



Literacy Council for Josephine County

FALL/WINTER, 2010

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

What if...?

As I write I cant help but marvel at living in these United States and especially here in Grants Pass, Oregon.

WHAT IF...I didnt have a computer? I could use a typewriter but would lack easy corrections and changes and how would I store the informa-

Notes from the Chair

tion? And I would not be able to share the information in a way that wouldnt take up valuable time and energy.

WHAT IF...I didnt live in Grants Pass, with its energetic volunteers willing to help those not fortunate enough to have computers?

WHAT IF...I lived in a country that did not allow me to freely express my ideas and opinions?

WHAT IF...I found myself, as did my Mom and Pop, new to this country without being able to adequately read, write or speak English?

I have been blessed. I have been given the opportunity of an education, freedom of speech and expression. I do live in Grants Pass, with all of its wonderful volunteers, and I do live in the United States.

I belong to the Literacy Council, with its hard working members who help others by teaching English as a second language, by preparing students for citizenship, by testing for GED and by teaching them how to use computers. All free!

WHAT IF...you accepted this open invitation to join us.... to learn....to help...to teach?

WHAT IF...you called for more information? Reach us at 541-472-0355.

WHAT IF? The possibilities are endless.

— Allan Hammer
Literacy Council Chairman

Giving thanks

The Literacy Council is grateful for the many blessings it has received this past year. First and foremost we're thankful for our tutors, who volunteer their time, talent, energy and enthusiasm day in and day out. To say thanks to them for their dedication, we're throwing a party:

■ **WHAT:** Literacy Council Tutor Appreciation Event and Annual Meeting

■ **WHEN:** Tuesday, Dec. 14, from 2:30 to 5:30 p.m.

■ **WHERE:** Taprock Northwest Grill, 971 S.E. Sixth St., Grants Pass

■ **DETAILS:** Tutors, board members and their significant others are invited to socialize and enjoy some refreshments as a way to ring in the holiday season. Those who wish to participate should bring a wrapped ornament for an ornament exchange.

■ **RSVP:** Call Liz Medley at 541-956-8573.

We're also thankful for the many generous donors who have supported our work throughout the year. Among them:

- Walmart, which provided us with a \$500 grant;
- Rogue Community College, which provides us with a quarterly stipend;
- Sue and Gene Dunaway, who have donated countless hours and a lot of heart to our organization and attended board training sessions;
- Book lovers, who helped us raise \$646 at our summer book sale;
- All the kind folks, including Grant and Tamara Medley, who answered our fundraising appeal with open hearts and wallets.



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Literacy Council Board Members

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We're online!

Check out the Literacy Council's website:
literacyjoco.weebly.com

CALENDAR

Upcoming Board Meetings

Meetings are at 12:30 p.m. at the Literacy Council office, 223 S.E. M St. in Grants Pass. (That's in the Coalition for Kids building; entrance is off the back parking lot.)

Jan. 13	April 14
Feb. 10	May 12
March 10	June 9

✓ Check out the Lit Council Library



As the new "keeper of the library" for the Literacy Council, I have completed a thorough inventory and examination of our holdings and am impressed with the number and range of materials on hand.

The Council makes use of myriad teaching tools, which include teacher manuals and student workbooks, audio cassettes and CDs, some VHS tapes, flash cards, word lists, maps, globes and several computers containing Lexia phonics program software and the English version of Rosetta Stone. Beyond these, the library offers publications that assist students with daily life skills, including driving, reading labels, reading instructions and directions, dealing with medical and school personnel and safe food handling instructions.

To augment a student's learning experience, the library has a large supply of additional reading materials that include fiction books, classic stories and enjoyable books on science and history topics, all arranged by reading level. For an extra challenge, there are a number of puzzle books available as well. The Council also encourages family literacy and provides a nice selection of children's books available for parent-students to take home and read to their children.

The materials are separated into sections that target the specific adult students the Council services. For instance, there are teacher manuals and corresponding student workbooks for those interested in adult basic education (ABE), which includes reading skills and comprehension, math, spelling, phonics, science and social studies, some of which is geared specifically to pre-GED and GED testing. Other similarly-structured materials focus on those who are learning English as a second language (ESL). Still other resources focus on preparation for U.S. citizenship.

To assist our volunteer tutors in their skills development and efficacy of communication with their students, there are a number of instructional materials available as well as a large supply of reference materials, such as U.S. and world history and geography, English and foreign language dictionaries in regular and picture formats and thesauruses.

As a tutor myself, I find these reference materials invaluable and utilize them constantly. In addition, the Council regularly reviews literacy catalogues and websites for new and innovative materials that would prove useful to the students and tutors.

If you've never stopped by the Council's office to see what we do, now's the time. Come check out our library and volunteers.

You may just find yourself wanting to become a part of our group!

— Submitted by Susan Dunaway, librarian



Who's Who? Meet board member Merle Nyberg

Q. Please share a little of your personal history and educational background.

A. I was born in Medford and went to Medford and Central Point schools. I was in the first freshman class at Crater High School.

As a rebel of the day, I left school in the middle of my senior year to join the Navy and see the world. I served for 20 years as a photographer's mate, retiring in 1974 as a chief petty officer.

While stationed with a combat camera group at North Island, San Diego, I completed high school through a night school program. I spent one year at San Marcos Community College. Then, when we moved to Grants Pass, I completed a business management associate degree at Rogue Community College.

I married Charlene in 1966. She had four kids at the time, so that was a great start.

We were on our way to Roseburg to look for a house but Mount Sexton was snowed in so we stopped in Grants Pass and have been here ever since.

After I graduated from RCC, we owned La Casita Mexican Food Products for several years. I worked for Bob Quinn at his well drilling company and then I went to work for Nortisu America Corp installing and maintaining one-hour photo equipment. This job required travel from central California to Alaska, Montana, Idaho and Washington. It was a great job.

Charlene and I had 42 great years before she passed away in 2008, after putting up a strong fight with Alzheimer's.

Our kids, all college-educated, are scattered all over, I do not get to see them nearly often enough.

Q. How and when did you come to get involved with the Literacy Council?

A. After Charlene passed away, I needed to be busy, so I volunteered at RSVP. They passed my name on to Liz Medley at the Literacy Council. She made the Lit Council sound like an interesting challenge. And it sure is!

Q. What are your current duties with the Literacy Council?

A. I tutor a man who wants to improve his reading skills and I'm a stand-by for other tutors during their vacations and when they need some time away. I'm also on the council's board of directors.

I thoroughly enjoy my interactions with our stu-

dents. I think I learn more than they do!

Q. What, if any, other volunteer work do you do in the community?

A. So far, the Literacy Council is my only volunteer work, though I did help RSVP hand out backpacks for kids this year. That was a great experience.

Q. Who are your favorite authors?

A. I read all the time and enjoy fiction most of all for the many places it can take you. I really enjoyed J.K. Rowling's "Magical Kingdom." What an imagination.

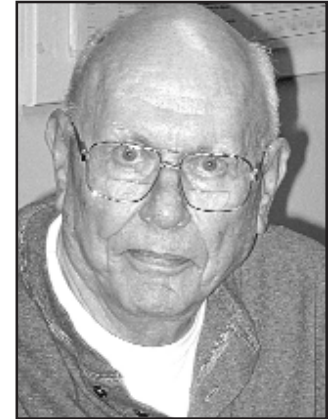
For a touch of reality, I read the Daily Courier, cover to cover. I also use newspapers in my tutoring duties.

Q. If you were stranded on a desert island, what one book would you want to have with you?

A. I'm afraid I would never have a book with me on a desert island, because I would still be dithering and trying to decide from among so many when I'm left stranded.

Q. What one thing would you suggest to improve the Literacy Council and its value to the community?

A. I wish we were better able to get in touch with the people who could best use our help and services. But it is kind of a Catch 22. The folks we could help the most either can't or don't read the information we pass out. That means we have to rely more on verbal messages than the written word.



MERLE NYBERG

Tutor Profile



Merle looks over paperwork with John Ahlstrom.



Read any good books lately?

Let's talk about favorite books. Crime stories? Something romantic? How about Muff? Now, there's adventure!

Muff's got a tug — a motor boat — named Tuff Tug. On board are Muff and Rob, and Max and Kim (a bit of romance there). Razz the cat naps on logs on a rug. The logs were for a TV quiz show. In the previous book, Rob's dog and hog jogged on a log, his fox boxed an ox, and they all danced a clog in a big box on a truck. Well, they're together again on the tug and the tug's a dud and gets lost in the mud. There's a suspenseful and surprise ending, followed by a bunch of sequels.



They're just about our favorite books. Max and his friends are part of a series, "Beginning Readers for Adult Learners." Many of them were gifts to us from another nonprofit group, the Family Literacy Centers of Orem, Utah.

They're just perfect for an adult who wants easy reading. They're not children's books. They're paperbacks for adults.

Call of the Wild by Jack London, is a great story. It is told well in simple words in the Great Illustrated Classics series of hardbacks published by Baronet Books. We have several titles.

Jack Sloan in Tin Star Promise by Agnes Hagen, starts this way: *The horseman was tired. It was a long ride...But when Jack Sloan rides home to Texas his wife and son are missing.* It's a great Western. We treasure our few copies because they're out of print at New Reader's Press. We would like to buy other cowboy stories, but we haven't found another Western series as good as these.

More advanced reading is Richard MacAndrew's A Death in Oxford by Cambridge University Press. It begins: *It's six thirty in the morning. Inspector Frank Williams of the Oxford police is in*

How about these titles from the Lit Council library?

bed. He hears his phone and answers it. 'Williams,' he says. 'It's Kate Miller, Inspector. I'm at 17B St. John Street, the house of a Dr Janet Leighton. She's dead.'

Great Heroes, Great Disasters, Great Mysteries, Great Adventures and similar titles are published in magazine-type format by Steck-Vaughn Publishers.

Talk of the Block is a series by New Readers Press using short, common words with regular spelling, plus 75 sight words. One set uses short vowels — the common consonant/vowel/consonant words like sat, rid, hot, well. The other set uses long vowels. Interesting people on a city block shop for bargains and deal with landlords, buying insurance, dieting and conferences with schoolteachers. A short-vowel story begins with this: *Kim is not well. She is with the doctor at Hill Street Clinic. The doctor thinks Kim has too much stress.*

Sometimes students who are learning to speak English will memorize a poem and recite it. Better than that is to master the rhythm of everyday speech by chanting words with great jazz playing in the background. That's the idea of Small Talk by Carolyn Graham, from Oxford University Press, with audio tapes and textbook. Music legends Dick Hyman, Milt Hinton and Ron Traxler recorded riffs that capture the rhythm of everyday speech. It's hard to explain, but it works. Imagine piano, bass and drums. Swing as you read this: **I like it. I like it a lot. I really like it very much. And: I don't like it. I don't like it at all. I do't like it a bit. Not at all.**

We like it (louie-ooie-la-la-la). Students like it, too (just skeep-beep de bop-bop beep bop bo-dope/skeetle-at-de-op-de-day).



— Submitted by Liz Medley

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