

WORDSWORTH

A Newsletter for Literacy Volunteers of Roanoke Valley

November-December 2003 | 5002 Williamson Road, Roanoke, Virginia 24012 | (540) 265-9339 | FAX 265-4814 | Web: www.lvarv.org

Training Schedule

ESOL Tutor Training

Tuesdays, 6-9pm
November 4, 11, 18, December 2,
& 9th

Basic Literacy Tutor Training

Thursdays, 6-9pm
November 6, 13, 20, December 4,
& 11th

Advanced Literacy Training for GED Preparation

6-9pm
Monday, November 17,
Wednesday, November 19, and
Monday 24th

Refer to the article on the Governor's Initiatives to the right. Please call Jack at 265-9339 if you'd like to attend this workshop.

Tutor Training Follow-ups

6-8 pm
ESOL-Thursday, November 20th
BL-Tuesday, December 2nd

ESOL Brown Bag Lunch

11:30 am
Friday, November 7th

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

Email Addresses

Annette Loschert: annette@lvarv.org
Susie Boxley: susie@lvarv.org
Bill Van Velzer: bill@lvarv.org
Jack Spraker: jack@lvarv.org

The Learning Center will be closed Thursday, November 27th and Friday, November 28th for Thanksgiving.

Governor's Initiatives Create New Opportunities for Literacy Volunteers of Roanoke Valley

On October 8th, Governor Warner announced two new initiatives for adult education in the state. These two initiatives, to double the number of GED certificates and to create a Career Readiness Certificate, should interest Literacy Volunteers tutors and supporters. According to the 2000 census, twenty-four percent of Roanoke City adults over the age of twenty-five lack a high school diploma or an equivalent like the GED certificate. Many of these adults come to Literacy Volunteers for help. Without a high school diploma, people find themselves stuck in dead-end jobs or denied access to educational opportunities for self-improvement or enhanced employability. Improving literacy skills is an essential part of preparing for the GED Tests, and since the new Career Readiness Certificate, which is in the early stages of development, will probably focus on mid-level proficiency in reading, writing, locating information, and math, improving literacy skills will also enable adult learners to obtain this "portable credential." Literacy Volunteers of Roanoke Valley plans to assist in making both of these initiatives succeed.

Last year, we developed a new advanced training workshop for tutors who either work with or wanted to work with learners who plan to take the General Educational Development (GED) Tests. In the past, Literacy Volunteers targeted learners from emergent readers to fifth-grade level; however, a recent trend has brought more advanced learners into the program, and many of these learners want to prepare for the GED. Although our basic literacy training serves our tutors well for teaching reading and writing skills to adults at a variety of levels, we decided that a workshop that focused on applying these basic techniques to GED preparation would be very useful to our tutors and their learners. Coming back for nine more hours of tutor training on top of the eighteen-hour initial training, ten tutors participated, one of whom has already shepherded her learner successfully through tests. We've scheduled the next **Advanced Literacy Training for GED Prep Workshop** for November 17, 19, & 24 from 6 'til 9 pm at the learning center. Interested tutors should call **Jack** at 265-9339.

"Initiatives" continued on the next page

Literacy Volunteers of Roanoke Valley

Holiday Book Sale

Saturday, November 29th from 10 am until 6 pm
at Tanglewood Mall next to TJ Maxx

New Hardcover Books Just \$3 Plus Bonus Book Giveaways

All proceeds benefit Literacy Volunteers, so come out and shop for the book lovers on your gift list.

Thank you, donors

Mr. and Mrs. William Beasley
Mr. and Mrs. Caldwell Butler
– in honor of Nancy Chapin
Dee Copenhaver
Lewis Crossgrove
Walter and Libby Dungan
Foundation for Roanoke Valley–
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Eva Jarose
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Carolyn Riddleberger
The Roanoke Times
Mrs. Edward B. Smith
Eldora M. Steinle
United Way
VA Department of Education
Wal-Mart Foundation

Tutor Anniversary for November- December

ESOL Five-year Anniversary

Kathy Seeley

Congratulations, Kathy!!

Proliteracy Annual Conference “A Celebration of Literacy”

Three staff members, Annette Loschert, Susie Boxley, and Bill Van Velzer, will attend this conference in Washington DC from November 14-17. The conference will offer an opportunity for staff to glean ideas from other programs and participate in invaluable workshops. To learn more about the conference and our parent organization, visit their Web site.

www.proliteracy.org



“Initiatives” continued from previous page

The governor’s second initiative, the Career Readiness Certificate, will create a new possibility for Literacy Volunteers of Roanoke Valley to use its forces to improve individual lives as well as the Roanoke area. This “portable credential” will also give adult learners in our programs an opportunity to develop skills and then prove those skills to current or potential employers. Many of our adult Basic Literacy learners will have to struggle a long time, often years, to obtain the GED credential, and most of our English-for-Speakers-of-Other-Language learners have educational credentials from their native countries but need to show English proficiency. Both of these groups could benefit from a credential that allows them to demonstrate mid-level skills in reading for information, applied math, writing, and locating information to potential employers.

Although the state hasn’t worked out the specifics of the Career Readiness Certificate, the governor will look to other states like Michigan, Kentucky, and Louisiana to help in the development of this credential. In fact, this past June, Governor Warner appointed Dr. Barbara Bolin as the first Workforce Development Coordinator in Virginia. Dr. Bolin comes to Virginia from Michigan where she worked as the Director of the Department of Career Development. In this role, she helped to develop Michigan’s Career Readiness Certificate. According to Michigan’s Web site, to obtain the certificate, learners have to demonstrate certain mid-level proficiencies, e.g., to recognize the application of technical terms, apply instructions to new situations, summarize and compare information in charts and graphs, write clear messages, which may include minor errors that don’t compromise the message, etc.

We already train our volunteer tutors to tackle these kinds of intermediate literacy skills, so however the certificate shakes out in Virginia, again Literacy Volunteers of Roanoke Valley stands ready to help. We believe strongly in the potential of the adults who come to us for help. Our tutors work diligently to help learners maximize this potential. In doing this, tutors improve people’s lives one person at a time. However, collectively these volunteers battle the problem of illiteracy in this area. Their efforts reverberate through the community, creating not only stronger economic potential but also stronger individual potential to fulfill the American dream. In this regard, we will assist the governor in these new educational initiatives. We are excited about the prospects that they represent for the Roanoke Valley.

Literacy Volunteers to be Represented at Valley Book Festival

The City of Roanoke Public Library System will be hosting its second annual Valley Book Festival – A Day for Readers and Writers – on November 15, 2003 at the Main Branch Library located on 706 South Jefferson Street. The Book Festival will be held from 8:00am - 6:00 pm and will feature authors from Southwest Virginia. In addition, the Library will be hosting an opening reception for the Book Festival on November 14th from 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm.

The event is free and open to the public. The festival program, created to be of interest to children, families, and adults, will feature topics such as genealogy and local history, fiction, non-fiction, poetry, and environmental studies. Noted authors like Sharyn McCrumb and Katherine Soniat will give readings. Call the library at 853-2785 for more information on the festival.

Literacy Volunteers will have a session on literacy issues at 1:30 pm. We will use our session to inform festival participants on literacy issues generally and how specifically our program uses volunteer efforts to combat the problem. If you’re interested in sharing your experience as a tutor, please call **Jack** at 265-9339.

Holiday Shopping Inexpensive and Easy at the Learning Center

When you're rushing around madly this holiday season, don't forget that we have new hardcover bestsellers at our learning center for only \$3. We also have some older, new hardcovers for only \$1. Why pay bookstore prices and fight the crowds in the mall when you can pay a quick visit to the center and leave with your shopping done for the book lovers on your list? With the latest titles available from authors like Dean Koontz, John Stanford, Mary Higgins Clark, and many more, why go anywhere else? Well, unless it's to the Holiday Book Sale at Tanglewood Mall on November 29th. Call 265-9339 for the complete list of titles or visit our Web site at www.lvarv.org.

Welcome Aboard to New Tutors

We'd like to say thank you and welcome aboard to the new tutors who finished training in October. The new Basic Literacy tutors are **Emily Watkins, Linda Walker, Nancy Sweeney, Paul McLaughlin, and Audrey Benda**. The new ESOL tutors are **Becky Schoener, Rick Terrell, Karen Bermudez, Charlotte Hines, Joy Davis, Margaret Walters, Peggy Wade, Carol King and Carl Robertson**. Congratulations to all!

Groups Work by ESOL Tutor, Becky Schoener

When I took the tutor training workshop, I had hoped for a small group, and to my extreme delight, I was assigned a group of four learners. In less than one class the four had turned into six. The following class I had eight. Then we, as a group have elected to meet twice a week, instead of once. Does this sound exciting? Well, it is. And clearly there is a need for class time for these learners.

For me, so far, group work has been very rewarding. And I'm enjoying every minute of it. My preparation time for the group is about the same as what it would have been for one learner, I just need to run off more copies. For stimulation, you can't surpass teaching a small group. My students are very understanding and patient with each other, and they are very eager to interact. Today, I brought two rubber balls and tossed them to the learners whose turn it was to respond to questions or drills. Also, I brought four old telephones and passed them around for phone simulated dialogues. As a group we are very pleased when the whole group gets a concept and we clap. We also laugh a lot. If you're thinking of taking a small group, I recommend it.

ESOL Miscellany by Susie Boxley

ESOL-Brown Bag Luncheon What a great success.- Thank you to all BYOLers! The first luncheon was a great success. The following tutors attended: **Nancy Steinweg, Ginny Craig, Pam Reilly, Al Brown, Joe Casselles, Clara Geist, Karen Recknor, Carol Sheahan, John Divers**, and me. We discussed curriculum favorites, pronunciation techniques, web sites, EL/Civics, and political issues facing adult education today. We all had a good time, and I look forward to more of the same.

Please join us in November. **No RSVP's, do BYOL**, just come and share in tutoring fellowship. The first **Friday** of each month **November 7 at 11:30**, here at the LVRV office conference room.

What's new in the office? Bill Van Velzer and I have been collaborating on restructuring and expanding our ESOL program. We have team taught an EL/Civics in the daytime on Wednesdays, and team trained tutors in the evening on Thursdays. I highly recommend a visit to watch Bill in action. He is a dynamic teacher who is successful in integrating relevant life skills and grammar, and making them applicable right away. His night class is open for observation on Monday and Wednesday nights through the 12th of November.

To all Tutors: Do you assess your learner at the end of each lesson? Do you assess whether the learner can apply the skill or skills you have been working on? Can you determine the percentage of learning that took place in today's lesson? Try asking yourself if you and your learner know where you are going? Where you are on that path? And when you get there, can you and your learner look back and see where you have been? **That is the stuff motivation is made of!** Make the progress visual, measurable, and meaningful so you both can marvel at the accomplishments.

A Night in Cuba!

The Roanoke Valley Cultural Exchange will hold a gala celebration of Cuban culture and food on Friday, November 21st at Virginia Western Community College's Student Center at 6 pm. Don't miss the authentic Cuban food and dancing.

There's a suggested contribution of \$10. Seating will be limited so call 387-2782 or email admin@rvce.org to make reservations.

Literacy Volunteers of Roanoke Valley
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From the Director, Annette Loschert

I don't need to tell you what an excellent, dedicated staff we have here at LVRV. Jack, Susie, Bill and Karin make a great team. They all have a passion for the work that they do and a commitment to the organization and its mission that is second to none. It shows in the quality of their work with learners and tutors alike. Join me in thanking them for being who they are!

And you tutors know how grateful we are to you for making this place tick. Without you, we simply could not provide the valuable care and service that our learners receive, not to mention all the other ways in which your volunteer service impacts our organization. I'd like to extend a special thank you to those of you who have served in special ways during the past two months. If you haven't noticed, we've cleaned house, and our Learning Center has a fresh coat of paint thanks to **Susie Boxley, Larry Loschert, Ralph and Jo Wohlford, Karin Warpula, Tricia Traubert** and **Andy Keen**. And thanks to **Jack Spraker** who made multiple trips to the dumpster!

Thanks also to **Kevin Unrath, Edna Whittier, Barb Carraher,** and **Susie Boxley** who joined us downtown for our last duty night at First Fridays at Five on September 19th. Through your efforts and the efforts of our earlier volunteers, we will share in the profits as a designated charity this year.

Together we can do great things! Happy Thanksgiving!

From the ESOL Coordinator, Susie Boxley

I have some goals of my own to share. I strive for 100% of my tutors reporting their hours. You all are proud of what you do, so by all means let me brag on you to the funders. Other goals of mine are to generate new tutor recruitment through tutor referral, and renew and energize my current tutors. I think in-services and prompt responses to your needs are a good place for me to start. Usually craftsmen and women, like yourselves, want the tool box full, so if your tools are tired or low, come in and we can work on a new set for you.

From the Basic Literacy Coordinator, Jack Spraker

In Basic Literacy Tutor Training, we have a discussion in the first session on the qualities of effective tutors. "Flexibility" is a characteristic that groups always throw out. Another is "prepared." Having well-prepared tutors requires effective training. Tutors who have flexibility and the desire to do the best they can with their learners need on-going training. The Basic Literacy Program's success depends on enhancements to current basic training while we continue to develop advanced training like the Advanced Literacy Training for GED Prep workshop that's coming up this month. We need to prepare as a group to work effectively to serve our learners. I appreciate the flexibility and commitment that tutors show when they return for in-services and special training. If you're interested in November's workshop, please call me at 265-9339 now ✍