

lovetoread News

Volume 6, No. 3 Winter 2007-2008

Students Have Fun with Words

How do you get students who aren't sure of themselves writing and sharing their experiences? That was the challenge for Susan Lutgen, LVT's Basic Literacy Program Manager.

The answer? *The Journey*, a new quarterly publication at Literacy Volunteers of Tucson created by and for our Basic Literacy students.

In its debut issue, nine students took the plunge and contributed brief stories to *The Journey*.

Practice makes confident

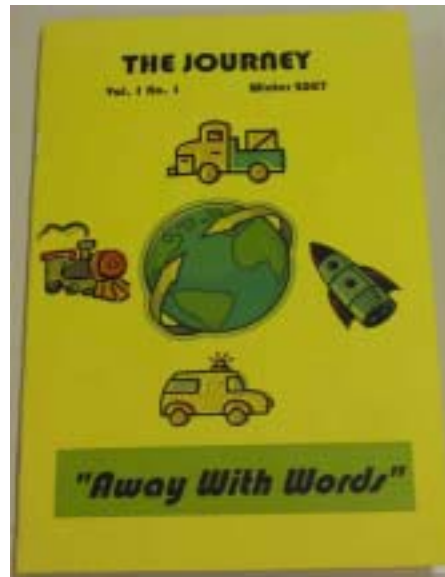
Basic Literacy students of all levels are encouraged to contribute articles as a way to practice writing and share ideas with others. Emphasis is on feeling and color – getting students to have fun with language – not on perfect grammar.

Being able to express themselves in writing gives students a new self-confidence. "Seeing their words in print gives students a sense of empowerment," Susan Lutgen said.

The theme of the first issue was "Winter" and the many ways to cel-

brate it and its holidays. Coincidentally, the stories also involved some form of transportation, inspiring the cover art and the subtitle.

The theme of the spring volume will be "Families."



Firsthand knowledge

Editor-in-Chief Sheryl Sitser has experienced firsthand the problems

associated with learning disabilities: she has dyslexia.

"Dyslexia brings with it an emotional toll," she explained. She was, however, able to overcome the lack of self-esteem and confusion it caused. She attributed her success in part to her mother, who taught her at home when she was quite young and living abroad.

Sheryl later got two A.A. degrees and a B.A. in English with a teaching certificate. She has taught writing.

She was assisted in this first (ad)venture by tutors Jeannie Archibald, Steve Windsor and Diane Olson and students Juanita Short and Kathy Walker.

Thank you to our donors, who made this possible.

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If you'd like to receive a free copy of this publication, please contact the LVT office at 882-8006.

IMPORTANT TAX INFORMATION

If you contributed to Literacy Volunteers of Tucson during 2007, your contribution is tax-deductible on your Federal forms. You may also be eligible for a State

tax credit, as we are certified as an organization that provides assistance to the working poor. Please be sure to check with your tax advisor.

Our Mission

Literacy Volunteers of Tucson believes that everyone should have the opportunity to learn to read. We exist to improve, free of charge, the reading, writing and English-speaking skills of adults who read at or below the sixth grade level. We bring together dedicated adult learners and committed, well-trained volunteers who provide instruction to address the individual needs and goals of the students in a confidential manner.

Transforming Lives Brings Joy



“Now that I can read I no longer suffer from depression. In fact, I realize that, when I couldn’t read, I couldn’t even think straight!” That’s from an LVT student, as he recently stood in our offices proudly displaying his newly earned GED.

As I listened to him, I felt an overwhelming rush of gratitude.

What a great job I have, one that lets me be a part of helping people improve their lives so dramatically! You tutors know what I mean. To you donors, I hope this story – which is just one of many that we hear – allows you to feel this joy as well, because you made it possible. Lives are transformed here at LVT.



The smiling faces of tutor Cathleen Beczkehazy and one of the Rio Vista students, as certificates were given out at the end of the semester, says it all. (Photo: BJ Cather)

As we begin 2008, we are excited about some new projects that are getting underway. We are partnering with the Direct Caregiver Association to assist those who apply to become healthcare givers but read at too low a level to qualify for its program. LVT is providing tutors to help those individuals improve their skills to pass the test at Direct Caregivers as well as to ensure their success once they enter the program. People who once thought they had no options for improving their job skills are now getting a hand to reach their goals.

Another partnership that is growing in the New Year is the work that LVT does with the Pima County Public Library. English Language Acquisition classes are now being taught at three branches, with plans underway for classes at three more branches before the end of 2008. At one site, LVT tutor Jerry Richmond is piloting a Fast Track Learning Project to promote independent learning between classes by teaching students to make better use of the library and develop valuable self-study skills.

This is the first year we have no State funding. This means we can focus on finding and following “best practices” for our English Language Acquisition students as well as our Basic Literacy students. The real winners are our learners, as we now have the freedom to teach to each student’s needs rather than to a prescribed test. What a joy!

Please join us in 2008 and share in the joy and inspiration that comes from helping others.

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www.lovetoread.org

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LVT is an accredited affiliate of ProLiteracy America, a non-profit organization that combats illiteracy through a network of community volunteer literacy programs.



New Partnerships Bring New Revenue, New Students

Literacy Volunteers is always on the lookout for new ways to collaborate so that more students can be served more efficiently.

New Partnerships

A smiling Cesar Castellanos, the employee of a local commercial heating and air-conditioning company, recently received a \$2-an-hour raise after attending English classes offered by Literacy Volunteers of Tucson (LVT) at his neighborhood library. Of course, the raise wasn't just for learning English, but that was part of it.

LVT's collaboration with the **Pima County Public Library** is one of our new partnerships initiated last fall. LVT began offering ELAA classes at the Martha L. Cooper and the Quincie L. Douglas Libraries, with another now at Valencia Library. Special computer classes are beginning at the Mission Library.

In December 2007, LVT became a contractor for literacy services with Pima County. As LVT no longer receives any money from the State of Arizona, this is an exciting new source of revenue.

(More) New Revenue

After much support of our newsletter by the **Pima Federal Credit Union**, LVT now enjoys a different type of support.



A smiling Cesar Castellanos took his English class at Martha L. Cooper Library. (Photo: Mari Herrerias/Tucson Weekly, Dec. 27, 2007, issue)

The credit union is a popular source of car loans. However, not everyone who goes out to buy a car or truck is a credit union member. The person still qualifies by paying

a \$10 membership fee, which is now donated to LVT.

While this won't replace the State funding we're no longer receiving, it does help keep a deficit away.

New Students

LVT is working with the **Direct CareGiver Association** to help applicants improve their literacy skills. The association offers certification for nursing assistants and home-care providers. If applicants do not have a high-school diploma or GED, they are required to pass a test to see if they read at seventh-grade level. Many don't – and are referred to LVT for help. Our LVT plan is to help these people with reading, including introducing them to vocabulary and concepts that will be used in their training, then to follow them as they progress through training, placement and future jobs.

LVT continues to look for opportunities to collaborate with other organizations, helping people improve their English or their reading.

Library Summit to Create a Community of Readers from Birth

An alarming trend in early childhood education brings formality and strictness to ensure children are ready for school. But, education in pre-school should be happening every minute of the day without being formalized. This **free** presentation will look at the enthusiastic use of books, poems and reading aloud as a way of preparing children in the happiest manner for their entry into the world of literacy. It will also explore ways in which teachers in el-

ementary school can ensure these students continue their eager journey on the road to literacy success.

This summit will show how important it is for children to be ready to learn when they begin school and describe current research on early brain development, the importance of reading aloud to children and creating a language-rich environment for them.

For more information, contact Gina Macaluso at the library, 791-4391 or gina.macaluso@pima.gov.

Pima County Public Library

Announces

Creating a Community of Readers Starting at Birth Literacy Summit

March 5, 2008, 9-4 p.m.

Plus a **Literacy Fair**

followed by

Education Without Educating

An Evening Address
with Mem Fox, 6:30 p.m.

Jewish Community Center
3800 E. River Road

Good Health Comes in Small Doses

One of the stories we tell a lot here at LVT is the one about a mom who couldn't read or understand the doctor's directions. She poured the antibiotic prescribed for her son's ear infection in his ear, instead of his mouth.

Studies have shown that people who don't read well (or who don't understand English well):

- » may not read medication labels and instructions correctly,
- » are less likely to get preventative screenings such as Pap tests,
- » make less informed healthcare decisions and
- » are less able to advocate for themselves in the healthcare system.

Health: Important, Overlooked

Health literacy is an important area that is often overlooked but that costs taxpayers millions every year.

A study by Tucson's Dr. Barry Weiss found that Medicaid patients with the lowest grade levels (0-2nd grade) had annual health costs of about \$13,000 a year, compared to an average of \$3,000 for all Medicaid participants in the study.

That's one reason health is an area LVT emphasizes in our train-

ing, especially for those tutors who will be teaching English. And it's having an effect!

Luci*, one of our center students, had an appointment for her daughter with a new doctor. When she arrived for the appointment, the receptionist gave her some forms to fill



out. The receptionist asked her if she needed help with English.

Luci said, "No, thank you. I am taking an English class, and I can do this."

Because a visit to the doctor's office had been discussed in her LVT English class, she was able to fill out the forms, which the receptionist said were fine.

Luci also spoke with the doctor in English, and she now has an ongoing relationship with this doctor.

Juanita*, a student at another center, got a call from the school nurse about her son, and she understood what she was told. Someone had pushed the boy. He hit his head, and

the nurse wanted Juanita to come to school. She took her son to the hospital to be checked out. Thanks to her LVT class, she spoke English to the school nurse and at the hospital.

Report: Education = Longevity

The single factor that best predicts how long you'll live is the number of years you spent in school. This was the emphasis of an opinion piece by Dr. Douglas Kamerow, a family physician and former assistant surgeon general, on National Public Radio recently. Studies around the world, he said, show that, for every year in school, life expectancy increases 18 months.

Health Literacy, Higher Profile

For all these reasons, health literacy is becoming a high-profile area. LVT will continue to help our students be able to help themselves with their own healthcare needs and those of their families.

New Year, New Cost for Training

Effective January 1, 2008, the cost of LVT tutor training for Basic Literacy and for English Language Acquisition for Adults (ELAA) is \$50.00 a person, with no membership fee.

For those who want the training but do not tutor with LVT, the cost will be \$100.00 a person.

A small number of scholarships will be available to those not able to afford the cost of training.

The increase is necessary to cover costs of materials now that LVT has left State funding. As only a part of the actual training cost is offset by the fee, LVT will happily accept additional contributions.

A week has 168 hours.

Can you spare a couple to help someone in our community improve his or her life? Adult learners are looking for tutors to help them learn to read, write and/or speak English.

For more info, email
lkemper@lovetoread.org
or call
882-8006.



* All names have been changed to protect students' privacy.

An Open Letter to Our Wonderful Volunteers

We wish to express our heartfelt thanks and gratitude to our 2007 Volunteers. We appreciate all you do!

Literacy Volunteers of Tucson could not exist without dedicated individuals who give of themselves to assist and make the lives of others better.

We have volunteers who perform intake duties with the students, make our bulk mail task look easy, answer

the phones, train tutors, mentor tutors, tutor students in many different settings, perform library duties, enter data and so much more.

Each of you has a special place in LVT, and we appreciate the uniqueness of each of you. Please know how we continue to need you and value all you do for us.

– Lisa Kemper, Volunteer & Community Resources Coordinator

***Thank you,
Volunteers,
for all you do
and for who
you are.***



LVT Volunteers Honored



Yale Joseph with student Maria Moran after she spoke at the ProLiteracy America annual conference in fall 2005.

LVT volunteers Jane Pence and Yale Joseph are among 21 finalists statewide for the 2008 Blue Cross Blue Shield of Arizona and *The Arizona Republic* Outstanding Arizona Seniors for Ageless Heroes Awards.

Four LVT volunteers were nominated: **Yale Joseph**, volunteer ELAA tutor; **Ann Maly**, ELAA tutor and office volunteer; **Jane Pence**, volunteer librarian and data entry specialist; and **Cathie Seifert**, volunteer center tutor and ELAA trainer.

The award ceremony is to be held February 14, 2008, at the historic Arizona Biltmore Hotel in Phoenix.



Jane Pence at work in the LVT library.

Double-duty dollars

Studies show that, as adults improve their literacy, they improve their lives. They take more interest in their children's education. They model the importance of education for their children.

In other words, "no child left behind" begins with "no parent left behind".

For a few bucks, a BIG bang!

Arizona Adult Education Love of Learning Week February 17-23

Right: One of our center students wears her 2007 "I'm in Love with Learning" t-shirt to class.



Fortune Smiles on Student Speaker

At Literacy Volunteers of Tucson, we say we change – transform – lives. At our Annual *lovetoread* Breakfast November 7, 2007, we all saw this “up close and personal”: Our student speaker was praised by her employer, who hadn’t been aware she even had a problem, and she was offered a scholarship!

With a learning disability problem as far back as she could remember, Rebecca Lona, the student speaker, has been an LVT student on and off for seven years.

After special ed, “lost”

From the beginning, she was placed in a special ed class to help her learn how to read. But in eighth grade, ashamed of feeling different, she asked to be placed with “regular” students. She got lost in the system in high school and has struggled ever since to learn how to read and write.

She got her high school diploma, though she read at about the third-grade level. She knew she wanted to go to college, but felt too dumb and thought she would just be laughed at.

Depression brings help

After high school, Rebecca went to see a therapist, who diagnosed depression, told her she wasn’t alone and introduced her to LVT.

Rebecca enrolled in Pima Community College to prove to herself she could learn. LVT found Rebecca a



Rebecca Lona talks about her path to reading and education at our recent breakfast. (Photo by Roxana Vasquez)

tutor, who showed her that, in spite of her learning disability, she could learn to read and write.

After graduating with three degrees in December 2006, Rebecca transferred to the University of Arizona (UA). Told when she enrolled that Pima transfer students usually had a

drop in their grade-point average, Rebecca has maintained a 3.0 GPA.

A single mom with two daughters, Rebecca works part-time and goes to school full-time. She still tries to fit in LVT tutoring and plans on getting a Bachelor’s degree in Accounting.

One life is changed

After Rebecca finished her talk, her employer, who was in the audience, asked to say a few words. She was absolutely shocked to hear about Rebecca’s journey, saw Rebecca as the ideal employee and had no inkling of her problems.

Then, a representative of the UA Hispanic Alumni Association stood up and offered Rebecca the possibility of a scholarship for her studies at the university. She has applied and is awaiting a decision.

The 350 or so who attended the breakfast gave Rebecca a standing ovation and left energized by her and the good fortune that surrounded her.

Made possible by...

We would like to thank Bookmans Entertainment Exchange for underwriting the breakfast.

LVT Roof Gets New Coat

Not just doctors wear white coats. So do roofs. After almost seven years, the LVT roof needed some attention. So, this year’s project for the United Way Day of Caring on October 3 was a new white coat for the LVT roof.

Labor was provided by IBM employees Quintus Schulzke, Eric McGar, Nikhil Khandelwal and John Ain. On their own time and over several days, more than just the Day of Caring, these supermen power-washed the roof and applied two coats of sun protection.

E•las•tek, Structural Elastomeric Products, Inc., a local company, kindly donated the coating itself and application rollers.



left to right: Quintus Schulzke (Project Leader), Eric McGar, Nikhil Khandelwal and John Ain clean up after rescuing the LVT roof.

Where There's a Will, There's a Way

A FREE workshop to help you understand the importance of having a will or trust regardless of your age, family or financial circumstances.

Why You Want To Attend

- Ensure that your wishes are carried out after your lifetime
- Alleviate your family's burden of economic or legal chaos

You Will Receive

- Practical, hands-on approach to planning
- Answers to your questions from a highly respected elderlaw attorney
- Information on the legal aspects of wills and trusts
- How-to's to protect even the most modest estates

- Ways to support your favorite charities – even after you are gone
- A venue to ensure your wishes are known and respected

Dates and Location

The workshop, presented by leading elderlaw attorneys, will be repeated several times between March 10- 28, 2008. As of this newsletter, the schedule has not been finalized. Please contact us for dates and times or look on our website. The dates will be posted in early February at www.lovetoread.org.

What You Can Do to Leave a Legacy

1. Prepare a will, so, your family isn't left in financial and legal limbo.
2. Leave a gift in your will for the nonprofit organizations that make a difference in your life.
3. Name a nonprofit as the beneficiary of your pension plan or Individual Retirement Plan. This can avoid estate and income taxes that might otherwise be due on these.
4. Name a charity as the owner and/or beneficiary of a new or existing life insurance policy.
5. Encourage family and friends to leave gifts to charity in their wills.
6. Encourage your financial advisor to include charitable giving as part of counsel to clients.

Acknowledgements & Memorials

We gratefully acknowledge donations in honor of:

Shirley & David Allen
Christine Ballew
Betsy Bolding
Mary & Frank Durazo
Jane Evans
Dick & Jane Evans
Greg Hart
Rena Paradis Hawley
Todd Horst
Sammi Jiang, student
Nam Hee Kim, student
Parents of Jerry Lefkowitz & Julia Salmon
George Miller
Roz Miller
Tara Ord's birthday
Dr. Leonard Plotkin
for his 82nd birthday
Dr. Ed Rogoff's retirement
Diana Spinney
Jack & Irene Steindler
Mary P. Wixted
Nancy Woodling
Don & Jeanne Wright

In Memoriam

LVT has received donations in memory of the following:

Michael Joseph Babbitt
Jean Cox
Janet Fink
Jean Harle
Georgia B. Hudson
Beatrice Kirz
Parents of Jerry Lefkowitz & Julia Salmon
Kirby Lockard
Mable
Dean Marrs
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Myrna Strelinger
Ralph Taylor
Raymond E. White, Jr.,
PhD
David Woodling

Literacy Loses Long-time Legend

Jean Cox, long-time volunteer and later president of Tucson Area Literacy Volunteers (TALV), died in Boulder, CO, on October 9, 2007. She was 89.

TALV was one of the two organizations that merged to form Literacy Volunteers of Tucson.

Involved in adult literacy in New Jersey, Jean Cox continued her efforts when she moved to Tucson after her husband died in 1973. In 1995 she won the J.C. Penney Golden Rule award and in 1996 the Arizona Sertoma Service to Mankind award for her work with adult literacy.



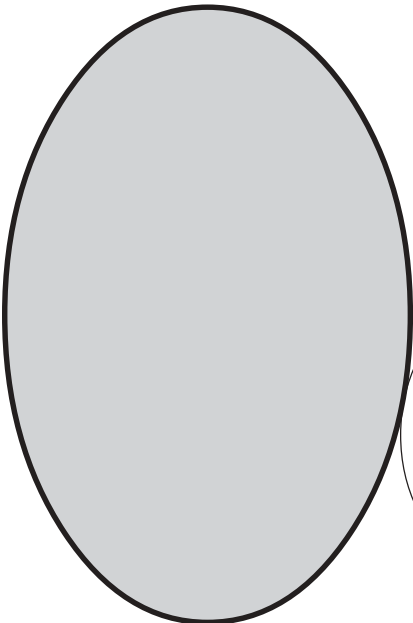


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*Tutoring Adults in Reading,
Writing and Speaking English to
Strengthen Individuals,
Families and Our Community*



Literacy Volunteers of Tucson participates in most **United Way** campaigns, including Combined Federal Contributions (CFC), Pima County and Tucson ECAP and UA Cares.

LVT extends its gratitude to **Pima Federal Credit Union** for its ongoing support.



LVT thanks its corporate sponsor, **Bookmans Entertainment Exchange**.



Orientation & Tutor Training Schedule
(Registration required!)

ELAA Tutor Training	1/12/2008, 9-3 1/19, 9-3 2/16, 9-12
Orientation	1/15, 5:30-7
Basic Literacy Training	1/26, 9-12:30 2/2, 9-12:30 2/23, 9-12:30
Orientation	2/9, 10-11:30
Orientation	2/12, 5:30-7
Orientation	3/6, 3-4:30
ELAA Tutor Training	3/8, 9-3 3/15, 9-3 4/26, 9-Noon
Basic Literacy Training	3/11, 1-4:30 3/18, 1-4:30 4/19, 9-12:30
Orientation	3/22, 10:30-Noon
Orientation	4/22, 5:30-7
Basic Literacy Training	5/3, 9-12:30 5/10, 9-12:30 5/31, 9-12:30