



# Literacy Council of Carroll County

225 Clifton Blvd. Westminster, MD 21784 410-857-0766 October, 2019 [www.literacyccmd.org](http://www.literacyccmd.org)

## Why do we concentrate so hard on a PRE GED program?

The two other organizations in Carroll County who run GED programs require students to pass a placement test prior to enrolling. So where does a student go who does not pass the placement test? Often times these students walk through the Literacy Council's door.

Such is the case with Donna Balls' two students. Both of the young women had dropped out of school and have come to realize the importance of educational certification. Both have been away from formal education for a time so that many of the skills they once knew in school have slipped away. They did not test high enough to start their GED pursuit.

When these students came to the Literacy Council our student/tutor coordinator, Heidi White, met with them to talk about their educational goals. This is very important because all of our tutors have strengths in different areas, and Heidi tries to match the student and tutor for a long term relationship. The student then takes a brief test to determine where their instruction should begin.

Donna's first student did not place into a GED program because she needed to improve her reading level. The student loved history particularly the Civil War. Using the reading level determined by Heidi, Donna began teaching basic reading skills using the Literacy Council's adult specific reading material but supplemented this reading with material she found that was level appropriate about the Civil War. Donna and her student worked together for almost a year when her student moved to Florida. Donna gave her several of the books into which she would have advanced and her student promised to continue the program so that her reading could improve and she could enter a GED program in Florida.

Donna's second student dropped out of school in the eleventh grade after some bullying problems. Again it had been several years and her skills had declined. She loves multiple syllabic words and enjoys working out their pronunciations. As before, Donna uses the Literacy Council's adult specific reading material as the basis of her teaching but throws in all kind of "fun" words to intrigue her student.

Once Donna's second student is ready to take the GED placement test again and enters the GED program, Donna will have the opportunity to continue to work with her on the GED material. Tutoring often continues as our students move into other educational programs. We have had students move into beginning Community College programs who call on their "old" tutors to help with the initial transition courses.

Why does Donna make this effort for strangers she never knew before? To quote her, "This is fun for me" and I love waiting for "the big light" and I enjoy "all the little lights" that come on along the way. For those adults who want an education, the Literacy Council is here in Carroll County to help.

**NO MATTER WHERE A STUDENT MAY NEED TO BEGIN.**



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## *Save the Date*

*December 10, 2019 11:30-2:00 PM*

*Holiday Luncheon at the Carroll Non-Profit Building*

*As part of this year's Holiday Luncheon we are celebrating*

## *Our 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary*



### *History Lesson 101*



In the picture on the left are Shirley Hoff, an early tutor, Susan Moringstar, the first president of the Literacy Council and Sister Rosalia, vice president of the Literacy Council. The photo appeared in the Carroll County Times on March 15, 1979.

Sister Rosalie came to Carroll County in 1979 from St. John's school in Frederick to be principal of the Westminster St John's School. She brought with her the realization of the problems adult illiteracy causes in the community. While in Frederick she was trained as a tutor with the Frederick Literacy Council. She enlisted the help of the Frederick County Literacy Council to train tutors and the help of

Nancy Eckhardt, wife of the pastor at Grace Lutheran Church, to provide a space to begin. Thus The Literacy Council of Carroll County was founded. As today, all tutoring was free and all materials were free to the students. That was 40 years ago.

Looking through the newspaper clippings from 1979, some of the comments are still so applicable. "You learn to appreciate the stratification that exists in society", another tutor stated in the article. "You realize the intelligence and ingenuity of people who haven't learned to read and yet are responsible, working adults."

