

DELAWARE COUNTY

Winter 2009



LITERACY COUNCIL

TUTOR TRAINING SCHEDULE

Training: 10-hour training in Adult Literacy or English as a Second Language

April 18 & 25

(Saturdays) 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
Springfield Township Library,
70 Powell Road, Springfield

June 15, 17, 22 & 24

(Mondays/Wednesdays) 6:30-9 p.m.
DCLC, 2217 Providence Avenue,
Chester

Call 610.876.4811, to sign up for a workshop. Volunteer and change a life today!

DATES TO REMEMBER

DCLC offices will be closed:

April 10 Good Friday
May 25 Memorial Day

Save These Dates:

- March 11 Book Discussion,
DCLC Office. Details on
back page.
- March 21 Tutor In-Service. Details
on page 5.
- March 28 The Book & The Bear
Family Literacy Event,
Noon-2 p.m., Lansdowne
Public Library
- April 19 Visit us at Swarthmore
Fun Fair, 1-5 p.m.
- April 20 **Carnival of Reading**
Family Literacy Event,
6-7:30 p.m., Southeast
Delco School District
- June 10 GED Graduation
Ceremony, 5:30-
7:30 p.m., Latham Hall,
Widener University

Celebrating Volunteers & Success

The Delaware County Literacy Council (DCLC) recently hosted our Annual Literacy Celebration and Potluck Supper. We had a wonderful turnout and a fabulous dinner.

Ruth Malloy, pictured on right with Board President Joe Ann Craft, accepted our first Community Support Award on behalf of Kimberly Clark. Kimberly Clark has been so generous to our program, supplying DCLC with paper products and sending volunteers to improve our building. Ruth Malloy said she was so excited to receive the award because Kimberly Clark found the DCLC to be a wonderful program and an excellent resource for applicants to Kimberly Clark.



Highlights of the evening included students and volunteers who have accomplished some lofty goals. The following students were presented the U.S. Citizenship recognition: Thelma Arandia of Aldan, Winston Gardner of Upper Darby, and Blaker Kpamia of Woodlyn.

Student and tutor awards and more pictures on page 3

Families Reading Together Every Day

DCLC is participating in a series of Family Literacy events in partnership with the Southeast Delco School District, the Sharon Hill Library and community volunteers. This program aims to get kids and parents reading together every day.

The first two events – in October and January – drew approximately 250 people each, and all of the children who attended took books home.

In March, the Rotary Club of Central Delaware County will co-sponsor The Book and the Bear Family Literacy event at the Sharon Hill Library for parents and children of Southeast Delco School District. Untours donated 1,000 Teddy bears to DCLC to be paired with a book for the children to take home.

Future Family Literacy events are also being planned with the Lewis J. Crozer Library in Chester and the Widener Partnership Charter School.



Volunteers are Money in the Bank

In February, 2008, DCLC received a Capacity-Building grant from The Philadelphia Foundation

to help strengthen our infrastructure. With this grant, we were able to hire Ted Swenson Associates to work with

our Board and staff to help us look at community needs and our program resources in order to determine our future direction.

For the past year, our Board has met with Ted Swenson and one of his associates, Jennifer Shropshire, for retreat days, informational sessions and workshops. Ted and Jennifer have facilitated many discussions about our mission and vision in light of the current needs of adult learners in our community.

A recent U.S. Department of Education study indicates that 10% of Delaware County adults cannot read or write well enough to handle even elementary school material. They are unable to do simple math like adding deposits into a bank account or to read a doctor's instructions about what to drink before a medical test. Of the adults

who come to DCLC for help, almost half are reading below a 5th grade level.

In light of the great need and available resources, we considered the various arenas of adult literacy—basic literacy, GED preparation, English as a Second Language (ESL), workplace skills, financial literacy, health literacy, and family literacy—in an effort to gain greater clarity on where we will focus our resources.

Through this process, our Board has been able to deepen their understanding of the need for our services in our community and the impact of our work in changing the lives of the adults who improve their literacy skills.

The involvement of volunteers in delivering literacy instruction was one key aspect of our mission all agreed was crucial. Volunteers enable DCLC to stretch our resources and steward our public funds wisely. Last program year, 165 volunteers provided 11,388 hours of instruction with a value of \$216,372!

Your investment in our work is changing the lives of individuals, their families and our wider community, and I am most grateful for all your support.

The Book and the Bear

DCLC's new The Book and the Bear Program aims to get kids and parents reading together every day. Families in Delaware County who have few if any books in the home will receive a new or gently used book, appropriate for their family, paired with a cuddly Bear, donated by Untours.

Joanne Sutton-Smith, director of the new Family Literacy Outreach program says, "This generous and extraordinary gift from Untours allows us to launch this exciting initiative and unlock the interactive magic of reading. It is when a parent reads to a child, snuggling up with a bear in between, that a life long habit of joy, learning, and connection is made. We want to use this amazing gift to help families tap into the deep bond that a lifelong love of reading can form in a family."

The Book and the Bear supplements DCLC's in-house Pre-K program, which builds reading skills for both parents and their children.

Delaware County Literacy Council's Mission

The Delaware County Literacy Council enables adults and their families of Delaware County to gain literacy and communication skills in order to participate fully in society, and advocates for literacy at all levels.

Celebrating Volunteers & Success at DCLC's Annual Dinner

Joe Heistand, Havertown, and his tutor Gloria McNutt, Springfield, were honored as Student/Tutor of the Year.

At the young age of 61, Joe has passed three parts of the GED exam and hopes to complete the rest within the year.



Kira Daniels-Green, Chester, was chosen Student of the Year. She has a smile and warm hug for Gwen Cottman, her GED instructor. Kira was the featured speaker at the DCLC GED graduation last June.



Peter Matthews, Boothwyn, offers his thoughts after receiving the Volunteer of the Year Award.

At right, Priscilla Ewing, Tutor of the Year, shows off her plaque with the award's namesake, Helen B. Simyak.



New citizens, thanks to help from DCLC, are, from left, Winston Gardner and his tutor Eleanor Vadala, Executive Director Madeline Bialecki, Thelma Arandia and tutor Doris Mitrani, Blaker Kpamia and her tutor Dottie Tiffany.

Since the celebration in November, two more DCLC students, Lyudmyla Oksyuk and Olesky Oksyuk (not pictured), have also become U.S. Citizens.



“Thanks to my Favorite School”

by Robert Rimm

Many immigrants come to the United States with an intense drive for self-improvement, a willingness to work hard, and the kind of dreams generally not possible in their home countries. For Tatiana Moskatova, gratitude and humility are natural by-products of these personal goals, and inform everything she does. The summer of 2006 saw her come to America knowing virtually no English; arriving at New York’s JFK airport, she was shocked by the relentless and incomprehensible activity, and had to learn very quickly to stand on her own. Her extensive education in jurisprudence and geography—combined with tangible career success—did little to prepare for life away from her homeland. During those initial weeks, she did not know that she would stay, as her love of Russia was (and remains) palpable. She and her daughter simply brought two small bags with necessities.

America did not impress her at first. Everything seemed casual, with a surface quality that revealed little depth. Yet she became continually surprised by the relationships she witnessed between people, their genuine respect for one another, and how many would volunteer without expectation of payment. She found herself deeply moved and decided to stay in this country.

Two months later, Tatiana came to the Delaware County Literacy Council upon a friend’s recommendation. Reflecting an ardent devotion to their mutual cause, DCLC Executive Director Madeline Bialecki spent one of those initial days in Philadelphia with Tatiana, providing critical assistance with all the necessary paperwork. Tatiana, in turn, was more than surprised at the level of assistance and compassionate care she found through the Literacy Council and beyond.

Necessity was a prime motivator, and one of the favored words in her adopted language is ‘must.’ Its myriad meanings provide a credo for this young Russian-American: self-improvement, adaptability, language acquisition and daily sustenance are all ‘musts’ that lead to tremendous personal growth and quiet satisfaction.

Toward the end of 2006, Tatiana wrote to Ms. Bialecki about her work experience in Russia, and asked for a volunteer position at DCLC, which was soon arranged. She realized the difficulty of working with everyone, but they demonstrated selfless care and patience in what turned out to be a wonderful opportunity to work in an American office and to speak English daily.

Those of you reading this article can be forgiven for taking the ability to read for granted; surely, that is among the birthrights of the world’s people. Six, seven, then eight months passed before Tatiana began to feel comfortable with the language. Without full understanding, though, she became afraid that she would do things in the wrong way, or not properly understand



Russian Immigrant Tatiana Moskatova continues to improve her English skills with tutor Peter Mathews. Referral to DCLC, Tatiana said, is the best advice that she has ever received.

her rights. She did not feel equipped to speak up even when she knew something was wrong, and relates a touching story about buying a television set, for which she equates learning English with learning life:

“It was a really good deal: 0% for 12 months. We were very happy. Every month I got a bill and paid it on time. But after a while I realized that I was paying extra money every month, for a “Debt Cancellation” charge of 1% from every payment. Nobody had told us about this charge when we made the agreement. My first thought was that I couldn’t do anything because I would not be able to explain about my disagreement. But later, I decided to show this bill to my tutor and he suggested that I write a letter with my complaint. He helped me to make this letter more powerful. I sent it and was sure that it would not work in my situation. I couldn’t

imagine that in three weeks I would get a letter from this company, a very kind letter, with apologies and a promise to return to me a sum more than I expected. I was stunned, and couldn't believe my eyes. I felt so happy. In this letter I found my voice. It was not just money, it was much more.

At that minute I realized that I'm not silent anymore, that my perseverance had given me the first real result. I understood how important it is to go to classes and work with my DCLC tutor. They are not just regular classes about adjectives and nouns; these classes are about real life in the United States. My homework sometimes looks very unusual, like how to order a pizza by phone or listen and then explain idioms from a TV show, but it is the best example how we can learn English and be involved in American life."

Tatiana applied for and received a job at Marshall's department store as soon as she got her work papers. And, just over a year after her arrival, DCLC offered Tatiana a ten-hour per week job inputting data, her first real employment in America. She was thrilled to become a part of the DCLC team and could not believe her good fortune.

As 2009 begins its passage, a conversation with her reveals a high level of English proficiency coupled with intense gratitude. She demonstrates unquenchable curiosity about American culture and people, and loves studying the language. Influenced by her years in America, her perspectives are now far different; she realizes that people are the same everywhere, with similar needs and aspirations.

Family remains an essential and devoted part of Tatiana's life. Her two parents still live in Russia, and she travelled back this past Christmas for a loving reunion. She is now married to a childhood friend, and

her daughter is a freshman and scholarship winner at Temple University.

These days, Tatiana works part-time at DCLC (where she has demonstrated an extraordinary work ethic), learns English with her tutor twice each week, and attends a conversation group. She considers herself blessed and expresses her "thanks to my favorite school and all the people who work here. They do the best job in the world because every day they give a chance to everybody to find their way in this country. We, immigrants, can't be lost in this country while we have such a school as this."

Tatiana considers the DCLC referral as the best advice she has ever received; its people have made it her second home. She always reads true love and care in their eyes, and remains charmed by the relationship between staff and students.

Tatiana does not know what the future holds (who among us does?), but one of her firm goals is to help people believe in themselves, and not to give up. She wants to do all she can, a desire reflecting a genuine need to give back for all that she herself received.

The reality of her own dreams bears out this faith. She will become an American citizen in less than three years, oceans away from that fateful day in New York when she first stepped off the plane into a rich new life, impacted with the kind of satisfaction possible only with hardship experienced, hardship overcome.

Tatiana's example is a realistic inspiration to all who come after her, and an elemental illustration of the DCLC's vital, life-changing work.

vsego nailuhwego! (Wishing you the best!)

Tutors,

Please remember to report your tutor hours because we need them for our grant reports. Your hours can be called in, mailed in or e-mailed in from our website, www.delcoliteracy.org. Thank you.

Tutor In-Service: Reading and Writing with Real-life Materials

Colleen Serencsits, of Tutors of Literacy in the Commonwealth (TLC), will share techniques for teaching reading and writing using real life materials, project-based activities and strategies using the multi-sensory approach on Saturday, March 21, 9:30-12:30, at DCLC, 2217 Providence Avenue, Chester, PA. Call DCLC at 610.876.4811 to register for this event.



2008 Annual Report



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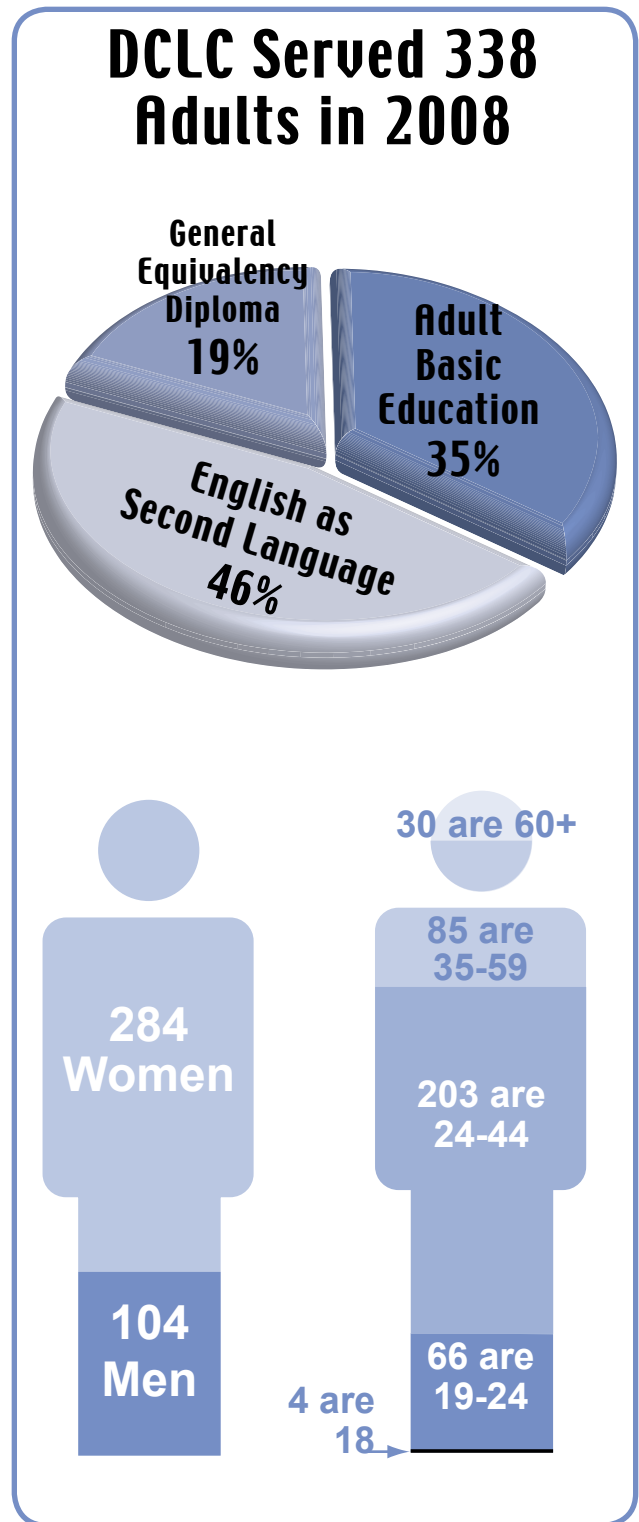
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DCLC appreciates all our donors and volunteers. We apologize if we have misspelled, misplaced or omitted your name. If you see an error, please let us know so we can correct our records.

Revenue & Other Support	
Government Grants	\$383,276
United Ways	52,000
Corporations, Churches, Community Groups	12,141
Foundations (18 months)	48,500
Individuals	22,652
Special Events	22,922
Miscellaneous	3,184
Total Support	\$544,675
Expenses	
Program Services	380,298
Support Services	118,422
Fund Raising	2,023
Total Expenses	\$500,743



Volunteer Opportunities

In addition to tutoring, you can help DCLC by contributing your skills in the following areas:

- Computers/IT
- General office work
- Assessing students
- Small group instruction
- Volunteer recruitment
- Public relations
- Newsletter preparation
- Fundraising
- Special events
- Speaker's bureau
- Building maintenance
- Landscaping/gardening

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Members of the Board of Directors received thanks at the Annual Literacy Celebration. Pictured are, seated, Ann Seidman and Charlotte Hobson, back row from left, Joe Ann Craft, Suzy Davis, Shonette Harrison, Joe Hawkins, Linda Ramsey, Helen Subbio, Rob Berley and Christy Tramdaks.

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 Russell Bankes*, GED/Move-Up Instructor
 Gwen Cottman*, GED Instructor
 Mimi Nenzo*, ESL Instructor
 Nancy Kirkwood*, ESL Instructor
 Qin Reese*, Teacher Assistant
 Tatiana Moskatova*, E-data Entry
 Michelle Radabaugh*, Administrative Assistant

* indicates part-time staff

A little volunteer:
 Yassine,
 whose mother
 is a DCLC
 student, has the
 important job of
 drawing for door
 prizes at the
 Annual Literacy
 Celebration
 with Executive
 Director
 Madeline
 Bialecki.



What's on Our Website

Check out www.delcoliteracy.org

Tutors can record and submit tutoring hours by going to the DCLC website and clicking on Volunteer Corner.

Visitors to www.delcoliteracy.org can read student writings, find details about training sessions and ways to volunteer. You can even donate through a secure online service.



2217 Providence Avenue, Chester
 Hours: Monday-Thursday 9 a.m.-8 p.m.
 Friday 9 a.m.-5 p.m.

Phone: 610.876.4811

Fax: 610.876.5414

E-mail: delco@delcoliteracy.org

The Community Supports DCLC

Special thanks to the following who donated time and talents to DCLC:



Grassman Pure Landscaping, 908 Heathdale Lane, Media has graciously donated lawn cutting and snow removal services for our office in Chester.

In October, the **Outback Steakhouse in Springfield** hosted a lunch buffet to benefit DCLC. One-hundred people attended the event and we raised over \$2,000 for our adult literacy programs. The employees of Outback generously volunteered their time serving all of our guests. A wonderful meal and a good time was had by all. Thanks to Outback Manager Dave Trout and all his staff for their support.

The **Pre-kindergarten and Kindergarten classes at Saint John Chrysostom School** in Wallingford held a book drive in December to benefit the Family Literacy Program of the Delaware County Literacy Council (DCLC). The new and gently-used books will be distributed to the families served by DCLC.



“Reaching out and serving the wider community is an important value at St. John’s School,” said Principal Kay Kelly. “From the youngest grades, we help children become more aware of how fortunate they are, and we try to instill in all our children the responsibility to contribute to the greater good,” she added.



DCLC celebrated Black History Month on February 18, 2009, with a pot-luck supper, readings, African-American art and artifacts and soul dancing.

Frederick Douglass, abolitionist and newspaper publisher, was the subject of a reading by Mary Harris.

Marianna Riggs read an original essay about her feelings about the Presidential election: “President Obama steps through the doors of history. We will change the course of history and are on the journey to heal nations.”

DCLC Celebrates Black History Month

Beverly Trusty, Charlotte Hobson and Christopher James also shared reflections about President Obama.

Thanks to Phyllis Stephenson, Charlotte Hobson and Gwen Cottman who organized the event. Special thanks to St. Katherine Drexel Church and the Drexel Neumann Academy for generously opening their school building to us and to Harrah’s for their support.

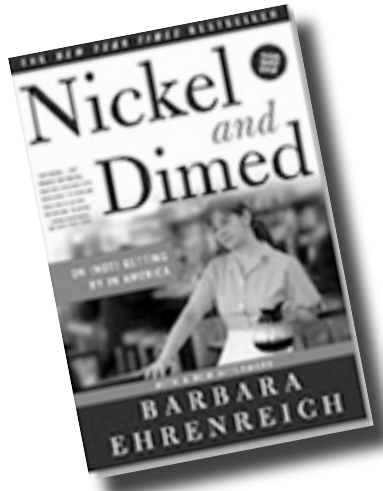


Tickets Available for Black & White & “Read” All Over Quilt Drawing

Buy a chance on this beautiful black and white quilt, made by instructor Mimi Nenno.

She made the newsprint pattern Black & White & “Read” all over – the back of the quilt is solid red – to remind its owner that reading is as essential as a good night’s sleep.

Chances are \$5 each or 5 for \$20 available from any member of the DCLC staff or Board. Drawing will be March 29th, 2009, at the Volunteer Appreciation Brunch. You need not be present to win.



DCLC’s Next Book Discussions

Nickel and Dime On (Not) Getting By in America is the topic of DCLC’s next book discussion on Wednesday, March 11, at 7 p.m.

Author Barbara Ehrenreich decided to experience one day in the life of millions of Americans who work for poverty-level wages. She was inspired in part by the rhetoric surrounding welfare reform, which promised that any job equals a better life. But how can anyone survive, let alone prosper, on \$6 to \$7 an hour?

The discussion will be held at the DCLC Office located at 2217 Providence Avenue in Chester. Call 610.876.4811 for complete details.

Coming in May: **In My Place** by Charlayne Hunter-Gault, will be discussed on May 6 at 7 p.m. at DCLC office.



United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania



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