

From the Back of the Boat

Bob Garfinkel

Every caring tutor with an open and positive relationship with his/her student has a moment to share. Mine happened when my student and I were making an outline for his composition for the "Key" writing contest. His writing entitled, "My Dreams Came True," describes his life from the age of 20 to the present. He is from another country and from modest origin. He talked about his hopes and dreams as a 20 year old and actually they were much like the dreams of most young men born and raised in Northeastern Wisconsin. We went through the next ten years of his life and he said, "You know, most of my dreams have come true except one. I am not rich and never will be!" He paused, looked at his expectant wife in the kitchen along with his two beautiful children, turned to me and said, "You know, maybe I am rich." I was so proud of my student and started to look differently at my own life. Sometimes we place too much emphasis on the financial aspects of life when looking at self worth.

I talk to organizations, donors, and potential tutors all the time about how our great organization is changing our student's lives for the better. Next time I promote Literacy Partners, I would be remiss if I did not mention how our students have changed our lives.

If you have a tutor moment to share with our readers, let me know. We can keep your names confidential.

"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others." (Mahatma Gandhi)

THE STAR

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Coming Events

Let's Have a Pow Wow!

Date: April 23, 2009
Place: Kewaunee Grade School Cafetorium
(921 3rd St.)
Time: 6:30 pm

Kate Phillips, Literacy Partner Board Member and tutor extraordinaire, has planned another exciting cultural event for this year. It is a presentation of the Oneida Pow Wow! Similar to last year's Hispanic Cultural Dance, the Pow Wow will feature all the sights and sounds of a realistic western US Indian dance. From the dignified and graceful traditional dancers, to the chants and drums, the Pow Wow is a time to get together to sing, dance, renew old friendships and make new ones.

Traditional food such as fry bread, Indian tacos, and Indian corn soup (a strawberry drink made with maple syrup), will be served (at family prices) between 5:00 pm and 6:20 pm. Hot dogs will also be on the menu. After the meal, attendees will go into the gym and see the Pow Wow at no charge.

The Pow Wow will be open to the public. Please encourage your student to attend. Exposure to different cultures is important to all of us. When we as a community accept and understand other cultures, our community becomes a better place to live.

We will need a few volunteers for the event. Please call Bob.

More “Coming Events”....

“Anything You Wanted to Know About Our Latino Neighbors, but Were Afraid to Ask”

Date: April 22, 2009 at 6:30 pm
Place: Room 103 Luxemburg-Casco Middle School (319 Church Ave, Casco)
Question Deadline: April 9, 2009
RSVP Deadline: April 17, 2009

Gema Garcia, Coordinator of the Multicultural Center at Northeast Wisconsin Technical College, will present a lively question and answer informational session centered on the Latino Culture. Gema is a well-known personality in Brown County promoting life-long education and helping minority students achieve educational goals.

Gema’s presentation to about 30 tutors last year was both fun and informative. Her humor and dedication to improving peoples’ lives is both inspiring and contagious. To make the presentation as meaningful and relevant as possible, we are asking tutors interested in attending to submit questions about our Latino neighbors to Bob by April 9, 2009. Questions will be sent to Gema at that time.

Please RSVP if you want to attend by April 17, 2009. The best scenario is to contact Bob before April 9th with your questions and RSVP at that time.

“Comprehension Strategies: Universal Design to Benefit Every Reader”

Date: May 12, 2009, at 6:30 pm
Place: NWTC Luxemburg (room 114) 133 Commerce Drive
RSVP Deadline: May 6, 2009

Jo Allison Scott’s reading comprehension workshop is designed for literacy groups such as ours, who work with a variety of students and reading levels. Jo Allison’s objective will be to present three kinds of reading comprehension strategies that will help literacy tutors maximize their efforts at any reading level.

Jo Allison is a Basic Education Instructor at NWTC. Her reading presentation last year to a group of 20 of our tutors was rated as “excellent” on our evaluation sheets. Under the evaluation question, “What could be improved?” tutors consistently said, “This seminar was too short!” The tutors did not want Jo Allison to stop!

Please RSVP by May 6, 2009 by calling Bob (845-2516) or by e-mail (rgarfinkel@centurytel.net).

Next Tutor Training Classes

The future of Literacy Partners not only depends on how well we meet the needs of our students, but also depends upon finding prospective, talented tutors. Please help us promote the next tutor training class by passing on the dates and times below. Have prospective tutors register for the orientation session by calling Bob at 845-2516.

If you would like to be a tutor trainer and help Barb Baldwin train new tutors, call Barb at 920-776-1540 to find out what it takes.

Spring Tutor Training Schedule – All sessions will be held at Hillcrest School, Room 110.

Session	Date	Time
Orientation	March 17, 2009	9:00 am – 10:00 am
Class 1	March 24, 2009	9:00 am – 12:30 pm
Class 2	March 26, 2009	9:00 am – 12:30 pm
Class 3	March 31, 2009	9:00 am – 12:30 pm

New at the Resource Center

The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation by Jane Straus is an excellent tutor resource that covers many aspects of the English language. This book is probably best for level 3 and 4 and basic education students. We have four copies.

The Junkyard Dan Series has arrived at our Resource Center! This series of books is the talk of the English as a Second Language and adult basic education classes throughout the US. The series contains 10 action packed books (mysteries) written for adults but vocabulary is kept low. Workbooks (optional) are interesting. At this time, we have one copy of each of the ten titles. If we find interest in Junkyard Dan, we will purchase additional copies.

Books 1 through 4 would be appropriate for level 3 students while level 4 and basic education students would enjoy reading all ten books in any order. They are fun and give the student a feeling of accomplishment. As a tutor, you can either look each book over to find a starting point, start with book 1 since it introduces the series, or call Bob for guidance.

If you are unable to make it to Hillcrest School, call Bob and he will make arrangements for you to get a copy of Junkyard Dan!

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“Beginning Writing” Workshop

Encouraging writing was the topic of the workshop presented to our tutors by Shawn Jensen. She invited each tutor to find ways to encourage the student to write. It is a skill quite separate from reading or speaking. As tutors, it is important to include all four skills of language: reading, writing, listening, and speaking.

She suggested:

- 1) Journal writing for two continuous minutes.

This is an opportunity for the student to write whatever passes through his mind without anyone else reading it. The pencil should never be waiting for the next word. There is no need to be concerned about grammar, spelling, or sentence structure. The effort needed to write continuously helps to bring out all sorts of things. Just write, write, write. When 2 minutes are working well, make it four, then 10.

- 2) Writing on a suggested topic.

This method stretches the imagination and the ability to describe things. The topics might include the description of an event, a piece of art, or the experience of listening to music.

Of course, grammar is important. It may be necessary to go back to the basics. The following resources might be helpful:

- 1) The website, USAlearns.org
- 2) The Blue Book of Grammar and Punctuation, by Jane Straus

The Trainer’s Corner

Barbara Baldwin

Did January’s workshop, “Beginning Writing,” start to get your creative juices flowing? Are you anxious to explore more ways to tune in and turn on your student to writing? Then I recommend checking out the following web links and resources:

Teaching Guides Volunteering in ESL

<http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/teaching/esl/writing.cfm>

The topics of “free writing” and “revised writing” are described at this web link along with ideas for tactfully making corrections to student’s writing. One of the methods I liked was the “dialog journal.” It allows the tutor to model correct spellings and grammar usage without correcting the student’s work. In other words, incorporate the corrections into your reply. The student may notice and begin to self-correct.

“Writing Without Fear,” a free “on line course from Thinkfinity:

<http://literacynetwork.verizon.org/TLN/>

It introduces a process for writing that takes one through the five steps: prewriting, first draft, revising, editing and final draft. What I liked about this course is that it shares methods that could be used with low level students. I especially liked the section that uses templates to enable a student to draft simple notes to their child’s teacher. (Open “free on line courses,” blue tab upper left corner; new students will be asked to create their own unique username and password—just follow the steps.)

CanTeach, a list of writing prompts and journal topics.

<http://www.canteach.ca/elementary/prompts.html> perfect for getting your student focused on a topic. If you don't have access to a computer; this list can be provided to you upon request.

Check out: **LitSTART**, by Patricia Frey from our library. Chapter 8 deals with writing strategies and techniques

Of This and That.....

CenturyTel's mission is much like ours— to make Kewaunee County a better place in which to live. They have supported us financially since our early beginnings. Thanks CenturyTel!



Pictured: Mike Repinski (right) of CenturyTel renews the company's commitment to literacy with a donation to Literacy Partners, Mary Gotstein and Bob Garfinkel.

The website www.usalearns.org is a valuable teaching tool our tutors in Algoma are using. It is a free site for students learning English.

Literacy Partners is looking for a four drawer file cabinet with drawers that lock. We are willing to pay for it if the price is right. Please contact Bob.



Becky Massart of the United Funds of Kewaunee County presents Bob with a donation to fund our website.

The Green Bay Packer Foundation scored a touchdown for literacy last month when they renewed their financial support for Literacy Partners. GO PACK!

The last newsletter reported that tutor Peggy Wussow was moving to the Madison area. Her new e-mail address is WussowP@TDS.net

The January issue of the "Star" featured an article called "Scam or Sham." If you remember, one of our student's husbands purchased manuals to learn English that turned out to be worthless. Upon further investigation of the seller, F.G.H. International of Panorama City, California, we found that there have been many indictments filed against them by customers along with numerous fines for fraud. After all of this, are still in business! The program purchased was titled, "Curso Espanol/Ingles – El Sueno Dorado Americano (The Golden American Dream). This program is a waste of money and should be avoided. Thank you, to Bunny Burris and Linda Benaszewki for exposing this company.

We have a Kewaunee County volunteer who would like to be a pen pal for one of our Hispanic students. If your student is interested, please contact Bob at 845-2516.

If you are interested in scrap-booking and would like to be our Literacy Partner's Historian, please call Bob at 845-2516.

Introducing Our Tutor of the Season.

Christina Klaubauf – teacher, tutor, mother to be.

In this issue, we are featuring a tutor who has recently gone through the Laubach training. Sometimes a new experience opens up new awareness, and new opportunities to share and to grow. Christina tells us that she has always loved to read and thought that the idea of sharing her love of literacy with someone else would be very rewarding.

She grew up in Door County, attended Southern Door High, and graduated from St. Norbert College in 2003 with a degree in education. Currently, Christina is in her third year teaching at Luxemburg-Casco Primary School and lives in Casco with her husband who is also a teacher. They are expecting their first child.

We asked what it was like to begin tutoring someone who wanted to learn English. In her words, “I was very nervous at first thinking about how it would go to try and teach and hold a conversation with someone who does not know our language. After meeting my student, though, everything was fine. I used a lot of pictures and hand gestures. It seems like I can always get the point across. My student is very willing to learn and tries really hard.”

“It is so exciting to see her learning and making so much progress. At first my student was very shy and timid, but I can tell she is feeling a lot more comfortable. It is so amazing to be helping her out and to know that the skills I am teaching her will help her in her daily life. In the beginning when my student needed to change the time or date of a meeting she would have her daughter or brother-in-law call me. Now she is calling herself and is doing such a great job speaking on the phone.”

A Student Writes:

Dear Mr. Garfinkel,

I want to thank you for everything you are doing to help the people like us. To believe in us that we have the wishes to learn English as a second language.

And thanks to all the tutors that take their time to teach us and be an important part of our lives. Thank you for the party (Recognition Day). It was very nice. I enjoyed it. It was a good time.

Thank you very much for this important labor that you are doing.

(Student's name is withheld.)

Mark your Calendars:

March 17, 2009 New Tutor Orientation

March 24, 26, 31, 2009 Classes for new tutors.

April 22, 2009 – “Anything You Wanted to Know About our Latino Neighbors but Were Afraid to Ask”

April 23, 2009 – POW-WOW

May 12, 2009 – “Comprehension Strategies”

Ask “La Cucaracha”

In the last issue, La Cucaracha addressed the difficulty in having other children present during a tutoring session. This can be very disturbing. Here is a suggestion from another tutor on this topic.

“Take along toys or activities for the children. Sometimes just having a different toy or activity is an incentive to not be so disruptive.”

From my spot under the rug, I can feel the difference when the other children are busy and not disruptive. I can run as I wish without fear of being squished. I like the toys as a solution to that problem.



Pow Wow at Kewaunee April 23, 2009 at 6:30 pm

We Recognize ----

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