

Literacy of NNY St. Lawrence County

Newsletter
Winter Spring
2008

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Hello from Bobby and Ann

Greetings - Literacy of Northern NY tutors,

A belated Happy New Year wish to you. We are hoping to stay in touch with you more consistently this year beginning with this newsletter. Please do read it, and let us know if you have any questions or comments about anything you've read. Many thanks to you for your work in support of adult literacy! You really are helping to make a difference, and what you do is greatly appreciated.

Anne Mazzotta and Bobby Gordon

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You are invited ...

You and your student are cordially invited to our annual "Recognition Celebration". This is a time for tutors and students to get together and celebrate their progress and achievements. It will be held on Saturday morning, February 9 from 9:30 - 11:30 in the Community Meeting Room above the Potsdam Police station and Rescue Squad. In past years, those who've attended have enjoyed spending time with others who are involved with the literacy program and it's a time for sharing and recognizing how everyone benefits from the

tutoring experience. If you need directions to locate the room, just let us know. Please try to come and encourage your student to attend as well. We have had a few students with small children who asked if they could bring those little ones and that is fine. It just seems to add to the fun. Light refreshments will be served. Please RSVP by February 2 so we will know how many of you to expect. Our email address is lvastlaw@hotmail.com and our phone number is 265-0194. We hope to see you ALL there!

Auction results ...

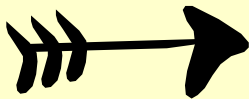
We tried a new variety of fundraising in November, a silent auction. Pictures were posted on the web and we held the actual auction on a Saturday. We would like to extend our sincere thanks to Memory Lane in Massena, Sunfeather Soaps, Willow Tree Florist, The Greenhouse, local artists Joan Upham and Leon Le Beau, and others for contributing so many items. Also, we want to thank tutors and others who gave items from their homes, and tutor Kathy Curro for her cash donation. The auction raised \$414.00.

*"Thank you to our
tutors ... We could
not do what we do
without their
dedication!"*

Barbara Gordon

Upcoming Events

- ◆ Recognition
Celebration



Important Message about Funding ...

We receive Adult Literacy Education (ALE) funding from NY State to support our program. The funds come from the Federal government. It appears that there are plans to decrease the amount of money to be given to adult literacy programs and it is very important for us to let legislators at various levels of government know that the money is being used to provide vital services. Please consider writing to the following people, asking them to support level funding for adult literacy programs or even to increase the funding.

Assemblywoman Dede Scozzafava
(She's in the NY State government)
93 E. Main St.
Gouverneur, NY 13642

Congressman John McHugh
(He's in the Federal government)
120 Washington St.
Watertown, NY 13601

Ideas to include would be that adults who have poor literacy skills lack the ability to be informed and be active members of their communities; they are unable to obtain and/or retain employment; they are more likely to turn to crime and then be incarcerated; they often are not taxpayers (if they're not employed); and they are among those who receive various forms of public assistance. If funding is cut, programs (like ours) that help these adults acquire the skills they need to become self-supporting and contributing members of their communities, might no longer be available or might have to be curtailed. You might also mention that YOU are a registered voter and that you recognize the importance of adult literacy programs and that you volunteer your time to help adults with

poor literacy skills. You also are inclined to vote for those of your elected representatives who, like you, realize that programs like ours are critical in our democratic society and therefore vote to support these programs.

Finally, it would be appropriate for you to help your student write a brief letter asking these same legislators to continue to vote for legislation which provides funding for adult literacy programs. Students' letters might mention that they are receiving help in improving their skills, and, they could give specific examples of how the tutoring they're receiving is helping them with their daily lives. This might include such things as being able to read to their children, obtain a job or get a promotion, fill out job applications, or whatever is appropriate for you student. If your student has trouble writing, he or she could dictate and you could actually write the letter. You can also help with spelling, grammar, etc. The letter need not be perfect, but, it should show that your student really benefits from your help and would suffer if funding is cut.

We sincerely appreciate the time you and your student spend in writing and sending these letters. The continued existence of Literacy programs may very well be dependent on how loudly and clearly our policy makers in the various levels of government hear what we have to say!

Annual Appeal

Thank you to the following donors
for their generosity:

St. Lawrence County donors:

Janet Gibbs
Carol Lama
Duncan and Lois Cutter
Carol Ann & Walt Kissam
Amy Montpelier
Jutta and Joseph Fitzsimmons
Anne and Dr. Sebastian Mazzotta
Elizabeth "Betty" Bradshaw
Richard Mooers
B.P.O. Elks, Potsdam Lodge
Barbara Evans
John Bursnall
Pamela and Jim Whittet
Edward C. Seymour Post

Total contribution from St.
Lawrence: \$1,325. Overall total for
the three counties: \$3,275

Other Contributors:

Walmart, Ogdensburg
Sweetgrass Foundation
Canton Area Zonta Club
Institute for Ethical Behaviour in
the name of Dr. Harold Hughes

Success Stories ...

D Y - had 2 different tutors. He passed the GED test several months ago and now is taking college courses!

J L - passed the GRE exam. Her SPL level on the Best Plus went from 1 to 5.

P B - passed the course to be a certified nurse's aide. Her score on the Best Plus went from a "4" to a "6".

Y C's Best Plus score went from SPL level 2 to level 5 in about a year's time.

N G entered the program in February with a Best Plus SPL of 0 which means she had no skills in English. In June, she was retested and had an SPL level of 2.

Z G's Best Plus SPL level went from 5 to 8. When she entered the program, she hesitated to say anything in English and now she speaks freely (and WELL) and is very comfortable with this. She has

come to the final session of tutor trainings several times to speak to the trainees about her experiences being a student.

Y P Q reported that he learned vocabulary that helped him in his job at a Chinese restaurant. He also learned about pints and quarts (measurements). His SPL on the Best Plus improved from 0 to 1.

G F improved his reading and was promoted twice in his job. He is now enjoying his reading so much that he's reading John Steinbeck's works.

P P says he can read a menu in the restaurant now and can read signs better than before.



*Certified tutors, St. Lawrence County, (l)
Pam Whittet,
Michele Stone,
September, 2007*

Please send us your Tutoring Hours ...

If you haven't already submitted information about your activities with your student (including the # of hours you worked together and preparation hours) during October, November and December 2007, please do it as soon as possible. We have heard from many of you, but we need to get all active tutors' data collected, so this is just a reminder for those who haven't yet contacted us. You can email us at lvastlaw@hotmail.com, call us 265-0194 or submit information online at www.proliteracy.org

New tutors waiting in the wings ...

We have conducted a tutor training in Gouverneur that should have concluded in mid December. However, due to the crazy weather and then the Holiday season, we postponed several sessions. We now have six new tutors in the Gouverneur area. If you know of an adult who would be interested in services in Gouverneur or anywhere near there, please refer them to us.

Congratulations to the new tutors -

*Jessica Provost, Tabatha Bush, David Douglas,
Gary Spicer, Jill Bristol, and Tanya Lando.*



If you have any writing samples or photos of your students and he or she is agreeable, we can post them on the web page. Ask Bobby for information.

Can you help?



We have a number of students waiting for a tutor and would like to ask you to consider working with a second student (if you are currently working with one) or be matched with one of those who is waiting (if you have been taking a break from tutoring). If you are a snowbird and currently out of the area, PLEASE let us know when you will return so we can contact you at that time and hopefully match you with someone who's anxiously awaiting a tutor. Even

though we trained 16 new tutors in the fall, some of these people awaiting a tutor have been waiting for as long as 5 months, and I really hope we can provide them with services soon. Most are ESOL students and are in the Potsdam area but we also have some basic literacy students in various parts of the County. Please let us know if you would be willing to help!

New books for you to use with your student ...

We have received some new books for you to use with your students. They are specifically designed to help adults improve the skills which are measured on the Test of Adult Basic Education (TABE), which many of our students take as part of our continuing process of evaluation and re-evaluation. We use this test so we can be aware of and

recognize their progress. If your student has taken that test, which is usually a measure of their reading skills, and if you want to help him or her improve skills in specific weak areas, call us and we'll give you information about how you will be able to access the new materials.

Literacy of NNY

We're on the Web!
www.proliteracyyny.org

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RECIPIENT NAME