

Literacy  
Changes  
Lives



# Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County

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



*Serving the people of  
Englewood, Laurel,  
Nokomis, North Port,  
Osprey and Venice*



May 2016

## Annual Meeting and Luncheon - Venice Art Center



Picture a spacious gallery hung with works of local artists who display their delightful paintings, sculpture, and glasswork in celebration of the amazing surrounds of Sarasota County. On April 25th, the gallery is also filled with an interesting mix of attendees at the LVSSC annual meeting and luncheon. Some are retirees who spend countless hours teaching English to the other attendees, our potential new American citizens, our students of English. You also find some English speaking students who are here because they are working to improve their

reading and writing skills. A glance will tell you of the friendships forged and the sense of accomplishment for both students and tutors. And we came together once again to celebrate just that. We enjoyed a very nice lunch followed by a short business meeting in which a new slate of officers was approved:

President  
Vice President  
Secretary  
Treasurer

Jan Gallas  
Joe Pokorney  
Nancy Pike  
Betty Black

Jan Gallas, President-elect, and Nancy Nasser, Basic Literacy Tutor, shared some brief remarks. And several students shared their stories.

Maria Faura (right) from Cuba was introduced by tutor Kathie Page. Maria spoke English for many years but is proud to tell of her new effort, with the help of Kathie, to improve her grammar and vocabulary and how it has allowed her to help her children with their school work.

Mario Rodriguez (right) from Venezuela was introduced by his tutor Sid Shrauger. Mario came to the U.S. about two years ago from Venezuela to provide a better life for his wife and two sons. He has been working on his English with Sid for the last year. During that time he's had five different jobs, each one bringing better support and benefits to his family. He gave several humorous examples of his misadventures with English when he first arrived. He is very personable and has a great sense of humor.

Martha Yolanda Heidenis (right), from Colombia was presented by Jean Smuckler, co-instructor of the citizenship class. Martha came from Colombia where she was a successful bacteriologist. She came here to help her son finish his graphic design education and she fell in love with Sarasota. She learned enough English to obtain her Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) and had a series of jobs but was looking for more. Martha found the citizenship class in North Port quite by accident and now is a hard working participant. She thanked the volunteers for their time and encouragement.



Svitlana Cherkashyna (right) from Russia, was introduced by Karen Bridegam, standing in for tutor Margaret Nietling. Svitlana brought us to tears as she recounted the joy she feels in being able to fully participate in American society now that she can clearly express herself.

Thank you to everyone who worked hard to make this a special event. And many thanks to our officers, board members, volunteers, and contributors who make such a difference in the lives of our students.

-- Judith McGinty



For more photos, visit our [Facebook](#) page!



## President's Corner

I want to extend my thanks to our 2016-2017 officers for agreeing to serve beginning July 1. I will remain on the Board in a supporting role.

As an officer since 2006, I've watched the number of volunteers and students grow dramatically. The following improvements have helped us recruit and train more volunteers, serve more adults who need our services, and increase our visibility in the community for raising funds to support our programs.

- Many volunteers and students have found our organization through our website ([www.LiteracyChangesLives.org](http://www.LiteracyChangesLives.org)).
- Bi-monthly 2-day tutor training workshops conducted by ProLiteracy Certified Trainer, Esther Bird, and our new North Port Trainer, Linda Wieman, have prepared volunteers to be tutors-- averaging 60 new tutors per year for the last four years.
- Construction of the North Port office staffed by a part-time Coordinator,

Karen Bridegam, has greatly improved service to the North Port community.



- Literacy Volunteers' comprehensive profile on the Giving Partner website (<http://thegivingpartner.guidestar.org>) entitles us to raise funds and earn matching funds in the annual Giving Challenge (Sept. 20-21, 2016). The Giving Partner website is a year-round tool that donors and funders use to make decisions about giving.

Volunteers are needed to assist the Board with various aspects of program management, community outreach, and fundraising. If you would like to become involved in the non-tutoring activities that are vital to Literacy Volunteers' future, please contact Jan Gallas at [JGJGFL@aol.com](mailto:JGJGFL@aol.com).

-- Sandy McIntyre

## Building Community with Facebook



Wouldn't it be great to have a place where you can connect with other tutors, read inspiring student stories, keep up with the latest news and events, get teaching tips and tricks, and ask questions when you need help with your lessons?

Join Literacy Volunteers on Facebook and build community in South Sarasota County. All you have to do is type "[Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County](#)" in the Facebook Search box and LIKE the page. You will begin receiving information in your Facebook Home feed where you can comment, tag, and share photos. Share this link with your students too. Let's support each other and build our community!

-- Valerie McBride

## Successful Fundraisers & Events

Our organization holds several fundraisers each year to cover the cost of coordinator salaries and training materials. LVSSC has a surprisingly small budget considering the numerous training activities ongoing all year. This year we had a bit of a bump in the area of fundraising thanks to many of our volunteers.

The Golden Beach Association determined that LVSSC should be the recipient of the Annual Spring Picnic Raffle. **The Golden Beach neighborhood was able to contribute more than \$650 to LVSSC through this event.**

A big thanks to LVSSC volunteer Pam Marble, who lives in Golden Beach and requested that the Board of Directors consider making LVSSC the recipient of the raffle proceeds. Several tutors and some students live in that area, so it made sense to Pam for the neighborhood to support LVSSC. She solicited donations from community businesses for the raffle. Golden Beach board members also contributed gifts for the raffle. Finally, Pam worked the day of the raffle selling tickets. She was joined by

Nancy Pike, LVSSC Vice President, who is also a Golden Beacher. Thank you, Golden Beach neighborhood and especially Pam Marble! Pam says that she hopes other LVSSC members will consider how their neighborhood or organization can help support Literacy Volunteers.



several specialty baskets were provided by board members and some impressive vintage jewelry was contributed by a board member as well. More than half of the attendees won a prize. The 50/50 cash drawing allowed for another player to win \$180.

**The Card Party was a big success both socially and financially. LVSSC cleared \$3,091 while providing many people with a good time.**

The annual fundraiser Card Party was held on March 29th. Once again we were hosted by Jacaranda Trace in a lovely function room. One hundred and twelve attendees enjoyed refreshments provided by Jacaranda Trace while playing various card games, dominoes and Mahjong. It was clear that many of the players were regulars at LVSSC parties and most seemed to know one another. Over 50 tea cup auction prizes were provided by area businesses,

Incoming LVSSC President Jan Gallas is already exploring the possibility of having a similar event in North Port next year.

Thank you to the many contributors to the Tea Cup Auction:

3 Little Pigs BBQ  
Allegro Bistro Restaurant  
Avenue Hair Design Co.  
Bonefish Grill  
Captain Eddie's Seafood  
Cassariano's Italian Eatery

Flynn's on Venice Ave  
 Foxy Lady Salon  
 Gold Rush BBQ Restaurant  
 Le Petit Jardin Restaurant  
 Left Coast Seafood Co.  
 Mi Pueblo Restaurant  
 Outback Steakhouse  
 Publix Super Markets  
 Charities  
 Venice Art Center  
 Venice Community Center  
 Venice Wine & Coffee Co.



On March 19th LVSSC participated in the **Venice Book Fair**, an annual event hosting area authors in a series of lectures and workshops that provided opportunities for them to display their books. The public was able to meet the authors, discuss the books and make purchases. The Fair was held in Centennial Park at the same time as the very popular Farmers Market was in session. The arrangement benefited both groups.

LVSSC Vice President Nancy Pike is one of the original organizers of this event. Special thanks to former board member Carolyn Conte for the time and talent she spent representing us. The turnout was excellent but what began as lovely weather became a threatening storm. Before hurriedly packing

up and leaving, the LVSSC display was visited by many interested potential volunteer tutors.



Once again LVSSC participated in the **United Way Venice Walk-a-Thon**. Sixteen humans and one large dog walked for our cause and raised over \$1,500 this year. Our little group raised the most money for the United Way sponsored event and we received half of all proceeds for our programs.

To add to the festivities was the music of the always popular 'Cryin Shames' whose talented members are also some of Sertoma's finest (Sertoma is a local service club). Participants were also treated to hot dogs, fruit and soft drinks. The walk is more of a stroll as it is a leisurely

trip on foot to and from Venice Beach. Thanks to Joe Pokorney for leading the Venice team.

For our efforts we now have a big bright blue trophy which will be on display in the LVSSC office in the new Venice Library, as soon as the space becomes available.



Jan Gallas headed up the **North Port Walk-a-Thon** team of 14 eager walkers. They raised \$670. For their effort walkers were rewarded with a real old-time barbeque. For both these walks LVSSC received half of the contributions made to United Way and all of the contributions made directly to our organization.

## New Tutor Training Classes - Welcome New Tutors!

Linda Wieman's North Port class on Feb. 20 and 27



Left to right: Arlene Charest, Joseph Fertitta, Peggy Ludgate, Pete Petrie, Sarah Anderson, Teasha Kendall, and Carmen Brining.

Esther Bird's Venice class held on April 8 and 15



Front left to right: Ann Caron, Muffy McDowell, and Jan Gallas.  
Back: Jim Patterson, Holly Regar, Harry Barnes, and Keith Aiken.


### Upcoming Tutor Training Dates

Saturdays May 21 & May 28  
Tutor Training at [North Port Library](#)

Thursdays July 7 and July 14  
Tutor Training at [Jacaranda Library](#)

To register, send an email to the North Port Coordinator at [north.port.literacy@gmail.com](mailto:north.port.literacy@gmail.com) or the Venice Coordinator at [lvssc@verizon.net](mailto:lvssc@verizon.net).

## Venice Library Update

The latest word on the library is that Sarasota County is about to renovate the Hamilton Office Complex which is behind the Venice Theater, and directly on the inland waterway. [Hm ... will there be parking spaces for boaters coming to the library?] 

The renovation is estimated to cost \$250,000 and will be completed within the next few months. As most of you know, LVSSC depends on the Sarasota County

Library System to provide office space for our coordinators and the training materials collection. The Venice office is currently in a "make do" situation in a coordinator's home. Thank you so much, Sharon Betterton, for your generosity.

For more information visit, <https://www.scgov.net/Library/Libraries/Pages/VeniceLibraryUpdate.aspx>.

## Website Treasures

Tutor Kathie Page has provided this treasure trove list of teaching materials, all free and easy to find online. All sites offer free materials although some require the user to register. Some of these may be familiar to you; hopefully, others will be new, useful tools.



<http://www.eslgold.com/>

### **Free teacher-made sheets**

<https://en.islcollective.com/>

### **Word lists, worksheets, ideas, and activity suggestions**

<http://freelanguagestuff.com/>

<https://www.havefunteaching.com/worksheets/english-worksheets/>

### **Student centered activities free to print and use**

**Often includes a blank template to print and fill in so you can tailor it for your student**

<http://www.fcrr.org/curriculum/SCAindex.shtm>

**Use the very short stories when they are related to a topic from the library's reading series student books**

<http://www.rong-chang.com/qa2/>

### **A few good freebies**

<http://www.elcivics.com/esl-ebooks-free.html>

**Free K-12 spelling, vocabulary, grammar, some reading, and some writing**

<http://englishlinx.com/content-by-subject/>

<https://www.englishclub.com/>

<http://www.elbase.com/>

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## ...Continued Website Treasures

<http://www.learnenglishfeelgood.com/esl-printables-worksheets.html>

<http://englishlanguage.org.nz/tutor-resources>

### Conversation starters / Speaking topics

<http://printdiscuss.com>

<http://www.esldiscussions.com/>

<http://www.eslmania.com/teacher/teacher.htm>

<http://www.easypacelearning.com/>

## Dear LitWits

In each newsletter we will publish an answer to a question from a tutor, instructor or member submitted to [lvssc@verizon.net](mailto:lvssc@verizon.net) (place “LitWits” in the subject line). LitWits will delve into local brains and widespread research to answer your questions about the Literacy Volunteers organization, questions about tutoring or instructing adult learners.

**Question:** What would you recommend as a fun activity to give my student a break from book work that would also increase her vocabulary and improve her spelling?

**Answer:** Many adult literacy tutors play Bananagrams with their students. This game consists of 144 letter tiles in a yellow banana shaped zippered bag. Using Bananagrams will help your student learn and recall the correct spelling of words. You can play according to the instructions or create your own variations. It’s beneficial for students to be able to manipulate the letter tiles to form words. This kinesthetic learning approach helps learners see and feel the words they are spelling.



Have a question? Send it to [lvssc@verizon.net](mailto:lvssc@verizon.net) (place “LitWits” in the subject line).

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of South Sarasota County**  
326 Nokomis Ave. S.  
Venice, FL 34285

*Literacy Changes Lives*



**FIRST CLASS**

**Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County**  
A member organization of ProLiteracy

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Secretary Janita Wisch  
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Esther Bird  
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Jan Gallas  
Judith McGinty  
Joe Pokorney  
Mary Seyler  
Polly Skinner

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Sharon Betterton, Venice  
Karen Bridegam, North Port

**Database, Reports, Records**

Sandy McIntyre

**Tutor Trainers**

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