



The Insider, the monthly newsletter of LVA Essex & Passaic Counties, will keep you in the loop on all of the organization's upcoming events.



This lively workshop was filled with writing tips for tutors to encourage their students to submit work to the NJALL Learner Writing Contest.

The Insider

Greetings LVA Family,

Winter holidays are underway and we hope everyone is busy cooking, visiting and sharing good cheer. Here at LVA, we hope you and your families are enjoying peace and happiness this season.

Looking ahead to the new year, are your students working on their submissions for the New Jersey Association for Lifelong Learning (NJALL) 2019 Learner Writing Contest? Please encourage them, it's a great way for them to see their hard work and progress in print and online once the contest is completed. Turn all submissions in to Debbie Graham at our office by December 15, 2018. We are proud of the hard work you do with your students.

In this issue of *The Insider*, you'll meet LVA student Ana who hails from Honduras and has relied on her resourcefulness to make a new life here. LVA has helped her learn English and become more social. Did you know LVA tutor Bob Bouncek has "I Get the Job Done" on his resume right after his name? He has a natural curiosity and sense of adventure that guided him to a new career and propelled him to greatness as a tutor.

In this issue, you'll also read about how people in India use WhatsApp to communicate about recipes and sell food beyond their kitchens and help remote farmers grow their food. It's fascinating! Many LVA students already use WhatsApp to communicate with loved ones far away.

In the News

To view the following stories, copy and paste the highlighted website into an internet search bar.

'What literacy skills do students really need for work?' Education Week. <https://bit.ly/2QcGLBZ>

'English students express thanks for opportunities in America' Milford Mirror <https://bit.ly/2ANGara>

'Top 10 easiest languages to learn for English Speakers' ValueWalk <https://bit.ly/2zEMVVE>

'Retirees and refugees: How a 93-year-old Julia Allen builds community through ESL' Commercial Appeal/USA Today network <https://bit.ly/2BNj1zL>

'Pen America files Friend of Court brief in Michigan right to literacy case' Pen.org <https://bit.ly/2FTP2Ku>

Literacy Volunteers of America Essex & Passaic Counties

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Ana, a retired school teacher, learned resourcefulness at a young age and works very hard to learn English with LVA.

Tutor Support Workshop

“Grammar With Your Students,” with Mary O’Connor
Bloomfield Public Library
90 Broad Street, 2nd Floor Boardroom
Bloomfield, NJ 07003
Tuesday, January 8, 2019, 1:00-2:30 pm

Tutor Training Workshops

Clifton Memorial Library -by Darnelle Richardson
292 Piaget Avenue
Clifton, NJ 07011
Saturdays, 1:00-4:30 pm
March 2, 9, 16, 23, & 30, 2019

Bloomfield Public Library – by Sable Lomax
90 Broad Street, Second Floor Boardroom
Bloomfield, NJ 07003
Tuesdays, 10:00 am–1:00 pm
February 5, 12, 19, 26, March 5, & 12, 2019

Montclair Public Library – by Mary Kao
50 South Fullerton Avenue, Literacy Room
Montclair, NJ 07042
Saturdays, 12:15-3:45 pm
January 26, February 2, 9, 16, & 23, 2019

Getting to Know Us *Ana, LVA student*

Ana learned the art of being resourceful at an early age. Now, she is honing this skill to learn English.

“One day I asked someone where my husband and I could study English. We came into the office at the Bloomfield Library and met Jorge. He directed us to the grammar program at Berkeley College. It was a very good experience over there. Now we are at the library in Passaic and are learning reading, writing, and conversation,” Ana said. They spend more than six hours a week in class.

Ana and her husband are retired teachers, and together, they share many adventures. Whether they are traveling across country or across town, you will seldom see one without the other. Both enjoy living and learning.

But, life has not always been easy for Ana. Being the oldest child in a family of 6 siblings, Ana stopped her formal education in San Pedro Sula, the second largest city in Honduras, due to her father’s job being relocated to a small town with no schools.

Ana said, “After the move from the city, I stayed with my mom at home to learn about the woman’s role. The women learn to cook, sew, and prepare themselves for all areas of what they do in the house. You do everything to prepare to be a wonderful wife.”

Ana’s decision to leave Honduras proved to be another good choice. She moved to New York City at age 24 and remembers, “At the time, people thought the United States life was like the gold rush. There was a lot of work. You could have a good life. Many people say I came to this country and had opportunity. That is not true. I had to go out and make it happen,” Ana said.

LVA has been a key part of Ana’s good life. It is not only an educational, but social opportunity for Ana. “Studying at LVA give me more practice in English which is good for me. It has help my communication. My teacher says I speak English better than he. I feel more confident because when we retired we needed something challenging to keep our minds working. To go over there to take the class, to enjoy my husband, to talk to my teacher, they make me come alive.”

Literacy opens a wide door to life. Help us keep that door open with your donation!

Thanks in large part to you, we are able to aid hundreds of students each year. Please continue your efforts to improve the lives of others by giving the gift of literacy. You can contribute through our website – <http://www.lvanewark.org/donatotlva/> or by mailing us a check.



“WhatsApp Is Changing the Way India Talks About Food”

New York Times

By Priya Krishna, November 23, 2018

Anil Bandawane, a farmer living outside Pune, India, was fed up with the poor advice he was getting from the government’s national hotline for agricultural queries. Life as a farmer in India can be isolating, and he felt cut off from his peers.

So he started a WhatsApp group called Baliraja (which roughly means “farmer king” in the Marathi language). The group, which allows his fellow farmers across the country to exchange expertise and support on the popular messaging platform, gained so much traction that Mr. Bandawane has created more than a dozen different subgroups for various districts.

To the south, in the state of Kerala, Bharathy Gopalakrishnan, a stay-at-home mother, wanted to make a little money from some leftover red-velvet cupcakes. That idea turned into PB Kitchen, a WhatsApp group she founded to allow the women in her apartment complex to buy and sell one another’s homemade dishes, from sambars and vadas to burgers and cakes.

Around the same time, Krishna Prasad, the director of an organic-agriculture advocacy group, and Abhishek Naik, a scientist, were looking for a way to share healthy recipes and information about organic food. So they created a group a WhatsApp group, Anna Arogya (“food for good health” in Kannada).

Reprinted from The New York Times. For full story, paste the following link into an Internet search <https://nyti.ms/2T1eiGG>

Learning a new culture is more than studying a language. Tutoring is more than learning techniques. Our ‘Resources’ page covers everything from legal matters, health care, & scholarships for immigrants, to professional development for tutors. Give us a look @:

<https://www.lvae.org/students.html>

Getting to Know Us (cont.)

Bob Bounczek, LVA tutor

For nearly three quarters of a century, Literacy Volunteers of America tutor Bob Bounczek has been charting his own course. Now, he helps others chart theirs.

With his wry sense of humor, Bob said, “I came into this world a long time ago at a very young age. I am old enough to know what to do and young enough to still be able to do it.”



Growing up in a middle-class household, Bob started his early working life in warehouses. “I realized that whole environment was very familiar to me. I eventually became a warehouse manager,” Bob said.

Bob’s natural curiosity and sense of adventure, which has always been front and center in his life, led him down his own path. “I realized I didn’t want to be on the clock anymore,” he stated.

“I went for help in making a resume, and learned to craft my own. After typing my name and address, I added, ‘I get the job done.’”

And that he does. Whether it is in his former position as a warehouse manager who set his own hours, or as a tutor, Bob is your go to guy. “I manage people and situations. I solve problems,” he said.

One of the first problems Bob solves in his two days per week, three hours per day English conversation class is putting his students at ease and creating a safe environment in which they can learn. Bob admits to his students that his English is not always perfect and he is still learning as well.

Bob shares with his students his story of growing up in Newark and attending Catholic school. “When the nun was teaching English, I looked out the window and wanted to be involved in the action in downtown Newark,” he said.

With all baggage left at the door, Bob has what he calls a “common sense” approach to teaching. He understands that the older a student is, the harder it may be for them to learn a new language. Bob simply states, “If you come from a Spanish speaking country, your computer is full of Spanish. The computer is all filled up and it has to be reprogrammed.”

Bob added, “We also have to understand the difficult barriers English Language Learners face. Do you as a native English speaker have to tell your tongue where to go?”