



# Central Coast Literacy Council

## Newsletter - Spring 2011

### Editor's Message



How do you picture yourself and literacy? Do you enjoy a good book? Exchange text messages with your friends? Read a shopping list? The Central Coast Literacy Council helps to make these crucial life skills available to all adults in

our community.

In this issue, we'll "picture literacy." We'll show you photos of literacy in the making. We'll present our vision of literacy going forward in 2011. Finally, we'll ask YOU to put yourself into the picture. Give some of your time or dollars to literacy. It's truly a picture worth a thousand words.

Editor: Wendy Stockton

### From the Board of Directors

Picture yourself active in literacy at 80 years old. That's our wonderful **Margaret Cooper**. Margaret, a retired teacher, has volunteered on the Santa Maria Library Board, as a tutor and on the Literacy Council Board for decades. She's always ready to take on a new challenge and deliver what's needed.



In 2011, Margaret is teaming with another Board member, Kathryn Felix, to spearhead a Board effort to get the literacy message out to key community members. Margaret's target will be her contacts at area high schools.

Happy birthday and thank you, Margaret!

The Board also envisions a more secure financial future for the Council. Board member (and director of Center Plaza Center) Bob Reeser kicked off the Board's new

Board meeting fundraiser—with a picture, of course! He brought a piece of original artwork to the Board's March meeting. We all made contributions, and.....at the end of the meeting, the picture was awarded to our brand-new Board member prospects, Eduardo Leyva and Sinai Melendrez. Eduardo and Sinai are literacy learners. They have pictured themselves giving back to Literacy. Thank you, Eduardo and Sinai: we accept!

Each month, Board members and guests will have the chance to give \$5 (or more) to Literacy and (maybe) go home with a unique and wonderful gift. If you picture yourself participating in this fun and unique fundraiser, contact Isa or a Board member and we'll put you at the table at our next Board meeting.

### S.H.A.R.E.S Program Fundraiser

Beginning on September 1st of this year, the Central Coast Literacy Council will participate in Save Mart Supermarkets S.H.A.R.E.S program. S.H.A.R.E.S stands for **Supporting Humanities, Arts, Recreation, Education & Sports** in our community. Save Mart Supermarkets donates up to \$2 Million dollars annually to organizations and provides SHARES cards free to participants. Each swipe of your S.H.A.R.E.S card at checkout, at a participating Save Mart supermarket, earns 3% of your qualified purchases. In Santa Maria, the participating store is FoodMaxx located on the southeast corner of South Broadway and McCoy. CCLC will receive a quarterly check reflecting the allocated amount earned. How easy can that be? Pick up S.H.A.R.E.S cards at CCLC office after September 1st to give to your family, friends and students. Let's make our grocery dollars start earning funds for CCLC!

As we gently ease into fundraising, the Board also envisions itself doubling in bulk! Said another way, the Board wants YOU to join the Board. We need eager supporters of literacy with lots of energy and new ideas. Prospective Board members are always welcome to try out the Board experience by joining the Board on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of the month, in the Dorothea Nelson Conference Room of the Santa Maria Library.

## And speaking of Eduardo Leyva...



In our Fall-Winter 2010 issue, we published the first of three "writer to writer" letters. In these letters, our literacy learners respond to authors about books the learners have read.

Eduardo Leyva wrote the second response letter, which we reproduce below. Nice job, Eduardo!

September 14, 2010

Eduardo Leyva  
Central Coast Literacy Council  
Santa Maria Library

Dear Mr. Jiménez,

My name is Eduardo Leyva. I migrated to this country recently. I work as a cook in a restaurant and I am learning English.

I would like to start by letting you know that I usually don't read books, probably because I never get to connect with the author. I learned from you about the way of life for people who work in the field. Now I respect them more because it is a very difficult job.

Reading your book, *Breaking Through*, has been a trip of emotions. It has given me hope and the idea that it doesn't matter how many obstacles you have every day. As long as you hold onto your dream, it will come true. I want to continue improving my education. I have the desire to go to college. I don't want history to pass me by. I want to be part of history. I want to be part of the American dream.

Sincerely,

Eduardo Leyva

## Literacy Center Happenings



In the **St. John Center** we have many different students, but they all have one goal: to learn English. One of our students is 50-year-old Maria Leticia

Castellanos. She got a permit to travel to this country because her father, who lived here, was sick. So, although she lives in Mexico and all her family is there, she comes to spend 5 months in the US every year. She is very interested in understanding and speaking English. She comes to the St. John Center, and also takes classes using the *Rosetta Stone* program 2 hours twice a week in our office at the Library. At home, she uses her computer to do the "USA Learns" program. We wish her the best.

Good News! In our last newsletter we talked about Mercy Lee...Well, she took her USA Citizen Exam and SHE PASSED. Congratulations Mercy!



On April 11 the St. John Center had 25 students take the Casas Progress Evaluation. This is the third time they have taken it this school

year. Scores are compared and we receive funding for increased points. Congratulations, students! Dolores Segui – Director

## Central Plaza Center



## A New Sign for the CCLC Office

Big thanks to John Corbett, our acting City Librarian. With John's help, we were able to post a sign by the entrance to the Council's office in the Santa Maria Library that clearly announces who and where we are.



## Spreading Literacy

Recently the book giant Barnes and Noble donated \$850,000 worth of new books to the United Way. In turn, the Santa Maria United Way has given many of these books to Central Coast Literacy Council. The Council then rewarded students, tutors, and friends with gifts of books.

We greatly appreciate the books and the joy that they have given. Several still remain at the Literacy Council Office. If you can put one or more to literacy-related use, please contact Isa or Marj at 925 0951, ext. 836/837. Big kudos to CCLC Board Member Regina Ojeda for creatively putting some of these books to work for Literacy. Regina made a gift basket including some of the books and presented it at the annual Strawberry Dinner (an event with 500 + attendees). CCLC's donation was listed first among the donations. Thanks for getting the good word out, Regina!

## Inspirational Words from Executive Director, Isa Ponce



Spring is here. This is an appropriate time to share with you some inspirational thoughts.

I believe in the spirit of sharing and I believe we are what we are because of those around us. I am what I am because of other people and they are what they

are because of me being around.

One hand cannot clap by itself because it needs the other hand to make a real clap.

Many hands make light work. – *Maasai tribal sayings*

No one cares what you know, unless they know that you care. – *Unknown*

If you see someone without a smile ....give them one of yours. – *Becky Heimbach*

Take Care of People - People before Paper, People before Profits, People before Self and People before Projects. – *Carol S. Ritter*, Speaker on Non-Profit and Educational Leadership

Life is not about waiting for the storms to pass...it's about learning how to dance in the rain! - *Vivian Greene*

A pessimist, they say, sees a glass of water as being half

empty; an optimist sees the same glass as half full. But a giving person sees a glass of water and starts looking for someone who might be thirsty. – *G.Thomas Gale*

Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain love for one another. – *Erma Bombeck*

A single sunbeam is enough to drive away many shadows. – *St. Francis of Assisi*

When were the good and the brave ever in a majority? – *Henry David Thoreau*

Service to others is the rent you pay for your room here on Earth. – *Muhammad Ali*

When someone shares something of value with you and you benefit from it, you have a moral obligation to share it with others. – *Chinese Proverb*

I always wondered why somebody didn't do something about that. Then I realized I was somebody. – *Lily Tomlin*

If you don't have any charity in your heart you have the worst kind of heart trouble. – *Bob Hope*

Treat people as if they were what they ought to be, and help them become what they are capable of being. – *Goethe*

Never doubt that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has. – *Margaret Mead*

Success in life has nothing to do with what you gain in life or accomplish for yourself. It's what you do for others. – *Danny Thomas*

At the end of our life our questions are simple: Did I live fully? Did I love well? – *Jack Kornfield*

If you insist on measuring yourself, place the tape around your heart rather than your head. – *Carol Trabelle*

The highest reward for a person's work is not what they get for it, but what they become because of it. – *John Ruskin*

## Wanted: High-Powered High School Volunteers



Central Coast Literacy Council recently held a bittersweet graduation ceremony. Seven student mentors from our Family Literacy program are heading off to college. We wish them well. They—particularly Tatiana Kufferath and Daniel Brim—launched this critical component

of community literacy and stood by it ever since. Thank you, departing student mentors!

A special message from our executive director: Our last session of our Family Literacy program for this school year was on March 28. It was a very special evening, not only for those families who received precious books for their 0-5 children (courtesy of First Five), but also for the seven teen mentors who are graduating very soon from high school. We celebrated their achievements and future academic dreams with a delicious (and rich!) cake.



Congratulations and our deepest thanks to all our high school graduates, whose effort and dedication made our program possible: Daniel Brim, Elena Garcia, Valerie Hernandez, Aya Kasai, Tatianna Kufferath, Sensika Niyathapala, and Harjas Singh. Our best wishes



will have the following minimum qualifications:

Family literacy sessions begin again in September. The Council needs a crop of responsible, committed teens to continue what Daniel and Tatiana began. The teens we need

- Willing to make a 6-month commitment, consisting of:
- 1 training session followed by 6 full family literacy sessions (each full session meets three times), on
- Monday nights from 6:30- to 8:15 p.m. in Shepard Hall of the Santa Maria Library
- Ability to quickly grasp the family literacy training
- Ability to create lesson plans that incorporate elements of the training and present them in English to parents and children.



Volunteering will give teens invaluable pre-job experience and will result in certificates showing community service hours given. Truly stellar teens can score letter-of-recommendation and college scholarship assistance from Literacy Council staff and adult volunteers.



Interested, qualified teens should contact Dr. Isa Ponce-Jimenez at 925-0951, x836 now. According to Dr. Ponce-Jimenez, the most fundamental element in nurturing academics is showing

the parents what a pivotal role they play in their children's educational journey. This is CCLC's main family mentor focus, who in turn model the basic elements so that parents can be empowered and help their children at home. We need volunteers to help us keep that activity going. For more information about how volunteers can join us, please call (805) 925-0951, ext. 836.



## **19<sup>th</sup> Annual Spelling Bee to Be the Best Ever**

Bonnie Royster invites you to join her as part of the team to bring about the Literacy Council's

Best Bee yet. Our 19<sup>th</sup> annual event is on the drawing board now, with the event to take place on September 17, 2011. You can get in on all the strategic planning, and sign up to help with large tasks or small. Bonnie envisions a Really Big Bee, in a new location in the Town Center Mall that can handle an audience of hundreds. Your help would *Bee* most appreciated in this major fundraiser to help Central Coast Literacy Council.

To join the Bee team, contact Bonnie by email: [Royster.bonnie@gmail.com](mailto:Royster.bonnie@gmail.com).

**Picture Yourself as a Tutor for Central Coast Literacy Council!**



Recently Dr. Isa Ponce-Jimenez, Executive Director of Central Coast Literacy Council,

reported that we now have 60 wonderful individuals serving as tutors in literacy centers from Santa Maria south to Solvang. The total number of learners varies from month to month, at times approaching 100.



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Truly, giving service as a tutor is one of the most richly rewarding ways to support literacy in our community. Many wonderful people sign up for the Council's fall

and spring Saturday morning tutor training sessions. As you consider putting yourself in the Literacy picture as a tutor, be sure to find out the facts about tutoring in the various centers. The Council has a brochure that will tell you all about it; read it on our website at <http://www.centralcoastliteracy.org/>. You can also find brochures in the Santa Maria Library Main Branch.

Thank you to the new tutors who will join the other dedicated Literacy volunteers after completing training this spring:

**A Fond Farewell to Our Marj!**

Marj Lambe has been our Administrative Assistant for more than eight years. She is currently a CCLC board member and previously tutored for about 15 years. A native of Long Beach, California, Marj has always enjoyed the sun, the beach, crossword puzzles, and selected romance books. When her oldest granddaughter was born, Marj left the southern beaches and moved to Santa Maria to be closer to the baby. After the second granddaughter joined the soccer league, Marj became one of the most passionate fans of that sport. Now that both girls are attending college, she is their biggest and proudest admirer.



She will be leaving us at the end of June of this year. However, she will not be able to go too far away because of the amount and nature of the information she has accumulated throughout the years. Thank you, Marj, for all your expertise and dedication. You will be missed a great deal!!

**Announcements**

*Our 2011 Spelling Bee* – the best ever – will take place on September 17, 2011. *BEE* part of it and enjoy this fun activity!! Want to be a part of the BUZZZZ? Call us at 925 0951, ext. 836/837!

*Next tutor training:* October 15 and 22, 2011, 9 am-3:30 pm.

*Our condolences to:*

Mrs. Jeannie Woods, whose husband, Edwin (Bob), passed away on March 1<sup>st</sup> of 2011. The generous Mr. and Mrs. Woods have granted us funding for several years through the Woods Family Foundation.

Diana Garcia and Iltra Palomo (tutors at People of Greatness) both lost their fathers in December 2010 and March 2011 respectively.

*Our get well soon wishes to:*

Sasha Silva, member of CCLC Board and the Family Literacy committee, and Kim Kearns, tutor.