

2008 FJSA ANNUAL TRAINING CONFERENCE
OCTOBER 9 - 12, 2008- ALBUQUERQUE, NEW MEXICO
by Debra Newman and Donna Silva

As most of you may already know, FJSA's 2008 Annual Training Conference will be held October 9-12, 2008 in Albuquerque, New Mexico. We are so excited that we have the opportunity to train in this beautiful city during one of the most exciting fall events in the country, the International Balloon Fiesta! Albuquerque will be jam-packed with tourists during this national event and city officials are expecting over 70,000 visitors to the area that week. While we are fortunate to have our conference during this event, **you must plan early** to attend the conference and for any activities you anticipate doing while you are in Albuquerque.

If you have not already made your **hotel reservations** for the conference, please do so immediately. The conference will be held at the Hyatt Regency Albuquerque. To make your reservation, please call 505-842-1234. The FJSA has a room block which is nearly sold out at the rate of \$169.00 per night. We have expanded this block once already beyond previous years' blocks and in a prudent effort not to over-obligate the association, we are not able to expand the block further. We are also not able to contract with an overflow hotel. If the Hyatt room block is sold out when you call, you do have several options: 1) make a reservation at the standard or 'rack' rate and check back often for cancellations to the FJSA block; 2) look for an alternate hotel in the area, the Doubletree and the Embassy Suites are nearby; or 3) ask your FJSA friends if they want to room share. If and when people cancel their reservation, the room will be put back into our block of rooms, so it is worth checking back in periodically. **Please plan ahead.**

The Albuquerque Convention and Visitor's Authority also warned us that **airline tickets** to the city also sell out during this period. Again, please make your airline reservations early and be flexible. Shuttles and cabs from the airport will be in full operation and the cost from the airport to the hotel on either cab or shuttle is approximately \$14 one way.

If you plan to extend your stay, rent a car, see the sights, or partake in additional recreational activities while you are in Albuquerque you **need to plan early**. The Hyatt has an Enterprise Rental Car office right in the hotel lobby for ease of picking up a vehicle. With 70,000 tourists in this small city during this week, it will be first come-first serve. **Make a reservation for any extra-curricular activities now.** The FJSA is planning one optional event on Friday evening, which we anticipate will be the Special Balloon Shapes Glowdeo followed by the AfterGlow Fireworks Show. This is an evening event at which the beautifully colored hot air balloons are lit up like giant holiday ornaments. For more information on this event, please visit www.balloonfiesta.com.

The conference committee is busy planning an exciting learning experience for you all, and we are thrilled to offer the conference during the International Balloon Fiesta! Take the time to visit www.itsatrip.org, which is the Albuquerque Convention and Visitor's web site, to get acquainted with all the city has to offer prior to your arrival. We hope that you all will enjoy your stay in Albuquerque and take part in one of these many activities during your stay: shop in one of the dozens of art galleries on Route 66 (Central Avenue); tour one of the many museums; visit the Albuquerque Biological Park which consists of a botanic garden, a zoo, an aquarium and a beach; shop and eat at Old Town; check out the Night Life on Central Avenue; or visit one of the 19 Indian Pueblos and 3 reservations in the Albuquerque area.