

*Toni Theisen*  
(1987-88)

I think that the greatest legacy that both Nancy Oakes and I will have is the "Colorado Add a Body Club". This club consists of people who want to share a room at a conference. Since many knew that Nancy and I went to many conferences they would always call to see if there was a spot in one of our rooms. There was usually a place and if not, we could hook people up with other conference groupies on the circuit. It made for cheaper conferences, new acquaintances and fun for all. Rooms could have representation sometimes with up to four states. The greatest club connection came at ACTFL in Monterey when in two rooms over four days we rotated in fourteen different people (including several cots). Nancy created a room and bed assignment sheet so everyone knew her place. It even turned out that we had language beds - the Italian bed, and the French, Spanish and German beds. To this day the "Colorado Add a Body Club" is still active and ready for your requests.

I believe that the office of president has shifted tremendously since my term in 1988. That year brought the first big joint conference with three regional organizations and us. It gave us a more direct connection to many in the profession and helped us create a new organizational format for our group. Our self-esteem grew also. Since then, the momentum that that conference brought has moved us more into the political wing of our profession. Understanding that in order to promote language study, funds were needed and information had to be circulated to more than just language teachers. The last several years and the wonderful efforts of the presidents during these times is a clear indication of the success of that strategy.

Due to these political moves, our state now has standards and we are a valid part of the curriculum. But with this new found validation comes the challenges for the presidents that follow. More and more school districts are trying to include more World Languages and Cultures courses into the curriculum at different levels. The dilemma, of course, is the funding. The challenge for the new presidents will be not only to provide a quality conference where teachers can learn and become aware of more creative ways to finance our move into the global society as effective communicators of another language, but also to make this conference a forum and a safe place for administrators to understand, to learn and to dialog about the complexities of language learning and the need for long extended sequences

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and how this can be made affordable. Our job is to help these administrators become aware. In the process it is also important that we preserve the idea that many different languages need to be studied. In some instances, administrators abandon all language except Spanish, thinking that the students will only need this language because they live in Colorado. This narrow perspective is killing many French, German, and Russian programs. We must do more awareness training from a global perspectives arena that promotes languages such as French, German, and Russian as an integral part of the languages taught, and that all of these languages and others can successfully connect our students to the rest of the world. As always, the job of CCFLT is to think globally and act locally.