

Mission Statement

The mission of the Marinette & Oconto Counties Literacy Council is to provide adults of Marinette and Oconto Counties with programs and services to improve literacy in reading, writing, comprehension, health, speaking English, math, digital skills, and cross-cultural awareness. The power of literacy will enable adults to become self-confident, contributing, members of their community and work force and positively impact their families.

Vision Statement*Our vision for the organization*

Marinette & Oconto Counties Literacy Council actively assist those with a literacy need and remains committed to those we serve and to our organization. Community outreach is ongoing and involves many organizations within Marinette and Oconto counties. The marketing effort is strong and has many available resources at its disposal through grants, fundraising and human resources, such as volunteers.

Our vision for the region

Within the communities, there is an increase awareness of the resources that are available to individuals who are in need of literacy services. Community organizations, together with individuals, have become advocates for those in need of literacy services. The literacy rate continues to improve through the willingness of individuals to accept assistance without fear.



Tutor Talk

A Newsletter for and about the Marinette & Oconto Counties Literacy Council, Inc.

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Tutor-Time-Out Luncheon

Here's a little promotion for a former literacy council student: We held this year's tutor-time-out at Happy Gardens Chinese Buffet in Oconto.

On April 23rd, twenty-three members from our literacy council came and enjoyed the great buffet at the Chinese restaurant. The wonderful thing about meeting here was that one of the owners, Sharon, was our former student.

Tutored by Judy Peterson, they met at the Farnsworth Library in Oconto on Mondays, the day the restaurant is closed. Judy and Sharon formed a great bond and Judy even invited Sharon and her two children over to her family's farm which was their first time on a farm; the children loved it!

After the luncheon, tutors stood to briefly tell about their experiences with their students and what was being accomplished.

Everyone commented that both the food and the service was very good at the Happy Garden. We all hope to visit it again.

Contact Us:

Phone:
(920) 897-4422

email
moliteracy2012@gmail.com

Online at:
mo-literacy-council.square.site

Office:
M&O Counties Literacy Council
1605 University Dr.
Marinette, WI 54143

follow us on FB
<http://facebook.com/MarinetteOcontoCountiesLiteracyCouncil>

Marinette & Oconto Counties
Literacy Council, Inc.
W10072 E. Springside Rd
Colemar, WI 54112

February Tutor/Student of the Month

Marsh Mellen & Orel



Orel was presented a handmade quilt from the quilting group at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Marinette. He couldn't believe that women who have never met him would take the time to make this beautiful quilt for him. He knows he'll be warm at night now.



Tutor: Marsha Mellen

Marsha began as a trained tutor in 2017. Marsha has had some very interesting students so they have kept this former teacher learning all new concepts and ideas. Marsha still keeps in touch with one of her former students who returned to Italy; she recently contacted Marsha that she may be returning to the area this year and plans to give Marsha a call; how wonderful that such friendships can develop. In October 2023, Marsha began tutoring Orel, from Haiti. Because Orel's refugee status has involved requiring an immigration lawyer, Marsha has been in on a phone consult with that attorney. Marsha enjoys helping Orel with advanced English. We are all hopeful that Orel's wife and two children will be able to join him someday in the USA. Orel appreciates Marsha's guidance as a teacher and care as a concerned friend. Marsha is appreciative of Orel's good-natured personality.

Student: Orel

Orel came from Haiti as part of a refugee program. He not only had to leave his country and home but also his wife and children. Although he is employed and speaks fairly good English, he is trying hard to learn improved comprehension of spoken English and his understanding of idioms. He has met with an immigration attorney via a phone visit and is hopeful he and his family may eventually live together here, safe from turmoil. Orel is bright and polite and tries hard in his lessons with Marsha. He appreciates Marsha's perseverance and kindness in teaching.

Congratulations Marsha & Orel for being chosen Tutor/Student of the Month!

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CONNECTIONS:

We support or are supported by:

COAB-Coalition on Adult Basic Education
Coleman Municipal Building
Crivitz Woman's Club
North Coast Marine Manufacturing Training Center, Marinette
NWTC Marinette
Oconto Falls Senior Center
Oconto Falls H.S. FBLA & Business Class
ProLiteracy
Peshtigo City Hall
Wisconsin Literacy Council, Inc.
WVCA Wisconsin Volunteer Coordinators Assoc.

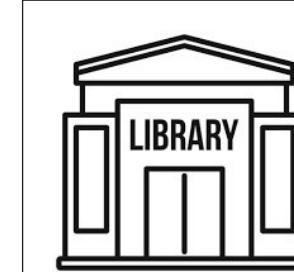


June 11, Tuesday 1:00 P.M. Literacy Board Meeting at the Coleman Village Hall, 202 E. Main Street

September 10, Tuesday 1:00 P.M. Literacy Board Meeting at the Coleman Village Hall, 202 E. Main Street

Marinette Marine class will be held again in the Fall of 2024.

CONNECTIONS:



Library Support

Coleman Area Library
Crivitz Area Library
Gillett Public Library
Lakes County Public Library
Niagara Public Library
Peshtigo Public Library
Stephenson Public Library, Marinette
Spies Public Library, MI
Suring Area Public Library
Wausauke Public Library

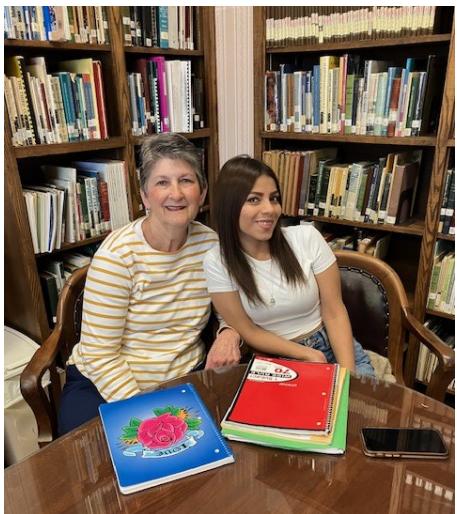
April Tutor/Student of the Month Mary Hayes & Nayelhy

Tutor: Mary Hayes

Mary has been a trained tutor since 2014 and this is her 4th student. Mary is a retired teacher and uses her teaching skills well with her student. She is known for being very kind and patient with her students and tends to bring out the best in them. Mary has helped Nayelhy, not just with her English studies but is a friend as well. In fact, Nayelhy requested that Mary and her husband, George, be witnesses at her marriage to her husband, Ariel.

Student: Nayelhy

Nayelhy came to our program in June 2023. Since then her knowledge of the English language has grown. Since then, she has gotten married and has begun working on her immigration process. Her long-range goals are to become employed and become a USA citizen. She continues to work hard to learn more and she does all the tasks that she is given to further her education.



Thank you, Mary and Nayelhy for being such hard workers in our program.

May Tutor/Student of the Month



Sandy Henquinet and Keesha enjoying a Cup of Jo together at the Serving Spoon.

Tutor: Sandy Henquinet

Sandy Henquinet has been serving as a trained tutor since 2015. She is currently teaching her sixth student. Her previous students have all met their goals and/or moved away.

Currently, Sandy has been tutoring Keesha since March 2024. They began meeting in the Marinette library. But then, because Keesha has fluctuations in her job schedule and deciding they would like to try a more casual setting, they moved to the Serving Spoon in Menominee. They meet in the back room and feel they have their privacy to chat and review the lesson.

Keesha feels Sandy not only identifies topics that need to be addressed for Keesha's benefit but also is fun and easy to be with. Sandy is a retired educator and that is evident in the good skills she employs with Keesha.

Sandy Henquinet & Keesha.

Student: Keesha

Keesha came to the USA from the Philippines in 2010 where her native language is Tagalog. On her own, she began improving her English, became a USA citizen, began employment, and obtained her driver's license. So, needless to say, Keesha is a determined and driven person. But requesting further assistance to advance her use of the English language she sought our help.

Sandy has been that tutor Keesha was looking for. Together they work on use of proper written English, conversational English and understanding idioms. Because they are both busy women, they meet for coffee when they can and have fun in the meantime.

Keesha has also been helpful to her family and has been doing very well at her place of employment. Keesha works hard toward her goals.

January Tutor/Students of the Month

Tutor: Sue Zane-Students: Augusma, Vanessa, Clifford, Erica, Marcley, and Zelita



Students:

Vanessa, Erica, Marcley, Zelita and Roseanna, all from Haiti, began receiving English classes with Sue in October 2023. They are working with the text "Health Stories" and learning parts of the body, names of illnesses and questions to ask when at a doctor's office. They are also practicing orders in a restaurant and driving signs.

The students are enthusiastic and participate in discussion. Clifford and Augusma, also from Haiti, joined the class in January 2024. They are both polite and willing to learn more.

Thank you, our Haitian friends, for being such a wonderful group for Sue to work with!

Sue Zane (tutor), then students: Augusma, Vanessa, Clifford, Erica, Marcley, Zelita Missing from photo: Roseanna.

Tutor: Sue Zane

Sue took tutor training in Sept 2023. She was then looking forward to teaching a new student but, lo & behold! - Sue began with 5 students initially and has been doing great.

Sue always goes the extra mile for her students and the lessons. Sue was gladly teaching the 5 students when two more arrived from Haiti and Sue opened her class to them as well.

Because one of them is at a different level than the rest, Sue offered to meet an hour earlier with him so they can review topics at his level of understanding to prevent frustration.

Thank you, Sue, for being such a wonderful tutor!



Here are three of our students from Haiti who received a handmade quilt from the quilting group of Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Marinette. The students were so happy to know they'll not only be warm in bed but also have a lovely quilt to cover them. Shown here are: Vanessa Antoine, Paul Marcley, & Rose-Anna Pierre.

They were so happy to receive such a fine gift. A total of 5 quilts were given to this group.

Literacy Legacies

By Lilly Vang, Web Site Manager

What could be more perfect than these three literacy innovators being surrounded by books at the Farnsworth Library! Romelle Delzer, charter member; Janet Glime, president; and Lilly Vang, literacy council board member. March 6, 2024



Romelle Delzer has been one of the original Board of Directors of Marinette & Oconto Counties Literacy Council. Our Board is grateful for her years of advice and experience to help form our council. Romelle is now in the “spotlight” as we thank her for her time and service to our group and others. I conducted an interview with Romelle to learn more about her life and the many ways she has been involved in the community.

Romelle was born and raised on a farm in Gillett. She spent her youth summers entering her family’s Brown Swiss cows in the county fair, often winning blue ribbons and, even an occasional grand champion! Throughout her years in school, Romelle knew she wanted to be a teacher and excelled academically (skipping grade 4). After graduation from Gillett High School, she graduated from UW Oshkosh with a teaching degree and a double music minor, having the ability to play many instruments. Romelle then continued her education for a Master’s degree in guidance from UW Stout. With her strong educational background, Romelle initially taught English and History at Gillett High School. She eventually transferred to Oconto Falls High School, being involved in various student groups such as forensics, drama and Hi-Q.

In 1967, Romelle married Kenneth Delzer. Their family would grow to include four daughters. Romelle recalls both beginning and ending her days with a child on her lap while she typed or corrected papers. Sadly, Kenneth passed away in 1998. Then, in 2000, Romelle retired from the high school. Although her formal teaching position may have been ending, her extensive community service only grew with her involvement in the church and other community organizations. Leadership positions have been with the Oconto County Democrat Party, Oconto County Commission on Aging, Oconto Falls Women’s Club, then serving as Vice President and eventually, president of Northern Oconto County Retired Teacher’s Association (NORTA).

In 2012, Romelle was approached by a former student, Janet Glime, for advice and assistance in forming the new non-profit literacy council in the area. With Romelle’s experience in teaching English and community work, Romelle helped to form the initial mission statement and bylaws. Romelle even took part in the council’s fundraiser, “Are you Smarter than an Oconto Falls 5th Grader?” via donations and selling tickets for the 50/50 raffle.

Romelle has been a valued part of her community, for sure. Her secret to living a good life? Make good decisions and get involved. After helping others for so many years, Romelle has now taken a step back stating, “Now it’s my time to nap and read.”

Romelle, thank you for your years of assistance and giving back to the community. You’ve touched many people with your kind heart and generous nature.

March Tutor/Students of the Month Nancy, Mike Churchill, & Laura

Tutor: Mike Churchill

Mike has been a tutor since 2017 & this is the 3rd time he has been given students. Mike lives in Amberg & volunteers to drive to Stephenson, MI, to meet with his current students at the Menominee County Library. Mike has a background in Spanish which helps when explaining some of our crazy English spellings. Initially, there were 3 students but he currently meets with the 2 who are also good friends. Mike keeps class lively and interesting and gives credit to his 2 students who he says are bright and eager to learn. Initially meeting on Saturday mornings, they now meet Tuesday afternoons when the children are still in school. Mike teaches language that the students want to learn and can use in their day-to-day interactions.



Thank you, Nancy, Mike, & Laura for being part of our team

Students: Nancy and Laura.

Nancy was born and raised in Puerto Rico so, of course, is already a USA citizen. In Puerto Rico, she completed high school and some college. She came to the USA in 2018 knowing limited English which has since improved greatly and she has become employed at the Stephenson Public School which her 3 children attend.

Laura was born and raised in Mexico and came to the USA in 2003, residing in several other states before settling in Stephenson, MI. She completed high school in Mexico. Laura has a teen daughter who attends the local public school.

Both women have a great sense of humor and pick up very good on new concepts and words introduced. They are glad to have a teacher like Mike who can make class fun and interactive.

Tacos and Talk



What better way to practice English than to show up at La Cabana in Marinette for Conversation Club???



conversation | kānver'sāSHən | noun a talk, especially an informal one, between two or more people, in which news and ideas are exchanged: *she picked up the phone and held a conversation in French* | [mass noun] : the two men were *deep in conversation*.

From Webster’s