

Message from the Executive Director It's back to the future

The renovated St. Charles Public Library is scheduled to open in July. I was invited to do a walk-through in early May. Prepare to be amazed.

Images from the St. Charles Public Library Renovation Project webpage give a glimpse of what you can expect. Inside the new entrance you will find a large, welcoming space where you can meet up with others. Study rooms are accessible throughout the building. Patrons will be able to make room reservations on keypads stationed outside each room. There is a space where patrons can create video recordings. It will be fun for students to record themselves at language milestones so they can gauge their progress over time. Meeting rooms have been expanded and equipped with state-of-the-art speakers and projection systems. There is an outside garden for those who prefer to enjoy the library al fresco and an abundance of natural light inside the building for those who prefer the comfort of the brand new heating, air conditioning, and ventilation system.

Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley is thrilled to have in-kind office space at the St. Charles Public Library. We can't wait to get back. The future is now!



Peg Coker, Executive Director



Lobby looking toward new entry and reading room
Concept designs by Sheehan Nagle Hartray Architects

UPCOMING EVENTS

TUTOR TRAINING

MONDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS
JUNE 7, 9, 14, AND 16
6:30 PM TO 9:00 PM
POTTAWATOMIE COMMUNITY CENTER
ST. CHARLES
ATTENDANCE CAPPED ACCORDING TO CDC
GUIDELINES AND STATE OF ILLINOIS
RESTRICTIONS.

TUTOR TRAINING

TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS
AUGUST 17, 19, 24, 26
6:30 PM TO 9:00 PM
POTTAWATOMIE COMMUNITY CENTER
ST. CHARLES
ATTENDANCE CAPPED ACCORDING TO CDC
GUIDELINES AND STATE OF ILLINOIS
RESTRICTIONS.

DONORS' BREAKFAST

NOVEMBER 2021 FINGERS CROSSED

TRIVIA BEE FOR LITERACY

MARCH 2022 FINGERS CROSSED

Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley

One South Sixth Avenue
St. Charles, Illinois 60174

Temporary Address:
305 S. Ninth Street
St. Charles, IL 60174

Phone: 630-584-2811
Email: info@lvfv.org



Find us on Facebook



Find us on Instagram

Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley's website gets a facelift

If you have visited www.lfvf.org in recent months, you have seen our new look. Web developer, technology expert, and former board member Ellen Kamps teamed up with Martin Pinnau Photography to reimagine our web presence.

Visitors can now locate information with fewer clicks. Contemporary navigation features have been added and content has been combined to make for more efficient searches.

There are more features for adult learners. The translator, located on the lower left hand side of every page, allows visitors to view the website in English, Spanish, or Farsi, our most common languages. Learners who want to enroll online can do so with a fillable form that is located on the "Need a tutor?" page.

Martin Pinnau's photography and video content makes Ellen's extraordinary design come alive. Martin has the amazing ability to capture human emotion in his images. The photos and videos he has created for Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley do not disappoint.

We are grateful to the many students, tutors, and supporters who agreed to have their images posted to the website. Our diverse population is well-represented.



Videos have been uploaded to various pages so you can "meet" our tutors and students.

Meet Cynthia O'Kelley, LFFV Tutor Trainer



Enthusiastic, encouraging, organized, and fun! These are a few of the words that tutors have used to describe Cynthia O'Kelley who became a new tutor trainer last November.

Cynthia is a graduate of the University of Illinois, Champaign where she earned a B.A. in Art Education and an M.E. in Curriculum, Technology, and Education Reform. "Over the years, technological advances have increased the way to educate and I love the challenges of expanding my training tools," she says on her LinkedIn profile.

Cynthia spent a number of years in the international travel and tourism industry, working for Insight Vacations as sales manager Midwest. She particularly enjoyed presenting programs that allowed her to train with technology tools while applying the human touch. She also has experience as a substitute teacher for St. Charles Community School District.

Volunteerism rounds out her education and employment background. She has been a volunteer tutor with LFFV since August, 2019. Currently, she tutors her student virtually.

Welcome to the staff, Cynthia!

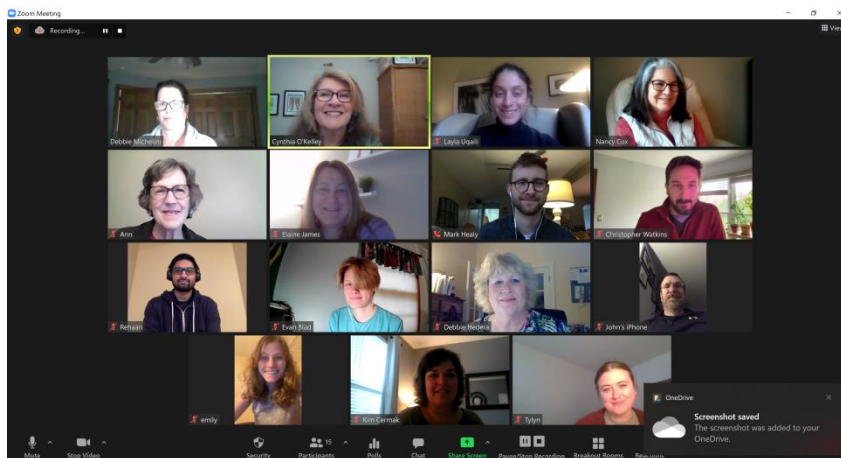
Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley hosts tutor training online

With 300 million Zoom users in the United States, we thought we might be able to attract a few of them to online tutor training. Success! In April, 19 local residents joined us in cyberspace for our first Zoom tutor training.

Veteran tutor trainer Mary Benson had already modified the sessions so we could hold in-person workshops while social distancing and following other safety guidelines issued by the State of Illinois and the CDC. Trainer Cynthia O'Kelley further modified training, making use of the Zoom breakout group feature, chat box function, and several other teaching tools to facilitate the workshop online.

Training evaluation comments were positive:

- “All the resources we were given where great.”
- “The small group activities and processing with other students helped me get a better handle on strategies and tools.”
- “Bringing in a guest speaker who had a lot of experience was most helpful. Being able to ask questions was useful.”



Cheers to the volunteers who completed Zoom tutor training in April.

Learning in the comfort of your own home is convenient but some tutors missed the personal interaction. One volunteer said, “There’s something about chatting with someone in person during an assignment or before and after class that is more meaningful. It’s easier to share ideas, ask questions, give and get advice.”

Lessons learned? Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley will continue to use Zoom once COVID-19 restrictions lift but we will not abandon the in-person meetings that effectively build comradery between students, volunteers, and staff. We will work to strike a happy balance.

Welcome new tutors

Thanks to the tutors who completed tutor training in-person or virtually August 2020 through April 2021:

Tylyn Anders
Mary Anderson
Emily Bettler
Evan Blad
Rehaan Bux
Kim Cermak
Karen Clutter
Nancy Cox

Terry Crowe
Lisa Dinning
Scott Fintzen
Cyndy Halleran
Mark Healy
Emma Henderson
Vince Iturralde
Elaine James

Gerardo Juarez
Eileen Kurtz
John McCullagh
Mark Meyer
Deb Michelini
John Myall
Ann Niedzwiecki
Ann Rak

Valann Reddington
Yari Tapia
Jill Taylor
Layla Uqaili
Linda Virgil-Feeney
CJ Watkins

Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley receives \$10,500 for Chromebooks from the Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley



Program Coordinator Margarita Jimenez prepares a Chromebook for student use.

Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley thanks the Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley for approving a grant for the purchase 30 Chromebooks for adult students.

COVID-19 restrictions have prevented adults students from meeting with volunteer tutors in-person during most of the pandemic. Some are meeting for virtual lessons but many adult students lack electronic devices that are suitable for learning. The grant removes a significant barrier that low-income adults face when seeking English lessons.

Thanks to the St. Charles Public Library, we were able to prepare the Chromebooks for use. We couldn't ask for a better community partner.

Edith Craig, Director, offered valuable insight and library resources to help launch the project.

Amanda Kaiser, Technical Services Manager, created a tracking method through the SWAN library consortium so the Chromebooks can be checked out with a library card at any of the libraries with whom we partner.

Brian Hand, IT Manager, gave us the benefit of his experience. He had supervised a Chromebook rollout at a former job. His staff created a Chromebook user guide for adults at low literacy levels. It is available in English and Spanish.

The Chromebooks are being loaned for a 16-week period to adults who are enrolled in our program with options for renewal. The user guide emphasizes that Chromebook is a powerful tool that a student can use to learn English, talk with a tutor, look for jobs, complete online job applications, and get more education.

So far, about 20 have been placed in the hands of adult students. This leaves 10 Chromebooks for new students or students whose life circumstances allow them re-enroll in our program.

The Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley is a non-profit, tax-exempt, philanthropic organization that administers individual charitable funds from which grants and scholarships are distributed to benefit the citizens of the Greater Aurora Area, the TriCities, and Kendall County, Illinois. Founded in 1948, the Foundation provides a simple and powerful approach to charitable giving. Individuals, families, businesses, and organizations have the opportunity to custom design their own named funds that reflect their charitable goals and interests. If you are interested in more information about the Community Foundation of the Fox River Valley, please visit www.cffrv.org.

If you know an adult who needs to improve their English language skills, please encourage them to call/text/WhatsApp Program Coordinator Margarita Jimenez at 630-584-2811 or email margarita@lvfv.org.

Want more information about Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley?

For more information about:

- Being a tutor
- Being a student
- Making a financial donation
- Sharing your ideas

Visit our website www.lvfv.org for more information.
We look forward to hearing from you!

Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley
One South Sixth Avenue
Temporary Address: 305 S. Ninth Street
St. Charles, Illinois 60174

Call us at:
630-584-2811

Or email:
info@lvfv.org

In part, this project was made possible by a grant awarded by the Illinois State Library, a division of the Office of Secretary of State, using funds designated for literacy.