

LEARN Minutes for July 29, 2008 at Lisle Library

Attendance & Introductions of New Members:

1. Ann Weaver (Westchester Library) – Ann created a bookmark and brochure for LEARN which each member library can customize to meet its own needs.
2. Lisa Thackeray (Literacy DuPage) – Literacy Volunteers of DuPage is now going by the shorter name of “Literacy DuPage.” Proliteracy is the parent organization.
3. Jean Demas (Lisle Library) – Noted that 53 languages are spoken in the local schools.
4. Carol Clover (Maywood Library) – Maywood is roughly 80% African American and 20% Hispanic with only a small percentage of other ethnicities represented. The library has a literacy room with a computer and a CD player.
5. Kay Kohut (Woodridge Library) – Kay is taking over the ESL collection from Susan McNeil-Marshall. She hopes to weed the collection extensively, and in particular phase out the videocassettes and cassettes.
6. Tina Viglucci (Aurora Library) – One issue with which Tina is currently grappling is where to keep their large Spanish language collection.
7. Leslie Brittain (Winfield Library) – They really do not have much of a collection to speak of at this time except some outdated materials in Spanish, Russian and Polish. (In the past we had discussed creating a core list of materials, and I thought that smaller libraries like Winfield might benefit from such a list).
8. Linda Schehl, Jan O’Connell and Barbara Draai (Helen Plum Memorial Library) – Their ESL collection is located in an out-of-the-way part of the library. They draw some patrons from unincorporated areas, which can create some challenges. The collection includes a number of Saddleback Classics books. They have received a \$1,000 donation from the Rotary Club for ESL for the past two years.
9. Laura McIninch & Merril Tlusty (Bloomington Library) – Bloomington had a separate literacy collection and dispersed it so that now three different selectors purchase for different parts of the literacy collection. They would like to know how other libraries with interfiled ESL resources highlight these items. They also have materials in Spanish and Polish. The “Froil Collection” consists of children’s books with both languages.
10. Matt Weston (Carol Stream Library) – He has managed the ESL collection for 5 years, but is now moving to Kalamazoo. Their ESL collection includes a large number of Cambridge Readers. The foreign collection includes Spanish and some Asian languages, especially from India.
11. Jennifer Kelly (College of Dupage) – Jennifer is the Student and Community Outreach Librarian and replaces Debra Kakuk Smith.
12. Karen Neal (Downers Grove Library) – At Downers Grove, the selectors exchange selection areas every three years. Karen will be keeping the collection for one more year.
13. Cheryl Diane Collins (Forest Park Library) – The literacy collection is small, but several study rooms are used by Literacy Volunteers of Western Cook County’s volunteers. She has done some tutoring herself. The materials for the most part are old, but she added some new materials in September and has looked into some grants from Wal-Mart.

Forest Park's population includes Eastern European, Asian and a fairly large, well educated African community.

14. Kate Mallon (Wheaton Library) – Wheaton Library has recently completed a project to expand the library, which is now much more open. It is easier for people to see the ESL collection. World Relief uses the graphic novels in the teen collection for their tutoring. You do not need a card to use the study rooms. People who live in unincorporated areas can still check out materials, but they have to leave an ID at the library to do so. Everything is available for interlibrary loan for a four week checkout. The foreign collection includes Russian, Serbo-Croatian and Vietnamese. It is difficult to find publishers in some languages like Farsi and Tagalog.
15. Joe Popowitch (Indian Prairie Library) – Maintains the LEARN Web site and moderates the LEARN Yahoo email group.
16. Yvette Miller (Literacy Volunteers of Western Cook County - LVWCC) – They do have some books. They had received \$5000 worth of books as part of a National Book Scholarship Fund. Tutors can make copies from the workbooks for use with their students, and the program director has a list of books. They do book drives in conjunction with Borders Book Stores. Sometimes they do a program where adults read a book with a child, and they usually let people keep the books. Proliteracy is the parent organization.

Marketing Plan

Ann briefly discussed the brochure and bookmarks that she worked on and revised over the course of the past year. The brochure includes blank space so that each member library may include its own information. The brochures can be distributed near the ESL collection, near the foreign language collection, in the front vestibule, or at any location in the community that is helpful (schools, religious organizations, apartments, hospitals, government offices, etc.).

We had hoped to make the brochures available for International Literacy Week in early September. In the past, LVWCC has given out flowers (and sometimes balloons) at local libraries during this week. Forest Park solicits donations of flowers from local flower shops for this occasion. The event can be covered by local papers.

For copies of the brochures and bookmarks, go to the LEARN Web site at <http://www.adultslearnenglish.org/learnbrochure.html>. Tina Viglucci has translated the brochures and bookmarks into Spanish, which are also available on the Web site.

Explore Hosting an MLS Workshop

The possibility of hosting a workshop at MLS or for other library systems was once again addressed. Ann Weaver had suggested hosting a forum where different publishers could talk. The other half of the workshop might be run by members of LEARN and include a discussion of issues we grapple with every week such as recommended titles and how to market to ESL users. I suggested that we try to develop the specifics of hosting a workshop at a smaller LEARN

meeting. Sometime before January, I will try to solicit a few volunteers to meet and develop the workshop idea.

Resource Sharing

1. Lisa Thackeray – She recommends purchasing books that are tutor resource books, and not necessarily workbooks. The LEARN Web site at www.adultslearnenglish.org has lists of recommended resources by both Literacy Dupage and Literacy Volunteers of Western Cook County. Lisa points out that these titles, though not brand new, are still very relevant and useful. Books of short stories are very helpful like the titles by Ann Gianola from New Readers Press (e.g. *Easy True Stories*). Books emphasizing comprehension and vocabulary are important, and the newspaper *News for You* is very useful.
2. Jean Demas – Pointed out three publishers that have good ESL resources: Pearson Longman, New Readers Press and Oxford University Press.
3. Tina Viglucchi – Continental Book Company at www.continentalbook.com has some titles that are becoming outdated, but overall the company offers a good selection.
4. Joe Popowitch – I have recently created an ESL blog to highlight new Life Skills titles, answer ESL questions and post tutor recommendations. I emailed twenty tutors about the blog, but so far no one has posted any messages. Feel free to visit the blog at <http://indianprairielibrary.org/esltalk/> and leave a comment.
5. School on Wheels - Sister Marybeth McDermott was unable to attend, but she asked that Ann Weaver remind the group that they are still greatly in need of tutors. For more information, please visit the site at http://www.schoolonwheels.com/tutor_info.html
6. Ann Weaver – She pointed out two sites that might be useful. The Web site <http://www.spokentext.net/> allows you to record PDF, Word, plain text, PowerPoint files, RSS news feeds, emails and web pages, and convert them to speech automatically. For practice with keyboard skills, try <http://www.keybr.com/>
7. Someone suggested www.delta-systems.com which comes up with www.deltapublishing.com. The books are easily divided on the Web site into categories like reading, grammar, conversation/vocabulary, etc.
8. The Oxford bookworm series was recommended. The books are graded at six language levels, from elementary (400 word vocabulary) to advanced (2,500 word vocabulary). Vocabulary, structure, syntax and the information presented are all carefully controlled. Key topic vocabulary is often illustrated, particularly at the lower levels.
9. Tina Viglucchi – She showed us a keychain with a tiny Spanish/English dictionary attached that they hand out. Tina also related that she learned English by reading the comic books for Archie. *The Firefly Spanish/English Visual Dictionary* is another source she recommends. Tina asked for recommendations of books of mathematics for ESL students.
10. Linda Schehl – *English for New Americans* is an audio series by Living Language which goes out well at Helen Plum Library, especially the *Everyday Life* and *Health* CDs. This is also available in DVD.
11. Laura McIninch – *TumbleBooks* are animated, talking picture books to which users can read along. They have found that grade level 6 works well for ESL learners.

12. Merrill Tlusty – She discussed how beneficial it is to have translators available. They participate in PolyTalk (as does Carol Stream Library), the Illinois Public Library translation project, which makes available to public librarians 80 interpreters speaking 36 languages.
13. *Power English* by Natasha Cooper which is available at <http://www.englishskills.com/>. It includes scripts for writing English and how to speak English for specific situations (banks, utilities, police, medical offices, etc.). It is for intermediate to advanced learners.
14. Cheryl Diane Collins had heard that *Rosetta Stone English* is good, but it seems that the publisher is no longer selling to libraries. Wheaton Library, Indian Prairie Library and a few other libraries already have it for check out.
15. Jennifer Kelly recommended the *We Both Read* series. It has parallel texts in English and Spanish and titles for multiple levels. The title she brought was *Perfect Gift* by Jenny Gago.
16. Karen Neal suggested the DVD series *English for New Americans* by Living Language. It includes the following titles: *Everyday Life*; *Health, Home & Community*; and *Work and School*.
17. Kate Mallon recommended the DVD *US100.org Your Road to Passing the U.S. Citizenship Test*. It covers the exact 100 questions for which students will need to prepare for the test.

Miscellaneous

1. **Calendar** – Someone suggested that LEARN meetings get posted on the calendar on the LEARN Web site. I will also explore the possibility of having upcoming events highlighted on the front of the Web site.
2. **Recruiting Volunteers** – According to Lisa, Literacy DuPage is trying something they learned from LVWCC. In the week prior to having tutor training classes at Westmont Library, they had volunteers sit at a table (with chocolates) to recruit prospective tutors. They had three shifts, with two shifts on Saturdays (which was not a good time because mainly parents come at that time). Yvette said that LVWCC does this about two weeks before the training and that the best spokespeople are current tutors. They usually try to have something to give away.
3. Someone mentioned that from 1995-2000 PLA put out lists of “**Top Titles for Adult New Readers**.” It does not look like this list is still being produced annually, but the old lists can still be accessed on the Internet.

Tour of Lisle Library

Jean showed us the Literacy Room which includes a computer and room for small group tutoring. We also toured the collection. I noticed that she duplicated some titles that might also appear elsewhere in the library (e.g. *Culture Grams*). There were multiple copies of some titles and many of the multi-part items (i.e. with books, workbooks, CDs, etc.) were packaged as one unit in a bag or kit.

Next Meeting

The next LEARN meeting will be at the Helen M. Plum Memorial Library in Lombard on Tuesday, January 13, 2009 from 2-4 p.m. I will send an agenda in early January.