

April 2010

Whittier Area Literacy Council, Inc.



WALC TALK!



Calendar of Events

- Family Literacy Night!
Wed. April 7th @ 6:00
- Board Mtg.— May 1st
- Tutor Support Workshop,
May 6th, 4:00-5:00
- Summer Reading Program

Tutor Training Dates:

April 17th, 24th, &
May 8th

9:00 a.m. —12:30 p.m.

Volunteer Needs

Newsletter Editor
needed!

Historian needed!

President's Message

With twenty-one months in office, I have so many people to thank. First Pauline Tracy, Gloria Boone, Virginia Salazar and so many others for the great encouragement when I accepted this office. I have appreciated everyone's dedication to our cause of literacy.

The Whittier Area Literacy Council has had many recent changes on the Board of Directors. We miss those who have left, but the new members have stepped up and we have an incredible, active and talented group of men and women. Our more recent events: Our 5th Annual Soup & A Good Book—Love of Reading, the Student Awards Luncheon, and our recent 3rd Annual Scrabble

Tournament, demonstrates the dedication of our board members to our students and tutors and to the continuance of our programs and its mission. For anyone unfamiliar with the Soup and a Good Book event, the students, both children and adults write about a topic chosen by a committee. The writings are performed by readers. The soup, crackers, bread, and desserts are donated by many Whittier restaurants and our Board of Directors.

The 3rd Annual Scrabble Tournament, chaired by Maricella Ibarra, was a great success, with twelve full tables of players standing room only observers, and donations from so many of the Whittier community—both

merchants and private parties. What a fun event. This yearly fund raiser helps cover operating expenses for our learning center.

Pat Almada and her incredible team, will be training more tutors in April. We have a waiting list of students looking for our help and we would love to train more tutors. If you are interested please contact the office.

Finally, our last event for our year will be the Summer Reading Program. This program will begin on June 14th and end July 30th. We will be working with the Whittier Public Library to encourage our students to read over the summer for fun, awards and a party at the Library.



Getting students to comprehend what they read continues to be one of our toughest challenges. The book Strategies That Work—Teaching Comprehension to Enhance Understanding by Stephanie Harvey offers wonderful suggestions. One of these strategies is to encourage students to make personal connections to the text. When students compare their own experiences and background knowledge to the plot, setting or characters in a story, they are better equipped to understand it. Every student has experience, knowledge, opinions, or emotions to draw upon. But knowing how to use these to understand text

may need some modeling and practice. The book describes three kinds of connections:

1. Text to self-connections that readers make between the text and their past experiences or background knowledge.
2. Text-to-text connections that readers make between the text they are reading and another text, including books, poems, songs.
3. Text-to-world connections that readers make between the text and the bigger issues, events or concerns of society and the world.

Tutors can help students make connections to the text by modeling. For example, tutors can say, “This reminds me of the time I ...” or “I read another

book about getting lost.” You can invite students to connect to the text orally or in writing. Select an important sentence from the text and then make a personal connection in writing as the student does the same. Remember that this is not the time for spelling correction and focus only on meaningful connections to the text. Then practice, practice, practice and watch this strategy work!

Another Strategy that Works—Visualizing and Inferring will be the topic of the Tutor Support Workshop on February 12, 2010 at 7 p.m.

Patricia Almada
1st Vic President
Tutor Trainer

President's Message con't

If you have some time to give to this event, please let us know immediately. Then you can give some input as well as help the students to give a short report or hand out prizes.

Again, thank, you for all the hard work by so many to help our students to become all they were meant to be, literate and more productive members of our community.



Memorial for Allen Rious

A memorial was held at the Literacy Center for Allen Rious, past president and longtime member for the Literacy Council. Allen also trained others to become tutors. Allen will be greatly missed in the world of literacy.

WALC At Uptown Festival!

It's hard to believe summer is just around the corner. Last year WALC held a post at the Wednesday Uptown Festival. It was a delightful experience meeting our community members. WALC representatives were able to sign up potential tutors, meet with parents and prospective students, all whom will benefit from

our free tutoring services. We met new Whittier College students who share our values on education, literacy, creative language, and human dignity. WALC looks forward to working with these college students as incoming tutors. Parents talked while children participated in arts and crafts at our table and made original bookmarks. WALC extended its hand to the Whittier community and it

was received with gratitude. It was exciting to see vows made from both sides of the table renewing the commitment to continue carving the legacy of literacy!



Scrabble Tournament a Great Success!

The Literacy Council would like to thank all who made



our 2009 Scrabble Challenge such an incredible success. We especially want to thank Maricella Ibarra and Mary Ellen De Santos, who put in so much time and hard work.

We had a full house of serious Scrabble competitors who enjoyed wonderful entertainment, good

food and great raffle prizes. We want to thank Whittier Council member Owen Newcomer for coming and supporting our event and our work.

This year's event was a wonderful financial success as well, so tell your friends to start practicing for next year's tournament which will

Council Has A New Attitude!

Every once in a while, a makeover is needed and WALC has a new look. Elizabeth Cruz created a new face for WALC with a new Marketing Packet. The new packet consists of a Power-Point presentation CD, a colorful brochure and an in-

sert card with testimonies from a child, teenager and adult who have benefited from our program. Elizabeth Cruz put a lot of thought into taking WALC up a notch. This will allow us to be more visible and viable in our communi-

ties. Literacy is mandatory in order to survive in the current job market, and education is a tool that affords new opportunities in all areas of our lives. Yes, WALC has a new attitude and you're going to love us! Come and check us out!

Elizabeth Cruz
Publicity Chairperson



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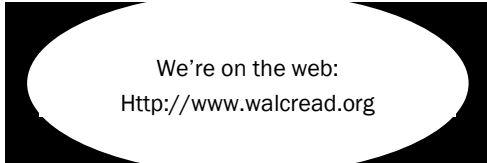
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EACH ONE, TEACH ONE

Welcome!

There is a new face in the office at the Literacy Center. Her name is Sinda and she became a part of our team on March 8th, 2010. Sinda has put a lot of effort into giving the office a new look. Students and tutors alike have given her a very warm welcome!



New Business Hours

Monday/Wednesday
9:30-1:00
2:00-7:00

Tuesday/Thursday
9:30-1:00
2:00-5:30
Closed Fridays



Volunteers Award Brunch



The Whittier Area Literacy Council's Holiday Volunteer Awards Brunch was a beautiful event. Special thanks to Mary Ellen De Santos and Rebecca Pacheco for the wonderful and festive decorations and great food. Also, special thanks to Lisa Dabbs who led us all in some great holiday tunes!

This brunch is just a small way of thank-

ing our volunteers and tutors for keeping our organization strong. It is also a way of honoring their many years of service. You all keep the spirit of the season all year round by giving of your time and knowledge for the benefit of others and we thank you.

Patricia Almada, our very busy 1st Vice President, received the Volunteer of the Year Award for all of her hard work with revamping the tutor training, and basically always being wherever the need was.

We were also able to honor each volunteer with a years of service certificate.

Special honoree and tutor Ida Sacco received a certificate for 27 years of service! That is amazing!

So, thank you all and may 2010 be a great year for everyone!

