

SPRING 2025

STUDENT & TUTOR NEWS

Literacy Volunteers of Washington County



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ANNOUNCEMENTS AND EVENTS

Literacy Volunteers of Washington County will close for spring break from April 14-18 and reopen on April 21.

We will also be closed Monday, May 26 for Memorial Day.

Links for Literacy will be Monday, June 9, 2025.

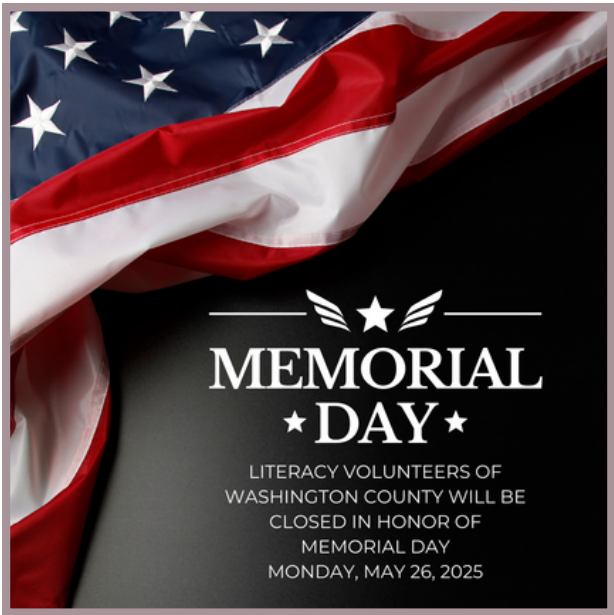


TUTOR HOURS
DON'T FORGET!

Important Tutor Information

Off-Site Tutor Reporting Form

If you meet your student off-site (not at the LVWC office), please use this form to submit your hours.



Upcoming Tutor Gatherings		
March 31	April 28	May 19
11:30am-12:30pm	11:30am-12:30pm	11:30am-12:30pm
LVWC, Westerly	Kingston Free Library, Kingston	LVWC, Westerly

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SPOTLIGHT

Pedro Tzoc and Todd Dresser

We have been meeting since the fall of 2022 on Wednesday evenings at the Westerly Public Library. Pedro's goal has been to complete the GED. After the GED, Pedro would like to enter a program to be an electrician. Since 2022, he has completed 3 of the 4 tests for the GED: Math (April, 2024), Language Arts (February, 2025), and Social Studies (February, 2025). He just has the science test remaining. The goal of being an electrician is in sight! Pedro is even thinking about the possibility of college!

Written by Pedro and Todd.



SPOTLIGHT

URI Graduate Village Conversation Class

The URI Graduate Village conversation class began in November 2016 under the guidance of Barbara Oberle and remains a vital component of Literacy Volunteers of Washington County.

Initially, the class enjoyed strong attendance, but like many others, it experienced a decline during the pandemic. Nonetheless, this did not deter the class, which adapted by transitioning to Zoom meetings. Now that the pandemic has subsided, the URI Graduate Village conversation class is once again flourishing, offering both in-person and online options for participants. This is great for those who have returned to their home countries but wish to stay involved.



Over the years, many tutors have joined Barbara in supporting this conversation class. Currently, Anne Haviland-Martin serves as a consistent tutor, while Jamie Gardiner, who relocated to Maryland, contributes whenever possible via Zoom.

When asked about her experiences volunteering with this group, Barbara expressed that she gains a wealth of knowledge about various countries and cultures.



URI

**GRADUATE
VILLAGE**



**CONVERSATION
CLASS**

TUTOR TIPS

by Barbara Heuer

"We have met the enemy and he is us"
Walt Kelly's Pogo

Have you ever tried to learn something new as an adult? Like Italian or the clarinet or mail merge? If so, you know what a process it is. Proficiency doesn't happen overnight. Some days you're on top of it; other days you've forgotten everything. On your path to mastery (or good enough), you face detours, peaks and valleys. You are often afraid of making mistakes. You may have felt nervous when called upon to show progress (a form of test or performance anxiety).

The same holds true for your students, of course. They are motivated to improve their English speaking, reading and writing skills to better their family and work situations. But learning the unruly English language (forget about idioms and accents!) is a formidable challenge. At LVWC, we (staff and tutors) try to provide a safe, welcoming place with one-to-one individual attention, tutor and student. It is well documented that we learn by making mistakes. But when we are afraid of doing so, our learning is slowed. We tend not to engage when we feel nervous or fearful.

In the last Tutor Tips column, I mentioned components of successful sessions with your students. Focusing, asking questions, listening actively, repeating, reinforcing and ending with a success, however small, were listed. (You've heard these before.) These strategies should be embedded in a safe environment where your student feels relaxed enough to make the inevitable mistakes.

When students register with LVWC and ask for a tutor, we try to impress upon them that this will be a partnership, requiring effort from both tutor and student. They may be appropriately nervous entering into an unknown situation. Tutors, too. But as you work together, you build trust. They feel more comfortable and engage/participate more. Your respectful tutoring provides the best environment. Ideally, as you navigate the uneven path to literacy together, you're both learning and making mistakes with gusto!

Thank you for joining the journey so graciously. Comments welcome!

Happy Spring!
Barbara Heuer 😊

THE BLOCK ISLAND BEAT!

As spring approaches and the tourist season goes into high gear, our Block Island conversation class will take a break for the tourist season starting in May and will start up again in the fall.

We are still matching tutors with students, however.

FREE CONVERSATION CLASS

WHEN: TUESDAYS FROM 6:00 P.M. TO 7:00 P.M.

WHERE: ISLAND FREE LIBRARY,
9 DODGE STREET
BLOCK ISLAND

LED BY JOANNE WARFEL



**CONVERSATION CLASS
BLOCK ISLAND**

Free conversation class for adult English language learners.

When: Tuesdays
Time: 6-7pm
Where: Island Free Library

40 YEARS LITERACY VOLUNTEERS of Washington County
and growing!

www.literacywashingtoncounty.org

The poster features a circular inset image of the Island Free Library building and a colorful illustration of a diverse group of people.

DORCAS INTERNATIONAL

A big thank you to Dorcas International's Program Director Tatyana Tsangarakis-Almeida and Staff Attorney Cecily Kerr Zieger for coming down to Westerly and speaking to us about the immigration process, upcoming changes, and immigrant rights.

About 55 people attended our Immigration Lawyer Event held in the Westerly Library auditorium and via Zoom on Wednesday, February 19.

If you are interested in viewing the recording of this event, please contact Theresa at 401-596-9411 or email at lvwctgstaff@gmail.com.

**Click here to learn more
about Dorcas
International.**



DORCAS INTERNATIONAL
INSTITUTE OF RHODE ISLAND

CURRENT CLASSES



FREE CONVERSATION CLASS

For adult English language learners at the
URI Graduate Village Community Center

Learn English
and
make friends!



Access by
Zoom, too.

Join us!



URI Graduate Village

Type: Conversation Class--Hybrid (in person and on Zoom)

When: Mondays, 5:30-7:00pm

Where: URI Graduate Village Community Center, 2900 Kingstown Road, Kingston, RI 02881

Email: Barbara at oberlejj@verizon.net to register for free

LVWC Center

Type: Conversation Class--In person

When: Tuesdays & Wednesdays,
11:00am-12:00pm

Where: 7 Elm Street (Christ Church),
Westerly, RI 02891

All levels welcome--no registration required.



Conversation Opportunities Online

ELL Beginner Class on Zoom
Mondays from 10 am-11:30 am

ELL Conversation Groups on Zoom
Tuesdays from 6 pm-7 pm
Wednesdays from 5:30 pm-6:30 pm

These classes are free and open to any
adult English language learner.

Click Here: Email Brigid for Zoom Link

ELL Conversation Groups (Zoom)

Thursdays
10:00 AM - 11:00 AM
Online event

Description: Practice speaking English in
an informal setting with Community
Literacy Council volunteers online.

ELL Conversation Classes from Literacy
Volunteers of Kent County

Tuesday mornings from 10:00 - 11:30 AM
East Greenwich Free Library (82 Peirce St.,
East Greenwich, RI 02816)

Zoom Meeting (link provided after sign up):
Wednesday Nights from 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Contact Brigid Pigott,
Literacy/Volunteer Coordinator for
the Zoom link.
Email: bpigott@somervillema.gov
WhatsApp: +1 617 366 7684
Office: 617 623 5000 x 2935

Click Here for More Information

Click Here for More Information

Online Conversation Opportunities

Visit our website to learn about Zoom
conversation classes from other literacy
organizations that are open to all.

www.literacywashingtoncounty.org/classes-gatherings