



## WALC Talk Fall 2014

### Inside this issue:

- Page 1 – President's Message
- Page 2 – Student's Voice
- Page 3 – Scrabble Tournament
- Page 4 – From Our Tutor Trainers

## President's Message

Diversify, diversify, diversify... don't put all your eggs in one basket! You may have heard this sound suggestion from your financial advisor. I know I have. Diversification is also a good idea when it comes to the funding and the long term sustainability of today's non-profits. Our organization has been mainly funded through the generosity of the BCM Foundation and smaller grantors such as the city of Whittier, our wonderful service organizations and private donors. Last year, however, our grant writing committee launched into a new effort to seek additional sources of funding and we were successful in obtaining the financial support of the Union Pacific and the Weingart Foundations. Each foundation has unique criteria and conditions for their awards. One of these conditions, set by the Weingart Foundation, is the background check of all volunteers. When you think about it, it makes sense in this crazy world of ours.

As tutors, you graciously give of your time and knowledge to help your student fulfill his/her literacy or life goals. We sincerely appreciate what you do, but now we must ask a little more! We ask that you help us comply with this background check requirement for all of our volunteers. We are in the process of filing the application with the Department of Justice for our Live Scan code, a process which may take up to 3 months. When this code is received, we will be ready to comply with the fingerprinting process which will be done at our expense. Julie will have more details in the upcoming months. On behalf of myself and the entire board of directors, we thank you for your service to this organization and wish you a happy and peaceful holiday season.

Sincerely,

Pat Almada, Co-President

### EXECUTIVE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Patricia Almada,  
Co-President

Stephan Koelle,  
Co-President

Sallee Kraics,  
1st Vice President

Lisa Dabbs,  
2nd Vice President

Gloria Boone,  
Corresponding Secretary

Maricella Ibarra,  
Publicity Chairperson

Susan Mitchell,  
Treasurer

Lucy Alaniz,  
Parliamentarian

Barbara Walters,  
Asst. Publicity Chair

L. Alaniz & B. Walters,  
Tutor Training Co-Chair

Cristina Gardner,  
Family Literacy Chair

Anna Hinkle,  
Inspirational Chair

Red Ortega,  
Historian / Parent Rep

Laura Chavez Warner,  
Newsletter Editor

Open,  
Recording Secretary

### ADVISORY BOARD

Conan Barker  
Dan McMillan  
James Sass, PhD  
Donna Smith  
Bonnie Weber



Whittier Volunteer of the Year.

Her award was presented on October 28, 2014, at the Whittier City Council Meeting and she received a special corsage as well.

Susan contributes many hours a year on our WALC Board and is a tutor to several students as well. In addition to her volunteer work for WALC, Susan volunteers for at least 4 or 5 other agencies.

Congratulations, Susan!  
We members of the board hold you in high esteem!!

## The Student's Voice

**SALLEE KRAICS, a WALC tutor, speaks with student JOSEFINA ACEVES about an experience Josefina had with the Superior Court system; Josefina won a civil case against a landlord. She represented herself and did not use the services of an interpreter.**

Josefina Aceves, who has been coming to WALC for about three months, is an ESL student that Sallee tutors. Her literacy goal is to improve fluency in English. Josefina wants to get a better job and wants to speak, read, and write English more smoothly.

Josefina-who lives in a rented apartment in Whittier-recently came to the conclusion that she did not want to continue to pay for a very poorly-maintained apartment: drains were backing up (and not getting repaired) and the rats, roaches, termites and ants were starting to take over! She had first one court date (at a Long Beach Superior court) and then another court date was set up for the judge to hear the case.

**SALLEE:** So you first went to the court a few weeks ago, and then a second court date got set up? How will you prepare for the next court appearance? Who are you taking to court?

**JOSEFINA:** We had a [court] date, but the judge asked for us to try to have a deal [reach an agreement] first. I have a case against the management company because they always want to receive the rent on time, but they don't want to maintain the buildings in perfect condition. To prepare myself, I made a list--in English--of the points I wanted to make. I kept it simple, and I have many photos [of rats and roaches] that I will show the court.

A few weeks then passed. JOSEFINA went back to the court for the second time; her civil case had a trial date in mid-October. In the meantime, and in our ESL classes at WALC, we went over Josefina's list of the points she wanted to make, and she practiced saying those things out loud.

**SALLEE:** What happened in court? Did you use an attorney? Did you use an interpreter? What was the result for you?

**JOSEFINA:** I had the confidence to express myself, and I said the list of points that I had written down. I was on my own [without a lawyer]. I did not need an interpreter- I spoke in English, and they could understand me. They [the apartment management company] offered me two weeks to stay free in my apartment. I told the judge it had to be four weeks free or nothing [or no deal]; the judge agreed, and the management company accepted. THANK YOU, TEACHER! Thank you for helping me express myself.



## 2014 Scrabble Challenge Fundraiser

By Laura Chavez Warner



WALC's 2014 Scrabble fundraiser took place on Friday, October 17, in Newman Hall. All those in attendance had a wonderful time, enjoying fellowship and friendly competition with their table partners. A delicious lasagna dinner was provided by Sweet Dreams Dessert & Bistro.

We thank all the volunteers who made the event's success possible, including our Scrabble committee, who work diligently in organizing the event.

We hope that next year's Scrabble Challenge will be a great success as well, so plan on participating and let Julie know in advance that you will attend. Also, remember to practice your Scrabble skills!



## Family Literacy Night

By Cristina Gardner

Once again WALC will be offering three Family Literacy Nights this academic year. On November 19th, 2014 we had our first event. Mr. Arles Benavides from SPIRITT Family Services was our speaker for the evening. SPIRITT Family Services is a Substance Abuse Prevention agency with several offices, one of them located here in Whittier on Painter Ave.

Mr. Benavides spoke about the climbing incidence of alcohol abuse in teens and about the unfortunate easy access to alcohol among teens. He offered advice regarding family communication, the setting of boundaries and the importance of parental monitoring. He offered names of agencies, including his where, help is available.

WALC's next scheduled Family Literacy Night will take place on February 25th at 6:00 pm. As the date gets closer, Julie Garcia will be mailing out flyers. Plan on joining us for dinner and the lecture. As always childcare is provided.

# Tune Up Your Tutoring

By Lucy Alaniz and Barbara Walters

We hope your tutoring is going well. Our first tune up suggestion is the use of poetry. If you didn't have an opportunity to attend the Tutor Support Training on Tuesday, November 18<sup>th</sup>, we'd like to share a few highlights.

- Various poetry elements were explained and examples were given.
- Poems were recited
- We tried our hand at writing our own poems and were pleasantly surprised with the results.
- Attendees left with numerous handouts. (Copies are available from Julie.)

Our second tune up suggestion is to be sure to include Listening, Speaking, Reading and Writing activities in every session, using the Core materials and supplementing with additional resources. Include poetry, mysteries, proverbs and even jokes. Then discuss meanings, predictions, author's purpose, etc.

Our third tune up suggestion is called "Wait Time". Allow your student time to think before answering. Count to yourself slowly 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. This allows your student the opportunity to think and process a response. This gently affirms the student's responsibility to respond.

Our last tune up suggestion is to have your student submit a poem of his choice for our Soup and a Good Book Event in March. We are available to help.

**WALC would like to thank our grant funders, whose generosity and commitment sustains WALC in our mission to provide literacy skills to our students.**

**BCM Foundation  
City of Whittier  
East Whittier Lions Club  
Whittier Sunrise Rotary Club  
Weingart Foundation  
Whittier/Hacienda Heights Newcomers Club**

## Upcoming Events

Tutor Recognition Week  
December 8 - 11, 2014

WALC Center Closed  
Dec. 22, 2014 - Jan. 2, 2015

Tutor Training  
January 17, 24, and 31, 2015

## 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

12911 Hadley St.  
Whittier, CA 90601

Phone: 562-698-6598  
(To send a fax, please call Julie)

Email:  
[walcread@verizon.net](mailto:walcread@verizon.net)

Web Site: [walcread.org](http://walcread.org)



Find us on:  
**facebook®**

Be sure to "Friend"  
Whittier Area Literacy  
Council on Facebook