

**LOOK AT THIS**  
A Newsletter of the Los Angeles Public Library  
Adult Literacy Service

**Fall 2004**

**IT'S A MATCH!**



On Valentine's Day 2004 Bakhrom Tuleganov turned 21, and it was certainly a day for celebration. Not only was he of legal age, he had finally learned to spell the word "bird"!

Born in Uzbekistan, Bakhrom came to the United States at 17, working long hours as a cook at a Russian restaurant to make ends meet and studying English at a language school at the same time. But the class was crowded and he had a misunderstanding about how confusing English spelling can be.

Unlike the phonic spelling of the Russian and Uzbek languages, similar English sounds can be spelled in many ways. Think of how many words rhyme with "bird" (Bakhrom's special nemesis) that all are spelled very differently - absurd, dullard, herd, heard, and word.

Because of this, he didn't make much progress--until the day he found a tutor at the Cahuenga branch of the Los Angeles Public library, a 56-year-old woman named Janice Mueller.

Janice had decided to tutor because she and her husband were at a particularly low point in their lives. They had chosen as a business partner a con man, an unscrupulous man who took them for everything they had accumulated in life--savings, pensions, house equity, and credit (from \$760,000 to 1.2 million, including attorney fees, liabilities they had to assume, etc.). Staying busy, Janice thought, would keep her mind off her troubles.

And it did. Tutoring Bakhrom gave Janice her life back. She saw how hard he worked with no ties in this country, completely alone and self-dependent. It was a time where she could think about something else besides her personal issues. Seeing him improve his spelling gave her pleasure when little else could.

Communication was difficult at first because, as a “grandmother,” Janice’s word was law. It took some time before Bakhrom felt comfortable enough to begin to work on his spelling problem. The epiphany came one day in Janice’s office. After several months of work, Bakhrom finally understood that homonyms were a characteristic of English, and it was not a personal lack of intelligence that kept him from comprehending a hidden spelling key. He started to spell whole groups of new words effortlessly, including “bird”.

A second breakthrough came at the corner of Santa Monica Bl. and Crescent Heights, when Janice was giving Bakhrom a ride home. Bakhrom’s native languages don’t have linking words like “a”, “the”, “to” and “from”. All of a sudden the young man began to understand and by the time they had reached Sunset and La Brea he knew what “a” and “the” were and could use them appropriately.

No longer convinced he was lacking in comprehension, encouraged by Janice, Bakhrom wrote compositions and poems, applied to SMC, and was accepted, where he is currently in his first semester.

“He’s a brilliant, nice kid,” says Janice. “Tutoring was a great experience for me.”

“Janice was really good and helpful,” comments Bakhrom gratefully. “I really like her.”

Due to the persistence and kindness of his tutor, Janice Mueller, Bakhrom Tuleganov has a very bright future, which very possibly includes a university degree.

## **CREATIVE CORNER**

Here are some “silly poems,” Bakhrom and Janice wrote together:

I really like my new blue coat.  
Because it is really beautiful.  
It is the color of soft water in a moat.  
Looked over by a guide dutiful.

\*

My grandmother liked to bake  
To make a cake  
For whose sake did she bake a cake?  
She make a cake for neighbor Jake.  
When she makes the cake does she make a mestak?  
How does she know to make a cake? She takes  
A snake, combines it with a hake and a take  
To make a flakey fake combination.

\*

As I was driving I saw a snake  
So I put on my brake.  
I don't know if he met her in the snow  
If not they would have to go ski a mountain tall.  
If she never skied she will fall  
He will help her with his all.  
She will kiss him on the nose  
And I now know this gal  
Is more than a pal.

## CONGRATULATIONS

Adult Literacy Services would like to say congratulations to the following

### Learners:

Leah Buford is now writing letters to her friends. She reads and likes the Kaleidoscope books. In the summer she took a test with ninety-three spelling words and only missed two.

Norman Fisher can not only fill out applications and forms, he can read much better; titles he has enjoyed recently include *Treasure Island*, *Fatal Fiction*, *The Secret of Seco Canyon*, *The Winds of Mars*, and *The Sign of the Beast*. He enjoys writing too; in fact, he writes so well that a story of his made his girl friend cry.

Haddan Garbutt, having finished LWR III, can now interpret the stories and discuss real situations related to the story. He can also recognize and spell words.

Donald McGaffee completed the ALP program. He still has problems, but he is very hardworking and now has the skills to break down words and understand what he reads.

David Miramontes, at 72 years of age, is an amazing man. Too poor to go to school as a child, he became part of the Adult Literacy Program in January 2004 and has since taught himself handwriting and spelling.

Frances Moreno is now enjoying reading to her grandchildren as well as reading the Bible out loud in her Bible study class. She passed the driver's test--and bought a new car!

Semira Nurahmed not only learned to write in cursive by completing the LWR Cursive Handwriting book, but she has also learned to speak English better and can use the English dictionary. She passed the driver's test and got a new car as a present.

Herman Satuye, who attends Washington Tech Adult School, can now comprehend what he is reading. He tutors students at his school, while his tutor helps him with his own homework.

Sanchez Shockley is much more confident in himself; he's learning to type, fills out his own paperwork and is reading Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*.

Donnell Thompson passed the driver's test and drives the freeways with confidence, as he can now read the signs. He enrolled in adult school, where he's taking classes 4 nights a week, two hours a night. Also, on August 13, he went to the

unemployment office where he used the Internet to create his resume for the first time.

Virginia Williams, who has never attended school, completed LWR I and reads and comprehends what she reads. The reason she wants to improve her reading is simple. "I am like a blind person when I look at books and would like to help my six year old son," she explains.

Graduates of the June Tutor Training Workshop:

Filiberto Betancourt	David Hughes	Theresa Reyes
Melissa Blazek	Belinda Klarin	Lynda Skeen
Je-Ne Fleming	Phil Moser	Sue Ulu
Rolando Franquez	Ju Hu Park	Donald Weggeman
Ruben Garcia	Luvh Rakhe	Anita Ziobro
Cheryl Garland	Shana Reid	

Graduates of the July Tutor Training Workshop:

Pamela Abraham	Bluebird Herrera	Lia Reid
Michael Brennan	Dennis Hieney	Roger Rodriguez
Luke Bugenhagen	Wendy Ho	Monica Rossetti
Debbie Carlos	Samuel P. Levine	Anita Ruis
Mark Chai	Yvette McPheeters	Iliana Salmeron
Antonia Diaz	Ruben Martinez	Barbara Stewart
Cataya B. Dunn	Alex Montesino	Jessica Staheli
Elaine Eastwood	Adu Moorthy	Steve Tapoozian
Ambrose Ehirim	Bonnie Oliver	Sherry Varon
Alex Fayvil	Anne Pike	Jimena Vayas
Kristen Galich	Martha Portillo	Joyce Warmington-Lee
Kirsten Gronfield	Alexandra Rebeles	Stan Wing

Graduates of the August Tutor Training Workshop:

Jonathan Alvarado	Nayla Huq	Claire Rogger
Karen Aschenbach	Ji Eun Lee	Leslie Roseboro
Dan Frank	Kara M. Lemma	Katherine Smith
Claire Gerard	Odell Mack	Jill Sylvan
Meredith Griggs	Jody MacKinnon	Mary Webster
Julie Hanson	Jennifer Muelbauer	Abraham Williams
Gwendolyn Harris	Helen Nichunsky	Charmaine Wilson
Henry Hooks	Kim Roberts	

Upcoming Tutor Training Classes will be on September 18 at the Cahuenga Branch, October 16 at the Mid-Valley Branch, November 29 at the Venice Branch, and December 18 at the Watts Branch. For information, please call (213) 228-7037.

## **ROLES AND GOALS**

By Sheila Weisberg

Thanks to all tutors who returned their Roles and Goals forms. These forms will be due to your coordinator every six months in order to satisfy the State Library, which created this new tool for all library systems in the state of California that have literacy programs. Knowing learners' goals will help us in ordering materials for your students to use, and that knowledge will also aid you in helping your student achieve his/her specific goals. These forms are therefore very important and very helpful. Here are some highlights of the most recent summary:

### Goals set by students:

369 wish to read for pleasure

294 want to complete a job application or write a resume

287 would like to share a book with children or other family members

285 want to use the library regularly

Other popular goals were to get a library card (they should all have one),

search the internet, take a class on a topic of interest, write checks,

write cards or letters to family members, read the newspaper, get a job or get a

better job or promotion.

### Goals met:

200 got a library card

148 now use the library regularly

115 have shared a book with children or other family members

91 can read a newspaper.

Other goals set may be long-term goals but, if you are helping your students take the first step towards these goals, you are being a wonderful help in this life-changing process.

Keep up the good work!

## **TUTOR TIP**

### How to Make "Roles and Goals" Work For You

Pat Habeck from California Literacy Inc. has the following suggestion:

Many tutors lament that learners often fail to recognize their own progress. Have you considered a "Customer Success Log?" After each tutoring session, the tutor and the learner both complete a short log with their comment (s) about the session. This can be as short as one line, and learners who struggle to write can tell the tutor what to write.

Each team can use the log as a record of success. Every 3 months or so, the tutor can remove previous logs and review what has been accomplished.

(from "How to Track Success")

## **THANK YOU**

Adult Literacy Services would like to thank the library staff for their invaluable help at the following branches, where Literacy Centers are located: Baldwin Hills, Cahuenga,

Central, Exposition Park, Jefferson, Lincoln Heights, Mid-Valley, Pacoima, Panorama City, Pio Pico-Koreatown, Robert Louis Stevenson, Sylmar, Venice, Washington Irving, Watts, and Wilmington.