

LITERACY BI-MONTHLY

McLit, Marathon County Literacy Council, Inc.

Vol. 2, Issue 11, August 2022

A Message From the McLit Team

The McLit family is heartbroken to share the news of Donald Huehnerfuss' passing on June 1, 2022. Don was a pillar here at McLit, always ready to lend a helping hand, share a smile or a joke, and ensure the literacy center's longevity through his financial support. He truly embodied the spirit of McLit with his passion for giving

back to the community, especially those too often underserved. He will be deeply missed, but his spirit lives on through all the lives he touched, inspired, and helped change for the better. In honor of Don, we are sharing a heart-felt column written by our very own Jodi Schreier.

Moon Tides and Fairy Dust

By JODI SCHREIER

It started with a look. Then a whisper. We all felt an invisible cool breeze. Then conversation began and phone calls. Connie's husband, Don, had passed away. We had to sit with this for a while.

Our board president, Denis, sends out an announcement via email. We appreciate his kind way of breaking the news. I think out loud, wishing for a Don card (a sympathy card for Connie that would give an essence of Don). I think of a rooster or a chicken because he loved these clucky farm friends and had a collection. My coworker, Ashley, opens the art workbook that she bought earlier in the day. A rooster appears on page 1! A rooster. On the first page. This will be done in honor of Don. This is clearly a sign.



Connie's right hand woman, Judy, takes Connie's "to-do" list and pitches in, delegating to make sure all items are done. Judy wants to take away the chance that Connie will be worried about work details. Not on her watch.

"Do you think you could work extra hours next week?" I ask as I turn to my coworker, Ligia. And before I can even get the words out, Ligia says with conviction "I will be here." Two Venezuelan students, now also volunteers, have filled a large gap. Marilu and Celin are here at 9 a.m. to make sure McLit opens on time. They are also here at 4 p.m. to make sure McLit closes safely. They tutor, greet, clean, do computer work, and pick up tasks they see are undone. We could

See MOON TIDES, page 2

Introduction

Hello all and welcome to McLit's summer newsletter! We look forward to sharing with you all that we've been up to for these past few months. First and foremost, we lost one of our "rocks" here at McLit, Don Huehnerfuss. We are heartbroken, but determined to honor his legacy through all that we do. Read on to learn more about his impact as well as various events, activities, partnerships, and people who have made summer 2022 one to remember. ■

Who we are

Our mission: *Improve quality of life through literacy.* We are a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to the students who enter our program(s). We provide free tutoring services to Marathon County and surrounding areas.

We support and promote literacy at all ages. Areas of instruction include reading, writing, math, finance, health, workforce, computers, ESL/ELL.

MOON TIDES, continued from page 1

not have kept things running without them! How amazing is the idea that the McLit staff, volunteers, and board members were meant to be together at this specific point in time, just at the moment of Connie's need to focus elsewhere. Game time! Learners continue to arrive for lessons and we switch our sad faces into smiles and energy. We proceed with our classes, because our students deserve the flow of knowledge to continue. We know that Connie and Don would like McLit to continue to touch lives.

This is the respect and appreciation we have for Don and Connie and all they have done for the community. What a duo to celebrate! Don with his handsome dress attire and his great sense of humor. He often made us giggle. And Connie, who some say has the best mental strength of anyone they know. She has been a true blue mother figure to many of our learners. Connie and Don fit together so wonderfully. Some perfectly fitted puzzles are not sold on a shelf or found in any game cabinet. They are the fit of a lifetime, crafted by unseen forces, moon tides and



Jodi Schreier

fairy dust. Sad, sad endings when we must say goodbye to a loved one here on Earth and happy beginning to Don on his new Heavenly chapter! We imagine that he has been greeted by friends, family, books and yes, the random chicken running wide open through the gates of eternity. I can see his smile now. ■



Don was at the heart of all things McLit. ABOVE LEFT: Don holds down the fort at the McLit booth during an area event. ABOVE RIGHT: Don tries out the Grinch mask used for the Breakfast with the Grinch fundraiser.

McLit: Your headquarters for summer reading!

BY JOHANNA NELSON

Summer is in full swing, and if you haven't already, it's time to crack open a book, curl up in your favorite reading spot, and get swept away to another world. We often hear about the benefits summer reading has for school-aged children. And while this is true, grownups should keep in mind that these very same benefits extend into adulthood.

According to librarian Ivy Woodward, summer reading for adults can introduce some helpful advantages for anyone working professionally, getting involved in their communities, or staying at home to enjoy some quiet time.

"You know, reading opens your mind. Once that mind is open like a parachute, the possibilities are endless," Woodward said. "Also, when you read, it improves your writing. It helps you put those sentences together, and it also helps your speech. However you write is how you speak."

Here at McLit, we have bookshelves full of books, just waiting to be chosen. Westerns, biographies, cookbooks, sci-fi, romance, thriller, fantasy, historical fiction, multicultural, magical realism, mystery, classical literature, young adult, children's and more - you name it, we've got it. And the best part? These books are free! You decide whether you want to borrow, keep, or pass on. As long as you are reaping the benefits of reading, we're happy.

So, next time you are in Wausau's downtown, think about stopping by. Put away your shopping list, trade the hustle and bustle of the marketplace for some peace and quiet, and start exploring the wonderful world of books. We have plenty of nooks to nestle into as well as complimentary coffee, tea, and other "necessities" to fully enjoy your reading respite. You'll leave feeling rejuvenated and ready to finish up those pesky errands.

To inspire and entice you, the McLit team has pulled together a list of good reads available here at the learning center. This is just a taste of what we have to offer, so we hope to see you soon. Happy reading!

- **Summer-themed**

The Weekenders by Mary Kay Andrews



Some people stay all summer long on the idyllic island of Belle Isle, North Carolina. Others come only for the weekends, and the mix between the regulars and "the weekenders" can sometimes make the sparks fly. Riley Griggs has a season of good times with friends and family ahead of her on Belle Isle when things take an unexpected turn. While waiting for her husband to arrive on the ferry one Friday afternoon, Riley is confronted by a process server who thrusts papers into her hand. And her husband is nowhere to be found. So she turns to her island friends for help and support, but it becomes clear that each of them has their own secrets, and the clock is ticking as the mystery deepens...

- **Cooking**

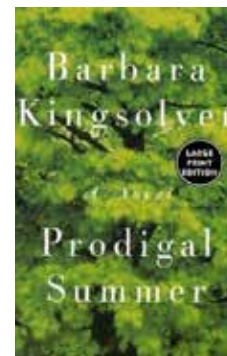
Down Home Cooking: The New, Healthier Way compiled by the editors of Reader's Digest



More than 450 favorite American recipes--from appetizers to desserts--have been carefully adapted to meet modern nutritional guidelines, in a cookbook that furnishes step-by-step directions, serving tips, variations, and nutritional information for each dish.

- **Contemporary Classics**

Prodigal Summer by Barbara Kingsolver



Barbara Kingsolver's fifth novel is a hymn to wildness that celebrates the prodigal spirit of human nature, and of nature itself. It weaves together

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SUMMER, continued from page 3

three stories of human love within a larger tapestry of lives amid the mountains and farms of southern Appalachia. Over the course of one humid summer, this novel's intriguing protagonists face disparate predicaments but find connections to one another and to the flora and fauna with which they necessarily share a place.

Pachinko by Min Jin Lee

National Book Award finalist

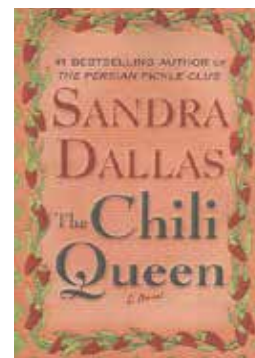
Pachinko follows one Korean family through the generations, beginning in early 1900s Korea with Sunja, the prized daughter of a poor yet proud family, whose unplanned pregnancy threatens to shame them all. Deserted by her lover, Sunja is saved when a young tubercular minister offers to marry and bring her to Japan. So begins a sweeping saga of an exceptional family in exile from its homeland and caught in the indifferent arc of history. Through desperate struggles and hard-won triumphs, its members are bound together by deep roots as they face enduring questions of faith, family, and identity.

- **Historical Fiction**

Paper Love: Searching for the Girl My Grandfather Left Behind by Sarah Wildman

Years after her grandfather's death, journalist Sarah Wildman stumbled upon a cache of his letters in a file labeled "Correspondence: Patients A–G." What she found inside weren't dry medical histories; instead what was written opened a path into the destroyed world that was her family's prewar Vienna. One woman's letters stood out: those from Valy—Valerie Scheftel—her grandfather's lover, who had remained behind when he fled

Europe six months after the Nazis annexed Austria. Obsessed with Valy's story, Wildman began a quest that lasted years and spanned continents. She discovered, to her shock, an entire world of other people searching for the same woman. In the course of discovering Valy's ultimate fate, she was forced to reexamine the story of her grandfather's triumphant escape and how this history fit within her own life.

The Chili Queen by Sandra Dallas

Even though life has been hard on Addie French, all her protective instincts emerge when she meets a friendless young woman on a train from Kansas to New Mexico. Emma Roby's brother is seeing her off to marry a man she has never met. And Emma seems like a lost soul to Addie—someone who needs Addie's savvy and wary eye. It isn't often that Addie is drawn to anyone as a friend, but Emma seems different somehow. When Emma's prospective groom fails to show up at the train depot, Addie breaks all her principles to shelter the girl at the Chili Queen, a place where men are "taken in and done for." But once Emma enters Addie's life, the secrets that unfold and schemes that are hatched cause both women to question everything they thought they knew.

The Book of Lost Friends by Lisa Wingate

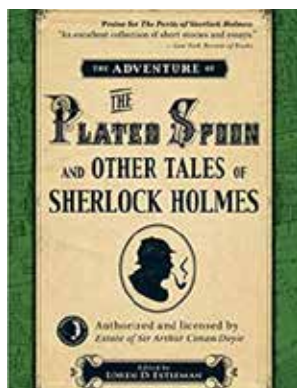
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READING, continued from page 4

From the bestselling author of *Before We Were Yours* comes a dramatic historical novel of three young women searching for family amid the destruction of the post–Civil War South, and of a modern-day teacher who learns of their story and its vital connection to her students’ lives.

- **Classics**

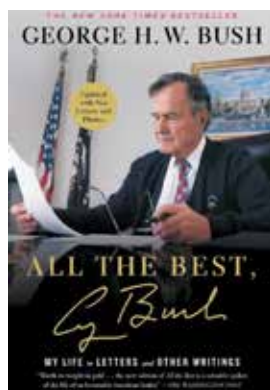
The Adventure of The Plated Spoon and Other Tales of Sherlock Holmes, edited by Loren D. Estleman



A collection of classic reprints and four original stories featuring Sherlock Holmes.

- **Nonfiction**

All the Best, George Bush: My Life in Letters and Other Writings by George Bush

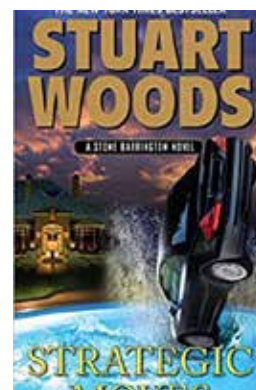


Fortunately, since former Pres. George Bush does not plan to write his autobiography; this collection of letters, diary entries, and memos, with his accompanying commentary, will fill that void. Organized chronologically, the volume begins with 18-year-old George's letters to his parents during WW2, when he was the youngest pilot in the Navy. Readers will gain insights into Bush's career highlights.

Readers will gain insights into Bush's career highlights, including the oil business, his two terms in Congress, his ambassadorship to the United Nations, his service as an envoy to China, his tenure with the CIA, and, of course, the vice presidency, presidency, and the post-presidency.

- **Thrillers**

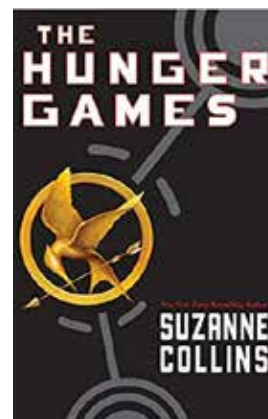
Strategic Moves by Stuart Woods



Stone Barrington is enjoying his usual dinner at Elaine's when his boss at Woodman & Weld, the law firm where Stone is "of counsel," walks in, sits down and hands Stone a check for one million dollars. It seems Stone's undercover dealings with MI6 had brought in a big new client for the firm, and they're willing to pay Stone a huge bonus and make him a partner. But almost as soon as he's taken the deal, Stone gets wind of an impending scandal that might torpedo his big promotion: it seems the lucrative new client he's introduced to the firm might be a devil in disguise...

- **Popular Series**

The Hunger Games (Book 1) by Suzanne Collins

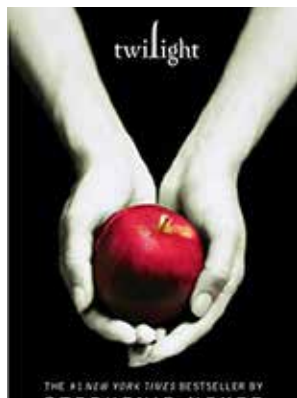


Winning means fame and fortune. Losing means certain death. The Hunger Games have begun. . . . In the ruins of a place once known as North America lies the nation of Panem, a shining Capitol surrounded by twelve outlying districts. The Capitol is harsh and cruel and keeps the districts in line by forcing them all to send one boy and one girl between the ages of twelve and eighteen to participate in the annual Hunger Games, a fight to the death on live TV. Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen regards it as a death sentence when she steps forward to take her

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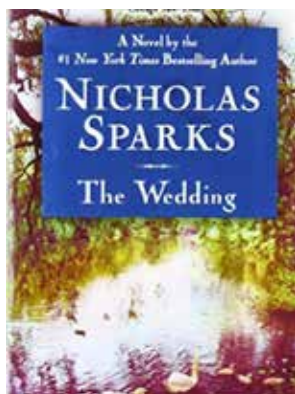
BOOKS, continued from page 5

sister's place in the Games. But Katniss has been close to dead before-and survival, for her, is second nature. Without really meaning to, she becomes a contender. But if she is to win, she will have to start making choices that weigh survival against humanity and life against love.

***Twilight* (Book 1) by Stephenie Meyer**

Isabella Swan's move to Forks, a small, perpetually rainy town in Washington, could have been the most boring move she ever made. But once she meets the mysterious and alluring Edward Cullen, Isabella's life takes a thrilling and terrifying turn. Up until now, Edward has managed to keep his vampire identity a secret in the small community he lives in, but now nobody is safe, especially Isabella, the person Edward holds most dear. The lovers find themselves balanced precariously on the point of a knife - between desire and danger.

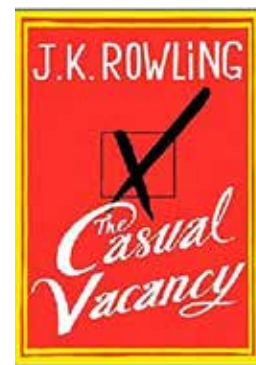
- **Sequels**

***The Wedding* by Nicholas Sparks (follow-up to *The Notebook*)**

After thirty years, Wilson Lewis is forced to face a painful truth: the romance has gone out of his marriage. His wife, Jane, has fallen out of love with him, and it is entirely his fault. Despite the shining example of his in-laws, Noah and Allie Calhoun, and their fifty-year love affair, Wilson himself is a man unable to express his true feelings. He has spent too little time at home and too much at the office, leaving the responsibility of raising their children to Jane. Now his daughter is about to marry, and his wife is thinking about leaving him. But if Wilson is sure of anything, it is this: His love for Jane has only

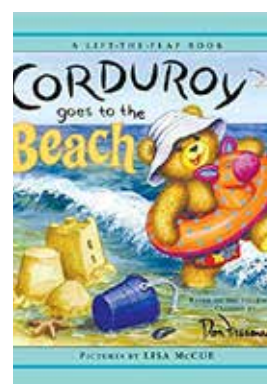
grown over the years, and he will do everything he can to save their marriage. With the memories of Noah and Allie's inspiring life together as his guide, he vows to find a way to make his wife fall in love with him...all over again.

- **Lesser-known books by famous authors**

***The Casual Vacancy* by J.K. Rowling**

When Barry Fairbrother dies unexpectedly in his early forties, the little town of Pagford is left in shock. Pagford is, seemingly, an English idyll, with a cobbled market square and an ancient abbey, but what lies behind the pretty façade is a town at war. Rich at war with poor, teenagers at war with their parents, wives at war with their husbands, teachers at war with their pupils.... Pagford is not what it first seems. And the empty seat left by Barry on the town's council soon becomes the catalyst for the biggest war the town has yet seen. Who will triumph in an election fraught with passion, duplicity and unexpected revelations?

- **Children's**

***Corduroy Goes to the Beach* by Don Freeman**

Corduroy and his friends are heading to the beach for a fun-filled day of playing by the sea. First they jump over the waves and fly kites, then it's time for a tasty picnic lunch and a special treat—ice cream! In the afternoon, Corduroy and his pals collect seashells and build sandcastles. Seven spreads filled with thirty-five flaps will keep small fingers happily busy. ■

A thank you from the executive director of McLit

Since the last newsletter a lot has happened in my personal life. As my husband and I were moving to a new house, my husband got sick and suddenly and unexpectedly passed away. I would like to make a tribute to Donald Huehnerfuss. He believed in me and in the idea that Marathon County truly needed a Literacy Council. Donald supported everything the Literacy Council did and has done. He financially supported the Literacy Council as well as becoming a strong volunteer in helping with office, maintenance, and financial skills. Don was always making sure that we were following the correct path and staying in good shape.

Donald's strength affected all who worked, volunteered, and tutored as well as the majority of the students at McLit. A huge turn out of support and appreciation was shown at his funeral. Since then many many people and possibly you, who is reading this, have shown me so much kindness. I want to thank



Connie Heidemann

you and express my gratitude for McLit and for myself personally as I continue with McLit. I hope to make Donald proud as well as you, our followers, students, and supporters of everything the Literacy Council can do. Thank you, Connie Heidemann.

P. S. I do not want to miss mentioning the exceptional work done by my staff to keep the office open and running smoothly. We at McLit have started a few Zoom classes in Spanish and have been promoting and successfully having many students also learning Spanish as well as Spanish speakers learning English. This has become a win-win situation and the classes have gotten large enough to become a Zoom meeting in areas farther away from Wausau and out of Marathon County. We are proud to announce our Spanish classes and English classes for Spanish. If interested please contact us. 715 679 6170 (call or text). ■

Literacy Events August-September 2022

Monday, August 8, 5:30 P.M. McLit board meeting.

Wednesday, August 31, 11:00 A.M. The Landing, Woodson YMCA, 707 N. 3rd St., Wausau. The Landing Literacy Book Club will discuss *Harlem Shuffle* by Colson Whitehead. Email mcclitofwausau@gmail.com or call 715-679-6170 for more information.

Thursday, August 11, 1:00 P.M.-2:00 P.M. Yawkey House Garden. 403 Mcindoe St., Wausau. Stories in the beautiful Yawkey House formal garden. Enjoy the flowers and sit under the pergola to hear a book or two. Email sdelconte@marathoncountyhistory.org or call (715) 842-5750 for more information.

Thursday, September 8, 1:00 P.M.-2:00 P.M. Yawkey House Garden. 403 Mcindoe St., Wausau. Stories in the beautiful Yawkey House formal garden. Enjoy the flowers and sit under the pergola to hear a book or two. Email sdelconte@marathoncountyhistory.org or call (715) 842-5750 for more information.

Monday, September 12, 5:30 P.M. McLit board meeting.

Friday, September 23-Sunday, September 25, Central Wisconsin Book Festival. See mcpl.us/cwbf for more information.

Wednesday, September 28, 11:00 A.M. The Landing, Woodson YMCA, 707 N. 3rd St., Wausau. The Landing Literacy Book Club will begin its new fall season with new books! Check the Landing for the latest handout listing the books. Email mcclitofwausau@gmail.com or call 715-679-6170 for more information.

McLit in Pictures: Learning Center



CHIP program provides health literacy for all

McLit now has a new health manual with resources and guidelines catered to the Wausau community. This is thanks to the help of two college interns through the Wisconsin Area Health Education Centers' community, public, and population health program known as the Community Health Internship Program, or CHIP. Our interns, Megan and Mario, worked diligently throughout the months of June and July,

meeting with area nonprofits, researching general and regional health systems, and compiling a list of resources for both mental and physical health issues. McLit extends a heartfelt thank you to our "Chippers," and looks forward to offering the new manual online at mclitofwausau.org and in print. Read on to learn more about our fabulous interns!

Feature Profile: Megan

What drew you to McLit as a site to complete your CHIP internship?

As I was looking through all of the different sites that the CHIP Program has to offer, the McLit site caught my eye. It explained how it is an education center for adult and child literacy as well as helping the underserved community, one of which was the refugees from Afghanistan. Being able to help all of these people caught my interest as this was not something that my hometown did.

What internship-related activities do you most enjoy doing, and why?

I enjoy going to all of the different outreach organizations to learn more about what they do for the community!

What has been a struggle?

With our research project being on making a healthcare booklet, figuring out how to make the healthcare process easier has been a struggle. There are not a lot of resources all in one place that are not easy to read and with our group being young, figuring out all of this information for ourselves has been a challenge.

How will this experience help you reach your academic and career goals?

This experience will help me better understand the needs of my community and how I can help them. As I make my way forward towards my goals, I will have the knowledge on how to handle local issues that arise in the healthcare setting. On the academic aspect, learning about all of these organizations along with their members, I can apply this information to my public health classes. Understanding the community and how their health can be impacted in all sorts of ways, from less accessibility to healthcare resources and other issues. From the first outreach organization that we visited, I have been able to see all of these things and learn the value of education regarding healthcare.

What is your major/minor, and how far along are you in schooling?

I am a biology/pre-med major at the University of Wisconsin- Stevens Point. This coming fall semester I will be a junior.

What made you decide to choose this career path?



I chose this career path because the healthcare place has been about all I can remember as my mom was the manager/registered nurse of Marshfield Clinic in northern Wisconsin. I have also gone through a couple injuries in high school that have made my decision very clear. By attaining a role as a physician, I believe that I will be able to make a good healthcare experience for everyone and make difficult decisions that can benefit my community.

List a few big takeaways from this internship experience

This internship experience has opened my eyes to the public health community in the Wausau area. I had no idea about all of the challenges different people face in their everyday lives. I also learned a lot about non-profit organizations and how they use their skills and ideas to provide resources to those in need.

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

In my freetime, I enjoy being outdoors. From fishing to swimming, I love to do it all. I also enjoy spending time with my friends and family as we like to have lots of fun together.

What are your favorite things to read?

My favorite things to read include many Colleen Hoover books as well as some medical education articles. ■

Feature Profile: Mario

What drew you to McLit as a site to complete your CHIP internship?

I am originally from Wausau and sought to serve the community. McLit sounded like an intriguing opportunity where I could work while gaining a greater understanding of the needs of the public. McLit educates to improve language and health literacy. These are essential components for a functioning community and being part of that objective excited me.

What internship-related activities do you most enjoy doing, and why?

I enjoy tutoring and completing projects where I get to see the direct impact. I enjoy every-day activities because I always have the opportunity to improve or learn a new skill.

What has been a struggle?

It has been a struggle putting the healthcare process together in our project in an easy-to-read manner. It was difficult trying to learn about health insurance for myself in order to be able to convey that information to others.

How will this experience help you reach your academic and career goals?

This experience gave me a better understanding of the healthcare needs of the community. I will be able to employ that knowledge to guide my future practices in the medical field. The new perspectives I attained from working with community members educated me in regards to prevalent healthcare problems and their roots. This experience perfectly matched my global health minor by demonstrating to me how access to health resources, lower socioeconomic status, and education plays a significant role in impacting the health of marginalized communities. Enjoying using my education outside of school affirms my interest in global/public health.

What is your major/minor, and how far along are you in your schooling?

I am a nutritional science major and a global health minor. I am going to be a senior in the upcoming fall at the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

What made you decide to choose this career path?

Nutrition and health have always been an interest to me and I truly enjoy learning and understanding the reasons for healthy habits. I have been inspired by my experiences in healthcare thus far and aspire to use my



passions and abilities as a future physician to benefit my community. As a physician, I will be able to professionally prioritize the health of individuals to improve longevity and quality of life.

List a few big takeaways from this internship experience

I have gained new perspectives from this experience as I have been able to work with members of the community who need the most help. I now understand some of the factors that influence the direction of people's lives, especially when it comes to literacy. I understand that literacy is more than reading and writing; literacy involves everything one must know in navigating their lives. I have learned that illiteracy is a public health issue as it directly influences decisions that affect the health of individuals.

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

Some of my hobbies that I regularly participate in include tennis, fishing, bowling, and other outdoor activities such as camping. I love to travel, explore new places, and dive into new experiences.

What are your favorite things to read?

I like to research and read about the history of different places, people, and events. I also like to read foraging books and articles. I find it fun to be able to identify and consume plants in the wild. ■



WISCONSIN AHEC
Area Health Education Centers

McLit in Pictures: Community Outreach

Business Expo: May 2022



World Refugee Day: June 2022



Feature Profile: Marilú, Assistant to the Director

What attracted you to McLit as a workplace?

In August 2021, I came to McLit to study English. I found that the people who work here want to help everyone who comes in and are very nice and polite. Our motto is: "Everyone is welcome." McLit is a great job opportunity, it's what I like and know, I work and learn a lot every day.

Seeing the McLit activities and the professional way the McLit staff conducts these activities, I began to participate in some of them as a volunteer.

In March 2022, I received my Employment Authorization, shared my joy and showed it to all the McLit staff. A few days later, I was surprised when McLit's director, Connie, approached to me to see if I wanted to handle McLit's financial and administrative matters, as well as possible mentoring. I feel that thanks to God and McLit, I am working in my first job in the U.S.A.

How long have you been with McLit?

As a student, since the end of August last year. With my job opportunity, since mid-April this year.

What are your main roles and responsibilities?

My main roles and responsibilities are to record all income and expense transactions in Quicken (personal finance and money management software). I do the bank reconciliation. I do end of the month reports of bank balances. Participation in exhibitions where McLit is. Update and register students, tutors, and volunteers in the database. As well as any other activity inherent to McLit.

I hope to do accounting, internal control, taxes, asset control, payroll, among many other things that I am sure I can contribute to McLit. I would like to learn about tax, business, and accounting processes in the United States.

What unique talents/insights do you bring?

Well, I'm from Venezuela, and I graduated as a public accountant from the Universidad Santa María (USM) in 1992. In 1995, I was certified at the USM as a specialist in finance. In 2013, I received my degree in business administration from the same university.

Due not only to my academic preparation but also to the skills I acquired during my 30 years of work, among other responsibilities, as vice president of audit of the Industrial Bank of Venezuela, internal auditor of the National Superintendency of Internal Audit, administration manager in Telecommunications Movilnet, I think I could contribute to McLit's objectives. I have characterized myself by my commitment, responsibility and institutional loyalty.

What are some of your favorite memories with McLit so far?

My first day I arrived at McLit, I was very scared. I did not know how to say "hello" in English.



Thank God, Jodi (McLit tutor) received me with joy and understanding. She greeted me in Spanish. She gave me confidence and understood that I wanted to study ESL. Since that day, she has been my teacher. I am very grateful for Jodi's patience and attention, which has allowed me to learn, understand, write, read in English. I am aware that I am on the right track, little by little my hands that at the beginning were frozen by fear, now have been warming up with the affection that I receive every day at McLit.

For me it is important to talk about how I got to McLit. That day I walked from my son's house. I was very afraid of getting lost and not being able to return. I took courage and walked with a map on the screen of my old cell phone, and I had no Internet. That day was strange. My fears were mixed with my desire to study English, but Jodi's welcome gave me confidence, I already have nine months as a student at McLit!

What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

I like to read, walk, meditate, and do yoga.

What do you like to read?

I like to read books, I recently reread a book I had read some time ago, *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, in Spanish. I have read in English *Three Cups of Tea* by Greg Mortenson, suggested by my teacher Jodi. Also, at the suggestion of another one of my teachers, Ligia, I read *Yes! We are Latinos* by Alma Flor Ada. Right now, I am reading aloud every night the book *A Midnight Clear* by Katherine Paterson with my fiancé Celin.

Any additional comments?

I am very happy to be part of the McLit team. Everyone's understanding every time I must communicate is very important to me. The job opportunity that Connie gave me and her confidence in me is of great value. I am infinitely grateful to each person at McLit. I continue to study day by day. I dream of the day when I speak to everyone almost like a native, when I am not scared by an unexpected question. I hope to laugh with my fellow McLit students about my initial conversations in English, I hope to laugh at every mistake I have made. I hope to laugh at all my fears and above all I hope to laugh with gratitude and happiness, for having arrived at McLit. ■

McLit in Pictures: Taste and Glow Balloon Fest 2022

Preparation: McLit team members made arts and crafts to raise money for local literacy education at this year's balloon festival.



Booth: McLit had a craft-filled booth during the balloon fest, featuring hand-made crafts. Mrs. Wisconsin (Sasha) also was present to support her cause, literacy education. She has helped us with a number of activities and events throughout the summer.



McLit in Pictures: Taste and Glow Balloon Fest 2022



An update on McLit's new Spanish as a Second Language program

By CELIN MEJIAS

Spanish is the second most spoken language in the United States. According to 2019 Census data, the official Hispanic population in the U.S. is 60.5 billion (18.4 percent of the U.S. population), with predictions that this percentage will continue to rise.

Based on that fact, by the middle of January 2022, McLit set up Spanish as a Second Language tutoring (SSL). SSL classes are free and are taught by Venezuelan native Celin Mejias, who has studied both the French and English languages, including time spent in France. Mejias also has participated as an engineer in business meetings focused on fiber optic submarine cable systems in the United States, Europe, China, and South America.

At the beginning, SSL classes were scheduled from 9

a.m. to 11 a.m. Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. Only one student attended the classes. Then two volunteers who were helping McLit with its Afghan refugee program liked the one-to-one method used by McLit to teach not only ESL but SSL too. So, two more learners were added to the classes, and by March, another two. Although McLit's first student couldn't continuously attend classes, he stopped by when his schedule permitted.

SSL tutoring continues to gain momentum and interest among community members.

The following table shows the number of students currently participating in SSL tutoring and total tutoring SSL hours/week (almost 20 percent of the tutor's activities).

Learners*	SSL Hours/day					Total Tutoring SSL Hours/Week
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	
Learner 1			2			2
Learner 2			2	2		4
Learner 3	1			1	1	3
Learner 4				1		1
Learner 5				1		1
Learner 6			1			1
Learner 7		1	1	1		3
Learner 8			1		1	2
Learner 9			1		1	2
Total	1	1	8	6	3	19

*To keep confidentiality, students' names have been changed to Learner 1, 2,3 ..9

METHOD:

Keeping students motivated has been one of the primary goals of McLit's SSL tutoring. Tutoring has focused on two strategic teaching objectives:

- **Motivation**
- **Phonic Comprehension**

Motivation: Based on Confidence and Fun

Confidence: How do you motivate students if you don't continuously promote self-confidence? No matter the level of Spanish language proficiency, you must

plant, water and nurture the self-confidence seed in each student.

Fun: How to make a class fun without the participation of the students, not only as learners, but also as teachers? Preparing recipes, books, dialogue performance, storytelling, and offering positive reinforcement is a fun and interactive experience in SSL tutoring.

Phonic Comprehension:

Unlike the English language, the vowels in Spanish only have one sound, no matter where they are placed in a word. On the other hand, the English language em-

See SSL, page 16

SSL, continued from page 15

phasizes consonants, and in general, each vowel has an unique sound. As a rule; however, the sound of the consonants in English and Spanish are very similar.

Amongst other things, to learn a foreign language is a matter of sound-repetition as well as comparison in some way with the native language.

Having said this, a continuous conversation, read-alouds, and establishing a correlation between sounds and words (phonics) comprise the second scope of the Mc Lit's SSL Tutoring.

Those interested in learning Spanish can contact Celin Mejias at 715-679-6170 or by email at celin@mcclitofwau-sau.org. ■



Wausau June 2022



Celin and Mary have some fun during an SSL class at McLit.



Celin, along with McLit tutors Marilú and Ligia, share insights from the McLit SSL program during Lunch at NTC: Sharing Learning Experiences.

McLit in Pictures: Comings and Goings

Parade Day: McLit was honored to participate in Wausau's Sesquicentennial Parade in July.



Big Thank You: Taylor was McLit's AmeriCorps volunteer this summer. She wore many hats during her time with us, and we will miss her lots!



McLit in Pictures: May-August 2022



ABOVE: Come visit McLit's new arts and crafts table, housed at the Learning Center on 515 N 3rd St. It features items handmade by our staff! If you see something you like, it's yours with a donation to McLit.



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