

The Lamplighter

October, November, December, 2007

*A quarterly newsletter of the
Literacy Council of Bonita Springs*

First Steps Class Helps Beginners

Beginning in July 2007, tutor Bob Sorensen formed a new class, First Steps, to help students who never attended school in their native countries. They are unable to read or write in any language and this class helps to introduce them to English language instruction at the most basic level. The class meets every Friday at 6:00 pm at the Literacy Council offices. Thanks, Bob, for developing this class to fill an important need for many students in this community.

Xmas Parties for Moms and Tots

Our Moms and Tots program participants enjoyed Christmas parties this past holiday season. Moms brought their favorite dishes to share and tots received Barnes and Noble-donated books as presents. Moms also received gifts, compliments of Office Depot. All were treated to a visit from Santa (aka Diego Grisales) who handed out presents.

Plan to Attend Fundraising Breakfast March 12 at Hyatt Coconut Point Resort

The 5th Annual Fundraising Breakfast will be held on Wednesday, March 12, from 8-9 am at the Hyatt Regency Coconut Point Resort. We want to invite all of you to join us for this exciting and uplifting event at the beautiful Hyatt Coconut Point Resort in Estero. A Continental breakfast will be served. Students and tutors will relate their experiences and a film presenting a student's successful journey to English literacy will also be shown.

As we do not send out invitations, we ask that if you would like to attend that you call Susan at the office to be added to the guest list. Also, if you have ten friends or neighbors that you would like to introduce to the Literacy Council and its marvelous programs, you might want to serve as a table captain for the event. It's easy: you invite ten friends; they sit with you at your table and you distribute pledge cards toward the end of the event. If you are interested, please call Susan at 495-0999 for details.

O'Donnells Hosted Annual Legacy Society Dinner

Thanks to Board member Pat O'Donnell and her husband, Al, who hosted a wonderful event at their home last November for members of the Legacy Society. The appreciation event, for those who contribute \$1,000, \$5,000 or \$10,000 per year for five years, featured wine-tasting and a delicious dinner.

Attendees had an enjoyable casual evening filled with great food and fun conversation. Susan updated members on Literacy Council happenings, shared success stories and expressed appreciation for their generosity toward helping the Council serve over 1,549 students last year. Thank you so very much, Pat and Al, for a wonderful evening! If you have any questions about membership in the Legacy Society, please call Susan at the Council.

Muchas Gracias Por El Dinero!

December 2007

Brooks Foundation	\$5,000
LeClerc Foundation.....	\$20,000
Irwin Foundation.....	\$50,000
Barnes & Noble and its customers.....	\$2,000
Work-A-Holics Landscaping	\$1,000
St. Mary's Episcopal Church.....	\$2,000

November 2007

Naples Fire Sprinkler Toshiba copying machine

October 2007

Stark Community Foundation.....	\$1,000
St. Monica's Episcopal Church.....	\$500

Student Donates \$100 to Council

Thanks so very much to student Josue Gonzalez, a student in Bert Bonner's class, who donated \$100 to the Literacy Council. Josue is so very grateful to the Council and his tutors for helping him improve his English skills that he wanted to express his appreciation. Our deepest appreciation goes to you, Josue, and we wish you success in everything you do.

Student Raffle Buys New Software

On November 30, three lucky students were the proud winners of the following items at our Student Council-sponsored raffle:

Dell laptop computer: Rocio Perez

Automobile Tools: Isaul Avalos

Portable system for iPod: Dionicion Gonzalez

The Student Council worked very hard to sell tickets for the raffle to help benefit Literacy Council programs. Students collected over \$2,145. The Student Council voted to use the rest of the proceeds to purchase new software for the Council's computer lab. At this time, One Tree Learning software has been installed to give our students another choice of programs as they study English independently. This software complements our existing EASY and Ellis programs. Thanks so much for your hard work, Student Council!

Barnes & Noble Donates Over \$2,000 in Children's Books

Thanks so very much to Barnes & Noble, its customers and Community Relations Manager Andrea Theisen for an incredible gift for our children. Throughout the season, customers shopping at the Coconut Point store could purchase a brand new hardcover children's book which was given to the Literacy Council. The response was incredible and the Council was fortunate to receive over \$2,000 worth of beautiful books for boys and girls. Over 200 books were joyfully wrapped by our oldest volunteer to date, Laura Holman, Susan Acuña's mother, who, at 93, refused to relax while on vacation in Southwest Florida! Thank you again, Barnes & Noble, Andrea and all customers who purchased books for the children!

Literacy Council Held Holiday Open House on December 21

The Literacy Council hosted a Holiday Open House for students and tutors on Friday, December 21 from 4:30 to 7:00 pm. Everyone was treated to free raffles, lots of wonderful food brought by students and tutors and a visit from Santa! It was a fun event where students and tutors enjoyed each others' company over lovingly prepared food. It was a super way to end 2007!

United Way Resource House Hosts Agency Meetings

The Literacy Council has been hosting Abuse Counseling and Treatment Center staff who meet weekly with Bonita area clients in need of domestic violence counseling. ACT representatives have also given bi-lingual talks to our Moms and Tots participants to inform on domestic violence issues and to offer support if needed. Other agencies are invited to hold meetings in the Resource House.

87 Volunteers Complete Tutor Training

October 13, 20, 27, 2007, Bentley Village

Andrea Smith, Trainer

Claudia Arévalo
Jennifer Arnold
Paul Benedict
María Carrillo
Martha Casañas
Jamie Henline
Carol Jansky
Connie Kindsvater
Rita Kohn
Elizabeth Nagel
Melissa Santiago
David Steckler
Molly Thompson
Merril Vitek
Eileen Warburton
June Wirtz
Liset Zelaya
Thelma Zilinskis

October 30, November 1, 2007, Audubon CC

Andrea Smith, Trainer

Dolores Azarow
Jan Balson
Jim Barr
Larry Baytos
Frank Cannon
Bill Clark
Neal Farrell
Paul Gold
Ed Graf
Joe Grecky
Charles Jeffrey
Joe Mazur
Mark McDonough
Karen Meier
Bill Mettler
Lisa Miller
Hugh O'Hare
Joyce Sauer
Spike Schellenger
Sue Schellenger
Rich Schneeberg
Marcela Ugarte
Barbara Wallisky
Lorsie Walseth

Rich Schneeberg
Marcela Ugarte
Barbara Wallisky
Lorsie Walseth

November 3, 10, 2007, Palmira Golf Club

Andrea Smith, Trainer

Susan Alyn
Ann Bigley
Jerry Bigley
Judy Buchanan
Marie Buckley
Ray Cayo
Pat Conley
Cheryl Denmark
Jay Denmark
Margaret Doerr
Wendy Evans
Joanne Glaser
Martha Goodloe
Ann Hutchins
Bess Kaplan
Nancy Kaufman
Betty Morey
Elizabeth Newton
Ann Roush
Dan Roush
Cheri Schwandt
Sally Smith
Carol Wallman
Sue Webber

December 5, 14, 2007, Stonebridge Country Club

Andrea Smith, Trainer

Elaine Birrell
Bea Busa
Dan Chabot
David Davidson
Vic DeBartlo
Rosie DeBartlo
Peggy DeJonckheere
June Falcone
Leo Gallagher
Robert Goldstein

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From The Council Director:

Another holiday season has passed, very quickly I might add, and we are in the fast lane of “Season”. Events are happening and new events are being planned. Tutors are back with us and enjoying the comfortable SWFL temperatures. Students are thrilled that their tutors are back helping them improve their English skills. And we celebrate the spirit of volunteerism that permeates the Literacy Council. We are constantly amazed by the generosity of time and donations that flow into the Council daily.

We have so many volunteers with numerous skills, talents and experiences who enrich our lives and those of our students. We have tutors who consistently teach students on a one-on-one, small-group or large-group basis at the council or at various locations throughout the area. We have tutors who teach English to the hard-working employees of 17 golf communities. We have tutors who joyously teach moms and children at our seven Moms and Tots program locations. We have volunteers who help us tremendously with many administrative duties at our offices, relieving the pressures on our small paid staff. We have students who donate their time cleaning and trimming our landscaping, picking up donated items using their vehicles, cleaning our offices, assisting beginner students to use the computer programs and with filing.

We have volunteers in a tremendous age range from Jocelyn, 11, who helps us when she’s at her mom’s laundry next door and Diego Felipe Grisales, 13, who helps us when school’s out; to Laura Holman, my Energizer bunny mom, 93, who wrapped over 200 books, did filing, assembled tutor nametags and labeled over 200 books during her 4-day “vacation” here.

We really appreciate all of your support. You are the engine that keeps the Literacy Council running so smoothly – we can’t do this without you!

P.S. and Mom – I hope when I’m your age I have the kind of energy and good health that you enjoy. I’m proud of you – and love you, too.

Susan Acuña



Literacy Council of Bonita Springs
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Bonita Springs, FL 34133



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Diane Hammer
Michelle Heuschen
Bob Hobbs
John Ruggeri
Helene Scolnick
Robert Scolnick
Beth Sendre
Denny Sequeira
Beth Syburn
Paula Thomas

OFFICE SCHEDULE

Susan Acuña, Executive Director
Diego Grisales, Program Director
Kerty Reiterer-Crespo, Office Manager
Monday to Friday, 9:00 am to 5:00 pm
Jeanne Sachs, Student/Tutor Coordinator
Monday to Thurs., 4:00 to 9:00 pm
Nora Martinez, Assistant Coordinator
Monday to Friday, 5:00 to 9:00 pm

STUDENT LAB OPEN

Mon. to Fri., 9:00 am to 9:00 pm

CONTACT INFORMATION

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