



*John Fleming*

## *Ana Rodriguez and Demetria Suazo* By Chamundi Sabanathan

After living and working in the United States for over 30 years, Ana Rodriguez and Demetria Suazo became determined to learn English—their grandchildren insisted on it! Both applied for a tutor in February, 2009, submitting their applications together, after a friend told them about the Adult Literacy League. They have found an excellent tutor in Patti O'Keefe, who started tutoring the two women immediately after graduating as a League tutor in April, 2009.

Ana came to the U.S. from Honduras 30 years ago with her three children, then aged 14, 13, and 9. She supported the family by cleaning houses at \$4.00 per hour while watching carefully over her children's lives. All three children are grown now and have good jobs: Her son, who completed his studies in art at the University of San Francisco, is working as a truck driver; one daughter is a doctor's assistant, and the other is a teacher's assistant working with special-needs children. Ana has five grandchildren ranging in age from 19 to 6, including ten-year-old twins. Now retired from her job, Ana cares for her special-needs granddaughter.

Demetria came from Mexico 37 years ago with her son and daughter, then aged 5 and 4. Like Ana, she spoke no English when she arrived. She found work in a poultry processing plant on Fulton Road, a job she held for the next 30 years as she single-handedly supported and raised her children, including another son born in the States.

Demetria's children have grown up to become a welding instructor, a beautician and a fireman—and have further rewarded her with six grandchildren.

Ana and Demetria became good friends after meeting at church six years ago. Each retired, and each the matriarch of her family, they have been roommates for the last three years. Until their grandchildren started pressuring them to learn English, neither saw much need to do so; but once decided, each has worked enthusiastically to master the new language.

Patti admires their shared dedication to learning: "They study and practice together at home and help each other all week—a real bonus for me as their tutor. Each one has made tremendous progress in less than a year. Ana, who initially did not even know the English alphabet, is now reading at the fourth- or fifth-grade level; and although Demetria was totally illiterate even in Spanish, with Ana's help she has already progressed to the second- or third-grade level."

Patti says it is immensely rewarding to tutor these two women, whose success in raising fine, upstanding families in a strange country, despite linguistic barriers, attests to their hard work, perseverance, and strong family ethic. One cannot speak with her about tutoring without realizing her strong drive to "give back to the community." Indeed, Patti loves tutoring so much that she recently took on a third student—Lupe Soto, Demetria's daughter-in-law. Patti says she considers it a great honor to tutor these dedicated, hard-working students.

## *Please Report Your Volunteer Hours!*

By Chamundi Sabanathan

The Adult Literacy League depends on donations and an occasional grant for its survival. Ruth Maloney, our Executive Director, needs facts and figures to support her grant applications. The information you send in each month on your Volunteer Report Form demonstrates just how far the League manages to stretch every dollar we receive. I cannot stress strongly enough how important it is that you report all of your hours each month! Please call the office at 539-3848 if you need a copy of the form.

## *Thanks Giving*

### **To Volunteers, Donators & Sponsors**

*It is with a great deal of gratitude that the Board of Directors thanks all the tutors, mentors and volunteers for their time and support of the League. Without you, the League would not exist.*

- To Goodwill Industries of the Redwood Empire for providing office space to the League for four years, free of charge;
- To Linda Landon for becoming the League's bookkeeper;
- To Darlene Pacheco for taking over the job of librarian;
- To Carrie Peterson and Heather Thompson for helping to update our files;
- To Christine Slaymaker of Community Action Partnership – Headstart, who made it possible for us to hold our spring Tutor Training Workshop at their location—even providing lunch for all;
- To Healdsburg Community Church and Knox Community Church for continuing to provide space and other assistance for their outstanding walk-in tutoring programs;
- To Gary Holm for his outstanding photography of our winter and spring Tutor Training Workshop graduates;
- And another Thank You to Charlotte Baird and the Knox Presbyterian Church for hosting our annual “All Members” meeting.

## *A Special Thank You to Our Sponsors!*



## **WE'VE MOVED!**

### **Stop by and see our new office:**

2245 Montgomery Drive, Suite C  
Santa Rosa, CA 95405

(Our telephone and fax numbers remain unchanged)

A very special thank you goes to our wonderful and energetic volunteers who helped us during our move:

- To Ruth Maloney, Chamundi Sabanathan, Pat Lennon, Nancy Schell, Eiko Kollander, and Karen Fleming, for carefully packing our office;
- To Ruth and John Maloney, along with their nephew Andrew Aherne, Pat Lennon, Heather Thompson, Karen Fleming, Nancy Schell, Rafael Nunez Sr. and his son, Rafael Nunez Jr., for moving and unpacking the office. What would we have done without John, Andrew, Rafael and Rafael for all the heavy lifting!
- To Bob Parsons for making sure that all our electronics and communications equipment was properly disconnected, packed, and reassembled in our new office, and for continuing to be available for troubleshooting.

## **WE'VE ALSO CHANGED OUR TUESDAY OFFICE HOURS!**

Our office has been open on Tuesdays from 1:00-6:00 p.m. However, effective May 1<sup>st</sup>, our NEW office hours will be the same each day, Tuesday through Friday—10:00-3:00 p.m. The office will continue to be closed on Mondays.

### *For Your Information*

#### **Adult Literacy League of Sonoma County, Inc.**

2245 Montgomery Drive, Suite C  
Santa Rosa, CA 95405  
707.539.3848 (ph) 707.539.3899 (fax)  
literacy@sonic.net  
www.literacyleague.org

#### **Office Hours**

##### **Closed Mondays**

10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Tuesday through Friday

Closed Saturdays, Sundays, Mondays & Holidays

Executive Director: Ruth Maloney

Administrative Coordinator: Chamundi Sabanathan

A.L.L.STAR Editor: Karen Fleming



John Fleming

## President's Corner

By Karen Fleming

January started off with a bang when we found out we needed to move our office. Thanks to our many volunteers, we accomplished this and in the timeline Goodwill Industries requested. First and foremost, we are grateful to Goodwill for the years of free rent. If you haven't visited the new office yet, we look forward to your visit.

We have all our tutor workshops scheduled for the year, so we're ready to bring in new tutors to help with our long list of new students. Our first in-service for tutors is scheduled for May 22; you will read more about the in-service in this newsletter. You will also read about our first annual recognition picnic, to be held June 6<sup>th</sup>. We are very excited about this event.

The League's financial situation continues to be challenging. Funding that comes from donations and grants continues to be down, and that is why you'll be reading about membership in this newsletter. Our executive director, Ruth Maloney, is working on a federal grant to help with U.S. Citizenship training, as well as various local grants. However, many other non-profit organizations are vying for the same funding. How can you help?

- You recently received information in the mail about The Human Race. Help fundraise by talking to friends, co-workers, and family about donating. Not only do the donations benefit the League, they also benefit the Volunteer Center.
- Become a member of the League for \$25.00. We will be starting our 2011 membership drive later in the year, but you can still become a member for 2010. You will read more about this later in the newsletter.
- Do you have something hidden in your garage or closet that it's time to sell? We are now registered with MissionFish and ebay, so anyone can designate part or all of the proceeds of a sale to the League.
- We also are registered with PayPal, and there is a link in our website. This will make it easier for individuals and businesses wanting to make donations.
- Purchase "Opportunity Knocks" tickets. The drawing will be held at our June 6<sup>th</sup> awards picnic, and the winner will receive half the proceeds. Tickets can be sold to members and non-members; and since you don't need to be present to win, you can sell some tickets to friends, family and co-workers.

You can be very proud of the work the Adult Literacy League does in the community, and the way the League runs the business without waste and bureaucracy.

## SPRING IN-SERVICE

**DATE:** Saturday, May 22, 2010  
**PLACE:** Rohnert Park-Cotati Regional Library  
 6250 Lynne Conde Way  
 Rohnert Park Expressway/  
 State Farm Drive

**TIME:** 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.  
**RSVP:** Call 539-3848, or email to [literacy@sonic.net](mailto:literacy@sonic.net)  
 (Attendees only)

**Do you need help with motivating yourself and your student? Do you need new creative ideas that will help the learning process and keep you engaged as a tutor?**



John Fleming

**Gretchen Werner, M.Ed.**, owner and director of Werner Educational Services (formerly "Gateways, A Learning Center"), will be our speaker and will be exploring these as well as providing other tools such as games that will support the learning process.

Gretchen is a member of the Board of Directors for the Adult Literacy League and North Bay Institute of Green Technology (employment readiness for at-risk and gang-affiliated youth in the green-collar jobs sector), Executive Board for the Sonoma County Literacy Coalition, Association of Educational Therapists, Collaborative Education Network, Parents' Education Network, and Leadership Team of Gateway to Success Business Network International. She is also chair of the Windsor Chamber of Commerce Scholarship Committee.

Join us for an informative and fun morning! Please bring any tools or ideas you have used that you feel contribute to a fun learning environment, and we will share!

## FALL, WINTER & SPRING TUTOR WORKSHOPS

Congratulations and welcome to our new tutors!



*Bob Parsons*

Fall 2009: Susan Ortiz-St. Claire, Corrie McCluskey, Heather Thompson, Lisa Floyd, Susanna Barlow, Nancy Casazza, Don Stratton, Michele Bishop, Ayla Scofield, Kate Wolf, Sandi Stone, Shirley Syiek, and Inge McCormack



*Gary Holm*

Winter 2010: Sarah Adelman, Juanda Halper, Pat Veuve, Myra Slatoff, Jim Lindgren, Barbara Fromm, Rosalie Gillmore, Judi Lynch, P.J. Belmont, Laurie Wesler, Ellen Storz, Harry Helms, Diane Hales, Robin Sheehan, Chip Goodrich.



*Gary Holm*

Spring 2010: Catherine Freund, David Douglass, Nancy Rowinsky, Julian Blair, Kaye Henderson, Jim O'Hara, Bonny Diederich, Bonnie Wood, Milt Danoff, Barbara Shatto, Kay Marshall, Easter Esparza, Anita Christmas

## SUMMER TUTOR TRAINING WORKSHOP

The summer Tutor Training Workshop will be July 24 and 31. As always, we have a large student waiting list and tutors are needed throughout Sonoma County. If you have a friend, neighbor, co-worker, or family member who is interested in being a tutor, please have them call the office: 539-3848.

## 2009 MEMBERSHIP MEETING

The 40<sup>th</sup> Annual Membership Meeting was held at Knox Presbyterian Church on November 14, 2009. The members voted in the 2010 Board of Directors:

President: Karen Fleming

Vice President: Tom Buckley

Treasurer: William Pitney

Secretary: Vacant

Director: David Chung

Director: Dan Jenkins

Director: Pat Lennon

Director: Heather Thompson

Director: Gretchen Werner

It was with a great deal of appreciation that Karen Fleming recognized Nancy Schell and Eleanor Welch with the Helen Tomigal Award. Nancy and Eleanor brought their experience as ESL teachers in the school district and developed a training package. They have been delivering this training four times a year for the last eight years. They are professionals, and their training expresses this. The League is grateful for everything Nancy and Eleanor have done for the League.

In honor of the League's 40<sup>th</sup> year, the keynote speaker was Martha Peterson, one of the co-founders of the League. Martha had a fascinating story to tell about the founding of the League and how the work she did with the League was a springboard into all the traveling and work she did around the world teaching ESL.

Also honoring the League's 40<sup>th</sup> year, Tom Buckley and his student, Zhisheng "Sheng" Qi, spoke about their tutor-student relationship. Sheng is from a rural area south of Beijing, China and is highly trained in medicine. He graduated from a medical school in China, where he was licensed as both nurse and physician specializing in internal medicine. Yet, he came to America with no English language skill. He soon learned of the Adult Literacy League, and Tom became his tutor and friend.

The 2010 Membership Meeting will be on November 13<sup>th</sup>. As the date approaches, you will hear more about it.

## ARE YOU A MEMBER OF THE LEAGUE?

Later this year, you will be given the opportunity to become a member of the League for 2011. The cost is \$25.00. However, there are a number of people in our community who have already realized the worth of the League and have become members now:

- ♥ Beth Sasan
- ♥ Jeff and Janet Buckley
- ♥ Zhisheng Qi
- ♥ David Chung
- ♥ Gudrun Hommer
- ♥ Terri Kaplan
- ♥ Jacque Mielke

Membership is the heart and soul of the financial future of the League. The most important benefit of being a member is that membership helps keep the League's doors open so that the mission of teaching adults English as a Second Language can continue. However, there are other benefits: In the future, only members will receive the quarterly newsletter and qualify for the In-Services at no charge. Membership provides individuals and businesses exposure, recognition, and networking opportunities:

- ~ Discounted advertising opportunities in the League's quarterly newsletter and website
- ~ Name recognition in the League's quarterly newsletter and website
- ~ Office referrals and business leads

If you are interested in becoming a member for 2010, please make out a check to the Adult Literacy League for \$25.00 and mail it to 2245 Montgomery Drive, Suite C, Santa Rosa, CA 95405. Be sure to write "2010 Membership" on the memo line. If you have any questions, please call the office: 539-3848.

### *Come To Our First Annual*

**\*\*\*A.L.L. AWARDS PICNIC\*\*\***

Are you a volunteer, student, or member of the League who did not receive your invitation to the "first" awards picnic?

**When:** June 6, 2010, 1:00 to 4:00 pm

**Where:** Richard's Grove and Saralee's Vineyard

Even though the cut-off date was May 7<sup>th</sup> to RSVP, if you have not yet received your invitation or are now able to come to the picnic, please call Tom Buckley at 707-658-1744 or e-mail him at tom\_buckley01@comcast.net.

## TUTOR TIPS

### Keep lessons simple and be prepared for surprises.

- ✓ One of the keys to tutoring is being able to break a language task down into its simplest parts and focus on these parts without referring to more complex words or aspects of the language. Occasionally you will find that you have not prepared enough, or you may discover that your student knows what you thought s/he didn't know. So have a back-up lesson or activity ready.
- ✓ Your student may come to a session with a problem that needs immediate attention; for example, s/he may need to write an official letter to the government. Be prepared to put your lesson plan aside and work on what the student really needs at that moment.
- ✓ Just as you need to allow yourself to make mistakes and experiment, you also need to allow your student to have a bad day. Sometimes you may need to simply take a break from the planned lesson and go to a café or a park.

### Go easy on yourself, and have fun!

Your student knows that you are a volunteer and not a professional teacher, so s/he will not expect you to know everything about the English language or teaching. S/he will probably be thrilled to have the opportunity for a little more English practice with a native speaker. Plan and prepare but do not be discouraged if some marvelously organized lesson does not work out very well. Be honest, try something new, and enjoy.

## United Way

Did you know you can designate the Adult Literacy League of Sonoma County in your workplace giving campaigns? Your United Way donations are an important part of our funding, and every dollar helps us reach our financial goals. Remember to add your name to the form if you would like an acknowledgement letter from us. Otherwise, United Way will code your donation "Anonymous."

## DID YOU KNOW?

According to ProLiteracy America, the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy estimated that 30 million people over the age of 16 in the United States can barely read and write in English, and that an additional 60 million have basic literacy skills far below what is considered adequate for earning a living wage in today's technology and information-oriented society. Globally, 774 million adults are illiterate. In the United States, adults who drop out of high school and later enroll in adult basic education or literacy classes to earn a high school diploma or GED can increase their earnings by an average of \$9,000 a year. Yet combined current funding from the federal government, state governments, and philanthropic sources support instruction in basic literacy, English as a second language, adult secondary education, computer training, and vocational education for just 3 million adults.

## OFFICE WISHLIST

- Laptop computer with MSOffice
- Volunteers interested in occasional office-work tasks (some of which can be done at home).

## Mark Your Calendar!

May 8 — The Human Race

May 22 — In-Service

June 6 — First Annual Awards Picnic

June 14 – Board Meeting

July 5 – Office Closed for Holiday

July 24 – Tutor Training Workshop, Part 1

July 31 – Tutor Training Workshop, Part 2

August 9 – Board Meeting

September 6 – Office Closed for Holiday

September TBD – In-Service

October 11 – Board Meeting

October 16 – Tutor Training Workshop, Part 1

October 23 – Tutor Training Workshop, Part 2

# A.L.L. AWARDS PICNIC

## “50/50 OPPORTUNITY KNOCKS”

Invite your friends, family, neighbors and co-workers to join you in supporting the League—with a chance to win! 50% of the proceeds will go to the winner, and 50% will help to support the League’s programs. The drawing will be held at the June 6<sup>th</sup> Awards Picnic. You need not be present to win. Complete the tickets below and mail with your payment to Ruth Maloney, 2245 Montgomery Drive, Suite C, Santa Rosa, CA 95405. Checks should be made out to The Adult Literacy League. More tickets will be available at the event or by calling 707-539-3848.

**\$5.00 for each ticket or 6 tickets for \$25.00**

Adult Literacy League of Sonoma County  
Awards Picnic  
50/50 Opportunity Knocks  
Drawing June 6, 2010 (No Refunds)  
Need not be present to win.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

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E-Mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**For information regarding the June 6<sup>th</sup> Awards Picnic, please call Tom Buckley on 707-658-1744 or email [tom\\_buckley01@comcast.net](mailto:tom_buckley01@comcast.net)**

*Please don't forget* to report your monthly hours to the League office!  
Fax, e-mail, phone, or snail mail — they A.L.L. work.



ADULT LITERACY  
**LEAGUE** of SONOMA COUNTY, INC

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Santa Rosa, CA 95404

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