

Vision LITERACY

Partners Creating Opportunities

Tutor & Volunteer Newsletter

January 2009

HAPPY NEW YEAR!

The staff of Vision Literacy wish you a wonderful 2009. We look forward to working with you throughout the year!



Above, Vision Literacy staff observe the season of giving by wrapping donated presents for local children in need

YOUR GENEROSITY CHANGED LIVES!

Thanks to you – the wonderful tutors, volunteers and donors of Vision Literacy – the lives of thousands of adult learners throughout Santa Clara County were transformed through literacy last year. During fiscal year 2007-08, your willingness to share time and money resulted in:

- 2,800 students participating in adult basic education, English as a second language, health and family literacy programs.
- 15,800 hours of instruction provided by tutors, volunteers and staff.
- Over 8,800 hours of service by 150 volunteers in support of literacy programs.
- More than 3,000 books distributed to adults, children and families.

These statistics are a testament to the words of the incomparable Margaret Mead, “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

ESL AND COMPUTER CLASSES AVAILABLE IN MOUNTAIN VIEW AND SAN JOSE

Is your learner looking for additional opportunities to improve his or her skills? Vision Literacy is offering a variety of group learning opportunities this winter that might be just the ticket.

- **Beginning and intermediate level ESL instruction** at the MACSA Youth Center, 660 Sinclair in San Jose. This ongoing class meets every Monday and Wednesday from 9 a.m.-noon. Free childcare is provided.
- **ESL for all levels** at the MACSA-Calmecac Center, 1776 Educational Park Drive in San Jose. This ongoing class meets every Tuesday and Thursday from 6-8 p.m.
- **Computer Basics Workshop**, covering topics such as email and internet search skills. It will meet at the Mountain View Library on January 29.

Also in development for 2009 are a **Steps for Success Workshop**, which teaches goal setting, time management and study skills, and an **English conversation group**. Both will meet at the Mountain View Library.

Anyone interested in signing up or learning more about these classes should call the Milpitas office at 408-262-1349.

NEW MILPITAS LIBRARY OPENS TO PUBLIC

Come see the beautiful new Milpitas Library, which opened its doors in a grand ceremony on January 10. The new library is located at 160 North Main Street. Visit www.santaclaracountylib.org/milpitas/ for hours and programming information.

Tutors: Please remember to submit your monthly progress report by mail or online at www.visionliteracy.org. Reports are due February 3. Thank you!

UNITED WAY OFFERS FREE TAX HELP

United Way has launched *Earn It! Keep It! Save It!*, an initiative to help low-income, working people connect to free tax preparation services and access important tax credits, such as the earned income tax credit. People needing tax help can call 211 – United Way’s assistance line, which operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and provides information in many languages. Those wishing to volunteer as a screener, translator or tax preparer should go to www.uwsv.org and click on “volunteer” or call 408-345-4347.



FREE ONLINE COURSES FOR TUTORS

Want to improve your tutoring skills without paying a penny, even for gas? Then check out Thinkfinity Literacy Network – an online initiative supported by ProLiteracy and the National Center for Family Literacy. It offers 47 free online courses with topics ranging from “Understanding the Reading Process” to “Let’s Read Math.” Go to www.thinkfinity.org/literacynetwork and click on “free online courses” to see the many topics available.

TUTOR TIP: REVIEWING GOALS

This month’s tip is based on one from Literacy Volunteers of Coconino County in Flagstaff, AZ (www.lvccreads.org).

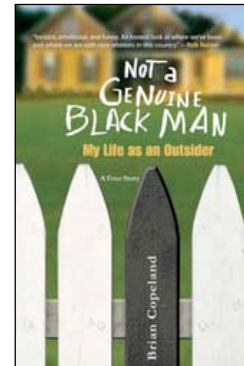
Remember to review learning goals at least once a month with your learner. These should be dated and in writing. Also, make sure you establish ways to measure achievement toward these goals, so you and your learner know that he/she has achieved them. As you set your targets, keep in mind the “KISS” principle – Keep It Simple, Silly; setting clear and simple goals makes success more likely.

PROLITERACY CONFERENCE TO BE HELD AT TOLL HOUSE HOTEL IN LOS GATOS

Mark your calendars – ProLiteracy will host a regional conference at the Toll House Hotel in Los Gatos March 19-20. This will be an excellent opportunity for tutors, volunteers and advocates to learn more about adult literacy trends and approaches to teaching. More details will be made available soon in this newsletter or at www.proliteracy.org.

SILICON VALLEY READS ANNOUNCES 2009 BOOK SELECTION

If you or your learner is searching for a good book to read, look no further than Silicon Valley Reads’ 2009 book pick: *Not a Genuine Black Man* by Brian Copeland. In this memoir, the writer and comedian reflects on growing up black in an all-white suburb in California. The story was also the subject of Copeland’s one-man show of the same name, which was the longest-running solo show in San Francisco history.



Silicon Valley Reads is a program created to promote reading and literacy, broaden exposure to and appreciation of good literature, and build community. In addition to presenting the selected book, the program will sponsor more than a dozen public appearances by the author through mid-March, promote companion books appropriate for children, and support a writing/storytelling contest at the Gilroy library. Visit www.siliconvalleyreads.org to find out more.

MINI FESTIVAL OF BOOKS:

SHARE A GOOD BOOK ON VALENTINE’S DAY

Families are invited to spend this Valentine’s Day reading and celebrating together at the Mini Festival of Books. The event will be held at the Alum Rock Branch Library, 3090 Alum Rock Ave. in San Jose, from 11 a.m.-1:30 p.m., and will offer hands-on activities, a reading by author Jose Luis Orozco and a free book for every child under 6. It is co-sponsored by Vision Literacy, First 5, Bring Me a Book Foundation and the San Jose City Library.

SHARE YOUR OPINION & WIN A PRIZE!

Vision Literacy invites you to help improve this newsletter by sharing your opinions and ideas in our online survey. You can find it at www.visionliteracy.org – just click on “our survey” on the homepage. (Tutors, this is the same survey that was mailed to you with the progress report form in December.) Everyone returning a survey by February 1 will have his/her name entered in a drawing for a free music CD.



If you have a question, comment or submission for the newsletter, please contact 408-262-1349 or info@visionliteracy.org. Next deadline for submissions: February 13, 2009.