

## *Reflections of Past CCFLT Presidents*

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(1963–65)

The 50's ended with Sputnik orbiting the Earth and the United States responding by attempting to improve the quality of education in our schools, especially in the areas of Math, Science, and Foreign Languages, by establishing the National Defense Education Act. This Act provided monies for the retraining of foreign language teachers to teach via the audio-lingual method, the development of new visual, written, and taped materials for our classrooms and the installation of audio-record language laboratories.

Under the leadership of Professor George A.C. Scherer of the German Department at the University of Colorado in Boulder, Colorado was at the forefront of the NDEA movement in the U. S. by hosting one of the first language institutes at the Boulder campus during the summer of 1958.

Because of this renewed interest in the teaching of foreign languages, the membership in the Colorado Congress of Foreign Language Teachers began to grow at the beginning of the 60's. More teachers started to attend the annual meeting and more workshops were held. Blanche Pigott, a Latin teacher from East High School in Denver, was the first CCFLT president in the 60's. The term of office at that time lasted two years. A highlight of her tenure was the presentation that Nelson Brooks made at the annual CCFLT meeting held at a junior high school in Wheatridge.

I was president from 1963–1965. The other officers were Joanna Ritzman of Wasson High in Colorado Springs (vice-president), Jeannette Pastore of Lincoln High in Denver (secretary), Estelle Carr of the University of Denver (treasurer), Sara Baily of Manuel High in Denver (asst. treasurer), and an advisory board made up of Dr. Siegwalt Palleske of the University of Denver and Blanche Pigott of East High School in Denver. The Peals Staff was composed of the Editor-in-Chief, Dr. Edward Diller of Colorado College, CO Springs, Assistant Editor, Al Smith of Jefferson High in Denver, and Associate Editor, Dorothy D. Duhon of the Colorado State Department of Education.

The CCFLT held two meetings per year. During my tenure, the organization met in Boulder with the help of Alice Yates, Spanish teacher from Boulder

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High; in Colorado Springs with the help of Joanna Jolly Ritzman at Colorado College; and in Jefferson County at Alameda High School with the help of Edward Tanguay, District FL Supervisor and Larry McWilliams. Attendance was steadily increasing at each meeting.

The final meeting of my tenure was held at the new West High School in Greeley. Over 365 members attended, which made it the largest meeting ever held by the CCFLT. Nationally known speakers presented: Elton Hocking of Purdue University; Waldo E. Sweet of the University of Michigan; George A.C. Scherer of the University of Colorado; Klaus A. Mueller of the California State Department of Education; Andrea Mildenberger of the U. S. Office of Education; Anthony Gvadisnik, FL coordinator from Wisconsin; James T. O'Neil of St. Louis Public Schools; and Leonor Amezcua-Sánchez, International Exchange member at the Colorado Department of Education from Colombia.

Topics ranged from teacher preparation to articulation issues K-12. A lot of "firsts" took place at this conference. The first official CCFLT logo was presented, the first FL week proclamation in Colorado was made by Governor John A. Love, and the first banquet was held.

In subsequent years, the Organization continued to grow under the leadership of Joanna Ritzman, Colorado Springs; Daniel Martínez, Pueblo; and William López, Ft. Collins who guided the CCFLT into the 70'S.