

## Letters From бабушка

In the former USSR, Tamara and Ben had been devout Evangelical Christians, but that was always dangerous. Their pastor was often jailed, and the church they worshipped in was often attacked because only the Russian Orthodox Church was authorized. Their involvement with the Evangelical Church was risky. In addition, Ben was an engineering student, a member of a peace movement, and could not espouse Communism. He was identified to the KGB while taking a required course on Communism. They were forced to leave.

Tamara and Ben provide us with a wonderful story about overcoming the frightening obstacles in their former lives in the former USSR. This couple and their 4 small children came from suburban Moscow 31 years ago. They were required to leave everything they owned behind, or Ben would be imprisoned. They were each allowed to take Russian rubles equivalent to \$90 with them.

When they arrived in Massachusetts the couple was helped by a local church group. They lived in a town where there is a large Russian and Ukrainian population. Ben found work as an electrician's helper and Tamara worked nights in an envelope factory where she found companionship with others who spoke her language. Eventually, Tamara was offered a job as a teacher's aide in a school that had many very young children who spoke no English.



Tamara read to the children and translated the stories. In the process, she learned English. This is quite a feat considering that her native script is Cyrillic! While in Massachusetts, they both attended citizenship classes, became proud Americans, and raised four successful well-educated children.

Today, Tamara and Ben are retired, speak fairly good English and live in North Port where there is a large Russian and Ukrainian bilingual population. They are improving their English skills with LVSSC tutors Walt Koenig and Allisson Kirk. Ben wants to achieve better pronunciation and Tamara wants to write to her grandchildren using proper English.

Translation: **бабушка** means Grandma

*Literacy Changes Lives!*

## *The Foundation of Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County*

Have you ever asked where the funds come from to operate the Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County? We are supported by three sources: annual donations, fundraising events, and grants.

With three part-time coordinators and a very engaged board of directors, efforts are continually underway to obtain funds to pay our operating costs, as we serve an expanding client base of 350 with 175 volunteer tutors. From card parties, United Way support, miscellaneous grants and the new Author Literacy Event, the Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County are in a constant fundraising state.....but what about the long-range support?

With this in mind, we have formed a 501(c)3 Foundation with the hope of attracting some planned giving legacy gifts from committed individuals seeing the need to support our ongoing costs. Gifts of cash, stocks, bonds, real estate/land, life insurance and other substantial gifts may be given with a tax deduction benefit for the donor.

We have chosen to work with Pinkerton Private Wealth who will advise us and manage our investments as we begin to accept donations. In the coming months, you will hear more about the opportunity to help make a legacy gift to our organization.

For more information, please contact Jim Patterson at [jcpatterson46@gmail.com](mailto:jcpatterson46@gmail.com) or Joe Pokorney at [Joe@lancaftermcginty.com](mailto:Joe@lancaftermcginty.com) or speak with any board member.

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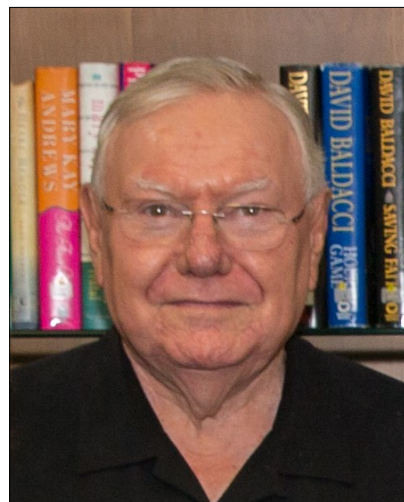
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### *President's Comments*

We are halfway through our 2018/2019 year, and LVSSC has made great strides to expand our services and improve our finances. We have reworked the operation of our English Literacy Computer Lab so that all of our software licenses are assigned to each MacBook and eliminated the various delays we had experienced previously. We have also added two MacBook computers to the Venice office.

Our new Foundation is now active, and we are ready to accept donations, gifts, and other items from individuals and or estates. After a year of planning and collaboration, we just completed the first major annual fundraising event: An Evening with Randy Wayne White. And we still have four months left in this fiscal year.

Looking ahead, we hope to participate in the implementation phase of the Adult Literacy XPRIZE competition. This is an effort to evaluate the effectiveness of two newly created Literacy Applications for cell phones.



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### *Save These Dates!*

Sat 3/16 9:00 am	<b>Venice Book Fair</b>	Blalock Park, Venice
Wed 3/27 1:00 pm	<b>Annual Card &amp; Game Party</b>	Jacaranda Trace, Venice
Sat 4/6 9 am	<b>United Way Community Walk</b>	Island Walk Community Center
Mon 4/18 Noon	<b>Tutor Appreciation Luncheon</b>	Venice Library Community Room

## ***Academic English at SCF***

Is your student interested in attending college? August seems a long way off, but now is the time to let your intermediate or advanced student know about opportunities at State College of Florida for next semester. The local campus at 8000 S. Tamiami Trail is just a mile north of River Road. The English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program can help your student move on to the next step in English language studies. Small classes, day and evening hours, a focus on grammar, writing, and college reading and discussion skills make the program unique in the area.

Instructors, advisors, and a Career Resource Center assist students to move seamlessly from the English program to a degree pathway in the College. EAP is great both for students who want to attend college for the first time, and for those who are college graduates from another country and want to pursue a new area of study or look into transferring their degrees.

Who can attend? The EAP program follows the same policies as other college programs. The applicant should have a high school diploma (from any country) and be living permanently in the United States. The program consists of levels 3-6, so it isn't for absolute beginners. The application process and high school diploma evaluation can sometimes take more than a month, which is why interested students shouldn't delay getting answers to their questions.

The Venice Campus of SCF offers a one-on-one service to help prospective students through the process of gathering information and applying to the College. The EAP Curriculum Coordinator, Professor Maria Spelleri, is happy to meet with any inquiring student (and tutor!) to explain how the program works, what the college offers, and how a student can apply both to the college and for federal financial aid. Also, she can informally assess your student's level to determine if the student is ready for EAP. Contact her before mid-May, when summer vacation starts.

Information: [www.scf.edu/LearnEnglish](http://www.scf.edu/LearnEnglish) Maria Spelleri [spellem@scf.edu](mailto:spellem@scf.edu) 408-1505.

## ***Tutoring Location- SCF Library***

Halfway between Venice and North Port, the library at State College of Florida makes a great tutoring spot. There are some private rooms available on a first come, first served basis. If they are full, tutoring may commence at one of the many tables upstairs or downstairs. Head librarian, Theresa Smith-Ennis, has happily agreed to continue this location agreement with LVSSC. Just identify yourself as a volunteer tutor with Literacy Volunteers if you are asked.



SCF Library Hours: Mon.-Thurs. 8-8, Fri. 8-2. 8000 S. Tamiami Trail, Venice. (941) 408-1435.

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## ***Tutor Continuing Education***

We are continuing to offer special continuing education sessions for tutors as these were very well received last year. They brought like-minded volunteers together to learn and share ideas. We are offering more opportunities such as using FaceTime, and the Computer Lab and we urge our tutors to attend two or three this year. There is a schedule of all activities on page 11.

As new sessions are added, the tutors will be notified via e-mail.

## ***Our First Literary Fundraiser Out of the Gate. And What a Success!***

February 28 marked the first Author Night fundraiser for LVSSC. It was held at the Venice Yacht Club, the perfect venue for our 'Old Salt' Randy Wayne White, author, adventurer and raconteur. Randy arrived early and held court with our generous sponsors in Pearson's Cove. Then he signed the Doc Ford and Hannah Smith books that he wrote.

The champagne and wine were flowing, and tempting hors d'oeuvres were passed. Everyone was either very happy to see and hear Randy or very happy for our success. Hopefully both!

This event was in the making for many months. It was imagined and executed by a group who had never done something on this scale. Ignorance is fraught with danger. But the group effort paid off. We are definitely a working board. Yes, we can! And we will do it again next year. This event along with the very successful annual card party (coming up soon) make significant contributions to our operating expenses. Other sources of funds for these expenses come from United Way and its Community Walk and our annual donor appeal. There is another event being considered as well...stay tuned.

A big shout out to our sponsors who made it possible for us to have Randy Wayne White. Gulf Coast Community Foundation, Venice Regional Bayfront Health, Sarasota Herald Tribune, Coach House RV, Freedom Boat Club, PGT Industries, Pinkerton Private Wealth, and the Victoria Stultz Team at Premier Sotheby's International all gave us the financial boost we needed.

**Randy Wayne White**  
**Featured Author**



**GULF COAST**  
**COMMUNITY FOUNDATION**





Master of Ceremonies  
Paddy Padmanabhan



Randy Signing A Book  
For Helen Russette



The Victoria Stultz Team  
Premier Sotheby's International



Randy Wayne White  
With Jim Patterson  
Board Vice President



# Literacy Volunteers of South Sarasota County

## Card and Game Party Wed., March 27, 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  
300 Nokomis Ave. S., Venice, FL 34285



**BRING:** Your own cards or games  
Cash for “Teacup Auction” and 50/50 Drawing

## GREAT PRIZES AND REFRESHMENTS!

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improve their reading and writing  
skills and improve their ability to  
understand and speak English.



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Beautiful gift baskets  
and gift certificates  
from local businesses.

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

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

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

## **LVSSC AT THE VENICE BOOK FAIR IN MARCH**

The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Venice Book Fair and Writers festival will take place Friday and Saturday, March 15 and 16, and Literacy Volunteers will be there!

This is a unique event, featuring writing and publishing workshops, and a special day when local and national authors sell and sign books at a festival market in a beautiful downtown Venice, Florida park. The Friday Writers Festival will include presentations to help writers hone their skills and sell their books. Learn more about these writers events and how to register at [venicebookfair.com](http://venicebookfair.com)

The Saturday Book Fair is FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC. This year, the event will take place from 9 to 3 in Blalock Park, across the street from the Library, Art Center, Community Center, and Venice Museum & Archives. Look for our booth number 3 close to the Pensacola side of the park. We will be selling the last remaining copies of our International Cookbook, featuring recipes from our students and volunteers.

The change in venue is due to the ongoing downtown construction project. The new larger venue is just a few blocks from downtown and from the farmers market, which has relocated to Avenida des Parques, west of Venice City Hall.

Saturday is a family-oriented day with more than 50 authors and publishers displaying their wares. Around 20 of them are children's authors. Great gifts for children and grandchildren! Come visit our booth and check out all the other great exhibits.

**2019 VENICE BOOKFAIR & WRITERS FESTIVAL**  
**FRIDAY, MARCH 15TH SATURDAY, MARCH 16TH**

**VENICE PUBLIC LIBRARY**  
**GCCF COMMUNITY ROOM**  
**2:00PM - 7:00PM**

**BLALOCK PARK**  
**401 PENSACOLA RD**  
**9:00AM - 3:00PM**

FRIDAY EVENTS: @ 2:00 & 3:30PM TWO AUTHOR PANELS & @ 5:00PM A MASTER CLASS BY DAVID HAGBERG FOLLOWED BY A 6:30PM WINE & CHEESE RECEPTION **\$20.00** SEE [VENICEBOOKFAIR.COM](http://VENICEBOOKFAIR.COM) FOR DETAILS

## Welcome New Tutors

Pictured below are the new tutors trained at Lavonne Radonovich's Tutor Training Workshops for LVSSC at West Villages.



January  
12th

Back Row, L to R: Ann Hollander, Peg Rudolf White, John Palaitis, Jose Gonzalez, Ray Phelps

Middle Row, L to R: Yira Gonzalez, Margaret Wentz, Mary Linda Orlando, Patricia McDermott, Alice Neitzert

Seated, L to R: Sandra McTavish, Barbara Vitali, Mary Ellen Schaertl

February  
20th



Back row, L to R: Marni Brown, Kimberly Otherwise, Margaret Daut, Parma Hanan, Denise Valentich, Jerry Medler

Front Row, L to R: Frank Chamblin, Cathy Brock, Lavonne Radonovich, Tutor Trainer, Gail Boudreau, Marilyn Medler, Susan O'Brien



Barton Workshop  
January 31st



***Tutor Training for New Volunteers - Remember to tell your friends!***

**2-day tutor trainings at West Villages Office Park by Lavonne Radonovich  
Tuesdays, March 19 and 26  
Thursdays, April 11 and 18**

Reserve for North Port workshops by contacting Karen Bridegam  
at [north.port.literacy@gmail.com](mailto:north.port.literacy@gmail.com) or 941-861-1320.

## ***Come to an Orientation***

Several months ago, we began to conduct orientation sessions for those who are interested in becoming LVSSC tutors. The Orientations have been well received and now have become a prerequisite for the 2-day tutor training course. This one-hour session answers many questions for the new volunteers. With this in-depth information, the potential tutor can make an informed decision about going further. The orientations are scheduled during the week before tutor training. They are held in both North Port and Venice. Call either of the coordinators to register for Orientation.

## ***Volunteer for the XPRIZE Community Competition***

In 2018, the Barbara Bush Foundation in coordination Dollar General funded the Adult Literacy XPRIZE Communities Competition. In phase 1, technology firms were solicited to create and test cell phone based applications to help students with Basic Literacy and ESL. Beginning in April, phase 2 will implement a five month evaluation of the winning apps. LVSSC will be participating in this evaluation, and we are looking for tutors who might be interested in working with our students to use and evaluate the apps. If you are interested contact Kim Pike at (941) 429-3717, or at [start.now.north.port@gmail.com](mailto:start.now.north.port@gmail.com)

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## ***Speakers Bureau***



In South Sarasota County, the best way to get the tutors we need to meet the demand is through promoting LVSSC. Local clubs such as Rotary, Lions, Sertoma, book clubs and church groups all have a wealth of possibilities. Currently, we go to these clubs and organizations at their request and address their members at their regularly scheduled meetings. We provide information about LVSSC and talk about the fun and rewards of being a volunteer. Audience members are usually surprised at the amount of work we do and the success stories.

We need to do more of this! Every member of our group should be pursuing opportunities for our Speakers Bureau. If you know of a social, service, or church group, please inquire as to whether they would like one of our speakers to come to a meeting.

Also please consider becoming a speaker for LVSSC. If you are interested, let us know. We have prepared talks and will get you well oriented to the process. When you help us find tutors you are changing lives.

## LVSSC Calendar

### March 2019

Tue Mar 5	11:30am - 12:30pm	<b>New Tutor Orientation</b> (New Volunteers)	<b>StartNow!</b>
Wed Mar 6	11:00am - 12:00pm	<b>New Tutor Orientation</b> (New Volunteers)	<b>Venice Library</b>
Fri Mar 15	1:00pm - 3:00pm	<b>Computer Lab Workshop</b>	<b>StartNow!</b>
Tue Mar 19	10:00am - 4:00pm	<b>Tutor Training Workshop Day 1</b>	<b>West Villages</b>
Wed Mar 20	1:00pm - 3:00pm	<b>LVSSC Monthly Board Meeting</b> (LVSSC Board Members and Coordinators)	<b>West Villages</b>
Thu Mar 21	9:00am - 12:00pm	<b>Video Chat Tutoring Workshop</b> (Tutors)	<b>StartNow!</b>
Tue Mar 26	10:00am - 4:00pm	<b>Tutor Training Workshop Day 2</b>	<b>West Villages</b>
Wed Mar 27	1:00pm - 3:30pm	<b>Card and Game Party</b> (All)	<b>Jacaranda Trace</b>

### April 2019

Tue Apr 2	11:30am - 12:30pm	<b>New Tutor Orientation</b> (New Volunteers)	<b>StartNow!</b>
Thu Apr 11	10:00am - 4:00pm	<b>Tutor Training Workshop Day 1</b>	<b>West Villages</b>
Wed Apr 17	1:00pm - 3:00pm	<b>LVSSC Monthly Board Meeting</b> (LVSSC Board Members and Coordinators)	<b>West Villages</b>
Thu Apr 18	10:00am - 4:00pm	<b>Tutor Training Workshop Day 2</b>	<b>West Villages</b>
Tue Apr 23	10:00am - 12:00pm	<b>Computer Lab Workshop</b>	<b>StartNow!</b>
Mon Apr 29	12:00pm - 2:00pm	<b>LVSSC ANNUAL MEETING</b> (All LVSSC tutors, students, Board members, supporters)	<b>Venice Library</b>

### May 2019

Wed May 15	1:00pm - 3:00pm	LVSSC Monthly Board Meeting and Coordinators	(LVSSC Board Members and Coordinators) <b>West Villages</b>
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**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

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Kim Pike

**Tutor Trainers**

Denise Gastineau, Venice  
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**Newsletter**

Judith McGinty, Editor

**Speaker's Bureau**

Paddy Padmanabhan

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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