

From Russia with Love

This is the story of an energetic family of parents and four bright children who were living in a small town near Siberia and looking for a better future. One of the siblings, Egor Gnusov, now 20, works with his ESL tutor in a study room in the North Port Library. He, the eldest of the children, tells the tale of their journey to opportunity in the United States.

According to this intelligent, shy young man, in Russia, his home country, there were very few ways to improve one's circumstances without moving to a major city. Then, a few years ago, Egor's grandmother, who had migrated to Washington State, urged the family to come to the U.S. Without much hesitation, the entire family relocated, not to Washington, but to North Port because, as Egor says, it doesn't rain so much.

About a year after arriving here, Egor was paired with Jack Nugent, an LVSSC volunteer tutor. At the time, Egor was enrolled in North Port High School and hesitantly spoke some English. He was Jack's first assignment as a newly trained tutor. Jack didn't have a teaching background like some of the other new tutors, but Jack is a natural teacher and very effective with young people. He attributes that to his many years as a small business owner, employing and managing teenagers.



For the past year, Jack and Egor have met once a week at the library for English lessons. Both seem very pleased with their progress. Jack enjoys teaching, and Egor is learning and speaking English more confidently.

Egor may be hesitant about his ability to speak English, but he can be proud of so much. He recently graduated from North Port High School and has good SAT scores that will get him admitted to college. Egor's English was sufficient to pass the Florida Drivers test without the help of a translator. In addition to these major milestones, with Jack's help, he has a job at Jacaranda Trace as a food server. His new goal is to be able to speak English without an accent. That's a tall order, Jack!!

Literacy Changes Lives!

Passing the Baton

For the past year, the LVSSC Board has been led by Jan Gallas who brought the term 'Working Board Member' to a new level. Jan has a background in Education Administration. For us, she has been the Energizer Bunny. Jan attends many meetings and workshops regarding ESL, conducts English classes and provides 1-1 tutoring. She worked tirelessly to implement the Start Now! program to address the North Port list of students waiting for tutors. She has brought some top-quality professionals to the Board. During Jan's tenure, LVSSC moved into additional space and hired a project manager for Start Now!. We are very appreciative of all she has done.

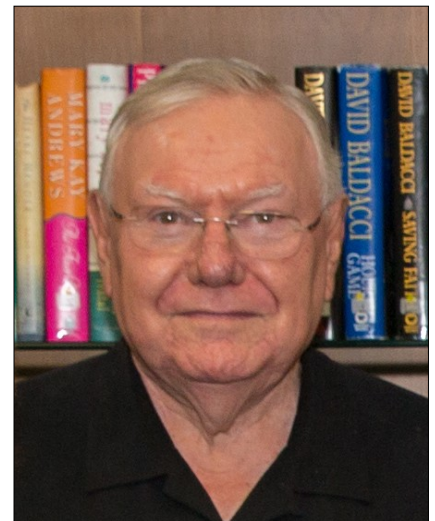
Since the 1st of January, we have a new president – Joe Pokorney. Joe is an engineer who spent many years teaching technology to adults. He has been tutoring with LVSSC for three years and has been active on the Board as well. He organized two successful donation drives as well as the Giving Challenge. Along with Jim Patterson, Joe wrote the LVSSC 5-year strategic plan and has been exploring new fund-raising opportunities. He also led the search for a new database for the organization and was instrumental in the implementation. He led the Venice Walk-a-Thon to first place in money raised two years in a row. Joe is very precise, quality driven, and likeable. Under his leadership we will continue to grow and maintain financial security.

President's Comments

As we begin 2018, LVSSC is looking at significant opportunities while facing a number of new challenges. All of this is a result of our continued growth over the past few years and our successes in 2017. This past year we increased our tutors and the number of students served, we added a major new project Start Now! North Port, expanded our board, and increased our visibility. All of this growth is supported by limited financial resources, three dedicated part-time employees, and a hard-working board.

We will continue to see expanded demand for individual English Language Service while having more opportunities for community-based workplace English Classes such as Jacaranda Trace, Casariano, and PGT. During 2018, we must expand our financial resources, establish a long term financial plan, while continuing to deliver our Literacy services. The keystone to our continued success is our wonderful group of dedicated volunteer tutors who work on a daily basis with our students.

As we move through 2018, I am confident that we will continue to Change More Lives through Literacy.



Save These Dates!

Sat., 3/24, 9:00 am	United Way Community Walk	Gran Paradiso, West Villages
Sat. 3/24 9:00-3:00 pm	Venice Book Fair	Downtown Venice, Centennial Park
Wed., 3/28, 1:00 pm	Annual Card & Game Party	Jacaranda Trace, Venice
Mon., 4/23, 12:00 noon	Annual Meeting & Luncheon	Venice Art Center, Venice

CHANGE
STARTS HERE.
CAN WE COUNT YOU IN?

LIVE UNITED™



GIVE. ADVOCATE. VOLUNTEER.

United Way of South Sarasota County
12th Annual

Community Walk

Saturday March 24, 2018

Gran Paradiso

20061 Galleria Blvd, Venice, FL 34293

(Rain or shine)

Registration:

9:00am to 10:00am

Walk and Health Fair:

10:00am to 11:30am

Awards, Pictures and Food:

11:00am to 12:00pm

Music, food, & prizes provided.

Pet and Family friendly.

Walking is optional.

The goal is raising \$\$ and having fun!

50% of donations returns to LVSSC.

Support the United Way and Literacy Volunteers

Make checks payable to United Way of South Sarasota Co.

Mail to Literacy Volunteers, 260 N. Nokomis Ave., Venice, FL 34285

**50% of donations used by United Way for 29 local agencies and
50% is returned to Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County.**

Call for more info:

Karen in North Port Literacy Office 941-861-1320

Sharon in Venice Literacy Office 941-861-1352



LIVE UNITED
BETHE CHANGE

Lavonne Radovich's Prototype Tutor Training Workshop

Lavonne Radovich has been an educator for nearly 20 years. She has an M.S. with concentration in Curriculum and Instruction. Her list of educational experiences and accomplishments is too long to include here. Even before seeing her resume, I was hooked. She had me at Hello because of her welcoming demeanor, something that our tutors-in-training need to be able to convey to their students. They will be greeting people who are often new to our country and don't speak English.

Imagine being a newcomer who is trying to navigate in our society, but doesn't understand the culture or English. It's very confusing. Americans may just be the most generous people in the world. The generosity of time and talent surprises many newcomers. If one has been accustomed to living under an authoritarian regime, generosity is probably not well known. At the risk of being political...let's say it out loud.

Most people don't migrate from wealthy countries with stable governments. Besides the cultural nuances, Americans speak in idioms which are so difficult to grasp.

Lavonne's approach to tutor training is a bit different from the presentation LVSSC has used successfully for many years. She brings guest speakers for specific areas such as Learning Styles, Pronunciation, Using Technology to Teach English, etc. She strongly believes that today's tutors-in-training will come away with a good understanding by actively participating in the workshop.

Lavonne teaches us to let the student lead. She encourages us to use pictures as much as possible. For new vocabulary she advises: "See it, Say it, Do it, Touch it, Trace it, Write it, and Repeat". Make it real to all the senses. She uses this approach with both tutors-in-training and her ESL students.

Lavonne, like Esther Bird, LVSSC's established Tutor Trainer, has completed the rigorous path to becoming a ProLiteracy Certified trainer.



Now, Denise Gastineau, their colleague who is also a very qualified teacher, is on the path to the same certification.

LVSSC tutor trainers conduct several classes each year for volunteers who want to teach English to adults who either don't speak English, or want to improve their English comprehension. Some of our other students are native English speakers but need help with basic reading and writing.

Many of our tutors are retired teachers. Others have not taught previously but soon realize they can teach, and they do a great job. They come away from either of our Tutor Training classes with the knowledge they need and with the resources provided by LVSSC. They also have the opportunity to attend additional workshops and meetings conducted for the tutors, so they can hone their skills and keep in touch with the teaching staff. We are very happy to have Lavonne as one of our Tutor Trainers.

Welcome New Tutors

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

November
11th and 18th
2017



Front: Erin Stokes, Debbie Salinas, Lori-Nan Mihaley
Middle: Sherri Munera, Robyn Sunada, Carole Myles, Tina Muldoon
Back: Lynn Hippensteel, Tom McWhorter, Paddy Padmanabhan, Tim Ivins, Paul Muldoon

January
20th and 27th
2017



Front: Gussie Bartell, Dolores Castellanos, Nancy Stanko, Jennifer Abbott, Lynda Carver
Back: Ann Sharoun, Helen Russette, Wayne Hall, Sandra Miller, Monica DeGenaro, Laura Anders

Welcome New Tutors

THANK YOU to these volunteers who will be making a difference in lives of adults who want to learn English or improve their reading skills.

On December 5 and 12, these volunteers were trained by Esther Bird at the Jacaranda Library.




Front: Sandra (Sam) Humphreys, Brenda Hall
Middle: Alison Kirk, Joan Valdez, Phyllis Dabundo, Maria Hallabrin
Back: Meg Castner, Kim Schroeder, Laura Romeiro, Walt Koenig, Kevin Smith. Not shown in photo: Joy Lenz.

TUTORS.....Check Out these ESL Web Sites

This partial list of internet resources for tutors was supplied by Tutor Trainer, Lavonne Radonovich.

**Internet Journal
for Teachers of ESL**
<http://iteslj.org/>



**Grammar Instruction
with Attitude!**
www.ChompChomp.com

A4els.org
Englishspeak.com
Pdictionary.com
Elscafe.com
Eslgold.com
Englishclub.com
Yourdictionary.com
Esl-lab.com
Vocabulary.com
Soundsofenglish.org
Iteslj.org
Elllo.org
Usingenglish.com
USALearns.org
Chompchomp.com

Activities for ESL Students
a4esl.org



Lessons - Activities
Audios
EnglishClub.com

Help with Pronunciation
SoundsofEnglish.org



Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County

Card and Game Party
Wed., March 28, 1:00 - 3:30

at Jacaranda Trace in Venice

in Cadbury Commons auditorium, 3600 William Penn Way
(first left turn off Jacaranda Blvd north of US 41 in So. Venice)

**Invite friends for a table of 4 or more and
call Sandy 941-412-0107 for reservations.**

\$15 per person in advance

Mail checks to: Literacy Volunteers,
260 N. Nokomis Ave., Venice, FL 34285

BRING: Your own cards or games
Cash for "Teacup Auction" & 50/50 Drawing

GREAT PRIZES AND REFRESHMENTS!

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GRAND PRIZE
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and more!

www.LiteracyChangesLives.org

Venice Office 861-1352 - North Port Office 861-1320

Free **READING** and **ENGLISH** help for **ADULTS** by trained volunteer tutors.

Volunteer Orientation



Board Member, Debi Hoefler, has developed a 1-hour orientation for potential tutors. There are two good reasons to hold orientations. The first is to help the volunteer understand what it means to be an adult literacy tutor before attending tutor training. Secondly, our new Tutor Orientation helps to keep LVSSC members in close touch with potential tutors who are waiting for the next class.

If you have acquaintances who may be interested in tutoring, please bring them to the next orientation. Orientations will be scheduled shortly before each series of Tutor Training classes.

Debi won a Braves cap at a North Port Chamber of Commerce luncheon to welcome the Atlanta Braves to North Port.

Tutor Training for New Volunteers - Please tell your friends!

**2-day tutor trainings at StartNow! North Port office by Lavonne Radonovich
Saturdays, March 10 and 17 - or - Saturdays, April 7 and 14**

Reserve for North Port workshops by contacting Karen Bridegam
at north.port.literacy@gmail.com or 941-861-1320.

**Tentative - 2-day tutor training at Jacaranda Library by Esther Bird
Wednesdays, April 18 and 25**

Reserve for Venice sessions by contacting Sharon Betterton
at venice.literacy@gmail.com

Literacy Volunteers Welcomes the Atlanta Braves to North Port



In November, Board members and the StartNow! Project Manager attended a North Port Chamber of Commerce luncheon at Heron Creek Golf and Country Club to welcome the Atlanta Braves to North Port and to hear about the new Spring Training facility opening here in 2019.

There may be a significant opportunity for LVSSC to provide classes/tutoring services for players in the Braves organization who are learning English as a second language. Stay tuned!

Left to Right: Maryann Terry, UWSSC, Jim Patterson, Jan Gallas, Debi Hoefler, and Mary Seyler.
Not pictured: Kim Pike, StartNow! Project Manager and Fran Valencic, former Board member.

Ribbon Cutting at Start Now! North Port Office



The North Port Chamber of Commerce held a Ribbon Cutting event in January 2018 at our new LVSSC Office. The **"Start Now! North Port"** office is located in the North Port Family Service Center on Outreach Way. This office is an extension of our Literacy Office at the North Port Library.

North Port has a long waiting list of adults eager to have a Literacy tutor to teach them to read, write and speak English. Our new office works with students on this waiting list until they are matched with a 1:1 tutor.

Bill Gunnin, Executive Director of the North Port Chamber, brought people together for this event. Many LVSSC Board members attended along with a number of North Port Chamber members. All have been most supportive of our efforts.

Kim Pike, Project Manager, and Sveta Cherkashyna, LVSSC student, cut the ribbon as we all looked on. Refreshments were served as we discussed our program and four gift cards from Chamber restaurant members were raffled off. Special thanks to all who attended!!

Quinn Charitable Foundation Supports StartNow!

The Arline Smyth Quinn Charitable Foundation has awarded a \$5,000 grant to Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County. This grant was provided so that our organization can continue to support ESL students and staff in the Start Now! Literacy program in North Port.

Students who are on the waiting list can get a head start by using the language training software available for each different level. They can combine this with participation in the StartNow! sessions with the help of our staff and at their own pace. Many thanks go to the Quinn Charitable Foundation.

Tutor Continuing Education

LVSSC has developed a plan that requires tutors to attend at least two Continuing Education events each year. Continuing Education events have several purposes:

- to maintain contact with tutors for the mutual benefit of the volunteers and LVSSC
- to educate tutors on various teaching methods and materials available
- to follow measurable progress of the student

These Continuing Education events can be workshops, college presentations, and discussions during our Tutor luncheons and coffees. We have had some events this year that were very well attended.

NEW! Tutoring Techniques for Low Level Learners

Save the date and make a reservation to attend this new Continuing Education workshop by Laura Gregory that's scheduled for Thursday, April 5, at 11:00 in the Start Now! Office at the North Port Family Service Center, 6919 Outreach Way (near Pan American and U.S. 41), North Port.

Contact Karen Bridegam at north.port.literacy@gmail.com or 941-861-1320 to reserve your seat.

Other Continuing Education Opportunities

Video Chat Tutoring workshops for snowbird tutors so they can continue tutoring with their students when they return North. Presented by Lavonne Radonovich

Public Speaking workshops for tutors willing to share their tutoring experience with new tutors in training workshops, but who are uncomfortable speaking in front of an audience. Presented by Lavonne Radonovich.

English Grammar - LVSSC Continuing Education Workshop



Eighteen LVSSC tutors attend an LVSSC Continuing Education Workshop on English Grammar in the State College of Florida (SCF) Library. The presenter was Maria Spelleri, Curriculum Coordinator of the English for Academic Purposes at SCF Venice Campus. Tutors participated in "hands on" activities and learned methods to present grammar to adult students.

This workshop will be offered again so more tutors can benefit from Maria's experience.

Student Success Stories - We'd like to print yours!



Lyubov Ivanova and tutor Laura Gregory have been working together for about three years. Although Laura is a snow bird, they manage to stay connected. Laura finds such immense pleasure in seeing how Lyubov has progressed.

Lyubov is from the Ukraine and has been in the United States for about four years. She was an accountant in the Ukraine and now works in North Port at a jewelry company. Laura said "She is one of the hardest working students I have ever had the pleasure of working with." When they first met, Lyubov would ride her bicycle to each tutoring session at the North Port library. But last year, because of her hard work,

she was able to obtain her driver's license. This year she and Laura have been asked to speaking engagements promoting Literacy Volunteers - and each time Lyubov speaks, she leaves a very good impression with the audience!

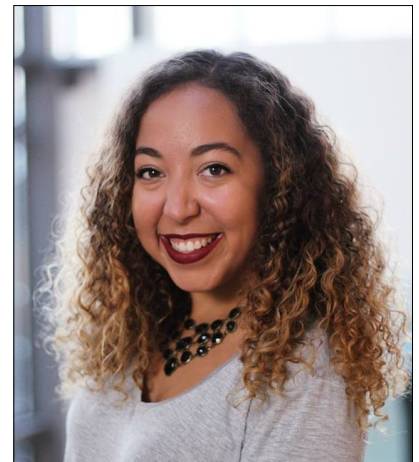
Lyubov's new goal is to obtain citizenship in 2019.

According to Laura, working with Lyubov has been a great honor. Laura plans to be present when she makes her citizenship pledge and will be the first to call her a true 'Yankee Doodle Dandy'!

LVSSC Intern - Nicky Gayle

Nicky is currently in the process of completing a Bachelor of Education at Queen's University, Toronto, Canada. She recently completed a Bachelor of Arts (Honours) studying French and English Language and Literature. She is currently in her 5th year of university studies.

Nicky is coming to LVSSC in March to spend 30 hours per week for five weeks. She will work under the leadership of Kim Pike, StartNow!, Project Manager. Kim has a list of assignments that would benefit from Nicky's expertise. We wish Nicky a very successful internship. Our group hopes that this is the first of many internships supported by LVSSC.



Monthly Volunteer Hours Reports

Please make it a habit to report your volunteer hours at the end of each month using the link emailed to you by a Coordinator or by going to LVSSC's web site:

www.LiteracyChangesLives.org

Yes, There is Such a Thing as a Free Lunch



In December, Esther Bird, LVSSC Board Member and Tutor Trainer, hosted a Tutor Luncheon at the Venice Area Beautification building next to the temporary Venice Library.

It was a great opportunity for the 29 attendees to share not only a tasty lunch, but their tutoring experiences and success stories.

Literacy DOES change lives!

Community Outreach - North Port Newcomer Day



Nov. 2017 - Debi Hoefer, Jan Gallas, Kim Pike

Feb. 2018 - Peggy Ludgate, Sherri Munera

Three times a year, North Port Chamber of Commerce hosts an expo-style event for people new to the North Port area and others who wish to learn more and connect with the community. Over 80 community organizations, government agencies, and local businesses participate, including LVSSC.

These events are very well attended, and we have the pleasure of speaking with many of the new and seasonal residents. We interest people in volunteering, and publicize our mission and presence in South Sarasota County.

Food, Fun, and Conversation at the North Port Library

The first LVSSC Student Party in North Port brought together 26 students and a few volunteers. They brought food to share that was typical of their country.

Lidiya Vigovskaya, Karen Bridegam, Kim Pike, and Janita Wisch planned fun activities including "Pin a Country on the Map" while blindfolded with watchers shouting, "Right, Left, Higher, Lower."

Svitlana Cherkashyna, Student Representative on the LVSSC Board said, "All the students loved getting together and want to do it again." Another party will be announced soon.



Grazyna Pierzak

Svitlana Cherkashyna

**Literacy Volunteers
of South Sarasota County**
260 Nokomis Ave N
Venice, FL 34285

Literacy Changes Lives



FIRST CLASS

Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County

www.LiteracyChangesLives.org

Mailing Address and Venice Literacy Office:
260 Nokomis Ave N
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

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Vice Pres..... Vacant
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Start Now! North Port

Kim Pike

Tutor Trainers

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