

LOOK AT US!



A Newsletter of the Los Angeles Public Library
Adult Literacy Services
Edited by Ruth Gooley
Fall 2007

IT'S A MATCH!

Liz and Connie

Liz's Story
By Tutor Liz Parker

Connie and I began our tutoring sessions in October. I learned about her goals at our first meeting. The foremost goal was for her to obtain her citizenship. We began working on her conversation and writing skills until we got the date for her citizenship test. By December we were focusing solely on interview questions and civics studies. I learned that I was a little rusty on some of my civics and ended up learning a lot myself! There were many aspects of our country's origins that I had long since forgotten and maybe never learned. We had many laughs regarding various pronunciations and customs. Connie studied hard and also used the citizenship study guides provided by the Literacy Center. I wasn't surprised when we met on January 4th that she had passed her citizenship test and will be officially sworn in on January 19th. I am proud to welcome her as a fellow citizen of our wonderful country.

Connie's Story
By Learner Connie Chan

I came to the United States in December 2001. In the beginning, I had a difficult time here because of my poor English. It was not easy for me to communicate with people, even though I had learned English for a few years in my own country. When I saw there was a literacy program in the Central Library, it gave me a good chance to learn English. Luckily, I met with Elizabeth Parker, my tutor, who is so friendly and made me feel comfortable in our lessons. I learned more from her, especially in conversations. This was the most important thing that made me pass my citizenship test on January 3, 2007. She helped me to learn about U.S history and how to understand the traditions of the United States,

I thank her so much and also the Literacy Program in the Central Library.

Laurie and Wilfredo

Laurie's Story By Tutor Laurie Asjes

It has been a privilege and an honor working with the Adult Literacy Program as a tutor. My name is Laurie Asjes. I was born in Los Angeles and raised in Encino, part of the San Fernando Valley. I have lived in Valley Village over twenty years.

Having completed the literacy training, I was excited to learn of the myriad of resources available to me, to help my student reach his goals.

My student's name is Wilfredo Joaquin. He is from the Philippines. He likes to be called Willy. I met Willy at the end of May, 2007. After interviewing him, I realized that he had problems speaking English and articulating his words. He struggled in reading, communication, and speaking complete sentences and therefore started in the Challenger 1 series. I realized that Willy had an incredible desire to learn. His outstanding qualities of perseverance, discipline, and dedication helped him achieve amazing success in just three months.

My goal was to help Willy speak English correctly, to speak in complete sentences, to learn vocabulary words, grammar and word pronunciation. We worked together with the assistance from Structures in Spelling, Patterns in Spelling, Focus on Phonics, and a dictionary with large print. There was one time when Willy felt somewhat frustrated and said that he felt like giving up. I replied, "Winners never quit!" I had Willy write that sentence down and recite it daily, several times a day.

It has been three months now, and Willy has developed reading skills, speaks in complete sentences, has learning grammar and the parts of speech, and has completed the Challenger 1 book, Willy always finishes his homework each session, and we are working together twice a week, four hours a week.

This has been a very rewarding experience for me. I feel so grateful to have been a part of Willy's extraordinary journey. He is a very polite and kind gentleman, who has developed self-esteem, confidence, and the ability to read, write and speak English. He has made tremendous progress!

It has been a blessing for me to watch Willy emerge into a confident, tenacious person, who is capable of reaching his dreams or passions he has in life!

Wilfredo's Story By Learner Wilfredo M. Joaquin

I am Wilfredo M. Joaquin second son of Geronimo G. Joaquin and Estelita M. Joaquin. I lived in the Philippines for 43 years. I spoke a Filipino language (Tagalog). I was born on December 29, 1958. I was married to Luzviminda Teodoro Joaquin and I have two sons, one daughter, one daughter in law, and one grand son. I came to the United States of America on September 6,

2002, not speaking fluent English. When I arrived in the United States, I worked as a caregiver. I take care of a 92 years old woman named Evelyn C. Lobree. I am now remarried to Wendy Hainlin. I didn't know how to speak in fluent English. Stephen and Teri Meyer, the owners of the Care Facility, enrolled me in to the Adult Literacy Program at the Studio City Library.

Then I met Miss Holly Schoch, who is the person in charge of the Adult Literacy Program. Then I met Miss Laurie Asjes. She is my tutor in learning the English language. She is tutoring me twice a week, 2 hours a day. Now in three months, I have learned long and short vowels, consonants sounds, consonant blends, prefixes, roots, suffixes, and vocabulary words.

Laurie has taught me how to speak in complete sentences. She has also helped me to learn how to use the dictionary. The dictionary helps me learn new vocabulary words, including their parts of speech and definitions. I enjoy working crossword puzzles, reading my first library book called Monkey.

I'm excited now about my future and being able to speak fluent English!

I want to say thank you to miss Laurie Asjer for helping me to learn more English, writing, reading and speaking better.

CONGRATULATIONS

Adult Literacy Services would like to say congratulations to the following

Learners:

Terry Moore, who has new responsibilities at his job requiring him to fill out expense forms and calculate the sales tax on items that he purchases for his firm, benefited from the Tutor Information Meeting his tutor Eileen King attended. The topic covered was banking and the language of forms. The timing was perfect because the last lesson in the Laubach Way to Reading 1 emphasized numbers. *Way to go, Terry. Keep those numbers rolling!*

Sanchez Shockley has been accepted to the fundraising program at UCLA Extension with a scholarship. *Congratulations to Sanchez and tutor Julian Pasillas. May you raise a lot of money, Sanchez!*

Mina Silani, with the help of tutor Mary Ann Kebo, is a finalist in the Writer to Writer contest sponsored by the California State library. *Great job, Mina!*

Graduates of the July 2007 Tutor Training Workshop:

Nancy Adel

Sumitra Angepat

Jeanette Avedissian

Joe Barba

Sue Bernard

Erik Bruhwiler

Jackie Chou

Jenene Clemons

Donna Contreras

Amber Copilow

John Doggett

Linda Dorman

Rosetta Dunbar

Christian Gonzalez

Marjorie Grace-Sayers
Judy Greenfield
Phillip James
Daryl Johnson
Celia Joseph
Surleen Kaur
Isabella Kim
Alice Maupin

Marc Moten
Gail Osborne
Sujana Patel
Marie Rasner
Paul Schachter
Ronald Simmons
Bessella Sims
Justine Smith

Georgianna Streeter
Amy Sumner
Scott Toland
Jacob Vangelisti
Nancy Watson
Amy Witry
Jean Yoon

Graduates of the August 2007 Tutor Training Workshop:

Allison Anderson
Francisco Aragon
Ora Blackmon
Janalynn Bliss
Tomy Chaisawasdi
Arthur Coleman
Teresa Connors
Eileen Cusimano
Christine Elliott
Carlo Flores
Alison Goldberg

Marcia Gorton
Charlena Grato
Marcy Hiratzka
Teni Khachatoorian
Lydia Magdaleno
Lara Mahaney
Teresa McLaughlin
Sheila Mechanic
Sarah Moreau
Monique Moss
Thania Munoz

Michelle Perea
Jo Powe
Fernando Santillan
Radell Simon
Stan Smith
Chris Thomason
Salomie Ware
Howard Weiner

Graduates of the September 2007 Tutor Training Workshop:

Caroline Altman
Ronnie Amromi
Yvonne Ash
Laura Case
Mary Conheady
Beverly Croswhite
Anne Faigin
Lauren Gordon
American Herrera

Walter Higgins
Susan Hoffnagle
Janice Hou
Nikki Indicks
Bob Loos
Mary Alice Mesa
Semee Park
Adrian Payne
Careen Praschnik

Estelle Reich
Joan Sitnick
Michael Stuart
David Weimer
Jennifer Weinstein
Vivian Wood
Laura Woolley

A special congratulations to:

Nancy Lusk for her Certificate of Appreciation with Honorable Mention for the
2007 L. A. Senior Citizens of the Year.

FUTURE TUTOR TRAINING WORKSHOPS

Tutor training workshops will be held on the following dates at the following locations. Please call your local Adult Literacy Coordinator for information.

Saturday, October 20, at the Cahuenga Branch, 10-5.

Saturday, November 17, at the Robertson Branch, 10-5.

Saturday, December 15, at the Lincoln Heights Branch, 10-5.

Saturday, January 12, at the Pacoima Branch, 10-5.

Saturday, February 9, at the Cahuenga Branch, 10-5.

Saturday, March 15, at the Harbor City - Harbor Gateway Branch, 10-5.

CREATIVE CORNER

Students Write Letters, Stories, and Poems

My Grandma's Hen

By Grace Wang

I remember when I was seven years old my grandma raised a white hen. We all liked her very much.

One day at night, we all fell asleep, our hen slept too. We didn't know what time we woke up with a sharp voice, my grandma went to the hen's house to check if she is safe. My grandma yelled with a shaking voice. I got up quickly, I saw our hen was bitten was some animals, her legs were lame, her gizzard was broken. We were very sad with that attack.

We understood that our hen was in pain, what can we do for our hen, I cried out with a lot of tears, my grandma told us, "Don't worry about it, I can fix it. Really." We doubted her. My grandma took a string into a needle then she sewed her gizzard, the hen felt a lot of pain, her body was shaking by the needle, but she understood my grandma was saving her, so she was quite quiet and didn't move.

One week later, our hen had gotten over it. She could eat and drink, we were very happy about that, we were all so proud of my grandma to save our hen. We were also proud of our hen with a lot of smarts and bravery.

Super Smart Pills

By Ingrid Xu

This semester, every time my sixth grade daughter and her classmates take a History test, Ms. Ehrke, the History teacher, lets everyone take a *Super Smart Pill*. After taking this special pill, the students become more interested in History.

The Super Smart Pill Ms. Ehrke gives to her students isn't a so-called panacea, it's only a common small candy named Skittles. Since History, studying dead people and out of date places, is an unpopular subject among the middle-school students, Ms. Ehrke came up with the idea of the *Super Smart Pill*. Every time students take a History test, they get a piece of candy.

In order to get the maximum effect, Ms. Ehrke puts the pills into a big medicine jar labeled with *Super Smart Pill*. As for a few students who don't like candy, Ms. Ehrke sticks some *Super Smart Patches* on their arms and hands instead. They're regular stickers with words like *Super*, *Excellent*, and *Great*, etc.

Although everyone knows the truth about *Super Smart Pills*, before the test the students act like they are taking a real drug. Students with a sweet tooth attempt to get more candy. One boy once gave the excuse that he needed more candy to get smarter. Ms. Ehrke answered him cleverly, "According to the usage instructions, you can only take one pill at a time. If you overdose, you will go from smart to crazy." Once before a History test, Ms. Ehrke ran out of the *Super Smart Pills* unexpectedly. So Ms. Ehrke gave her students the *Super Smart Patches* as a replacement. She assured her class, "Don't worry, I'll go to the doctor tomorrow and get a new prescription, then I'll go to the drugstore's *Super Smart Teacher* aisle to get plenty of *Super Smart Pills*."

The little Skittles motivated the history class, reduced the test taking pressure and brought great fun. Under Ms. Ehrke's hands, those common Skittles turned into the magical *Super Smart Pills*.

The other day, Ms. Ehrke was absent from school and a substitute took the History class. Because it was a test day, everyone asked the substitute for a *Super Smart Pill*. The substitute made a surprised face and said regretfully, "Darn it! I thought I invented the *Super Smart Pill*." Everyone laughed out loud. —We are glad to see that a *Super Smart Teacher* like Ms. Ehrke does not stand alone in America.

This article was originally published in the HOME/LIFE section of the Chinese Newspaper WORLD JOURNAL on Wednesday Jan 3, 2007. English translation edited by Mrs. Gwenn Sayer

Happiness is...

By Young Kim

"It's clean." "Yes, it's clean." I looked around where the man's voice was coming from. There was a man on the street, where I was waiting for a bus at a bus stop, waving some pants he has held in his hand to a woman across the street. The man seemed to be a street vendor who was selling clothes on the street, but I had never seen him around the bus stop.

I will be back in five minutes," said the woman, Then the man said to himself, "I am happy, I am happy..."

I felt something flooding inside myself when I heard him say that. His remark made me think about happiness for a few minutes.

What is happiness?

Many people are thinking that they are not happy, so they are trying to find happiness everywhere in life. Some people having good wealth are not happy because they want to make a fortune, more than they need. Some people with knowledge are not happy because they need more knowledge for their brain. Some people with personal things are not happy because they need more basic things, even though they have already enough to live on.

There are many books about happiness in book stores and they are selling as one of the best sellers. Did these books really bring happiness to the readers? Did they really become happy after reading the books? I am in doubt. The readers should be only happy when they started reading the books because they are expecting these books to show them the way of happiness.

How can people be happy? "People are happy when they believe they are happy," I thought.

Hope is...
By Joey Baek

Hope is very important to people because humans can progress to their goals with hope. If our life has no hope, nobody will try for a better life. Hope is like a medicine and is a refreshing as food. Let's begin with a definition of hope.

First of all, I think hope is having an ambition for something new. People can't predict their future, but people want their dreams to come true. This is possible because there is hope. Secondly, hope means having a positive mind. If a man fails to get a job, he will be depressed. He may feel hopeless. In conclusion, it's not difficult to have hope. You just have to change your outlook. Although you have had bad luck, don't be disappointed. There is hope; we can handle everything.

Tutors write too!

Coincidences
By Shel Erlich

I really got my student Catherine's interest cooking on all cylinders when I told her I had actually been on the same Navy ship that one of her Marine Corps sons is on right now. I was on the USS Bonhomme Richard temporarily for two months when it was a regular aircraft carrier back in the early days of the Vietnam war (mid-1960s). It has since been converted to a helicopter carrier.

Catherine told me a couple of months ago that her son's ship, which had been in and around Guam in the Pacific for awhile, had been redeployed to the Middle East. I checked out the ship's public information website and sure enough -- she was right. I downloaded and printed out some interesting information about the ship and its activities that I helped her read, including the tidbit that between our two days of lessons last week on July 16 and 18, her son was probably in the

audience aboard ship -- at sea -- for a concert on July 17 performed for the crew by a rock-and-roll band that had been flown aboard by helicopter. She was thrilled!



Shel Erlich & Catherine Cooper

Coordinators in the News

Luva Coulson, Adult Literacy Coordinator at the Pacoima branch, appeared in the Daily News Valley News after giving a talk at the Sylmar Women's Club's monthly luncheon. The reporter was impressed with the poignant success stories Luva told of the adult students who came through the program and encouraged interested people to contact the library.

DYSLEXIA
By Susan Camier
Adult Literacy Coordinator
Platt Branch

Generally speaking, *dyslexia* is defined as difficulty with reading and writing. Some people experience reversal of letters [lower-case **ds** and **bs** are confused as well as **ps** and **qs**]. Some people do not. Research shows that people with significant difficulty reading use a different part of their brains to read than that used by so-called "normal" readers. Those researchers reason that because that brain part they're using was really designed for speaking rather than reading, dyslexics have to work harder to read.

Whatever the causes, there are specific things we can do to help those students who have difficulty learning to read. We definitely know that using a systematic **phonics** approach helps.

It helps to emphasize that each **letter** or **digraph** (*two letters which are written together but make **one** sound like sh, ch, th, or ck,*) makes a sound, and these can be sounded separately and then combined or blended into a word. I like the process of tapping the thumb and forefinger together for the first sound, then the thumb and middle finger, and then the thumb and ring finger: ch-a-t. Tap the *ch*, then the short vowel *a* then the *t*. Then pull the thumb across the other fingers to say the word *chat*. Adding the tap adds another sense to the multi-modal or multi-sensory approach, so that now we have touch as well as sight and sound.

Here are some really helpful on-line sources of information on dyslexia for learners and tutors:

www.LDonline.org
www.reading.org
www.hellofriend.org
www.schwablearning.org

If you have any questions, contact Susan Casmier at scasmier@lapl.org.

CLASSES:

Adult Literacy Services are proud to offer the following classes. Please call the appropriate Center for more information.

Singleton Adult Literacy Center at the Central Library:

English conversation class: Monday-Thursday 3:30-5
Friday-Saturday 2-3:30

Writing class: Monday & Tuesday 2-3:30

Mid-Valley Regional Branch:

Conversation class: Wednesday 12:30-2
Thursday 3:30-5

Pio-Pico Koreatown Branch:

Conversation class: Tuesday 3:30-5
Vocabulary: Please contact coordinator for times.

THANK YOU

Adult Literacy Services would like to thank the 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, Platt, Robert Louis Stevenson, Robertson, Venice, Washington Irving, Watts, and Wilmington.