



English Express

June 2018

Annual Meeting Report

In April over 100 volunteers and students of the Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County filled the gallery of the Venice Art Center to celebrate the accomplishments of the year. Joe Pokorney opened the meeting and shared with the group the major accomplishments of the past year. He then presented the new board members. After a plentiful buffet lunch prepared by board members, the group enjoyed hearing heartwarming stories told by students of ESL and Basic English. These detailed the hardships and successes of learning to speak, understand, read and write English. Can you imagine speaking before a large group in a language that is new to you? As intimidating as this was, each of our speakers imparted important messages about their experiences in learning English or improving their abilities to read and write. All of them expressed great appreciation for their tutors. Thank you to all who participated and made this annual event fun and joyful.



The 2018 Board Members gather for a group photo at the Annual Meeting.

Literacy Changes Lives!

Annual Meeting Photos



There was a full house at the Annual Meeting and the board members are to be thanked for supplying an abundance of wonderful food for everyone.



Joe presents flowers to Past President Jan Gallas in appreciation for her service to LVSSC and as a fond farewell as she is moving to New York.



Several students spoke at the Annual Meeting to thank their tutors and told how LVSSC has helped move them forward and enrich their lives here in America.

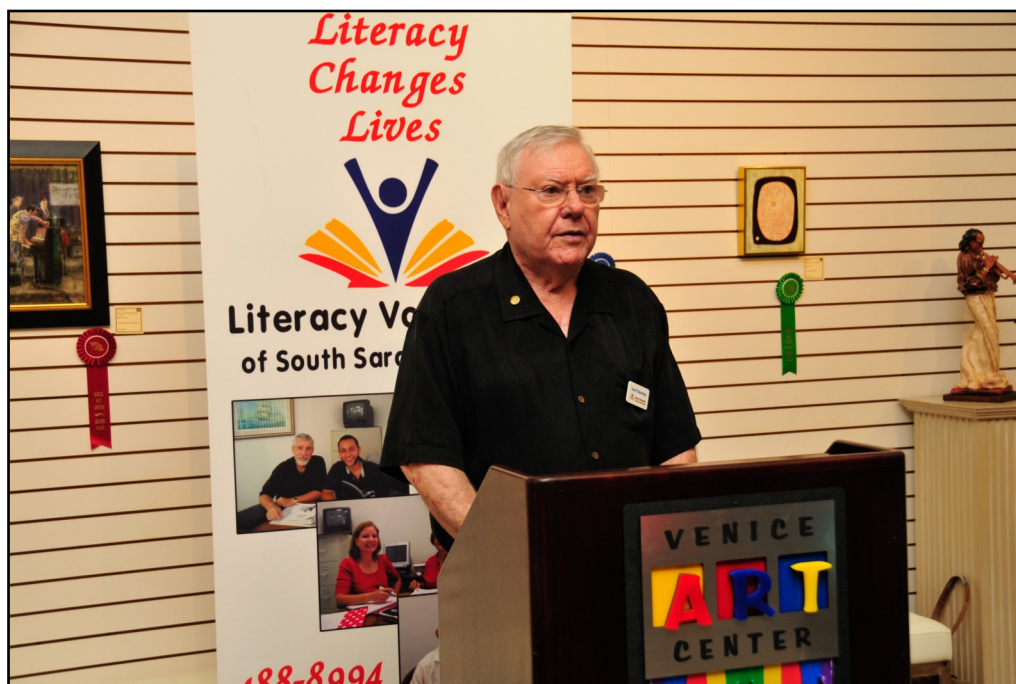


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President's Comments

As we head into summer we are closing in on a significant year for LVSSC. We have opened our StartNow! program in our North Port facility, our new English Computer Learning Lab is progressing, thanks to a very generous grant from the Plantation Community Foundation, the new LVSSC website is ready to go live, and we are beginning to solicit sponsors and sell tickets for our first annual literary event, **An Evening with Randy White, at the Venice Yacht Club on February 28th, 2019**. While we are experiencing exciting opportunities, we continue to work at meeting the daily challenges of matching students with tutors, especially those students who prefer to meet on evenings and weekends due to employment or family commitments.

Over the past few months, a few of our board members have participated in a series of workshops on Earned Income sponsored by The Patterson Foundation. The focus of the workshops is to help non-profit organizations such as LVSSC consider ways to increase their financial stability by providing services or products for a fee. In our case, we are exploring the possibility of expanding our Literacy services to include a Workplace Literacy Program that would provide English classes onsite for local employers. The employers would be expected to compensate LVSSC for these courses, and we in turn would compensate the tutors. The fourth and final workshop is in late June. If we decide to proceed, The Patterson Foundation will provide support for this new program.



President Joe Pokorney

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Plantation Grant

For many years, the Plantation Community Foundation has supported us with annual grants of \$1,000 to \$2,000. Following the 2017 grant cycle, we decided to compete for their annual Impact Grant which is given to one organization annually for approximately \$20,000. Of course, we had never imagined having a computerized English Learning Lab because of our limited financial resources. This would be possible if we were awarded the grant! Claudia Daniels wrote a very effective grant proposal, and Nancy Pike prepared a detailed list of potential components for the \$20,000.



From Right to Left:
Bob Hayden, TPCF President
Kathy Mason, TPCF Grant Chair
Pete Petrie, TPCF Impact Grant Committee and Board Member
John Lauer, TPCF Impact Grant Committee
Claudia Daniels, LVSSC Grant Writer and Board Member
Joe Pokorney, LVSSC President

Claudia and Joe were presented with the check on February 16th.

Our New English Learning Lab



After having been so fortunate as to receive the computer lab grant, we were faced with the challenge of how to design and implement a computer learning lab that would meet our needs and demonstrate to the Plantation Community Foundation that we used their funds in a cost effective way. We have several tutors who have voiced interest in this technology. Fortunately, two of them, Walt Koenigh and David Williams, both have extensive experience with computers and educational software. We formed a committee comprised of Walt, David, Kim Pike, board members Debi Hoefler, Nancy Pike, Joe Pokorney, and our intern Nicky Gayle. This committee met weekly over a period of six weeks and has developed a detailed list of computers, software, desks and associated components to establish a modern English Learning Lab. Our overall concept is to design a lab with flexibility to allow us to meet our needs in the future. We now have several more tutors who have expressed an interest in exploring how they can use the lab to help teach English to their students.

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Annual Card Party Deemed a Success

Our annual fundraiser card party was hosted for the seventh year by the Jacaranda Trace Retirement Community on March 28. One hundred and five attendees enjoyed fruit, pastries, and beverages provided by Jacaranda Trace while playing Bridge, Hand and Foot, Ulcers, Dominoes, and Mahjong.

Sandy McIntyre, Card Party Chairman, reported that a total of \$4,525 was raised for Literacy Volunteers programs while providing many people with a good time and over forty prizes. Two round-trip airline tickets donated by Southwest Airlines were won by Rosemarie Sulzbach. Rosemarie is a long-time ESL instructor at North Port Library. She was at the party, so she knew immediately that she was the lucky winner.

Janita Wisch, Assistant Manager of the North Port Library, did a wonderful job as Chairman of the Teacup Auction. A fabulous assortment of prizes were provided by area businesses and current and past board members. The Auction raised \$1,000. One of the three men attending won the 50/50 cash drawing of \$155.

Thanks to the following businesses for their support:

Allegro Bistro Restaurant
Angelo's Italian Market & Restaurant
Avenue Hair Design Co.
Kumihimo Designs by Bonnie Blackburn
Cassariano's Italian Eatery
Le Petit Jardin Restaurant
Foxy Lady Hair
Kyle Kurtis Salon
Luna Ristorante
Outback Restaurant
Perkins Restaurant
Publix Super Markets
Venice Theater Tickets
Venice Wine and Coffee



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Start Now! Update

The North Port student waiting list had decreased from 66 students (April 2017) to approximately 24 students after the recent April Tutor Training Workshop, but our numbers have ticked up again in the past couple of weeks due to the northern migration of so many of our tutors (Start Now! tutors included). We're looking for some tutors to help out during the summer, if anyone is interested in meeting some fantastically interesting adult learners and picking up an hour or two of tutoring here and there. The Start Now! tutor doesn't have to create the lesson plan or materials (we provide them). They simply meet with the student to present the lesson and afterwards record their progress. Since June 2017, 31 students have come in for a SN! interview. Some have been matched with a permanent tutor right away, but 26 students met with Start Now! tutors for at least one lesson or more. Several Start Now! tutors have enjoyed working with a particular student so much that they have requested to be permanently matched!

Intern Update

Nicky Gayle, from Queen's University in Ontario, Canada, was placed with LVSSC for three weeks from March 19 - April 6 for her Alternative Practicum Experience. Nicky assisted with several projects. This was a thoroughly delightful experience and Nicky proved herself to be a focused, energetic, hard-working, responsible and very positive asset to our program. We were only sorry that she could not stay longer!



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Welcome New Tutors

Pictured below are the new tutors trained at Lavonne Radonovich's Tutor Training Workshops for LVSSC at the Start Now! North Port office in the North Port Family Services Center.



Pictured left to right:

Barbara McKeathon, Myrna Hollander, Anita McGough, Meri-Jaine Stinson, Charlie Ruppert, Andrew Cullison, Nancy Parry and, David Williams.

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Spotlight on LVSSC's ESL Group Classes

In addition to LVSSC's individual tutoring services, LVSSC also delivers small group classes each week. The sessions range from basic Level 0 to Level 4 Conversation classes and are very popular for students who enjoy learning in a group setting. In addition, LVSSC also supports Workplace English programs for several local businesses. The students experience not only language lessons, but also interactive introductions to popular US holidays and sports events.

A big **Thank You** to our group class instructors!

**Charlie Ruppert –
Jacaranda Trace Workplace English**



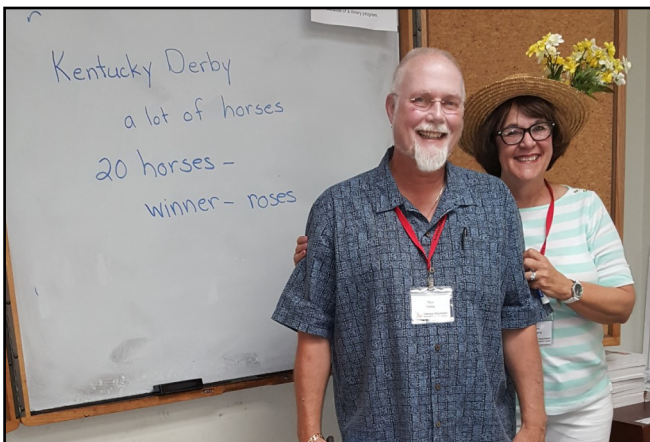
Rosemarie Sulzbach - Level 2-3 ESL



Laura Gregory – Level 0 ESL



Laura Gregory teaching her last class for this season. Tim Ivins will work with this class for the summer while Laura is away. You can see their lesson was on the Kentucky Derby



Spotlight on LVSSC's ESL Group Classes (Continued)



Richard Coleman - Level 4 ESL Conversation



**John Moynihan - Level 0-1
ESL for Spanish Speakers**



Mary Seyler – Level 2 ESL



Quality Assurance

As all of you know, our organization covers a large area of Sarasota County. We have tutors and students in Venice, Nokomis, Osprey, Laurel, Northport and Englewood. But we are one group and need to maintain our quality and continuity. To this purpose LVSSC now offers a minimum of five Continuing Education sessions for tutors; and tutors are asked to participate in at least three of these per year. The schedule of Continuing Education sessions will be available in early September. Most sessions will present a topic appropriate for tutors teaching our ESL students. If you are tutoring a student in Basic Reading, Comprehension and Writing, you will find at least one session that addresses those topics.

Sessions will be in the format of a luncheon or coffee, with a featured speaker, or structured classes at State College of Florida and the Start Now! office. Attendance at the Annual Meeting or a Board meeting are also considered qualifying sessions. If you participate in a session outside those we offer, please let us know so that you receive the credit.

Below is a very preliminary list of suggested topics. We need your input. Please let us know what topic you would like to have included. If you are tackling a tough teaching situation, let us know. If we can't find a training session for you, we will provide a mentor. Contact Coordinators Karen Bridegam or Sharon Betterton.

Potential Continuing Education topics:

- Correcting Pronunciation
- Grammar
- Lesson Planning
- Teaching Through Fun and Games
- Evaluating Progress
- Keeping in Touch with FaceTime
- Accent Reduction
- Using Technology to Teach English
- Cultural Differences

We welcome any of your suggestions for topics.

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Result of Direct Appeal

Early in 2017 the board listened to a presentation from a fundraising consulting firm called One to One Group. They were highly recommended and have a good track record. After months of discussion and an encouraging reference from United Way who had engaged them, we decided to proceed with a fundraising contract. One to One Group would prepare a professionally designed mailing piece, acquire a local mailing list, and send out two mailings, one this past March and a follow-up in November. The results of the March effort were less than we anticipated, about \$3,300. However, we expect a much larger amount of donations when the November follow-up mailing is sent.

The Giving Challenge

May 2nd was the date for this year's Giving Challenge, the annual online fundraising event sponsored by the Community Foundation of Sarasota County and the Patterson Foundation. We had a very successful event raising about \$7,400 including our estimated matching from the Patterson Foundation. This is the second largest amount we have raised in our five years of participation, but less than last year, due to very generous matching rules applied last year.

It's Easy to Forget

Have You Borrowed Books?

Please return any materials you may have been using as soon as you have finished with them. The books are expensive, and in some cases another tutor is waiting for them. If you have any, please drop them off as soon as possible.

Valuable Time Spent

Your time is valuable. In addition to giving so much of it to someone learning English or improving their literacy level, your time is very important to our bottom line. When organizations consider giving grants, they want to know that we are a committed, effective, hardworking group of volunteers. Proof of that is our timesheets on the website www.literacychangeslives.org. If you have difficulty using the timesheet tool, ask one of our Coordinators to help you. If you have forgotten to enter your hours, we suggest you review your calendar and enter all the prep time, travel time and actual tutoring time. Also, please report the non-tutoring hours you spent at any LVSSC event such as tutor training workshops, luncheons, coffees, etc..

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Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County (LVSSC)

2018-2019 Board of Directors

President

Joe Pokorney
941-544-7272
joe@lancastermcginty.com

Retired management consultant and graduate school instructor. President of software education firm. Member Rotary Club. MS in systems engineering. LVSSC ESL tutor. Joined Board 2015. VP 7/2016-2018.

Treasurer

Sandy McIntyre
941-412-0107
sandymac@comcast.net

Retired - Naval Air Warfare Center, Indianapolis. Manager, Admin Services. MBA - Univ. of Indianapolis; co-founder of family building business ESL tutor 2000-2007; Treasurer 2006-2008 & 2017-2018; President 2008-2012 & 2015-2016, Secretary 2012-2014; VP 2014-2015.

Secretary

Nancy Pike
941-484-3287
ndpike@verizon.net

Retired – Director, Sarasota County Library System; Former Manager of Venice Library; Master of Library Science, U. of Wisconsin-Madison; LVSSC Member 20 years; Joined Board 2010; VP 2011-2012; President 2012–2015; VP 2015-2016; Secretary 2016-2018.

Svitlana Cherkashyna
718-419-5046
igmarak.3@comcast.net

Student Representative. Metallurgical Engineer who immigrated from Russia in 2000 and moved to North Port in 2013. Started attending LVSSC ESL classes in 2015.

Penny Corell
941-809-2668
pennyinrotary@gmail.com

Retired - Speech and Hearing Therapist; Major in education and minor in psychology from Miami University of Ohio; Marketing specialist for major apparel brands; Co-chair of Jazz With Pizzazz Venice Symphony 2018 Brunch; Board member, Past Secretary, and Past President of Venice-Nokomis Rotary Club. Joined LVSSC board in 2018

Claudia Daniels
941-773-1447
cdplayadesign@gmail.com

Realtor with ReMax Platinum Realty; former Graphic Design Instructor, State College of Florida; Master's Degree, U. of South Florida, concentration in English and Multimedia; former ESL tutor; LVSSC Grant Writer; Joined Board 2012; VP 2013-2014.

Debi Hoefler
941-416-9417
dhoefler@comcast.net

Retired - Teradata Corp Dir. of Customer Education. 40 yrs. experience in corporate tech industry, with extensive teaching experience. College majors in Computer Science and Math, minor in Accounting. Current ESL tutor in North Port. Joined Board September 2017.

Judith McGinty
941-544-9797
Heyjude43@gmail.com

Retired RN, ER nurse, and administrator. Consultant to hospitals on teaching technology and information systems. Member Rotary Club. LVSSC tutor. Joined Board May 2015. Newsletter Editor 2015- Present.

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Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County (LVSSC)

2018-2019 Board of Directors

-Continued-

Don Moore
941-223-6922
vript@comcast.net

Retired Physical Therapist, Venice FL, Master's Education, USF
Volunteers at Venice High School ESOL class and Laurel Civic Assoc.
LVSSC tutor since 2006, member Venice Sunrise Rotary since 2003.
Joined LVSSC Board September 2017.

Dr. Jim Patterson
941-412-7093
jcpatterson46@gmail.com

Retired higher Ed. Exec. & MBA faculty member, founder of Maine
School of Science and Mathematics. Current Board member of
Sunrise Rotary, United Way of SSC and U.W. Foundation.
Joined LVSSC Board 2017.

Paddy Padmanabhan
973-204-7637
paddy0206@gmail.com

Retired after 40 years in the Pharmaceutical Industry in various positions in
Sales, Marketing, Business development and Alliance management.
Paddy moved to Venice in June 2016 from New Jersey.

Mary Seyler
908-309-5921
me.seyler7@gmail.com

Retired teacher of elementary and secondary math in NJ. Member of the
Suncoast Educational Assistance Fund, North Port. ESL tutor in NJ and
in North Port since 2013. Joined LVSSC Board April 2016.

Anne (Polly) Skinner
941-486-8266
taxanne2@gmail.com

IRS Enrolled Agent; former owner of Anne Skinner Tax &
Bookkeeping Service; Rotary Futures volunteer at Venice
High School and at Venice Art Center, LVSSC member
for 20 years. Joined Board 2010.

Janita Wisch
941-861-1318
jwisch@scgov.net

Assistant Library Manager, North Port Library;
Master of Library Science from Univ. of Pittsburgh;
Librarian in academic and public libraries in Ohio. Joined Board 2012;
Vice Pres. 2012-2014; Secretary 2014-2016.



Penny Corell



Paddy Padmanabhan

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Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County

www.LiteracyChangesLives.org

FIRST CLASS

Venice Office

Inside Venice Library
260 N. Nokomis Ave.
Venice, FL 34285
(941) 861-1352
venice.literacy@gmail.com

North Port Office

Inside North Port Library
13800 S. Tamiami Trail
North Port, FL 34287
(941) 861-1320
north.port.literacy@gmail.com

Office Hours

Monday, Wednesday & Friday
10:00 a.m.— 11:00a.m.
12:00 p.m.— 2:00 p.m.

Office Hours

Tuesday: 1:00 p.m.— 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday & Thursday
11:30 a.m.— 4:30 p.m.

Officers

President..... Joe Pokorney
Vice Pres..... Vacant
Secretary..... Nancy Pike
Treasurer.....Sandy McIntyre

Literacy Coordinators

Sharon Betterton, Venice
Karen Bridegam, North Port

Start Now! North Port

Kim Pike

Directors

Svitlana Cherkashyna
Penny Corell
Claudia Daniels
Debi Hoefer
Judith McGinty
Don Moore
Dr. Jim Patterson
Paddy Padmanabhan
Mary Seyler
Polly Skinner
Janita Wisch

Tutor Trainers

Denise Gastineau, Venice
Lavonne Radonovich, North Port

Newsletter

Judith McGinty, Editor
Charlie Ruppert, Layout

Yes, we will mail printed copies to members who do not have an e-mail address or who request paper copies.

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