



# LITERACY VOLUNTEERS OF THE TARRYTOWNS INC.

[www.lvtarrytown.org](http://www.lvtarrytown.org)

The Warner Library, 121 N. Broadway, Tarrytown, NY 10591 914-488-4250

June 2018

NEWSLETTER

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## Annual Meeting



Our annual membership meeting was held on June 9th at 11:00 A.M., partly indoors and partly outdoors, because the fire alarm sent us out into a beautiful spring morning on the library lawn.

### **President's Report** **Mary Jane Driscoll**

I would first like to thank the board members who have served for the past two years. This organization could not have run without the continued sharing of their time and talent.

Niamh Fitzgerald is stepping down from the board, but will continue to serve as a tutor advisor and assist with our online training program. Thank you, Niamh, for your 8 years of service as a board member and 12 years of service to our affiliate.

I would also like to welcome Darla Kohler Steiner and Gerry Mahoney as new board members. Both bring their experience as Literacy Volunteers - Darla as a teacher and school director and Gerry as a former executive director of three libraries.

At our annual meeting we voted to approve the following slate of Directors to serve from July 2018 to June 2020:

#### **BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

Mary Jane Driscoll, *President*  
Sharon Hart, *Vice President*  
John Lough, *Treasurer*  
Geraldine Mahoney, *Secretary*  
Marilyn Ghilardi, *Director Tutor Advisory Services*  
Nancy Kaufman Panagacos, *Director Learner-Tutor Matching*  
Promila Saxena, *Director Tutoring Materials*  
Kathy Kee, *Director, Publicity/Fundraising*  
Ben Hunter, *Director*  
Darla Kohler Steiner, *Director*  
Joan Meade, *Director*  
Joan Stern, *Director*  
Barbara Cohen, *Library Liaison Appointee*

Ben Hunter gave a presentation at the annual meeting about "Who We Are." This was a compilation of information about the number of active tutors (75), a profile of where we live, how long we have been members of LVT, and a profile of the learners we

serve by country of origin, language they speak, years of education, age, where they live and how long they have been tutored by us. We will make copies of Ben's presentation available for viewing in the Tutoring Center.

There have been a number of initiatives this year to improve our record keeping and reporting, our finances, and our Tutoring Center, as well as to expand our reach in our ability to recruit and train tutors. Our efforts to address our waiting list of students has improved to the point that Nancy, our matcher, was somewhat concerned that we might not have enough students on our waiting list to find matches for all of our new tutors. However, she succeeded in making it happen.

### Director of Training Report



We trained 14 new tutors in the fall of 2017 and 23 in the spring of 2018. In addition, we introduced a new 12-hour online training program to which we added a 2-hour orientation session before matching an online trained tutor with a student. We have trained 3 new tutors with this method and hope to train more during the long gap between the spring and fall workshops.

Online training allows us to address the need for tutors willing to meet students at the Ossining Library. Some are unable to travel to Warner Library for training on Saturday mornings, but still wish to be part of the program. Therefore, we have been working with one of the librarians in Ossining to ensure that information about our online training is made available to them.

We held two tutor chats, two follow-up sessions to the workshop, and one holiday party where tutors had the opportunity to share their experiences with fellow tutors and board members.

Word of mouth continues to be a very important method of recruiting new tutors – please share your enthusiasm about our program with your friends and neighbors.

### **Your Charitable Contribution!** *Required Minimum Distribution (RMD)*

**Here is another way our friends and supporters can contribute to our organization's mission and goals, so that we can expand our work to the community.**

If you are over 70-1/2 years old, you can make a Qualified Charitable Distribution from your IRA account directly to a charity. Above all, there are some notable advantages for you as a taxpayer:

- The contributed amount goes toward satisfying your Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) for the account.
- You, the taxpayer, effectively get the tax benefit of a contribution even if you are using the larger standard deduction because this charitable distribution is **not** taxable even though it reduces the RMD.

### **Attendance Awards**

Congratulations to Andy Buxton and Andrea Kott on tutoring their students for **16+ hours** during March-April. We appreciate their dedication.

Tutor Advisor:	Kathy Kee
Tutor :	Andy Buxton
Learner	Mitchell Zambrano

Tutor Advisor:	Marilyn Ghilardi
Tutor:	Andrea Kott
Learner:	Manuel Tenecota



**Director, Learner-Tutor  
Matching**  
***Nancy Kaufman Panagacos***

LVT has continued to grow to almost 80 tutor-learner matched pairs working together. It is great that we can support the community at this level. Our list of applicants waiting for a tutor is down from last year, hovering at around 25, which means overall the learners are served sooner. This is a result of the larger training classes, such as the one that was completed this spring. However, availability times do not always align, so some new learners may wait for quite a few months. It is our goal to reduce the turnaround time from application to matching with a tutor. Each new training class, plus new volunteers joining through taking the online course, helps bring us closer to that goal.

You can help us keep the momentum going. If you know anyone who might enjoy being a tutor, please refer them to our next training workshop in the fall, or suggest the new online training option as a way of getting started sooner. If you can accept an additional new student, please email [info@lvtarrytown.org](mailto:info@lvtarrytown.org) or leave a note for Nancy in the LV mailbox. Be sure to include your contact information as well as the days and hours you are available to tutor. We particularly need tutors who have evening availability and flexibility to work with either gender and from any nationality. Whatever you can offer would be helpful and appreciated. Thanks to our volunteers for all that you do in support of our learners.

**Director, Tutor Advisory  
Services**  
***Marilyn Ghilardi***

There are 17 Tutor Advisors who encourage new tutors after they graduate from the workshop. They also collect the tutoring hours from their assigned tutors every two months. It is an important job and I want to thank the following TAs for their service:

**TUTOR ADVISORS**

Judith Christopher  
Niamh Fitzgerald  
Marilyn Ghilardi  
Helene Gomez  
Sharon Hart  
Ben Hunter  
Kathy Kee  
Betina Kleiss  
Kristen Lankester  
Joan Meade  
Gail Roth  
David Saphra  
Promila Saxena  
Darla Kohler Steiner  
Joan Stern  
Fred Steigman

**Termination/Reassignment**

When a tutor needs to go on hiatus or terminate their tutoring relationship with their student, please complete a Termination-Reassignment Form and leave it in the LV mailbox. This will let us know the wishes of both the Learner and the Tutor. We need to know if the learner and/or tutor wish to be assigned to a new tutor or learner – and if so, what days and hours they are available.



**Director, Tutoring Materials**  
***Promila Saxena***

Recently we received funds from The Church of St. Barnabas to spend only on books. We used some of that money to buy additional copies of a few books – 22 books. The decision to buy those books was based on the frequency and number of tutors borrowing those books in the last few months. We still have some money left over to spend on more books.

This is your opportunity to have any book of your choice to be added to the LVT collection for the benefit of your learner. Please let me know at [psaxena304@aol.com](mailto:psaxena304@aol.com) the title and description of the book and I will ask for the board's approval to add the books to LVT's collection.

### **BEST Plus Testing Update**

**The Literacy Volunteers' BEST Plus Testers are simplifying the process for making a Best Plus Test appointment.**

Going forward, all Tutors who would like to schedule a BEST Plus Test for their Learner should send an email to: [lvbestplustesters@gmail.com](mailto:lvbestplustesters@gmail.com) and provide times and dates when your Learner will be available. One of the current 3 BEST Plus Testers will contact you by email and arrange for your Learner to be tested. We recommend scheduling the BEST Plus Test during the regular meeting with your Learner, keeping in mind that the test takes about 15

to 20 minutes to administer. LVT's goal is to give all Learners the BEST Plus Test once per year. We would like to have new learners take the BEST Plus Test after one or two months of tutoring. If you are a new Tutor working with an experienced Learner, your Tutor Advisor or the BEST Plus Testers can inform you when your Learner is due for the Best Plus Test.

Having BEST Plus Test results for all of our Learners is very helpful when we request a grant or funding from various organizations. Your participation in this testing process is important and greatly appreciated.



### **Online Tutor Training**

We are offering a 12-hour online tutor training program for volunteers who wish to be trained and start tutoring in between our classroom tutor training workshops. You don't have to wait until next fall to begin tutoring!! Our online tutor training is also appropriate for volunteers who cannot attend Saturday morning classroom training. To find out how to be trained to be a Literacy Volunteer ESL tutor via online training, please email [Info@lvtarrytown.org](mailto:Info@lvtarrytown.org) and request more information about online tutor training. We will send you the information and let you know when our next orientation session will be held.



## The Work We Do

On April 12th and April 17th we had follow-up sessions for the spring workshop to share tutoring experiences. Our new tutors are beginning to include in their lessons some of the techniques we covered in the workshop.

**Bunny Rosen** is working with a young woman, **Karlas**, who has been in the U.S. for about six months since leaving the Dominican Republic. She is a high school graduate and would like to go to college. She lives with her mother and two sisters in Sleepy Hollow. Bunny tested her with the ESLOA and found her to be at level 1. They have been able to communicate by texting to arrange their meeting times. They have worked on basic vocabulary – the days of the week, the months of the year, numbers and the family tree. Karlas missed a lesson and was not responding to text messages. Bunny found out later that Karlas had found a job working in a day care center and had to work extra hours. They are back on track now and Bunny helped Karlas apply for a library card. Bunny said that what is missing from Karlas' day-to-day life is being able to hear more spoken English. Therefore, they will need to find ways to help Karlas find more opportunities to listen to English outside of their tutoring sessions.

**Terry Arcuri** reported that she had tried to start with the first student assigned to her, but that student neither showed up nor responded to subsequent calls. Terri just started with her second student **Silvia** – who is from Ecuador. Silvia has been in the U.S. for about 12 years. She completed 6th grade in Ecuador

and was previously tutored by another volunteer in our affiliate. She cleans homes in Connecticut. Terry says Silvia knows a lot of basic vocabulary and can read at a low level. Terry thinks they need to work on using English in conversation. Silvia lives in Sleepy Hollow with her young daughter and would like to be able to speak to her daughter's teachers at school meetings.

**Yeni Morales-Diaz** reported that her student **Lina** is from Colombia and has been in the U.S. for about two years. She works full-time and wants to be tutored at night. Yeni is available in the daytime, but is working with Lina to find a workable schedule.

Lina works as a hair stylist and can come in late one day a week to be tutored. Yeni and Lina have been working on basic vocabulary, the alphabet, the days of the week, and the family tree. Lina wants to learn more English so that she can speak to more of her clients, as well as communicate with other parents and her eight-year-old daughter's teachers.

**RoseMarie Cossaboom** has been tutoring **Maria**, a woman from Ecuador who has been in the U.S. for about 18 years. Maria finds work helping her friends clean houses. She lives with her husband and mother in Sleepy Hollow. The day they met for their follow-up session was the day that Maria's son was getting married. Maria told RoseMarie that she wants to learn more English so that she can speak on the phone to make doctor appointments to follow up on a surgical procedure she had. They have been working with flash cards and Maria liked the pictures, so now they use pictures to build sentences. Although RoseMarie has not been able to administer the ESLOA yet due to some lesson cancellations, she reported that Maria was able to speak enough English to tell her about her son's upcoming wedding.

**Jeanne Kaplan** has been working with **Victor** from Ecuador, who has been in the U.S. for about 3 years. He is a high school graduate. Victor has a 2½ year old son and a new baby on the way. He works as a bus boy. Jeanne says Victor is able to communicate well. He tested at a high 2 or low 3 on the ESLOA. He has some trouble with tenses and conjugation, but he does need to speak English at work. His wife, who was a biochemist in Ecuador, speaks slightly better English. However, when she is tired, she prefers to speak Spanish to Victor at home. In Ecuador, Victor



## TUTOR CHAT!



Joan Stern led two tutor chats this spring – one on March 15th and one immediately preceding the meeting on June 9th at which Joan told us about a Spanish/English Visual Dictionary that her student found to be very helpful. We hope to purchase a couple of copies for the Tutoring Center. At both Tutor Chats, tutors shared information about their tutoring experiences and offered suggestions on how to work with students who don't seem to be making much progress. We hope to schedule another chat in the fall.

## LVT 2018-2019 Calendar

<b>BOARD MEETINGS</b>	<b>September 17 November 19 January 14 March 18 May 20</b>	<b>MONDAYS 5:30 – 7:00 P.M.</b>	<b>Meeting Room A</b>
<b>Fall Tutor Training Workshop</b>	<b>September 29 October 13 October 27 November 3 November 10 November 17</b>	<b>SATURDAYS 9:00 to Noon</b>	<b>Meeting Room B</b>
<b>Holiday Party</b>	<b>December 2</b>	<b>SUNDAY 1:00 to 3:30</b>	<b>Reading Room</b>
<b>Spring Tutor Training Workshop</b>	<b>TBA</b>	<b>SATURDAYS 9:00 to Noon</b>	<b>Meeting Room B</b>
<b>ANNUAL MEETING BOARD MEETING</b>	<b>June 8</b>	<b>11:00 AM to Noon Noon to 1:00 PM</b>	<b>Meeting Room A</b>