



IMS Explorer

This December 2012 issue is dedicated to all of the living modern Maya who are celebrating the birth of the new sun. May we all be blessed with a long cycle of living in harmony with the planet and each other.

A monthly newsletter published by the **Institute of Maya Studies**



December 21, 2012 • Maya Long Count: 13.0.0.0.0 • 4 Ahau 3 K'ank'in • G9 An affiliate of the Miami Science Museum

2012: What will you be doing? Where are we headed?

IMS members distributed questionnaires to a handful of the Maya scholars attending the 6th Annual Maya at the Playa Conference. The following is a synopsis of their answers to some of the 2012-themed questions:

How aware do you think the ancient Maya were about the precession of the equinoxes?

This is somewhat of a hot topic among Maya scholars and responses varied depending on the respondee's own areas of interest and research. **Debra Walker** believes that the ancient Maya were very aware of precession, also being especially cognizant of local zeniths and antizeniths (nadirs). (*See her photo caption below.)

Gerardo Aldana thinks that the ancient Maya may have been qualitatively aware of precession, but that he sees no evidence that they were quantitatively aware. **Mark Van Stone** responded affirmatively, noting that **Barbara MacLeod's** research on the 3-11-Pik interval/title convinced



Debra Walker is now affiliated with the Florida Museum of Natural History, University of Florida. Her interests include the Maya civilization, ceramics, trade, religion and cultural transitions. Photo: Marta Barber.

*Just as the sun passes through the zenith, that is, directly overhead, twice a year as viewed from any location within the tropics, so it also passes twice a year through the point directly beneath the observer. This point is known as the antizenith or nadir.

The antizenith passage of the sun may seem a totally esoteric event since, unlike zenith passage, it is not directly observable. Yet some human cultures, including the Maya, do seem to have had an interest in identifying the dates of solar antizenith passages and marking them with appropriate observances.



M@TP presenters **Takeshi Inomata** (center) **Norman Hammond** (right) and IMS president **Rick Slazyk** (left) take time out for a Kodak moment. Inomata is from the University of Arizona and Hammond hails from Boston University. Photo: Marta Barber.

him that they did know about precession with some precision. See Mark's "Part I - Introduction to the '2012 Issue'" at www.famsi.org/research/vanstone/2012/2012Part1.pdf (**See his photo caption below.)

Amanda Harvey believes the ancient Maya had extensive knowledge about astronomy including the precession of the equinoxes. **Bruce Love** does not think the ancient Maya were aware of precession at all, while **Stanley Guenter** continued on page 2

****Mark Van Stone** is a Professor of Art History, Southwestern College, and a Maya expert specializing in Maya hieroglyphs and calligraphy. In the PDF mentioned above, he writes "Barbara MacLeod has been working with an unusual Maya concept, a significant interval of time they called '3-11-Pik' (or '3-11-Baktun', to use the traditional epigrapher's name for the 144,000-day/ 400-year period). 3 x 11 x 144,000 days is 4,752,000 days, or 13,010.5 years, half the length of the Precession cycle.



Photo: Marta Barber.

VOLUME 41, ISSUE 12

December 2012

ISSN: 1524-9387

Inside this issue:

2012 Survey,	2,3
<i>continued from page 1</i>	
13.0.0.0.0: The End of an Era and the Dawn of Another	3
Program Recap for 2012: Our 41st Year for the IMS!	4
Motul de San José, Edited by Antonia E. Foias and Kitty F. Emery, Book Review by Jim Reed	5
Index for Vol. 41, 2012	6
December Lineup of IMS Presentations and Membership Application	7
Upcoming Events	8

December 12 , 8 pm

IMS Annual Business Meeting and December Birthday Party

You're Invited!



Jim Reed, Editor

The *IMS Explorer* newsletter is published 12 times a year by The Institute of Maya Studies, Inc. 3280 South Miami Avenue, Miami, Florida 33129. The Institute is a non-profit corporation. The newsletter is available to IMS members and by subscription. See Membership Application on page 7. ©2012 I.M.S. Inc.



2012 Survey: What will you be doing? Where are we headed?

continued from page 1

thinks that they might have been aware, but not that much.

Do you plan to do anything special, or be anywhere particular on 4 Ahau 3 K'ank'in, December 21, 2012?

Most of the scholars that responded to our questionnaire do not have any particular plans for that special day. **Amanda Harvey** says that she will probably be celebrating somehow, somewhere, but has not made any specific plans as yet. **Stanley Guenter** joked that he will probably be worshipping the god of the age – Santa – and doing some last-minute shopping. **Mark Van Stone** will be at Chichen Itza with some Mayanists and friends.

Explorer editor **Jim Reed** reports that he and a friend will rent a car and drive around Guatemala on their own, avoiding crowds, groups and large Maya sites. He plans on spending time with Santiago Billy (see October issue) at his hotel on Lake Petén Itzá and having Billy guide them to the site of Nakum. Reed plans to then visit with a family of friends in Puerto San José, on the Pacific coast of Guatemala. On 12/21/2012, due to the angle of the coastline in the Department of Esquintla, they should be able to view the new sun rise over the ocean. Reed notes that Maya scholars, **Michael Grofe**, **Barbara MacLoed** and **John Major Jenkins**, will be spending 12/21 in Copan, as part of a 2012-themed conference tour.

The Maya Conservancy has planned a group tour to visit sites along the Pacific coast of Guatemala then enter Mexico to spend the three days around 12/21/2012 at Izapa. Izapa is considered to be "ground zero" for 2012 celebrants, and a conference with Izapa researcher **V. Garth Norman** and archaeologist **Mary Lou Ridinger** will take place at the planetarium in Tapachula.

We put Long Count calendar glyphs in the mastheads of our monthly IMS Explorer newsletter. Our editor would like to know if he should continue showing the 13 Bak'tun, as if we're moving towards the 14th Bak'tun, or should he not show the 13 in the Bak'tun position, and have the new cycle start at 0.0.0.0.1?

Bruce Love answered that in his opinion, December 22, 2012 should be 0.0.0.0.1, but he is aware that many scholars believe that this Long Count cycle should continue on to the 14th Baktun. **Stanley Guenter** says that this cycle should definitely continue on through the 14th, 15th and 16th Bak'tuns.

Gerardo Aldana notes that following computations based on Palenque's west Tablet of the Inscriptions, we should keep

Beverly West and Pat Manfredi work the IMS tables



During the four days of the M@TP conference, the lobby of the Government Services Building in Bunnell, FL, took on the feel of an Oxford University annex. Courtesy of FlaglerLive.com



L) Stanley Paul Guenter from Idaho State University and R) Marc Zender of Tulane University. Together they led a hieroglyphic workshop for beginners. The title of Guenter's individual lecture was "Groupthink and Maya Studies: Common Misconceptions about an Ancient Civilization"; and that of Zender's was "Reconsidering the K'iche Maya Popol Vuh." Photos: Marta Barber.

the 13 while moving to the 14th Bak'tun. **Mark Van Stone** points out that in the same inscriptions, the ancient Maya computed past 13.0.0.0 to the 14th Bak'tun and the 20th Bak'tun (that would be 1 Pik'tun).

Debra Walker went further, noting that we should consider keeping the 13 in the Bak'tun position and go ahead and add a 0 in a new Pik'tun position (20 times the 144,000-day Bak'tun period).

What do you see as the future of Maya studies, now that the hoopla of 2012 will soon be behind us?

Mark Van Stone sees everything improving after that fateful day in December. **Debra Walker** envisions Mayanists developing a history of the Maya region that would become the only "real" American history and making it more "public". **Gerardo Aldana** thinks overall awareness of the Maya has been raised that may translate into more interest by the public in the Maya and possibly more scholarships.

continued on page 3

2012 IMS Board of Directors:

Rick Slazyk, AIA, NCARB, LEED AP
President/Membership/Website
arcwerks@bellsouth.net

Marta Barber
Executive Vice President/
imsmiami@yahoo.com

Ray Stewart
Administrative Vice President
rstu@bellsouth.net

Beth Wiggert
Treasurer/Subscription List
beth2vic@earthlink.net

Janet Miess
Secretary/Website
jmiess@gmail.com

Joaquín J. Rodríguez III, P.E.
Director of Research
rod44@comcast.net
954-786-8084

Susan Bearse
Hospitality
bear6072@bellsouth.net

Patricia Manfredi
Programming
pmanfred2003@yahoo.com

Anne Stewart
Board Member at Large

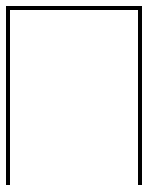
Beth Wein
Hospitality
bethwein@ymail.com

Gerald Wolfsohn
Public Relations
gerald.wolfson@att.net

Keith Merwin
Webmaster
keith@merwin.com

Jim Reed
Newsletter Editor
mayaman@bellsouth.net
404-680-9703

IMS Explorer of the Month:
Ror
Tramd 5.



13.0.0.0.0: The End of an Era and the Dawn of Another

Archaeologists, academics and tourism authorities from Guatemala gathered at the headquarters of the Organization of American States (OAS) in Washington, DC, on October 2, 2012, to explain the meaning and interpretation of the thirteenth Bak'tun, which according to Maya tradition marks the end of 13 Bak'tuns and the beginning of the 14th Bak'tun.

The event, part of the preparatory activities for the 43rd OAS General Assembly, to be held June 4 to 6, 2013, in Guatemala, highlighted the legacy of the Maya civilization and its importance as a Cultural Heritage of the Americas, and provided the context to discuss its cosmology, relevance and interpretation of history.

Introducing the event, OAS Secretary General José Miguel Insulza highlighted the importance of history in understanding the present, and remarked on the efforts made to deepen the understanding and interpretation of the Maya culture. "From the work of Yuri Knorozov, in the early



A Maya performance group entertained during the festivities, by Maria Patricia Leiva/OAS.

fifties, until the recent discovery of mMaya scribe calendrics in Xultun, the Maya culture gradually reveals its secrets and dazzles us with its rich civilization and science," he said.

The leader of the hemispheric institution noted that the process to decipher, understand and interpret the Maya culture accelerated in recent years due to the development of the region. "The peace agreements and democratic deepening in Mesoamerica gave us greater stability, which allowed a boom in the study of the Maya civilization," he noted, and recalled that according to the Maya calendar, the OAS



General Assembly in Guatemala will be held during a "period of renewal." The institution's annual meeting "will help us to learn more about and get excited about the cultural richness that the Maya world offers," he concluded.

Francisco Estrada-Belli, Professor in the Department of Archaeology at Boston University, spoke about the beginnings of the Maya civilization, focusing on the archaeological discoveries and efforts to understand the culture, its symbolism, mythology, art, wealth and ritual forms. 🏠

Source: www.thebahamasweekly.com

2012 Survey: What will you be doing? Where are we headed?

continued from page 2

"But mostly it means that we can get back to work!"

Amanda Harvey notes that while coming from a biological perspective, she thinks we will move towards more stable isotope studies and other hard science research, like DNA. **Bruce Love** sees Mayanists as getting back to business as usual.

Stanley Guenter feels that Maya studies with return to normal, and it will be harder to get as much attention. "This could be a blessing or a difficulty."

What will be your focus of attention in 2013? Excavation and field work? Research and writing projects?

Mark Van Stone wants to continue offering his iBook titled *2012: Science and Prophecy of the Ancient Maya*, available at: www.markvanstone.com.

Gerardo Aldana will be working to complete a manuscript about the Venus Tables in the Dresden Codex.

Amanda Harvey will continue working towards her Ph.D. and

depending on grants, data collection. She added "We write in our sleep so the writing process never ends."

Bruce Love will keep going on with his research and writing and recommends that you visit www.discovermam.org.

Stanley Guenter will continue working on the analysis of materials found by his colleagues, as well as other writing projects.

Debra Walker has kept busy with a major digitization project on the existing collection of artifacts (about 300,000 items) from the site of Cerros. You can access the Florida Museum of Natural History's Cerros Research Online Catalogue, at: www.flmnh.ufl.edu/latinarch/cerros/gallery.htm. Next year, she hopes to work at the Middle Preclassic site of Yaxnohcah which was discovered in 2004 by Ivan Sprac and is located in Campeche, approximately 26 km northeast of El Mirador.

Editor's Note: Well, I can't believe that in a few weeks the whole 2012 hype will be over with. I've been

following the 2012 story since it began in the mid-90s, and to a degree intimately involved. I still have a copy of the Word doc version of John Major Jenkin's *2012 Maya Cosmogenesis* that he sent me to review before its publication.

I wish all of the Mayanists the best in the future and trust the excavations and research into all things Maya will continue in earnest. Mexico and Guatemala have spent millions to draw crowds to the Mayalands to celebrate 12/21. I only hope that future monies will continue to be invested in preserving Maya sites and cultural traditions although I hear Guatemala has invited the tourists but not Maya elders to Tikal for their planned 12/21 festivities. I fear that if not enough tourists show up, it might be a bust for investment in future site restorations.