



# LITERACY MATTERS

NOVEMBER 2015

Literacy Matters is a recurring publication of Literacy Nassau, Inc.



## What You'll Find in this Issue:

Tutor Spotlight .....	2
Bridge Recap .....	2
Introducing Ocaria DiMango! .....	2
Congratulations .....	3
Tutor Conference Recap .....	3
Resource Corner .....	3
Sponsor Spotlight .....	4

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## WHO DOESN'T LOVE TO TRAVEL?

*(submitted by Barbara Fody)*

Perhaps some of you are planning, or have already planned, your next trip. Some of our students also have the opportunity to travel. The vast majority of our students, however, are not able to travel, in some cases not even outside of the town in which they live.

Since they struggle with English, not all of our students have a driver's license, the family may not have a reliable car, and more often than not, the family will not have multiple cars. Many of our students walk, ride a bicycle, or take public transportation to the public library. Has anyone experienced the joys of riding the bus on Long Island?

Figuratively speaking, "meeting students where they are," means preparing lessons that are at or slightly above the student's target instructional level. It also has a secondary, more literal meaning: meeting students in the library most accessible to the student. We have a critical need for tutors to work with English Language Learners in the Uniondale and Freeport Libraries, during the day and especially in the evening. Would you please consider going on a "mini break" each week to one of these communities to partner with a beginner student?

Both libraries are dynamic community centers with a diverse cultural mix and scores

of patrons entering and leaving throughout the day and evening, right up until closing. Literacy Nassau has enjoyed a long standing and collaborative relationship with both communities. In fact, Uniondale and Freeport are two of the "hub" locations where students can work with a tutor as a beginner, progress to intermediate small classes, and finally cap off their study of English in advanced classes, all conveniently located in the same community building. We have great access to brand new, state-of-the-art technology thanks to the supportive staff in those libraries, and each is unique with regard to public community programs. For example, at the Uniondale Library there is a beautiful large theater, where (thanks to the grant they received from the National Endowment for the Humanities) public performances and multi-media events about Hispanic culture and history will be held throughout the year.

Well-lit parking lots are adjacent to the Uniondale and Freeport Libraries, which are located on main roads: Uniondale Avenue (just south of Hempstead Turnpike and Hofstra University) and Merrick Road, respectively.

We hope you will consider enlarging your geographic circumference and give someone the gift of language and learning in the Uniondale or Freeport communities.

## THOUGHTS FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Hi Everyone,

Nothing is worse than feeling lost. We've struggled with that in my house this fall, as my two girls had to adjust to separate schedules for the first time. They're so used to being together all the time, Haley's entry into nursery school has challenged them both. Since they're too young to understand the concept of time, I can't simply explain to them the path of childhood. When you're little, you stay home every day, then when you get bigger, you go to school in the mornings, and when you get even bigger, you go to school for the whole day, and eventually you go to middle school, high school, college, etc. Time and repetition create a predictable rhythm, which makes young children feel safe.

Students at Literacy Nassau also have a path, and it has been five years of sweat equity on the part of our staff to make sure the road leads to success. Sometimes, students get so comfortable with their tutors that their weekly visits become social calls more than instructional learning opportunities. It is our job, as tutors (and parents) to guide our students towards the next step on the journey, even if it means leaving the comfort of your current situation. For more on the path of a student, see page 3 for a recap from the Tutor Conference.

*Karen*



My oldest daughter Haley (left) has grown to love school and is making friends, her favorite of whom is Cecelia, pictured in the above hug.



## TUTOR SPOTLIGHT: GLORIA PETTITO

I was born and raised in Queens, New York by parents who were both born in Italy and immigrated to America. I attended Hunter and Queens Colleges and worked for 36 years as a teacher and principal in the elementary schools of New York City.

After I retired, I volunteered at my church and local library. I was introduced to Literacy Nassau at the Hillside Library where they were holding a TTW in the fall of 2014. I've been working with my first student, Maria, for about nine months. Her goal, now that she retired, is to take computer classes at the library. She had come to America in the 1960's from Italy as a married mother with two young children. She went to work to help support her growing family. She raised four children and continued to work, which left her no time to complete her education.

Maria is eager and motivated to learn to spell and write English. She learned to adapt to her limited language skills by using phonetic cues and memorizing the words she needed for whatever her jobs required. She can read and write Italian fluently, but still struggles with English pronunciation.

We started with reading children's books aloud (ex. Judy Blume). She always gave thoughtful and complete answers whenever I

questioned her comprehension. She understood the humor as well. I now give Maria short passages to read. We talk about the story details, vocabulary and main ideas. After oral reading, there are a series of questions to answer in writing.

At first, she wrote only fragments she learned from the passages. Now she has learned how to use the words in the question and to reverse their order to write a complete sentence and record it in her notebooks. These sessions have improved Maria's oral reading, pronunciation, and fluency.

I'm finding this assignment both enjoyable and challenging. Teaching adults is very different from teaching children. Although each child presents individual differences in a classroom, they are all in the same setting with many similar experiences and backgrounds. Children tend to accept learning as a part of their daily lives. Adults, however, have such diverse life experiences which impact their ability to concentrate and commit the time to go back to learn the "stuff" they missed as children. It takes a lot of courage, fortitude and perseverance to begin learning as an adult. I greatly admire and appreciate their decision to give learning a chance, and their ability to change their lives.

## A DAY OF BRIDGE

A Day of Bridge was held on Friday, September 25th at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation at Shelter Rock in Manhasset. The event was sponsored by the John and Janet Kornreich Foundation. The day started with a delicious breakfast catered by Panera Bread which included fruit parfaits, pastries, bagels and more. Over 100 people attended and were eager to play the exciting game of bridge. Aaron Silverstein from The Bridge School led the game. Three hours of bridge play were followed by lunch catered by Ben's Deli. The day ended with a raffle drawing including an Uppababy Stroller, a Cape Cod Excursion, a Black Pearl Pendant, an Emerge Yoga & Wellness package, and so much more. Congratulations to our winners, who received iPad minis for their superior game play! The guests were thrilled as they collected their prizes, and even the people who didn't win a raffle prize still left with a wonderful goodie bag which included Clinique makeup, Burt's Bees products, Armani exchange sunglasses, and more. We want to give a special thanks to John and Janet Kornreich for their incredible support and for making this event possible.



The room was filled with bridge players, ready to play for a chance to win an iPad.

The entire back wall of the UUCSR Social Hall was filled with amazing raffle prizes!

## INTRODUCING OCARIA DiMANGO!

Our beloved Literacy Specialist, Ocaria Silva, wed Mr. Matthew DiMango on Saturday, September 12th at St. Thomas the Apostle R.C. Chapel in West Hempstead. The couple met as college students at Stony Brook University, so they were joined by family, work colleagues, and many friends from their college days. It was a beautiful ceremony and the bride was as radiant as ever. Following the ceremony, Mr. & Mrs. DiMango held their reception at the Swan Club, and two days later they left for a relaxing honeymoon in Hawaii! We are so happy for Ocaria and we wish her much joy and happiness in her new role as Mrs. DiMango. Please note: Ocaria's e-mail address has changed to [odimango@literacynassau.org](mailto:odimango@literacynassau.org).



Pictured above, the bride and groom, surrounded by family and friends as they pause for a kiss outside the chapel.

### Do you read and write a language other than English?

Literacy Nassau is looking for some help in translating student registration documents from English into the following languages:

- Spanish
- French
- Haitian-Creole
- Mandarin

Interested? Please call  
Barbara Fody at (516) 867-3580 x17





## **TUTOR CONFERENCE RECAP: THE PATH OF AN ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNER**

*(submitted by Karen Micciche)*

If you missed the tutor conference, there's a good chance you might not know that we have developed an intentional path for our Literacy Nassau students. In every education-based setting, there is a beginning, middle, and an end to a student's time with a teacher. There is also a "next step" once a student moves out of a level. It has taken us years to develop the programs and secure funding for each part, so that we could officially roll out a pathway for our English Language Learners.



It starts with SGIB, a platform designed to be a 5 (or 6) week "test" for our low level students. Before a student gets the privilege of working with a tutor, we check his ability to be accountable by making him go to SGIB classes. If he misses classes, we quickly learn that he will not take tutoring seriously. If he shows up on time and is ready to learn, we know he will succeed if placed with a tutor. Once the student is matched with a tutor, they work together for one program year (approximately 10 months). When the student is post-tested by a Literacy Specialist, a recommendation can be made as to whether or not the tutoring should continue for another program year. If the student has made significant educational gain, he moves on to SGI classes, which are 12 weeks in length and feature the benefit of a licensed teacher and a curriculum to follow. The small group dynamic enables students to learn from one another as well as from their teacher, and each small group culminates with a final project. Next, students move into our large group classes (funded by the Office for New Americans). These classes feature a paid, professional, TESOL-licensed teacher, as well as homework, tests, class trips, and up to 20 students per class - a true "school" experience. When large group classes are over, the student officially "graduates" from Literacy Nassau, as he is now equipped to go on to larger programs. More importantly, our tutors are able to work with more students over the course of their time with us, thus allowing our greatest resource (you) to meaningfully serve as many students as possible. It's a real win/win, and we are so excited to finally have all the pieces in place.

## **RESOURCE CORNER: SAY "HI" TO HI-LO BOOKS**

*(submitted by Kim Nau)*

Do you want to engage your student's interest in reading but can't seem to find an appropriate book? Allow me to introduce you to hi-lo readers.

The last thing you want is for your student to struggle through text that is too challenging. Picture books can have immature themes and young adult books can have topics that relate to high school or teen issues. Hi-lo books are a formidable solution for adult learners. They provide high interest subject matter at a lower reading level. Stories are compelling but with more accessible vocabulary and less complex sentence structures.

Through my research for Literacy Nassau's Next Chapter Book Clubs, I have found several book series that provide excellent options for both English Language Learners and struggling readers. Penguin Readers, which is published by Pearson, offers titles including: The Pirates of the Caribbean, Marley & Me, The Godfather, Jane Eyre, The Inventions That Changed the World, and many more. They truly have something for everyone. The Oxford Bookworms Library is published by Oxford University Press and has titles such as: Romeo and Juliet, A Tale of Two Cities, and Eat Pray Love. Saddleback Educational Publishing also offers graded original hi-lo literature in both print and e-book formats. All of the above mentioned publishers have adaptations of classic and modern literature and the books can range from first to sixth grade reading levels. Also, at the end of most of the books, there are exercises and discussion questions that can be used when working with your student.

Another tremendous benefit of the hi-lo books is that they tend to be significantly shorter than their original versions. This is done intentionally. The theory behind this practice is that if a book has abbreviated chapters, it is less intimidating to struggling readers. The faster they finish a book, the more likely they are to pick up another and this gives the students a sense of accomplishment.

Time and time again, research has proven that reading improves language skills. This helps English Language Learners build their confidence and fluency. Hi-lo books allow readers to finally see the pleasure in reading, keep them engaged, and set them up for success. The next time you visit the library to find your student's next book, check with the librarian to see if they carry hi-lo books. Most libraries do. Good luck and enjoy!

## **HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

Happy birthday to all of our tutors born in November! They are:

Gaynelle Bailey  
Lorraine Bak  
Steven Carbone  
Kathleen Dendy  
Diane Dubno  
Diane Dwyer  
Avi Feinstein  
Lita Friedman  
Audrey Hores  
Charles Jencius  
Susan Kimmel  
Arlene Kupchik  
Jean Lavelle  
Kathy Mahony  
Carolyn Quenon  
Teresa Rienzie  
Helen Schmidt  
Peter Schwarz  
Diane Ugelow  
Maryanne Williams-Pitman



*Enjoy your special day!!  
Warmest regards,  
Your friends at  
Literacy Nassau*

## **CONGRATULATIONS!**

Congratulations and welcome to our newest tutors:

Ira Berkowitz  
Joanne DePaula  
Susan Fitzgerald  
Garry Katz

Debra Phansteil  
Alma Reyes  
Suzanne Weinick  
Gina Wood Hart



187 Smith Street, Freeport, N.Y. 11520  
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## SPONSOR SPOTLIGHT

Special thanks to our friend Mukund Padmanabhan from the Guru Krupa Foundation for their \$25,876 grant to support three upcoming SGI Tutor Training Workshops! Their principles and philosophy, derived from the value system of Hinduism, may be succinctly summarized as:

- 1) Help those who are less fortunate than yourself,
- 2) Support causes related to the acquisition of knowledge (both materialistic and non-materialistic), and
- 3) Preserve the heritage and knowledge that has already been acquired.

To that end, the Guru Krupa Foundation supports social, educational, and religious or cultural projects that better our society as a whole. Literacy Nassau is grateful to Mr. Padmanabhan and the Guru Krupa Foundation for their support as we continue to expand our service population by introducing more SGI programs for our intermediate level English Language Learners!



Guru Krupa Foundation



## 70's TV Shows Word Search

Find and circle all of the 70's TV shows that are hidden in the grid. The remaining letters spell the name of an additional 70's TV show.

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S I L L I G E I B O D E E R A N N O D
W A L T O N S P E Y T O N P L A C E T
A F N G I X A T V H O D D C O U P L E
L L E A R M E R E H W E S L E T S O Y
A I R A M E M U R P H Y B R O W N V D
L P M E R E E Y L M I A M I V I C E O
J P A E T G L N Y S Y M N K S T Y B O
E E D V F N S F H L E C O O O P E O D
T R A I L I E R I O E R N D N J Y A Y
S E B T Y T M C L R R R C E S N A T D
O D O I I H I L L G R N A A G Q A K W
N I U G N G T A B A O I E D N R U C O
S H T U G I D S I E C M N T L E E A H
M W Y F N L O S L A N I E T E I E M D
P A O S U N O I L L O C D R I D K R E
O R U R N O G E I I E S A E P N U R G
E D I S N O R I E C H I P S M Y T A D
H Y N A P M O C S E E R H T E O L I M
O O R A G N A K N I A T P A C Y W E N
    
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|---------------------|--------------|----------------|-----------------|
| ALICE               | FLYING NUN   | L.A. LAW       | ODD COUPLE      |
| BEN CASEY           | FUGITIVE     | LASSIE         | PEYTON PLACE    |
| BEVERLY HILLBILLIES | GOMER PYLE   | LOVE BOAT      | RAWHIDE         |
| CHIPS               | GOOD TIMES   | MAD ABOUT YOU  | RIFLEMAN        |
| CANNON              | GREEN ACRES  | MAUDE          | RIN TIN TIN     |
| CAPTAIN KANGAROO    | GREEN HORNET | MEDICAL CENTER | SOAP            |
| DOBIE GILLIS        | HOWDY DOODY  | MIAMI VICE     | ST. ELSEWHERE   |
| DONNA REED          | I SPY        | MOD SQUAD      | TAXI            |
| DR. KILDARE         | IRONSIDE     | MOONLIGHTING   | THREE'S COMPANY |
| EMERGENCY           | JETSONS      | MURPHY BROWN   | WALTONS         |
| FLIPPER             | KOJAK        |                |                 |