



# Literacy Council for Josephine County

FALL/WINTER, 2011-2012

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

## Success through literacy: providing opportunity

***“We hold these truths to be self evident that all men (people) are created equal.” – Thomas Jefferson***

The Literacy Council for Josephine County provides an opportunity to better one’s self by learning English so that English may become one’s first language.

English provides each of us the very foundation to give us the confidence to serve our community through hard work and commitment rather than to rely on others to pro-

vide us with means of survival.

Through literacy, we have the opportunity to be considered ‘equal’ that we don’t have without being literate.

***“Strive not to be a success but rather to be of value.” – Albert Einstein***

### Notes from the Chair

In order to be “of value” it is imperative that we communicate.

In order to communicate we need to know English. We best serve our community by being knowledgeable, by being willing to work hard and by helping others.

This we can best accomplish by being literate. We can feel of value only through giving, never through taking.

***“Ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country.” – John F. Kennedy***

In closing, I wish to thank the tutors and fellow board members for their hard work and dedication over the past four years. They are prime examples of successful people who are of great value to Josephine County.

These people are living proof that value is best achieved by giving, not by receiving.

– Allan Hammer,  
Literacy Council Chairman

### Join us

■ **WHAT:** Literacy Council for Josephine County Annual Meeting

■ **WHEN:** Jan. 12, from 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

■ **WHERE:** Evergreen Room, Taprock Northwest Grill, Grants Pass

■ **DETAILS:** The Literacy Council Board will be providing some hors d’oeuvres. Beverages and additional food is no-host. We’ll also be holding an election of officers. The nominees are:

- Andrea Dougan – chairman
- Dee Pierce – vice chairman
- Hilton Reynolds – treasurer
- Open – secretary





# Literacy Council for Josephine County

Page 2 FALL/WINTER, 2011-2012

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

## Literacy Council Board Members

- **Allan Hammer, chairman**  
phone: 541-761-2804  
e-mail: hammerhaus@charter.net
- **Andrea Dougan, tutor**  
phone: 541-471-4893  
e-mail: dougan@q.com
- **Dee Pierce, tutor**  
phone: 541-955-5185  
e-mail: da@q.com
- **Don Stocking, treasurer**  
phone: 541-761-7402  
e-mail: donstocking@gmail.com
- **Mary Slayter, secretary**  
phone: 541-476-6315  
e-mail: mslyter1@earthlink.net
- **Kathleen Alaks, publicity**  
phone: 541-955-5371  
e-mail: kalaks@thedailycourier.com
- **Wanda Holder Sherman, RCC liaison**  
phone: 541-956-7465  
e-mail: wsherman@roguecc.edu
- **Nancy Hitchcock, tutor**  
phone: 541-479-9436  
e-mail: jnhitchcock@charter.net
- **Merle Nyberg, tutor**  
phone: 541-479-7437  
e-mail: monyberg@q.com
- **Sue Ward, Head Start liaison**  
phone: 541-450-4379  
e-mail: wardjohnsue@aol.com

## **Contact Us!**

**Call:** our office at 541-472-0355 and leave a message; or Dee Pierce at 541-955-5185  
**Email:** jocoliteracy@yahoo.com  
**Find us online:** 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. (In the Coalition for Kids building; entrance is off the back parking lot.)

Jan. 12	April 12
Feb. 9	May 10
March 8	June 15

## **Success through learning: providing tools**

Successful teaching revolves around meeting the real-life needs of a student. How can the learning material be applied to their life? Obviously, each student has a different life situation.

Because the Literacy Council tutors students one-on-one, rather than in the large traditional classroom, we have the unique opportunity to discover the specific needs of our student. Time permitting, I believe it is ideal for tutors to customize instruction to a particular student, which will make learning immediate, meaningful and useful.



**Ademar understands the value of learning English.**

Ademar is a young, single Latino man, 23 years old. He has been in this country for four years and milks cows on a ranch for a living during the graveyard shift. In general, he does not have a lot of interaction with others. His family — brothers and sisters — recently moved to the Oregon coast and he is now living

alone in Grants Pass.

In the beginning of our sessions, we had casual conversations about his life. He is very limited in his English skills, but was able to express some of this information in English. To establish a good working relationship and to understand his situation better, I asked additional questions in Spanish and he answered in Spanish. Since I speak Spanish, I was able to understand.

Then I developed a formal lesson where he had to write about his life in English (by answering a series of questions) because we were going on to our next activity: He was going to be interviewed on television. We conducted this mock interview as if we were in a studio with an interviewer and an imaginary camera operator, director, etc.

From exploring who he was and his current living situation, I knew he had few friends and he expressed he was lonely.

I then developed a three-part lesson — a total of 30 sentences/responses — called “Friends,” teaching how he could have conversations in English with people in order to get to know them, explore their interests and hobbies, and to make friends. The first part of the lesson covered vocabulary regarding the names of relationships, such as friend, acquaintance, girlfriend, groom, wife, etc.

We then went over each written lesson, which was given to him to take home and study. With each sentence, one-by-one, I reviewed the meaning of the sentence, read the sentence in English several times, reviewed the vocabulary and then had Ademar practice the sentence many times in English. Proper pronunciation was reviewed and practiced.

After each lesson (three different parts), there was a quiz where he had to write out selected sentences in English as best as he could, with his limited English. Ademar did an excellent job on the quizzes and earned high scores.

Ademar was enthusiastic about the “Friends” lesson because he had a real desire to meet people and make friends. This lesson gave him real-life tools which were “personal” in accomplishing his goal.

## **Student Profile**

— Submitted by Richard Feist, tutor



## Success through citizenship: providing language

After years of persistent effort to learn the basics of the English language and American history and government, Xiao Liu, a cook at the Hong Kong Restaurant, passed the test for United States citizenship in Portland on Aug. 2, 2011.

The Literacy Council is proud of Xiao Liu's success, and we are grateful to have helped make it possible by providing language and naturalization materials, achievement testing by Nancy Hitchcock, and five tutors who taught classes two and three mornings a week for the last four years: Eleanor Hester (who has since moved to California), Jackie Clark, Jeanne Patterson, Bette Mohr and Mary Lou Campbell.

### Student Profile

Jeanine Felker also helped with special coaching for the test. All of us involved have been inspired by Xiao Liu's steady, cheerful determination to reach her goal of becoming a U.S. citizen.

Seven years ago, Xiao Liu and her husband, Xi Chao Li, arrived in San Francisco with their two boys, Wen Feng, 13, and Wen Hui, 11. None of them knew much English.

The boys were entered in Grants Pass public schools. Both have become proficient in English.

Wen Feng graduated from Grants Pass High School as salutatorian of his class in 2010. He has since become a naturalized citizen and is attending Portland State University, preparing to be a dentist.

Wen Hui is an active junior at GPHS and helps out at the restaurant after school and on holidays. Both these sons were with their mother when she "took the oath" as a new citizen of America.

Xiao Liu, who goes by the American name Shelley, and Chao work as cooks six days a week. Their one holiday each year for the whole

restaurant staff is Thanksgiving Day.

To the tutors, such a work schedule sounds onerous. But Xiao Liu says life in China was much harder. There she worked in a shirt factory every day with no scheduled days off.

After work she hauled water by hand from her village to their farm in the mountains and tended the garden for several hours.

After that she cooked dinner for her family and then cleaned house and started all over again the next morning.

Meanwhile, Chao cooked in a restaurant some years, and other years worked as a builder who constructed homes, apartments and commercial buildings. He is happy now to be a cook, but his eyes light up whenever tools or fix-it projects come up in a conversation.

Xiao Liu says that besides the unending labor in South China, it was oppressively hot all the time. She and Chao much prefer the climate in Grants Pass. They especially enjoy the beautiful trees along our streets and in our parks.

Xiao Liu and Chao are typical of the motivated people who have come to Grants Pass from other countries. They work hard not only at their jobs but at education for themselves and their children.

The Literacy Council has helped many to become citizens. Xiao Liu is now an honored member of this group.

We are proud of you, Xiao Liu!



XIAO LIU

— Submitted by Bette Mohr, tutor



# Literacy Council for Josephine County

Page 4 FALL/WINTER, 2011-2012

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

## Computer news

Computer-based learning is one of the many tools that the Literacy Council has to offer its students. We have four computers and offer several excellent software programs, including Lexia, Picture Dictionary and Rosetta Stone, as well as a variety of online learning websites.

The software programs are interactive and fun for the students to use – they can help with pronunciation, vocabulary, spelling, grammar, comprehension, and reading. We also are able to get students set up with software on their home computers if they wish to practice at home.

In addition to being able to use the software during their regular tutoring sessions at the Literacy Council office, we have an open computer session every Wednesday from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m. for students to get some additional practice on their own, with Dee Pierce available to provide help.

— Submitted by Dee Pierce



## Two student vignettes

■ My student was used to speed reading only, to scan an article for facts. So we tried reading O. Henry's wonderfully funny story "The Ransom of Red Chief." It was an eye opener for her – she never knew that reading could be something to enjoy and that a writer's words could be full of humor, subtlety and hidden meaning.

■ My student had pretty good basic knowledge of reading and writing English but needed to improve his speaking skills. He was very hesitant when trying to speak English. He really enjoyed his job as a cook at a local restaurant, so I brought in the restaurant's menu and asked him to describe how he made a variety of dishes. He became very animated and spoke more English in several minutes than he usually did in an entire lesson.

— Submitted by Dee Pierce

## Volunteers and Donations

No one is paid at the Literacy Council. Tutors, board members and others who help out all volunteer their time.

However, the Literacy Council has expenses for rent, teaching materials, computers and telephone.

Over the last three years these have accounted for 78 percent of our total expenses. Over the same period, the major sources of funding have been grants from local foundations, support from Rogue Community College and donations from local supporters and businesses.

These sources have provided more than 77 percent of the Literacy Council's funding.

The Literacy Council is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. All donations are tax deductible and put to good use.

Please, help us continue to do our good work in the community.

The Literacy Council for Josephine County  
223 S.E. M St.  
Grants Pass, OR, 97526

