

Tutor Talk

January 2009

E-mail Diane at dsnell@racineliteracy.com

Racine Literacy Council

734 Lake Avenue

Racine, WI 53403

(262) 632-9495

www.racineliteracy.com

NEW TUTORS

Welcome to the following people who have become tutors since July 2008:

Les Fregien, Mary Fregien, Jamie Gaa, Brittany Guuynn, Pat Hall, Jim Haroldson, John Hnilicki, Jerry Hutkowski, Alma Juarez, Wendy Killberg, Cara Lewis, Mary Etta McLane, Jane Nixa, Dolores McMahan, Matt Mulready, Jessica Phan, Kate Prindl, Jackie Reich, Sally Richardson, Brittany Shimek, Chuck Snyder, Lisa Van Koningsveld, Lillian Wilk, and Sarah Wright. Also attending tutor training was **Ellen Clipsham**, the Thursday night ESL class teacher.

LIFE'S VOYAGES—VOLUME 7

Would you like to add an interesting new dimension to your tutoring sessions? Would your student like to have an opportunity to share his/her thoughts with others? Would your student like to be a published author? For the seventh year, RLC will publish a book of student writings. We also encourage students to submit artwork for the cover. Completed stories should be submitted to Diane by April 17. The publishing party will be in June. Details will follow.

You'll find copies of previous volumes of Life's Voyages in the RLC and Racine and Lakeshore Public Libraries. Many teams use this book as one of their readers. Check them out!

TUTOR TIP

More Learner Talk, Less Tutor Talk

Whenever possible try to design activities that enable ESL learners to do most of the talking in class. Although there will be times when you, as the tutor, have to explain or clarify, it is important to give learners opportunities to do most of the talking. They need to be able to ask as well as answer questions.

Keep a log of how much you talk and how much your learner talks as well as which strategies were successful and which weren't.

CELTIC NIGHT FOR LITERACY

Tutors are invited to attend the Racine Literacy Council's (RLC) annual Celtic Night for Literacy. Current, active tutors who participate in the *Parade of the Tutors* at the beginning of the concert will be given one ticket FREE. Please sign up at the Front Desk at RLC or call 262-634-9495 or email Gloria at rlc@racineliteracy.com.

This is the RLC major fund raiser for the organization's Adult Literacy Program. The event, now in its 15th year, will be held on Saturday March 14, at Memorial Hall in Racine. This is a great night of Celtic music, dance, food and the Guinness Bar. Make your plans now to see two great Celtic musical groups: **Bua** from Chicago and **C'e** from Milwaukee. The Caledonian Scottish Dancers will also perform. A special feature this year is the Celtic Cultural Display with the star attraction a replica of the Famous "Irish Book of Kells".

Tickets are now on sale at the front desk at RLC. Advanced concert ticket prices are \$18, youth (6 – 18) are \$10 each, and seniors (62 or older) are \$15 each. Individual tickets for seating at a table are \$20. A table for eight are \$150 apiece. Doors open at five p.m. If you'd like to participate in the "Parade of the Tutor", please sign up with Gloria.

The RLC will also have a "float" in the Racine St. Patrick's Day parade on Saturday, March 14, the same day as Celtic Night for Literacy. Please join us as we travel down Main Street.



NEW CITIZENSHIP CLASS

Two citizenship classes will begin in early February. One will be offered at RLC on Wednesday evenings from 6:00-8:00 p.m. and the other on Monday mornings from 10:00-noon. The classes are taught in English and no childcare is available.

For details, contact Diane (dsnell@racineliteracy.com).



TUTOR MENTORS

We have a group of experienced tutors who have volunteered to support new or experienced tutors who may have questions or who would like some feedback from a peer. The purpose of the tutor mentor program is to provide RLC tutors with an informal support system in addition to the formal support provided by the Education Coordinators. The tutor mentors contact the new tutors during the first month of tutoring and thereafter as needed. They help tutors become more familiar with RLC resources, answer questions, and offer suggestions for instructional approaches. Any tutor may call a mentor to ask questions or to exchange ideas. Most contact will be by phone or email, so feel free to contact a mentor regardless of where you live.

These are the current RLC tutor mentors. If you would like to contact a mentor, please contact Diane.

ESL

Joyce Anderson
Geri Connelly
Colleen Dorsey
Vicki Signorin
Sharon Devine
Vivien Stetler
Jean Makovsky

Basic

Bev Sorenson
Lorrie Peterson
Serge Logan
Evelyn Christensen

Both

Kathy Bardenhagen

Basic and Math

Melwyn Turner

Coming soon

Mentors in western Racine County

Thanks to all our tutor mentors who so willing give extra time by participating in the tutor mentor program **AND** to Mona Swan, who is coordinating the Mentoring Program.



TUTOR INSERVICE—JANUARY 13 BAG OF TRICKS FOR THE ESL TUTOR

by: Dave "EL Gato" Nelson

This evening 16 eager tutors braved the cold and snow to learn some new ideas on how to make our student's learning experience more exciting and meaningful. And it was we, who had that experience, thanks to the dynamic presentations of Cheryl Mooney, our instructor. Ideas ranged from having the student ask questions with yes/no answers to discover the relevance of 5 words the tutor supplies regarding "My World", as an icebreaker, to having the student keep a log in which he/she can reflect on what was learned in the just completed session. Templates were provided for learning word meanings, including definitions, synonyms, opposites and rhyming words, their use in a sentence and Story Maps for understanding the sequence of events occurring in a story. And last but not least, the use of exaggerated body language and gestures to help the student learn and remember the meanings of new words, reinforced by a skit acted out by several tutors who told the story about a family of mice and a cat, in Spanish, to their classmates to conclude a very worthwhile tutor in-service.

Editor's note: To find out why Dave Nelson is "el Gato" or if you have ideas for in-services, please contact Diane.

FREE TAX HELP

The Racine Literacy Council and AARP have again teamed up to offer free tax preparation for low/middle income and elderly taxpayers. The service begins February 3 and will take place on Tuesday mornings at RLC. Appointments can be made through April 10. Let your students know that these services are available. The services are available in English and Spanish. The forms will be prepared by computer and will be e-filed. Call Gloria at 632-9495 or ask at the front desk to schedule an appointment.



The Burlington location will be at Love, Inc. (480 S. Pine) on Fridays by appointment. Call Corrine at 763-6226 or stop at the reception desk for an appointment in Burlington.

Filers should bring a copy of last year's tax form and all income statements. First time filers are welcome. ITIN application forms will be filed for those filers without a social security number. Richard Goetsch is the coordinator of these programs.

STATISTICS JULY 1—DECEMBER 2008

Learners served: 274

Number of learners who met goals:

Improve literacy skills and/or learn English: 64

Take responsibility for self & family: 47

Take civic responsibility: 38

Developed skills for employment: 29

Program/tutoring sites: RLC, Siena Center, and Our Savior Lutheran Church-Racine. Tutoring also takes place at the Burlington, Waterford, Graham (Union Grove), and Racine Public Libraries. Classes are held at RLC, Our Savior Lutheran Church-Racine, and St. Charles Catholic Church-Burlington. Tutors also work at 3 correctional facilities.

Number of learners in special topics (tutoring or small groups):

Citizenship: 9

Driver's education (knowledge test): 25

Conversation: 6

MONTHLY CALENDAR REPORT

Thanks to everyone who regularly gives us their Monthly Reports. Not only do we need to know the amount of time you spend with your learner and the amount of time you spend preparing your lessons, we also need to know what life-skill goals your student is pursuing and when he/she meets those goals. This information is used by our funders to evaluate our program.

If you don't meet at RLC, please call, U.S. mail, or email your monthly reports to your Education Coordinator so your learner's goals can be included in our year-end report.

OTHER ...

- We've been requested to offer a citizenship class in Burlington. Is anyone interested in teaching it?
- Please remind your ESL learner (low intermediate or above) about the conversation group offered at RLC on Thursdays at 7 p.m. Let Diane know if your learner is interested so we can contact him/her if the group is cancelled on any given day. Is anyone interested in trying to set up a conversation group in western Racine County?
- Coming soon to RLC ... the Networked version of Rosetta Stone. No more missing CDs!

ON-LINE RESOURCES

Check out these free online resources and give us your feedback.

Instructional Support

GCFLearnFree.org (updated) is a free online training website that provides learning opportunities for people so they can acquire the skills they need to succeed. Learners can select lessons from these three areas: Everyday Life, Basic Math, or Computer Training. Everyday Life provides interactive learning experiences to build the skills and confidence needed to function in the world today. The interactive lessons are not intended to teach vocabulary and reading skills, but rather to provide learners with a safe environment where they can practice new skills without real-world consequences and the fear of failure. Basic Math helps learners build math and money skills. Learners can move at their own pace in the Computer Training area to learn Word, Excel, etc.

Dave's ESL Café (www.eslcafe.com) has exercises, tutoring suggestions from teachers and tutors and links to many other ESL sites. Since it is free, it has started accepting ads, so when you log on, check the menu to the left of the screen.

<http://www.makebeliefscomix.com/> (create dialogs with your learner in a comic book format.)

Student instruction

<http://www.USALearns.org> is a free Rosetta Stone-like program that began as a project of the U.S. Department of Education. The idea is that learners can use this program on their own. The learner can select instructions in English or Spanish so they understand what to do.

Professional Development

Verizon provides free online courses for tutors. The website is <http://www.thinkfinity.org/home.aspx>. Click on "free online courses" listed under the orange Thinkfinity Literacy Network Heading. Follow the directions to enroll in a course. Most of the courses take an hour or less to complete and you do not have to finish in one sitting.

An excellent article entitled "Communication Strategies for All Classrooms: Focusing on English Language Learners and Students with Learning Disabilities" can be read at www.ldonline.org/article/19260. The article makes some suggestion for making your tutoring sessions more inviting for all students who have difficulties with language.

These resources can be accessed at home, at the Racine or Lakeshore Public Libraries, or at RLC. All RLC student computers are now connected to the Internet.



Racine Literacy Council
734 Lake Avenue
Racine, WI 53403

Upcoming Events

Beginning February 2—Citizenship Class 10-noon

Beginning February 4—Citizenship Class 6-8 pm

February 7, 14, 21—Saturday Tutor Training at RLC

March 10—All Tutor Reunion

March 14—Celtic Night for Literacy

April 10—RLC Closed; reopen April 13

April 17—Deadline to submit stories for Life's Voyages-7

May 25—RLC Closed; reopen May 26

June ??? - Life's Voyages Publishing Party

September 7—RLC Closed; reopen September 8

September 15—Volunteer Recognition Evening



United Way
of Racine County
Partner Provider