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Literacy Changes Everything.



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September is Literacy Month

*By MaryJo VanGompel
Executive Director*



September is National
Literacy Month. On
September 8th, the world will
mark the 48th annual
International Literacy Day to
remind us all that reading,

writing, and basic math remain an elusive target for nearly
800 million adults around the globe, including nearly
20,000 here in the Chippewa Valley. Literacy Volunteers is
part of a national network of organizations that work every
day to end the adult literacy crisis.

Board Members:

- Laurie Klinkhammer, President
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- Greta Heike, Treasurer
- Stacy Secker, Secretary
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- Pa Thao

GED Update

Several GED students at the Chippewa County Jail have recently passed GED tests. Ashlea, Cody, and Andrew have all passed the Social Studies test. Cody passed the Reasoning through Language Arts test, and Andrew received a *perfect score* on the math test. Congrats to all of you!

A Funny Story: I am Beans

A Spanish speaking student who works on a farm saw the farmer's bags of soybean seeds. He asked the farmer if the bags were written in Spanish and he said "No".

Soy means "I am" in Spanish, so to him the bags read "I am beans!"

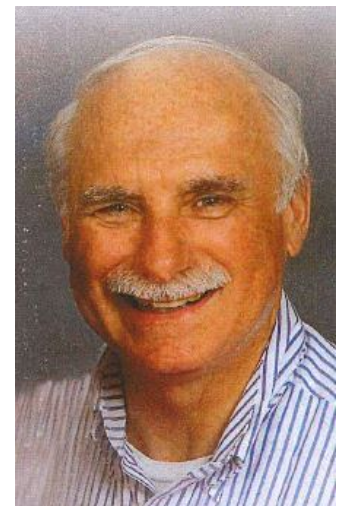
Literacy Volunteers will be holding special events during Literacy Month. On September 8th and 10th, LVCV staff, board members, tutors and students will be serving meals at The Community Table. On Sept. 8th, we will serve the evening meal and on Sept. 10th we will serve lunch. We will also be distributing information about Literacy Volunteers and the services that we provide. If you are interested in helping us volunteer on either of those days, please contact Louise at lbentley@lvcv.org.

We will also be participating in the Wisconsin Literacy statewide READ event using the book "Hotdogs and Hamburgers". The statewide READ is a fun, new program to bring attention to the need for literacy tutors throughout the area. The WI Literacy's 12th Annual 1200 Tutors in 12 Weeks campaign will run from September 8-December 1, 2015. Funding for organizations will be based on the number of tutors trained during that time. Look for more information on LVCV's Tutor Training in the next newsletter. In the meantime, please start a conversation with someone on National Literacy Month and talk about how to get involved in LVCV.

Remembering Jack O'Connell

Jack O'Connell, one of the founders of Literacy Volunteers of America – Chippewa Valley, (now LVCV) passed away on July 11, 2015.

Jack worked at Chippewa Valley Technical College (CVTC) as Dean of Education until 2001. In 1986, Jack O'Connell and Dorothy Sorlie, an instructor at CVTC, recognized a need for additional literacy services in the Chippewa Valley. Students were matched with trained tutors to assist them. A family literacy program soon evolved and has



Thrivent Choice

Literacy Volunteers Chippewa Valley has enrolled as a participating organization in Thrivent Choice. Thrivent Choice is a charitable grant program that allows eligible members to recommend where Thrivent Financial distributes part of its charitable outreach grant funds each year. LVCV is now listed in the program's searchable [online catalog](#).

Thrivent Financial members will direct Choice Dollars® to our organization in a particular month. Thrivent reviews the recommendation and makes a contribution by the following month.

Goodsearch

LVCV is connected to Goodsearch. To learn more about how you can raise funds for LVCV through this program, [click here](#).



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been recognized as a national model.

According to the first executive director Carol Gabler, Jack O'Connell had the vision, passion and positive spirit to open doors when he saw someone in need. Carol said, "I first met Jack when I was working as a volunteer helping new Hmong immigrants learn about life in America." Jack came to Carol and said, "Dorothy and I have this idea, and we wondered if you would help us get this organization going to help adults with their reading. We don't have any money right now, but the library will give us space for \$1.00 a year. We will find a way to make this all happen with so many wonderful partners in our community."

Jack opened doors, found money and brought people together to advance the cause of literacy. Because Jack believed in people's positive intentions, he was an amazing leader linking LVCV and CVTC. Hundreds of students and families have a better life because Jack O'Connell paved the way. Jack O'Connell's leadership style of positive, caring communication for others is a model to emulate, as LVCV continues to serve students and tutors in the Chippewa Valley.



Bremer Bank officials Michelle Heinzen, Kristin Gildenzopf, and Mai Nou Hang present a check to Literacy Volunteers staff, students, and tutors July 9th at the LVCV office.

Bremer Foundation Supports Literacy

Literacy Volunteers Chippewa Valley recently received a grant from the Otto Bremer Foundation. The Bremer

price to LVC. Bookmark the link
<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/39-1657040> and support us every time you shop.

Have you "liked" us on Facebook yet? Go to our page now.



Foundation is generously supporting LVCV's general operations with a grant of \$115,000. The grant will be used to implement the strategic planning initiatives that were established by the organization last year.

The Otto Bremer Foundation supports work important to the communities that are homes to Bremer banks. They strive to help build healthy, vibrant communities—places where basic needs are met, mutual regard is prized and opportunities for economic, civic and social participation are within everyone's reach. They give highest priority to opportunities with potential to move a community forward in meaningful, powerful and broad-based ways. In 2014 the Foundation provided 679 grants totaling approximately \$42 million.

Family Literacy Reports on Activities

Family Literacy offers a full range of learning and activities for families participating in the program. When a family joins the program, they not only improve their literacy skills but also learn more about the American culture. While the adults are learning, the children participate in structured early childhood education.

The Family Literacy Program concluded the 2014-2015 school year in June. This year our families included four children at home, 28 attending Family Lit Birth to 3 class, 17 in Head Start, 60 in elementary school, 15 in middle school, and 14 in high school.

Some of the parent education projects that were completed this school year:

School:

- Parents learned how to participate in fall conferences, vocabulary about conferences and what to expect at conferences. Staff attended several conferences with

parents who needed help. Our teachers also worked with their students to complete goal-setting forms, setting goals for their children, and preparing them to discuss the goals with their child's teacher.

- Parents were provided with letters that they could give to teachers suggesting they contact the Family Lit Staff if assistance was needed with communication. We also sent letters to elementary teachers, telling them parents are in Family Literacy and how to contact us if they need help to communicate
- Staff taught math vocabulary to parents of second graders to help them comprehend the new math curriculum.

[Continue to read about Family Literacy Activities.](#)

Marine Credit Union Presents Check



Thanks to Maria Kane and Ian Kirkpatrick of Marine Credit Union for stopping by with a contribution to LVCV this month. They are shown here with Executive Director MaryJo VanGompel.



Tom Wagener, Eau Claire Transit Manager, left, and Dawn Comte of the Dept. of Parks, Recreation and Forestry, right, hold the ribbon as David Hillman stands with Hobbs Ice Arena supporters.

Making a Difference...

A bus stop near Hobbs Ice Arena and Oxbow Villa Apartments on Eau Claire's Menomonie Street did not have a bench for riders as they wait to board. LVCV student David Hillman applied his writing, computer, and interpersonal skills to engage Eau Claire Transit and city officials with his idea for a bench. He then secured permission from the land owner of Robecki Bike & Skate.

The outcome? Officials poured a concrete block, and found and refurbished a bench. Installation occurred in late June. Congratulations, David! Your idea and your approach made a difference!

CST Volunteers Return



Volunteers from Chippewa Sand Transport (CST) returned to the Literacy Volunteers office to do some painting recently. Pictured here, we see them painting the kitchen. Other volunteers painted a staff office and worked on the ScrabbleBee game boxes. Thanks, guys!

Take Me Out to the Ballgame



Members of the LVCV staff and family members held a cookout at Carson Park followed by an Eau Claire Express baseball game July 8th. A good time was had by all as the Express won!

Need Help?

We have a variety of programs to help you acquire the necessary skills to achieve economic self-

sufficiency. [Click Here](#) to see services that we provide.



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