

Message from the Executive Director

In fourth grade, Billy Potter fell in love with me.

When he intended to kiss me after school, my friends would pass me warning notes. Now Billy was a perfectly nice kid, but I didn't want to be kissed by him or any other boy. When the dismissal bell rang, I would quickly run home and hide under the bed to avoid his affection. I was glad when the school year ended.

During summer vacation, I grew six inches, got a haircut, and started wearing prescription eyeglasses.

When fifth grade began that fall, Billy Potter didn't recognize me and he fell in love with someone else. The threat was over.

What is the moral of the story? Change can be good.

In this newsletter you will read about changes in the LVFV community.

- You can read about the progress our students have made as a result of the lessons they received from tutors.
- An article about the Geneva Public Library will let you know what tutors and students can look forward to when construction is complete.
- You can read about St. Charles Public Library and renovations that will offer benefits to tutors and students.
- You will be introduced to a new staff member and a new board member.

Embrace change! Join me in saying goodbye to summer and hello to fall with all the promise it holds.



Peg Coker, Executive Director

UPCOMING EVENTS

TUTOR TRAINING

TUESDAYS AND THURSDAYS
SEPTEMBER 10, 12, 17, AND 19
6:30PM TO 9:00PM
ST. CHARLES PUBLIC LIBRARY

GET CONNECTED!

SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 21
9:30AM TO 10:30AM
ST. CHARLES PUBLIC LIBRARY

TUTOR TRAINING

MONDAYS AND WEDNESDAYS
OCTOBER 7, 9, 14, AND 16
6:30PM TO 9:00PM
ST. CHARLES PUBLIC LIBRARY

DONORS' BREAKFAST

SATURDAY
NOVEMBER 2
9:00AM TO 10:30AM
ST. CHARLES COUNTRY CLUB

Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley

One South Sixth Avenue
St. Charles, Illinois 60174
Phone: 630-584-2811
Email: info@lvfv.org



Find us on Facebook!

Can you help find tutoring
space in St. Charles?
See page 3

GIVE THEM A PAT ON THE BACK! Celebrating our students

If you are a number cruncher, you will appreciate that in fiscal year 2019, 225 volunteer tutors gave 267 adult students 5,880 hours of instruction. As a result, 80% gained one or more educational functioning levels for every 30 hours they received, an impressive statistic in any academic setting.

However, accomplishments measured by standardized tests tell only part of the story. With a better command of the English language, our learners are realizing their personal aspirations and helping their families achieve what they never thought possible. For example, in fiscal year 2019,

--47 students started studying for the U.S. citizenship exam and seven additional students attained U.S. citizenship.

--11 students started preparing for their GED and 17 students enrolled in community college or started taking other classes that will improve their job prospects.

--13 students got new jobs, four got second jobs, and four received job promotions. Two students opened their own businesses. One was declared "Employee of the Month."

Volunteers should be very proud of the very real difference they are making in the lives of our students and their families. Kudos to our students and the tutors who teach them!

Taina Latinovic elected to the Board of Directors



Taina Latinovic

"Marketing professional by day." That's how Taina Latinovic describes herself. But there is so much more to the new member of the board of directors for Literacy Volunteers of Fox Valley.

Taina trained as a tutor several years ago, but then moved from the area. When she returned about two years ago, her schedule and baby daughter prevented her involvement at that level. But a call for marketing help offered her a perfect opportunity to volunteer.

"I have lived, volunteered, and worked in five countries, travelled to countless more and plan to continue this trend," Taina said. Raised in the U.S., she said she felt happiest on a plane, going from one place to another. "I have a passion for opportunity and a love for culture."

This gives her a passion for LVFV's mission. She has seen first-hand how these services can be life-changing. "Tutors deliver a safe space for students to learn and to perfect their language skills with dignity and respect," Taina said. "Why wouldn't I want to be a part of such a wonderful organization?"



St. Charles Public Library - Changed for Good!

In the musical, “Wicked,” two characters sing about how they have been influenced by each other and changed for good. Your local libraries are in tune with the current and future needs of our communities and are transforming their spaces accordingly. The results will be awesome!

St. Charles Public Library’s Board of Trustees has approved preliminary concept plans for renovation to the One Sixth Avenue property. An estimated 9,000 ft. building expansion coupled with improved parking and landscaped areas will create a neighborhood library campus.

There are many features that our tutors and students will like. We were blown away when we heard that the library anticipates 13 study rooms with lots of neat features. You read it correctly....13 study rooms!

The library is working with St. Charles School District 303 to move core library services to the Haines Middle School building on Ninth and Oak Streets during construction, which should start in March 2020. With full access to the Sixth Avenue property, construction will move quickly. It should take 12 to 14 months.



Site plan from the Exterior and Schematic Design Update 11 July 2019. For complete information visit <https://www.scpld.org/library-renovation-project>

Can you help find tutoring space in St. Charles?

During the St. Charles Public Library renovation, tutors and students will need to relocate. We are also looking for places to hold tutor training workshops. Got an idea? Contact Peg@lvfv.org or call/text 630-584-4428.

At Haines Middle School, there may be a few tables and chairs for the public to use, but no study or meeting rooms. For more private study space, tutors and students will want to consider visiting one of our partner libraries in Batavia, Geneva, or Elburn. Messenger Public Library in North Aurora has also offered to host tutors and students.

For pairs who prefer to meet in St. Charles, we have approached local churches to see if they have space for tutoring. Since potential construction is a half year away, it is hard for churches to determine what space will be available, but most are willing to help. If you are associated with a church, business, or organization that has space where tutor/student pairs can meet for one hour each week, please call/text Peg at 630-584-4428. In the winter newsletter, we will publish a list of alternative meeting space and how to make reservations.

Geneva Public Library Construction Continues

What’s that new construction on Seventh and Campbell in Geneva? It’s the new Geneva Public Library and we can’t wait for it to open. The new space will be double the size of the current library and should serve the community for the next 100 years.



Rendering of Geneva Public Library Lobby

When tutors and students enter the new building, they will immediately notice the sense of space and light the library has incorporated into their design. In the lobby area, visitors will find an area to meet, chat, have a cup of coffee, and soak up the ambience.



A rendering of the Geneva Public Library as seen from Seventh Street. For more images and building updates, visit <https://www.gpldnewbuilding.org/>

Up the grand staircase, tutor/student pairs will find a collaboration zone similar to the one at the current library, but a little more spacious. No need to reserve this space; it's open to everyone. Eventually, there will be tables and chairs on an outside balcony, which will be located near the collaboration zone for those who prefer learning in the fresh air.

For tutors and students who want to reserve space, there will be five study rooms with one that can be subdivided. The library will still require that either the student or the tutor be a Geneva cardholder to reserve a room, but if you arrive and there is no reservation, you are welcome to use the space.

As long as you are at the library, you will want to explore the new features. For example, next to the study rooms there will be a soundproof room with a green screen where people can record videos. It will be fun to record your student speaking English then to record him or her again in six months or a year so the two of you can track progress. They will hear how their English has improved and see that they are visibly more confident.

Once the new Geneva Public Library opens, you will want to take a tour so you can learn about all that is offered. Geneva tutors and students, look for an invitation in your mailbox. It will list four times and dates.



Rendering of Geneva Public Library
Collaboration Zone, second floor

Come one, come all!

“Get Connected” on September 21

If you are looking for a way to contribute to a great organization, mark your calendar for Saturday, September 21.

“We are calling it ‘Get Connected’, said Peg Coker, executive director of the Literacy Volunteers of Fox Valley. “We will be meeting from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. in the Huntley Meeting Room at the St. Charles library. Our board members will be there and we will talk about ways people can get involved, on any level.”

Not everyone works as a tutor. Some people volunteer occasionally. Peg said that sometimes people start as tutors and then decide they want to do something else as well or instead of.

“And folks don’t know what other options are available.”

LVFV is like so many organizations these days. It depends on donations and grants. Peg said one large grant they have received in the past will not be coming this year. The donor has changed its focus and will be supporting other groups.

“We have the Trivia Bee every year as a major fundraiser,” Peg said. “We are looking for people to help come up with questions for that.”

And Community Ambassadors work to get the message of LVFV out to the community. They make sure there are posters and fliers in conspicuous locations, especially around the time of tutor training. And they attend events hosted by groups - churches, schools, business organizations - looking to offer involvement in the community.

Writers are also needed for the newsletter and a proofreader.

So come as you are on the 21st. Have a cuppa and hear about a great program.

Meet Terry Shouba

There is a new face at the trainer's podium, tutor trainer's podium, that is.

Terry Shouba has been tutoring since 2014. She will begin working with her third student this fall.

“When the position (as trainer) became available, it seemed like a good fit with my background.”

That background includes teaching and developing training in the corporate world. She also worked as a tutor in another setting. Terry taught ESL, which she loved.

“I found that working one-on-one with someone who is motivated and appreciative is a very warm and gratifying experience.”

And why tutor training?

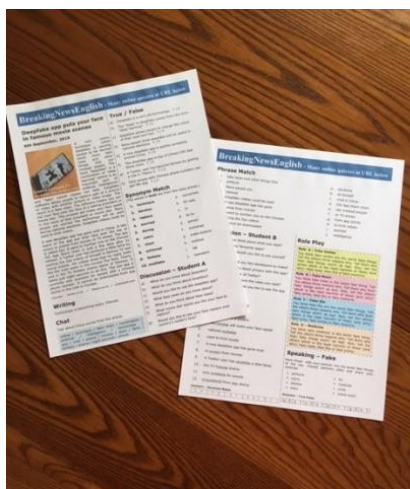
“The new tutors are such nice people and a great pleasure to work with!”



LVFV welcomes Terry Shouba to the position of tutor trainer.

Tutor Resource – Breaking News English

If you are looking for reading resources, our program coordinator thinks you might like “Breaking News English.” <https://breakingnewsenglish.com/> The website offers short articles on interesting subjects condensed from various sources. All articles are based on stories currently in the news.



A two-page mini lesson from “Breaking News”

Each article has at least three optional reading levels ranging from elementary to advanced. There are also listening files in British and North American English that can be downloaded in mp3 format.

Each article has up to 26 pages of printable activities and handouts. If that is overwhelming, consider the two-page mini lessons.

All articles and lessons can be downloaded in PDF format and are free to use, but be careful. This website has a lot of ads. Avoid clicking on anything that has a little blue AdChoice triangle in the corner.

The website is produced by British teacher Sean Banville who has his masters in TEFL and TESL. If you scroll to the bottom of the page, you can click on “about” to find out more about him and his other websites.

Tutor/Student Spotlight

Maribel Flores, student

Q: Where are you from?

A: Mexico City. I've been here 15 years.

Q: Did you know English when you arrived?

A: No. In school you learn a little English, but very little and the pronunciation is different so sometimes you can get confused.

Q: Why did you decide to learn English?

A: I need it for my daughters and for my job. There are not always Spanish-speaking people at school or at my work. I need it for communication.

Q: What do you do?

A: I work in the kitchens; always in the kitchens. I'm not a chef, but I have always cooked. My first job was at Pi Pizza. When that closed I went to Breadsmith, but it closed. Then I went to The Finery, but that closed. Now I cook at a Polish deli. It's got a lot of flavor. It's good. Sauerkraut? Oh my goodness, it's the Polish favorite food!

Q: Has learning English paid off?

A: Yes. When I was working at The Finery no one spoke Spanish. It was all English. Same with Breadsmith. I remember the owner at Breadsmith asked me to stay and wait on the customers. I was scared but she said, "Just practice." My English is not perfect, but I'm working on it. More practice and more practice.

Q: What is the best part of your lesson?

A: All of it. I took some time off for my new baby, three or four months, and Kasia waited for me. Sometimes I call and change the day or the hour and she changes for me. Thank you, Kasia.

Q: If someone was thinking of asking for a tutor but was afraid, what would you say?

A: I would tell them it's good. I've recommended lots of people, Sometime they say, "I don't have time." Same with me! But it's just one hour a week. It's good for me and good for my family. My English is not perfect but people understand me. It's good when you practice with other people. And I like Kasia.

Katarzyna (Kasia) Wieromejczyk, tutor

Q: Where are you from?

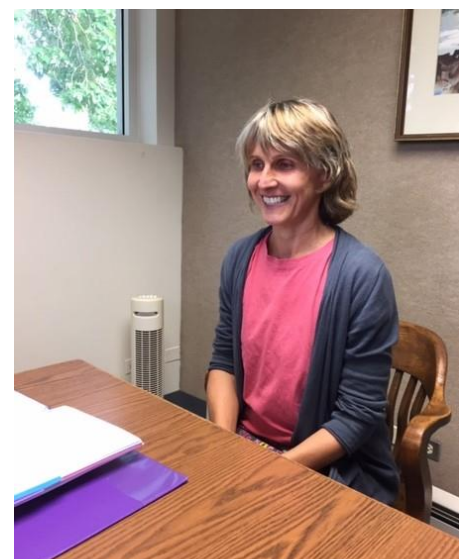
A: Poland. I've been here 10 years.

Q: What brought you to St. Charles?

A: My husband. He is American and he decided we would move.



Maribel Flores



Katarzyna Wieromejczyk

Q: Was it a big change?

A: Yes, but I think for the better. First we lived in England. It was nice to come to a country where we have family and it's also more welcoming. The U.S. is kind of a melting pot. In England, you can stand out if you are not from there.

Q: Why did you decide to tutor?

A: I found a leaflet and I thought I should really do something with my time. I was nervous about it because English is not my first language and also it's difficult to explain things to people. It's so much easier to understand yourself but it's kind of a different step explaining. But it's going well. I had a student from Burma and she moved to Aurora. Then I got Maribel. Actually, I feel like we are friends. It's an enjoyable time so I don't have the stress associated with preparing lessons. It's just a lot of fun.

Q: Tutors often say that they learn from their students. Have you learned anything from Maribel?

A: Yes. Maribel is a very good mother. I feel like if I met her earlier, I would have been a better mother myself! Her girls are very happy with her; respectful and thoughtful. They love each other. My children are all grown up so it is nice to see them. The girls are awesome, so sweet. And Maribel is happy and honest and a lot of things that I wish I was so it's a lot of fun.

Q: What kind of things do you do in your lessons?

A: Right now, we are talking lot. We started doing past tense. We use the "Who Is" series for reading and a little vocabulary.

Q: What do you like best about tutoring?

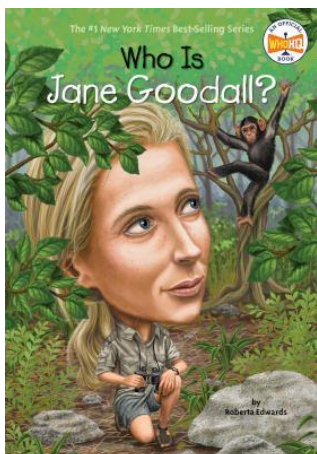
A: The best thing is knowing Maribel. I understand more about people coming to America. I don't know any other immigrant besides myself, so it is nice to hear things first hand and understand a little more.

Q: Where you a professional teacher?

A: No. I was officially a stay at home mom but now (that my children are grown) I am out of a job.

Q: If someone wanted to tutor but was hesitant? What would you say?

A: It's good to try. I was afraid and none of my fears really came true.

"Who Is" Books

In her interview, Kasia mentions a series called "Who Is." Published by Penguin Random House and written by various authors, the books give short biographies of famous people. Titles include "Who is Michael Jordan," "Who was Walt Disney," "Who was Anne Frank," and "Who is Jane Goodall" to name a few. They are written at a third to fifth grade level.

If you are interested in using them with your student, contact our program coordinator, margarita@lvfv.org. She may have some copies that were donated during the Barnes & Noble Holiday Book Drive last year. If she doesn't have the title you seek, check the Youth Services department at your local library. The books are available in electronic and paper format.

We Want to Hear from You!

Know someone who deserves the “spotlight” or have an article you would like to see in this newsletter?

Send your suggestions to info@lvfv.org.

LVFV Board Members

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Taina Latinovic, Communications and Marketing Consultant/Director
US, Lifa Communications
Deborah Newsam, Volunteer Tutor
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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 and click on **Contact Us**. We look forward to hearing from you!

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info@lvfv.org.

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