



Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County



***Literacy
Changes
Lives***

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*Serving the people of
Englewood, Laurel,
Nokomis, North Port,
Osprey and Venice*

November, 2009

A Love of Children Brings Tutor and Student Together

Ruth Williams, a long time tutor for Literacy Volunteers and Board member, had an opportunity to choose a student/employee in our Venice Regional Medical Center's (VRMC) Workplace Literacy program that began in June. As Ruth reviewed the brief biographical information for each employee, she noticed that Valentina Konovalchuk from the Ukraine had 10 children. Ruth, herself, had raised nine children. That was the deciding factor!! Ruth knew she and Valentina would have a lot to talk about.

As the two of them worked together over the summer to help Valentina speak English more fluently, Ruth learned that Valentina lived in Rochester, New York for 15 years before moving to North Port four years ago. All her children remain in Rochester except for her four youngest that range in age from 22 to 16. Yelena, Vladimir, Anna, and Daniel like to tease their mother about her homework and enjoy helping her keep up with American slang. One day Valentina asked her son Daniel to take out the garbage and he replied, "No problem." "What's that mean?" asked Valentina when she spoke to Ruth about it. Of course, Ruth was able to explain the meaning to Valentina and

asked her to jot down any words or phrases that she encountered at work or at home so they could talk about them during their tutoring sessions.

Ruth and Valentina worked together at VRMC from June through August when our Workplace Literacy program ended. However, Valentina has a great desire to continue her tutoring sessions on her own time with Ruth. They study together for an hour then Ruth assigns homework for Valentina to do until their next session. Valentina's children will now be able to continue to tease their mother about her homework. They are very happy for her and proud of her commitment to improve her English.

---Priscilla Miranda



President's Corner

I'm happy to report that during the July 2008 – June 2009 year, 112 volunteer tutors and instructors helped 197 English as a Second Language (ESL) students and 7 Basic Literacy students either one-to-one or in small classes. Students received 3,604 hours of free instruction. Also, 3,072 non-tutoring hours were donated for lesson preparation, tutor training, travel time, new students interviews, database maintenance, Newsletter publication, and all the tasks performed by our working Board.

Unfortunately, United Way of South Sarasota County reduced allocations to their agencies in August because of the effect of the economic downturn on their last campaign. Literacy Volunteers' allocation was reduced by \$2,000 from \$6,000 to \$4,000. We are grateful to the LVSSC members who are helping make up this shortfall by including an additional contribution with their annual membership renewal. We are also asking past supporters for help and looking for additional grant opportunities.

Please become an ambassador for Literacy Volunteers by giving our brochures to people who might be interested in joining. Also, pick up a few 3" x 5" student information cards in the office to hand to adults who want to improve their English or reading ability. There are people in our community who are struggling because of the lack of functional English skills or basic reading skills. Please help spread the message that help is available.

---Sandy McIntyre

Workplace Literacy

Improving literacy improves lives and the community in which we live and work. Literacy Volunteers was given the opportunity to tutor eight employees in English as a Second Language for three months at Venice Regional Medical Center (VRMC) this summer.

From June 1 to August 31 in cooperation with the Director of Education and Director of Environmental Services and Dietary Departments at VRMC, LVSSC tutors met once a week for an hour with their student (employee) at the hospital. These employees were originally from China, Cuba, Poland, and the Ukraine, and they all worked intently to improve their English language skills.

At the completion of the Workplace Literacy program, each employee received a certificate of completion. We hope this tutoring project will inspire them to continue to improve their English studies on their own time. A tutor and hospital employee with 19 children between them are featured on the front page of this newsletter.

A special thank you goes to the following tutors who contributed their time and talent to make this program a success: Lauren Austin; Katie Bliss, Ann Kellum; Pam Marble; Sandy McIntyre; Priscilla Miranda; Don Moore; Joan Schwartz; and Ruth Williams.

---Priscilla Miranda

Library Hours of Operation Changed October 5

All libraries open at 10:00 AM Mon. through Sat. On Sunday, Jacaranda and Selby Libraries are open from 1:00 to 5:00 PM. Open evenings ('til 8:00): **Elsie Quirk** (Englewood) – Mon./Wed.; **Jacaranda** – Tues./Wed./Thurs; **North Port** – Tues./Wed.; **Venice** – Mon./Tues./Thurs.

Financial Report

The following is a summary of LVSSC's income and expense for the year ending June 30, 2009:

<u>Income</u>		<u>Expense</u>	
United Way of So. Sarasota Co.	\$6,000	Salary/Payroll Tax	\$10,463
Plantation Community Foundation	\$2,000	Training Materials	\$3,678
Memberships	\$2,980	Phone/Voicemail/E-Mail	\$1,251
Contributions	\$3,957	Postage and Printing	\$883
Fundraisers	\$1,845	Office Supplies/Copier Repairs	\$541
Total Income	\$16,782	State Fees	\$175
		Computer Software	\$167
Sarasota Libraries' facilities	PRICELESS!	Miscellaneous	\$93
		Total Expense	\$17,251
Net Income	- \$469		

—Ruth Toms, Treasurer

New ESL Tutors

Congratulations to these new tutors who attended training in Venice in October. Thanks to our tireless ESL Program Director, Pat Swindler, who trained 35 new tutors last year.



Left to right: Norm Beck, Ralph Wagner, Sue Coleman, Ernie Coleman, Fran Brinkman-McClurg, Leslie Yard, Jerry Thier, Lois Weeks, Sharon Gaza, Jody Keady

North Port Happenings

Sheila McClintock-Fraser, new volunteer North Port Coordinator, is busy interviewing new students and volunteers at the North Port Library. She will be at the Library on Tuesdays 5:00 – 7:30 PM and Thursdays 10:00 – 12:00 noon. If you'd like to meet Sheila or refer a new student or tutor, please contact her at svmclin@yahoo.com.



In cooperation with the Port Charlotte Adult Learning Center, ESL classes began on Monday, Oct. 26, in New Hope Community Church which is across U.S. 41 from North Port Library on S. Biscayne Dr. These classes will meet on Monday and Thursday nights each week.

ESL tutor training classes will begin in North Port on November 10th. We are hoping for a large group of new volunteer tutors to help meet the demand for one-on-one tutoring in North Port.

Tutors Talking to Tutors

Join us on Thursday, December 3 from 10:00 am to Noon in the Venice Library Conference Room to participate in Ronnie Caruso's seminar, "Tips and Techniques for Teaching English Pronunciation."

Before his career with the Federal Government, Ronnie was an ESL teacher in language schools in Brazil and in the U.S. He lived in South America for 6 years, where he learned to speak fluent Spanish and Portuguese, and has recently learned the basics of Italian. His diverse language experience has given him a rich understanding of the process of learning language pronunciation both from a teacher's and a student's perspective. Since retiring to Venice in 2005, he has been teaching an ESL class for our organization at the North Port Library where he has had a chance to further refine his teaching techniques.

If you bring with you an example of an English word that your student is having difficulty pronouncing, Ronnie will try to make some suggestions to help you in the latter part of his seminar.

After Ronnie's presentation, we will break into groups by the nationality of each tutor's student to discuss what we have learned and to share with each other our own ESL teaching successes (and frustrations). See you on December 3. —Priscilla Miranda

Citizenship Class in January, 2010

Bob Knowler will again teach a 10-week U.S. Citizenship class beginning Thursday, January 21, 6:00 to 8:00 PM, at the Venice Public Library. The classes will prepare students to pass the Citizenship Examination. A \$15 donation will be collected the first night of class for the textbook. Please ask interested students to call the Literacy Volunteers office to register.

**Literacy Volunteers
of South Sarasota County**
300 Nokomis Ave. S.

Literacy Changes Lives

FIRST CLASS



Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County

An Affiliate of ProLiteracy America

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