



One in ten Frederick County adults is functionally illiterate.  
Together we can end illiteracy.

2017 Annual Report

# LITERACY COUNCIL FREDERICK COUNTY, MD

EMPOWERING ADULTS THROUGH ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS



## New Literacy Council Website

If you're a regular visitor to the Literacy Council's website, you're probably surprised by its brand-new look. We hope you're finding the site is more responsive, more informative, and more visually representative of the important services our organization provides.

The idea to create a new website came about two years ago, initiated by concerns that the original website was not mobile device-friendly, didn't show up readily in searches, and was hard to maintain. Public relations professional Scott Grove donated his time and expertise to help us determine our needs and expectations for an improved web presence.

The Ausherman Family Foundation awarded a Capacity Building Grant that allowed us to hire a professional team. The grant covered website design and construction by Jean Peterson Design, video production by Digital Bard, and photography by C. Kurt Holter. Three new video clips were developed from the perspective of our ESL and Basic Literacy students, and tutors.

Website – continues page 4



## Literacy Council Receives Rotary Grant

*Seen left to right back row: Michelle Shipley, RCF; Jeff Grills and Lisa Bruck, Co-Directors of FCPS's; Rick Simons, RCF; Bob Robey, East Frederick Rising; Nancy Thrasher, RCF; Shari Scher, President & Founder, Children of Incarcerated Parents; Tony Checchia, RCF; Corey Shorb and Susan Hood, Up and Out Foundation; Joanne McCoy, RCF; Norrine Haas, RCF. Front row, left to right: Susan Thornton, Other Voices; Laurie Fisher, Literacy Council of Frederick County; Linda Clark, Sheriff's Ranch; Suzi Borg, Mental Health Association.*

The Rotary Club of Frederick recently awarded the Literacy Council a \$12,000 Significant Partnership Grant to expand the Council's workplace programs over the next year. The Council's workplace program helps low-literate employees find and keep sustainable employment by teaching them English language skills. The program will also help employers retain a better-educated workforce and reduce turnover.

For the past three years, the Literacy Council has been conducting workplace classes for kitchen workers in several downtown Frederick restaurants, and most recently at Dutch's Daughter Restaurant. Our workplace restaurant English classes have been popular with both employers and employees, and we will continue to expand this program. Many thanks to the Rotary Club of Frederick!

## Literacy in the Workplace



*Congratulations to kitchen staff at Ayse Meze Lounge (left) and Dutch's Daughter Restaurant (right) who participated in an 8-week workplace English class taught at the restaurants this year. Ayse Meze owner Nezih Pistar is seen with instructors Denise Dertzbaugh and Marianne Dacey. A similar recognition took place at Dutch's Daughter where Manager Jeff Schenkel joined instructors Barbara Kippen and Andy Zarick.*

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS & STAFF

**Catherine Cox**  
*President*

**Richard Haney**  
*Vice President*

**Patricia Hanberry**  
*Secretary*

**Lisa Myers**  
*Treasurer*

**Richard Adams**  
*Director*

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*Board Member Emeritus*

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*Director*

**April Lee**  
*Director*

**John Tisdale**  
*Director*

**Geordie Wilson**  
*Director*

**Holly Bohman, Catherine Coundjeris  
& Karen Nagy**  
*Volunteer ESL Program Coordinators*

**Lynn Bruton**  
*Volunteer Basic Literacy Program  
& In-Service Coordinator*

**Freida Pryor**  
*Volunteer Materials Coordinator*

**Evonne Rogers**  
*Volunteer Classes Coordinator*

**Laurie Fisher**  
*Executive Director*

**Diana R. Halleman**  
*Office Manager/Volunteer Coordinator*

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### Programs & Services

Basic Literacy • Workplace Literacy  
English as a Second Language  
Citizenship • Prison Literacy  
Health, Math & Computer Literacy  
Beginning Writing, Conversation  
& Pronunciation Classes

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Frederick MD 21701  
[www.frederickliteracy.org](http://www.frederickliteracy.org)  
[info@frederickliteracy.org](mailto:info@frederickliteracy.org)  
301-600-2066



### President's Message

Catherine Cox  
*President of the Board of Directors*

For over a decade I've been a volunteer with the Literacy Council of Frederick County, and I'm honored now to be its board president.

I met my first tutors and students while I was working in the office. I saw applicants' faces light up when they learned that we could help them and that their lessons would be free. A number of them, immigrants from other countries, questioned me about why people would volunteer so much time to teach strangers. I've never felt more patriotic than when explaining that volunteerism is an important component of American society.

Our tutors have dedication, courage, and imagination. They are rocks. There are no words of praise sufficient for them. Our students are some of the most dedicated people I've ever met. I imagine working two jobs while raising a family. Would I be able to summon the determination and energy to attend tutorials or classes? But they do.

We do great work at the Literacy Council. We give our adult learners the tools they need to improve their own lives – and to enter into full participation in our community here in Frederick County. At year's end I am full of gratitude to our tutors and other volunteers, to our staff, and to all the individuals, businesses, and foundations who support us and make this endeavor possible. Thank you!

[ccox@frederickliteracy.org](mailto:ccox@frederickliteracy.org)



### Executive Director's Message

Laurie Fisher  
*Executive Director*

From my viewpoint at the base of our spiral staircase, I have the pleasure of greeting our students and tutors when they arrive each day. As I watch our students climb up the circular stairs to join their tutors for their weekly sessions, I can't help but think that our staircase is symbolic of the journey that each student is traveling to achieve their goals, step-by-step, sometimes uphill, sometimes down. Our students are on their own individual journeys to learn to read or speak English, and their passage has many stops along the way before they reach their destination -- whether it is to get a better job, a driver's license, pass their citizenship exam or to read to their children and help them with homework. At first they are hesitant, but after a few weeks, our students' faces light up when they arrive, begin their upwards climb and are warmly greeted by their volunteer tutor. When they leave, they are smiling and happy, going out into our community with new-found confidence and hope.

I am forever thankful for our more than 150 volunteers who accompany our students on their journeys, going above and beyond their weekly tutoring sessions, as companions, advocates and cheerleaders giving over 14,400 hours of your valuable time this past year. I am also thankful for the donors, foundations, and businesses who together make it possible for the Literacy Council to carry out its work; to our fellow nonprofits with whom we join to meet the basic needs of our neighbors; and finally to our students and their families who have entrusted this part of their journey to the Literacy Council.

[lauriefisher@frederickliteracy.org](mailto:lauriefisher@frederickliteracy.org)

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### Literacy Council Mission Statement

*To teach adults in Frederick County the reading and other English language skills they need to provide for their families and contribute to the well-being and prosperity of our community.*



# New Board Members & Program Coordinators



James Grissom, MD



April Lee



Geordie Wilson



Holly Bohman



Linda Bruton



Karen Nagy



Evonne Rogers

Please welcome our new board members, who individually and collectively bring a wealth of professional experience and leadership in the Frederick County community. James Grissom, MD, is a retired physician and Literacy Council tutor. April Lee is co-owner of Lee Building Maintenance (with her husband, Jason). Geordie Wilson is the publisher of the *Frederick News-Post*.

Please also welcome our new volunteer program coordinators: (from left to right) Holly Bohman, Linda (Lynn) Bruton, Karen Nagy and Evonne Rogers who join Catherine Coundjeris. Together they have over 85 years of experience in education. They have generously volunteered their time and talents to help support our tutoring program and small group classes.

They are available for meetings, emails, and phone calls to be of assistance in any way they can. We are now offering Tutor Chats at the office every third Wednesday from 3:00 until 4:00 p.m. for tutors to come in and share their experiences, and Tutor In-Service presentations.

## Council Provides Meaning and Connection for Students and Tutors

by Julie Heifetz

At 68, I had been retired for a year and was looking for a way to use my training, skills, and love of people and their stories. I had talked with and written books about Holocaust survivors and had thought a lot about the resilience they'd needed to start over again. Today, adults who emigrate to our county have many opportunities, but also many struggles. They too require resilience, and can't move forward without learning English. I wanted to help ease their way, so I found the Literacy Council of Frederick County, which offers a supportive, caring place for students and tutors to connect with others in the pursuit of the English language. I don't know who benefits more, the student or the tutor.

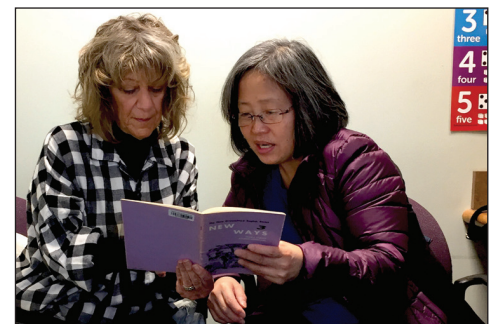
Both students I tutor are from South Korea. Eun Hee is in her 30's. She was raised in rural Korea and married a Korean-American man she met in this country. An outgoing and sociable person in Korea, she seemed depressed and withdrawn when we first met. She felt isolated and was very self-conscious about knowing little English. I became not only her tutor, but her first American friend. We worked on grammar, vocabulary, and especially pronunciation. "My tongue, it doesn't work," she used to say. Now, after two years, she can pronounce most words clearly and she speaks with more confidence and joy. Surprised by her own success, she sees herself as a good student for the first time in her life. I

acquainted her with Baker Park, and we visited the Botanical Garden by Metro. I encouraged her to take classes at FCC's ESL program, and she and her husband came to my home for a meal. Eun Hee's charming personality shines through, and she has made many other new friends. Eun Hee is happy now with her life in the USA. She plans to take the citizenship exam in another year.

Young Sil was raised in Seoul, where she was an award-winning student. Due to her father's sudden illness, she had to take care of her house and little brother, and her studies suffered. She did not go to college, but worked in a bank and got married. She came to the USA with her husband and children, and for 26 years she worked in different jobs here, but without learning English. Her children finished with college, she says, "Now, it is my turn." She still works at her husband's business but is a dedicated student. She does her homework after work, often studying until 3:00 a.m. She passes each level of our books saying, "Again. I need to do it again," and will not go on to the next level until she feels she remembers and can do it all perfectly. The same is true of her classes at FCC. She has made new friends now, which thrills her. She smiles constantly but is still hesitant in speaking. She says I am her American mom. She is a proud citizen of the United States and is hungry to continue her education.



Eun Hee and tutor Julie Heifetz



Young Sil and tutor Julie Heifetz

I feel tremendous gratitude to the Literacy Council for the opportunity to be involved in the lives of such industrious and engaging people, surrounded by other skillful, caring tutors with fascinating backgrounds, and a staff who want to help others become happy, productive contributors to our community.

## Beth Lowe Honored With DAR Award

In September, Past President of the Board, Beth Lowe, received the Daughters of the American Revolution – Carrollton Manor Chapter Community Service Award for 2017 for her many contributions to the work of the Literacy Council of Frederick County.

“Beth has done so much for the Literacy Council and it was wonderful to see this recognized. Her heart is as big as her smile, and that’s saying something,” said Catherine Cox, current board President.

Beth joined the Board in 2011 and plunged right in, volunteering for the strategic planning committee, helping to develop a 5-year plan for the organization. She recently served as Board President from 2015-17. Beth shares her expertise from State Farm in the field of change management with our tutors and staff, and helped to facilitate our new collaboration with Frederick Community College’s Adult Education Program. She has helped to lead the annual Celebration of Achievements and supported a new annual Literacy Council fundraiser – Scrabble Mania for Literacy! Early in 2016, Beth spoke at a DAR chapter meeting about the Literacy Council’s

mission and volunteer recruitment. As a result, the chapter decided to spend its 2016 Day of Service volunteering to paint the Literacy Council’s new classroom, with Beth also pitching in. The successful partnership has continued, with Beth coordinating a book donation from Carrollton Manor, resulting in a donation of six specialized textbooks for the Literacy Council’s lending library for its 100+ volunteer tutors.

“You can tell from working with Beth, and listening to her presentations, that she has a passion for the work of the Literacy Council. This passion, combined with her professional experience and the many hours she volunteers, has helped progress the mission of the Council and awareness in the community,” said Karen Lucas, Carrollton Manor Chapter.



## Think Planned Giving!

Have you thought about planned giving? Board President Catherine Cox is writing her will and asked Board Member Emeritus Caroline Gaver (seen right) about planned giving.



**Caroline:** I became involved with the Literacy Council in 1975 because the people who worked on our farm couldn’t read. It got me interested in how you can help an adult who can’t read. So I signed up for a tutor workshop. **Catherine:** And you worked with Betty Seligmann, right? The woman after whom our Community Foundation fund is named?

**Caroline:** Yes. Betty and I became very good friends. She and her husband, Ed, were two of the most genuinely nice people I have ever known. Betty had a magnetic personality. She was pretty much a full-time volunteer—the board president for a time, a tutor and trainer, and the student-tutor coordinator until she became ill and died.

**Catherine:** My husband and I are re-writing our wills this year. If I leave money to the Literacy Council of Frederick County, should I name the Betty Seligmann Literacy Endowment Fund in my will?

**Caroline:** You can leave money directly to the Council through the Seligmann Fund, or you could establish your own Community Foundation fund to support the Literacy Council. My husband and I have designated the Seligmann Fund in our wills. When I received the Community Foundation Wertheimer Fellow award a few years ago, I put that money into the Seligmann Fund. [Caroline was also the 2015 recipient of the Governor’s Lifetime Achievement Award.] **Catherine:** You’ve given more than 40 years of service to the Council. Why did you decide to leave it money, too?

**Caroline:** It responds to a need that will never go away. Being able to read and to use language is the basis for doing everything else. You have to be able to read and to speak English in this country.

For more info about planned giving, visit the Literacy Council’s website or contact the Community Foundation of Frederick County.



## Holiday Book Drive

The Council’s 11th annual Holiday Book Drive, in partnership with Curious Iguana and Barnes & Noble, collected over 4,000 new books for children in 16 FCPS schools participating with Blessings in a Backpack.

### Website – continued from page 1

We are indebted to the Ausherman Family Foundation for their generosity and to the creative people who worked so diligently (and patiently) with us throughout this process. We’re also grateful to the many adult learners and volunteers who offered helpful feedback and participated in interviews and photography sessions. We think our new website will be more effective in reaching adults who need our literacy services, as well as people who might be interested in tutoring. It is easier for our adult learners, volunteers, and donors to use. Key web pages are available in Spanish. But please tell us what you think of our new website! We’d love your feedback. Call the Literacy Council office at 301-600-2066 or email [info@frederickliteracy.org](mailto:info@frederickliteracy.org).



## 2016-2017 Donors

# Thank You! We Couldn't Have Done It Without You!

### \* Event Sponsors

#### Businesses

Bartlett Tree Experts\*  
Crisifulli's Cheese Shop  
Curious Iguana Book Store\*  
First United Bank & Trust\*  
Frederick County Bank\*  
Gaver Farm\*  
Jean Peterson Design, Inc.\*  
Lawyer's Signature Settlements, LLC\*  
Leidos Biomedical Research, Inc.\*  
Mid-Atlantic Hispanic Chamber of Commerce\*  
Plamondon Cos., Inc.\*  
PNC Bank\*  
Pryor's Nursery\*  
Sandy Spring Bank\*  
Shockley Honda, Inc.\*  
Wonder Book & Video\*  
Woodsboro Bank\*

#### Foundations,

#### Trusts & Grants

Aushman Family Trust  
Betty Seligmann Literacy Endowment Fund  
Community Foundation of Frederick Co.  
Delaplaine Foundation  
Eastern Panhandle Combined Federal Campaign  
Frederick County Community Partnership Grant  
Rotary Club of Carroll Creek  
Schwab Charitable Fund  
Helen J. Serini Foundation  
State Farm Companies Foundation  
The Nora Roberts Foundation  
United Way of Frederick County  
Unity Campaign for Frederick County  
Women's Giving Circle of Frederick County  
Yelp Foundation

### Religious

#### Organizations

St. Mary's Chapter,  
All Saint's Episcopal Church

#### In-Kind Donors and Sponsors

Ric & Ann Adams  
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Big Cork Vineyards  
Brewer's Alley  
Michael Campagnoli (Campagnoli, LLC)  
Carrabas Italian Grill  
Catherine Cox  
Crisifulli's Cheese Shop  
Valerie Dale  
Don DeArmon  
Denise Dertzbaugh  
Digital Bard \*  
Distillery Lane Ciderworks  
Sandy Doggett  
Dublin Roasters  
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Frederick News-Post\*  
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Julie Gaver (Mustloveshoes.com)  
Grove Public Relations  
Diana Hallemann  
Patricia Hanberry  
Imagination Center  
Le Parc Bistro  
Dam Le  
Leberz Oil & Vinegar  
Liberty Mountain Resort  
Beth Lowe  
McCutcheon's Apple Products  
Merryhaus Design  
Mountain Memories at Thorpewood, LLC  
Lisa & Eric Myers  
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Smooch Studios  
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Springfield Manor Winery & Distillery  
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Squirrel's Nest  
The Temple  
Thomas Scott Salon & Spa  
Hon. John H. Tisdale  
VanGilder Pottery  
Washington Wizards  
Way Off Broadway  
DinnerTheater

Weinberg Cntr. for the Arts  
the Wine Kitchen

#### Individuals

Richard & Ann Adams  
Mr. & Mrs. Anthony Allen  
Anonymous  
Anonymous  
Clare Archer  
Dorine Armstrong  
Maria Arthur  
Betty Baggett  
Sonia Bar-av  
Patricia Barber  
Julie Barnhill  
Sue Basford  
Harold Beall  
Judith Benedict  
Chad Bieber  
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Cindy Bladley  
Thomas Blair  
Gerald Blessing  
Mary Blessing  
Charlene Bonham  
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Annette Breiling  
Judith Brennan  
Alice Brouillet  
Michaela Brown  
Brunswick Book Club  
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Michael Bunitsky II  
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Martha Doggett  
Sandra Doggett  
Alex Dommerich

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H. Dubin  
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Norine & Theodore Haas  
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Gail Howard  
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Maria Laird  
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Linda Moser  
Stan Mount  
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Charles Murray  
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Maurice O'Leary  
Michael Paskowsky  
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Patrick Pexton  
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Freida Pryor  
Maylin Ramirez  
Ruth Ann Randall  
Kerry Reynolds  
Karen Richey  
Barbara Rickman  
Evonne Rogers  
Irene Romersa  
Frances Rondum  
Theresa Rundle  
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Linda Schakel  
Andy Schotz  
Regine Schwab  
Stanley Schweinfurth  
Bruce Seligmann  
Patty Siedling  
Margy Smariga  
Fred Spahy  
Mamie Springer  
Rohini & Visvalingam  
Sripanjalingam  
Shirley Stroup  
Annie Stup  
Jennifer Szabo  
Mr. & Mrs. E.H. Tabler  
Jacquelyn Tate  
Mimi Teahan  
Ruth Tiger  
Hon. John H. Tisdale \*  
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Maribeth Visco  
Maria Vodniza  
Natalie Warner  
Georgia Wells  
Karen Wenner-Pedersen  
Anne Wieliczko  
Marcus Williams

Geordie Wilson  
Renae Winnan  
Mr. & Mrs. Roger C. Wolf  
Michael A. & Kathryn A. Young  
Mr. & Mrs. Michael S. Young  
Andy Zarick

#### Gifts Made in Honor or In Memory of Others

Elizabeth Brady – In memory of Anita Jones  
Donna Dicks – In honor of Nan Principe  
Crockett's Birthday  
Letitia English – In honor of Elizabeth Loverro's retirement  
Lalie Eskay – In memory of Nick Craig  
Frederick Women's Civic Club – In honor of Catherine Cox  
Caroline Gaver – In memory of Anita Jones  
Caroline Gaver – In honor of Bob Moroney  
Sarah Gladhill – In memory of Anita Jones  
Carolyn Greiner – In honor of Rich and Paula Haney  
Norine & Theodore Haas – In memory of their son, Robert Haas  
Robert Hundertmark – In honor of Laurie Fisher's birthday  
Marita Loose – In honor of Annie Stup  
Patty Siedling – In honor of Karina Milstein

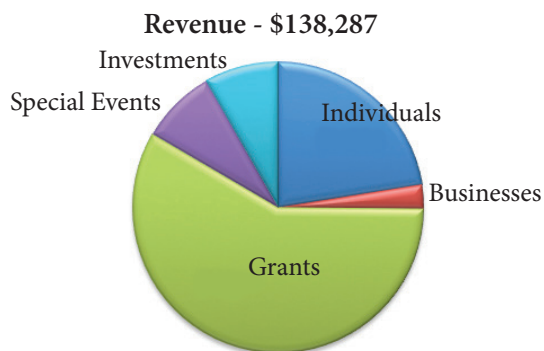
#### Community Partners

Asian American Center of Frederick  
Barnes & Noble Booksellers  
Blessings in a Backpack  
Dutch's Daughter  
Family Partnership  
Frederick Community College  
Frederick Co. Public Libraries  
The Judy Center

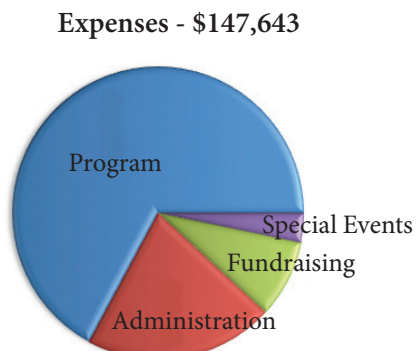
## Make a Contribution is To Our Community's Future

Create your legacy by giving the Gift of Literacy. The Community Foundation of Frederick County can assist you with planned giving resources.

## 2016-2017 Finances



Donations	Amount
Individuals	\$31,146
Businesses	\$3,636
Grants	\$80,568
Special Events	\$11,586
Investment	\$11,352
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$138,287</b>



Expense	Amount
Program	\$99,129
Administration	\$31,029
Fundraising	\$12,777
Special Events	\$4,708
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$147,643</b>

## Who We Served 2016-2017

Basic Literacy Adult Learners: 24  
 English as a Second Language (ESL)  
 Adult Learners: 240

## Growth in Volunteers & Students 2010-2017

98-154 volunteers (57%)  
 116-264 students (127%)

All Literacy Council direct services are provided by volunteers. Last year our 154 volunteers contributed over 14,591 hours of time, which equals approximately 364 40-hour work weeks. This equates to a monetary value of \$390,893 (based on a standardized hourly rate of \$26.79).

*In 2014, the board acknowledged the need for an Executive Director. This decision was made with the knowledge that for the short term it would require the use some of the Literacy Council's savings and investments in order to offset deficits and support the long-term growth of the organization.*

Thanks for Supporting Scrabble MANIA for Literacy!  
 Saturday, March 10, 2018, 2:00-5:00 p.m., Dutch's Daughter Restaurant

