



### NABO President's Message

Summer has brought its warm weather and Basque picnics and festivals, and we're looking forward to those. But first a look back to February. To first of all thank the delegates that attended the NABO winter meeting in Salt Lake City. Also, briefly to comment about my trip to San Francisco, where I was invited to attend a reception honoring Lehendakari Ibarretxe's visit to the US, as a representative of the North American Basque Organizations.

The Lehendakari had previously been invited to speak at Stanford and then traveled to Sacramento to meet with California's Lieutenant Governor, John Garamendi, before attending a welcome reception at the San Francisco Basque Cultural Center, on Saturday afternoon, where he and several of us spoke to the attending crowd. The speeches were centered on peace and unity among the Basques. He was his usual gracious self and told me to be sure to relate to everyone in NABO, to keep up the good work that is being done. His visit was concluded with a Mass on Sunday, where he spoke again, and several presentations, including one for Aita Tillous were made by members of the San Francisco Basque Cultural Center..

Just a few days ago I made a quick trip to attend the final performance of Udaleku in Buffalo, Wyoming. The 43 participants were initiated into the life of a shepherd by spending time in the mountains and also spending a night in the sheep wagons. Kate Camino, along with members of the Big Horn Basque Club must be commended for another memorable Udaleku.

Our Chino meeting will be our annual election of officers (President & Treasurer) and we have instigated a process where we ask candidates to be made known beforehand to allow delegates some time for consideration. Accordingly, I will be submitting my nomination for the office of NABO President for one last year. Thanks to everyone for your great support and I hope to see all of you in Chino for the NABO Convention. As we begin a new year it serves as an mutual cooperation in pursuit of the same goal.

*Mary Gaztambide*

NABO President



### What does the Basque Government want from the Basque clubs?

*EDITOR'S NOTE. It is an often repeated inquiry: what does the Basque Government want from the Basque clubs? In his address at the Basque Cultural Center of San Francisco (Feb. 2008), the President of the Basque Autonomous Government of Euskadi, Juan Jose Ibarretxe, laid out their three-fold aspirations. Here is an excerpt from his speech given to Basques gathered in San Francisco.*

"And now let me speak to you about the future. On many occasions you ask us 'What does the Basque Government want from the Basque Centres?' Well, as Lehendakari [President of the Autonomous Basque Government of Euskadi] I would mention three challenges.

The first is that your institutions become a social reference point in your communities; that the people in your community have a kind of healthy envy of your co-existence and social projection. The more you grow both within your clubs and in your projection out to the world, the greater will become your recognition and social presence. And in this way, the Basque Country will obtain greater recognition in the international environments where Basque communities are to be found.

For the second challenge, together with a show of solidarity between the Basque people, which is something that needs to be continually strengthened, I would concentrate on the young people of today, concentrate on their education, their preparation so that in as short a time as possible they can become the leaders of the Euskal Etxeak and the institutions in their communities. There is no future without youth.

And finally for the third challenge, I would ask the youngsters to build a new world, both in the Euskal Etxeak and in their community.

In July last year, the 4th Conference



of Basque Communities was held. 50% of the participants were youngsters. And the motto of the Conference was ZUBIGINTZAN, building bridges.

You are the bridge between your parent's generation--gurasoak--and your children's--seme-alabak--you are lodged between the past generation and the next. But bear in mind that a bridge means meeting, union, mutual relations and projection. Under no circumstances does it involve separation, disagreement, break-up.

From this perspective, it would be interesting if in the 2011 Conference you could present the objectives that were set during the previous Conference on recovering the historical memory of Basque presence throughout the world and especially in America. It is important to know where we come from: it is important to quench our thirst at the fountain of knowledge of our origins, our past history and the why and the wherefore of our Euskal Etxeak.



*As most are aware, the whole of the Basque country today is divided into three political entities: the Iparralde or northern provinces that are administered from Paris, Nafarroa which is its own autonomous region, and then the three historical provinces of Araba, Bizkaia & Gipuzkoa that comprise the entity "Euskadi."*

But if it is important to recover historical memory, the challenge of your projection and the projection of your Euskal Etxeak into the future is by no means less important. Don't be afraid of change, of the new realities that will crop up in your path. You will never be able to resolve the problems of new situations with past strategies. But even though this is true, never forget that the life of institutions depends upon whether we get it right when setting up a community. We should build a society where everyone feels at home and where everyone, both young and old, perceives the Euskal Etxeak as their own institution.

In the Basque Government we firmly believe in the philosophy implied in the motto ZUBIGINTZAN-building bridges: the work carried out by you and your ancestors has given the Basque people and their representatives a positive international image. And so I want to take this opportunity to thank you from the heart, to say to you quite clearly: Eskerrik asko bihotz-bihotzez."



# GUREA

## NABO's Basque Cultural Literacy Project

For a culture to survive it must be transmitted from generation to generation. If effective means of doing this are not found, then a culture dissipates and soon disappears. The "Gurea" (Basque for "it is ours") Basque Cultural Literacy Project is aimed at developing and implementing some effective methods to sustain "Basqueness" in terms of Basque culture and identity.

As most are aware, you cannot give what you do not have. Many of us want to give to younger generations a sense of *Basqueness* because we want to share what we have ("Gurea") and what we have appreciated. The problem--and don't take this personal--is that many of us don't have much depth or breadth of knowledge about Basqueness which then makes it problematical.

We have to learn (ikasi) more to be able to teach (irakatsi) more about that which ours. If we commit ourselves to this Basque Cultural Literacy Project, we stand a better chance of seeing Basqueness not only endure but flourish. What do you think? Is this worthwhile for NABO to pursue in relation to our motto Recreate + Educate = Perpetuate?

One of the challenges that confronts those who wish to see Basqueness endure is the fact of the matter that most have only a limited understanding of Basque culture and identity. There are various reasons for this, including the fact that for many immigrant Basques, their initial understanding of the Basque Country was generally limited to only an area of about twenty miles from their birthplace. This was just the way life was at that time. Meanwhile today its much easier to travel greater distances and to see many parts of the Basque Country, oftentimes on the tour-package plan where the knowledge we get still remains limited and superficial.

So what to do? There are already various resources available and some of these are excellent. What is being initially proposed, however, is a three-part introductory book that would serve to provide greater breadth with of course references for the reader to pursue greater depth and online links. Even in this day of the internet, there is still a useful role to be played by a book one can hold in their hands. Send along your comments and suggestions.



*In general, culture is made up of three distinct yet integrated layers:*

*Thinking: language, symbols & artifacts*

*Behaving: customs, practices & interactional patterns*

*Valuing: shared values, norms, beliefs & expectations*



### NABO's story finally told in a book!

Argitxu Camus Etchecopar had her book published telling the story of NABO as part of the Basque Government's Urazandi project. You can view an online version of the whole text which features the products of numerous interviews. From the early meetings held in the 1970s to the present, Argitxu does a fine job of capturing this shared effort among Basques to reach and join a larger Basque-American community. View it at [www.nabasque.org](http://www.nabasque.org)



### NABO's Udaleku in Buffalo, WY

Thanks to a dedicated group of coordinators, host families, and a good group of kids, NABO's annual Udaleku of Basque culture summer camp for kids ages 10-15 was another great success. Zorionak eta eskerrik asko: Congratulations and thanks to those who made this all possible. This is how we keep it going from generation to generation!



### Coexistence: Being Basque & American

Years ago the "Zenbat Gara" Basque dance group performed and following that one of their dancers found a posting online that declared the sentiment of why can't Basques be Americans like everyone else? It appeared that the author was put -off by a group of people choosing to express an identity other than being just an American. Well the short answer is, yes, Basques can be Americans like everybody else. They can be both Basque and American. We can embrace both our cultural

identity as being Basque and our civic identity as being American--and being one doesn't require that the other be disqualified or rejected.

People do not possess just one singular identity; rather who were are is a composite of multiple identities. People have multiple identities--as a child, a sibling, a co-worker, a sports fan, etc. It is a peculiar aspect of the Western world that people can largely choose the degree to which they want to adhere to different identities--plural. Two of these many identity options are being Basque and American. For Americans of Basque descent, it does not represent a denigration of their American identity when they choose to celebrate their Basque heritage. Two of our member organizations (Southern California & Elko) celebrate their annual festivals that always fall on the 4th of July weekend. There, as at most every other event during this Basque festival season, the festivities include an opening ceremony of sorts that always has two flags prominently displayed: the American and Basque flags. There you'll hear the singing of the American then Basque (defacto version is "Gernikako Arbola") national anthems.

Succinctly, Basques are proud to be both American and Basque. And most have it very clear, that they are fortunate to have this opportunity. America gave our Basque ancestors opportunities that were not readily available at that time in their European homeland. In America Basques were able to build a new home, and America did not demand that they forfeit their original heritage. America just asks that you choose to be part of a larger family.

This sentiment of coexistence is shared throughout the Basque Diaspora as people of Basque descent in Mexico, Argentina, Australia, Canada, etc. There too they celebrate both their cultural and civic identities. So on this anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence, that marks the birth of the American nation, we're proud to be both Basque and America, and we say thanks to America for the opportunities offered us including the freedom *from* being made to be just one thing, and the freedom *of* being able to choose who and what we want to be in life.



### EGUTEGIA: 2008 NABO Events

**Dance instructor workshops:** SF & Boise in July

**Convention:** Aug. 29-31 | Chino, CA

**Pilota:** Sept. 13-14 | San Francisco, CA

**Kantari Eguna:** Oct. 11 | Rocklin, CA

[www.naBASQUE.org](http://www.naBASQUE.org)

Izan zirelako, gara, eta garalako izango dira: "Because they were we are, and because we are, they will be."