



# Literacy Council for Josephine County

FALL/WINTER, 2013/2014

223 S.E. M Street, Grants Pass, OR, 97526

## Looking back on the generosity of donors; Looking ahead to challenges of those still in need

### Dear Friends of the Literacy Council for Josephine County:

We are well situated to serve you and your neighbors for this coming year.

This past year was a year of generous support. The Oregon Community Foundation and Leightman-Maxey Foundation pulled us out of difficulty with grants to help us take care of operating expenses.

The Carpenter Foundation and the Cheney Family Foundation gave us grants to cover the purchase of the Barton Reading and Spelling System, which we have already used to help at least 10 adults with learning disabilities finally learn to read.

We are so grateful for the people in these organizations who see the good that our services provide the community and recognize the many ways the Literacy Council provides help.

But, it's important for us all to consider those who are still in need. Think what it would be like if you had to struggle to read a sign signaling "No Left Turn" when you were driving in a new town and didn't know the traffic flow? Would you just tell your child who had moved to this new town that you couldn't come to see the new baby?

Self-worth has been proven to change IQs. And knowing how to read improves self-worth.

The greater percentage of those in prison have trouble reading. Are we affecting the number of crimes in our county?

How much do we need to help those who are in lower paying jobs, but who have aspirations to improve their family's life?

Perhaps there is someone who feels the need

to go to church, but doesn't because she can't join in the readings of scripture or singing from the hymnal.

Then there's the man we know of who bought and pretended to read the newspaper every day because he was ashamed to let his children know that he couldn't read. We even

found one fellow who voted by choosing the name that had an 'R' behind it because he couldn't read the names, and he marked all proposals in the 'no' column on the ballot because it was safer.

Supporting the Literacy Council will give you opportunities to relieve the kinds of suffering I have mentioned. Many of you already support our work with money, for which we are always grateful.

Be aware of those in your purview who might be helped by our services. And with the changes and chances in life always in a state of flux for everyone "still alive and kicking," as my mother used to say, you may find a chance to bring a soul in need of our help to our door or decide that you now have time available to tutor those who want to read, so badly. Most tutors spend only one hour twice a week.

Thank you for keeping in touch by reading our newsletter.

**Andrea Dougan**  
Literacy Council Chairman

P.S. My student is practicing writing so that she can add a personal note to the Christmas cards she sends.

### Notes from the Chair



## Literacy Council Board Members

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## **Contact Us!**

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## **CALENDAR**

### **Upcoming Board Meetings**

Meetings are at 12:30 p.m. on the second Wednesday of the month, at the Literacy Council office, 223 S.E. M St. in Grants Pass. (In the Coalition for Kids building; entrance is off the back parking lot.)

The next meetings are:

Dec. 11	April 9
Jan. 8	May 14
Feb. 12	June 11
March 12	July 9

## **Trouble with dyslexia.....**

This year, the Literacy Council received grant money to purchase the Barton Reading and Spelling System, a program used to help people with dyslexia learn to read. One student's plight helped bring about the addition of this program to our



David Boyd has been struggling with dyslexia all his life, but he's been making progress working with the Barton system.

resources.

David Boyd, 35, first came to the Literacy Council in October 2011. Originally from Bakersfield, Calif., David says he has always had difficulty with reading.

"I was in special ed classes. They were aware that I had a problem," he says. "But I never got any help, any treatment. It was hard for me to push myself to read, I was embarrassed. I've been embarrassed all my life."

David moved to Grants Pass about three years ago, a single father with a young daughter, doing maintenance, janitorial and construction work. He's now married and trying to start up his own garden maintenance business.

In Bakersfield, David was able to hide or "dance around" the fact that he couldn't read and worked as a hands-on electrician. In Oregon, however, he needed to be certified to do electrical work.

"But I couldn't get certified because I couldn't take the tests," he says, "I had the knowledge under my belt, but couldn't use it."

So, he sought help from the Literacy Council.

After David was with the Literacy Council for just a month, though, his tutor had to take a leave of absence. Dee Pierce took over as his tutor.

"I had him read a simple story but he struggled so much trying to pronounce the first two words, I knew I had to figure out what the issue was," Dee says. "I guessed it might be dyslexia,





## ....Spells progress for the Literacy Council

and an internet search that night showed a match with the signs of dyslexia. The second time I met with him, he told me his little girl in first grade was very slow in reading speed – then I knew it was dyslexia, since it is an inherited disorder.”

David then got a daytime job and had to quit his tutoring sessions.

Dee’s very next student was someone who had been an ESL student with the Council since early 2010, but he had never made much progress learning to read in English, even though his spoken English was good.

“At our first session, I had him read a simple story, and he showed many of the same signs that David did. So I guessed his problem was also dyslexia,” Dee says.

Dee used the internet to find ideas on how to help dyslexic people learn to read, and came across the Barton Reading and Spelling System. It was too expensive to buy without knowing whether it would work, so Dee ordered a free demo from the Barton website that showed some of the tools that the Barton program uses.

Using the demo, the student showed clear signs of improvement in only a couple of months and tremendous progress in eight months. So the Literacy Council sought out and obtained grants to buy the complete Barton system.

“Once we had our dyslexia program up and running, we brought David back as a student, over a year since he had left,” Dee says. “We can now finally offer him a program that will help him.”

David says he’s noticed a difference.

“When I’m reading, I can figure it out, how to break down the words,” he says. “It’s been a challenge, but it’s working good.”

“The overall experience revealed several very important points to us,” Dee observes:

1. Standard methods of teaching reading don’t work for dyslexia;
2. Most of our ABE students were likely dyslexic. For years we knew they didn’t make as much progress in general as our ESL students, but we didn’t know why;
3. Some of our ESL students may also be dyslexic, and it is critical to be able to recognize the disability even in non-native speakers.

## The circle of giving

The Literacy Council is part of a big circle of givers: Our volunteer tutors and officers give hours of their time each week to empower others through the gift of literacy, and these efforts are supported by financial gifts from individuals, businesses and foundations in our community.

We invite all who value this work to send a contribution. To those who have already given this year, we extend our heartfelt thanks.

— Sincerely, Board of Directors

## It adds up

We are thankful for our generous donors. This year, the Literacy Council received:

- \$1,360 from our mailing campaign
- \$6,000 from the Carpenter Foundation, for the purchase of a dyslexia learning program. We used the money to buy the first six levels of the Barton Reading and Spelling System.
- \$3,650 from the Chaney Family Foundation for the purchase of the remaining four levels of Barton.
- \$2,500 from the Leightman-Maxey Foundation, for operating support. We used it to cover the cost of rent.
- \$10,000 from the Oregon Community Foundation for general support.



## Clever words....

**ARBITRATOR:** A cook that leaves Arby's to work at McDonalds

**AVOIDABLE:** What a bull-fighter tries to do

**BERNADETTE:** The act of torching a mortgage

**BURGLARIZE:** What a crook sees with

**CONTROL:** A short, ugly inmate

**COUNTERFEITERS:** Workers who install kitchen counters

**ECLIPSE:** What an English barber does for a living

**EYEDROPPER:** A clumsy ophthalmologist

**HEROES:** What a guy in a boat does

**LEFTBANK:** What the robber did when his bag was full of money

**MISTY:** How golfers create divots

**PARADOX:** Two physicians!

**PARASITES:** What you see from the top of the EiffelTower

**PHARMACIST:** A helper on the farm

**POLARIZE:** What penguins see with

**PRIMATE:** Removing your spouse from in front of the TV!

**RELIEF:** What trees do in the spring

**RUBBERNECK:** What you do to relax your wife

**SELFISH:** What the owner of a seafood store does

**SUDAFED:** Brought litigation against a government official

## Good Reads

**"The Warmth of Other Suns" by historian and Pulitzer Prize-winning author Isabel Wilkerson.** It is a non-fiction account of the Great Migration of large numbers of African-Americans from the South to the Midwest, Northeast and West from 1915 to 1970. She explores the migration not just through the historical facts but also through the lives of three individuals, each one migrating from a different Southern state to a different city outside the South. I really liked this book in large part because it takes a very personalized view (i.e., three life stories of actual people) of this important event in our nation's history.

— Dee Pierce

**"No. 1 Ladies Detective Agency" series by Alexander McCall Smith.** It is set in the African country of Botswana. It is so much fun to learn about another culture in our world and the book is written with such respect and caring. My friend from Swaziland says the book series is a pretty accurate description of the area and its people.

— Andrea Dougan

**"The Tipping Point" by Malcome Gladwell.** It is helping me to understand how small things like teaching one person to read can be that small thing that will change the world for the better. Of course, I am hoping for Josephine County in particular.

— Andrea Dougan

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