

CO-5

## LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE REPORT

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Marilyn Hinshaw, Committee chair

How do you know what is going to work when 29+7 freshly scrubbed faces sit down together to begin an adventure of listening, learning, working and playing together for four days? You don't. You just begin.

The location offered challenges. It was remote enough to cut off both telephone and television contact with the outer world, to the annoyance of a few. It was primitive, really just an upgrade from camping. Hot water for showers and electric lights in the cabins and meeting places was provided, but that was all. Movement around the grounds required flashlights, and that was necessary any time after 5:30 p.m. It was cool. Temps rarely rose above mid-40's, and it snowed the night of the day we arrived. The food was "camp" food, meant to provide a filling meal for hundreds at a time.

Nothing about Ghost Ranch was even remotely "cushy". The challenges required an adjustment period. Those few who complained of no connections slowly loosened their pace and finally gave in to the spirit of the place. The moon was so bright most nights that outdoor walking was a diversion after dark. We sought permission and were given a group place to light a big fire. Participants gathered as they wished - to share thoughts and talk. The snow we discovered as we woke on our first day was so beautiful we had to take a mid-morning break for the camera buffs who wanted a picture of Ghost Ranch in the snow. It was gone by mid-day. The food certainly was filling, always presented with enough vegetarian choices to provide a whole meal for those who don't eat meat selections. A fresh salad bar was constantly replenished.

The CONTENT for the week's work was totally supplied by Maureen Sullivan, the facilitator. Her method was no-nonsense, flexible, interactive and set a tone of respect for everyone there and for those this group would find still waiting at home. With new approaches, maybe even new understandings of themselves, and with the modeling of Maureen and the mentor group, participants left us, their fellow learners/mentors on Thursday for the real world of library leadership. They took away with them enlightened management approaches and friends who pledged to keep the spirit of support going.

So how did we come away feeling that we had been to a "magic" place? In those four days together, the spirit of Ghost Ranch took hold. Twenty-nine creative, open minds, six mentors and one multi-talented facilitator would tell you it is always the people who can make an isolated desert at the beginning of its winter season into a warm community of learners, who in the process become friends and fellow travelers on the road to a future we make happen for ourselves and our library organizations.

The first GHOST RANCH LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE is now passed into MPLA's history. May its legend multiply.

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