



LITERACY FOR LIFE

“Once you learn to read, you will be forever free.” – Frederick Douglass

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NATIONAL ASSESSMENT OF ADULT LITERACY RELEASED

Just before the holidays, in December, there were some *sad tidings*. The National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL) from 2003 was released. The conservative estimate published was that 11 million Americans are non-literate in English. But the organization ProLiteracy looks at the NAAL data and estimates there are 30 million adults in the US with “extremely marginal literacy skills” and another 63 million having only the “most basic” skills. If the ProLiteracy estimates are correct, 1 American in 3 fails to rise above a primitive literacy level.

On the heels of the NAAL report, the National Association of Manufacturers released a study in which 83% of participating companies cited shortages of qualified workers. More than a third of these reported that “their current workforce has insufficient reading, writing, and communication skills to do their jobs”.

These reports make clear that we should all work to raise awareness of the problem of illiteracy in our nation. Moreover we should support and advocate for support – both public and private – of BRLC and its sister organizations.

[For a copy of the NAAL go to www.nces.ed.gov/naal.]

ACCREDITATION – AND PRAISE!

Here’s the good news! BRLC has just received word that the Accreditation Review Panel of ProLiteracy America has voted to approve its accreditation. Of course nothing less was expected; but not so expected were the comments that accompanied the notification. In this notification we read that “the members (of the review panel) were very impressed” with our organization. And, better yet, they are “very proud to have” BRLC “as a leader in our network”.

Illiteracy as described by Carl Sagan:

The gears of poverty, ignorance, hopelessness and low self-esteem interact to create a kind of perpetual failure that grinds down dreams from generation to generation. We all bear the cost of keeping it running. Illiteracy is its linchpin.

McNutt Service Group Wins BRLC SPELLING BEE

On Friday evening, April 7, ten teams from businesses and organizations around the county showcased their spelling talent for a great cause.

Our Master of Ceremonies for the evening was the inimitable and hilarious Scott Treadway from Flat Rock Playhouse. Our Enunciator was the erudite and distinguished Dr. Stephen Page, Superintendent of Henderson County Public Schools. The evening started with a dinner and silent auction, then the real fun began as the teams vied for the coveted “Spelby Award.”

After a hard fought competition, the winners were Scarlett Goodman and Karen Putnam, the McNutt Spellers, representing McNutt Service Group. In her acceptance speech, Scarlett shared their reasons for joining in the competition to support BRLC: her uncle. A life long non-reader, he became a BRLC student several years ago and this Christmas the family received their first ever Christmas cards from him.

This most successful Spelling Bee ever netted \$6500.00 for the Council and Chairwoman Lee Smith is already expanding plans for next year’s gala event!

BMW CHARITY PRO-AM TICKETS ON SALE

Blue Ridge Literacy Council has again been selected as a beneficiary of the BMW Charity Pro-Am Golf Tournament played April 27- 30 at The Cliffs at Walnut Cove in Asheville and The Cliffs Valley and The Cliffs at Keowee Vineyards in South Carolina. Patron tickets for \$25 admit you to all four days at all three courses. We receive the full \$25 for every ticket we sell.

Amateurs and other celebrities will be grouped with Nationwide PGA Tour professionals. This year’s players include Wayne Gretzky, Catherine Bell, Gary Player, Kevin Costner, Kurt Russell, Jennifer Mills, Ben Wright, and many others. This year there is an added attraction--Kevin Costner will be premiering his new band (he’s lead singer) in a free concert open to all volunteers and ticket holders. Call us to purchase tickets.

Literacy For Life

the newsletter of:

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Monday thru Friday
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From The Desk of the Director

I want to encourage you to take advantage of one or both great in-service trainings we are having. Both will be conducted by Marlene Martin who calls these "playshops" so you can be sure they will be hands on activity oriented experiences that you can turn around and use immediately.

TREASURE MAP – Thursday, April 27 – 6:00 to 8:30 PM

Help your students visualize and attain their goals. In this hands-on workshop you will complete your own map and learn to help your student do the same.

INSPIRED LEARNING – Wednesday, May 10 – 1:00 to 4:30 PM

Help your student take responsibility for his or her own learning. Learn to set up a class environment that facilitates a learning experience where the emphasis is on students "learning," not on teachers "teaching". The Inspired Learning Model™ holds that everyone has the capability to learn – it's just waiting to be re-discovered, re-ignited and expressed.

I really hope you will take advantage of these; the Inspired Learning Workshop is an opportunity for us to get the same training that will be presented nationally at the ProLiteracy Conference later this year – what a deal!

Sincerely, *Diane*

STUDENTS WITH 100+ HOURS IN 2005

Saul Colin-Mondragon 106, Carmen Davila-Gomez, 151, Salvador Fabian 109, Raymond Garcia 107, Rosa Gutierrez 117, Isaac Hernandez 203, Silvia Hernandez 102, Pedro Hernandez-Lara 136, David Nava 112, Martha Olvera-Padilla 112, Judith Orihuela 113, Hugo Ortega 126, Eva Patino-Lara 105, Guillermina Patino-Lara 107, K. 121, Victor Quebrado 116, Gary Reese 103, Veronica Santos 126, Ana Serrano 127, Barbara Taylor 119, Brandon Trivette 113, PW 112, Santiago Zamudio-Morales 125

MANY TUTORS VOLUNTEER 100+ HOURS IN 2005

In 2005 there were 74 tutors who gave more than 100 hours of instruction to their students and 9 who gave more than 200 hours. Topping even that were Karen Ashby, Polly Heaton, Howard Perley, Glenn Rodgers, Joyce Roth, Gloria Wagner, and Roxanna White who each volunteered more than 300 hours!

I would Like To:

- Learn more about volunteering.
 Make a tax-deductible contribution of _____ (amount).

[If not using a credit card omit the first two items below.]

Credit card type and number _____

Signature _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (Home) _____ (Work) _____

Please clip and return to: Blue Ridge Literacy Council, Inc.
P. O. Box 1728
Hendersonville, NC 28793

JOINT LITERACY PROGRAM IN SIXTH YEAR

On Tuesday and Thursday mornings the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Hall on Kanuga is a beehive of activity. There, up to nine Literacy Council tutors and ten ESL students work while a sitter looks after the students' younger children. This activity is the outward face of a thriving program which began in 2000, according to Roxana White, the BRLC coordinator of the program as well as an active tutor. In 1999 Roxana and four other BRLC tutors found themselves, by chance, doing the same sort of ESL tutoring in the same place, at the same time. After about a year of this common, but individual, effort Roxana called the tutors together to formalize a group program which today is supported by the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Blue Ridge Literacy Council, and WCCA/Head Start.



The UU Group Christmas Party

This ESL tutor program serves mainly young women who have children in the Head Start program, but not exclusively as is explained below. Ms. Patricia Jimenez, WCCA/Head Start social worker, identifies from among her clients mothers who wish to learn English, refers them to the program, and keeps a waiting list of potential students. And, a crucial element of the program, she uses her agency van to shuttle those mothers lacking transportation to and from the Unitarian Fellowship Hall. (Once they are in the ESL program, mothers whose children age out of Head Start may remain but must provide their own transportation.) The Unitarian Universalist Fellowship provides space and \$800 per year to pay for a sitter for younger children of the students. BRLC of course provides the training for tutors along with the books, etc. needed for the program.

Aside from Roxana White, the only tutor remaining of the original five is Rusty Breeding. Rusty and her student Maria Martinez are perhaps representative of those currently (and formerly) involved in the program. Ms. Breeding says she liked learning a foreign language herself, and had studied Spanish. So the idea of tutoring

Spanish speakers appealed to her. Although most of the tutors are members of the Fellowship, she is not, but she lives nearby and finds her efforts both pleasant and worthwhile. Maria has three children, one in first grade, one in Head Start, and one, Jacqueline, who comes to class with her. She is from Guanajuato, Mexico and has been in Hendersonville for 7 years. She has been with the ESL program since September of 2004 and is making great progress.



Rusty Breeding with Student Maria Martinez, and Jacqueline

Tutors currently active in the program are: Rusty Breeding, Suzy Camp-Goodman, Barbara Johanson, Marion Knybel, Kay Nelson, Louisa Murray, Helen Struve, and Roxana White. Currently active students with children in Head Start are: Maria Alvarez, Maria Calvillo, Maricela Chavero, Vanessa Kuhnagel, Maria Martinez, Susana Velazquez, and Maricarmen Visoso. Currently the only student with the program whose children are no longer in Head Start is Martha Lopez.



Maria and Jacqueline

TUTOR TIP

Backward Buildup

Some sentences are just too long for English-as-a-second-language students to repeat correctly the first time. They may have no problem at the beginning but have trouble near the end. The backward buildup technique for repeating long sentences provides more practice where the problems are - at the end.

In the following sentence, “*We’re going to the supermarket to buy meat and vegetables for dinner*”, students often repeat the first two phrases correctly but stumble on the third. And they usually can’t remember the fourth.

To use the backward buildup technique, first divide the sentence into phrases: “*We’re going*” / “*to the supermarket*” / “*to buy meat and vegetables*” / “*for dinner*”.

Start on the last phrase, proceeding backward from there.

Use a natural stress and intonation pattern for each phrase.

Tutor: for dinner

Student: for dinner

Tutor: to buy meat and vegetables for dinner

Student: to buy meat and vegetables for dinner

Tutor: to the supermarket to buy meat and vegetables for dinner

Student: to the supermarket to buy meat and vegetables for dinner

Tutor: We’re going to the supermarket to buy meat and vegetables for dinner.

Student: We’re going to the supermarket to buy meat and vegetables for dinner.

This technique can be used with lower-level students who have trouble with shorter sentences, but it is particularly helpful as students begin to work with longer sentences.

[Reprinted from *LitScape Winter 2006*]

Student Book Achievements

Janette Alejandro; Gene Carman; *Laubach Way to English 1*; **Troy Allen;** Bob Walker; *Voyager 3*; **Maria Alvarez;** Marion Knybel; *Laubach Way to English 2*; **Salvador Avalos;** Jean Terry; *Stand Out Basic*; **Chad Beddingfield;** Lee Smith; *Voyager 1*; **Nicolas Bolaños;** Stan Leon; *Laubach Way to English 1*; **Ginny Brake;** P.J. Giese; *Patterns in Spelling 1*; **Rosa Carbajal;** Barb Johnson; *LifePrints Literacy*; *Laubach Way to English 1*; **Tim Case;** Ramsay Lawson; *Wilson 2 and Wilson 3*; **Carlos Chavela;** Barbara Hodik; *Voyager 4*; **Maricela Chavero;** Barbara Johanson; *LifePrints Literacy*; **Mireya Chipol;** Jane DeMartini; *Voyager Foundation*; **Patricia Guevara;** Diane Emon; *Voyager 1*; **Dora Hernandez;** Anita Penner; *Stories Plus*; **Cristina Jaimes;** Laura Sexton; *Voyager 4*; **Vanessa Kuhnagel;** Louisa Murray; *Laubach Way to English 1*; **Martha Lopez;** Roxana White; *Laubach Way to English 1*; **Miguel Nolasco;** Roxana White; *Voyager 3*; **Nadia Oviedo;** Marian Gowan; *Voyager 5*; **Claudia Quintero;** Linda Burright; *Stand Out Basic*; **Miguel Quintero;** Linda Burright; *Stand Out Basic*; **Eloy Rosas;** Pierre Hart; *Laubach Way to English 1*; **Erika Sandoval;** Diane Rosborough; *Laubach Way to English 1*; **Barbara Taylor;** Mary Ellen Makowski; *Wilson 7*; **Mary Carmen Visoso;** Helen Struve; *LifePrints Literacy*; **Santiago Zamudio;** Hans Iwen; *Voyager 8*