



THE FLAME OF



Literacy Suffolk, Inc.
an accredited ProLiteracy affiliate

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Literacy Suffolk Advisory Council Member Receives MassMutual Community Service Award

Huntington, NY – Deanna Filosa, CLU, ChFC of Island Financial Group in Woodbury, a MassMutual general agency, has earned the MassMutual Foundation’s Community Service Award for her outstanding volunteer efforts with Literacy Suffolk, Inc. (LS) and Literacy Suffolk has received a \$10,000 contribution in her name.

Massachusetts Mutual Life Insurance Company (MassMutual) annually selects only eight associates to receive the Community Service Award. Ms. Filosa was chosen because of her work as a volunteer and as an Advisory Council member with Literacy Suffolk, doing fundraising, strategic planning, and tutor recruitment.

“My commitment to literacy began long before I became involved with LS. It began when as a young girl I saw my grandfather’s personal struggle with English. As most immigrants, he came to this country and worked two jobs to support his family in the hope of providing a better life. While his children were young there was no time to learn to read, write, or even speak proper English. Once his children were grown and he had more time, he did his best to learn English through books and Italian/English dictionaries.

“I remember how he struggled to pronounce words, how he was embarrassed to speak even in front of this own family. If he had had the advantage of a personal

tutor, a conversational study group, and everything else LS offers, his life would have been different; our relationship would have been different. Literacy Suffolk has given me an outlet to pursue my passions—literacy, women’s literacy, and financial literacy.”

The donation will be used by LS to recruit volunteer tutors for the many students who are waiting to be matched. LS Executive Director Gini Booth said, “The support from MassMutual is a saving grace in the midst of dwindling funds and unfunded mandates.” She continued, “Ms. Filosa brings fresh energy and perspective to LS; indeed, her work does not go with-out notice. We are greatly appreciative.”

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- ❖ **READING FOR LIFE** - Keep those submissions coming in for the 2009 edition of the magazine.
- ❖ **VOLUNTEER REPORTS** are due February 2nd. Complete yours online from the LS Website: www.LiteracySuffolk.org
- ❖ **VALENTINE’S DAY DANCE** (Saturday, February 14th) has been cancelled due to circumstances beyond our control.
- ❖ **LS 30th ANNIVERSARY QUILT** is on the road! (See article, Page 3)



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A Happy and Healthy New Year from Literacy Suffolk!





Gini Booth

Thoughts from the Executive Director

Tough Times, Strong People

No doubt, this has been one of the most difficult articles to write . . . when the economy is not only dropping on Wall Street – communities are feeling that loss of services, and in some cases, spirit.

Every day, I remind myself, no matter what the economy dishes out, there are people that I care about who will call the Literacy Suffolk offices across the county, asking for help. The needs of those who are illiterate are not in any way stopped by a woeful economy – if anything, the impact will hit hardest the most vulnerable who cannot communicate sufficiently.

So the task at hand, how do I write something uplifting but realistic? I decided to do what I know best – write about my unyielding faith. In spite of drastic cuts in funding, and doom and gloom in both the private and public sector, I remain with unyielding hope.

Favorite thought – *“We’ve come this far by faith.”*

Seems as if sometimes in the middle of the storm, little miracles are dropped on us . . . it’s those miracles that lay the groundwork for a stronger infrastructure to greet the bigger miracles that are coming, sometimes just around the corner.

Those little miracles begin to remove the barriers that are in the way of movement forward. Often folk share their faith, but, it is clear that we must also apply *acts of faith* – do something about “it”.

My dear little grandson, one evening was counting his money, I watched how carefully he put like money together, organizing the pennies, nickels, dimes, quarters, and dollars. I made a comment, “oh my grandson is rich” – he looked up at me with eyes beaming brightly and said, “No, Grandma, I am not rich, I am careful with my money.” My goodness, out of the mouths of babes! And so right, he handles his money carefully – maybe a lesson for us all.

We can do this, we can succeed no matter what is reported on the news, we can beat the odds, we can work together as a community – we can meet our goals, and we must all take individual responsibility. We must be creative, find new ways to accomplish goals. And totally eliminate negative words and thoughts from our minds and vocabulary.

Literacy Suffolk will continue to serve the 565 active students, support the 378 active tutors, match the 1481 waiting students, provide resources to a stellar staff, listen to the advice of board and advisory members, renew and seek new partnerships, research fresh funding sources, honor current ones, and look out for those little miracles that will ultimately remove the barriers for movement forward. And as my grandson would say, “Be careful with the money!”

This is a movement, a literacy movement – remember we’ve come this far by faith and acts of faith (and those little miracles). Yes, we are moving forward . . . just keep the faith, no matter what!

Participating Agency



THE TOWNWIDE FUND of Huntington, Inc.

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AROUND SUFFOLK

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Western Region
Huntington Public Library
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Riverhead Free Library
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 (631) 727-3228 Ext. 126
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How to Make a Literacy Quilt

The Literacy Suffolk 30th anniversary commemorative quilt is no longer a dream but a reality. After weeks and months of recruiting, meeting, planning, and designing, a beautiful quilt depicting 30 years of adult literacy service to Suffolk County came into being this past fall and was featured at the 30th anniversary *Sunset at Sunwood* fundraiser in September.

This commemorative quilt was created in tribute to the countless, dedicated individuals who have supported adult literacy and Literacy Suffolk over the past 30 years. Twenty-six volunteers contributed skill and vision to create this finely crafted piece depicting the diversity of Long Island and symbols of learning, literacy, and freedom. We are very proud to share it with all supporters of adult literacy.

- Quilt Coordinators:** Barbara Downs, Linda Bokuniewicz, Jean Lamberti
Quilt Assembly: Jean Lamberti
Sponsor: Loretta Piscatella
Quilted by: Patty Cline – Chestnut Bay Quilting
Blocks by: Beverly Best, Linda Bokuniewicz, Ina Casali, Lucille Corbett, Beverly Delaney, Barbara Downs, Jennifer Frye, Elaine Graf-Radenberg, Lynn Greener, Alice Hasselbach, Pauline Hazzard, Kathleen Kiss, Judy Knorr, Lynn Kollmar, Paula Madison, Ellen McLaughlin, Dorothea Menze, Michele Miroff, Carol Ann Nolan, Patches 'N Pieces Quilt Club, Beth Pile, Lynn Rokoff, Betty Schaeppi, Marian Shipley

Sisterhood of the Traveling Quilt

The quilt has been traveling from library to library since September. Below are places the quilt is scheduled for display in upcoming months:

Mastics-Moriches-Shirley
Community Library
 January 31 and February 7
(Tutor Training Workshop)

Harborfields Library, Greenlawn
 February (Last two weeks)

Rogers Memorial Library,
Southampton (March)

North Shore Library, Shoreham
 (April)



The Testing/Funding Connection

A Test We Cannot Fail!

Susan Shiloni, *Testing and Assessment Director*

Over the last few months anyone and everyone who is asking for government funding is being held to a *much more stringent* standard than in the past. We at Literacy Suffolk are no exception.

Keyword: **Accountability**

How do WE show the state government, who then must show the federal government, that **we are worthy of the funds that we receive?**

Unfortunately, they cannot personally see the great work that our tutors, testers, volunteers, and staff do. The funding we receive from the **NYS Education Department** depends entirely on our ability to demonstrate progress, and the only way we can accomplish that is through the administration of tests. Each student who is working with a tutor or participating in a conversation group *must* have a valid pretest as well as a post test done every year.

We administer two types of tests that are mandated by the NYS Education Department. The **Best Plus and Best Literacy Tests** are for our nonnative English speakers. The **TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education)** is given to our basic literacy students and high level ESOL students.

- **BEST Plus Oral Proficiency Test**

Administered one-on-one to our foreign born students. It is a test of conversational English skills. There is a 6-hour workshop to be certified to administer the test, and there is a refresher workshop given annually to review the test and ensure scoring reliability.

- **BEST Literacy**

A test of reading and writing based on life skills (writing a check, reading the label on a medicine bottle, etc.) that is given to high level ESL students.

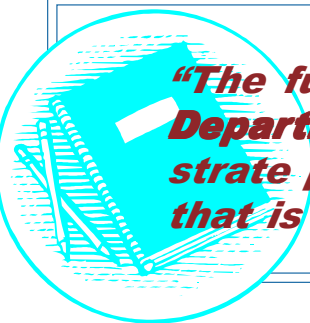
- **TABE**

A reading comprehension test that lasts about an hour. There is a workshop to learn how to administer this test.

These mandates have presented us with some serious challenges, but we are well on our way to overcoming them. We have had several workshops for new testers who have joined the testing team this year. Testing is a priority and I would like to encourage as many of our volunteers as possible to become testers! I will continue to run workshops throughout the year.

I would like to take this opportunity thank all of our testers for their time and outstanding work. Please contact me if you have any questions about becoming a Literacy Suffolk tester (631-286-1649).

“The funding we receive from the NYS Education Department depends entirely on our ability to demonstrate progress, and the only way we can accomplish that is through the administration of tests.”



Legislative Breakfast and Symposium

Health Literacy: A Social, Economic, & Political Imperative

On October 24, 2008, Literacy Suffolk and Literacy Nassau co-hosted a Legislative Breakfast at Molloy College Suffolk Center at Republic Airport in East Farmingdale. The focus of the event was on the social, economic and political effects that literacy has on uncovering, understanding, and adhering to health related issues. Representatives and legislators from across Long Island were joined by administrators of health agencies and hospitals, universities, colleges, and community based organizations.

A trio of panelists in the health care industry included **Ilene Corina**, President and co-founder of PULSE New York, **Julian Herrero**, Community Liaison, South Nassau Communities Hospital, and **Jedan Phillips, MD**, Stony Brook University School of Medicine and Department of Family Medicine. A panel discussion cited specific examples of communications barriers between health providers and patients, and



Panelists: Ilene Corina, Julian Herrero, and Jedan Phillips with moderator Al Jordan

strategies for assuring understanding of and compliance with medical advice. The discussion was moderated by Aludustus Jordan, EdD, Associate Dean, SBU School of Medicine.

Literacy Suffolk and Literacy Nassau continue to work with and seek out new and effective ways of bridging the gap between health care providers and the low literate population requiring their services.



Guests listen intently to the panel discussion.



The Staff of Literacy Suffolk



ON THE HEALTH LITERACY FRONT

Bridging Literacy and Language Differences*

By Helen Osborne, MEd, OTR/L

Mr. R. works as a day laborer for a landscaping company. He, along with others from a small, Mexican village, comes to the U.S. each year for this work. Now Mr. R. is at your clinic because of a sprained ankle. You check his vital signs and find he has a significantly elevated blood pressure level of 190/100. Mr. R. is surprised when you tell him this. Other than his ankle injury, he feels just fine.

Since Mr. R. speaks only Spanish, you communicate with basic medical phrases you learned in his language. You explain about his blood pressure problem and tell him to take medication each day. Mr. R. nods, smiles, and takes the prescription. But when he returns a month later for a follow-up visit, his blood pressure is unchanged. You explain again what he needs to do. Next appointment there is still no improvement, but there should have been.

Frustrated that Mr. R's condition is not improving, you ask an interpreter to meet with both of you. Through the interpreter you learn that Mr. R. didn't take his medicine because he felt fine and saw no need for it. He said that when he feels sick, he'll take it.

Situations like this are all too common in the clinic where **Jedan Phillips, MD** works. As both a family physician and clinical assistant professor at Stony Brook University School of Medicine, Phillips sees many patients from outside the U.S. who speak no English whatsoever. He says that these people come to the clinic with a sincere desire to get health problems taken care of but literacy or language problems stand in the way.

Aldustus Jordan, EdD, agrees. He is associate dean at the Stony Brook School of Medicine and also president of the board of Literacy Suffolk. Jordan has been making connections between literacy, language, and health for many years. His interest not only is academic but also personal. Both of Jordan's grandfathers were illiterate and could neither read nor write.

As executive director of Literacy Suffolk, **Gini Booth** collaborates with Jordan and Phillips on many projects. The three of them discuss experiences and lessons learned about ways all health care professionals can bridge literacy and language differences. Booth, Jordan and Phillips all speak with pride of their medical school and literacy program partnership. Booth says this partnership helps "everyone learn from everyone else." Together they consider literacy in a holistic way that affects all aspects of communication.

Helen Osborne, MEd, OTR/L, is president of *Health Literacy Consulting*. To learn more about building community coalitions, read Helen Osborne's recent *On Call* article, "Communicating Health Information Through Community Coalitions" by visiting [http://www.boston.com/jobs.healthcare/oncall/articles/2008/06/05/in_other_words/]

*Article excerpted and reprinted with permission.

Thank
You!

Networking Magazine and
Christine Conniff Sheahan

for naming Literacy Suffolk partial beneficiaries of proceeds received from the 8th annual David Awards breakfast on January 15th. Read more about the event: www.networkwomen.com/2008david.htm

www.USALearns.org

The Latest From the US Department of Education, Office of Vocational and Adult Education, Division of Adult Education and Literacy.

USALearns, an Online English Portal launched on November 7, 2008, offers easy access to an internet learning tool for adults seeking to improve their English skills. Low-level literacy participants can use the tool independently or with the assistance of their tutor. There are easy-to-understand directions and free instructional materials. The site also offers an online management system for tutor and student. Check it out!

The Wisdom of Women

It is not easy to find happiness in ourselves, and it is not possible to find it elsewhere.

— *Agnes Repplier*

You may be disappointed if you fail, but you're doomed if you don't try.

— *Beverly Sills*

What a wonderful life I've had! I only wish I'd realized it sooner.

— *Colette*



www.li-raen.org - LI-RAEN provides technical assistance and professional development to adult literacy, occupational, and continuing education programs funded by the New York State Education Department (NYSED).

www.spellingcity.com

A useful on-line tool for helping learners (both adult and children) with spelling.

www.aoa.org - American Optometric Association

Site provides valuable information on vision and vision programs in both English and Spanish.

Experience the Literacy Suffolk website: www.LiteracySuffolk.org

Worst Analogies Ever Written in a High School Essay

- From the attic came an unearthly howl. The whole scene had an eerie, surreal quality, like when you're on vacation in another city and "Jeopardy" comes on at 7:00 pm instead of 7:30.
- The little boat gently drifted across the pond exactly the way a bowling ball wouldn't.
- McBride fell twelve stories, hitting the pavement like a Hefty bag filled with vegetable soup.
- She caught your eye like one of those pointy hook latches that used to dangle from screen doors and would fly up whenever you banged the door open.
- He spoke with the wisdom that can only come from experience, like a guy who went blind because he looked at a solar eclipse without one of those boxes with a pinhole in it and now he goes around the country speaking at high schools about the dangers of looking at a solar eclipse without one of those boxes with a pinhole in it.
- Her hair glistened in the rain like nose hair after a sneeze.
- Her eyes were like two brown circles with big, black dots in the center.
- His vocabulary was as bad as, like, whatever.
- The hailstones leaped from the pavement just like maggots when you fry them in hot grease.

Value Every Minute

~ Author Unknown

- **To realize the value of one year:**
Ask a student who has failed a final exam.
- **To realize the value of one month:**
Ask a mother who has given birth to a premature baby.
- **To realize the value of one hour:**
Ask the lovers who are waiting to meet.
- **To realize the value of one minute:**
Ask the person who has survived an accident.
- **To realize the value of one millisecond:**
Ask a person who has won a silver medal in the Olympics.

Time waits for no one.

And continuing with the value of time as it applies to literacy:

Ask a person who you have taught to read a label on their medication bottle . . .

Ask a person you have taught who now has learned to understand what a skull and crossbones symbol means on a bottle of Clorox who only previously didn't even know the word 'bleach' . . .

Ask a person who is allergic to peanut oil and now you have taught them how to read the ingredients label on food . . .

Ask a person you have taught and now they can read to their children or grandchildren . . .

But most of all—look inside yourself and see how much you have been given because *you* have given—*of your time*.

Ina Casali, *Program Services Director & Tutor*

CALENDAR of Events

▶ Long Island Adult Learning Conference

• **March 28, 2009 (Saturday) • Embrace Lifelong Learning!**
Melville Marriott • 1350 Old Walt Whitman Road
8:00 a.m - 12:15 p.m.

▶ Annual LS Recognition Celebration

• **April 23, 2009 (Thursday) Save the Date!**
This annual events recognizes and celebrates the outstanding accomplishments of volunteers and students. *Plan to attend and enjoy!*

▶ Q & A Forum: Is Tutoring for You?

Informational meeting about becoming a volunteer tutor. (No fee.)
Attendance is not required to register for a tutor training workshop.

• **Mastics-Moriches Shirley Community Library**

January 19th (Monday) • 7 - 8 pm

• **Rogers Memorial Library, Southampton**

February 2nd (Monday) • 5:15 - 6:00 pm • Morris Meeting Room

▶ Tutor Support Meetings

• **Patchogue-Medford Public Library**

January 29th • 7 - 8:30 pm • Meeting Room E

• **Copiague Memorial Public Library**

Tuesdays, March 17 and May 19 • 1 - 3 pm

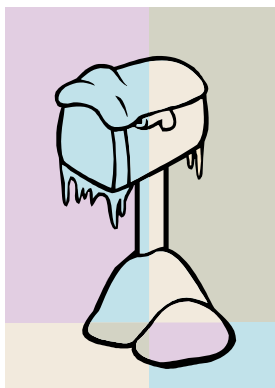
• **Mastics-Moriches-Shirley Community Library (7:00 - 8:30 pm)**

February 26th (Meeting Room E)

March 31st (Meeting Room D)

April 28th (Meeting Room E)

May 14th (Meeting Room B)



Winter/Spring Tutor Training Workshops

Workshop # 305

Mastics-Moriches-Shirley

Community Library

407 William Floyd Parkway, Shirley

Saturdays, 9:30 am - 1:45 pm

January 31, February 7, 14, 21 and

March 7, 2009 (Snow dates: 2/28 & 3/14)

Workshop # 306

North Shore Public Library

250 Route 25A, Shoreham

Thursdays, 6:00 - 9:00 pm

February 26, March 5, 12, 19, 26 and

April 2, 16, 2009 (Snow dates: 4/23 & 4/30)

Workshop # 307

West Babylon Public Library

211 Route 109, West Babylon

Thursdays • 6:00 pm-9:00 pm

February 5, 12, 26, March 5, 12, 19 and

April 2, 2009 (Snow dates: 3/26 & 4/9)

Workshop # 308

Rogers Memorial Library

91 Coopers Farm Road, Southampton

Saturdays • 10:15 am-2:15 pm

February 14, 21, 28 and March 7, 21, 2009

(Snow dates: 4/4 & 4/11)

Online Registration!
www.LiteracySuffolk.org



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