Dedicated to Literacy
A 30-Year History of Literacy Volunteers of Ontario County

Lynda McCurdy Hotra



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LVOC Timeline of Significant Events

1962 Literacy Volunteers originated in Syracuse, the idea of Ruth Colvin

1963 LV Cayuga started in Auburn, NY, LVA's second oldest affiliate

1964 New York State's Church Women United sponsored Literacy Volunteers

c.1966 Geneva Church Women United members discussed participation in Literacy Volunteers

1967 Marcia Lee returned to Auburn to receive training from LV Cayuga

LV Geneva held first workshop

LV Geneva achieved affiliate status, no longer a committee under Church Women United

LVA-NYS outgrew Church Women United sponsorship and received charter from New York State Board of Regents

1968 Mary Jeanne Grabman assumed leadership role after Marcia Lee moved to Elmira

Mary Schult took the tutor training course

1969 LV Geneva's Canandaigua branch began

1970 Leadership changed-- Ginny Barton and Mary Schult assumed responsibilities.

1973 English as a Second Language (ESL) classes started

1974 Bylaws adopted

1979 LV Wayne County and LV Yates County formed, offshoots of LV Geneva

Nettie Scoon took on the leadership role, reviving the faltering affiliate

1980 First VISTA volunteer for LV Geneva

LV Geneva renamed LV Ontario County (LVOC)

1981 Ginny Barton named an LVA-NYS board member

LVOC office opened at the Geneva Center of Concern

1983-1984

Ontario County Library System gave funding for bilingual materials

1984-1986

Ginny Barton served as LVA-NYS board president

1985 LV Seneca County formed, an offshoot of LVOC

Community College of the Finger Lakes (CCFL) gave LVOC a shared office space

1986 Wayne-Ontario Literacy Center established at Newark Public Library with state funds

1986 CCFL produced a promotional video on LVOC

1987 Project Literacy of the U S (PLUS) outreach

LVOC hosted Video Tutor Training Inservice Workshop at CCFL

1988 WEP funds from NYS allowed LVOC to hire paid staff member

Bognor Regis, England literacy exchange

LVOC office in Wood Library opened

LVOC became incorporated

1988-1989

Ontario County and ABC grant received for purchase of an Apple II GS computer and software, funds for training and the tutor-student coordinator position

WEP and ALE grants received

1989 LVOC became a United Way designated agency

Bylaws revised, including rotating board positions with 3-year terms

LVOC held conference at CCFL with workshops to develop teaching strategies

Full time equivalent (FTE) credit program available through CCFL, funding available to LVOC for registered students

LVA READ replaced by Bader assessment

LVOC sent its first student, Edward A., to LVA's national conference

1990 ALE funding paid directly to LVOC, increasing annual grant

International Year of Literacy

Bognor Regis exchange completed

U S Federal Census with census assistance centers set up in Geneva and Canandaigua staffed by LVOC volunteers

LVOC began paying for a bulk postage permit

1991 United Way allocation grant received

Apple Computer equipment grant received through LVA-NYS-- Macintosh and America On Line (AOL)

Rochester Area Foundation grant received which partially funded Tutor-Learner Coordinator position

Former LVOC student Antoinette Infurna joined the LVOC board

Board committee descriptions updated

1992 Personnel Policy adopted

Finger Lakes Press (Auburn, NY) began in-kind donation of newsletter printing

Newsletter renamed The Achievers

1993 BOCES Career Resource Center in Geneva opened, 1 of 2 set up in the county

GED courses available via cable television

Computer Assisted Instruction (CAI) Literacy Learning Center opened in Wood Library (grant from Adult Literacy Services Program of NYS Education Department)

1993-1994

First issue of student newsletter, Students Helping Students

LVOC endowment established

Reading With Children (RWC) family literacy program received funding from Zonta Club of Geneva and GTE Foundation (via LVA)

Lynda Millerd of LVOC attended LVA-GTE Family Literacy Institute at LVA Conference (Louisville)

1993-1995

LVOC was 1 of 3 LVA-NYS affiliates to participate in pilot project, Families Helping Families (FHF)

1995 At LVA Conference (Buffalo) Betty Fox received Ruth J. Colvin Award as Administrative Volunteer of the Year

New York Newspapers Foundation awarded $ 6,100 grant for Family Activity Book

1996 Filming and production of recruitment video, "Helping Neighbors Read"

New York State Education Department Adult Literacy Services grant to Geneva Free Library for computerized literacy center. Literacy Volunteers materials added and space enlarged.

Student club initiated

Student, Artie M. selected to attend Sundin Leadership Institute at LVA Conference (Tulsa)

LVOC named a designated charity for 1996 Ontario County Charities golf tournament, funds received allowed for expansion of RWC

Architect redesigned LVOC office space, adding new shelving, a work table, counter, and cabinets

LV materials moved to "open" basement shelves in Wood Library, and catalogued according to Dewey classification system

1996-1997

Student club meetings held monthly in east and west Ontario County

1997 Publication of the Family Activity Book

Expansion of Reading With Children to 3 new communities

Celebration of 30th anniversary

Preface-- A History of the History

In her post as paid Program Director, Laurel Wemett oversees the administrative day-to-day functions of Literacy Volunteers of Ontario County (LVOC). With strong interests in history and adult education, she believes that LVOC's history constitutes an important means for understanding the organization's past development and for guiding its future growth. As LVOC prepared to enter its third decade, Laurel suggested it was an appropriate time to explore the first thirty years. She reflected, "During my relatively short tenure with the organization, two key people important to the agency died: Mary Schult and Nettie Scoon. I felt it was worthwhile to find a way to document the experiences of others who are equally valuable to carrying out the agency's mission to eliminate illiteracy." Laurel then developed a proposal for a written history and sought grant funding from the state arts agency.

The state agency, administered locally, turned down the request. The review noted that LVOC, as a human service agency, should develop a project that would more directly involve the arts. The agency suggested that the students become involved, for example, by making a video history.

Upon learning that the grant had not come through, a board member (requesting anonymity) stepped in and offered to underwrite this narrative of LVOC's past. We are grateful for the funder's generosity. A recruitment video with student involvement ("Helping Neighbors Read") also materialized under separate guidance to mark LVOC's 30th anniversary.

When Laurel Wemett called to see if I had an interest in researching LVOC's history, I immediately said yes. Since I had spent a number of years studying Ontario County history, the opportunity to research one of the county's non-profit agencies appealed to me. I knew Literacy Volunteers of America was a national organization that helps adults learn how to read, but I was unaware of how local Literacy Volunteers affiliates operate, or how LVOC got started. As an avid devourer of the printed word, I cannot imagine being unable to read. It is how I earn a living, stay informed about current events, help my daughters with their homework, navigate unfamiliar roads, make decisions about countless matters, and relax by settling in with a book, magazine, newspaper, catalog, or whatever I can find. Reading is like breathing for me: it's a vital part of my life.

historian and as a contemporary observer. Last spring I visited several tutor training classes, sat in on the June annual dinner meeting, took part in a videotaped session with longtime volunteers in June, read through "history" questionnaires completed to aid the project last fall, joined Ginny Barton for a WGVA radio interview in October, contributed an article to The Achievers (winter 1997) newsletter, and attended the annual student-tutor brunch during Literacy Volunteers Week in February 1997.

This history chronicles LVOC's beginnings, its growth as an affiliate of Literacy Volunteers of America, its challenges and its successes. It has been compiled from information found in local newspaper articles, LVOC newsletters, scrapbooks, board and committee meeting minutes, office files, and through contact with other LV affiliates, LVA-NYS and the national LVA organization.

Interested and cooperative volunteers, staff, students, and others familiar with the program have been instrumental in telling LVOC's story. Gleaned through in-person conversations, telephone calls, and letters, their perceptions and memories give LVOC's written documents a fuller dimension.

During the fall of 1996 the LVOC office sent out over 300 questionnaires to current students (who had been in the program for at least a year), successfully-served former students, tutors, staff, board members, and volunteers. (Copies of the questionnaire are in the Appendix.) Designed as an informal sampling of LVOC participants, the questionnaire asked volunteers what drew them to LVOC, how LVOC is the same or different from other volunteer organizations they are familiar with, and how the organization has changed through the years. Respondents could contribute recollections or anecdotes about their LVOC experiences.

The information presented in this history is true to the best of our knowledge. It is based on interpretation of the available records, personal interviews, and the questionnaire responses and recollections of volunteers and students. LVA has always offered confidentiality to students. Those students whose stories are told in this history have given LVOC permission to use their names.

Lynda McCurdy Hotra
May 1997

Acknowledgments

We greatly appreciate those people who helped the history project along by filling out the written questionnaire (Q), and who provided information through telephone calls (T), face-to-face conversations (C), and letters or notes (L). Thank you for participating and for contributing to LVOC's historical archive.

Volunteers and Staff

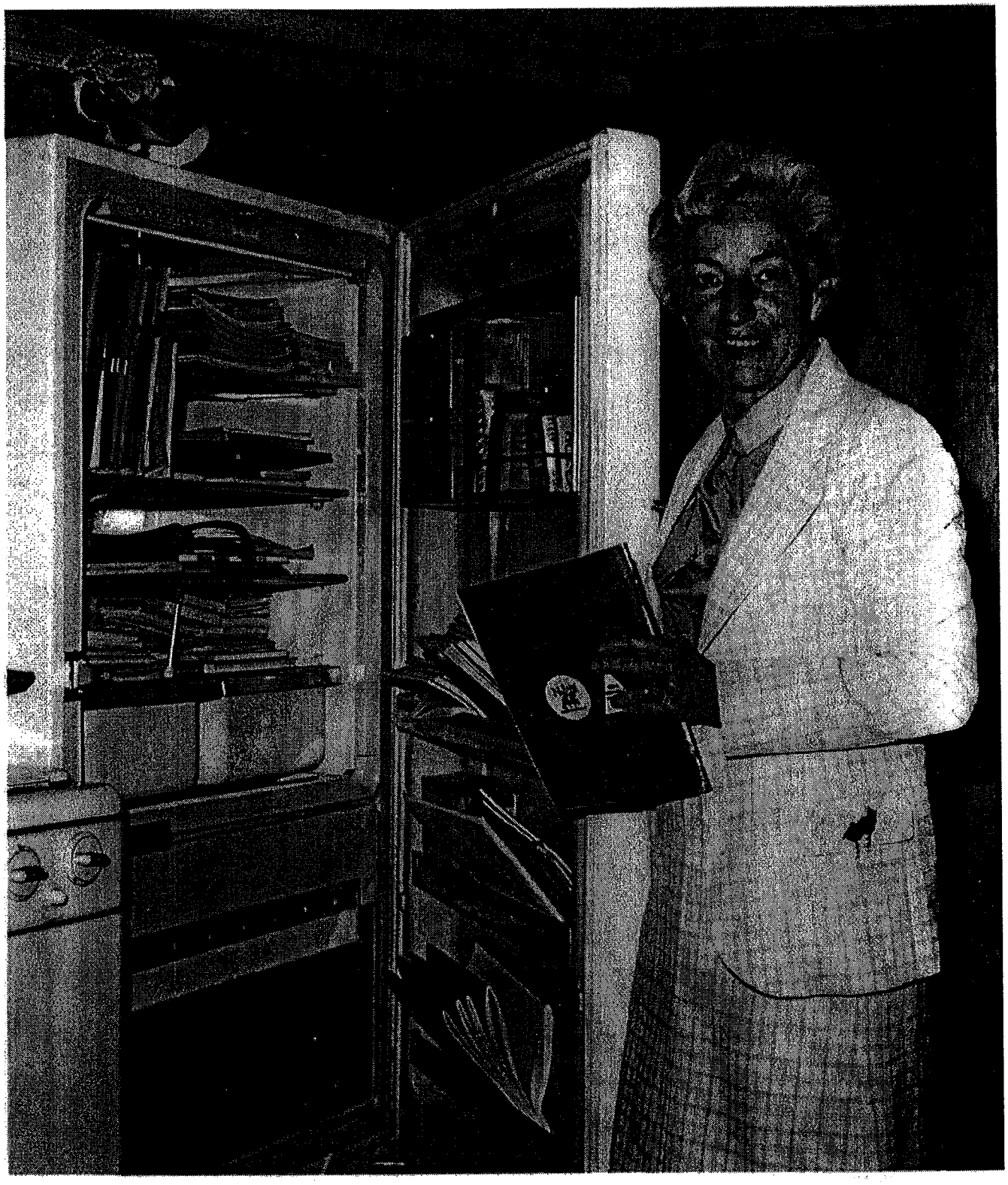
George "Doc" Abraham (T, L)
Pam Atwell (T)
Martha Andres (C, Q)
Pauline Angeline (C, Q)
Betty Barnard (Q)
Virginia (Ginny) Barton (T, C, L, Q)
Katheryne (Kay) Bolte (Q)
Ruth Brewer (T)
Nancy Bricker (Q)
Corinne Canough (Q)
Fenton Carruth (T, Q)
Rita Castillo (T)
Dave Chicoine (Q)
Jill Clouthier (Q)
Mary Jane Corliss (T)
Emme Cortelyou (Q)
Cindy Cummins (Q)
David Curtin (Q)
Judy Deinhardt (T, L)
Doris Eldredge (Q)
Joe Felice (C, Q)
Dolores Finley (Q)
Elizabeth (Betty) Fox (T, C, L, Q)
Cindy German (Q)
Virginia Gesell (Q)
Mary Jeanne Grabman (T, L)
Suzanne Green (Q)
Karen Groot (Q)
Deborah Lazarus Hall (Q)
Juanita Handley (T, C, L, Q)
Lucile Harford (Q)
Elizabeth Hart (T)
Elizabeth Heeks (Q)
Shirley Heeks (Q)
Sandy Holley (Q)
Everett Jennings (T)
Laurence Karz (Q)
Norma Kemp (Q)
Dorothy Kennedy (C, Q)
Thelma Knetzer (Q)
Claire Kremer (Q)
Clarence Kunz (Q)
Marcia Lee (T, L)
Dorothy Legg (T)
Mary Lienk (T)
Mary Lill (Q)
Dorothea (Dot) Magley (T, Q)
Dr. Robert Martin (Q)
Jane Will Mason (Q)
Fran Merriman (T)
Betty Miner (Q)
Marjorie Morris (T, L, C)
Peter Mount (Q)
June Oates (Q)
Margaret Lee Polce (Q)
Frank Queener (T)
Lois Saeger (Q)
Sue Schuppenhauer (Q)
Jane Shepard (Q)
Kim Sigel (Q)
Robert Sinnott (C, Q)
Isobel Skellett (Q)
Jane Sleeper (T)
Bonnie Race Smithers (Q)
Kitty Starr (T)
Kathleen Valvano (Q)
Barbara Walker (Q)
Eileen Wegman (C,Q)
Laurel Wemmett (T, C, L, Q)
Dave Wink (T)
Mary Zingerella (T, Q)

LVOC Students

Nora Cuch (Q)
Mary De Boerder (Q)
Bob Milspaw (C)
Arthea Minnamon (C, Q)
Dennis Rickert (Q)
Kevin Rickert (Q)

Others
Catherine Barnard, Geneva Times
Canandaigua Quick Print
Peggy Carroll, Daily Messenger
Ruth Colvin, Founder of LVA (L)
Elke Hallidy, Executive Director, LVA-Cayuga (T, C)
Alice Haskins, Chief Correction Officer, Ontario County Jail (T)
Muriel Hodge, Geneva Church Women United Treasurer, 1996 (T)
Rosalinde Mecca, Program Director, LVA-NYS (T)
Sharon Nedrow, Adult Literacy Education Coordinator, Finger Lakes Community College (FLCC) (T)
Ontario County Division of Planning, Development, and Environmental Services
Pat Pavelsky, Finger Lakes Professional Development Consortium (T)
Gretchen Starks-Martin, Former Director, Developmental Studies, FLCC (Q)
Carol Wilson, Coordinator of Family Services, Head Start, Geneva (T)

Special thanks and gratitude to the following people who have read through this manuscript and offered their suggestions: Virginia Barton, Ruth Colvin, Elizabeth Fox, Juanita Handley, and Marjorie Morris. I am very grateful for the assistance of Martha Andres who edited the manuscript, as well as the guidance and insights of Laurel Wemett who shepherded this project from concept to completion.



Food for thought: LVA founder Ruth Colvin set up an office in the basement of her home, and stored literacy materials in her old refrigerator. (Courtesy: Ruth Colvin and Literacy Volunteers of America)

Chapter 1

Ruth Colvin and the Beginnings of Literacy Volunteers

In 1960 Syracuse resident Ruth Colvin read her local newspaper and was shocked by federal census figures showing the nation's high illiteracy rate. After examining the 1960 illiteracy statistics and realizing how these figures related to Syracuse and Onondaga County, Ruth talked to community leaders about the problem. Myra Eadie, then president of Syracuse's Church Women United (CWU), suggested she speak with representatives of area church women's groups and ask them for help. (Church Women United is a nationwide ecumenical organization. Its statement of purpose encourages church women to "come together in a visible fellowship" and to "go out into every neighborhood and nation as instruments of reconciling love.") With Ruth heading up the effort, Myra thought Church Women United members would help get things started. Over the next couple of years, Ruth spoke to members of over 90 area churches about the problems caused by illiteracy and her proposal to offer one-on-one tutoring.

The effort received a boost in 1964 when Viola Stowell, then president of NYS CWU, invited Ruth to speak at the organization's state convention and CWU voted to sponsor expansion of the literacy project within New York State. By October, Myra served as Literacy Secretary and was later vice-president in charge of Affiliating Groups, linking those in other areas to the Syracuse group. The next year, CWU members approved Literacy Volunteers as the project's official name. (LVA Auburn annual report, January 1, 1966)

Training tutors to teach basic reading was the next step. Volunteers first used Laubach Literacy's "each one, teach one" method for reading and writing instruction. Dr. Frank C. Laubach of Syracuse was a missionary in 1930 when he devised a written language for the Moros people of the Philippines. Laubach's system, later adapted to promote worldwide literacy, taught phonics through sounds, repetition, and visual recognition. Illustrations for each alphabet letter formed a part of a picture beginning with the appropriate letter and sound.

When the literacy volunteers sought additional teaching methods, Ruth worked with Dr. Frank Greene of Syracuse University's Reading Clinic and his Ph.D. students. Reading Specialist Dr. Jane Root helped Ruth develop a revised training workshop and they co-authored two books-- TUTOR (Techniques Used in the Teaching of Reading) and READ (Reading Evaluation Adult Diagnosis). This professional input refined and improved the program.

As a community service, Syracuse's WHEN-TV prepared a videotape in 1964 of Ruth and a volunteer conducting a tutor training workshop. Rochester, Albany and Buffalo stations aired the program on closed-circuit television. Stations in smaller communities, however, did not have the proper equipment for videotape programming. (Colvin, p. 7) Trainers used a 16 mm. copy of the video at first, and later slides and tapes for tutor instruction. (Colvin, January 26, 1997)

Literacy Volunteers spread beyond Syracuse, as people in other communities learned about the program and offered to help. Ruth expanded her notes on how to successfully organize and manage a literacy program and produced LEADER, a handbook for developing literacy volunteer affiliates.

Soon, Ruth felt she had "oversold" the program and it was growing too quickly. She wrote, "I learned that if you are willing to listen, to work hard, and to adapt to change, people *will* help. Early on, I decided that tutor training and a meaningful support system were the crux of a practical program, especially if you use volunteers." (Colvin, p. 13)

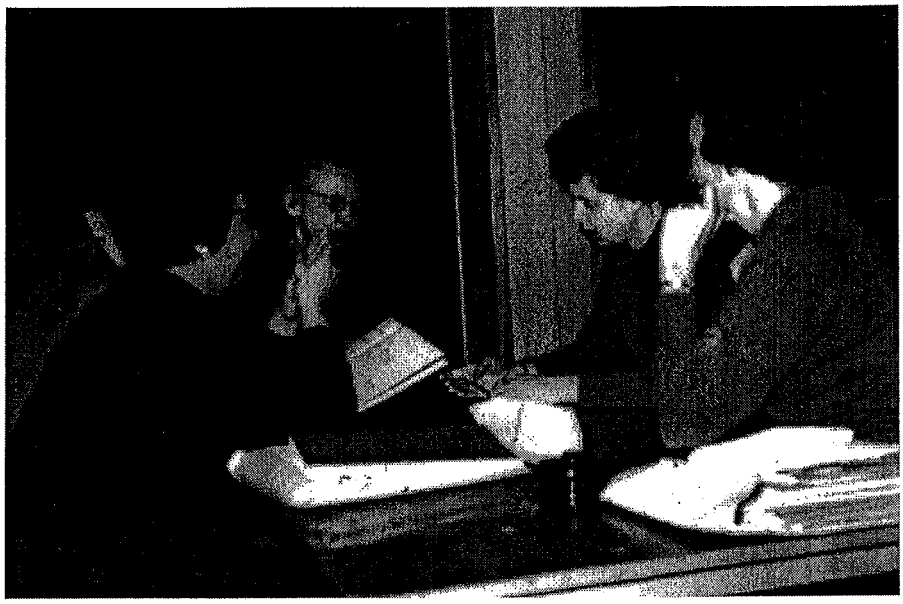
Ruth attended LVOC's 1981 annual meeting held at Geneva's North Presbyterian Church. In her address, she reflected on LVA's original purpose to focus only on the home community and the plan to have professional reading consultants train non-professionals. Regardless of changes in training and teaching methods, Literacy Volunteers has remained learner-oriented and responds to the feelings and needs of its students and tutors.

In a letter to Laurel Wemett (November 22, 1992), Ruth agreed to speak at LVOC's annual meeting in June 1993. She wrote that she does not accept honorariums from LVA affiliates and commented, "...some affiliates have elected to put aside the amount that they would designate for this....This is an effective way to start an Endowment Fund as a permanent backup plan for your affiliate's work." Ruth's letter sparked the creation of LVOC's endowment fund. (The LVOC board voted to set aside $ 250 to inaugurate the endowment fund. The December 19, 1994 minutes of the Executive Committee and the Resource and Development Committee indicate additional generous endowment gifts from area benefactors.)

Ruth traces the 1962 origins of Literacy Volunteers of America to her firmly-held belief that everyone should have the opportunity to read. She describes herself as "just a housewife who believes that each person can make a difference," but her determination, her ongoing quest to find the best learning methods and materials for helping students, and her continual commitment to Literacy Volunteers' goals have inspired countless volunteers and students. The organization's longevity, continuing service without charge to students, sensitivity to their needs, and the ability to attract volunteers bear testimony to Ruth's vision and persistence. The organization has grown over the years and its focus

has enlarged to include broader geographical boundaries, English as a Second Language students, workplace literacy, computer-assisted instruction, and family literacy.

Beyond LVA's 400 affiliates in 44 states, Ruth's work is well-known today throughout the United States and in many foreign countries. The National Women's Hall of Fame in Seneca Falls, NY, which serves as the nation's museum on notable women, honors those who have made valuable contributions to society, promoted the freedom and progress of women, and whose achievements have enduring value. In September 1993, the Hall inducted Shirley Chisholm, Betty Friedan, Martha Graham, Rosa Parks, Georgia O'Keefe, and other honorees. Ruth Colvin was also inducted, chosen for her founding of Literacy Volunteers.



In January 1967, in preparation for inaugurating LV Geneva,
Marcia Lee met with LV Cayuga trainers at Auburn's Westminister Church.
(Courtesy: LVA of Cayuga County)



A meeting of 9 teachers in the newly-formed Literacy Volunteer Group, sponsored by Geneva's Church Women United, and organized by Project Chairman, Mrs. Vernon Lee. Left to right: Mrs. Arthur Gardner, Mrs. John W. Bolte, Mrs. Spurgeon Wuertenberger, Mrs. Henry B. Grabman (not Graham as appeared in the original Geneva Times article), Mrs. Fred Magley, Mrs. Daniel Miles, Mrs. Albert Bond, Mrs. Marguerite Firoozi, and Mrs. James Crouthamel.
(LVOC Scrapbook)

Chapter 2
"On Your Own Now"

Initially, Literacy Volunteers of Ontario County (LVOC) was known as Literacy Volunteers of Geneva. LV Geneva began as an offshoot of LVA's second oldest affiliate, LV Cayuga. (LV of Greater Syracuse, established by Ruth Colvin in 1962, was the first. The third was LV of Rochester in 1964.) Reverend Cyril Foster of Westminister Presbyterian Church and his wife Pauline began the Auburn group in 1963. A 1964 list of Auburn's forty tutors, found in LVA Auburn files, bears an encouraging note from Ruth Colvin, "Good luck 'on your own now'--You're all wonderful!"

On the list was Marcia Lee, who had taken the leadership training class in spring of 1964. When her husband Vernon was appointed pastor of Geneva's First United Methodist Church, the Lees moved to Geneva in June 1965.

Virginia (Ginny) Barton, a member of Geneva's North Presbyterian women's group, knew of CWU's literacy project. She recalls seeing a "small squib" in the Geneva paper about 1964 on teaching reading to adults. "We had tried very hard to find someone who could go to Syracuse for the 4-day training, but without success, so we were all primed to get started when Mrs. Lee arrived." (March 30, 1996 letter to Laurel Wemett)

To get things rolling, Marcia Lee returned to Auburn to confer with LV Cayuga trainers. Photos in LVA Auburn scrapbooks document their meeting and one is captioned, "Marcia Lee at Workshop (LVA) at Westminister Church, Auburn preparing for workshop in Geneva. Jan. 9-18, 1967."

In February, the literacy volunteers held the first workshop in Geneva, and an article about the project, with accompanying photo of the participants, appeared in the Geneva Times (March 22, 1967). Trained as tutors were Betty Miles with Salvation Army affiliations; Mary Jeanne Grabman and Mary Jean Crouthamel (now Corliss), both members of the League of Women Voters; Nan Wuertenberger, the Geneva High School principal's wife; Dot Magley, a minister's wife; Kay Bolte, a volunteer in the high school library; Kay Bond; Marguerite Firoozi; and Mabel Gardner.

Geneva's CWU sponsored the group, and CWU treasurer's records for January and October 1967 show checks written for the "Literacy Project." These funds purchased teaching materials.

Marcia Lee attended the autumn three-day training workshop in Syracuse for LV group leaders (Geneva Times October 31, 1967). She and the others learned about recruiting volunteers and training them as tutors, organizing the group, finding students,

getting community support, collecting appropriate reading materials, and record keeping. Leaders stressed listening and responding to students' goals, and patience, enthusiasm and adaptability.

The next tutor training classes, consisting of 4 meetings and held in November 1967, offered morning and evening sessions. This change allowed people with 9-to-5 jobs to become tutors. The Reverend Clifford Butterer, Everett Jennings, Clarence Kunz, Jack Starr, and Bob Thompson, the first men in LV, joined Jean Dayton, Mary Farnsworth, and Marion Morse in the class. Mary Farnsworth (now Lienk) still has a Literacy Volunteers membership card signed by Ruth Colvin and Myra Eadie, indicating that she completed the training course.

The project was gaining visibility south of Geneva. The morning class included 4 Penn Yan residents-- Elsie Haney, Meek Meldrum, Iva Morse, and Rose Talman.

Student reports from 1967 and 1968 show no overnight successes. (They are typical examples of the difficulties students and tutors still encounter today.) Betty Miles and her student began working together in April 1967 with meetings at Geneva's Salvation Army on Wednesdays and Thursdays. The young woman, who quit school at 16, had lost interest in school work and learning how to spell, read or write. At a second grade reading level, she had made fair progress in sounds and reading but performed poorly with writing and spelling.

Kay Bond worked with a Puerto Rican immigrant who lived at Chartres Homes in Geneva. They started meeting for 45-minute sessions three or four times a week at the junior high school. Kay commented that he didn't seem to have the desire to learn.

One of Dot Magley's students lost interest because he was tired from work and could only meet every other week.

Perhaps the earliest recorded student-tutor success story is about 2 Agricultural Experiment Station employees-- Clarence Kunz, a member of LV Geneva's second tutor training workshop, and Clayton S., a custodian with a third grade education. After working with Clarence for a year, Clayton said that he learned "to break long words down into simpler words which I know, and get the meaning that way" and to associate the written word with sounds. With improved reading skills, he enrolled in adult education courses, and became a laboratory technician by 1971. (Geneva Times March 28, 1971) Dependability, hard work and repetition were the ingredients of this triumphant partnership.

By November 20, 1967, LV of Geneva officially achieved affiliate status. In the same year, its parent organization, Literacy Volunteers, outgrew its status as a committee of CWU and received its charter from the State of New York as tax exempt, non-profit

corporation. In a welcoming letter (December 20, 1967) to Marcia Lee, Ruth Colvin wrote: "As we learn more in teaching basic reading, we will share it with you-- and we assume you will report to us at least once a year, sharing your successes as well as your problems."

The program's structure offered free service to adult non-readers with student confidentiality, one tutor working with one student, and meeting for 1 hour twice a week. LV also asked tutors to remain with the program for at least 1 year. The basic teaching techniques were experience stories, sight words, phonics, and patterned words. Ruth Colvin explained, "We take advantage of what people naturally know just by being able to speak and use language." (Colvin, p. 36)

With trained tutors and students for them to teach, LV Geneva was under way. Yet, how do we determine exactly when the organization was founded? Was it when Ginny Barton read about LV in the newspaper and talked with CWU members about finding someone who could attend the 4-day training session in Syracuse? Was it when the fledgling group held its first meeting, perhaps sometime after Marcia Lee's arrival in Geneva? When Geneva's CWU gave funds for the first training session? The first contact between a student and tutor? When LV Geneva achieved affiliate status in November 1967?

Ten years ago the LVA-NYS and the local affiliate discussed the question of LVOC's beginnings. Ginny Barton, as president of LV-NYS, sent a memo (March 1, 1986) to affiliates and addressed the difficulty of establishing the starting dates of some groups. Beth Broadway, LVA Field Services Associate, provided a ruling which Ginny included in her memo:

> Since affiliates formed prior to 1969 had no formal method of affiliating with LVA, we will accept their documentation as word of their affiliation. If they offered workshops, and had tutors and students, they have a right to be recognized from the point their affiliate leaders claim.

An LVA-NYS memo (March 4, 1986) referred to a fall 1984 survey on affiliate anniversaries: "Our records indicate that LV of Ontario's anniversary date is 1966." However, a handwritten notation on the memo says, "1967 more likely." Finally, a letter (March 15, probably 1986) from Nettie Scoon to Betty Fox supports the 1967 date: "The Certificate of Award dated October 1982 says, 'LV of Ontario County has attained 15 years of dedicated service in teaching adults to read.'"

Without conclusive documentary records, we cannot determine exactly when Literacy Volunteers of Ontario County was founded. While 1966 was probably the year Church Women United members began to organize their efforts, we can state for certain

that 1967 was the year tutor training and student teaching began and the year Church Women United's Geneva Literacy Project achieved affiliate status. Despite the inconclusiveness regarding its precise birthdate, what matters is that LVOC has consistently provided adult literacy services for over three decades.

Chapter 3
A "Tiny Core"

At first, 1 or 2 key people held the organization together. There was no office or central storage space; people worked out of their homes and record keeping was haphazard. When the Lees prepared to move to Elmira in June 1968 and Marcia brought over boxes of materials, Mary Jeanne Grabman remembers becoming president by default. A "tiny core" of five or six people did everything-- training, matching, recruiting and teaching, and a nun from DeSales High School helped with typing and duplicating.

As LVA staff director of affiliates, Connie Haendle of Syracuse linked the main offices of LVA to its affiliates, including Geneva. Ruth Colvin would visit the various affiliates or send a film, and Mary Jeanne Grabman remembers that Ruth did a lot of the "nitty gritty" herself. After three or four years, Mary Jeanne says the assessment process improved when better materials became available.

Ginny Barton recalls that many people wanted to be volunteer teachers and they got good training. The problem was having a mechanism for getting students interested in the program. It was assumed that school teachers felt volunteers had no business or ability to help students who had failed in school. She says the literacy group worked with the public school, though it was hard to meet with students who might not show up, and to overcome scheduling difficulties. By 1968 Kay Bond supervised a teen age group and Dr. Marion Morse supervised an adult group. Marion, according to Ginny Barton, had retired from work as a missionary doctor in India and in the Southwest.

Mary Schult took the tutor training course in 1968 and for nearly 2 decades trained most of the tutors in both Basic Reading (BR) and later English as a Second Language (ESL). Although she also served as a board member, people remember Mary's expertise and constancy as the heart of the tutor training program.

Dot Magley, a minister's wife who moved to Canandaigua in 1966, knew about LV from living in Fulton, just north of Syracuse. A member of LV Geneva's first training class, she recalls that while efforts focused on Geneva, there was gradual interest in expanding to other areas of the county. A May 1968 list titled "Literacy Volunteers Outside Geneva" included Dot and 4 women from Penn Yan. In 1969 Dot started the Canandaigua branch because although people in that area were interested in helping, not everyone was willing to travel to Geneva. There was certainly a need for literacy services throughout the county and beyond. That year the volunteer list represented Manchester,

Hemlock, Shortsville, Middlesex, Stanley, East Bloomfield, Penn Yan, Newark, Geneva and Canandaigua residents.

The 1969 affiliate annual report listed Mary Jeanne Grabman as chairman and Dot Magley, Kay Bond, Marion Morse and Mary Farnsworth as supervisors. There were 10 students, a total of 443 volunteer teaching hours for the year and 31 tutors who had received training in April workshops. Expenses for the year totalled $207.18, with a $ 36.20 surplus in the bank. With CWU's continued sponsorship and donations from individual churches and community groups like Zonta, LV Geneva received financial support to run its operations.

The Syracuse Literacy Volunteers newsletter (fall 1969) sums up LV's purpose: "The focal point of all LV work is the functional illiterate who needs our help. We try to follow every path which may lead to this individual and cooperate with every agency or group which has a related goal." (This is still true today; LVA's organizational chart begins with the learner. Support services stem from student needs.)

To implement this goal, LV organizations became involved with community businesses, institutions, particularly other adult literacy providers such as the Community College of the Finger Lakes (CCFL) and BOCES, and organizations including industrial plants, prisons, school systems, community action groups, and welfare departments.

There were opportunities on every level from informal local referrals to more structured alliances. The Continuing Education Development Office of the New York State Department of Education and LV put together a contractual arrangement in 1969 for the Adult Basic Education (ABE) program. One of 8 LV affiliates cooperating on an experimental basis, LV Geneva assisted students in ABE classes with language, arithmetic and social living skills. Mary Jeanne Grabman's February 18, 1970 letter to Dr. Marion Morse lists 10 LV Geneva tutors with Clifford Butterer as the sole tutor working with Adult Basic Education. Mary Jeanne wrote that she did not know if he had any individual students. There are no other known records at LVOC which list the participating affiliates or the outcome of the ABE program. Rosalinde Mecca, LVA-NYS Program Director, explains that the state office was established in 1974 and does not house records from that earlier time period.

Chapter 4
New Leadership and Outreach

Eventually, Mary Jeanne Grabman felt "burned out" and while she enjoyed teaching, the administrative details became demanding. In her February 18, 1970 letter to Dr. Marion Morse, Mary Jeanne listed names of Geneva-area tutors working with students, and mentioned that she was not aware of what Dot Magley's group was doing. She explained:

> Since you will be contacting Church Women United, I am enclosing the last letter I've had from Literacy Volunteers, Inc. There is $ 69.00 in the bank, so that the fee could be paid if the program is to continue. However, as far as I can tell, we have no 'leader' in Geneva. I continue to get mailings from Syracuse because Mrs. Haendle has no other address. All the material is now packed in boxes and could be moved to another location easily if Church Women United are interested in continuing the program. Hope something can be worked out.

Ginny Barton remembers meeting with Church Women United representatives, tutors, and LVA Field Services Coordinator Connie Haendle at Geneva's North Presbyterian Church. How could they "save" the affiliate following Mary Jeanne's departure? Ginny says, "We had all Indians, no chiefs. Tutors wanted to work one-to-one, not administer." Tutor Mary Schult, who received her 25-year pin from LVA in 1982, had Girl Scout and Red Cross training experience. She offered to lead a workshop if LVA would waive the literacy training workshop requirement. Ginny became chairperson (the first in that position not to have taken the leadership workshop although she did several years later). By accepting these variations on the standard procedure, Literacy Volunteers enabled the affiliate to continue. The annual report for the program year ending June 15, 1971 listed 14 students, 210 volunteer teaching hours for the year, 39 volunteers, 8 new tutors, 12 or more tutors needing students and 18 who had received training in the March workshop.

Eventually, Ginny trained as a tutor and took on many responsibilites through the years. In 1981 the LVA-NYS board tapped Ginny as a board member to represent rural affiliates. She became LVA-NYS board president in 1984 and, in that capacity, served as a member of the national board.

Locally, LV Geneva continued to look for funding support from CWU and the Zonta Club of Geneva. (Zonta aims are improving the legal, political, economic, and professional

status of women, helping young people, and advancing good will worldwide.) Ginny Barton and Mary Schult addressed Zonta Club members and other community groups in the 1970s to spread the word. At that time, over 1,000 Ontario County adults had less than five years of education and needed reading instruction and other assistance. Tutors taught their students survival skills-- how to study the driver's license manual, how to fill out Medicare applications, how to apply for a bank loan, and how to accurately dispense a medical prescription. (Williams, 1973)

The constituency of LVOC students broadened during this decade. In a letter to Mrs. Cyril Foster at the Auburn affiliate (October 17, 1972), Ginny Barton wrote:

> We seem to be developing good communication with the Seneca County Department of Social Services. They have referred three students to us recently. This is great, except that either the pupil or the teacher has a long way to travel. I am wondering if the Cayuga County Affiliate would have any teachers living over towards Seneca Falls?

Additionally, churches sponsored refugee families from Laos and Viet Nam who arrived in the United States completely dependent on their host communities. Along with migrant workers and visiting scientists at the New York State Experiment Station, the refugees and other foreign-born adults (primarily Spanish-speaking) needed help with reading, writing, and learning how to function as American residents. To address their needs, LV Geneva pulled together a makeshift workshop for tutors in 1973 and English as a Second Language (ESL) became part of its curriculum. Ginny Barton says that these ESL efforts came "from the ground up" due to requests from local affiliates for help. LV Geneva tutors also worked with individuals from Italy, Czechoslavakia and Syria. Ginny recalls:

> Tutors and trainers in all the affiliates were asking LVA to develop ESL materials for testing and teaching. (LV's basic reading materials weren't adequate when students knew no English.) LVA sent some basic materials and went to work developing more. We were supposed to take the ESL workshop <u>before</u> training tutors, but the families were here and needed help, so instead of taking the workshop ourselves, we used what LVA sent, and trained the first ESL tutors in our affiliate.

Ruth Colvin wrote, "...LVA does more than teach people to read and write, to understand and speak English. We're breaking down barriers-- cultural, racial, economic. We're building bridges of understanding and friendship as well." (Colvin, p. 66)

Although most students were white, illiteracy affected other ethnic groups, too. LV Geneva recruited minorities through Geneva's Community Action organization (COMAC) and the Chartres Homes Citywide Tenants Association (Williams, 1973). Students and tutors met in schools, businesses, homes, adult education centers--anywhere that was mutually convenient. All students took the LVA READ test yearly to determine their current reading levels and measure their progress.

Longtime tutor Fenton Carruth joined LV Geneva in the early 1970s. Trained by Mary Schult, Fenton worked at the New York State Experiment Station in Geneva. Through his wife's experiences as a Home Economics teacher, he knew of young people just out of school who couldn't read and who weren't getting anywhere. While he felt very much needed, he admits (and others agree) that the students don't always achieve their goals. There are often other problems that can overwhelm the desire to learn to read. A student's lack of success can discourage the tutor, too. Retaining a tutor's interest in the program was difficult, especially if a student quit without achieving specified goals.

Joe Felice, a tutor since 1973 who has worked with numerous students, learned how to persist through failures ("...One could call it stubbornness," he says). When students succeeded, Joe gained great satisfaction in his efforts. One of his outstanding students was Bill Riley who overcame dyslexia to attend college, earn a master's degree in social work, and become an outpatient specialist at Syracuse's Benjamin Rush Center.

Increasingly, individuals and agencies from within and outside the county asked for help. Mary Schult responded to a request from the director of Wayne County's Retired Senior Volunteer Program. Mary and trainers working under her direction, led a Basic Reading workshop in Newark in 1977. Nine people from Newark, Palmyra, Clyde and Lyons attended. These efforts led to the formation of LV of Wayne County in 1979.

The team held a second workshop at the Finger Lakes Education Center in Flint, training 19 tutors from Canandaigua, Dundee, Naples, Geneva, Penn Yan and Rushville. They arranged a third workshop at the request of the Canandaigua Academy staff for students teaching other students in the school system.

Seneca County was also part of the affiliate's outreach. Mary Schult and the trainers held a BR workshop at the Seneca County Cooperative Extension in Waterloo. LV Seneca County achieved official affiliate status in 1985.

Mary Schult's daughter, Rita Castillo, was a member of the Geneva affiliate who helped Yates County get started with literacy training. In a letter to LVA-NYS (5/9/78), Board President Fran Merriman wrote that Rita had recruited 25 people from the Penn Yan area who had attended LV Geneva training courses in 1977 and 1978. Both Rita and her mother instructed at the workshops. Although the tutors were considered part of the

Geneva affiliate, Fran commented that the Penn Yan group would probably apply soon for separate affiliation (achieved in 1979). She added that the new tutors were "exceptional in their interest, vitality, and resourcefulness."

Fenton Carruth remembers when there weren't very many active tutors and the organization was weak financially and needing more volunteers. To help revive LV Geneva, Fenton recruited Nettie Scoon in the late 1970s. Nettie was his wife's Syracuse University classmate and the first person the Carruths knew when they moved to Ontario County. Nettie, an experienced administrator who headed Ontario County's Probation Department, became an active member of Literacy Volunteers after her retirement in 1979. She knew firsthand the consequences of illiteracy and its relationship to lawbreakers. Literacy Volunteers offered a means to help turn them around. Learning that Nettie was about to retire and knowing that other nonprofit groups would pursue her, Fenton asked for her help. He recalls fondly that "she did a fantastic job and was very generous about giving her time." In presenting the League of Women Voters' Agnes Slosson Lewis Award to Nettie in 1990, League President Susan Belding said, "Her leadership in rebuilding the organization placed it on solid ground for continuing its work." LVA awarded her its "Quality of Life" certificate in 1991 for her tireless contributions as tutor, trainer, board president, student-tutor matcher, fundraiser, and in numerous other roles. LVOC's spring 1991 newsletter article observed, "Today through grants and increased contributions, the affiliate supports 2 paid part-time positions doing many of the jobs Nettie did as a volunteer."

Chapter 5
From LV Geneva to LV Ontario County

In 1980 LV Geneva underwent a name change and became LV Ontario County to reflect its county-wide services. Despite small yearly budgets, the organization persisted. Income for the 1980-1981 year, for example, totaled $ 1,300 which came mostly from donations and tutor trainee workshop registrations. LVOC expenses included the LV New York State affiliate fee of $ 100, teaching materials, in-service training, student-teacher recognition, library and literature, conference expenses, office supplies, postage, telephone, equipment, public relations, and photocopying.

Volunteers trained tutors in Naples, Bloomfield, Flint and other sites. Tutors worked with 19 students during 1980-1981. LVOC tested students, gave individualized instruction and designed customized educational plans.

LVOC addressed literacy in the workplace, too. Workers who couldn't read had accidents, and companies suffered when illiteracy resulted in poor product quality, increased expense, or lost time. Tutor Joe Felice marvels at the survival techniques non-readers develop to hide their inability to read. He recalls a man who would report for work, get his day's assignment, and call his wife, telling her the numbers and letters on the card because he needed her help to understand the directions. Joe also remembers a young Hispanic man who arrived at a tutoring session with burned arms and hands from mixing chlorine and ammonia-based liquids. The man had just started a janitorial job and could not read the product labels. "Needless to say, the lesson that day was setting up assorted containers in our laundry corner and teaching him what the manufacturers [wrote]...."

To combat the problem on a larger scale, literacy volunteers consulted with work supervisors, analyzed how reading tasks related to jobs, and set up literacy programs for workers.

By 1981, the group procured rent-free office space at the Center of Concern, 90 Lewis Street, Geneva. (The Geneva Center of Concern, Inc. provides continuing activities and services for disadvantaged people in Geneva and surrounding rural areas.) Finally, volunteers could move records out of their homes and set up more official quarters at the second-floor office. Ginny Barton recalls the informality of that arrangement with LVOC's mail left "on the third step up." Though described as a windowless room with a locking 2-drawer file for student records, the office, staffed by members three mornings a week,

boosted the organization's professional identity and visibility. The Geneva Free Library also helped by taking phone calls on literacy services (an on-going service to LVOC).

Federal government assistance came in the form of VISTA (Volunteers in Service to America) workers when Shirley Finley arrived in October of 1980 for a part-time position. A Newark resident who had been an active member of Wayne County's LV, Shirley worked on public relations, recruited students and tutors, and improved record keeping. She also aided the affiliate's interest in cooperating with organizations outside Ontario County by contacting human services organizations in Ontario, Seneca and Wayne Counties. In 1981, the affiliate gave in-service workshops, 4 BR and 2 ESL tutor training sessions.

In 1982 Nettie Scoon served as president, Fenton Carruth as vice-president, Margaret Wyckoff as secretary and Robert Belvin, Geneva Free Library director, as treasurer. Under their leadership, the board planned to offer more tutor training workshops and enlarge services beyond its current thirty students to include the fifteen students waiting for tutors.

To raise funds for expanding these services, volunteers enlisted support from many sources. The affiliate recruited tutors and volunteers through referrals, displays in storefront windows, and an exhibit at the Ontario County fair. (Dorothy Legg, a nurse who retired in 1980, joined after seeing a poster in a store window and became a tutor and board member.) During Literacy Week in February an Ontario County map was used in store window displays. The map's colored pins, flags, and circles depicted the geographical locations and numbers of literacy participants, including both basic reading and ESL students and their tutors.

Fundraising events like the annual card party started in the 1970s and the annual mail appeal which began during Nettie Scoon's administration were critical to the yearly budget. Revenue came from past supporters, LVOC volunteers, churches, service organizations, and businesses. During the 1983-1984 year the Ontario Cooperative Library System's $ 1200 gift of bilingual materials for Wood Library and the Geneva Free Library added to the affiliate's resources.

Following LVOC's lead, neighboring counties proceeded with their literacy efforts. Seneca County, which was starting up a chapter, shared VISTA worker Kevin Spillane's services with Ontario County in 1985. At LVOC Kevin worked 2 days a week and contributed administrative services, office organizational skills and workshop assistance to LVOC and the fledgling group. LVA-NYS staff member Janice Cuddahee, the VISTA supervisor, felt the cooperative plan benefited both organizations.

Following Kevin Spillane, VISTA worker Barbara Ambrose arrived October 1, 1985 and set up an office (a desk in a room that also served as a gym) at the Geneva campus of Community College of the Finger Lakes (CCFL). College student volunteers helped with phone answering. Barbara attended board meetings, worked with committees, arranged a BR workshop at the Naples Library, handled public relations and news releases, spoke and gave slide presentations, and tutored a BR student.

Betty Fox learned about Literacy Volunteers by reading a fundraising appeal/recruitment letter sent to her sister. A veteran teacher and librarian, Betty joined LVOC about 1982, over the next 15 years taking on such responsibilites as board president, cataloguer of literacy materials, and tutor. She is also a Basic Literacy, English as a Second Language, and Reading with Children trainer; no other LVOC trainer is certified in all 3 areas. LVA awarded her the Ruth J. Colvin Award for 1994-1995 Administrative Volunteer of the Year, citing her implementation of the new TUTOR(7) training (an updated version of Ruth Colvin's text), her involvement with Reading with Children (LVA's family literacy program), her weekly stint in LVOC's office, and her ongoing supervision of reading materials.

During Betty's first term as president in the 1985-1986 year, the board redefined the executive duties of the board president and vice-president. Under the new plan, Betty, as president, took charge of planning, administration and correspondence while vice-president Nettie Scoon oversaw tutor-student supervision, matching, and reporting. Two other volunteers assisted Nettie with the tutors: Dorothy Legg took charge of the Geneva area, and Irene Camaione supervised Canandaigua and vicinity.

The winter 1986 newsletter reported that 22 tutors spent 1,248 hours working with students during June to December 1985. Their students achieved various goals: 2 received driver's licenses, 14 had jobs, 3 found new jobs and 3 got a better job or a raise in pay.

A board member "shanghaied" Juanita Handley, she said with a twinkle, in 1983 after she retired from 25 years of teaching in the Canandaigua school system. Juanita, like Betty Fox, was a mainstay of LVOC, holding various board and training positions until her death in April, 1997. She oversaw the annual fund drive and implemented many of the more recent fundraising initiatives such as the "Bid for Literacy" Auction, the sale of LVA limited edition ornaments, and "Entertainment Books." Even when she was not the publicity chair, she helped organize literacy displays at events like the July Canandaigua Downtown Arts Festival and the Waterfront Art Festival.

Releases for newspapers and radio announcements are other public relations tasks. Public relations efforts for the organization have paid off. For example, 19 tutors, the biggest class ever, enrolled in the BR workshop given July 1986.

Greater numbers of tutors meant more demand for library materials. While all the Ontario County libraries housed literacy resources for tutors and students, there was no standard shelving procedure. A New York State grant for $ 14,700 in 1986 made possible new purchases and the implementation of a plan to develop a bibliography of circulating materials. Joy Harvey, as administrator of the Wayne-Ontario Literacy Center at the Newark Library, informed tutors of the many BR and ESL resources available through inter-library loan. Drawing upon her experience as a reading teacher, Joy also assisted with student evaluations. These steps increased tutors' effectiveness.

Chapter 6

The Business of Being A Non-Profit Organization

In-kind donations contributed greatly to literacy efforts, totaling nearly $ 37,000 in 1986. The Summer 1986 newsletter reported:

> We have sometimes looked simply at the dollars and cents actually donated and spent without thinking about time, travel costs, telephone costs, contributed by our members, and various facilities, services, utilitities, contributed by community businesses, churches, schools and organizations where our programs take place or printed matter is prepared. All these donated services are deeply appreciated. Without them we couldn't exist!

The promotional video produced in 1986 by CCFL Professor Ruth Legg and her students is an example of donated service. Volunteers aired the video in Geneva and Canandaigua supermarkets for the fall campaign of tutor and student recruitment. The video showed George "Doc" Abraham and his student Jim Van Aucker in a tutoring session.

A tutor since 1985 and a well-known gardening expert along with his wife Katy, Doc believes in learning by doing. Doc and Katy have used seed catalogues and horticultural "hands-on" activities to teach area school children, prison inmates, and others about the environment. Their work with literacy led to a White House "Points of Light" service citation for the Naples Rotary Club, District 712. The Naples Rotary Club also earned the first place award at the 1995 Rotary conference in Baltimore. Why did Literacy Volunteers attract Doc? His parents were Lebanese immigrants who could not read or write English. For over a decade, he has helped others achieve what his parents lacked.

While the video captured local attention, another effort reached a national audience. The 1987 collaboration of ABC and PBS radio and TV networks, titled Project Literacy of the U S (PLUS), raised awareness through national television specials on literacy. In Ontario County, over 150 potential students and others who knew people who needed help called for information about literacy classes. (Daily Messenger 8/26/87) Part of PLUS outreach, the home study program for rural adults earning high school equivalency credits (GRASP) began in Ontario County.

LVOC students have varied backgrounds and many reasons for not being able to read. Some received inconsistent schooling because they moved around a great deal. Others had undiagnosed learning disabilities. For some, a thoughtless remark from a

teacher shattered their self-esteem and "turned off learning." Some of the students have been Ontario County Jail inmates. According to national statistics for 1990, 65% of prisoners nationwide could not read, and the cost of maintaining a prisoner for one year surpassed the annual tuition bill for Harvard. (LVOC Winter 1990 newsletter)

Learning how illiteracy cripples individuals and affects our nation as a whole has continually motivated literacy volunteers. Ruth Brewer, who completed the LV tutor training workshop, is a GED instructor who remembers tutoring an inmate about 1992 or 1993. In his 30s, he began working at a young age, never had time to learn, and was dependent on other inmates to write letters for him. Ruth tutored him for about 3 months, and he made great progress because he was so attentive. He also urged the younger inmates to listen and have respect. His fellow inmates pointed out one day that he was not paying attention, but Ruth responded that because he was engrossed in a book on Martin Luther King, he was paying attention to reading. Since Ruth knew he would be transferred to state prison, her goal was that he acquire skills to function in that system's larger classes. Today, her former student writes his own letters and reads the Bible.

According to Alice Haskins, Chief Correction Officer at the Ontario County Jail, BOCES offers a wide range of educational programs and these meet the needs of most clientele. In general, 3 months is considered a lengthy stay at the Ontario County Jail. It is difficult to match tutors with potential students, because inmates may leave before tutoring can be provided. Regardless, Ruth Brewer believes that instructing inmates increases their self-confidence, even when tutoring only lasts a few weeks.

To improve communication with tutors and help them deal with difficulties, experienced tutors and other volunteers began calling tutors every 6 weeks to offer assistance, suggestions, and encouragement. Tutors needed techniques for helping learning disabled students, guidance on administering and interpreting the assessment test, and teaching reading to ESL students.

The matching process changed. Previously, Nettie Scoon handled the affiliate's matching of all students with tutors, taking into account availability, meeting location, and personal compatibility. In 1988, 2 people took on Nettie's matching job: Pat Johnson coordinated the western and southern areas of the county while Betty Fox took over the northern and eastern areas.

About this time the board also looked for other ways to improve its operations. LVA state office representatives assisted the board with problem solving, defining long and short term goals, leadership, job descriptions, and recognition for volunteers' services and student achievements. The volunteers learned how task forces with short-term goals could be more effective than year-round committees.

Finding suitable office space was a top priority. There had been the Center of Concern's windowless room (as of 1981), then an office with a window but no heat, a corner of the gymnasium at Geneva's CCFL site, and a shared desk in an office at CCFL's Lincoln Hill campus (1985). Michael Nyerges, Director of Canandaigua's Wood Library, provided a more suitable solution, offering an appropriate and rent-free space on the library's second floor, adding a telephone line and instructing library personnel to take messages when the LVOC office was unstaffed. The office, which opened on December 3, 1988, gave the affiliate an accessible location, better visibility in the community, and the opportunity to centralize its operations, records, files and supplies. Expressing gratitude to the Wood Library trustees, the invitation to the official opening explained:

> We now have comfortable work areas with room for our desk, our new Apple II GS Computer, our own phone, files for records and supplies, privacy for interviews with prospective students and tutors, even enough space for our own Directors' meetings.

Geneva, LVOC's birthplace, offered support, too. The Geneva Free Library continued to house tutoring materials and to take phone calls for LVOC. (Since Ontario County is divided into two area codes, having two local numbers allowed callers to reach LVOC more easily.) On January 14, 1993, the BOCES Career Resource Center opened at 1 Franklin Square and an LVOC outreach office was established on the second floor. During the Families Helping Families literacy program, LVOC relocated to the large classroom on the ground floor. It returned to a second floor office (which is currently open on a limited basis), after that program concluded. The Career Resource Center, while giving priority to the varying needs of BOCES, has accommodated LVOC and facilitated the affiliate's outreach to Ontario County's eastern residents.

There were other innovations. With numerous functions, responsibilities, and activities, the affiliate's administrative duties became unmanageable. Board meetings, according to former board treasurer Frank Queener who joined the board in 1983 when he served as Director of the Geneva Free Library, might last 3 or 4 hours as the board tended to every detail of managing the affiliate's affairs. It was just getting too big for the volunteers to handle and according to Frank, "It seemed a waste to have volunteers who could be using their time tutoring." The board members concluded, Frank says, "If we wanted to deliver service to people, we needed someone dedicated to it." Having paid staff was a natural progression for seasoned non-profit institutions. Although at least 1 person felt the organization's essence was as a volunteer effort, a majority agreed that greater efficiency would serve the students more fairly. Before the advent of professional staff

and since, the volunteers' selfless efforts have always been the organization's core strength.

Grant money spurred growth as well and provided seed money for staffing. According to Ginny Barton, Kevin Smith, Executive Director of LVA-NYS, was instrumental, working with Garrett Murphy, former Director of Adult Education for the New York Department of Education, the Senate and Assembly Education Committees, and legislators "for months, probably years!" on obtaining state education funds for affiliates. The New York State Department of Education's Welfare Education Program (WEP) awarded $ 3,000 to LVOC in 1988. The grant, administered through LVA-NYS, was based on the size of the affiliate and the number of public assistance recipients (PARS) receiving literacy services.

As the part-time WEP coordinator, Pat Johnson worked with Department of Social Services personnel and their clients to identify public assistance recipients who were also enrolled in Basic Reading tutoring programs. She also sought other PARS who would benefit from literacy training, set up the required documentation of student and tutor records, contacted tutors to check on student progress and tutor concerns, and furnished fiscal and statistical reports to LVA-NYS. Representing LVOC's first government funding, WEP intended to initially offer annual grants for 3 years; however, the program was not continued in that format. New York State grant money for the Adult Literacy Education Program (ALE) funded Pat Johnson's subsequent post as LVOC's Program Administrator.

A 1988 mini-grant from Ontario County and Action for a Better Community (ABC) purchased an Apple II GS Computer, trained tutors with its use as a teaching tool and bought educational software for BR, math, and spelling instruction. A second grant, awarded in March 1989, allowed the board to hire Kathy Valvano as Student/Tutor Coordinator. Kathy took on Betty Fox and Pat Johnson's tasks of student referrals, testing prospective students, and matching students with tutors. Although the grant represented another professional milestone for LVOC, uneven cash flow from ABC caused LVOC problems in meeting the payroll.

In the meantime tutor Claire Tice presented an opportunity for a letter exchange with an English adult literacy group headed by her brother-in-law. Area Tutor/Organizer Michael Tice and the Adult Literacy Scheme of Bognor Regis (West Sussex Adult Basic Education Project) had previously swapped books of letters with groups in Canada and Australia. Composed of pictures and letters, the illustrated albums were written by the students about their interests, their families, their homes, and other topics of their choosing. The Bognor Regis book arrived in early 1988 with Michael's suggestion that tutors select a letter for their students to answer. Corinne Canough, a member of the Tutor

Support Committee, urged that tutors encourage students to participate. The Geneva Free Library displayed the Bognor Regis book during Adult Literacy Week, then circulated it to other county libraries before returning the album to LVOC's care. (During 1990, designated as the International Year of Literacy, Ontario County literacy students sent their written stories and pictures to complete the international exchange initiated in 1988.)

Corinne replaced Pat Johnson in 1989 as Program Director. She knew the affiliate well as a tutor, computer trainer, board member, and committee chair. In the part-time program administrator position, she took on day-to-day management functions, allowing the board to focus on general policy.

Statistics for the 1988-1989 year show 56 tutors and 59 students. At the annual meeting in May 1989, Betty Fox reported that 3 students entered GED programs, 2 more joined GRASP, 4 ESL students met their goals, and 1 ESL student enrolled in CCFL's nursing program.

In addition to achieving suitable office space and adding paid staff, LVOC incorporated in 1988, became an officially-designated public charity (required for United Way funding) by 1989, revised its 1974 by-laws and instituted a rotating board of directors with 3-year terms.

LVOC and other agencies shared many of the same concerns. The 1988 Genesee Region Literacy Caucus, held in Greece, NY, and funded by the Gannett Foundation, drew literacy providers from Literacy Volunteers, adult education programs, colleges and public schools. Meeting attendees selected area representatives to attend the statewide convention and communicate their concerns to legislators. The meeting highlighted the challenges faced by literacy providers:

-Need for more training and support for literacy providers, both volunteer and paid staff

-Lack of support services for students (child care, transportation, and counseling)

-Need for expansion of workplace literacy programs

-Increased funding

The Caucus attendees brainstormed to suggest solutions to these challenges:

-Wider access to resources now provided for K-12 teachers, such as SETRIC (Special Education Training and Resource Center)

-Student access to special education evaluation and support services, including career counseling and child care

-Improved networking between the Department of Social Services, Special

Education Departments, LVA, Substance Abuse Counseling and other service agencies

-More frequent GED testing dates

Corinne Canough noted in a letter to the Finger Lakes Times that Library of Congress officials designated 1989 as "The Year of the Reader," yet 1/5 of adults in the United States were functionally illiterate. (Letter to the Editor, 1989) During her husband's presidency, First Lady Barbara Bush's strong support for reading boosted all literacy programs on the national level and she pledged "to help literacy become a value in every family...to build a nation of readers... ." (An author of several books, Mrs. Bush donated proceeds from book sales to literacy programs.) Despite its high profile, however, illiteracy remained one of society's vexing problems.

Programs and collaborations strengthened LVOC's efforts. The Wayne-Finger Lakes BOCES and LVOC addressed workplace literacy programs. Corinne Canough coordinated literacy efforts with CCFL's Gretchen Starks and its Community Education Department. As the founder of CCFL's Adult Literacy Program and a member of WXXI's (PBS radio and TV) Project Plus Task Force, Gretchen provided student materials and arranged free office space at the college for LVOC volunteers. With LVOC, Gretchen formulated the first LVOC in-service conference at CCFL, held in 1989. The in-service workshops featured such topics as Alternative Assessment, Learning Styles, and Teaching the Learning Disabled Adult, and gave literacy volunteers new ideas on networking, available learner materials, and teaching strategies.

By registering students at CCFL and tracking student-tutor team hours, LVOC became eligible for program funding for FTEs (full time equivalents). Each 450 hours of instruction equaled one FTE resulting in the award of $ 1710 with 2/3 to CCFL and 1/3 in unrestricted funds to LVOC.

To better serve students, the board re-evaluated LVA's READ assessment test and concluded it tested only to the 6th grade level, did not cover spelling and writing instruction, or promote expressive writing. Its replacement, the Bader Reading Assessment, tested pupils up to 12th grade reading levels and gave tutors grade equivalent scores in word recognition, paragraph reading and spelling.

In reviewing the many aspects of the organization, LVOC President Pat Johnson commented in the LVOC Summer 1989 newsletter, "We are called on to serve our community in more ways than an all-volunteer group can manage." LVOC had reached, according to Pat, "the crossroads in our development" and needed to build a solid financial base to continue its services and support its professional base.

Chapter 7
At the Crossroads

To meet the affiliate's ongoing needs, LVOC updated committee descriptions in May 1991 to increase the committees' participation and effectiveness. Chaired by board members, the committees include both board and other volunteers. Their professionalism and expertise assist LVOC in meeting its goals. The Resource and Development committee handles the financial aspects, including fundraising and grants. The Program committee oversees student support, tutor training, tutor support, and recognition of both. Public Relations works on publicity, the newsletter, special projects, and public awareness. According to Public Relations Committee minutes dated April 1, 1992, Addie Cook started LVOC's Speakers' Bureau by writing a script which she presented with a video program to the Victor Rotary Club and the Canandaigua Welcome Wagon. With the goal to recruit volunteers and students, Addie and other committee members contacted additional local organizations to set dates for future speaking engagements. At about the same time, tutor Susan Kremer Besaw, an advertising manager at Goulds Pumps, facilitated complimentary printing of the newsletter (renamed The Achievers in fall 1992), annual fund drive letters, and stationery (courtesy of Finger Lakes Press). She and Laurel Wemett coordinated with Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) for the design of two promotional projects, a benefit made possible by LVOC's United Way affiliation. Under Chair Nina Colegrove's leadership, the Personnel Committee formulated a Personnel Policy adopted by LVOC in 1992. In the years prior to paid staff, there was no need for formalized personnel guidelines.

Though LVOC received funds for projects or the purchase of equipment, grants generally have not provided funds for personnel to run or supervise projects, or to train volunteers to oversee them. An exception is the Rochester Area Foundation grant received in 1990-1991 which paid half the Tutor-Learner Coordinator's salary.

Additionally, LVOC needed to develop funding sources to pay staff for part-time positions in administrative and student/tutor positions. (Note: Through the years the titles for these positions have changed. The Executive Director position was formerly the Program Coordinator, Administrator, or Program Director. The Tutor-Learner Coordinator title has undergone similar alterations.) Retaining good people in part-time positions has been challenging. In the spring of 1990, for example, both the Tutor-Learner Coordinator and the Program Coordinator left their 16-hour per week jobs to assume other positions with more hours and benefits than LVOC could offer.

Corinne Canough's successful 1990 grant application to the State Education Department for Adult Literacy Education (ALE) funds allowed LVOC to receive the money directly and the larger award meant LVOC could increase the administrator's hours. Previously, LVA-NYS had applied for funds and awarded them to individual affiliates under their "Umbrella Grant."

Board Presidents Pat Johnson, Betty Fox and Juanita Handley oversaw the lengthy process of applying for United Way designated-agency status which was successfully achieved in 1989. By 1991 LVOC began receiving an annual United Way allocation. As an LVA-NYS affiliate which met yearly financial, statistical, and other reporting requirements, LVOC qualified for Internal Revenue Service 501 (c) (3) "exempt subordinate" status through its parent LVA national organization.

To remain eligible for United Way funding, nonprofits like LVOC must adhere to United Way guidelines. During the annual United Way campaign, agencies agree not to conduct fundraising activities. LVOC's longstanding auction is allowed, however.

Becoming a United Way agency and a direct recipient of State Education Department funds (ALE and/or AEA) gave LVOC more stability. Laurel Wemett comments that this funding pattern fosters a greater independence for LVOC, but requires an increased accountability for its staff and volunteers.

LVOC, however, does not always receive anticipated amounts from United Way and other expected funding sources. This was true in 1992 with United Way, the State Education Department, and other sources affected by budget cuts and shifting priorities.

Despite funding challenges, LVOC programs remain learner-centered, and the training of tutors has become a team effort and a significant development for LVOC. The team concept evolved about 1990 when training sessions began consuming more time than Mary Schult and Betty Fox could allow. The Tutor-Learner Coordinator joined training efforts to become better acquainted with the trainees, allowing for better matching of tutors with students. Having additional volunteers achieve status as trainers helped overcome scheduling difficulties, and provided a variety of teaching styles. Most initial training, according to Betty Fox, occurred at regional LVA-NYS in-service meetings with trainers from the state organization. Since the 7th edition of TUTOR (1993), would-be trainers must fulfill requirements which are further defined in LVA's recently-issued Guide for Training Trainers. These include an understanding of the affiliate's mission, policies and procedures, and adult literacy issues. Trainers must receive certification for a BL or ESL workshop, tutor for a set number of hours, complete the LVA Tutor Training Workshop, and participate in teaching a BL or ESL workshop.

Currently, dates for tutor training classes and meeting sites are set with the help of the Program Committee. Approximately 2 months before the first session, the tutoring team meets to arrange the teaching schedule. The objective is to provide continuity by having 2 to 4 trainers at each session, and at least 1 team member present at all 6 sessions. LVOC now conducts interviews with potential tutors and requests references from each applicant. Tutor trainees attend an orientation, the 6 training sessions, and a final meeting to report on their first field experiences. At each session, the trainers cover a variety of topics. Tutors learn how to define literacy, how to work with the adult student through a number of strategies (including the experience story technique), how to set goals, how to plan a lesson, how to assess progress, and how to keep effective records. Refined teaching aids help tutors plan their lessons on topics such as explaining a calendar, teaching colors, reading comprehension, teaching consonants, contractions and vowels, writing the alphabet, numbers, plurals, sight words, signs and labels, spelling, suffixes, and grammar. In addition, tutors learn the value of recording a student's own words, ideas and thoughts in a written journal. Trainers teach tutors how to present a lesson so the student can be successful and become motivated to achieve at a higher level while increasing self-esteem.

To help all students achieve success, LVA has concluded, students need a plan with short term and long term goals, an understanding of how these categories differ from each other, and reasonable expectations of how long achieving them might take. Long term goals, for example, could take years to accomplish and might include passing the GED exam or improving job status. In contrast, students could reach short term goals in 1 or 2 lessons. Tutors could design lesson plans, for example, with the student's objective to recognize the symbol-sound relationship of the consonant "t," or when given the pattern "in," to write ten words using the pattern.

Highlighting student accomplishments became a target in 1990. LVOC hosted a Learner Recognition Tea, invited students, tutors and spouses, and provided free child care. Each student received a certificate of achievement and a Stars in Literacy button. The tea was also a chance to discuss ideas for other student events, including a student support group.

President Juanita Handley observed in the Fall 1990 newsletter that LVOC had multiple needs-- more tutors, more office volunteers, more help with special events, and, of course, more funds. Many tutors were on the inactive list and a few volunteers handled many duties. To fill the need for more tutors, trainers led additional workshops in both BR and ESL, but student referrals continued to outnumber available tutors. Juanita felt that new learners were "out there, eager to get started once they have gotten the 'nerve' to

ask for help." Despite the high number of student referrals, Juanita acknowledged that "we are merely scratching the surface" of Ontario County's literacy needs.

Offering support to tutors through phone communication or in-person gatherings was an ongoing LVOC priority. Informal get-togethers allowed tutors to stay in touch with the training team and to talk about their experiences and ideas. The Tutor Breakfast began in February 1991 as a social event to honor recent trainees and welcome other tutors. Bill Hollman, the Tutor-Learner Coordinator, handed out certificates to students who had achieved their GED degrees. Held during February's Literacy Volunteers Week, the event continues as the annual Brunch at local churches.

In a 1994 newsletter article on self-esteem, Mary Lill wrote about the Finger Lakes Counseling Services' workshop for tutors. She reflected on "how often we, as tutors, blame ourselves for our student's 'failings'." Mary's article included an undated excerpt from the LVA Ticonderoga County newsletter:

> It's a delicate balancing act for tutors to empathize, advise, and even act without becoming disillusioned by unexpected outcomes.
>
> Good teachers have long recognized that the process is as important as the result, that disappointments are inevitable, and that setbacks ironically provide great opportunities for learning. Literacy tutors who come to this understanding can manage the ups and downs. (The Achievers, Fall 1994)

Getting tutors to complete the twice-yearly reports required by both the national and state LVA offices and the State Education Department is an important task. Calling tutors, processing the information on proper forms, calculating total affiliate involvement with tutor, staff and general volunteer time, and entering data for the comprehensive affiliate reports is time-consuming for office personnel. Tutors, recognizing that student progress can be slow and difficult to measure, may be reluctant to administer tests to their students. In recent years, Laurel Wemett notes, reporting has emphasized achievements that cannot be tested. For example, has the student achieved a better quality of life? As vital indicators of the affiliate's complete activities over the year period, the reports' statistics furnish important data for grant applications and provide the only documentation of how much time and effort have been spent with students.

Chapter 8

Students as Ambassadors, Students Supporting Each Other

In 1991, a former student joined the LVOC board for the first time. A native of Italy, Antoinette Infurna studied with ESL tutors Ruth Glenn and Marge Gallagher, obtained her driver's license, became a U. S. citizen, enrolled at CCFL, and realized her long time goal in September 1990 when she opened her own bridal shop. Nominated by LVOC, Antoinette received an Outstanding Adult Student award in 1992 from the New York Association for Continuing Community Education.

LVOC's annual dinner meetings feature students who talk about their experiences as non-readers. At the 1990 meeting, Joyce J. told her story and it reminds us how cruel the effects of illiteracy can be. As a child, Joyce suffered from rheumatic fever. She did not attend school until age 8 and never learned to read. In 1969 she gave birth to her only child, Helen. When hospital officials asked Joyce for her signature on some documents, her sister stopped her by saying, "Do you know what you're doing?" Horrified, Joyce learned she had almost signed an adoption agreement. Years later, Joyce asked LVOC for help, winning a bet with her son-in-law that she could learn to read before her grandchild was born. (Daily Messenger, 1990)

Reflecting the success of Antoinette, Joyce and others, LVOC renamed its newsletter, The Achievers. The Fall 1992 issue, the first to carry the new name, featured Lori Coon's entry in the national "Reach for the Stars" writing contest. Lori had worked at jobs with minimal reading requirements and realized she needed help when her current job involved more math and reading. After second grade, Lori was placed in a special education class with very little reading or math. Lori recalled, "They gave me what they thought would get me by." Tutoring with Isobel Skellet for a couple of years, Lori wrote about her goals:

> There are things I would like to do for myself that would make me happy: to read like everyone else and get my driver's license so I can do for myself and not have to be waited on like I do now. (The Achievers, 1992)

Getting a GED was another aim. Lori said:

> I would like to find something that I am good at. I like to work with my hands and work with kids. I want to find another job, something that I would enjoy doing that I wouldn't have to be ashamed of. I wouldn't have to prove

> anything to anyone just to myself, if I could work with the kids that are handicap that is one thing I would enjoy. (The Achievers, 1992)

As president in 1992, Dorothy Kennedy thought LVOC could involve learners and get to know them better-- to match names with faces, learn about their interests and goals, their accomplishments, and their needs. Did students want more recognition, more responsibility and more involvement in the organization? Other affiliates had student support groups where students could express their interests and goals. Did LVOC students want one, too?

After attending the LVA national conference, Dorothy saw that former learners were important as ambassadors for LVA affiliates. She reported that at other affliates they were helping on committees, raising funds and serving on boards. Willing and wanting to talk about their experiences, they spoke to church groups, senior citizen centers, Rotary members, and tutor training workshops. "What better way to show the public their need and our effectiveness!"

Bob Milspaw attended both the 1994 and 1995 LVA national conferences. A chef at Belhurst Castle, Bob had worked with tutor Margaret Lee Polce for three years and showed marked improvement. At the conference he went to workshops on computers, public speaking and met other LV students. Bob's goals were to "sit and enjoy the newspaper" and to "fill out a form at the doctor's office without using a cheat sheet."

Current student Arthea "Artie" Minnamon fits Dorothy's description of affiliate ambassador. Following reconstructive ear surgery, Artie worked with tutors and a speech therapist to improve her writing and speaking skills. Through the Wayne County Literacy Volunteers, she discovered how a computer program could help her with word processing and other skills. Eventually, Artie wants to take humanities courses at FLCC and work with people. An LVOC volunteer and advocate, Artie contributed baked goods for the fall 1995 sale which benefited student activities and helped coordinate the 1996 sale, talked about LVA as a guest on WGVA and WACK radio stations in Geneva and Newark, spoke at the Tutor-Learner brunch, helped organize the student club, attended LVA national conferences, and serves on the Program Committee. LVA's Sundin Student Leadership Institute selected Artie as a participant at the 1996 national conference at Tulsa where she was awarded a full scholarship. The Institute assists student leaders with forming and maintaining student support groups and with public speaking skills, and encourages them to take on responsibilites within their home affiliates.

Four LVOC students, including Bob and Artie, got together on February 24, 1996, for the first meeting of the student club. They watched a video of the 1995 LVA National

Conference held in Buffalo (which Artie attended) and agreed to alternate meetings between Geneva and Canandaigua. At the next meeting, another student joined them as they discussed the "Bid for Literacy Auction" and talked about ideas for field trips.

Traditionally, students have busy lives with multiple priorities. Potentially, the student club can boost their success as learners.

The Adult Literacy Services grant to Wood Library led to the creation of LVOC's student newsletter in 1993-1994. Titled Students Helping Students (the choice of a student) and composed entirely of student writings, the first issue's theme was "Once Upon A Time." "A Special Family Story" and "The Letter I Wish I Had Written" have followed as newsletter themes, dervived from an annual writing exercise. Tutor Martha Andres guides newsletter production as the annual newsletter circulates each spring to all students and tutors. A local business, Mail Boxes Etc. at Canandaigua's Parkway Plaza, contributes complimentary printing of the newsletter.

Chapter 9
Family Literacy

Although LVOC traditionally serves older readers, a family literacy program, developed in the 1990s as a collaboration between Head Start and Literacy Volunteers of America, helps parents and children enjoy reading together. During the 1993-1994 year, the LVA Children's Book Distribution Program, with GTE Foundation funds, enabled LVOC to initiate a local family literacy project. The GTE Foundation also offered scholarships for GTE Family Literacy Institutes at LVA national conferences. LVOC's Lynda Millerd (Louisville, 1993), Mary Zingerella (San Diego, 1994), and Kim Sigel (Buffalo, 1995) have taken part, returning to share their knowledge with the affiliate.

Laurel Wemett recalls how LVA's Reading With Children (RWC) program began:

> Mary Lill was an experienced reading teacher [and] the perfect person to launch the RWC program, because she believed so completely in the value of reading to children. She paid a lot of attention to detail. [This was] important to the success of the program.

LVOC offered interested tutors free training sessions and handbooks. With new-found awareness of children's reading materials, the RWC tutor team, led by Mary Lill, conducted planning meetings with the Geneva and Canandaigua Head Start coordinators. Carol Wilson, Coordinator of Family Services at Geneva's Head Start, explains that Head Start family workers made home visits to identify potential participants. These candidates included low-level reading parents of children enrolled in Head Start, parents who needed assistance with English as a Second Language, and parents enrolled in GED programs who could benefit from 1-on-1 tutoring. Once the 6-session program was under way, Head Start also contributed child care, transportation, and refreshments.

RWC began at Geneva's BOCES Career Resource Center due to a lack of space at Geneva Head Start's North Street School classrooms. A second 5-week program followed at Canandaigua's Head Start. The first teaching team consisted of long-time volunteer Betty Fox, Tutor-Learner Coordinator Mary Lill, Pauline Angeline, and June Oates. (Pauline, who was drawn into LVOC by Juanita Handley, retired from the Canandaigua Primary School after teaching third grade for 12 years and serving 24 years as a Reading Specialist. June Oates worked as a secretary for FLCC's Adult Literacy Education Program and served on LVOC's board.) Supplemented locally by a grant from Geneva's

Zonta Club, RWC supplied parents of the Head Start preschoolers with children's books, audiotapes, and tape recorders.

The RWC volunteers read aloud, expressed their enjoyment of reading, and encouraged interaction with the parents. The team's teaching topics included writing skills, wordless picture books, books on tape, a hands-on puppetry workshop, poetry, and nursery rhymes. The Canandaigua group, for example, visited Wood Library for its final session. Parents met the children's librarian, learned what resources the library offers, and received their own library cards.

Program evaluation showed that parents learned more about children's literature, realized the value of reading and spending time with their children, and gained self-confidence in their reading abilities. One parent, with Spanish as her native language, worked with tutor Susan Kremer Besaw to improve her knowledge of English. The Head Start program hired her and she is now employed as a bilingual teacher aide in the classroom.

Mary Lill says, "While [I was] working with low-income mothers during a Reading With Children series, one mother was so excited about children's books that she bought each child in her daughter's class a book for Christmas."

During the 1994-1995 year the RWC team, joined by Dave Curtin (a steadfast volunteer who died in April, 1997) and May Hunt, presented the program to Head Start parents in Geneva, Canandaigua, and Clifton Springs. The RWC team was also invited to take part in the March 1995 Central New York Head Start Parent Conference in Syracuse. Parents who attended the RWC workshop on family literacy received free books whose cost was underwritten, in part, by Geneva's Rotary Club.

The success of Reading With Children brought renewed funding from Zonta. In 1996 LVOC was 1 of the 5 designated charities to benefit from the Ontario Charities Classic Golf Tournament. These financial resources will allow Reading With Children to continue programs at Head Start locations in Geneva, Canandaigua, and Clifton Springs, and to expand to 3 new sites (Bloomfield, Honeoye, and Naples) in 1997.

Laurel LeBoeuf, LVOC's first RWC coordinator, outlines RWC's objectives: to provide parents with appropriate reading materials to use with their children, to test baseline reading levels of participants (who are required to attend all 5 sessions), and to convey that reading provides lifelong pleasure. RWC aims to increase pre-reading and reading readiness skills in preschool children by encouraging active parent-child daily reading sessions with RWC materials.

When LVA-NYS received a grant of $ 110,000 in 1993 from an anonymous funder, it designated the windfall for an intergenerational literacy project which would modify

LVA's traditional 1-to-1 tutoring model. Over a 2-year period, Families Helping Families (FHF) planned to develop a new family tutoring model with tutor families and student families, test and refine it at three pilot sites, and then implement it through LVA-NYS and the LVA national network. The 3 participating affiliates were carefully selected by LVA-NYS. LVA Rochester, a vibrant affiliate with a branch office at SUNY Brockport, had access to a large Hispanic population. LVOC offered outreach to the City of Geneva in a primarily-rural county. There was also the opportunity for LVOC to develop a partnership with the Hobart and William Smith (HWS) Colleges, whose Student Literacy Corps consisted of over 100 volunteer reading and writing instructors. The third affiliate, LVA Broome/Tioga in Binghamton, hoped to attract families to its computer center. Its downstate location offered geographical diversity, yet was not too distant for facilitating meetings of the project coordinators.

For the first time, LV's tutoring approach did not focus on individuals. Instead, it encompassed the family unit and involved as many family members as possible. The idea was that tutor/families would assist learner/families with both literacy and life skills to help parents, caregivers, and children work together to achieve success. The focus of FHF was pure research.

Each site hired its own coordinators who reported to the LVA-NYS FHF project coordinator. Geneva resident Gail Lowe, a tutor and Basic Literacy (BL) workshop leader, supervised LVOC's first phase. (Janet Woody of Geneva initially held the position of Family Literacy Coordinator until family difficulties led to her resignation.) The plan was to recruit Reading With Children mothers who would be trained as tutors, then pair them with other families. As coordinator, Gail would work with the mothers while the HWS Literacy Corps students worked with the children. When the program got under way in April, the HWS semester was almost over and students were not available until the fall semester began. Laurel Wemett remembers that "Gail tried hard to work closely with the Corps and even attended a National Family Literacy Conference with HWS students in Kentucky."

Personnel continued to change. Gail Lowe's husband was transferred and they moved away. The HWS Literacy Corps coordinator also left. In late summer 1994, LVOC hired Mary Zingerella as FHF coordinator. Although Mary had no prior affiliation with Literacy Volunteers, she possessed a master's degree in Library Science, had taken 21 hours of education courses, and was an experienced Girl Scout leader. Meanwhile, HWS named a Student Literacy Corps coordinator who was feeling stretched by the demands of a new job, and who did not fully understand the FHF program. The HWS coordinator questioned the guidelines requiring students to take over 20 hours of literacy tutor

training. How would the training help students? Did they really need it? The outcome of this tension between the HWS Literacy Corps and LVOC was that the Student Literacy Corps did not play as strong a role throughout the program's duration as originally planned.

One FHF group met at the Head Start site during the day; another group for parents whose children were not in Head Start met evenings at the BOCES Career Resource Center classroom at One Franklin Square, Geneva. Mary worked with the parents while HWS students held separate sessions for the children. The college students' schedules, transportation needs, and lack of reliability for evening sessions caused problems. Mary also encountered complications with the parents. Although the idea was to bring parents and children together, parents wanted opportunities to learn separately, to socialize with other adults, and to benefit from adult support. One mother's developmental disabilites and lack of impulse control caused interruptions to the entire group.

Meanwhile, a descriptive recruitment flyer publicized the FHF program to case workers, social agencies, and others. Head Start proved to be the best connector for finding families who could attend regularly, which was critical to the program's goals.

FHF parents made alphabet books for their children and explored reading opportunities. Participants enjoyed an alternative learning experience when they visited the Geneva Historical Society's "Winter Toys, Then and Now."

The Geneva Free Library also helped support the program, and some sessions took place at the library. Mary found that it was hard to get families to visit the library and become regular users because some found the library intimidating, they had difficulty returning books on time, or had problems with paying fines for overdue or lost materials.

During the summer the Families Helping Families program stayed active and took advantage of good weather. Six families met at Geneva playgrounds while a local Senior Girl Scout troop interacted with the children. Each week, the participants crafted a different kind of puppet and wrote or acted out a story or skit on topics such as stranger awareness and safety. Each family chose books for reading at home, too, made possible by Reading is Fundamental (RIF) funds.

Mary recalls that FHF then sought a "captive audience," taking the 6-week program to Faith Haven in Naples, an agency for young women with problem pregnancies. Mary did modeled reading of a book, gave participants a copy, oversaw inexpensive activities using magazines or scrap art, suggested other kinds of appropriate books or stories, and talked about available library materials. The participants created puppets, a counting book and an alphabet book.

FHF funding ended in August 1995. In assessing the program, the FHF program learned that the student families were not comfortable with becoming tutor families. It was not a question of intellectual ability, but the difficulty of student families taking on volunteer leadership roles. On the plus side, LVOC's success with Reading With Children had led to its selection as an experimental site for FHF. As planned, LVOC and the HWS Student Literacy Corps developed training, and as part of the initial model, FHF worked with a Chinese family. Head Start's Carol Wilson encouraged and empowered parents, and the participating parents supported one another, expanding the definition of what a family is.

The Family Activity Book, a refinement of one produced in the FHF program, became LVOC's first published book in 1997. A successful $ 6,100 grant application to the New York Newspapers Foundation, encouraged by Finger Lakes Times publisher George Park, funded production of the Family Activity Book. Coordinated and edited by Mary Zingerella, the book is colorful, fun to look at, and filled with cooperative and inexpensive activities for parents with low literacy skills to do with their children. LVOC hosted an activity day in February 1996 for families to try some of the ideas. Photographs taken that day, and artwork by designers Susan Kremer Besaw recruited, provide visual interest for all ages. Participating families, FHF facilitators, and an advisory board of representatives from county agencies and LVOC staff made suggestions for the book's contents and format before authorizing production. Finger Lakes Press printed the first edition of 1,000 copies, and currently, plans are under way for marketing the book to LVA affiliates and other potential audiences. At LVA's 1996 national conference in Tulsa, LVOC introduced the book to LVA affiliates, along with a puppet-critter made by local puppeteer and designer Debbie Poplasky. The critter character, which appears in the book, was so popular that it will be reproduced for sale, too.

Chapter 10

Reaching Students-- New Technology and Traditional Approaches

Technological advances, such as desktop computers and "distant" tutoring via computers, may offer additional learning opportunites in the late 1990s. From the outset, LVA-NYS has been at the forefront in the application of technology to adult literacy programs. For example, Apple Computer awarded an equipment grant to LVA-NYS in 1991. LVA-NYS served as an original "test site" for the Macintosh version of a telecommunications package, and many affiliates, including LVOC, received Macintosh LC computers as part of the experiment. In addition to using computers as tools for student instruction, the LVA-NYS network applied computer technology to every aspect of its literacy program. The project integrated computer-assisted instruction (CAI) for illiterate adults, and management functions such as financial reports and general recordkeeping, with a telecommunications component. This component connected all LVA-NYS computers through telephone lines and modems with America On Line (AOL).

Communications also improved when Wood Library installed a separate phone line to the LVOC office in 1991. An answering machine for handling calls after hours freed Wood Library staff from answering calls and taking messages for LVOC.

The Adult Literacy Services Program of the New York State Education Department awarded a $ 15,838 grant in 1993 to Canandaigua's Wood Library Association, in cooperation with Rural Opportunities and LVOC. One of 12 projects funded in New York State and submitted through Newark's Pioneer Library System, the grant launched a computer-assisted instruction (CAI) literacy resource center. It specified that libraries collaborate with adult literacy providers or community agencies, and hold workshops to train LV tutors and library staff. The grant also furnished the center with computers, a printer, multi-media and interactive software for computer literacy and ESL. Cathy Carstens, a project coordinator, helped reach out to tutors and students by editing the first student newsletter as part of the Wood Library grant.

Laurel Wemett remarks, "Almost immediately, Geneva tutors began to ask for their own computers, expressing their desire to bring such advances to their students." In August 1996 New York State Library Development awarded the Geneva Free Library $ 13,960 in grant money for a computerized literacy center. The grant funds added a computer, printer, software, CD-Roms, audiotapes, and both literacy and English as a Second Language books to the library's literacy holdings. In partnership with LVOC and the Hobart and William Smith Colleges Student Literacy Corps, the Geneva Free Library

can better serve Ontario County's eastern population's literacy needs through updated equipment and materials.

Along with computers which offer an alternative to the printed page, the medium of television can provide access to classroom learning and reach a larger audience of adult students. Locally, beginning in 1993, Ontario County cable TV subscribers could take GED courses at home by paying $ 25 for textbooks and tuning into FLTV 12 on Mondays through Fridays, 7 to 7:30.

Despite technological wizardry, LVA's proven method is still 1-to-1 instruction geared to each student's needs. Dorothy Kennedy wrote, "Not all Literacy Volunteer classes are being taught in the same way. The beauty of our program is that we are free to fashion the course of a lesson to match the learner's individual needs." (The Achievers, Fall 1993)

Nora, an ESL learner who left Argentina with her husband in 1988, was a trained computer analyst who had to study computer instructions in English. Tutor Sandy Holley found that Nora brought questions to tutoring sessions about subjects she had heard about on TV or from newspaper clippings with difficult words underlined. Although tutors traditionally design lesson plans, Nora's motivation guided her tutor's teaching. Nora's computer knowledge also benefited LVOC when she became an office volunteer who updated records and entered computer data.

Chapter 11
LVOC Today and Tomorrow

Beyond its student services and tutor training, LVOC addresses all aspects of running a not-for-profit organization.

June Oates observes, "The Literacy Volunteer has become more involved as a fundraiser, committee member, organizer-- in addition to his/her initial involvement as a tutor."

Public relations for LVOC services and the recruitment of both volunteers and students takes a variety of forms. Word of mouth advertising has always been effective. For example, Margaret Lee Polce, a retired teacher of Special Education, learned of LVOC about 1991 from a fellow jury duty member.

A laminated student recruitment card, radio spots on local stations WCGR in Canandaigua and WGVA in Geneva, paper liners on Arby's food trays, bookmarks for Welcome Wagon baskets, booths at festivals and the state fair, and the 1996 video, "Helping Neighbors Read", have all contributed to letting people know about LVOC's mission. Board members provide valuable expertise and contacts in promoting the organization.

United Way has offered its member agencies an opportunity to collaborate with Rochester Institute of Technology (RIT) graphic design student interns. Through the "Public and Social Service Design" course, a previous partnership produced an Arby's restaurant food tray liner. Its bright colors and cartoon characters conveyed LVOC's message in 2 languages to Arby's customers. As part of the 1995 United Way/RIT Graphic Arts Student Intern Program, RIT student/intern Jennifer Damiano worked with LVOC and Auburn's Finger Lakes Press to produce a tutor recruitment brochure. With photos of students and tutors from the Daily Messenger, the Finger Lakes Times, and the affiliate scrapbook, the attractive brochure is found at the county libraries and public relations events. To reach a non-English population, a Spanish version is also planned.

Public relations includes fundraising, too. Longtime LVOC supporter Marjorie Morris believes that LVOC needs ideas which raise money without being too time-consuming for volunteers and staff. While some promotions may be more successful revenue-raisers, the publicity value of events like Kiss-A-Pig cannot be discounted. (The newspaper highlights nominees and runs a yearly story and photographs on the winning pig kisser in mid-smooch.) The annual "Bid for Literacy" auction, the sale of chances for a handmade quilt, the sale of holiday ornaments, concerts by the Sweet Adelines and the

fall bake sale are examples of fundraisers which elicit newspaper coverage, bring in dollars and heighten community awareness. LVOC's annual fund drive is an essential development tool, especially when government funding declines or anticipated grants are not received. LVOC depends on individuals and community businesses for yearly support and to increase the endowment fund. Due to a few loyal benefactors, the endowment fund is growing steadily, and the board has elected to let the endowment build, rather than withdraw a percentage of the generated interest. A substantial endowment, according to Resource and Development Committee chairman Dave Wink, is crucial to LVOC's future.

To look at its current standing and plan for the years ahead, LVOC and other LVA-NYS affiliates began a self-study in 1994. Designed to evaluate all aspects of an affiliate's program, the Self-Assessment Process included an extensive questionnaire directed to staff and board members. The LVOC Executive Committee then met with LVA-NYS representatives to develop an action plan by May 1995. They concluded the following directives would enhance the quality of LVOC's services and assist students to set and achieve their goals:

-Secure an even level of funding

-Maintain an adequate office facility for program management and tutoring needs

-Monitor student and tutor progress

-Increase volunteer and student populations

-Develop an organizational plan

In fulfilling these directives, LVOC will establish a strong foundation for its future efforts.

In looking back over LVOC's first 30 years, there have been tough times and obstacles that have been overcome by creative approaches, hard work, and the determination to keep going. In the words of Juanita Handley, who died just before this history was completed, "Take your time and think about it. You can do it."

Past, present, or future-- the motivation of students and volunteers accounts for LVOC's longevity. The reasons why people participate as literacy volunteers reinforce common themes: a love of reading, a desire to teach, a belief that reading is fundamental to a full life, and a satisfaction from personal contact, 1-on-1, whereby students and tutors learn from each other, and tutors become advocates for their students.

Appendix

Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc.
Organizational Chart

STUDENT

▼

TUTOR

▼

LVA LOCAL AFFILIATES

▼

LVA STATE OFFICES AND MID-LEVEL SYSTEMS

▼

LVA NATIONAL ORGANIZATION

The most important person in the LVA organization is each individual student, next is each individual tutor. These teams-- thousands of students and tutors-- are the reason for LVA's being. They are supported by the local organizations, by state or mid-level systems , and by the national organization. Each has its own role. Together we make a real "family."

From: Colvin, Ruth J. A Way with Words: The Story of Literacy Volunteers of America. Syracuse, NY: Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc., 1992.

Detailed records documenting LVOC's early years and statistics are incomplete. As we celebrate the last 30 years and look forward to LVOC's continuing service, ensuring that LVOC's important documents and records are preserved is a worthy goal. LVOC's Betty Fox is aware of this importance and deserves credit for retaining materials from the earlier years. In a letter dated January 31, 1994, Ruth Colvin thanked Betty for sending early copies of TUTOR to her. These copies, which fill gaps in the LVA archival records, are now housed in the Special Collections division of the Syracuse University Library.

The following data is included to bring together parts of LVOC's history and to provide a partial understanding of volunteer and professional leadership, Ontario County demographics, LVOC's outreach, and the composition of its students and tutors in various years.

Chronology of LVOC Leadership

Chronology of Volunteer Leadership

Marcia Lee-- 1966 or 1967-June 1968
Doris McIntosh (president of Church Women United, 6/9/67)
Mary Jeanne Grabman-- July 1968
Dr. Marion Morse-- by February 1970
Ginny Barton-- 1971-1972
Ginny Barton and Lucile Harford-- 1972-1973
Ginny Barton-- 1974-1975
Fran Merriman-- 1975-1979
Nettie Scoon-- 1980-1984
Betty Fox-- 1985-1986
Irene Camaione-- 1986-1987
Fenton Carruth-- 1987-1988
Betty Fox-- 1988-1989
Pat Johnson-- 1989-1990
Juanita Handley-- 1990-1991
Marcella Bloom-- 1991-1992
Dorothy Kennedy-- 1992-1993, 1993-1994
Lynda Millerd-- 1994-1995, 1995-1996
Karen Fouracre-- 1996-1997

VISTA

Shirley Finley-- 10/80-8/81 (or 1980-1981 according to handwritten note in file: "Annual Meetings Before 1990")
Kevin Spillane-- (w/ Seneca County until 10/85)
1985-- Seneca County affiliate begun.
February-August 1985
Barbara Ambrose-- 10/1/85 (shared with Seneca County)

LVOC Staff

Tutor-Student Coordinator (Previous Title: Tutor-Learner Coordinator)

Kathy Valvano-- March 1989-1990 (letter of resignation March 1990)
Bill Hollman-- 1990
Karen Groot-- spring 1991
Mary Lill-- fall 1992 (November 4, 1992 letter of introduction to tutors and students)-November 1994
Kim Sigel-- January 1995-February 1996
Eileen Wegman-- June 1996-May 1997
Karen Robertson-- May 1997 to present

WEP/PARS Coordinator, Program Administrator

Pat Johnson-- 1988

Executive Director (Previous Titles: Program Administrator, Program Director)

Corinne Canough-- June 1989-May 1990
Laurel Wemett-- spring 1990 (May 30, 1990 letter of introduction to tutors) to present

Volunteer Coordinator

Irene Camaione-- fall 1990 (a short-term, unpaid position)

Computer Records Assistant

Jill Clouthier-- January-February 1994
Judy Deinhardt-- March 1994-February 1997

Families Helping Families/Family Literacy Coordinator

Janet Woody-- fall 1993
Gail Lowe-- 1994
Mary Zingerella-- fall 1994-1995

Reading With Children Coordinator

Laurel LeBoeuf-- November 1996 to present

Reading With Children Consultant

Mary Lill-- 1996-1997

U S Census Figures

Finding statistics over a 30-year period to assess Ontario County's demographic and educational composition is difficult. According to Judy Deinhardt, Planner, Ontario County Division of Planning, Development, and Environmental Services, the U S Census Bureau collects different information each decade and the categories reported do not conform to a uniform standard.

	1960	1970	1980	1990
Ontario County Total Population	68,070	78,849	88,909	95,101
Non-white	472		2,164	2,667
Foreign-born	2,862		2,585	1,960
Male (25 yrs. +)	19,309			
No schooling	279			
1-4 years of school	544			
Female (25 yrs. +)	19,332			
No schooling	265			
1-4 years of school	367			
Total Male and Female (25 yrs. +)	38,641	42,523	52,411	61,394
No schooling	544	410		
1-4 years of school	911	689		
Number of functional illiterates in Ontario County	1,455	1,099		
Total Male and Female (25 yrs. +) Elementary Education (0-8 yrs.)		9,430	7,215	3,854

LVOC Annual Report
June 1987

Number of Active Tutors: 42
Male 11 Female 31

Number of Students: 42

Gender of Students:
Male 22 Female 20

Number of Students in Basic Reading (BR): 33
Number of Students in English as a Second Language (ESL): 9

Total Student Contact Hours (Over a 6-month period): 2,347

Progress:	Remained Within Entry Level	Achieved a Higher Level
BR:	24	9
ESL:	3	6

Age Range: 33 students were 25 to 44 years old

Ethnic Group:
White 27 Black 7 Asian 5 Hispanic 2 Native American 1

Employment Status	
Employed	21
Homemakers	9
Unemployed	9
Retired	1
Disabled	2

Number of Inactive Tutors: 40
Number of Students on the Waiting List: 25

1989-1990 Profile of LVOC Adult Learners

Gender
Male 69% Female 31%

Age
14-16 16% 25-44 51% 45-59 19% 60+ 6% unk 8%

Ethnic
White 67% Black 5% Asian 16% Hispanic 3%
Native Amer. 1% Unk 8%

1995-1996 Profile of LVOC Adult Learners
(Students served from July 1, 1995 to June 30, 1996 per LVA Annual Report)

		#	%
Gender			
	Male	47	52
	Female	78	48
	Total	125	100
Age	16-24	9	7
	25-44	75	60
	45-59	23	18
	>60	6	5
	Not available	12	10
Ethnic Group	White	79	63
	Black	16	13
	Asian	10	8
	Hispanic	11	8
	Native American	2	2
	Not available	7	6
Employment Status	Employed	60	48
	Unemployed	44	35
	Retired	1	1
	Not available	20	16
	On public assistance	*40*	*32*
Referral Source			
	Other Agencies including ARC/Abbey Industries, GRASP, Geneva/Clifton Springs/Canandaigua Head Start, FLCC and Ontario County Social Services:	77	62
	Friend/Family	25	20
	TV	4	2
	Radio	2	2
	Employer	1	1.5
	Library	2	2
	Other Literacy Organization	4	2
	Poster	1	1.5
	Not Available	9	7
Terminations	65 (Note: students might return and work with another tutor)		
Reasons	Met goals	30	46
	Lack of interest	12	19
	Moved	2	3
	Personal	2	3
	Job Conflict	8	12
	Tutor/Student Schedule Conflict	1	1.5
	Transportation Problem	1	1.5
	Other or Not Available	9	14

1995-1996 Profile of LVOC Volunteer-Tutors*
*Active and Unassigned Tutors on 6/30/96 per LVA Annual Report

		#	%
Gender			
	Male	20	20
	Female	79	80
	Total	99	100
Program	Basic Literacy (BL)	83	83
	English as a Second Language (ESL)	7	7
	Both	9	9
Age	16-24	0	0
	25-44	22	22
	45-59	41	41
	>60	36	36
	Not available	0	0
Education	High school	7	7
	Some college	21	21
	Undergraduate degree	28	28
	Graduate degree	33	33
	Not available	10	10
Ethnic group	White	97	98
	Black	0	0
	Not available	2	2
Employment	Full time	33	33
	Part time	18	18
	Unemployed	13	13
	Retired	27	27
	Unknown	8	9
Referral source	TV/radio	9	9
	Friend/family	20	20
	Library	5	5
	Special event	4	4
	Employer	3	3
	Other literacy organization	2	2
	Poster	4	4
	PR talk	2	2
	Newspaper	12	12
	Other volunteer	20	20
	Not available	18	18
Tutors Terminated		20	
Reasons	Fulfilled comittment	2	10
	Job/school commitment	4	20
	Moved	11	55

Length of stay of Terminated Tutors	1-11 months	3	15
	1-2 years	5	25
	3-5 years	8	40
	6-10 years	3	15
	over 10 years	1	5

LITERACY VOLUNTEERS of AMERICA Inc.

Canandaigua: (716) 396-1686
Geneva: (315) 789-2117
or
(315) 781-2935

Literacy Volunteers of Ontario County
Wood Library, 134 North Main Street, Canandaigua, New York 14424

September 20, 1996

Dear Friends of LVOC,

As many of you know, we are writing a history of LVOC. We have found a great deal of information in newsletters, annual meeting reports, newspaper clippings, scrapbooks, and other documents. Now we are communicating with you so we can expand what we have learned and gain a further understanding of LVOC-- then, now and in-between.

I have talked with some of you over the phone and appreciate your insights and memories. LVOC's Director Laurel Wemett suggests sending you this questionnaire will provide us with additional material. Please look this over (even if I have spoken with you already) and fill in what you can. If you are a tutor and have been working with your student for one year or more, you will also find a student questionnaire and release form enclosed. If your student is willing to participate in this learning opportunity, please work together to complete the student questionnaire.

While written records can tell us a great deal about our history, your experiences tell a large part of the LVOC story. Your participation in this project is a valuable contribution to LVOC's historical record, in celebration of this thirtieth anniversary and in future years.

Please return the enclosed questionnaire(s), your signed release form, and a release form signed by your student in the self-addressed envelope as soon as possible and no later than October 15.

We look forward to reading your responses and to learning more about LVOC.

With thanks for your help in collecting LVOC's history,

Lynda M. Hotra
LVOC Historian

Enc.: Questionnaire(s), Release Form(s), Envelope

LVOC ORAL HISTORY QUESTIONNAIRE

For Volunteers:

Your name: Today's date:

Years of involvement as a literacy volunteer:

How did you learn about Literacy Volunteers?

What other kinds of volunteer work did you do before joining LV?

Were you working outside the home when you became a volunteer?
If so, what kind of work did you do?

If you were retired when you began volunteering, what was your profession?

What drew you to LV, rather than to other worthy causes?

If you have experience with other nonprofits, how is LVOC different from or similar to other nonprofit organizations?

What do you feel you contributed?

What do you feel you gained?

How has the role of the literacy volunteer changed?

What is your vision for LVOC's future?

Do you have a memorable anecdote(s) that helps "tell the LVOC story"?

If you have additional memories, thoughts or comments, use the back of this sheet.

Literacy Volunteers of Ontario County (LVOC) Student Questions

Your name:

Today's date:

How many years have you been a student with Literacy Volunteers?

If you are no longer a student, tell what years you were a student with Literacy Volunteers. (Example: from 1987-1989)

How did you hear about LVOC?

What were your goals when you became an LVOC student?

How has your life changed with the help of LVOC?
(Example: goals, work, interests or hobbies)

What do you remember about tutoring sessions?

If you have known other people in LVOC (students, tutors, or other people), tell your memories of them.

Do you have a story about LVOC?

Use the back of this sheet if you need more space to write.

LVOC began in 1967. Lynda Hotra is learning about its history and would like to talk with students about what it was like. This would be a 15 or 20 minute meeting in Geneva or Canandaigua. If you want to talk with Lynda, write in:

Your name: _____

Your address: _____

Your phone number (with area code): _____

When is the best time to call you? _____

Literacy Volunteers of Ontario County

Wood Library
134 North Main Street
Canandaigua, NY 14424

Release Form

I give permission to Literacy Volunteers of Ontario County to utilize oral or written material I provide in interviews and/or questionnaires.

I understand that the purpose of collecting this information is to contribute to the historical record of Literacy Volunteers of Ontario County.

_____

Name of Contributor

_____

_____

Address of Contributor

_____

Phone Number, Including Area Code

_____

Date of Agreement

BYLAWS OF LITERACY VOLUNTEERS OF ONTARIO COUNTY

Adopted 1974

Amended February 14, 1994

ARTICLE I - NAME

The name of the organization shall be Literacy Volunteers of Ontario County, Inc.

ARTICLE II-PURPOSE

Section 1 - The purpose of the organization shall be to promote and foster increased literacy in Ontario County primarily through volunteer teaching of and aid to illiterate, semi-illiterate, and those for whom English is not their native language; to encourage and aid individuals, groups or organizations desiring to increase literacy through voluntary programs.

Section 2 - Basic to the philosophy of the organization is the concept that each person, prospective student and volunteer, is of equal worth. The organization, as an affiliate of Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc. (LVA) and of New York State, will recruit, train, supervise and support volunteer tutors using the professional teaching techniques by Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc.

Section 3 - This organization shall have no capital stock, its objective and purpose being solely of a charitable, literary and educational character and not for individual pecuniary gain or profits of its members. No part of the income or assets of this organization shall inure to the benefit of any private individual or member. This shall not prohibit payment to individuals for services received or assets purchased. It will receive, invest, and disburse funds, and hold property for purposes of the organization.

Section 4 - No substantial part of the activities or the organization shall consist of carrying on propaganda or otherwise attempting to influence legislation, and no part of its activities shall consist of intervening (including the publishing and distributing of statements) in any political campaign in behalf of any candidate for public office.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - No person shall be denied membership because of sex, race, color, nationality, religion, political belief, age, disability, or veteran status.

Section 3 - Sustaining Membership: The sustaining membership shall consist of all persons, other than voting members, who have contributed in any way towards the objectives of the organization.

ARTICLE IV - MEETINGS OF MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - An annual meeting of members of the organization for the election of Directors and officers and transaction of such other business as properly may come before it shall be held at such place and time during the year as is set each year by the directors. Notice of the annual meeting shall be mailed to all members at least twenty (20) days before the meeting.

Section 2 - Special meetings of the organization may be held at the call of the Board of Directors of at least ten (10) percent of the members of the organization. Notices of such meetings shall be mailed to all members at least ten (10) days before the date of the meeting which shall contain the purposes of the meeting.

Section 3 - Voting: Each member of the organization shall be entitled to one vote.

Section 4 - Quorum: Ten (10) percent of the members of the organization shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the organization.

Section 5 - Any member of the organization at any annual meeting may, with the consent of the nominee, nominate candidates for members of the Board of Directors and officers of the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE V - BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Section 1 - Duties: The property affairs and management of the organization shall be vested in and controlled by the Board of Directors.

Section 2 - Number of Directors: The Board of Directors shall consist of not fewer than five (5) directors, not more than fifteen (15) directors.

Section 3 - Election and Term of Directors: At the May, 1989, annual meeting, one-third of the total number of directors shall be elected for three-year terms. At subsequent annual meetings, directors shall be elected to replace those whose terms are expiring (i.e., one third of the total number of directors) and shall serve for three years. No director may serve more than two consecutive terms, except that (a) any officer shall be a director for the term of his office regardless of past service as a director, and (b) "consecutive terms" for this purpose means consecutive three-year terms and does not include special one-year and two-year terms as provided above.

Section 4 - Removal of Directors: A director absent from four (4) consecutive meetings shall be removed from the Board of Directors and notified in writing by the secretary of the action.

Section 5 - Vacancies in the Board of Directors: The Board of Directors shall have power to fill vacancies in its own membership. Such new directors shall hold office until the next annual meeting of the organization.

Section 6 - Quorum: One-third of the members of the Board of Directors shall constitute a quorum at any meeting of the Board.

Section 7 - Meetings: The Board of Directors shall meet at least four times per year and at any other time specified by the president or the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS

Section 1 - Officers of the organization shall be: a president, a president-elect or a vice-president, a treasurer, a secretary, and such officers as the members may designate. These officers shall be elected by the membership at the annual meeting. Officers may be elected to succeed themselves. All officers shall be members of the board.

Section 2 - The Board of Directors shall have power at any time to fill vacancies among the officers, and officers so elected to fill such vacancies shall serve until the next annual meeting of the members or until their successors are elected.

Section 3 - Any officer may be removed from office by a majority vote of the full Board membership at any regular or special Board meeting.

Section 4 - Terms and Duties of Officers

SEE ALSO Detailed Job Descriptions for these officers.

a. President - The president shall serve for a term of two years. The president shall preside at all meetings of the membership of the organization and of the Board of Directors; shall have general charge of the affairs of the organization subject to the authority of the Board of Directors and Executive Committee; shall appoint all committee chairpersons except Executive and Board Development and Nominating.

b. Vice President - The Vice President shall serve for the first year of the President's two-year term. The Vice President shall have such power as may be specifically assigned by the Board of Directors and shall act as president in the absence of the president.

c. President-elect - The President-elect shall serve for the second year of the president's two-year term. The President-elect shall have such power as may be

specifically assigned by the Board of Directors and shall act as president in the absence of the president, and shall succeed to the office of president the following year.

d. Secretary - The secretary shall keep and maintain the minutes of all meetings of the Board of Directors and the membership and shall perform whatever duties are specifically assigned by the Board of Directors.

e. Treasurer - The treasurer shall receive all monies of the organization and have custody thereof; shall deposit the funds of the organization in one or more banks selected by the Board of Directors, to be disbursed in accordance with the directions of and upon the signatures of persons designated by the Board of Directors; shall keep a full account of all the moneys received and paid out and shall make such reports thereof to the president and Board of Directors as they may require; shall receive and have custody of all deeds, securities, notes, contracts, and other financial papers of the organization and shall make such reports thereof to the president and Board of Directors as they require; shall sign such papers as may be required by this office or as may be incidental to the office. The Board of Directors may require the giving of such bonds as they shall determine for the faithful performance of these duties.

f. Other officers shall perform such duties and have such powers as may be assigned to them by the Board of Directors.

ARTICLE VII - PAID STAFF

The Board of Directors may appoint paid staff members of the organization, fix compensation, prescribe duties, and terms of employment. Paid staff (i.e. Program Administrator and Student-Tutor Matcher) should not be members of the board. They should be present at and participate in meetings of the board, but have no vote.

ARTICLE VIII - COMMITTEES

SEE Committee Guidelines for each of the following committees:

Section 1 - There shall be a Board Development Nominating Committee, Executive Committee, Resource Development Committee, Public Relations Committee, Personnel Committee, and the Program Committee. Additional committees may be appointed by the president with the approval of the Board of Directors. The president shall appoint committee chairpersons who in turn shall select members of the committee in consultation with the president.

Section 2 - Executive Committee: The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers and other persons designated by the Board of Directors from among its members (usually the chairpersons of the other committees). The Executive Committee shall have

all the powers of the Board of Directors during intervals between Board meetings, subject always to notification of the Board of Directors.

Section 3 - Resource Development Committee: The Resource Development Committee shall plan and implement ways to finance the programs approved by the Board of Directors; shall present to the Board of Directors for approval the annual budget for the coming year prior to the beginning of that fiscal year; shall review monthly income and expenditures for comparison to the budget.

Section 4 - Program Committee: The Program Committee shall be responsible for the maintainance and expansion of the program within the policies outlined by LVA.

Section 5 - Public Relations Committee: The Public Relations Committee shall coordinate the public relations efforts of the affiliate, prepare brochures and other forms of news media to explain and publicize the Literacy Volunteers of America program, and ensure that a newsletter is published at regular intervals.

Section 6 - Board Development and Nominating Committee: At each annual meeting of the members of the organization they shall elect a Board Development and Nominating Committee (BDN) of no fewer than three (3) and not more than five (5) members, whose duty shall be to present at the next annual meeting of the members of the organization nominations for members of the Board of Directors and officers of the Board of Directors. The BDN Committee shall function throughout the year, and make recommendations to the directors to fill vacancies occurring between the annual meetings of the members, and be responsible for the development of a balanced board.

Section 7 - Personnel Committee: The Personnnel Commitee shall be responsible for preparing job descriptions, recruiting, interviewing and recommending to the Board candidates for paid staff positions. They should also establish criteria for performance evaluations for paid positions.

ARTICLE IX - SEAL

Being incorporated, the seal of the organization shall be a circular impression of the words and figures: Incorporated August 1, 1988, surrounded by the name "Literacy Volunteers of Ontario County, Inc."

ARTICLE X - DISPOSITION OF ASSETS UPON DISSOLUTION

In the event of a dissolution of the local affiliate organization or in the event it shall cease to carry out the objectives and purposes herein set forth, all the business, property, and assets of the organization shall be distributed to Literacy Volunteers of America or to such similar nonprofit charitable organization or organizations as may be

selected by the Board of Directors of the local affiliate and which is or are tax exempt organizations pursuant to Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code, so that business properties and assets of the organization shall in such event be used for and devoted to the purposes of promoting Literacy Volunteers' organizations and in no event shall any of the assets and property of the organization or the proceeds of any such property or assets in the event of such dissolution go or be distributed to members either for the reimbursement of any sums subscribed, donated, or contributed by such members or for any other such purposes, it being the intent that in the dissolution of the organization, or upon its ceasing to carry out the objectives and purposes herein set forth, the property and assets then owned by the organization shall be devoted to carrying on the functions and purposes of such non-profit Literacy Volunteers' affiliates as the Board of Directors shall determine and direct.

ARTICLE XI - USE OF THE NAME

The words "Literacy Volunteers of America" shall not remain in a part of the LVA affiliate member organization's name if there ceases to be an affiliation between this organization and Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc., a New York State nonprofit corporation with offices in Syracuse, New York. Upon written request of Literacy Volunteers of America, Inc., the officers, directors, and members of the LVA affiliate member organization shall take all necessary measures to execute and file all necessary documents to change the organization's name so as to omit the words "Literacy Volunteers of America."

ARTICLE XII - AMENDMENTS

Section 1 - These bylaws may be amended upon a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors present and voting at any meeting of the organization provided a copy of the proposed amendment shall have been mailed to each Director of the organization at least ten (10) days before the date of the meeting at which the proposed amendment is to be acted upon.

Section 2 - Amendments adopted by this affiliate member organization shall be consistent with the national bylaws of LVA, unless approved by LVA.

ARTICLE XIII - EFFECTIVE DATE

These bylaws shall become effective immediately upon adoption by a two-thirds vote of the members of the organization present and voting.

Works Cited

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Canandaigua: (716) 396-1686
Geneva: (315) 781-2935

Literacy Volunteers of Ontario County

Wood Library, 134 North Main Street, Canandaigua, New York 14424

