

Summer, 2023

# Literacy Matters

Newsletter from Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley

## Message from the Executive Director

By Peg Coker

When my son was a little boy, I would take him to “Leaps and Bounds.” It was an indoor play-place that was popular with kids in the 1990s.

We would crawl through the sturdy plastic tubes for hours. There were delightful surprises at every turn. But when it came to taking the tube slides down to the ball pits, he would have none of it. I’m not sure where he thought the long, dark tubes would lead, but it was like trying to get a cat in the bathtub.

Once I was able to dislodge my screaming child’s grip from the sides of the tube, we would glide down into the wonderful, multi-colored balls. “Let’s go again,” he would say as I tried to calm my shattered nerves.

That’s what came to mind when someone asked what it was like to navigate a non-profit through COVID. We moved forward, not really sure where the paths would lead. There were a few dark tunnels, but we landed mostly unscathed with our nerves just a little jangled.

With the pandemic in the rearview mirror, we are ready to plan ahead. In this issue of “Literacy Matters,” you can read about the tutors, students, supporters, and visionaries who are helping us shape the organization for even more success.

The future looks bright for Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley. Let’s go again!



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### VIRTUAL WALK FOR LITERACY

September 3 through September 30  
<https://www.charityfootprints.com/LiteracyVolunteersFoxValley/>

### TUTOR TRAINING

6:30 P.M. TO 9:00 P.M.  
Tuesdays and Thursdays  
September 12, 14, 19, and 21  
St. Charles Public Library  
<https://www.lvfv.org/become-a-tutor>

### TUTOR TRAINING

6:30 P.M. TO 9:00 P.M.  
Mondays and Wednesdays  
October 16, 18, 23, and 25  
St. Charles Public Library  
<https://www.lvfv.org/become-a-tutor>

### DONORS' BREAKFAST

9:00 A.M.  
Saturday, November 4  
Copper Fox, Geneva

### TRIVIA BEE FOR LITERACY

9:00 A.M. to Noon  
Saturday, March 9  
Location to be announced  
<https://www.lvfv.org/trivia-bee>

Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley  
One South Sixth Avenue  
St. Charles, Illinois 60174  
Phone: 630-584-2811  
Email: [info@lvfv.org](mailto:info@lvfv.org)



Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley  
Literally Changing Lives



Walk where you are, when you want, anytime between Sept. 3 and Sept. 30.  
 Log your distance online or track progress with your fitness device.  
 Watch your avatar travel around the virtual race route.  
 Earn e-medals for reaching distance milestones.

### Choose a Personal Fitness Goal

HOW FAR WILL YOU GO DURING THE 4-WEEK CHALLENGE?



**6 MILES**

Walk around the block three times per week and you will hit this goal. It's equivalent to a 10K.



**15 MILES**

This is like taking a nice long three or four mile walk twice a week. You will log about 25K.



**30 MILES**

Similar to walking a mile a day for four weeks, this is like walking a 50K.

**REGISTER NOW!**

### Choose a Registration Level



**\$30**

Basic Registration

**\$45**

Register at a \$45 level by Sept. 9 and receive a T-shirt.

**\$65**

Register at a \$65 level by Sept. 9 and champion our cause. You will receive a T-shirt and a beanie.

**HTTPS://WWW.CHARITYFOOTPRINTS.COM/  
 LITERACYVOLUNTEERSFOXVALLEY**

## STUDENT ACHIEVEMENTS

FISCAL YEAR 2023



OUR ADULT STUDENTS MADE SIGNIFICANT GAINS ON STANDARDIZED TESTS IN FISCAL YEAR 2023. THEY ALSO REPORTED MORE THAN 500 PERSONAL ACHIEVEMENTS.

### Student enrollment increases by 39%

Thanks to a successful social media campaign and the adult students who shared our posts, we enrolled 103 new learners in fiscal year 2023.\* That’s a 39% increase in the number of students that we enrolled in fiscal year 2022, which is significant. Altogether, we served 229 new and returning adult students, which exceeded our goal by 15%.

The social media campaign was informed by students who participated in discussion groups that we held in the fall of 2021. The resulting advertising was delayed when more than a dozen Ukrainian refugees enrolled in the program in the spring of 2022. As soon as the Ukrainian students were matched with tutors, we launched the campaign.

The Facebook posts reflect the concerns that many immigrants have when they lack English language skills. “I’m afraid of saying the wrong thing or doing the wrong thing at work,” said one student. “I came so my children would have a better life,” said another. “I want to help them instead of them helping me.” The student said that many immigrants depend on their children to translate for them.

We extend our gratitude to GKS Consulting, Cooper Hong Inc., and Edith Craig for facilitating discussion and to the students who participated.



Facebook posts address the concerns of adults who speak limited English.

\*Our 2023 fiscal year started July 1, 2022 and ended June 30, 2023.

## Welcome New Tutors

Congratulations to the volunteers who completed tutor training during fiscal year 2023. Thanks to all the volunteers who are helping our adult students reach their goals.

Paul Anderson	Bonni Ellis	Julie Hunnicutt	Frankie Ramos
Fred Bernacchi	Elena Feiza	Margarita Jaime	Bri Reif
Eric Bodwell	Linda Feiza	Gina Johnson	Karole Rutherford
Joe Bristow	Peggy Forster	Debra Jongeloed	Susan Ryan
Carrie Brizuela	Patsy Gallagher	Linda King	Annette Sloan
Roberta Bruno	Sue Gaseor	Laura Kivisto	Amy Stevens
Mary Callahan	Barry Gold	Tina Koral	Meg Stiglianese
Denise Campagna	Colleen Gold	Kristen Lewarchick	Sandy Wielgos
Katheryne Clippert	Neil Goldberg	Joanne Masuret	Terry Wohl
Rebecca Dennison	Melissa Gomez	Leslie McCarty	Susan Wohl
Patricia Dierks	Michael Harris	Genevieve Peik	Joseph Wolfe
Sandy Dixon	Jeanine Holtsford	Anna Piazza	Jimmy Wood
John Duerr	Daniel Horvath	Lisa Radlinski	Donna Zoellner
		Jennifer Rakow	Marie Zvetina

## Volunteer Tutors Meet to Share Ideas

This summer, the board of directors invited volunteer tutors to share ideas that will help shape our next strategic plan. Tutors offered thoughtful responses to general and specific questions such as

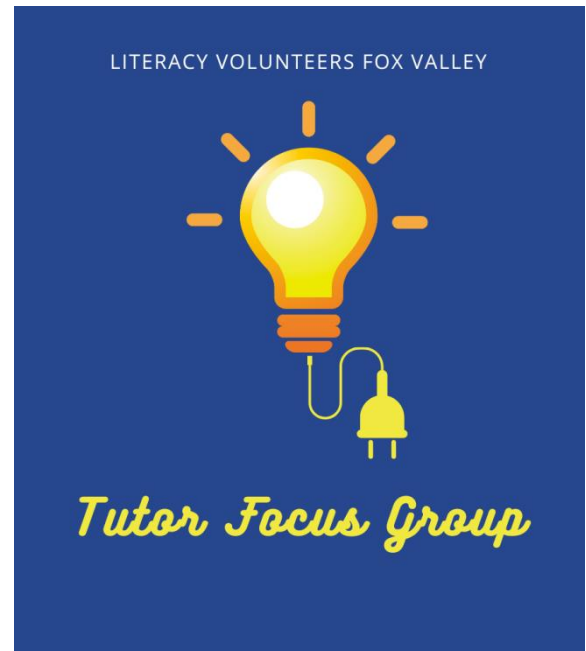
- How can we motivate volunteers to join us?
- How can tutor training be strengthened?
- How can we keep students engaged if there is a delay in matching?
- How can we make the transition between training and tutoring easier?
- What do tutors need to be effective that is not currently provided?
- How can we recognize tutors in meaningful ways?

Over half of the tutors thought that we should:

**Increase our physical presence in the community** to raise awareness and visibility. Now that COVID has subsided, there are an increasing number of opportunities.

**Develop a group of mentors** who will support novice tutors as they transition from tutor training to tutoring and provide back up.

**Help students find** intangible ways to express their gratitude, which will increase tutor satisfaction.



*Volunteers Meet to Share Ideas (continued)*

Tutors also thought that we should:

**Offer students self-study material** such as free books, library resources, websites, and pre-tutoring material so they can begin learning if a match is delayed.

**Feature tutor/student pairs on social media** or print media to bring public recognition of the value that our tutors bring to the community.

**There can never be enough goal-setting guidance.** It's easy for tutors and students to lose sight of goals. Sometimes they don't realize that goals have changed and lessons should go in a different direction.

Board members who attended the meeting enriched the executive summary with comments about the enthusiasm and dedication that tutors brought to the meeting. They were impressed. With these and the many other valuable ideas that were offered, the board can begin the planning process.

Thanks to Karen Bychowski, HCC, PCC, Professional Certified Coach and former LVFV board member for facilitating the discussion and to the tutors who participated.

## **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](http://www.lvfv.org) for more information.  
We look forward to hearing from you!

**Literacy Volunteers Fox Valley**  
One South Sixth Avenue  
St. Charles, Illinois 60174

*Call us at:*  
630-584-2811  
*Or email:*  
[info@lvfv.org](mailto:info@lvfv.org)

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