



LitBits

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Literacy Volunteers and Students Meet with Area Legislators

During the months of February and March, Literacy Volunteers tutors, students and Board members have been very active meeting with our delegation of NYS Legislators both at home and in Albany to discuss the needs of LVR students. On the local level, LVR representatives met with the Senator Robach and Assembly member Susan John as well as staff of Senator Alessi and Assembly members Morelle, Gantt and Reilich. On March 8th a team from LVR traveled to Albany to attend the Literacy New York annual meeting and met with Senator Robach and Assembly member Errigo and the staff of Senator Alessi, as well as

Assembly members John, Koon, and Morelle.

The purpose of these visits was to inform legislators and their staff about the impact of LVR programs and services on the lives of our students as well as the rewards that our volunteers receive through their commitment.

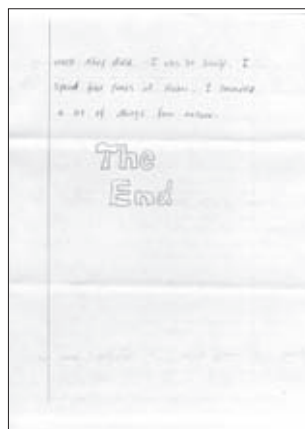
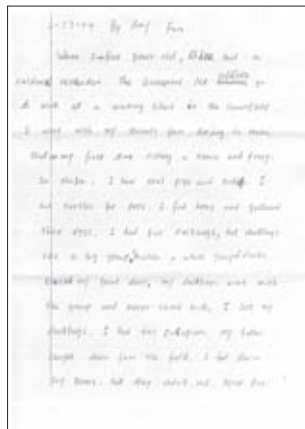
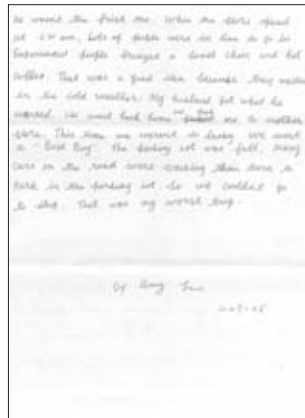
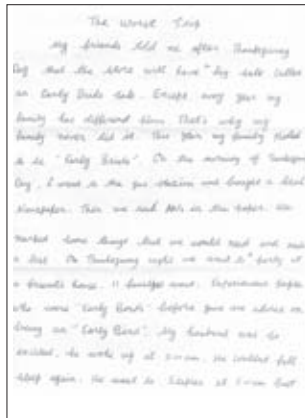
LVR receives approximately 40% of its annual operating budget from New York State via the NYS Department of Education. The funding support which LVR receives is called ALE (Adult Literacy Education) and it totals \$3.3 million for all of New

York State. Literacy New York, our state association is supporting an increase of \$1.7 million in funding. Additionally, our volunteers were able to thank our legislators for their support of literacy programs. Several area legislators have helped obtain support for LVR programs. In the current budget year, LVR has received support via the efforts of Senators Robach and Alessi and Assemblyman Errigo! Thanks to all our volunteers and students for spreading the message about the good works of LVR and to the Monroe County delegation for your support of adult literacy services in our community!

Student Writings from Amy Fan

Charlotte Klose and Amy Fan have been working together for 18 months. Amy is originally from China and has been living in the United States with her husband and daughter. She is an eager English learner and according to Charlotte, "She continues to work as hard and enthusiastically as ever and is progressing well, especially in vocabulary development and speaking clear English with confidence. She continues her strong interest in learning about New York state history and women's rights; we've now read aloud and discussed together nearly half of the book about Susan B. Anthony, *And Justice for All*."

These two writings were written one year apart. Notice the more complex sentence structure that Amy uses in The Worst Trip, and her ability to write in cursive.



Charlotte's Tutor Tip:

One useful technique which I consistently use to expand Amy's vocabulary is to help her build her own personal dictionary.

In a given session, she chooses five words new to her that we find in our reading or conversation. We both copy each new word on a 2"x3" card, marking any special pronunciation problems, and on the back of the card, we write its meaning in words which Amy understands (not "dictionary" definitions.)

We each number our cards consecutively and add five new words every second session. In our meetings in between, we drill on the pronunciation and meanings as needed. Thereafter, we both try hard to use these new words as often as possible.

From the Executive Director - Bob Mahar

Directors Update: Raising Awareness about Literacy



I recently had the opportunity to write a *Speaking Out* letter to the *Democrat and Chronicle* in which we outlined some of the challenges faced by LVR students and others in dealing with the 'new literacy.' In a world of increased forms, documentation and web based information, it can be a struggle for adults with limited basic literacy and English skills to keep up. From choosing energy providers to health care decisions, the tools we need to be functionally literate are changing.

Part of the mission of LVR is to raise awareness in our community about the issue of literacy and to support the efforts of individuals and organizations to address it. This year's spring fundraising event, in addition to raising financial support for LVR through the "Raffle for Reading," had a goal to raise awareness about literacy. LVR volunteers and staff will be appearing throughout the community at organizations, meetings and through local media to help our community raise its awareness level about literacy and LVR.

During the past months, our students, volunteers and board members have been meeting with local legislators locally and in Albany to share that message as well. It is an important reminder that while we discuss the educational needs of children, we not forget the needs of their parents who need the tools to compete effectively in the work force and to help support their child's education.

LVR is also partnering with ProLiteracy through its national contacts to raise awareness. Through its work with Wal-Mart, ProLiteracy has provided a country music CD by some of the top country artists about literacy. Copies of the CD are available at LVR— stop by and pick yours up today!

ProLiteracy has also partnered with Hasbro, Inc. to provide Scrabble games for local events and LVR held a Scrabble Party on March 30, 2005 at the Cooperative Extension Auditorium. The Scrabble Party was a fun event for students and tutors teaming together and playing Scrabble.

These efforts to raise awareness help increase support for LVR and the work that you all do. Please share your experiences and these events and efforts with others you know. Thank you for all you do to support LVR, literacy and to promote awareness in our community.

Message from the President – John Laurence



At our last Board meeting, we agreed that we have three priorities for the remainder of the year. They are:

- Actively support the spring fundraising event to ensure the

continued good financial health of the organization

- Engage our New York State legislators to carry forward the message about the need to increase literacy in the community reminding them of our role in it.
- Complete the Strategic Plan, our road map for the next several years.

You can help LVR achieve these goals by talking to those you know (friends, relatives, legislators, neighbors, co-workers, etc.) about the good the organization

does. Raising awareness of the literacy problem in the Rochester area and what you and the organization are doing about it is one of the key goals of the Strategic Plan. (And speaking of the Strategic Plan, you will have a chance to review it at the Annual Meeting.)

It's with great sadness that I talk about the passing of Grace Weinstein. She was an active volunteer for over 20 years who supported the organization in multiple ways. She and her best friend "Abby" (an English sheepdog) were often seen in the office. Long-term volunteers like Grace have been one of the strengths of the organization over the years. She will be sorely missed.

2005 Charity Golf Outing

Co-sponsored by Rush-Henrietta Rotary Club and Literacy Volunteers of Rochester

Monday, July 18, 2005 at the Country Club of Mendon

Call for information: 473-3030

Our Donors

These donors made gifts to Literacy Volunteers of Rochester between November 1, 2004, and January 31, 2005. If we have made an error or omission in the listings, please contact our office at 473-3030.

\$5,000 and Above

Davenport-Hatch Foundation; Empire State Development Corporation-Assemblyman Joseph Errigo; Special Legislative Grant (NYS Dept. of Education)-Senator James Alesi; and Special Legislative Grant (NYS Dept. of Education)-Senator Joseph Robach

\$1,000 - \$4,999

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In Memory of Lou Weissman
Jane Plitt and Jim Bruen

Super Tutors/Tutor Mentor

Basic – Evening

Mary June Dowd - 392-3811

Paul Crough - 271-3787

Pamela Langdon - 546-7254

Basic – Daytime

Susan Boland - 442-2844

Susan Brandt (Advanced Basic only) - 248-5786

ESOL - Daytime

Cynthia Goldstein - 334-4557

Charlotte Klose – 377-5481

ESOL - Evenings

Malla Barker - 473-5327

Peg Warrick - 461-0939

Pamela Langdon - 546-7254

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Office Hours

Monday-Friday 9:00 am – 4:00 pm
Saturday 9 am – Noon
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Pronunciation Can Be Fun!

Judy Emerson, Program Coordinator & Pamela Langdon, Tutor

In the first week of February, veteran tutor Pamela Langdon began the first classes of an eight-week workshop, titled "Pronunciation Can Be Fun!" The workshop, designed for English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL), has twenty participants. Students spend 1.5 hours each week learning about the signals for stressing the various parts of speech, intonation, rhythm, reduction of sounds used by native speakers and also working on specific linguistic problems they may be having.

Pamela has been involved in Literacy Volunteers for 29 years. She was raised outside the United States in a non-

English speaking environment.

She has a strong personal interest in the difficulties encountered in learning a new language. Much of the workshop is spent encouraging students to try and be understood by one another by offering a low-stress environment to practice the "tunes" of English

This class, as well as other events, such as Games Night and "Cultures and Customs of Spring," are intended to provide additional services to our ESOL students who are both waiting and matched with tutors.

Save the Date:
Brain Game
October 6, 2005, Clarion Hotel