

OPENING THE WORLD THROUGH WORDS

Literacy Matters



A Quarterly Newsletter

Spring 2014

30 Years of Learning and the Pages are Still Turning

In the last issue of Literacy Matters we began the celebration of the Oakland Literacy Council's 30th year with the story of our beginnings. In this issue, we will offer you another *30 Things* list about us which we think you'll find eye-opening! We'd also like to tell you about some of the events we have planned to celebrate and educate at the same time. Of course, other important information is included as usual.

As you dream of warmer weather, we hope you enjoy this issue!

Let's start with the month of May. Volunteers Bob Gaylor and Mary Rosenbusch, assisted by Judy Bryce, Debbie Castelli, Cathryn Hallisy, Judy Lindstrom, Nina Macri and Russell Moore have planned wonderful events as part of the **Motor City Wine and Food Festival**.

Three events are planned:

Made with Love, May 7, 2014, 6 pm-11pm, *Simply Good* in Birmingham

Lights, Camera, Fashion Show!, May 9, 2014, 7 pm-11 pm, *Packard Proving Grounds Gateway Complex*

Comedy and Tragedy, May 18, 2014, 4 pm-8 pm, *Players Club* in Detroit

Mary Rosenbusch noted that the cooking class at *Simply Good* is very popular and suggests early registration since there are only 28 seats. A wine expert from Napa Valley will be there to teach "us how the different wines will pair with the food we are enjoying in the class," she added.

"We have great events in unique locations in the tri-county area to raise money for literacy organizations in all three counties," commented Bob Gaylor. He continued, "Both the fashion show by Neiman Marcus at the Packard Proving Ground and the one act play presented at the Players Club in Detroit are unique in that neither has had such a large event in their facility."

You can go to the Motor City Wine and Food Festival website at www.motorcitywineandfoodfestival.com and get details about each event and register to attend.

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A few words...



Dear Tutor, Volunteer and Friend,

What does the Oakland Literacy Council, Virgin Atlantic, Dell, Bain Capital, Hampton Inns, Burt's Bees, Michaels, Cirque du Soleil, LA Fitness, Papa John's Pizza, and some 500 more companies have in common? They all developed a plan of action, a point of view, a need, a purpose and with great hope (and some fanfare) opened their doors in 1984.

We at Oakland Literacy Council, are so proud that this fine organization is celebrating 30 years of service to our community. It means that 12,000+ adult students are now able to achieve lofty dreams they may have once thought impossible. Just think, 30 years ago when our founder Robert Gaylor first came up with this plan of action he was met with tremendous road blocks and people who doubted that this service was needed in Oakland County or that it would survive. Boy were they wrong!

Not one to serve up the same programs year after year, the OLC has met the many changes and challenges in our county head on by constantly fine tuning our curriculum, materials and training. Our current staff excels in imaginative outreach programs allowing the tutor/student teams to flourish.

One word that has hit the mainstream and is heard over and over again is **Diversity**. The dictionary has several definitions but the one that strikes at the heart of our organization is "the state of having people who are different races or who have different cultures in a group or organization." We are our own United Nations! The article on this same page ties it up in a neat bow. We are always amazed at the challenges many of our ESL students face to come to our shores and then the many efforts they take to assimilate. Our heartfelt congratulations to both our ESL and Basic students.

Throughout this bulletin you will read about opportunities to get more involved in various 30th anniversary events. please step up and say "yes". You know the old adage "**30 is Fabulous**"-- well never has that been more true!

Judy Lindstrom *Judy*



30 Things about the Oakland Literacy Council

Our students come from different countries all over the world. Below is a list of the top 30 countries represented by our students over the years. The list goes in order by volume starting with the highest student population from South Korea. While this is a list of the top 30, the number of different countries represented far exceeds 30.

South Korea

China

Japan

USA

Mexico

Iraq

India

Brazil

Russia

Taiwan

Iran

Poland

Albania

Syria

Pakistan

Egypt

Ukraine

Romania

Vietnam

Columbia

Germany

Bulgaria

Hong Kong

Peru

Puerto Rico

Turkey

Argentina

Bosnia

Italy

Yugoslavia



Annual Bookstock Sale is Around the Corner

Bookstock, Used Book & Media Sale, is a community service project through which donations of books and media are turned into gold by both recycling books to new homes and raising money for literacy and education. For over ten years, this organization has worked diligently in the community to make the yearly Bookstock sale a household name.

Bookstock starts every September with the collecting of used and in some cases new books from individuals, businesses and libraries. This process continues through approximately March of the following year. Donated books are individually sorted on a weekly basis by countless volunteers committed to the cause. These activities culminate at the yearly Bookstock sale held at Laurel Park Place for an eight day period. While this sounds like an easy three step process, it is far from that.

Bookstock is an amazing community initiative run like a well-oiled machine. The Bookstock leaders take great pride in this activity and plan all phases with precision and care. What makes this endeavor so unique is the enormous amount of volunteers that are needed and deliver for this undertaking. With a strict focus on minimizing expenses, Bookstock is able to give the maximum amounts to a coalition of twelve non-profit agencies. Monies are disbursed to the agencies based upon volunteer hours accumulated throughout the year.

The Oakland Literacy Council is fortunate to be one of the twelve agencies. Our affiliation with Bookstock is over ten years. The Oakland Literacy Council has the distinct honor of sponsoring the sale Friday evening through Saturday evening. **Pat Peck** is the Oakland Literacy Council lead for the sale as well as all activity throughout the year. Pat's passion for books combined with her tremendous work ethic make this a great match and she delivers results.

This year the sale runs from April 27 through May 4 at Laurel Park Place in Livonia. The sale promises new and exciting events throughout the week. And for those who have never been to the sale, it runs through the entire mall so get your walking shoes on. Here's how you can be a part of this event:

- **Donate** used books to Bookstock
- **Volunteer** to sort books or work the sale. Sorting is done Wednesdays from 10-2 at the Jewish Community Center, Dan and Betty Kahn Building, West Bloomfield.
- **Buy** books at the sale for your enjoyment or as gifts.

Please call the Oakland Literacy Council for more information about volunteering at the sale. See you there!

Charter One Foundation donation honors one of our own!

Early this year the Oakland Literacy Council received a generous donation from the Charter One Foundation for \$2500. One of our tutors, **Diane Mullan-Cromwell**, is a Charter One employee and was rewarded for her many hours of service at several Metro-Detroit Non-Profits by receiving the **Michigan Citizens Helping Citizens Volunteer Award** for 2013. Upon receiving the award, Diane chose the Oakland Literacy Council to receive the grant in her honor.

We at the Oakland Literacy Council appreciate Diane's work as a tutor and as a strong supporter of our community. And, of course, we thank her for identifying us as the recipient of the donation. We also appreciate the Charter One Foundation for encouraging citizen volunteer efforts for non-profits in our area.

This is one example of a workplace program that recognizes and/or contributes to charitable organizations. Does your place of work have such a program? It may be worth asking. The Oakland Literacy Council office will work with you and your employer to be considered for awards or grants that support our literacy efforts. Give us a call!

From the Water Cooler

From the Water Cooler is a new feature that highlights questions we hear in the office.

My student is working very hard and I would like to acknowledge her efforts. Do you have any suggestions on how to celebrate my student's progress and achievements?

Celebrating milestones is so important! It helps to keep students motivated, lets them know their efforts are noticed and gives them a sense of pride.

It is a great time to take a step back and reflect on how far your student has come. Simply acknowledging your student's accomplishments and telling her/him how excited and proud you are can often be enough.

However, if you want to do something extra special, here are some ideas:

- Reward your student with a small gift like a dictionary or favorite book, balloons, candy, or a gift card to a favorite coffee shop.
- Take a break from your regular sessions and meet somewhere special to talk and look back. Go out for coffee, dessert or lunch; or take a walk.
- Create and print a certificate of accomplishment
- Send your student a card or a letter.
- Take a picture to commemorate the occasion.
- Nominate your students for the Oakland Literacy Council Honor Roll. They will be acknowledged at Reach for the Stars, our annual recognition event.



Tutor Tune-Up Workshops are a Great Success!

The Oakland Literacy Council is thrilled with the feedback we have received about our 2014 skill-building workshops for tutors.

Tutor Tune-Up workshops are designed to enhance tutoring sessions by focusing on specific skills and needs our tutors and students have expressed. Each course will provide you with the instruction and materials you will need to help your students achieve greater success and reach their goals!

Please join us for our next **Tutor Tune-Up:**



Make It Practical. Make it work!

Wednesday, April 16 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Join Russell Moore for a hands-on, interactive workshop with a focus on **decoding** and **comprehension**. During this session, we'll work together to produce paint sample word family sliders and contraction "folders" as well as "tense" word strips, while also engaging in Box Front Word Play. Making Words will be featured along with sequencing comic strip. Everyone will have the opportunity to produce retelling booklets. iPad Apps for reading and word work will be shared. Come prepared with a can-do attitude, ready to work together. Please bring a pair of scissors for this workshop!

Registration is required!

Xin Nian Kuai Le!

That's "Happy New Year" in Mandarin Chinese, and 2014 is the Year of the Horse. On January 30th, Cindy Oberg accompanied her student Jennifer Ke Huang and Jennifer's husband Steve Mo to a celebration of Chinese New Year's Eve sponsored by the Chinese Association of Greater Detroit.

Groves High School auditorium was packed with families who were enchanted by the beautifully costumed acrobats, magicians, dancers, and singers from the Peking Opera, all members of the Chinese Zhejiang Performing Arts Troupe who came from China for this event. Dignitaries from the Chinese consulate in Chicago and the CADG were recognized, as were representatives of Oakland County Executive L. Brooks Patterson and Governor Rick Snyder.



Cindy's favorite act was the "Face Changing" – an amazing display of sleight-of-hand involving a silent costumed dancer who changed his many masks instantaneously, apparently by magic, without touching his face or revealing where the masks were concealed. In a nice turn-about, Jennifer provided on-the-spot interpreting for Cindy, as well as background information on the customs and traditions that were portrayed, so Cindy would fully appreciate the performance and have an excellent time.

Please consider

Joining us on **Tuesday, April 8th at 10:30** in the Literacy office as we coordinate our efforts regarding two exciting 30th anniversary offerings....The first:

Challenge 30--Our business leaders have worked hand in hand with the OLC for 30 years. Without their support many of our programs would not exist. It is our goal to find 30 businesses willing to donate \$1000 earmarked for training our exemplary volunteer tutors. If we raise our goal of \$30,000 it will support our tutor training efforts for the next two years.

The Second:

We've created a **Walk for Literacy** at the Detroit Zoo aptly titled: *WILD ABOUT READING*. Mark your calendars for Saturday, September 6. Spend the morning getting to know the lions, tigers, bears, penguins all while knowing that you are assisting the OLC and getting healthy! Lots of surprises in store.

We can use your creative input to make these a success. Please call the office to let us know you can attend.

Country Spotlight: Montenegro

Country:	Montenegro
Location:	Balkan Peninsula in southeastern Europe
Capital:	Podgorica is the administrative capital; Cetinje is the historic capital and the ceremonial seat of the president
Population:	685,000
Size:	5,417 square miles (smaller than Connecticut)
Primary Language:	Serbian
Climate:	Montenegro lower coastal regions have average temperatures in July of 75 degrees and 46 degrees in January. In central and northern Montenegro temperatures average slightly higher in the summer months and dip down to 23 degrees in January.
Greetings:	Friends and relatives greet each other with an embrace and three kisses on alternating cheeks; youth may exchange just one kiss. Formal greetings include a handshake. As a form of respect, a younger person always greets an older person first by standing or initiating a handshake.
Eating:	Breakfast includes bread, cheese and ham. Lunch is served around 4:00 or 5:00 p.m. (due to later working hours) and is the most important meal of the day. It normally consists of soup, a main dish, cheese and bread. Dinner is relatively light consisting of eggs, cheese and some potatoes or fried meat.
Holidays:	Official holidays include New Year's Day (January 1), Labor Day (May 1) and Statehood Day (July 13). Major Christian holidays include Catholic Christmas (December 25 – 26), Orthodox Christmas (January 5 -7) and Easter. Orthodox Christians burn logs in front of their churches on Christmas Eve (January 6) to bring good fortune and ward off evil spirits.



Our students from Montenegro say:

Student **Marija Vukcevic** misses her family, friends and food. She says there is a lot of mountain and sea tourism. Montenegro is beautiful and only a short 3-hour car ride to Italy (from Podgorica).

Student **Lena Kalaj** says "wherever you are born it stays with you and you never forget no matter how long ago you left. I miss my family I left in Montenegro but I always remember them. I miss the small towns where you know everyone and all your neighbors. I miss the beautiful mountains and the nice weather. Mostly, I miss people getting together. They visit each other often." Lena grew up in the town of Tuzi and shares the following picture of the town.



Tuzi, Montenegro

CultureGrams 2009 World Edition. Provo, Utah: ProQuest. (2009)

Reading is to the mind what exercise is to the body.
Joseph Addison



Oakland Literacy Council

Student Goal Achievements – 2013 -2014

November 2013	IM ordered from the menu and understood the menu ingredients and quantities.
November 2013	ES is able to read books to her children.
November 2013	MW finished book 9 of the “Series of Unfortunate Events.”
November 2013	ZA wrote a report on Thomas Jefferson.
November 2013	MA ordered a Thanksgiving dinner at the grocery store.
November 2013	NF wrote a letter to her son’s new preschool director regarding his enrollment and tuition fees.
November 2013	CA able to read the majority of team members names from his job.
November 2013	KS attended and communicated effectively at her daughter’s parent-teacher conference.
November 2013	DI can now recite and write the alphabet with 95% accuracy.
December 2013	KH read A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens.
January 2014	ND learned how to text this month..
January 2014	SK learned what to do in case of emergencies.

TESTING 1, 2, 3

Students are review tested in no less than 40 hour increments of instruction. Most students should expect to be tested two to three times a year. Testing is important because it measures the students’ progress. This information helps the student and tutor focus their work on areas needing improvement.

In addition to the hours of tutoring, homework and practicing, being prepared to take the test is important. Here are some tips to prepare students for their review test:

- Get a good night’s sleep the night before the test
- Eat before the test appointment (don’t test on an empty stomach)
- Arrive early to the testing appointment
- Bring eye glasses if necessary
- Take care of any personal calls prior to the test (phones have to be off during testing)
- Dress comfortably
- Relax



Good study habits and good test preparedness are keys to positive results.

VARIETY is the Spice of Life

Reviewing grammar, mastering punctuation, practicing pronunciation and learning spelling rules are all very important in order for our students to meet and exceed their goals, but there is more to life than workbooks and drills! Just like good recipes need to be spiced up make them more interesting and worthwhile, good lessons need a measure of creativity and variety too.

To keep things fresh and make learning meaningful to your students, consider adding a dash of real-life experience and pinch of local flavor to your instruction. Sprinkling in authentic materials your student will see and use in everyday situations will help them connect to the world around them and give them the skills they need to navigate throughout their days.

To make your lessons more appetizing and rewarding, consider some of the following suggestions. Your students will relish the change and savor the excitement!

- Analyze the weekly grocery store fliers to compare prices
- Read a recipe
- Practice making change with American money
- Search and decode the classified ads
- Look over a menu and determine how much a meal would cost
- Study bus schedules
- Interpret charts and graphs
- Go to the mall and use the map to navigate your way to specific places
- Evaluate time cards
- Inspect labels
- Fill out forms and applications
- Give and follow directions
- Study street maps
- Figure out the information contained in a telephone message

In addition to adding spice to your lesson plans, the above suggestions will assist students when it is time for their review test. Oakland Literacy Council uses a testing series called CASAS Life and Work. This test is one approved by the state under the program in which we receive funding. The test contains scenarios that an adult would experience in daily activities. For example, questions in which the student must choose the correct answer to passages or pictures that are given.

Aligning lesson plans to life skills benefits the student in many ways. If you haven't added new material to your tutoring sessions, maybe now is the time to spice it up a bit! Resources are available at your local library, the internet, the OLC website, and the OLC library. Call for an appointment today!

Free Workshop to Help Students Open the Door to Success

Oakland Literacy Council is excited to provide a wonderful opportunity for our Basic students:

Free PowerPath Screenings and Intervention Strategies

PowerPath is an engagement, screening, and intervention system built on over 35 years of evidence-based research. Unlike other assessments that focus on what a person knows, the PowerPath System focuses on how a person learns.

Through a grant from the Workforce Development Agency, trained professionals will assess and assist our Basic students in building personal insight and strategies to help open doors to reading success.

Two sessions are being offered for Basic students:

"It was truly a life changing experience...my eyes were opened to a few simple things that made reading easier..." (Darryl)

March 20 from 10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

or

March 25 from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

at

the Oakland Literacy Council office

Registration is required

*** These sessions are for students only ***

"Since I did the PowerPath testing I understand myself and how I learn better. I have more confidence." (Arlene)

Tutors: Students have received information about these workshops. Please encourage your Basic student to participate in this unique opportunity!

For further information, visit their website at www.powerpath.com

Have you?

Visited our new web site or "friended" us on Facebook?

Would you?

Be willing to get more involved, like working at Bookstock?

Did you?

Tell your family, friends, neighbors, business associates about OLC?

Could you?

Visit your local businesses and ask for their support of our mission?

Many thanks to our 2013 donors. You make our mission possible!

AAUW Birmingham Branch	Keith Collin	Lynne Huisman	Jason Miller
Joyce Adderley	Ellen and William Couch	Freda and Norman Hunstad	Louise Miller Tuller Trust
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