



New Neighbors News



Information About Our Community from Students and Staff

New Neighbors English Language Learning and Family Literacy Program Volume I, Number 1 May 9, 2014

Why I Study English

By Yidayeti Zaidong (Level 6)

There are several reasons why it's important to learn to speak and write English well.

First of all, English is the most commonly spoken language in the world. It is the official language of 54 countries. English is spoken as a first language by about 400 million people. People with different languages commonly use English to communicate with each other.

In addition, English is the language of science. Approximately 80 percent of the world's academic and research papers

are published in English. That is to say, if you want to get the most out of your academic studies, you will need English. Knowing English increases your chances of getting a good job. It will increase your standard of living, too.

Furthermore, learning a language is good for your brain. It uses a part of the brain that otherwise would just be left to sleep. Learning a language requires patience, memory, and analytical and social skills, which all can help you your whole life. ENGLISH (continued on page 4)

Poetry Corner

Can you write a poem using words that rhyme with "their"? Here are two:

The Air

By Marcelino Jiminez (Level 4)

You can't see the air, but the air is everywhere.

You can't see the feelings, but you can share them.

I would like to feel more than your hair.

Touch and feel your feelings and your air.

My Hair

By Kamola Unmarkhodjaeva (Level 4)

My hair flew in the air!
Their hair flew in the air, too.
Bears have short hair,
So their hair cannot fly in the air!



My Biggest Challenge

By Wefag Ahmed (Level 5)

My first semester in medical school in Sudan was the biggest challenge of my life. It was hard in many ways, from finding my way around the campus to passing the classes I had. I was shocked the first day at how huge the building was and how hard it was to get used to it and not get lost. Luckily, I found two friends

who were with me in high school. One of them later became my best friend.

"Do you think you can do it?" Every day I kept asking myself this question because all of the books and classes were in English, and this was the first time I had studied the English language. The CHALLENGE (continued on page 4)

Let's Read Alphabet Sounds

By Bitsy Bullock

Just starting to learn English? These sentences will give you an idea of how the sounds are pronounced.

Aa. I ate an apple.

Bb. She bounced the ball.

Cc. He held the cute cat.

Dd. They danced the diggity doo.

Ee. It equals each amount.

Ff. Frank is having fun.

Gg. Good boys and girls are great!

Hh. Happy birthday to Henry!

Ii. I like ice cream.

Jj. Jane jumps for joy.

Kk. Keep the keys to the car.

Ll. Lucky Lucy is in love!

Mm. Mickey Mouse is mighty cute.

Nn. Nancy needs a nickel.

Oo. Open the office, Oprah.

Pp. Pat, open the package!

Qq. Queens are quiet.

Rr. Rachel is running right now.

Ss. Silent Sam is silly.

Tt. Take the train to town.

Uu. The umbrellas are upstairs.

Vv. Van has a visitor visa.

Ww. Willy Wonka has a wagon.

Xx. "X" marks the x-ray spot.

Yy. Yellow is a yucky color.

Zz. The zebras are in the zoo.

Some Facts About Us

New Neighbors registered 274 students from around the world during the September 2013 to May 2014 school year. Our program has nine levels of instruction for adult language learners. Our students' English skills range from beginning to advanced.

- Ninety-nine of the students' children were in our child care classes.
- The students and their families came from 39 countries and spoke 28 languages in addition to English.
- Forty-five percent of students from the fall semester returned to classes in the spring term.

From Our Director

By Marcia D'Arcangelo

A safe environment is essential to learning. Given that thought, I am pleased that our March 21 fire drill went off without a hitch. Three minutes flat! That's how long it took nearly 150 students, teachers, and children to leave their classrooms, make their way to the appropriate exits, and leave the Fowler House in an orderly fashion.

Everyone walked quietly down the block to the front of the Barrett Library on Queen Street, where the teachers took attendance. When all were present and accounted for, the crowd moved back to the Fowler House. All told, the fire drill took just 15 minutes from the first ringing of the bell to the school's returning to class.



Resources for English Language Learners

By Katherine Hoffman

If you have a computer, these Internet sites will help you study English:

- <http://www.voanews.com>. The Learning English tab in the top right corner will give you Voice of America's news, read slowly in two levels.
- www.newsinlevels.com. This site provides short articles from the news in three different levels of reading complexity.
- www.englishforeverone.com. You'll find exercises and quizzes at different levels that are useful for practicing vocabulary.
- www.uscis.gov. The site has information for new immigrants and for those studying to become U.S. citizens.

Spring Events at New Neighbors

Speakers

- Eduardo Mantilla-Torres, Alexandria Neighborhood Health Services, Inc. March 21. (703) 535-5568.
- Yvonne Kedoin, Alexandria Community Shelter, March 24. (703) 746-3535.
- Empowered Women International, March 28. (571) 312-4781.
- Susan Miller, The Campagna Center, nutrition and Alexandria's social services, April 7. (703) 549-0111.
- John Politte, Northern Virginia Community College English Language Learners Program, April 23. (703) 323-3000.

Spring Break

- April 14 to 21. Classes resume Wednesday, April 23.

End of Academic Year Celebration

- Friday, May 9, in the Auditorium. Please plan to arrive at 9:30 a.m.

Brain Teasers

By Paul Currer

Editor, *New Neighbors News*

Be careful! These questions are tricky. The answers are below.

1. Johnny's mother had three children. The first child was named April. The second child was named May. What was the third child's name?
2. How much dirt is there in a hole that measures two feet by three feet by four feet?
3. Billy was born on December 28, yet his birthday is always in the summer. How is this possible?
4. What was the President's name in 1975?

Milestones

Advancement

- Yodit Kideure is now studying at Northern Virginia Community College.
- Shiho O'Neil's first job in America is as an office assistant with a Japanese car dealership in Alexandria.

Attendance

- Maryam Mayar (Intro B), Yesse Lady Maldonado (L2), Zeinaba Sidi Salem (L2), Qiuling Wu (L3), Magdaly Perez (L4), Gabriel Zapata (L4), Wefag Ahmed (L5), Joao Ponte (L6), and Thanos "Nasho" Cimboku (L6) all had perfect or near-perfect attendance this semester.

Awards

- Pablo Lemus, an employee of the Bourbon Steak Restaurant, was awarded the "Star of the Industry" award by the Hotel Association of Washington, D.C.

Births

- Subhinur, daughter of Malika Abulaiti and Yidayeti Zaidong, born on April 4.
- Joseph, son of Marcela and Kyle Canavera, born on April 8.

Community Support

- Edgar Caita and his wife have realized their dream of starting a security company in the United States.
- Claudia Campos has developed a program that trains cancer survivors as counselors to aid newly-diagnosed patients. Volunteers are welcome and should contact www.Neuva-Vida.org or call (202) 223-9100.

Weddings

- Jaqueline Rozanski and Michael Rozanski, May 31.

5. If you were running a race, and you passed the person in second place, what place would you be in now?
6. If a farmer has five haystacks in one field and four haystacks in another field, how many haystacks would he have if he combined them all in a third field?

Answers: 1. Johnny. 2. None. 3. He lives in Australia. 4. The same as today. 5. Second. 6. One.

Teachers' Turn

Making Strides in Intro A

By Barb Reed and Julie Cook

The Intro A class has had a wonderful semester. With most of our 14 students new to English at the beginning of our session, and with four first languages being spoken in the group, the class has made great strides in its lessons. Each student can be proud of gaining a lot in their ability to listen, comprehend, speak, and read some English.

And they have all made a strong beginning to learning more. They are hard workers with a sincere desire to improve.

We have learned and laughed together. We have become friends. It has been a joy to learn together.

Walking Tour of Historic Alexandria

By Joby Dupuis

Class level 4 went on a field trip to Old Town over Spring Break. We met at a local restaurant for morning coffee and then walked to the Lee-Fendall House gardens, along a portion of one of the original cobblestone streets that are commonly found in historic Alexandria, and past George Washington's town house on Cameron Street.

After that, we stopped at Gadsby's Tavern, looked at its subterranean ice house, visited the Carlyle House gardens, walked past City Hall, and ended at the Torpedo Factory. Finally, we rode the Trolley back to Christ Church.

We used the walk to practice reading English street signs at each place and to enjoy casual conversations in English. We even learned "The Trolley Song" and sang "Clang, clang, clang went the trolley" as we rode up King Street!

Everything was free. Class members said they learned a lot about Alexandria and now know where to take family and friends who come to visit.

Visit to the National Mall

By Don Schlichtmann

Seven members of Class level 7, five children, and a family member took advantage of Spring Break to visit monuments on the National Mall in Washington. The field trip allowed us to combine English language learning with a survey of American history as we walked in nearly perfect weather at the height of cherry blossom time.

We took the Metro from the King Street station to the Smithsonian, walked to the Washington Monument and then to the World War II Memorial, which has a traditional European style. We next visited the Vietnam Memorial, designed by architect Maya Lin during a 1981 competition. After that, we climbed the steps of the Lincoln Memorial.

Our group moved on to the Korean War Memorial, which commemorates America's "forgotten" war, and then saw the memorial for slain civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. We walked along the Tidal Basin to the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial, which describes four distinct periods in America's history. Finally, we went to the Thomas Jefferson Memorial, which commemorates the third U.S. President, walked by the Holocaust Museum, and returned to the Smithsonian station to take the Metro back to King Street.

It was an engaging day. In the end, our planned four-hour tour took nearly seven! While tired, we were happy to have seen some of America's most honored sites, using the English language to enrich our experience.

Pen a Life

By Jaqueline Rozanski (Level 7)

Who is holding the pen that has been writing my story?

Sometimes I feel it is a little kid making doodle paths, innocently having fun with the flow of the ink.

Sometimes I think it is a teenage contrarian, wild, whose sarcasm I don't get.

But it can also be a wise old man, who has listened to my thoughts, corrected my sentences, and put each word in the right place.

When I question him – that's not what I meant – he whispers in my ear, "It'll all make sense at the end... It'll all make sense at the end."



Did You Know?

"The Trolley Song" was written by Hugh Martin and Ralph Blane. It was made famous by actress Judy Garland in the 1944 movie, *Meet Me in St. Louis*.

The song scene was filmed in a single sequence, which was rare for its time and still is today.

The most famous lyrics are:

Clang, clang, clang went the trolley,
Ding, ding, ding went the bell,
Zing, zing, zing went my heart strings,
From the moment I saw him, I fell.



The Washington Monument

ENGLISH (continued from page 1)

Most of all, you can use English to connect your nation and yourself to the world.

Not only will you learn about other nations and cultures, you can learn the best way to protect your culture, your identity, and your nation.



CHALLENGE (continued from page 1)

teachers did not make this easy, using every hard teaching method. I got used to translating every word in the book to understand what was going on. Sometimes it took me a very long time to understand just one page.

The whole experience of attending medical school and learning English taught me that hard work pays off. I graduated from medical school in 2007.

Now I am in the United States, seeking a better quality of life. I am studying English at New Neighbors School and am learning to be more confident in the way I talk to people.

I am also preparing for my medical license exam. My hope is to work in a hospital and help people.

What I love about the United States is that the harder you work, the more you will accomplish.

My Heaven

By Samra Elawad (Level 7)

When I first saw birds fly in the sky, I didn't know they had nests where they lived. After I learned this fact, I realized that we are all birds. We have to fly and collect our sticks and grass to build a comfortable and nice nest.

When I came to the United States, I felt like I was flying in an empty sky. There were no other birds, no grass, and no sticks. I faced a big obstacle: the English language. I had studied English in my country of Sudan for eleven years; however, when I landed in the U.S., I discovered that I really hadn't learned much English at all. So what was I to do? How could I learn American English?

My husband told me that to be a good speaker, you should go outside and talk with American people without hesitating. At first, I tried shopping alone, but I felt shy and couldn't open my mouth.

Everywhere I went, my lips froze, and my tongue stopped moving. So, I failed in this experiment.

I felt lost until my friend, Hala, told me about the New Neighbors program for English. It was the best information I learned in the U.S. because I found all of the knowledge I was looking for.

I have been at New Neighbors as a student for almost two years, but I feel as if it has been a hundred. From the first day I began, I loved everything about the program, including the good material in all the books, the honest teachers, and the lovely friends from different parts of the world. In addition to learning the English language, I learned new information about other countries, even my own.

One of the best parts of the program is the affordable day care for children. I

love that option because when I wanted to study at home or alone, I struggled with the childcare issue. Who would take care of my children all day? This issue forced me to stay home for a while because it was too expensive to put my children in day care or find someone to watch them in my home.

Here at this church, when I enter class in the morning, I feel I'm in my heaven or my home country, and my children are with my mom or sister nearby. I can concentrate on my studies and learn proper grammar, vocabulary, history, idioms and stories, as well as a lot of information about different ethnicities, languages, cultures, and religions.

If I continue to write here, I will soon have a book! Thank you to New Neighbors for your teamwork behind the nest that keeps us from losing our way.



Summer is Coming!

And "Daisy Time", by Marjorie Pickthall (1883-1922), beautifully describes its arrival. She was once thought to be the best Canadian poet of her generation. Here's her poem:

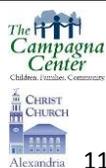
See, the grass is full of stars,
Fallen in their brightness;
Hearts they have of shining gold,
Rays of shining whiteness.

Buttercups have honeyed hearts,
Bees they love the clover,
But I love the daisies' dance
All the meadow over.

Blow, O blow, you happy winds,
Singing summer's praises,
Up the field and down the field
A-dancing with the daisies.



Daisies



418 S. Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314. (703) 549-0111. www.campagnacenter.org.

118 N. Washington St., Alexandria, VA 22314. (703) 549-1450. www.historicchristchurch.org.