

Ionia County Literacy Council

Winter 2010-2011

Special points of interest:

- Tutor Recognition Dinner
- *Curious George in the Snow*
- Two New Board Members
- Great Grown-up Spelling Bee

Board of Directors

Norrie Slater, Chair
Sr. Kathleen Kaiser,
Vice Chair
Linda Stewart,
Treasurer
Vicki Bradley,
Secretary
Olga Albert
Sue Kessler
Perla Paredes
Marilyn Stock
Cristina Velasco
Vicky Wagner



The Ionia County
Literacy Council is
funded in part by a
Workforce Investment
Act, Title II, Grant.

The Ionia County Literacy Council year in review

The past twelve months have been very eventful for the Ionia County Literacy Council. We added four new members to our board of directors: Cristina Velasco and Linda Stewart from Ionia, and, most recently, Vicky Lewis Wagner from Saranac and Marilyn Stock from Portland.

During March, which has been designated national reading month, we provided free books to nearly 830 first graders in every elementary school in Ionia County, including public, private, charter, faith-based, and one-room country schools. The books were delivered to first-grade classrooms by literacy council volunteers, who then read a copy of the book to each first-grade class.

We held a tutor-recognition luncheon in May to pay tribute to those outstanding tutors who have given so much of their time to the adult students in our county.

We created a new logo, which we believe more closely represents literacy. It will be included on our brochures once our current stock has expired. In the meantime, it is on our letterhead and website.

Funding for the literacy council comes from Workforce Investment Act (WIA) Title II and Ionia/Montcalm United Way grants, individual and corporate donations, and fundraising, all of which enable us to provide free services to the community.



New Logo

The literacy council has become a member of Region 7, a state-wide initiative to streamline and improve adult education services. Region 7 is comprised of all adult education, community colleges, literacy councils, and Michigan Works offices from a four-county region: Ionia, Montcalm, Isabella and Gratiot.

During the past twelve months the Ionia County Literacy Council served 114 students: 89 received tutoring in reading and math and 25 received tutoring in English as a second language.

Sixteen dedicated tutors provided instruction to these students, either in small-group settings or individually in a public location, usually a community library.

Our focus during the next 12 months will be to increase our funding base in order to train more tutors and reach more students. We have begun to include school-age students in our tutoring program and plan to expand that. Our hope is to have a full family literacy program in which children and parents learn together.

Our thanks to all of you who share our vision of making sure Ionia County adults can read and become contributing members of our community.

Gayle Thompson
Executive Director

Tutor recognition dinner



Doha Orban addresses guests at the May 2010 tutor recognition dinner.

The Ionia County Literacy Council Board of Directors honored its tutors in May with an appreciation dinner. Several students attended the festivities as well. Board members brought their favorite dishes to pass for all to enjoy.

After dinner, Ionia County Literacy Council Board Chair Norrie Slater expressed her gratitude to the literacy council tutors for their dedication to their students and our program.

Executive Director Gayle Thompson echoed Ms. Slater's sentiments and presented certificates of appreciation to the tutors. In addition, Joan Boog received recognition as the literacy council's newest tutor, and Charlott Perry was recognized as the tutor who had the most students at one time.

Recognition for tutoring the most number of years went to Rita Perry, who, at 92 years old,

was an active tutor until losing her battle with a debilitating illness only one week prior to the recognition dinner. Mrs. Perry's husband, Gerard, accepted the certificate on her behalf.

Former Lebanese ESL student and board member Doha Orban addressed the group with remarks about her experience as a student and as a board member.

Without the work of our volunteer tutors, the Ionia County Literacy Council could not complete its mission. Many heartfelt thanks to their sense of community and dedication to the cause of literacy.

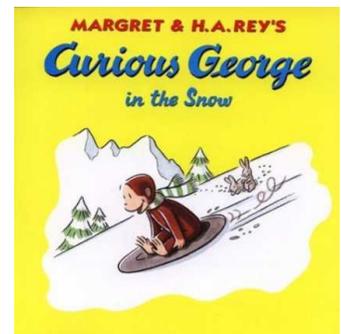
Ionia County first graders receive free book from Literacy Council

The Ionia County Literacy Council participated in the community once again during March is Reading Month in 2010. This year, in keeping with the theme of the Winter Olympics, the literacy council gave a copy of the book *Curious George in the Snow* to every first grade child in Ionia County.

Eight hundred twenty seven first graders from S.S. Peter and Paul in Ionia and St. Patrick's in Portland; Emerson, Jefferson, Boyce, and Rather elementary schools in Ionia; Oakwood Elemen-

tary in Portland; Saranac Elementary; Ellis Elementary in Belding; Threshold Academy; Gratton Academy; North LeValley School; Coon School; Haynor School; Ionia Seventh Day Adventist School; Faith Community Christian School; Woodland Elementary; Palo School; Twin Rivers in Muir; Clarksville Elementary; and Sunfield Elementary received a copy of the book.

Volunteers from the community, including literacy council board members and tutors, community li-



brarians and others, read to each first grade classroom.

The literacy council hopes that, by owning his/her very own book, every child will develop a love of learning.



Please help the Ionia County Literacy Council continue its mission by donating.

Send this form with your tax-deductible gift to

Ionia County Literacy Council, P.O. Box 288, Ionia, MI 48846

(You may also donate to us online at www.ioniacountyliteracycouncil.org)

I/we enclose \$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 other _____ to help increase literacy in Ionia County.

Name: _____ Telephone: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ Zip: _____

I am interested in becoming a tutor. Please contact me.

Meet two of our newest Board Members

Marilyn Stock is one of our newest board members, joining in November 2010. She has worked for Portland Community and Adult Education for 28 years and has been its director for the last four. Portland Community and Adult Education offers opportunities for youth and adults to earn their high school diploma, offers enrich-

ment courses to the community, hosts a summer school, and is a Lansing Community College Extension Center.

Marilyn is married, has three daughters, and "loves being a grandmother for the first time." She enjoys working in the yard, even though, "it's a game of cat and mouse, as I plant only to see if the dog will dig it up."

Marilyn earned a Bachelors Degree in Business from Davenport University. She states that, "It's been a great pleasure to work with our local adult students over the years, and I look forward to working with the Literacy Council and folks from Ionia County."



Marilyn Stock



Vicky Wagner

Vicky Lewis Wagner is another recent addition to our board, joining in November 2010. Vicky has a Master's Degree in Education with an endorsement as a Reading Specialist and is close to finishing a second Master's Degree in the Art of Teaching with endorsements as an Early Childhood Specialist and a Learning Disabilities Specialist. She also has credits towards a Master's in an Educational Psychology Degree.

Vicky has taught Early Childhood Education classes at Montcalm Community College for 11 years and also works in the Great Start Readiness Preschool Program at Saranac Elementary School. Previously, Vicky was the Ionia County Representative for Kent Regional 4Cs.

Vicky is married to John Wagner and says, "although I only gave birth to two children, I raised seven. As they have grown up and married, I have

now accumulated a whopping 14 children (no steps or in-laws here). We also have 13 grandchildren."

"I would love the whole world to have the opportunity to experience the joy of reading," she states. "That is my motivation for becoming involved with the Ionia County Literacy Council." Her most earnest desire is to "make a positive difference in the world."



Helping People Achieve Life
-Changing Goals

Ionia County Literacy Council

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How we're funded

In 2010, the Ionia County Literacy Council was awarded \$21,000 in funds from WIA II (the Workforce Investment Act, Title II), \$1,200 from the Ionia/Montcalm United Way, \$240 in fundraising, and \$2,000 in donations.

The majority of these funds go toward running our programs. All of our tutors and board members are volunteers and receive no compensation or stipends in any form.

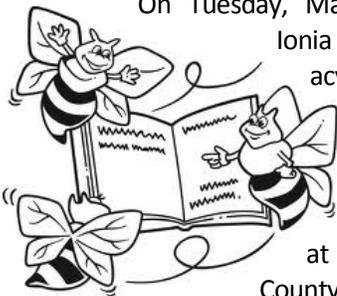
The literacy council has its office in the Ionia Michigan Works office on Adams Street in Ionia where we provide free, small-group math and reading classes to participants of Michigan Works. In addition, the literacy council conducts the adult basic education

testing of all Michigan Works program participants. As compensation for these services, Michigan Works provides the literacy council with office space, and telephone and internet service.

The literacy council has a paid half-time director and a data entry person who works five hours a week. Our future vision includes a full-time director and assistant in order to grow our programs and reach even further into the community, including having a family literacy program.

We wish to extend our sincerest thanks for your support in helping make Ionia County a literate community.

Literacy council to host adult spelling bee



On Tuesday, March 29, the Ionia County Literacy Council will host its first ever Great Grown-up Spelling Bee at the Ionia County Intermediate School District building. A sit-down dinner and silent auction are also planned for this fun-filled fund-raiser.

As its name implies, the spelling bee is for adults. Teams will consist of three members each. All teams will be on the "stage" at the same time spelling the same word.

Team members have 20 seconds to discuss among themselves the spelling of the word presented by the pronouncer, and then will need to write that word on a marker

board. All marker boards must be shown to the judges at the same time. Judges will determine correct/incorrect spellings.

Each team will be given two flags, one of which will be removed each time a word is misspelled. The last team standing is the winner and will take home the spelling bee winner's trophy for a year. The trophy will pass from winning team to winning team each year.

The cost to enter a team is \$200 and businesses are encouraged to sponsor a team. Businesses entering teams will receive free advertisement.

In addition, local businesses will be encouraged to supply goods/services for the silent auction. Names of participating businesses will be included in a thank-you in

local newspapers, as well as on the literacy council website. This will be an excellent way of getting new customers into your business.

The cost of participants to attend the fundraiser dinner is \$20. Team members eat free. The dinner begins at 6:00 p.m. and the spelling bee begins at 7:00 p.m, followed by a break at 8:00 for the silent auction.

Adult spelling bees are held all over the country and have proven to be successful fundraisers for literacy councils, not to mention the jolly good time had by all attending.

For more information about the spelling bee and how you can participate, call the literacy council at 616-527-1360, ext. 116. We look forward to seeing you there!