off. But thanks to the aides and hard-working students, everyone has stayed on track.

What's in the future? BGM Principal Radcliffe said they will see how this year goes but his goal is to find other schools they can help, and at the same time, keep their Spanish teacher and share her skills with others.

"It's a win-win situation for all," said Radcliffe

**Join the  
AATSP  
online  
Go to  
AATSP.org**



## Café Latino

The following are comments made by participants in various of the Cafés Latinos:

I was surprised and pleased at the energy this group of teachers displayed and their willingness to contribute to meetings next year.

I had a great time at the meeting. I was energized and extremely excited for the ideas to be put into reality.

## Websites for Spanish Teachers

### Tecla

<http://www.sgci.mec.es/uk/Pub/tecla.html>

Tecla is a text magazine written for learners and teachers of Spanish produced weekly during the UK academic year by the Consejería de Educación. The website offers archives for the magazine that run from 1994-2006. This on-line magazine is part of a larger website for the Council of Education in the United Kingdom and in Ireland: <http://www.sgci.mec.es/uk/Consej/index.html> The Council of Education in United Kingdom and Ireland offers its services of support to the education of the Spanish in these countries like part of the initiative of the Spanish Government to promote the Spanish language and culture anywhere in the world.

### Periódicos en internet (Online newspapers)

<http://web.bemarnet.es/ess/tema9.html>

SP. Esta es una página que ofrece información y enlaces directos a revistas español en una diversidad de temas: ciencias, fotografía, automóviles, decoración, y geografía. Además presenta enlaces a revistas en francés.

EN. This is a website that also provides resourceful information and direct links to Spanish language magazines in a variety of topics: science, photography, cars, decoration, and geography. It also offers links to magazines in French language.

## The Spanish Embassy

By: Adolfo Carbón

The program of Language and Culture Assistants in Spain gives recent graduates or students in the last year in university the opportunity of spending a year working in Spanish elementary or secondary schools, helping Spanish students to learn the language and appreciate the culture of the USA. Assistants will work with certified teachers and they will speak English during their lessons.

Candidates need to hold a U.S. or Canadian passport and be enrolled in the final year of or have successfully completed their BA, BS, MA or MSc. These university degrees must have been earned within a 15-year period prior to the year 2007. They must also be in good mental and physical health and have some knowledge of Spanish.

They work for 12 hours a week, receive a salary of 1000 euros and have medical insurance. Over 1000 grants are offered this year. Some of the areas where positions are available include Andalucía, Aragón, Asturias, Cantabria, Castilla-La Mancha, Castilla-León, Extremadura, Madrid, País Vasco and La Rioja. It is possible to express a preference for up to three of these areas. The deadline for applications is April 16th, 2007.

All the information, application form and guidelines for candidates can be found at <http://www.sgci.mec.es/usa/AC/indexing.shtml>. More information at the Spanish Studies Institute, in Lincoln, Nebraska. Phone 402 472 0683.

## Links to Important Affiliated Services of the AATSP

**Chapters:** <http://aatsp.org/scriptcontent/custom/chapters/chapterlookup.cfm>

**NSE:** <http://www.nationalspanishexam.org/>

**SHH:** <http://www.sociedadhonorariahispanica.org.National%20Director%20updates.html>

**Hispania:** [www.hispaniajournal.org](http://www.hispaniajournal.org)



Join us in 2007 for the AATSP  
89th Annual Conference

San Diego, California  
2 August – 5 August

*Go to [AATSP.org](http://AATSP.org) for more information about the conference.*

## From Alexandria to Salamanca: La profesora va a su primera confer-



That was the site last July of the American Association of Teachers of Spanish and Portuguese 88th Annual Conference. I teach high school Spanish here in Virginia, and this was my first AATSP conference. Spending a week in Salamanca is wonderful, any month of the year, but I wanted to finish these six conference days energized, eager to implement in the classroom what I had learned. And that I did. So here are some strategies to make a conference work for you.

1. Most important is whom you meet. Talk to everyone; what you glean from speaking with fellow attendees over a cup of coffee in the morning or a glass of wine in the evening helps put personalities and interests to names in the official program. And this is key when you survey the list of workshops.
2. Workshops! There are hundreds! Imagine eleven offered simultaneously; how do you choose? Ask all those people you meet (point 1) what sessions they recommend. Often the program précis indicates which workshops are geared to particular teaching strategies and/or provide handouts. Some presentations are readings of published articles; is the subject one that intrigues you?
3. The plenary sessions are important because they give substance to the names and the issues you read in your official publications. Your organization is more than its individuals; the meetings helped me feel connected to AATSP. And also, when you meet your officers later (point 1), you'll have some topics of conversation.
4. Prowl the displays. Sign up for further information, collect promotional pieces. Posters are obvious magnets for teachers, but I was even more excited by novel real-language resources.
5. Often excursions are offered with the conference. Arrive in time to be a tourist. Partly you are fulfilling point 1 (your seatmate on the bus, the people across from you in the restaurant), and partly you are seeing a city or a museum that's new. We encourage our students to travel; this is teaching by example.
6. Look and listen to everything with the idea of what you can immediately bring to your teaching. Ask the clerks in the music stores what is hot, and buy these CDs for your classroom. Collect local magazines and menus. I used one camera exclusively for photos of me, and I created a display using vocabulary of prepositions and place words with these pictures. Here is "Teacher in the lavender garden" and there is "Teacher under the hand of the statue."
7. Find time to be outdoors, to walk, to be alone. You know your own rhythms.
8. Talk. Talk a lot. We language teachers can become trapped in the language levels of our students. Use these days as a chance to bring forth the language you love.
9. And, finally, include plenty of moments to share meals with other conferees. These serendipitous encounters can give unexpected pleasures (e.g., the source of the best alpargatas in Madrid), and I think you'll come home awed by the expertise of fellow teachers (point 1 yet again!) and energized by ideas.

*Taken from the March issue of the NCLRC Language Resource Newsletter.*

