



# English Express

Spring 2022

## *Tutor and Student Learn from Each Other*



Allan Metzler came to Florida in 2014 after a long career with a telephone company in Maine. He became a Literacy Volunteers tutor five years ago, and for most of that time he has tutored Oksana Pogribna who is from Ukraine. They have made impressive progress. Allan and his wife Deb considered becoming tutors for several months before they inquired about tutor training. When they completed the training, Allan didn't believe he could teach English as a Second Language (ESL); he felt unprepared. Many of us experience that feeling when we first start out. However soon after Allan began meeting with Oksana, everything fell into place. He assessed her language needs and prepared lesson plans.

Oksana came to the United States six years ago, and for a short time she lived in Colorado. She came to Florida with her husband and daughter, looking for warmer weather. Oksana's husband is now a cross-country truck driver, and according to Oksana, he is a guest in his own home.

Oksana was a hair stylist in Ukraine. The stiff competition for a seat in beauty school in this area prevents her from attending now. Also, her twelve-year-old daughter needs her at home after school. So, Oksana has not attended a professional school since coming here, but she has accomplished so much by learning English. She is easily understood, and one can tell by her responses that she misses very little in conversation. She is hesitant to use words she recently learned for fear of making a mistake. She needs to practice with her tutor to have confidence using words that are new to her.

Oksana was a good student, and Allan was eager to help her. They discovered that they both love photography. On that subject, Oksana is the tutor and Allan is the student. And so, Oksana learns more English each week while helping Allan with photography.

After their working together for almost five years, it is so nice to hear Oksana's conversation. She has a lovely accent and a good vocabulary. She corrects herself on tense and parts of speech. Oksana also attends Literacy Volunteers ESL conversation classes and continues to be a dedicated one-to-one student.

## President's Corner



Judith McGinty, President

To all our tutors and other volunteers, thanks for another great year. And to our students, congratulations on your progress in English. It is your perseverance that makes all of us a success.

If you need more help, ask your tutor about workbooks that may be available. Another tool we have is Learning Upgrade, an app that helps you learn not only English but a host of other subjects. And if you are in need of a computer or internet connection, we can supply them on a temporary basis to established students.

We have an urgent need for more tutors, especially to help new Ukrainian arrivals. Many are well educated, but speak little English.

Tutors don't need to be college graduates or teachers. We are looking for outgoing, social-minded individuals who want to help their new neighbors. We will train you, coach you, and provide support as much as needed.

We have learned that **Literacy Changes Lives** for both the student and the tutor. Currently we have 156 students being tutored. We also have nine ESL classes on various levels. But we have many more students on our waiting list. **Be the One!** Call either of our part-time Coordinators to discuss how you can help. Karen is at the North Port Library, [north.port.literacy@gmail.com](mailto:north.port.literacy@gmail.com), 941-861-1320, and Peter is at the Venice Public Library, [venice.literacy@gmail.com](mailto:venice.literacy@gmail.com), 941-861-1352.

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## LVSSC is 40 Years Old and Looking Good

Since 1982, Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County has provided ESL and Basic Adult Literacy tutoring to adults who seek our help. Many American-born adults have a limited ability to read and write basic English. Lacking those skills, their job opportunities are limited, and they are unable able to read to their children and help with schoolwork. Newcomers from countries all over the world need tutoring to learn English as well as orientation to our health care and banking systems. In both cases, we help people change their lives and increase their earning power.

If you would like to contribute to this organization, there is an excellent opportunity to double your donation this year. The Louis & Gloria Flanzer Philanthropic Trust will match your donation. When you contribute to the Flanzer Trust for Literacy Volunteers, either online or by check, the Trust will match your donation. Donations can be made online with a credit card or PayPal at:

[www.FlanzerTrust.org](http://www.FlanzerTrust.org)

Scroll down and click on the big red DONATE NOW heart. Select Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County in the drop-down list of recipients. Contributions between \$5 and \$500 per household per month will be matched 1:1. The matching program will continue until December 31.

To contribute via check and have your donation matched, make your check out to The Louis & Gloria Flanzer Philanthropic Trust, write Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County on the memo line on the check, and mail it to Louis & Gloria Flanzer Philanthropic Trust, 1266 First Street, Suite 1, Sarasota, FL 34236.

## Annual Meeting Luncheon to Thank Volunteers



On May 10, for the first time in a few years, volunteers and students of Literacy Volunteers celebrated our accomplishments together and in person. The event was held in the William H. Jervy, Jr. Venice Public Library Community Room. As always, the lovely table decorations for the event were fashioned by Board member Janita Wisch. The Board members and staff all pitched in to fill the buffet tables with tasty lunch fare and yummy desserts.

We were delighted that the Sarasota County Director of Libraries and Historical Resources, Renee Di Pilato attended. She spoke about the COVID lockdown and its effect on the libraries and our organization. She said, it's really a positive story in that our organizations have been survivors through such a difficult time. We have worked closely together to make sure that Literacy Volunteers students and tutors were still able to do their very meaningful work that is so important for our community.

Renee told us that the work that Literacy Volunteers does means a great deal to her personally. Her grandfather immigrated to this country from Italy around 1920. She thinks of her grandfather as a successful man who came here, not knowing English, leaving everything behind to start over from scratch. So, she is always impressed with students who come to our literacy program to improve their English and be part of this community. She wishes that her grandfather had this opportunity when he came to America.

Our incoming president, Paddy Padmanabhan, discussed our accomplishments and challenges. The biggest challenge has become the need for more tutors as we prepare for the arrival of people from Ukraine. He stressed that we must all search for the tutors needed to help these newly arrived refugees.



Renee Di Pilato, Director  
Sarasota Co. Libraries and Historical Resources



### 2022-2023 Officers, Left to Right

Paddy Padmanabhan, President  
Nancy Pike, Secretary  
Sue Spayd, Vice President  
Sandy McIntyre, Treasurer

## Students and Tutors at the Annual Meeting Luncheon

Three of our students, Roberto Gomez, Olga Perez, and Vladimir Teplitskiy spoke to the group and shared their experiences as newcomers to this country and to the English language. They are testaments to the successful work we do.



Roberto Gomez



Olga Perez



Vladimir Teplitskiy

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It was a special time for all who are involved in teaching and learning English.

# TUTOR CHAT on zoom

FREE ONLINE  
TUTORING  
RESOURCES

TUESDAY, June 14  
4:30 PM

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REGISTER BY EMAIL:  
VENICE.LITERACY@  
GMAIL.COM  
NORTH.PORT.LITERACY@  
GMAIL.COM



## ***Digital Tablets and WiFi Hot Spot Devices***



Two grants from The Plantation Community Foundation have provided the funds to provide Samsung digital tablets and Hot Spot devices to our students who don't have regular access to the internet with a computer. Our goal is to be certain that our students can use all the tools available, in addition to their tutors, so they can quickly become fluent in reading, writing, and speaking English. It has taken some time to establish the criteria for lending these, but they are now ready and available to established students who need them. And remember, students can register for and use them for Learning Upgrade, an online collection of over 49 courses.

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## ***English Lessons and Dancing Lessons***

The Fred Astaire Studio in Venice has a group of dance instructors who needed our help to improve their English. Tutors Irma Arroyo, Joe Giorgianni, and Donna Sweet are helping these instructors with support from Peter Norrman, Venice Coordinator. English lessons are now provided as part of our Workplace Literacy program.



## Ukraine

Literacy Volunteers has made it clear to the Ukrainian community that we are ready to assist refugees from Ukraine. We are prepared to assist them with English classes as well as with job applications, drivers' licenses, and help accessing social services. A new class for students who speak no English has already begun. If you are connected to the Ukrainian American community, please broadcast our willingness to help. We'd also like your help to distribute the VOLUNTEER TUTORS WANTED poster that's on the next page. A JPG file of the poster is attached to post on your FaceBook page, attach to emails, hand out printed copies, and put on bulletin boards.

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### More Photos from the Annual Meeting Luncheon

A big **Thank You** to Claudia Daniels and David Williams for taking photos at the Luncheon.



Subin Carter and Angelita Gonzalez



Raquel Perez and Mary Seyler



Matt McHugh and Vladimir Teplitskiy



David Williams and Paddy Padmanabhan

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Peter Norrman, Venice Coordinator; Kim Pike, Start Now! Project Manager; Karen Bridegam, North Port Coordinator



# **VOLUNTEER TUTORS**



**“Literacy Changes Lives”**

**YOU can make a big difference in the life of an adult who wants to learn to speak English as a Second Language or an American who wants to improve their reading skills to get a job or enter a retraining program.**

**You do not need to speak a foreign language or have tutoring experience. Free training will be provided.**

**north.port.literacy@gmail.com or 941-861-1320  
venice.literacy@gmail or 941-861-1352**

**Leave a message, and we'll call you back.**



**Literacy Volunteers**  

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**of South Sarasota County**

**North Port Public Library, 13800 S. Tamiami Trail, North Port  
Venice Public Library, 300 S. Nokomis Ave., Venice  
Serving North Port, Englewood, Venice, Nokomis, Laurel, and Osprey**

**Literacy Volunteers  
of South Sarasota County**  
300 Nokomis Ave. S.  
Venice, FL 34285

*Literacy Changes Lives*



**FIRST CLASS**

**Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County**

[www.LiteracyChangesLives.org](http://www.LiteracyChangesLives.org)

**Mailing Address and Venice Literacy Office:**  
300 Nokomis Ave. S.  
Venice, FL 34285 Phone: 941-861-1352  
venice.literacy@gmail.com

**North Port Literacy Office, 13800 S. Tamiami Trail**  
North Port, FL 34287 Phone: 941-861-1320  
north.port.literacy@gmail.com

**Officers**

President.....Judith McGinty  
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Secretary.....Nancy Pike  
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Claudia Daniels  
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Mary Seyler  
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David Williams  
Janita Wisch

**Literacy Coordinators**

Peter Norrman, Venice  
Karen Bridegam, North Port

**Start Now! North Port**

Kim Pike

**Tutor Trainers**

Denise Gastineau, Venice  
Lavonne Radonovich, North Port

**Newsletter**

Judith McGinty, Editor  
Sandy McIntyre, Layout

**Speaker's Bureau**

Paddy Padmanabhan

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



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