



BC & Librarians from Belize Work Together



Librarians from Belize Train in Bainbridge, Valdosta

During their week's visit to Georgia, two librarians from Belize received training in library procedures at Bainbridge College Library and at Southwest Georgia Regional Library System. They visited Odum Library at Valdosta State University to study the Consortium for Belize Educational Cooperation Archives. Seen here (left-right) at VSU are Glenford Barrera, librarian with Belize's National Heritage Library; Deborah Davis, Odum Library archivist; Lusiola Castillo, public services librarian with Belize's National Library Service, and Alan Bernstein, Odum Library circulation manager.

Bainbridge College hosted librarians from Belize during the 2009-10 academic year as part of an on-going cooperative program between the college and Belizean schools and libraries, said BC Library Director Susan Ralph, who has been an integral part of the initiative of the Consortium for Belize Educational Cooperation (COBEC), which she serves as US. treasurer.

Ms. Ralph coordinated the Oct. 6-10, 2009, visit of Glenford Barrera, a librarian with the National Heritage Library in the Belizean capital, Belmopan, and Lusiola Castillo, public services librarian with Belize's National Library Service. They received training in library

procedures at BC and had a detailed tour at Southwest Georgia Regional Library System and its Subregional Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped. At Decatur County's Gilbert H. Gragg Library, they attended Toddler Tales.

In addition to training at the BC Library, working with library staff on topics of interest and need, and touring the college campus, they spoke to three of Valley Roger's education classes. Ms. Rogers, director of the Early Childhood Care and Education program, planned the Spring Break trip to Belize during which education majors worked in schools there.

The guest librarians also toured libraries at the new Bainbridge High School and Jones Wheat Elementary School, watched a webinar on Best Small Library in America, enjoyed the Arts Council Members Art Show exhibit and reception at the Firehouse Gallery, a performance at Bainbridge Little Theatre, and were guests at the Rotary Club.

The librarians' visit included a tour of Valdosta State University's Odum Library and its COBEC Archives. During their time in Valdosta, they visited with three Belizean students who attend VSU.

"They really got a lot out of their visit to Georgia," said Ms. Ralph, co-coordinator with faculty member Dr. Dave Nelson of BC's International Education Program, which presented special activities during International Education Week Nov. 16-20. She noted that Ms. Castillo said the visit was interesting, the hospitality extraordinary, and the library experiences valuable. Among the ideas they gained and hope to use in Belize are Toddler Tales activities and implementing BC ideas such as creating a Facebook for the library.

Through her work with the BC Library, the International Education Program, and COBEC, Ms. Ralph has forged partnerships with Belize's National Library Service for various projects and with various academic institutions there. BC has an on-going Early Childhood Education program with Corozal Junior College, she said.