



LITERACY MATTERS

JULY 2017

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



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LITERACY NASSAU CELEBRATES 50 YEARS OF SERVICE TO LONG ISLAND

(submitted by Karen Micciche)

I've looked everywhere - in our dingy basement, in the attic, through every file cabinet in this office, and the oldest piece of information I can find is from 1983. The frustration I feel is palpable to my staff: I want to share the story of how our amazing organization was started, and I'm afraid I'll never have any of the pertinent details. I've reached out to several people who I know are connected to our history, but so far, I've received no responses.

And then I hear the best sound I could hope for, a promising *ding* from my phone that indicates a new e-mail has arrived.

I can't believe she wrote me back.

Ruth Colvin is the founder of the adult literacy movement nationwide. In 1961, she read an article in The Post-Standard about the results of the 1960 U.S. Census and stopped when she came across this fact: In Syracuse, 11,000 people were functionally illiterate. Syracuse was Colvin's home town, a college town where education fueled the local economy, and as you can imagine, Colvin was appalled by this statistic. She decided to host a coffee in her living room, and she filled the room with educational and community leaders. The one person who offered to help her do something about this represented Church Women United. Colvin thought it was a small group, but it turned out to be the support of the women in 80 different churches around

Syracuse.

Fast forward to December 2016. Ruth Colvin celebrated her 100th birthday, and the honorary chairwoman of her birthday gala was Barbara Bush.

You might wonder: How did a woman who started a movement in her home in Syracuse become so important that the former first lady of the United States cared to celebrate her centennial? Perseverance. Persistence. Passion. And lots and lots of roll-up-your-sleeves hard work.

Ruth Colvin has helped teach people to read, and train literacy tutors, in 26 countries. She is the kind of person who is known by presidents, and yet still surprised when she's the most important person in the room.

And *she* wrote *me* back.

Here is what her e-mail said:

"Dear Karen - Congratulations to Literacy Nassau on its 50th year of dedicated service - I am so proud of you and all your staff, volunteers, Board, and donors. It takes a team and you're doing it.

I don't know if Anne DuPrey was your first Executive Director or not, but I do know that under her leadership you had great growth. Most of the early NYS affiliates were started by Church Women United with all volunteers until they could afford to pay a director, but I can't recall when your affiliate was able to pay a director, or who it was at first. I'm sorry.

(continued on p. 3)

THOUGHTS FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Hi Everyone,

Do you ever feel like birthdays get out of control? My birthday is next Monday, and I sort of pride myself in the fact that there won't be any grand festivities. (I sound like such a martyr.) It's just a day, right? No big deal. But there is a pretty big double standard in our house about birthdays - because when it was Haley's birthday, she had (I kid you not) 4 different celebrations: one at school, one at home with just us on her actual birthday, one with the grandparents, aunts, and uncles, and a party with her friends. So even though I don't celebrate my own birthday in a big way, I am quite capable of overdoing it for others.

1968 marks 50 years of Literacy Nassau's service to Long Island, and since it's such a huge birthday, I've planned a celebration that will last 18 months. It's a really big deal to be a relevant, thriving non-profit in this day and age! It's an even bigger deal to have 546 active volunteers working together to change the economic future on Long Island by educating their neighbors. YOU are the reason for the party - and YOU are totally worth it!!

Karen



Nothing beats the Sunday paper and a cup of coffee. For 50 years, LN volunteers have helped more than 40,000 adults enjoy this simple pleasure.





RECOGNITION NIGHT: A GRAND CELEBRATION!

(submitted by Umama Pasha)

Recognition Night will always be my favorite night of the year because it brings together students, tutors, Board members, staff members, donors and community partners in one place to celebrate teamwork, effort, dedication, and student success.

This year's Recognition Night took place on Thursday, May 18th at the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Shelter Rock in Manhasset, with over 350 tutors, students, and friends in attendance. We heard from students like Martel Howard, one of the first students to enter into the Orton Gillingham pilot program last November. Martel described his childhood growing up with dyslexia and how working with the Orton Gillingham approach has made such an impact on him and his family. He was personally able to thank John and Janet Kornreich for providing the funding to make the program possible.

Christine Kipper spoke on behalf of 3 students from the Office for New Americans class who were specially selected to participate in the internship program funded by the Guru Krupa Foundation. Ms. Kipper thanked Mr. Padmanabhan for his generosity in providing Literacy Nassau with the funding to hire and train students to prepare them for employment in America.

Awardees this year included Community Partner of the Year, PL Developments, a manufacturer, packager and distributor of pharmaceutical and consumer healthcare products. PL Developments helped create a pathway for its employees to receive English classes at their offices in Westbury. Other awards included:

Next Chapter Book Club Facilitators of the Year: Leslie Feinberg and Susan Astre

Basic Literacy Pairs of the Year: Elinor Brown/Petrona Treminio and Kathy Gyves/Pierre King

SGIB Tutors of the Year: Juan Manzano and Sue Risberg

ELL Tutor of the Year: June Prisand

Most Improved ELL Pair: Marjorie Farrell and Oliva Chu

ELL Pair of the Year: Joan Whiteside and Jing Jing Wang

Citizenship Tutors of The Year: Sheryll and Frank Dorf

SGI Tutors of the Year: Anita Faulding and Debbie Uckele

SGI Student of the Year: Emiko Katayama

To end of the night, we congratulated our second class of graduating students from the Office for New Americans program. The students in the Class of 2017 were called on stage and given their certificates. We are excited to have been a part of their journey and know they will continue to strive for the success after Literacy Nassau!



Karen Micciche with special guests, John and Janet Kornreich.



Kim Nau and our Spring interns: Liz Nam, Shashi Sonika, & Christine Kipper.



BL Pair of the Year Pierre King and Kathy Gyves with Sara Izquierdo.



Ocaria poses with Debbie Uckele and Anita Faulding, SGI Tutors of the Year.



Digna with our CDL Student of the Year, Maria Valerio.



Karen Micciche poses with Community Partner of the Year, PL Developments.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Happy birthday to all our tutors born in July!

Barbara Alster ~ George Bleckman ~ Eric Bonge ~ Sid Burgreen ~ Janis Caravello ~ Deborah Cavalieri-Arden ~ Lisa Cavanagh ~ Carol Ann Ceraldi ~ Andrew Corsi ~ Marcie Denberg ~ Barbara DiPalmo ~ Jackie Eill ~ Rebecca Figueras ~ Susan Fitzgerald ~ Ed Friedman ~ Gloria Glick ~ Andrea Kay ~ Carmen Lloyd ~ Margaret Manusch ~ Christine Martin ~ Kathy Mullen ~ Lynn Newman ~ Lisa Oldendorp ~ Nancy Reedy ~ Patricia Regan ~ Susan Risberg ~ Kevin Ryan ~ Dianne Saccone ~ Susan (Peedee) Shaw ~ Claudia Silbert ~ Cynthia Spiletic ~ Trish Szendrey ~ Gail Weinstein ~ Nathalie Zephirin ~ Anna Maria Iannetta





LITERACY NASSAU CELEBRATES 50 YEARS (CONT'D.) FOR YOUR BEACH BAG: SMALL ADMISSIONS

(continued from page 1)

Do you have a copy of the 4th edition of *A Way with Words, Literacy Then and Now*? It's the book I wrote and updated several times, trying to get most of our history on paper. If you don't have it, you can get it from New Readers Press.

When you do have your celebration, do let everyone know how proud I am of you all, and my CONGRATULATIONS on reaching 50 and have grown so tremendously, helping thousands upon thousands over the years. And still serving and growing! My very best to you all. Sincerely, Ruth Colvin"

Here's what I do know: Anne DuPrey worked with Literacy Nassau dating back to at least 1983, so my guess is that she probably was the organization's founding Executive Director. Sadly, Anne passed away in 2016, so the details of those first few years remain a mystery. I Googled "Church Women United" and got the phone number for a group in Rochester, but when I called them, the number was not in service. I'll keep digging to see if I can find any more information.

In the meantime, in honor of our 50th anniversary, I am happy to be giving away copies of Ruth's book, *A Way with Words, Literacy Then and Now*, to the first 50 readers who e-mail me at kmicciche@literacynassau.org. This is one of many awesome things we have planned for our 50th anniversary celebration! I'll be reading the book as well. It is an honor and a privilege to protect such a remarkably important legacy.

Stay tuned for more on our history, and just as vital, our future.



(Left) In the early days, Colvin used a fridge as a bookcase for tutor materials. Pictured right, Colvin turns 100.



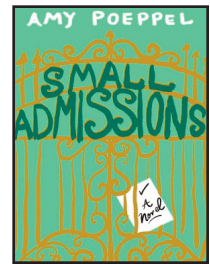
(submitted by Sara Izquierdo)

Welcome to the Admissions Office at Hudson Day School, a private college prep school in Manhattan. Kate Pearson finds herself thrown into this world after a desperate Head Master hires her despite an interview during which Kate charmed her new boss with phrases like, "I've never actually had a real job before, so I don't really have many of what you might call *skills*."

For Kate, this job represents the start of a new life. She had ditched the anthropology degree she was pursuing to follow the love of her life to Paris, only to find him in the arms of another woman. After months spent on the couch, the admissions job she had no qualifications for, or real interest in, was the first sign that Kate was ready to move on. True, her sister and best friends had forced her to apply, but maybe it was just the motivation she needed.

As she learns the intricacies of her new job, Kate sets about rediscovering herself as well. The students are hard working though spoiled. But Kate was not prepared for the parents who will stop at nothing to get their little angel into the prep school of their choice. Her sister and best friends share secrets they've been hiding from Kate since her break-down, and the ex-boyfriend returns to her life in the most unexpected of ways. Through it all, Kate emerges stronger than ever, and ready for the rest of her life.

Small Admissions, by Amy Poeppel, is a fun book for a summer read. Some of my favorite parts were crazy but potentially true moments involving the cut-throat prep school parents. The character development is not deep, but the plethora of people and plot lines provide the perfect amount of drama. So pick it up at the library at your next tutoring session, and take it along to the beach this summer. Happy reading!



TUTOR SPOTLIGHT: DEBBIE UCHELE

(submitted by Ocaria DiMango)

This year at Recognition Night, Debbie Uckele was one of two awardees for SGI Tutor of the Year. Debbie was deserving of this award because of her positive attitude and commitment in her students' learning. Here's a bit more information about Debbie:

What sparked your interest to join Literacy Nassau and its Small Group Instruction program?

What sparked my interest in Literacy Nassau was an article that appeared in Newsday in December, 2014. At the end of the article there was a number to call if you wanted to volunteer as a small group instructor. Recently retired from teaching and with my mom having passed away a few months prior, I needed to fill that void in my life.

What is your favorite thing about teaching SGI?

I love when students share their dreams and enthusiasm about America. It reminds me of when my husband and I first started out.

What have you found to be a challenge in teaching small groups?

Differentiating instruction is hard. I want everyone to experience success and I want to challenge students who are at a higher level.

If you could, tell us a success story or "lightbulb" moment from one of your past groups.

I don't have one particular success story. Some special memories are studying for the citizenship test with my former student Dilsia, supporting Mangesh's goal of finding a part-time job, sharing Elizabeth's baby's pictures, or meeting Deymi's children.

Do you have any fun activities you could share with other group tutors?

I love when students interview one another. I also enjoy having students come up to the whiteboard and teach the class. My very favorite activity is having a party for the last class and students present their "Open Door" piece. We take lots of pictures.

Some people are intimidated by working with a group. Can you give them some advice or tips to encourage them to join?

Ocaria gives you a complete set of lessons with conversation starters, reading comprehension and writing exercises. If you have apprehension, visit an SGI class. You will see how much fun it is and not feel intimidated. The one thing I love about teaching SGI is the appreciation, admiration and respect students have for you for helping them improve their English skills.





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WELCOME NEW TUTORS!

Over the past few months, Literacy Nassau has trained the following new tutors. Welcome, and congratulations, to each of you!

Cheryl Abend	Roslyn Armstrong-Powell
Alissa Belzie	Sema Blatter
Deborah Broder	Debbie Buglisi
Evelyn Chevalier-Richards	Roberta Cione
Kathleen Coleman	Jennifer Cutler
Marianne Deveau	Betty Engel
Josephine Feldman	Kelly Filippone
Marcy Gambino	Lisa Gewolb
Adele Goldberg	Julie Goldstein
Jennifer Goodwin	Audrey Green
Mary Greenfield	Joanne Hackert
Georgene Harrison	Michael Hauser
Andrea Kay	Linda Klein
Devon Macera	Mindy Mentzel
Phillip Mickulas	Carolyn Miller
Jeffery Miller	Lisa Monvignier
Janice Moran	Mike Moran
Carol Morris	Anand Persaud
Moriah Rastegar	Marcy Rollman
Linda Sardone	Barbara Usdain
Ken Wolk	Susan Wolk
Renee Yarmoff	Carolyn Zaremba

SIT! STAY! COME!

(submitted by Kim Nau)

I recently got an adorably cute 12-week old Cavalier King Charles Spaniel puppy named Milo. I have been working on training him by teaching him basic commands. Throughout my training sessions, it got me thinking about the role of repetition in the language learning process. For our English language learners and dyslexic students they must hear (and use) the newly learned words/concepts over and over in order to retain the language.

Review is an essential part of the learning process. Don't just do a topic and be done with it. In an article by published by Sean H. K. Kang from Dartmouth College, he believes that spacing out review/practice affects learning and enhances long term memory retention. Back-to-back repetitions can be ineffective.

In your tutoring sessions, review what was learned last week and then periodically review what was learned a few months prior. Spiral the review so that it is integrated into each lesson. Repetition and drills do not have to be boring especially when peppered with games, flashcards, and a little bit of creativity.

Every day I will continue to work with Milo to review and repeat what was learned previously. It is only through constant practice, patience, and positive reinforcement that I can expect him to retain the commands. Treats also help!

