

From the Back of the Boat

Bob Garfinkel

It has been my pleasure to see Literacy Partners of Kewaunee County grow from a dream and twinkle in the eye of a handful of county residents in 2005 to a literacy council providing 65 students with English as a Second Language instruction, G.E.D. opportunities, basic education instruction, and help attaining US citizenship. A dear friend of mine told me years ago that, "Anything worthwhile is never easy." Indeed, this has been the case with Literacy Partners. A dedicated, hard working Board of Directors, a steady-fast group of supporters and donors that wouldn't let this dream die, and committed tutors giving precious donated time with students often fighting to stay awake after 10—12 hours of manual labor, have been an inspiration to all of us.

We have reached a level of development where our organization must hire a part-time coordinator to insure the effectiveness of our programs and help insure a bright, successful future. I will be totally involved in Literacy Partners, but look forward to moving from the "Back of the Boat" to a perhaps more comfortable seat in the middle.

Please read the articles, Coordinator Position and note the Calendar of Events. We have some dynamite events scheduled for the next several months.

Please say, "Hi" to your student(s) for me and thank them for taking class with you!

THE STAR

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Coordinator's Position

Literacy Partners of Kewaunee County, Inc. has reached a level of development where a part-time coordinator is needed to continue our high level of instruction. Bob Garfinkel, President, commented that, "Increased student, tutor, and program needs require more time than board members and volunteers can deliver. We are ready to take the next step outlined in our 5 year Strategic Plan and that is to hire a Literacy Coordinator.

The Coordinator's position will be 10 hours/week the first year and will increase as services expand and funds become available. Job description and application requirements are available on our website or you could call or email Bob and information will be sent to you.

The wonderful opportunity to hire a Coordinator would not have been possible without grants and donations from:

The Greater Green Bay Community Foundation
BayLake Bank
Wisconsin Public Service
M&I Bank
Paul & Karen Hoagland
Sue Hingst
Kewaunee Fabrications

Introducing Our Tutor of the Season

Kathy Hutchison, tutor from the beginning



Kathy Hutchison, Dyckesville, has been involved with the Literacy Partners of Kewaunee County since it started almost four years ago. Her sister, Mary Fitzgerald, has been a tutor and tutor trainer for more than 20 years in Los Angeles. "Mary's enthusiasm for the program was a big influence on my decision to become involved." Kathy said. "In California, Mary teaches the Laubach method, as we do here. "

Kathy has been tutoring Maria since the beginning. "She is so excited about learning. She works very hard on her lessons," Kathy said. Maria has completed the third and fourth levels, and is now on the path to finish her G.E.D. course. Kathy and Maria meet weekly, depending on Kathy's substitute teaching schedule.

"We share news on our families and then get to our lesson. I have enjoyed getting to know Maria and her family. I also like to remind her that she has three English teachers in her home: her children, Jose, Samantha, and Paola."

Kathleen was born in Janesville, attended St. Norbert College and graduated from Alverno with a B.S. in education. She has lived in Dyckesville for 32 years with her husband, Dave. They have eight daughters, five sons-in-laws, five grandsons, and six granddaughters. They are members of St. Louis Parish.

The Trainer's Corner

Barbara Baldwin

Do you feel your student does not seem to be progressing? If so, it may be time to re-evaluate your student's goals. A goal of learning English or completing a textbook may not be enough to maintain motivation—especially when it seems a plateau has been reached.

You may need to help your student set attainable mini-goals such as:

- I will speak to my children in English for at least 15 minutes daily.
- I will read in English for 15 minutes daily.
- I will make 3 entries in my journal weekly.
- I will meet for 2 hours a week for 10 weeks.
- I will finish this book by September.

Date the goals and check them off or give a reward when a goal is reached. Keep a portfolio of your student's writing so that you will be able to track progress and growth.

Students will not make progress in speaking unless they are conversing in English outside class, so encourage goals that require some oral language use.

Of This and That

- Please encourage your student to write a story, poem, or a few sentences for the booklet we are trying to put together for Recognition Day 2010. See our last newsletter or call Bob for details.
- The Health Literacy Committee is almost finished putting together a handy booklet filled with information about local health providers and services available for our students. We are also writing grants to provide health related books for our Resource Center.
- Tutors interested in getting together to share common tutoring topics and concerns call Bob at 676-2061.
- Just a reminder, students in Level 3 Laubach who want to learn cursive have a handy guide available at the Resource Center (bookshelf near the door) or call Bob and it will be mailed to you.
- If you have a change of phone number, email, or address, please contact Bob at 845-2516.
- Handouts from the Conversation/Pronunciation workshop are on the large table in the Resource Center for those who could not attend.

The Tutor's Point of View – Passing the Driver's Test

Renee Koenig

Learning to drive and getting a driver's license is probably a very memorable time in your life. The excitement and anxiety associated with the feat make it unforgettable. Imagine how it must feel for our students who have the added challenge of limited English language skills. For my student, Maria, a driver's license was a priority goal so she could get a job, transport her children to school and doctor appointments, and share other responsibilities with her husband.

When Maria started her journey toward this goal, she had some experience driving on rural roads but she lacked confidence in her driving because she didn't understand all the road signs and rules. We began preparing for the DOT knowledge exam by using the tools available on the DOT website at www.dot.wisconsin.gov. You can print copies of the Motorists Handbook in English, Spanish or Hmong. You can also download audio files of the entire manual to listen to it in Spanish. There are also helpful practice tests online that prepare you for the 25-question multiple choice exam. Most DMV service centers administer the knowledge test on a computerized system using touch screens. For those with limited reading proficiency, all tests can be administered in multiple languages with an audio assist option using headphones.

After Maria passed the knowledge test and obtained her learner's permit, we practiced driving and parking maneuvers. Maria preferred to practice on the quieter streets on Sunday afternoons. She also wanted to take her road test in Algoma so we had to check the online schedule regularly for available appointments since appointments fill up quickly. Without internet access, scheduling an appointment is nearly impossible. Maria passed her road test in Algoma on her second try. Today, Maria is a confident driver and proud of her accomplishment. The total journey took about 7 months from filling out the initial application, to passing the knowledge tests, and finally obtaining a regular license.

Please feel free to call me at 920-857-8911 if you have any questions. I am willing to share more about our experience with the driver license process.

Coming Events

Bi-Okoto African Drum Dance

DATE: April 15, 2010

Place: Kewaunee Grade School

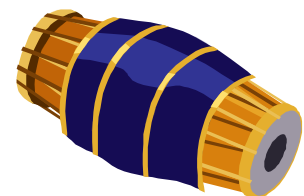
Time: Food sold from 5-6:20 pm (Cafetorium),
Performance at 6:30 pm -- FREE

Kate Phillips, Literacy Partner Board Member and tutor extraordinaire, has planned another exciting cultural event called "Bi-Okoto African Drum Dance" slated for April 15, 2010 at the Kewaunee Grade School. Many of our students and tutors enjoyed the cultural events the last two years, including the Hispanic Dancers and the Pow Wow. Bi-Okoto, based in Cincinnati, Ohio, could be the most exciting, interesting, and dynamic dance exhibition Kewaunee County has ever seen.

The Bi-Okoto Drum and Dance Theatre was established in 1994 as a professional African dance company. The company is highly regarded as demonstrating authentic traditional African dance, drumming songs, food, clothing, and language. Bi-Okoto members are teachers as well as artists engaging the audience to participate in rhythmic clapping and responding to songs in Nigerian dialects.

The performance is free of charge and open to the public. Bring your friends and students and their families and enjoy this fun-filled evening. African food and American hot dogs

will be on sale from 5-6:20 pm, with the performance starting in the gym at 6:30 pm. A trip to Africa will never be so close to home!!!



Upcoming Events (continued)

Learning Styles Workshop

DATE: Tuesday, May 4, 2010

PLACE: Conference Room, Kewaunee County Administration Center

TIME: 1:00 pm

RSVP: by April 30, 2010

Basing instruction on the best learning style for a student is one of the most important, yet most ignored concepts in American education. Does it seem reasonable to use a child's hammer to drive a large spike into a board? Does it make sense to teach a child or adult by lecturing when they work best visually or by manipulating objects?

Finding the right presenters for a learning styles workshop was not easy. The committee turned over a lot of stones looking for the right people. We have spared no expense for this presentation, looking for two presenters well known throughout the state of Wisconsin, only to find them in our own backyard. The leaders of the learning styles workshop will be our very own Mary Novak and Bob Garfinkel!

Mary, the Kewaunee County Extension Family Living Educator, has a BS in home economics, MS in curriculum instruction, is an advisor for our board of directors, and is a certified tutor. Mary has worked with people of all ages and abilities and is well aware of learners' individual differences.

Bob is a former elementary school teacher, and also has a MS degree. He taught at LC for 13 years, specializing in individualized education, and set up the school's first gifted and talented program. Bob taught fishing for 22 years and capitalized on using students' learning styles to teach fly tying and various outdoor skills.

This workshop will provide information concerning the different learning styles, how to address each learning style as far as your instruction is concerned, and, as an active participant in this workshop, you will take a learning style inventory and learn how to interpret the results.

If you are unable to attend this workshop, call Bob (845-2516) and we will schedule an evening session.

Health Literacy Conference

DATE: May 18, 2010

PLACE: UWGB

TIME: 8 am – 2:30 pm

Learn about health literacy initiatives in northern and northeastern Wisconsin, and the impact of health literacy issues on the health care system.

Keynote Speaker: Paul Smith, M.D.

Paul Smith is a leading voice for health literacy in the State of Wisconsin. He is associate Professor in the Dept. of Family Medicine at UW-Madison and has been a key player in organizing statewide and regional health literacy summits.

The Dominion Foundation will pay the \$20 registration fee for the first 15 tutors/board members who sign up for this conference. Contact Bob at 845-2516 to register.

La Cucaracha notices:

The events that have been scheduled for this spring look excellent. I am especially impressed with the variety of topics. Each touches the connections you make with your students on a different level.

Knowing the presenters for the Learning Styles Workshop, and realizing that they "spared no expense" in procuring them, ought to make Literacy Partners of Kewaunee proud that in your own organization you have such expertise. From under the rug, La Cucaracha just had goose bumps thinking about it.

A Report: Conversation and Pronunciation Workshop

On February 15, Shawn Jensen lead a workshop that was designed to help us “spice up” our sessions with our students. Spice it up, it did. With many examples and suggestions, she emphasized the need to use creative ways to get students talking and writing.

Besides offering topics for writing as: movies, newspapers, current events, holidays, debates, their country, etc. she suggested going on line and googling ESL junction. There are suggestions for games, activities, conversations and lists of other resources. The internet is a treasure trove of information that can really help.

Next, Shawn pulled out of her bag of tricks, piles of books that can help the tutor get the student involved. A list of them will be available at the www.literacykewaunee.org website. Some are already in the resource center. It takes just a bit of creativity to pick them up and use them. She also suggested that as a teacher, one could go to the publisher’s website and request a desk copy of a book.

In moving to the challenges of pronunciation, Shawn offered several rules that if memorized can give some direction to the pronunciation of some of the sounds that are frequently missed. She had each participant place her hand on her neck, to feel if a consonant was voiced or not. The student can do this also; to determine which “s” sound is called for.

The added “s” to make a plural is pronounced as:

/ Z / when the final sound of the word is voiced e.g. adding “s” to gum, train, wheel

/ S / when the final sound of the word is not voiced e.g. track, tent

To form a plural:

Add “es” to words that end in --sh, --ch, --es, --s, --x

Add “s” to most other words.

Pronouncing final “d” or “ed” for past tense.

/ D / when a verb ends in a voiced sound e.g. called, jammed

/ T / when the verb ends in a voiceless sound. e.g. baked, skipped

/ed / when the verb ends in a “t” or “d” e.g. tended, handed, rented

Another website that gives help with English grammar: AzarGrammar.com

Check the materials in the Resource Center for help keeping your classes alive and well.



This workshop proved to be very informative and enjoyable for the 18 tutors who braved the snow and slippery highways and back roads of Kewaunee County. Shawn’s enthusiasm permeated the classroom and seemed to give us a mid-winter lift we all needed. Be sure to check the calendar in this newsletter for the next exciting tutor workshop!

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