

# WALC Talk

## Fall 2013

### Inside this issue:

- Page 1 – President’s Message
- Page 2 – Family Literacy Night
- Page 3 – Scrabble Tournament
- Page 4 – Upcoming Events  
– From Our Trainers

## President’s Message

By Cel Carr



Another year comes to an end and WALC has so much for which to be thankful. The tutors have made such a difference in their student’s lives. The students have grown in their literacy and computer skills thanks not only to the tutor’s but also to their use of the i-Ready program, which was initiated this summer for the younger students.

WALC was able to draw great tutors from the community with our Tutor Training in April and September. Thanks to Pat Almada and her tutor training team. Pat also led the Tutor Support Workshops in April and November that have been giving encouragement and direction to our tutors, both new and current. Cristina Gardner presented Family Literacy Nights, in April and November as well, to assist our parents in the further education and support of their children. The next Tutor Support Workshop and Family Literacy Night will be held February 19<sup>th</sup>. WALC’s Scrabble Fundraiser was held October 25<sup>th</sup>. It was a fun evening and thanks to all the volunteers, it came off well. Thank you, Mary Ellen, for the decorations at all our events, especially Scrabble.

(Continued on page 2)

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## *President's Message*

*(Continued)*

WALC held our 1<sup>st</sup> Open House this year in September in coordination with International Literacy Day. It was well attended and we were able to demonstrate the i-Ready on-line system to our guests. From this event, we added a new candidate to our Board of Directors. At the next Board Meeting, Steve Koelle came on the board. We also added a new member to our Advisory Board. Jim Sass, Donna Smith and Conan Barker continue to add expertise and Dan McMillan joined us as well. Our Tutor Appreciation Week is upon us. We hope all of the tutors, including the new ones from our latest trainings know they are valued, as we could not run this council without these volunteers. The Board of Directors for the council continues to create a vibrant, hands-on group. These smart, creative volunteers make my job easy.

Sincerely,

Cel Carr



## **Family Literacy Night**

**By Christina Gardner**

On November 12, 2013, WALC held its first of three Family Literacy Night events for this school year. Melinda Piña-Escamilla of Piña Reading Academy was our speaker for the evening. Ms. Piña runs a Whittier-based academy where tutoring in reading is provided. The topic of her presentation was "How to improve your child's reading fluency and comprehension."

Ms. Pina's presentation focused on reading fluency, which she defined as the ability to read accurately, quickly and with expression. Ms. Pina emphasized the importance of parental involvement in monitoring their child's reading fluency and she provided techniques that parents can use to help their child gain reading fluency. Ms. Pina's recommendations in helping a child gain reading fluency include having the child read and reread the same passage aloud 3 to 4 times per week, having the child summarize after reading each chapter to check for comprehension, and having the child record his/her own progress in gaining fluency and comprehension. Also, parents should ensure that the reading material is within the child's "zone of proximal development" (not too easy or difficult). We are grateful to Ms. Pina for being so generous with her time and sharing her expertise in the field of literacy development.

WALC will hold two more family literacy nights, one on Feb. 19th and another on April 16th at 6:00 pm. Please plan to attend both these events. As these dates get closer, Julie Garcia will provide more information regarding the topics.

**The MORE that you READ,**  
the more **THINGS** you will **KNOW.**  
**The MORE you LEARN,**  
the more **PLACES** you'll **GO!**  
~Dr. Seuss

# 2013 Scrabble Challenge

*By Laura Chavez Warner*

Whittier Area Literacy Council's 7<sup>th</sup> annual Scrabble Challenge fundraiser was held on October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2013, in beautiful Newman Hall. Everyone in attendance had a wonderful time playing Scrabble, enjoying fellowship and a lovely dinner.

*Simply Irresistible* catering provided dinner featuring a delicious pasta dish with salad and rolls. WALC board members provided a variety of baked goods for dessert. Delightful and delicious cupcakes decorated with WALC Scrabble tiles on the frosting were baked especially for the event by Sweet Dreams Dessert Lounge.

We congratulate the winning team (right) and thank our Scrabble committee, judges, sponsors, and all volunteers whose contributions helped make our 2013 Scrabble Challenge a success. Also, we thank Pastor Layne of First Christian Church for the use of Newman Hall as well as Paul Samarin who provided the music.

We hope to see you at next year's Scrabble Challenge. Please register your name with Julie so that you may be contacted well in advance for the 2014 tournament.



# FROM OUR TRAINERS

By Lucy Alaniz and Barbara Walters

The Tutor Training on September 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> was successfully completed by 11 new tutors: Zaida Lopez-Le, Susan Pfursich, Karen Papilli, Thomas Jackson, Judi Rivera, Andrea Morales, Silvia Perez, Tina Rodriguez, Mary Sera, Renia Blamey and Benjamin Miller. As new trainers, we are grateful to them for their willingness to help carry out WALC's mission.

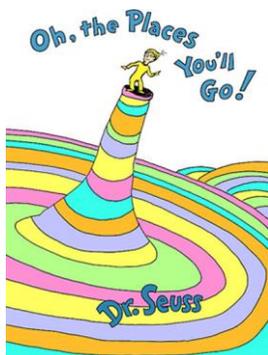
The goal of literacy training not only includes the process of how to teach reading and writing but also the many ways in which reading comprehension is a tool in our daily lives. An interesting aspect of the training focused on other areas of comprehension, including computer literacy, media literacy and health/consumer literacy. Tutors were encouraged to be more aware of their students' styles of communicating and how this can contribute to their learning.

Pat Almada, Lyn Hoffmaster and Natalia Martinez also brought their expertise to the training.

We encourage all our tutors to attend our on-going tutor support workshops. We also are available to answer any questions or provide any assistance to you. Our next training sessions will be starting on January 18<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.

## 2014 Soup and a Good Book

WALC's 2014 Soup and a Good Book fundraiser will be held on Saturday, March 15. The theme will be "Oh, the Places You'll Go... with Literacy!"



Please plan on attending this wonderful event that will showcase our students' literary achievements!

## Upcoming Events

### Tutor Appreciation Week

December 9 – 13, 2013

WALC

### WALC Closed for the Holidays

December 23<sup>rd</sup> – January 3<sup>rd</sup>

### WALC Mission Statement:

To provide literacy and ESL programs for adults and children who are in need of better skills and to train volunteers to perform these services.

[Through your generous donation, you can help WALC achieve its mission.](#)

See Julie for more information.

## Whittier Area Literacy Council

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