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A Newsletter for Literacy Volunteers of Roanoke Valley

March/April 2006 | 5002 Williamson Rd., Roanoke, Virginia 24012 | (540) 265-9339 | FAX 265-4814 | www.lvarv.org

## Training Schedule

### TUTOR TRAINING ORIENTATION

Tues Mar 7<sup>th</sup> and Thurs Mar 9<sup>th</sup>  
6-7 p.m.

LVRV Learning Center

### New Tutor Training Dates:

Mar 30<sup>th</sup>, Apr 6<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> & 27<sup>th</sup>

Brown Bag Tutor Lunch  
(Basic Literacy & ESOL)

\*Mar Brown Bag - Mar 10<sup>th</sup>  
(due to Learning Disabilities  
Workshop on Mar 3<sup>rd</sup>)  
Apr Brown Bag - Apr 7<sup>th</sup>  
11:45 am

Come in for new ideas and  
program information. Focus:  
Review & Discussion of Learning  
Disabilities Workshop

Bring a friend!

All tutors are encouraged to come and share  
their tutoring experiences. Bring your own  
lunch.



### Content Highlights

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## LVRV Enters the Workplace

According to the National Institute for Literacy's *Fact Sheet on Workforce Literacy*, workplace literacy needs continue to grow among American employers. Topping the list of critical employment competencies are verbal communication skills (86%) and interpersonal skills (77%). Sadly, the American Management Association's 2001 survey of American firms determined that more than 34% of applicants lacked the skills necessary to perform the jobs they sought. When one adds the commonly accepted wisdom that a 10% increase in workers' education results in a productivity increase of more than 8%, it is clear that employers have a vested interest in workplace literacy issues.

Literacy Volunteers of Roanoke Valley's recent collaboration with Salem Preferred Partners is the result of this nationwide trend. Since mid-January, Adult Programs Coordinator Bill Van Velzer has been conducting classes twice a week at the SPP worksite. The 16 enrolled students are all foreign-born employees who assemble axles and motors for Mack and Volvo trucks. The class contains a wide array of student abilities, from literacy to low-advanced levels.

Curriculum design has been the most challenging feature of this new endeavor. The presence of many different language abilities has required a differentiated approach to instruction, which Bill brings to the classroom from his experience with teaching gifted students in the public schools. As a result, students routinely work in pairs and small groups in addition to receiving whole-group instruction. The key to this method has been to assign a single concept to each class session, which is then "layered" to fit the needs of this diverse set of learners. The need for thorough planning is evident.

Differentiated instruction accounts for much of the success of LVRV's first foray into the world of workplace education. Yet there is another critical component: relevancy. Like any business, SPP views its workplace literacy program as an investment in improving their bottom line. Management is acutely aware of the connection between communication skills and productivity, especially when a significant number of SPP assembly line workers have limited English skills. The classroom curriculum reflects this by using materials commonly found on the job site. From employment policies and safety practices to the process manufacturing sheets and "Q Tickets" that direct assembly line operations, students are surrounded by the familiar while they explore the unknown. This method of weaving English language skills through an existing web of workplace vocabulary has enabled students to make rapid progress.

Literacy Volunteers looks forward to broadening its relationship with the local business community through its English language services. If the experience with Salem Preferred Partners is any indication, the future holds real promise for the expansion and adaptation of LVRV's traditional services into the exciting world of workplace literacy.

**Thank you  
for your  
donations**

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Mr. and Mrs. Robert W. Woody

*Thank You*

## LVRV Reviews its Vision and Mission

The Board of Directors and staff of Literacy Volunteers of Roanoke Valley recently took the first step in this year's strategic planning process. We looked at where we've been, where we are now, and where we want to go as an organization. We looked at our core basic literacy and English-for-speakers-of-other-languages programs and we heard about the progress we are making in computer and workplace literacy. We endorsed our vision which is to equip adults to reach their full potential through literacy, and we restated our mission – *to teach English literacy skills to adults and to raise literacy awareness throughout the Roanoke Valley*. Over the next several months, the board will look at both our strategic direction and long-term goals in preparation for annual planning for the 2006-2007 fiscal year, and we will be reporting the achievements of this fiscal year in the July/August newsletter.



### *Writing from the Heart*

The annual debut of *Writing from the Heart* has been the highlight of our summer awards ceremony for many years, and it just gets better and better! Start now to prepare for this year's edition by inviting your learners to compose and contribute writing – poetry, stories, essays, letters, etc. – for our eleventh volume. Fiction and non-fiction of any length are acceptable. Learners may either write or dictate their pieces, taking credit for their work or publishing it anonymously. Tutors should help learners edit and polish their pieces for publication, keeping in mind that learners' voices should come through. Any topic is acceptable, but topics based on the impact of improving language skills on learners' and their families' lives create very powerful pieces. The deadline for submission is Friday, April 21<sup>st</sup>. Further information will be sent to you. If you would like a copy of last year's edition of *Writing from the Heart*, call us at 265-9339.

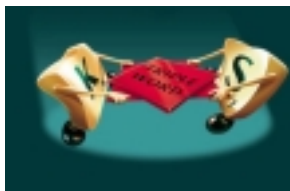
**SAVE THE DATE:** Our Annual Pot Luck/Awards Ceremony will be held this year on Sunday, June 24<sup>th</sup>. Watch for details.

### **Got Books? Pass Them On!**

If you have books you wish to donate to the LVRV Book Sale sponsored by *The Roanoke Times* to be held June 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, please call the LVRV office at 265-9339 after March 10<sup>th</sup> to find out where you can drop them off.

To volunteer to join in the fun of sorting books at our new sale location in Towers Shopping Center, call Janey at 985-0634 or Nancy at 989-8005.

### **Don't miss Roanoke's first SCRABBLE® Tournament!**



**See enclosed flyer for details!**

## Tutor Satisfaction Survey Results

\*25% of our tutors responded to the tutor satisfaction survey we conducted this spring – 20% have tutored less than one year; 28% have tutored for one to two years; 30% have tutored for three to five years; and 22% have tutored for five or more years.

On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 = Poor – 5 Good) –

### **Tutor Training:**

1 (0%) 2 (2%) 3 (24%) 4 (60%) 5 (14%)

### **Tutoring Experience:**

1 (0%) 2 (5%) 3 (12%) 4 (50%) 5 (33%)

### **In-Service Topics Requested:**

- Lesson Planning (32%)
- Assessment (26%)
- Pronunciation (18%)
- Grammar (18%)
- Other (6%)

### **Newsletter Additions:**

- Tutor Tips (43%)
- Accomplishments (19%)
- Adult Education Issues (19%)
- Program Information (19%)

### **Is set curriculum a good idea?**

Yes (67%) No (25%) Unsure (8%)

### **Turning in 2-month reports before Susie hounds us:**

Priceless (100% !)

Thank you for your input!



## Brown Bag Tutor Lunches

Don't forget our Brown Bag Tutor Lunches that are held the first Friday of every month. We meet in the LVRV Conference Room at 11:45 a.m., and there is no need to RSVP – just come! February's discussion was a review of 1-6 syllable types, a brief review of the Wilson Reading System Critical Points video, and the keywords for vowels in the syllable types.

**March's Brown Bag Tutor Lunch will be held on the 10<sup>th</sup>** (due to the Learning Disabilities Workshop being held on March 3<sup>rd</sup>.) We will be reviewing the Learning Disabilities workshop. In April we will continue this review and discuss the implementation of new methodologies presented at the Learning Disabilities Workshop.

Come join us. This is a wonderful way for us to share information and build community among our tutors.



**Congratulations to Nancy Ocorr and her learner!** They passed the GED!!!! It was immeasurably rewarding to see these two work so hard together. Leadership and persistence paid off. Nancy's learner is now assessing the possibility and reality of continuing her education!



## Pronunciation tip : /b/ and /v/

Key word for the /b/ sound is *bat*.

Key word for the /v/ sound is *van*.

The /b/ sound pushes the bottom lip forward and out in a "pouting manner." The inside of the bottom lip slightly covers the lower front line of the top lip, pulls the lips together and push out. No teeth are involved.

The /v/ sound pulls the corners of the mouth horizontally in a "flat" manner.

The teeth are resting on the bottom lip with vibration occurring across the lip. The two front teeth are showing some.

Put your index fingers in your ears and play with the sound of /b/ and /v/.

**Congratulations** and a warm **thank you** to the following tutors who are celebrating anniversaries with LVRV during the months of March and April – 17 Years! – **Lee Bristor**; 7 Years – **Stuart Wamsley**; 6 Years – **Angela Rauenswinter**; 3 Years – **Sharon Porter**; 2 Years – **Pat Kniffel**; 1 Year – **Lorah Igo**.



**We welcome** 10 new tutors who graduated in February: **Beth Bowman, Caryl Connolly, Hayden Hollingsworth, Nancy Hughes, Linda Hunter, Amy Kageals, Ben Manalo, Frances O'Donohue, Allison Sadler, and Daniel Weeks.** **June Weeks** attended our training workshop and is a tutor for the Rescue Mission. These tutors are taking on 28 learners in various combinations. **Thank you** for your investment in literacy and the community!

**Literacy Volunteers of Roanoke Valley**  
**5002 Williamson Rd., 2A**  
**Roanoke, VA 24012**

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## **From the Director, Annette Loschert**

Spring is almost here! Now's the time to start working with your learner(s) to compose and contribute their writings to the 11<sup>th</sup> edition of *Writing from the Heart*. This publication has traditionally debuted at our summer awards ceremony, and the highlight, of course, will be to hear some of our learners read their compositions. Mark June 24<sup>th</sup> on your calendar. This will be our time to celebrate the accomplishments of the year and to honor both our learners and tutors. Summer will be here before you know it! In the meantime, *happy spring!*

## **From the Program Manager, Susie Boxley**

The fiscal year end is four months away. In May, I will be calling and setting up reassessment dates. Remind your learner(s), as the time gets closer, so we can quell the anxiety that testing may bring. I would like to attempt group reassessment sessions again this year. Please talk with your learner(s) about this idea as we get closer to May. Enjoy the spring season. P. S. I am striving for 100% of my tutors to report their instructional hours for January/February.

## **From the Adult Education Programs Coordinator, Bill Van Velzer**

In keeping with the idea that "brevity is the soul of wit," my greeting to you this month contains but this simple quote from one of the modern world's most prolific observers of the human condition:

*"Not the maker of plans and promises, but rather the one who offers faithful service in small matters. This is the person who is most likely to achieve what is good and lasting."*

Johann Wolfgang Von Goethe

Thank you to our faithful and consistent volunteer tutors, board members and "mission specialists" who make Literacy Volunteers what it is.