



LVKC NEWSLETTER

The latest news and updates from the Literacy Volunteers of Kent County

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Letter from the Editor

by Dymond Bush



Happy Spring! I hope that like me, you embrace this season to look forward to new beginnings. The Covid-19 pandemic has affected us in imaginable ways. A little over a year ago we were forced to shift how we operate. You responded with resilience, finding new ways to support students and enthusiastically donating financially. Your perseverance throughout this past year will only help strengthen LVKC as we move forward. Keep reading to learn about all of the new things happening at LVKC this spring.

You can help LVKC bloom like the many flowers sprouting this season by participating in events, volunteering, responding to our spring appeal to secure the organization financially, and advocating for LVKC by sharing the great work we're doing with your friends and family. As always thank you for being a part of the LVKC community.

Sincerely,
Dymond Bush

Trunk or Treat

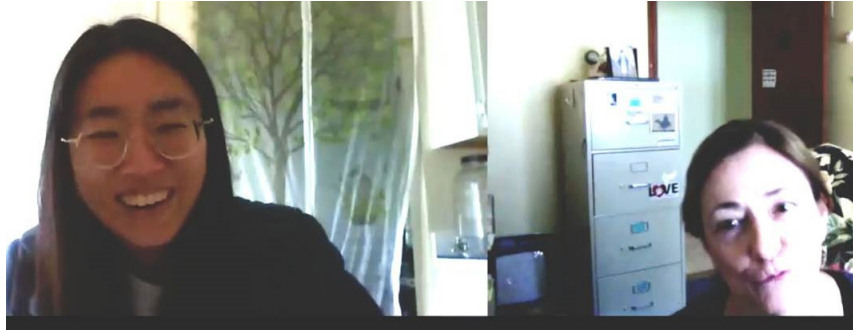
LVKC participated in the Town of Coventry's annual Trunk or Treat in the Park event on October 24th at Central Coventry Park. The purpose of this event is to provide a safe and fun trick-or-treating experience for the children in our community. We dressed up and decorated our trunk with a 'Cat in the Hat' theme and greeted 600 excited children.





Adapting to a Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic forced the closure of many of the public spaces that our tutors and students meet in for their regular sessions. Matches managed to adapt to the many challenges caused by the pandemic by meeting virtually. Read on to see how some of our matches continued to meet virtually throughout the pandemic.



Tutor Mary Dacey and student Kyoungmi Kim

The Covid pandemic gives challenges to all of society, and that includes literacy tutors and their students! Utilizing Zoom and technology in creative ways, along with the resources available at Coventry Library's Literacy Center, helps me to meet the specific needs of my student throughout this trying time.

The wide range of literacy materials available at the Coventry Library provided by Literacy Volunteers of Kent County, Inc. is an important resource. Among those I find practical is the leveled Challenger Series that uses an easy to follow format. It addresses applicable skills related to thematic stories in each Unit. Each week's lesson consistently addresses listening, speaking, reading, word study, writing, and pronunciation. We use either scanned or photos of activities/homework attached to emails related to a lesson's story. I review my student's work and use that as a start for conversation in respective Zoom meetings.

On our prescheduled Zoom regular meeting day, I may read aloud the story that my student has already reviewed. She underlines any part that is not clear to her. That usually involves unfamiliar idioms or informal American words and/or expressions. We spend much of our time conversing about the lesson's story and relating it to our life experiences.

For additional conversation, we use *In Their Own Voice* (Anne P. Copeland). This is composed of very short, relatable stories that have intercultural meaning, comparing American behaviors with those of other cultures. We both love these identifiable stories. From them we learn basic characteristic differences between our cultures that may negatively affect respectable communication.

Except for occasional lapses due to appointments and other normal life-interfering activities, we continue to be faithfully committed to our weekly hour-long meetings. Hopefully, as the country develops stronger immunity to Covid, it won't be too long before we can meet again at the library or go on outings or visit the Roger Williams Park Zoo with my student's five-year old son.

Last but certainly not least, is another valuable resource—Coventry Library's Literacy Staff that is always available to offer suggestions for simple problematic questions that may arise. Here is a big thank you to each and every one of them! -Mary Dacey





Adapting to a Pandemic cont.

Tutor Joan Flanagan, students: Dulce Soto, Amy Chen, Vanessa Monroes, and Luis Okuda

The pandemic has presented all of us with all kinds of challenges, and tutoring was one of them. I didn't want to have my students lose ground with what they had already accomplished and found that by using Facebook messenger we could still have our meetings. Messenger has no time limit like Zoom does. So this has worked out in a wonderful way.

I'm a retired nurse and have been tutoring for almost 5 years. I currently tutor five individual students and I've grown close to all of them. We have scheduled days and times for each of them on a regular basis and are able to be flexible should there be unexpected appointments, etc. One woman is currently in Germany and we meet twice a week.

Nothing has changed with regard to the method of tutoring, whether it's reading or discussions. We just no longer sit side by side. It all seems to be working out in a spectacular way.



Tutor Ernie DiMicco, students Min Chen and Xinglan Li

Tutoring during a pandemic has certainly presented its challenges but can serve as a lifeline to our English-language learners. We decided to use Skype as our platform as it is relatively easy to use. I worked with one lady via Skype almost since the beginning of the pandemic, working on vocabulary, reading comprehension, and vocabulary using short stories and articles from Voice of America and other source, that were of interest to her. We worked every week from March until December when she had a baby; we have not resumed tutoring yet but hope to do so soon.

With my other student, we took a completely different path. From March until June, I would send her work to help her son who was learning remotely, which she would do with him; that helped her improve her skills. She needed help understanding what the teacher was asking and how her son could complete the assignments. I also helped her with letter writing so she could communicate with her son's teacher. We then started to work on Skype to improve her English skills using vocabulary, writing activities, crossword puzzles, and videos. We also accessed articles with which she had interest or a connection from Voice of America and other sources.

Sometimes tutoring has to take a back seat to support. My student was suffering with many of the problems experienced by other parents, but with the added obstacle of a lack of English proficiency needed to deal with the problem. Our sessions were often interrupted by the children during tutoring as she was still supervising them during our session. Having her son back at school has reduced her stress level enormously. She would not have had this level of support without Literacy Volunteers of Kent County.





Virtual Learning Resources

ProLiteracy

Check out this page for tips on supporting your students virtually!

https://www.proliteracy.org/Resources/Coronavirus-resources#tools_platforms

Also, check out these websites that enable you to poll or quiz your students

Polling Websites

Google Forms- Use Google Forms to customize polls and surveys or even create intake forms.

<https://www.google.com/forms/about/>

Poll Everywhere- Use Poll Everywhere in real time in presentation programs such as PowerPoint and Google Slides.

<https://www.polleverywhere.com/>

Crowdsignal-Use this site to create surveys and polls, analyze the results, and share them on various platforms.

<https://crowdsignal.com/>



Quizzing Websites

Quizizz-Use this site to create quizzes for your students. This site also features quizzes previously created by other tutors.

<https://quizizz.com/>

Quizlet-This site allows you to set up electronic flashcard quizzes or reviews.

<https://quizlet.com/>



LET'S TALK CONVERSATION CLASS



MONDAYS AT 7:15PM

TUESDAYS AT 10:00AM

CALL 401-822-9103 OR
EMAIL LVKC@COVENTRYLIBRARY.ORG FOR THE ZOOM LINK



Our small conversation group, LET'S TALK, serves adult students who speak English as a second language. We talk about American customs as well as vocabulary and dialogs for various topics such as community, emergency, parenting, education, work, holidays, etc.





Meet The New Tutor Trainers and Assessors

We're looking forward to assessing prospective students and resuming our Tutor Training Workshops. Meet our new tutor trainers and assessors!

Tutor Trainers

Tutor Trainers lead 5 sessions of the Tutor Training Workshop to help prepare our new volunteers. These workshops are held in the Spring and Fall at the Coventry Public Library Annex.



Wendy Gallo

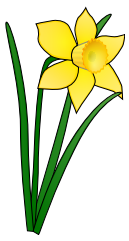
Wendy holds an Associate's degree in Social Work/Mental Health from the Community College of Rhode Island, a Bachelor's degree in Human Development and Family Studies from the University of Rhode Island and is currently enrolled in the Master's degree program in Adult Education at the University of Rhode Island. She is employed as a Higher Education Administrative Assistant II at the University of Rhode Island. She also has experience working at URI as a learning specialist.

Her interests include volunteering at her church's youth group, spending time with her husband and three children, hiking and exploring trails in Rhode Island, cycling, and she is an avid cook who loves to throw get-togethers for family and friends.

Miranda Zammarelli

Miranda recently earned her Bachelor's degrees in Anthropology and Brain and Cognitive Sciences from the University of Rochester. She served as a teaching assistant and writing tutor at the University of Rochester. She has been accepted into Dartmouth College's Ecology, Evolution, Environment, and Society PhD program and will only be able to support the Tutor In-Service. In her free time, she enjoys bird watching, board games, and playing lacrosse.





Assessors

An assessor is usually the first extended personal contact a prospective student has with LVKC. They administer the literacy pre-test and assist the Program Director in matching the prospective student with a tutor.

Mary Curtin

Mary Curtin earned her Bachelor's degree in History from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst. She recently retired from Rhode Island Legal Services after 39 years as a legal assistant. She brings volunteer experience from the Providence Public Library's Family Literacy Program and the Cranston Public Library Citizenship Test Preparation Program.



Marilyn DiMicco

Marilyn joins us as both an assessor and back up tutor trainer. She is very familiar with LVKC as her husband Ernie is a long-time tutor. Marilyn is a former elementary school teacher in the Coventry School Department. She taught general music in the elementary schools and later grade 4 at Western Coventry School. She is a former principal of North Scituate School in Scituate RI and has worked part-time as a literacy facilitator for the South Kingstown Public Schools. Her hobbies include cooking, traveling, and Italian language studies, but her favorite pastime is spending time with her two little grandsons.

Save the Date!

In-Service: Tutoring Refresher U.S. Citizenship Process

We so excited to have you join us for our first ever virtual tutor in-service on Thursday May 13th and 20th from 6:00pm-8:00pm. You'll have the opportunity to meet our new tutor trainers and get some great tips and tricks on supporting your students.

Click [here](#) or call Program Director Dymond Bush at 401-822-9103 to register



Update from South Korea

As many of you know, former LVKC Program Director Youmi Kim moved back to Korea a few months ago. She wrote to us to share about her experience being back in her native country.

Greetings to everyone at LVKC from the other side of the world! It's Yumi here. In the midst of the COVID-19 madness my family and I moved to South Korea to be closer to my family here for a few years. It's been 6 months since arriving in my hometown, Busan. A coastal city, Busan is the second largest city in Korea, Seoul being the largest. We've adjusted nicely and finding a rhythm to this new pace of life. There are days where I miss the flow of life in Rhode Island though. I especially enjoyed my short drive to work at LVKC: Quiet. Peaceful. No traffic. I don't drive here, I leave that to my husband David. I've replaced my driving independence with morning commutes to work on the subway - much faster than traveling by car in morning traffic.

The journey of relocating overseas is never an easy one, throw in a pandemic and it becomes intensely surreal - the experience for us was similar to scenes depicted in Stephen King's classic, *The Stand*. People in full body suits and face shields at the airport customs checkpoint, temperature checkpoints throughout the arrivals area, GPS tracking apps installed on our phones, phone number verifications checked and cross checked before we were allowed to pass through. Once cleared we began our 2-week mandatory quarantine period. It was a very difficult process, but definitely an understandable one.

Shortly after we cleared the quarantine, we celebrated the New Year's Day for the first time with the Korean side of our family. I also went back to my previous job as an elementary school teacher. My daughter had a beautiful 4th birthday party and celebration; and my son started 1st grade at the elementary school where I teach. He gets to enjoy the daily subway ride with me.

Everyone throughout the country wears K-94 masks, Korea's version of the N-95 mask, but we're lucky enough to enjoy mask-free time outdoors on the mountains we hike, far away from everyone. Busan is a densely populated city, so our mountain adventures are a nice break from mask-life once in a while. During our hikes we often talk about the beautiful trails and oceans we visited in Rhode Island with our children. It's a new feeling that I actually feel homesick for Rhode Island while living in my home country.

I read an article a while ago about how people develop a hybrid-culture while they live overseas, and how that causes reverse culture shock when they return to their home countries. Living in America indeed gave me a very different perspective toward my own culture, which I'm very grateful for that. It provided me with a second home and a bigger family.

Working at LVKC cultivated a deeper understanding and appreciation for my experiences in America. I can hardly describe how my experiences there, being able to witness genuine volunteerism from our tutors and bravery from our students, have changed my life. LVKC provided me with a new and profound understanding of what passion and diversity means. Everyone there became part of my family and my life journey. I'm so grateful for all of you.

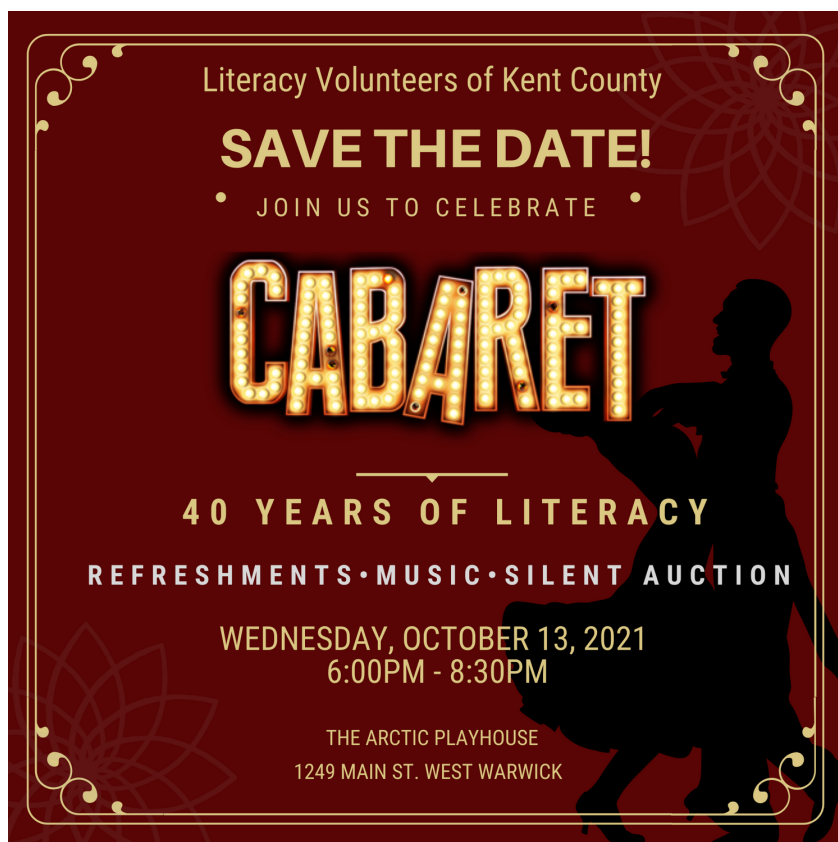
These experiences have motivated me to take a part in an outreach program to help Vietnamese immigrants here in Korea. The program was founded by my mother and operates through her church. We will resume the program again when it's cleared safe to fully re-open the church. When that day comes I hope to bring the same enthusiasm and positive vibes I saw and cherished everyday at LVKC!

My beloved friends, please know that your good work inspires and changes people's lives, both far and near. Stay safe and healthy until our paths cross again.

Until then, I'll keep you all in my prayers.

With Love, Admiration and Respect,
Youmi Kim





Follow us on social media!



[@LiteracyVolunteersKentCounty](https://www.facebook.com/LiteracyVolunteersKentCounty)



[@LVKC1](https://twitter.com/LVKC1)

Watch your mail for a letter from us regarding our annual spring fundraising campaign. While the Covid 19 pandemic remains with us, there are still many individuals in our community who need our services and LVKC continues to reach out to those who want to improve their literacy skills. If you believe what we are doing important, please consider a contribution to Literacy Volunteers of Kent County. If you work for a company that offers a charitable gift matching program, please consider participating in that program. As always, we thank you for supporting our efforts to change lives through literacy – one person at a time.



You can now support us through Amazon Smile. Go to <https://smile.amazon.com/> search Literacy Volunteers of Rhode Island, and begin shopping. A portion of your purchase will be donated to LVKC!



If You Can Read This, Help Someone Who Can't.
Literacy Changes The World. Contact Us Today.

Sign up to be a student [here](#)!

Click [here](#) for the tutor application!

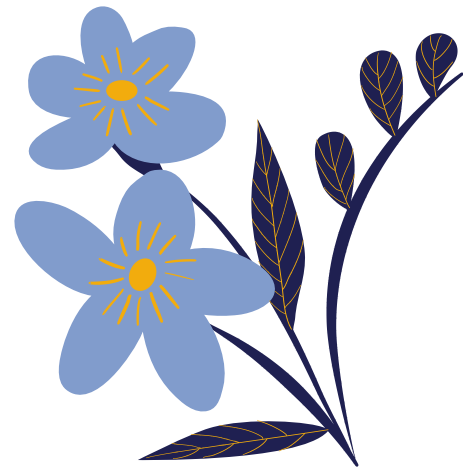
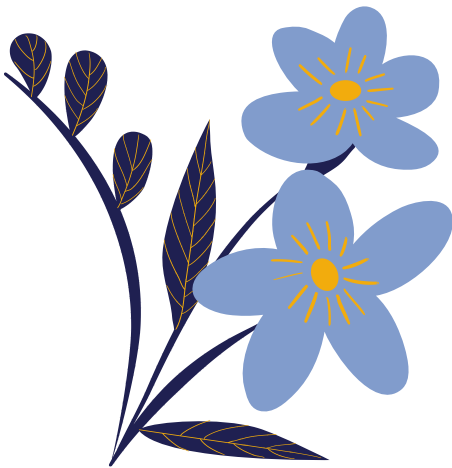
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Literacy Volunteers of Kent County (LVKC) is a nationally accredited adult literacy program that has been serving the families of Kent County and its surrounding communities since 1980.

If you would like additional information about any of the upcoming LVKC programs and resources listed in this newsletter, or if you have any ideas about future activities for LVKC pertaining to their fundraising efforts and tutor/student support, please email LVKC's Program Director Dymond Bush (lvkc@coventrylibrary.org).

All suggestions are a valuable component of LVKC's continuing goal to become an integral part of the Kent County community.