Compassion and empathy are on my mind. I’ve witnessed these values firsthand from educators, artists, librarians, and museum workers helping children, families, and communities in crisis. Even in the face of their own losses during the recent hurricane and disastrous flooding, these workers have stepped in as social first responders. Teachers help normalize students’ lives once they can return to school; librarians fight to keep facilities open so people can access the Internet and have a place of respite; artists look for ways to help people process emotions and also start campaigns to raise money and spirits; museums open their doors and programs to offer spaces where healing can begin.

September 12 I attended the Louisiana Association of Museums Conference (LAMcon) in Lafayette. Of course, the meeting was planned before the historic flood, which will affect thousands of people for years to come. In a state where budget cuts and the oil bust have slashed public institutions’ funding, everyone I met is helping others. Baton Rouge and other museum folks took a break from ripping out soggy drywall to learn, share, and enjoy camaraderie. Cajun and Creole musicians are playing for fundraisers across Acadiana. Carpooling is a necessity because so many lost their vehicles. Volunteers are driving lost pets to shelters in other states, and children are raising money to help local shelters. But everywhere, returning to school matters the most. Deans and professors, principals and teachers, food service workers and bus drivers—all have pitched in to ensure students have a place to stay, clothing, a way to get to class.

Back home, friends watched in horror as a school bus caught on fire outside their home. The media called the driver a hero, she said it was her job to
save the children. Compassion and empathy meld into courage and resilience. We've just launched [3]Vol. 3 of the Journal of Folklore and Education, "Intersections: Folklore and Museum Education." In this issue readers will find inspired examples of educators calling on compassion and empathy, engaging diverse audiences, and sharing learning applications for all types of classrooms.

In 2017 we will continue to think about compassion and empathy in [4]Vol. 4, "Newcomers/ Belonging." Whether refugee, immigrant, new student, or new teacher, we all experience being an outsider at some time. We welcome submissions of articles, model projects, multimedia products, teaching applications, and student work accompanied by critical writing that connects to the larger frameworks of this theme.

~Paddy Bowman

WHAT'S NEW

NEA Heritage Fellows

The 2016 Fellows will be feted in DC Sept. 28 at the Library of Congress in a public ceremony. Catch the annual free concert live at Lisner Auditorium, 8 pm, Sept. 30, or watch live on the [6]NEA website.

Congratulations especially to Dan Sheehy, a friend of Local Learning, the [7]2016 Bess Lomax Hawes Fellow.

Use the [8]Masters of Traditional Arts website and Education Guide to introduce students to Heritage Fellows in your region.

Fall Conferences

[9]AEP Forum Oct. 5-7, Denver
Explore arts-centered solutions as states implement higher learning expectations to ensure students leave high school ready for college, careers, and citizenship.

Workshops and general sessions highlight education and museums (see above).

Learn more about expanding equitable access to arts learning opportunities in communities across the country.

[12]SEM Conference Nov. 10-13, Washington, DC
Many special musical events around the city augment the conference.

Meet Us in Miami

Find a list of education and museum sessions during the Oct. 18-22 American Folklore Society meeting in Miami on our homepage.

Heritage Fellow Losang Samten, a Tibetan mandala maker, will be artist in residence and a presenter in our workshop, Reading Culture: Ways of Observing and Interpreting for Classroom and Museum Education. Open to local teachers as well as AFS attendees, we’ll meet at HistoryMiami, 101 West Flagler, 8:30 am-12:30 pm, Saturday, Oct. 22. The workshop offers multiple points of entry into “reading” as participants access HistoryMiami Museum’s display on Indian classical dance while also learning from Ranjana Warier, an Indian dancer and choreographer who is the museum’s fall resident artist. Losang Samten and folklife educator Linda Deafenbaugh will use the curriculum (2015 Dorothy Howard Prize winner) developed for Philadelphia’s Folk Arts-Cultural Treasures Charter School (FACTS) to teach about mandalas, their makers, and their community context. Refreshments provided and all are invited to the disassembling of the mandala in the conference center.

We’re also cosponsoring the third annual Experiments in Exhibition Workshop, Moving Beyond (Dis)ability Accommodation with Universal Design, with the Museums Section at HistoryMiami, Oct. 19, 12:30-4:30 pm, $40. Valerie Fletcher of the Institute for Human Centered Design will lead hands-on activities, revealing methods that avoid marginalizing or stigmatizing and embody the belief that “variation in human ability is ordinary, not special, and affects most of us for some part of our lives.”

News from the Field

LL@VV

Acadiana educators are invited to the free workshop “Lapin Lapin: Using Louisiana Cajun and Creole Music to Enhance Music and French Students’ Louisiana Learning Opportunities,” Oct. 4, 4:45-6:45 pm at Vermilionville. Grammy-nominated guest presenters are Jane Vidrine and Ann Savoy of the Magnolia Sisters. Contact education@bayouvermiliondistrict.org.

Freedom Sounds

Colleagues at the Smithsonian Center for Folklife and Cultural Heritage (CFCH) have been working with the National Museum of African American History & Culture, which opens Sept. 24. Timed tickets are booked through October, but Sept. 23-25 an outdoor festival will be held on the National Mall.

Global Folklorist Challenge
CFCH invites students 8-18 to explore a tradition in their community and share it with the world through a short video, audio podcast, or slide set in the third annual [18]Global Folklorist Challenge. Connect with a local tradition bearer, compete for a prize, and add your entry to an interactive global map! Deadline is Nov. 30.

Local Learning’s LAMcon workshop was Conversing with Artifacts, Connecting with Communities. Museum educators examined personal artifacts in depth.

Summer School Reports

The Oregon Folklife Network, with the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs’ Culture and Heritage Department and the Warm Springs K-8 Academy, hosted a pilot Folklife Field School for rising 8th graders in Warm Springs, Oregon. Local Learning Board President Anne Pryor was lead instructor with Makaela Kroin and Emily Ridout of OFN and Dana Smith of CFWS as assistants. During the first week, 11 students documented their family traditions and presented their findings to the Warm Springs community. The following week students visited the University of Oregon in Eugene, presented again to a campus community, and toured the university. Students earned one undergraduate folklore credit, and their fieldwork and presentations will be deposited in the CTWS archives.

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Forty south Louisiana teachers participated in the fourth annual LL@VV Institute, “Music in Our Community,” Aug. 1-2 at Vermilionville. Presenters included scholars and musicians who led activities integrating traditional music across subject areas. Among the highlights, poet Darrell Bourke’s workshop, Finding Poems in the Songs of your Ancestors, and Cajun musician Chris Segura’s instrument-making. Local Learning Director Paddy Bowman led sessions tapping musical memories of childhood and teaching literacy through the arts.

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University of Northern Colorado hosted the 2016 Center for Integrated Arts Education Institute INterCHANGE: Arts in Contemporary and Traditional Culture. Local Learning Assistant Director Lisa Rathje offered a plenary session on "Mapping Culture" and a workshop on "The Art of Culture." The conference offered a deep consideration of indigenous pedagogy and the significance of considering the role of traditional and contemporary arts in the classroom.

Local Learning advocates for the full inclusion of folk and traditional arts and artists in the nation’s education. We prepare young people, their teachers, and their families to discover, research, and draw on traditional culture and local knowledge to enrich education and create stronger communities. [19]Learn more.
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