

LITERACY LIGHTS



"To learn to read is to light a fire!" VICTOR HUGO

255 Clifton Boulevard, Suite 314, Westminster, Maryland 21157 • 410-857-0766 • e-mail: lcouncil@carr.org • www.literacy.carr.org

August, 2016

From the Director's Desk

By Sam Greenholtz, Director of the Literacy Council of Carroll County, MD

I hope that everyone has enjoyed their summer thus far. The Literacy Council has remained busy and is preparing for the fall season. This fall we will be concentrating on gaining new students and developing some new corporate ties.

As reported elsewhere in this newsletter, we have a new Student/Tutor Coordinator, Heidi White. We all wish Richard Keen the best of luck in his new position at Manchester Valley High School. Thankfully, he will remain on as a tutor and volunteer as time allows.

Heidi, will be coming in as we open our new remote location in Taneytown on September 8th, 2016. We will have an office that will be open one day a week at Trinity Lutheran Church. It will be staffed by volunteers on that day. Tutoring will be available anytime except Wednesday's. The Taneytown Library will also be available for tutoring purposes.

Watch for a special release of information regarding our new web site address and all the pertinent information for our Taneytown location coming in the near future. This will be a special addition of the Literacy Lights.

Two major announcements regarding grants: 1. We have received \$2500 of new textbooks through a grant from ProLiteracy along with our annual dues being payed, 2. We will be receiving a check shortly for a \$7000 grant given by the former Greater Westminster Development Corp. Executive Board of Directors.

Our computers have been installed and are being used by the staff and students.

By Board of Director's approval, we have changed our fiscal year from June through May to be a calendar year effective January 1, 2017. A special meeting of the Board will be held in December to approve a new budget. We have also begun moving our account from BB&T Bank to New Windsor State Bank.

We also want to welcome a new volunteer in the Westminster office, Nancy Godwin. She will be assisting Anita Wilcox on Wednesday's.

All of our various committees are meeting regularly and planning for fundraising, corporate donations, finance, and media and marketing are progressing. New volunteers to work on these committees are always welcome. Call the office for details if you are interested.



HELLO, TANEYTOWN

The Literacy Council is excited to announce its first satellite office in Taneytown. One of the problems that many of our students face is one of transportation. This has been a particular problem with several perspective students in Taneytown. Trinity Lutheran Church has given us office space and we are in the process of supplying this space with books and equipment. We have volunteers to man the office and have identified potential tutors.

EXPECTED OPENING DAY

SEPTEMBER 8



Save the Date **Get the Discounts!!**
Friends Helping Friends Shopping Day
Bosco's
Oct. 18, 2016 **9AM to 11PM**

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Welcome Heidi White



Heidi White is our new Student/Tutor Coordinator. She will officially take over from Richard Keen who has accepted a full-time job in September. Heidi comes to us from a 30-year career with the Carroll County Public Schools.

Heidi is a long-time resident of Westminster and has served as a volunteer at Northwest Middle School Library. She is the mother of two sons, one of whom lives in Westminster. She is well known throughout our community and brings a dedication to education that fits well into a volunteer organization.

Continuing to be Relevant

The Literacy Council of Carroll County was started in 1979. When we look back at how the world was that year we are amazed by how much things have changed. Disco was still the dominant music of the times. Few people had a computer in their home. We viewed our favorite shows via an antenna at no monthly cost. A new car cost around \$5,000, and new homes were selling for an average of \$64,000. A four-year college education cost \$10,000 at a private school and less than half that at a public college.

Since 1979 hundreds of adults have been taught how to read and write through the auspices of the Literacy Council. For the most part they were people who dropped out of school for one reason or another. Often, it was an economic necessity to work on the farm, or help with struggling families, or the responsibility of starting a family.

Today the demographics of a new student are very different. We still have adults who never made it through high school; but more often we are seeing new types of students. First are referrals from agencies that are trying to help adults with a variety of social and physical issues to gain the skills to enter the work force and live more independently. Second is the immigrant who needs both English language skills and knowledge of our American culture that will prepare them to pass the test required to become a citizen.

Fortunately, the pool of people who are interested in working with each of these types of students continues to grow in our communities. We have trained more tutors in the past year than in previous years. Most new tutors are matched with a student soon after training. But we still need to find more people willing to help others reach their literacy goals. New marketing strategies will help us fill this need. But you too can be a recruiter. If you know of someone who may be interested in becoming a tutor, help them get in touch with the Literacy Council. And, just as important, if you know someone who could benefit from the many programs offered by the Literacy Council, send them our way.

We continue to be relevant in an ever-changing world.

Richard Keen, Student/Tutor Coordinator

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Annual Fundraising Golf Tournament



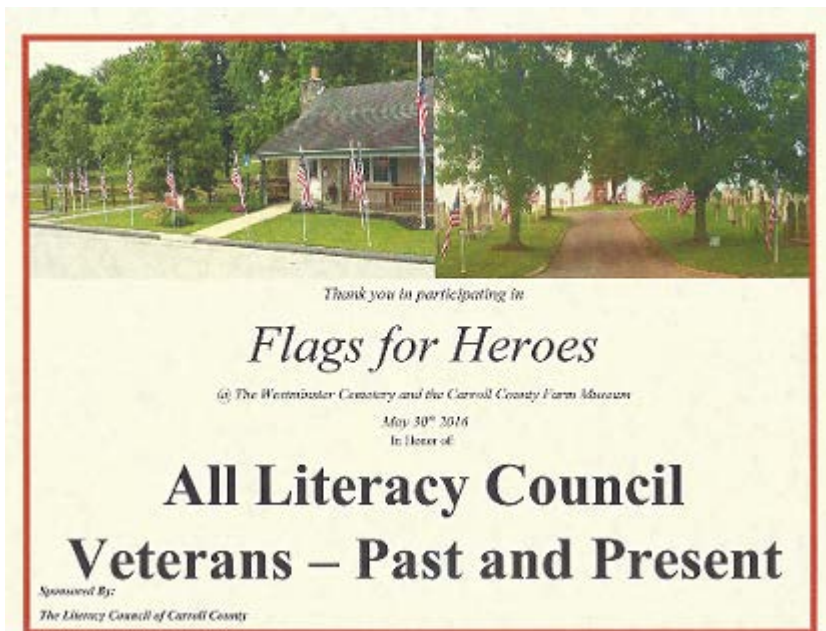
The winners of our Annual Golf Tournament were the gentlemen from

Swain Supply, Inc.

Thank you, Randy, Skip, Don and Todd and congratulations!!!

The tournament was held Friday, June 10, 2016 under a beautiful blue sky. Seven teams participated and after expenses the Literacy Council cleared over \$3000.00.

We look forward to next June and wonder if the competition could ever be as much fun.



The Literacy Council thanks all of our veterans for their service in preserving our freedoms that we so often take for granted.



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I Want to Be an American Citizen, a Personal Look at Determination

Judy Goodyear's student had one very clear goal when they first met 3 years ago. Her student wanted to become a citizen of the United States.

Although Judy's student had learned much spoken English since coming to the U.S., she was not able to read and write English, a skill she would need to pass the citizenship test. In fact, she was not able to read and write in her native language. As a child her parents knew it was too dangerous to send her away from home for school as they had already lost one child to violence on the roads of their native country. At 16, Judy's student was married to an older man and with the arrival of her children she put aside her dream of an education to be a full-time wife and mother. Determined that her children would have all the opportunities that education would provide, she encouraged all of her children to obtain professional degrees in their native country as well as becoming fluent in English, French and German. One of her daughters now holds a position in an area hospital. Since arriving in the U.S., Judy's student has worked as a housekeeper/health aide to an elderly man in our community.

Judy may have wondered where to begin teaching English reading and writing but her student's determination, willingness to work hard and obvious intelligence gave her the inspiration to start. Judy remembers holding her student's hand as she taught her to write her name for the first time. They began working on phonics and discovered certain sounds particularly the short vowel sounds were not part of her native language. Her student learned to read words containing the short vowel sounds but struggled with writing a dictated sentence, a requirement for the citizenship test. Judy's student finished several biographies of famous Americans including her favorite, Helen Keller, and Anne Sullivan, Helen's teacher. They read about and discussed the important documents of our government as well as how our government works and what our laws ensure for each citizen.

Last spring, Judy's student paid her test fee of \$685.00 and selected a date for her citizenship test. She had studied very hard and was prepared to answer questions like: How many representatives are in the House of Representatives? If the president dies and the vice president dies, who then becomes president? Name all the rights granted citizens in the Bill of Rights.

She passed the question part of the test fine but failed to pass the written part. Doubling their efforts to improve her writing skills, Judy and her student worked diligently to meet the time restriction for the one retest an applicant is allowed. On her second try, she passed!!!!

Judy was invited to attend the swearing in ceremony that is the final step to becoming a United States citizen. Judy described it as, "The room was filled with such joy and hope. Most of the new citizens had family and friends with them. It was like a graduation only much more powerful as so many of the people had struggled so hard to make the United States their home."

Judy and her student are now good friends and speak often. Her student continues to pray for Judy and her family, a practice that began when Judy complained about her knees and continued through her father-in-law's illnesses. Judy notes, "It is hard not be happy when you are with my friend. She is so jolly and looking forward to a very bright future."

