



The Literacy Letter

Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County

Spring 2010

LVSC Receives Bequest; Office to be Named for Tutor

Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County will be renaming its office, Room 250A of the People-Care Center, the "Mimi Ruch Memorial Literacy Office" during ceremonies on Sunday, June 13 at 12:00 p.m. A reception will follow in the newly named office.

Marian Ruch, known to everyone at LVSC as Mimi, passed away suddenly on October 24, 2008. Mimi was a dedicated volunteer tutor for Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County for eight years.

Originally from Port Washington, NY, she relocated to Somerville over 30 years ago. She re-

tired from Hoechst Celanese Corp. in Bridgewater in 1996 after 27 years of service. Mimi received her BA degree from the University of Miami in German and Psychology, her MA degree from Fairleigh Dickinson University in Psychology, and her MA and PhD degrees from Rutgers University in Cultural Anthropology.

She was very passionate about her love of dogs and was very active with the Mid-Jersey Labrador Retriever Club and the Lenape Tracking Club of NJ.

"Mimi will be sorely missed by LVSC, but her gift to the organization will be an everlasting presence and allow her to live on in the hearts of everyone associated with the organization," said LVSC Executive Director Alan Karmin.

Anyone interested in attending the ceremony and reception please RSVP to info@literacysomerset.org or 908-725-5430.



*Mimi Ruch
Our Friend*

Upcoming LVSC Events

GOLD RUSH!

Sunday, June 6, 1:00-4:00 p.m.

Mimi Ruch Office Dedication

Sunday, June 13, 12 noon

Fall Tutor Training Orientation

Wednesday, September 15, 7:00 p.m.

Comedy Show featuring Uncle Floyd

Friday, October 29, 7:00 p.m.

Scrabble Night

Saturday, January 22, 2011, 6:00 p.m.

A View From The Top...

Thoughts from LVSC's Board President

The winter season is, in general, a dreary time of the year for me, one that becomes more tedious after the holidays. However, as it is meant to be, winter bows to spring, trees and flowers blossom and our spirits soar. It is precisely during this season of rebirth when we are injected with bounds of energy and enthusiasm....as darkness seems to lead to something brighter.

With a generous bequest to Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County from Mimi Ruch, the strain of these volatile economic times has been lessened as we strive to meet budget while continuing to improve our programs to meet the needs of our adult learners.

Mimi Ruch was a LVSC tutor for 8 years, and was an inspiration to all of her students. Her commitment to our organization represents a model of loyalty and unselfishness.

And speaking of support, the well-attended Holiday Tea for Tutors in December 2009, was certainly that, as long-time volunteer tutors mingled and exchanged experiences and tips with new tutors - as the weather outside turned frightening! A warm note of thanks to those who attended, and to board members Peggy Koppen and Sheila Cancellia, as well as my friend Anna Macone for their hard work and creativity.

The Literacy for Life Conference on April 24, 2010 at Montclair State University in Montclair, NJ, was

hosted by Literacy Volunteers of New Jersey, and attended by more than 150 people from around the state. Tutor Deb Cummins and tutor trainer Arlyn Reed joined Executive Director Alan Karmin and me to represent LVSC.

The conference offered various workshops, one of which stressed the importance of tutor and student involvement in the organization. Alan and I found this reinforcing, since LVSC has been an advocate of a closer relationship with its tutors, students and volunteers. You can become more involved by attending our meet-and-greet events, helping with fundraising, or participating in professional development workshops.

During lunch, awards were presented for Tutor Excellence - Literacy of Plainfield Public Library. Student Excellence - Literacy of Union County and Literacy Volunteers Association Cape-Atlantic, Volunteer Excellence - Literacy Volunteers of Monmouth County.

In closing, I would like to thank my Board, Alan Karmin, tutors, and assessors, and volunteers for your caring, and for your efforts in carrying out the mission of Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County.

Martha Davis, Board President

Our Mission

Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County is committed to promoting literacy throughout the community by providing student-centered tutoring for adults so that they may function more effectively in their daily lives. Our mission is founded on the belief that the ability to read and communicate is imperative to leading a productive and functional life, and is essential for the protection of individual freedom and equality of all people.

We are committed to accomplishing this mission by:

- *Training volunteer tutors in the fundamentals of Basic Literacy and English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) instruction that include reading, writing, listening and speaking skills*
- *Providing tutors with ongoing support and in-service skills development programs*
- *Locating and recruiting functionally illiterate learners*
- *Creating and maintaining collaborative tutor-learner matches*
- *Helping learners establish and reach realistic personal goals*
- *Promoting learner self-sufficiency*

LVSC Board Member Honored **Patricia Flannery receives Millicent Fenwick Award**

LVSC Board Member and Bridgewater Township Mayor Patricia Flannery was honored by the Somerset County Federation of Republican Women with the Millicent Fenwick Award at a luncheon at the Olde Mill Inn in Basking Ridge on April 11, 2010.

Each year, the Somerset County Federation of Republican Women honors a woman who embodies the character of Millicent Fenwick. Mrs. Fenwick worked all her life for the promotion of civil rights, consumer interests, prison reform and ecological conservation. At age 64 in 1975, she was elected to the United States House of Representatives where, as one of only sixteen Congresswomen out of 432 members, she served four terms. Mrs. Fenwick lived her life with courage and conviction. She said she wanted to be remembered as one who was useful.

Patricia Flannery has been a LVSC tutor for three years and is in her second year as a member of the Board of Trustees. She is serving in her second term as Mayor of Bridgewater Township.

"The Somerset County Federation of Republican Women is pleased to honor Mayor Flannery for her outstanding achievements in government and beyond," said Kate Whitman Annis, President of the SCFRW.



"I believe I can speak for the entire Board of Trustees when I say how proud we are of Pat for receiving this honor," said LVSC Board President Martha Davis. "LVSC certainly feels honored to have her as a part of the organization."

Library Director Retires After 20 Years of Service



After almost 20 years at the helm of the Somerset County Library System, Director Jim Hecht recently retired. "I've been working in libraries for 42 years and it's just gotten to the point where I want to do some other things with my life," said Hecht. Hecht has been a good friend to Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County. He helped grow the System's commitment to Adult Literacy in Somerset County.



Gold Rush

To Benefit LVSC



Money on the Spot!

Proven Highest Prices

Sell your unwanted gold...

Bent, broken, tangled or mangled

Sunday, June 6

Sunday, July 11

1:00 to 4:00 p.m.

PeopleCare Center

120 FINDERNE AVENUE

BRIDGEWATER



Tutors and board members gather at LVSC's Holiday Tea Party in December. More events are planned for the coming year. Watch for updates via email and on the LVSC website.





and Tricky Tray

Saturday, January 22, 2011

Somerville Elks Lodge, Bridgewater, NJ

Team tournament with two players per team

Three games guaranteed with dinner, dessert & t-shirt

First, Second and Third Place Prizes Awarded

Only \$100 per team!

\$25 for non-participants

Singles may register for \$50 and be matched with a teammate

Let the games begin! Register at:

www.literacysomerset.org

Dinner begins at 6:00 p.m. First game begins at 7:00 p.m. sharp!

Sponsored by



Donate Today and Become a Friend of Literacy!

The vitality of any institution is often defined and measured by the strength of its annual giving program, both in terms of financial commitments and the rate of participation. An annual gift is truly a vote of confidence in Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County and its mission.

LVSC's annual fund provides support for every area of activity undertaken by the organization including tutor training and supplies, student assessments, tutoring services and administration, ongoing programs and promising new initiatives that make LVSC's programs not only exceptional...but FREE.

It is imperative that LVSC continually strives to increase annual contributions, establishing a reliable source of unrestricted support to fulfill its ongoing operating needs.

Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. We rely strictly on private contributions from individuals, corporations, foundations and other organizations.

Donating to LVSC is a easy. You can make an online donation and know that your information is totally secure and will not be shared with any other entity. In fact, if you are one of the first 100 people to make an online donation of \$50 or more, you will receive a free LVSC t-shirt as our way of saying "thanks" for your support.

Donate online by simply visiting us at www.LiteracySomerset.org. All donations made via credit card will appear as "Netcharge (877) 625-0290" on your billing statement.

All transactions are fully secured for your protection.

If you prefer to send a check, mail your gift to:

LVSC
120 Finderne Avenue, Box 7
Bridgewater, New Jersey 08807

Payroll Deduction

Ask your employer about having your gift to LVSC come directly from your paycheck. And, in a lot of cases, your employer will match your gift by 100%. So that is a way to have your gift make even more of an impact.

Corporate Sponsorship

Corporate sponsorships are available throughout the year for the LVSC website and special events. Check with us to discuss the sponsorship giving levels available.

Legacies and Bequests

Literacy Volunteers of Somerset County deeply appreciates those that have remembered us in their estates. If you would like to consider us when you do your estate planning, please contact us to provide the necessary assistance and appropriate paperwork.

Thank you for your continued support!



Trainer Arlyn Reed working with new volunteers.

Tips for Tutors with Jackie Flamm

Tips for Tutors is designed to help you explore some creative approaches to tutoring, find ways to make your tutoring more effective and relevant to your student's needs, review and revisit some of the principles you learned in your tutor-training course, and give you some springboards to help you liven up your lessons.

Get to know your student so that you can choose and create authentic teaching materials that truly appeal to your student's interests and help him/her to reach established objectives.

Unlike a large English-language class of students with a variety of language backgrounds and differing linguistic goals, you are involved in a teaching situation with only one or two students who need your help to speak, read, and write English. This one-to-one (or two-to-one) configuration allows you to become profoundly aware of your student's interests and needs, and you can begin to set clear, reachable, realistic goals. You are in a position to use printed materials and create activities and exercises specifically designed to help your student attain success in reaching those goals.

First of all, without being intrusive, learn as much as you can about your student's background. If your student shows interest, share some information about yourself. Finding out about family, job, hobbies, interests, and so on, will not only show the student that you are enthusiastic about getting to know him/her, but it will provide you with a wealth of knowledge which you can use to customize your lesson plans.

Research your student's country of birth. Learn something about the country's culture, history, arts, geography, cuisine, and so on, and use the information to initiate conversations.

Learn some of the characteristics of the language your student speaks so that you can predict where he/she might make errors in pronunciation.

Although you do not need to know your student's native language, learn some facts about how that

language works. In order to design specific pronunciation drills, review the information about your student's first language in the materials you received in your tutor-training course. For example, you can predict that a Spanish speaker might have difficulty pronouncing the /b/ and /v/ sounds. When you hear an error, seize the moment to create some drills (or glean them from an ESOL pronunciation book) contrasting the /b/ - /v/ sounds in initial position (*berry-very*), final position (*robe-rove*), and middle position (*saber-savor*). Knowing that your student is a native Spanish speaker, you might also anticipate a problem in the pronunciation of a consonant blend at the beginning of words such as /sk/ *school* and /st/ *student*. A Spanish speaker might want to say *eh-school* (because the word is *escuela* in Spanish) and *eh-student* (*estudiante* in Spanish).

The better you know your student, the more easily you can create and adapt grammar activities to make them more relevant to his/her life.

In addition to identifying individual pronunciation issues, you can isolate specific grammatical errors. Then you can find an appropriate ESOL grammar textbook in our library collection that offers explanations, drills, and exercises to clear up the problem. If you feel creative, you might take a drill from a grammar book and rewrite it to include situations from the student's world.

Having some linguistic facts about your student's language and information about his/her background and experience will help you to create and select the most appropriate activities.

Check out the next *Tips for Tutors* for more on the Language Experience, how to set it up, how to isolate sight words, and when and how to correct errors.

Please visit our Forum at www.literacysomerset.org. You can *Ask Jackie* specific questions, share some of your tutoring experiences, make suggestions, or just see what other tutors are up to.



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 Just go to www.literacysomerset.org and make your gift today!

Donate your used auto!

Get a tax-deduction of full blue book value! Call the LVSC office at 908-725-5430 for details.



Donate your unwanted, used, good clothing!

LVSC is collecting clothes to raise money for our ever-growing organization. Visit www.literacysomerset.org or call 908-725-5430 for drop-off locations.

We are also searching for more locations for our clothing donation bins. Email us at www.literacysomerset.org to find out how you can help with our clothing drive.