



Literacy of Northern NY

June 2010

Message from the Executive Director



Rachel has been studying math skills from subtraction on up. Her persistence and good attendance for the past 15 months have paid off. She is much better now at fractions, decimals, and percents and she is now learning about negative numbers. Her goal is to pass the GED so she can get a better paying job.

During our Board of Directors meeting in May, I gave a presentation about the many goals our students have achieved. Our tutors have helped students learn to read recipes so they can make a healthy meal, obtain a driver's permit, get a library card so they can access free books, increase literacy skills so they can get a job, become a U.S. citizen, enter job training, etc.

It is rewarding to see students improve their literacy skills and begin to use them at home. We have one student in her 50s who now reads all the time for pleasure. What a gift that is to give someone who thought she would never learn to read well.

Another student saved her money and purchased a laptop computer with Internet access. With access to the world-wide web, she was highly motivated to improve her reading skills because she was on-line frequently. Besides working with her tutor, this student spent a lot of time in our computer lab reading books we have on our computer. She immersed herself in reading and when she was retested, her reading went up three grade levels. Technology highly motivates some students to learn!

Thanks to all our tutors who work so hard to help their students achieve their literacy goals!

Cecilia Brock

Tutor In-Service Planned for June

There will be a tutor in-service on June 30th, from 11:30 am to 2 pm in the conference room at the Watertown LNNY office. We will be serving pizza and drinks. You are welcome to bring a salad or dessert. **REGISTRATION IS REQUIRED.**

The workshop will have three modules: learning how to tutor basic math skills such as multiplication and division; reading comprehension and fluency; and learning about our new ESOL materials.

You do not have to attend all the modules. This is an opportunity to network, share ideas, and see what's new at LNNY.

Please see the enclosed flyer for more information.

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It's Testing Time for our Students!

The end of June brings us to the close of the fiscal year and with it, the need to have all instructional hours submitted as soon as possible after June 30th. We are busy post-testing all available students and doing the end-of-year student surveys for our statistical reports.

Many of our students have already come in for post-testing and the majority has shown improvement. You will receive the usual e-mail or phone call for your tutoring hours. We are also interested in hearing about any goals your student has achieved.

We have reports to prepare based on the data and this year the requirements have become more stringent. We appreciate your help with this process.

All of you have been wonderful about sending the information via the web page. Many thanks!

Tip

ESOL students love to go on field trips. Try going on a walking tour of Watertown, visiting the Farmer's Market or going to the Jefferson County Historical Society. The zoo at Thompson Park is also a great place to have a lesson.

We are planning another trip to the Wakefield Apiary in the fall.

Building Reading and Vocabulary Skills

Adults who are mid-level readers and have spent years avoiding reading much of anything may have reading comprehension problems because of gaps in their vocabulary and background knowledge. Tutors can help students develop a better vocabulary by teaching unfamiliar words before the student reads a passage. Some of our textbooks such as the *Challenger* series contain words for study at the start of each new lesson. When the student reads these words, make sure he or she can also tell you what they mean. If not, you can have them look it up in the dictionary or you can orally tell them the definition.

Students need multiple exposures to new words before they will remember their meaning. You can ask your student to write the words in sentences for homework, create some sentences yourself that contain these words for reading practice, and have the student write the words down in a notebook or on index cards with the definition written on the other side. You can review a few of these vocabulary words at the beginning of each lesson, checking them off each time the student correctly defines them.

Teach students word-learning tips such as the meaning of common prefixes and suffixes. Demonstrate how the prefix can change the meaning of words. For example, un, non, dis and im, in, are all prefixes that mean not. So if you add the prefix non- to the word smoker, nonsmoker is someone who does NOT smoke. If you add the prefix un- to the word happy, unhappy is a person who is NOT happy. If you add dis- to the word agree, the word means not to agree. So a prefix can change a word to mean its total opposite in some cases.

Also teach students common suffixes and talk about how they affect a word. For example, -er means one who. So if you add -er to bake, you get baker, which means one who bakes. The suffixes -ible and -able mean able to. So if the base word is replace and you add the suffix -able, replaceable means you are able to replace something.

Another strategy for building vocabulary is to **help a student use context clues to figure out the meaning of unknown words**. Sometimes the definition of the word is in the sentence and is set off by commas. For example: The woolly mammoth, ancient animals that looked like hairy elephants, died centuries ago. In this sentence, the word mammoth is defined as ancient animals that looked like hairy elephants. For more vocabulary building tips, see <http://www.literacy.uconn.edu/compre.htm>

Lewis County News

The BOCES GED program has a site on State St. in Lowville. Deborah spoke with the coordinator, Jennifer Voght, and so far she has referred two GED students for extra help. One of the students is a former LNNY reading and math student who worked with Pat Dietrich for a couple of years. He is now working with tutor, **Donna Dolhof**. The other GED student is working with one of our new tutors, **Betty McDougall**.

Betty Sawyer helped us get people to sign our petitions urging the state Legislature not to cut our Adult Literacy Education (ALE) grant by 40 percent. Betty is a real asset to our board. Whenever we need anything done in Lewis County, she always volunteers to help. Betty has been on our Board of Directors since we merged with the Lewis County LVA 10 years ago. She also volunteers her time at many other organizations. Betty is real asset to the community!

Don't forget to visit our booth at the Lowville Cream Cheese Festival September 18th 2010! We'll be collecting new and gently used children's books again this year.



Lewis County Board member, Betty Sawyer, at the LNNY booth at the Lowville Cream Cheese Festival, September 2009

Upcoming Tutor Training in Lowville

Deborah plans to hold English as a Second Language (ESOL) tutor training course on Wednesdays beginning on July 14th. The course will be held over a three-week period. The three classes are four hours long.

The 12-hour course covers basic conversational English techniques. Volunteers do NOT have to speak another language to tutor ESOL. **Registration is required.** Call us at 376-8188 to sign up for the course.

ESOL News

In April and May, we saw an increase in new ESOL students and many former students returned after taking a winter hiatus. We are having difficulty finding enough tutors to meet the need. At this time, several tutors are working with more than one student and we have two ESOL classes. One class is held at the Watertown office and we have another class off-site at Water Housing Authority's East Hills Community Center. The enrollments increase each week in both classes.

We are not seeing many new tutors enrolling in either the ESOL or Basic Reading tutor training courses. We realize people are busy so if you know anyone who might be interested in becoming a tutor, please let us know.

Some great new ESOL materials arrived and we want to share them with tutors. Those who attend the tutor in-service on June 30th will have the opportunity to see what's new. If you cannot get to the workshop but would like to see the materials, please call to set up a time. Unfortunately, I do not have the time to see all tutors individually but will do my best to meet the needs of the tutors.

The ESOL student base at LNNY is expanding. We are seeing more students than in past years who are not affiliated with Fort Drum. This makes for rich and diverse classes.



Tutor Inger Curth and her Korean students, Ghu and Song, attended Calcium Primary School's International Festival. They helped us staff a booth there.

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Our New Office Volunteers

Former ESOL student, **Maria Hart**, has been helping with Spanish/English translations. She comes along to help with student intakes and she translated an event flyer for the Watertown Housing Authority.

Kathleen Esposito comes into the office each week and helps with photocopying and other sundry tasks, much to the great, great pleasure of the office staff.

"Read to Succeed" volunteer, **Jeanne Ney**, continues to do a fantastic job recording children's books.

Upcoming Events

Fourth quarter hours due	June 30
Jefferson/Lewis In-service	June 30
Lewis County Tutor Training	July 14
WHA ESOL Class	Ongoing, Tuesdays 1 – 3 pm
Summer ESOL Class	Thursdays, 10:15 – noon
Citizenship	As needed
Budgeting Summer class	Dates TBA
Cream Cheese Festival/LNNY Book Drive	September 18

