



# LITERACY MATTERS

JULY/AUGUST 2022



Literacy Matters is a recurring publication of Literacy Nassau, Inc.

## What You'll Find in this Issue:

Tutor Reflections .....	2
Summer Reading .....	3
Basic Literacy Spotlight .....	4
Amazon Smile .....	4

## Our Staff Team

Karen Micciche, Executive Director  
 Anne-Marie Poliviou, Executive Assistant  
 Renae Katz, Bookkeeper  
 Kate Quijano, Senior Program Director  
 Jessica D'Aprile, Program Assistant  
 Melissa Sansobrino, OG Tutor  
 Richard Aizer, Summer Program  
 Mary Baumgarten, OG Tutor  
 Kaitlyn Beleckas, Summer Program  
 Judy Fouad-Schoeppe, OG Tutor  
 Jane Hartigan, OG Tutor  
 Izabella Katz, Summer Program  
 Kerri Lattanzio, OG Tutor

## Our Board of Directors

Susan Santoro Esq., (President)  
 Stefanie Singer (Vice-President), Novogradac  
 Iris Grover (Secretary), Reading teacher (ret.)  
 Sean Miller (Treasurer), TD Bank  
 Judith Beckman, Financial Solutions  
 Wendy Ehrlich, OppenheimerFunds (ret.)  
 Dorita Gibson, NYC Dep't. of Education (ret.)  
 Irv Miljoner, US Dep't. of Labor (ret.)

## MY POLAND MISSION

(by Susan Santoro, Board President)

Americans have become accustomed, unfortunately, to seeing wars break out all over the world. We watch the news and think to ourselves, "oh those poor people." The Russian invasion into the Ukraine was yet another example. However, one night the news showed a twelve year old boy crossing into Poland by himself to go and stay with extended family living there.

The next day, I looked into volunteer organizations in Poland to help with children in these situations. Through a Polish organization entitled Wolontariusze Ukraina CW Krakow, I was led to Global Volunteers. I put my name on the list and was emailed a few weeks later.

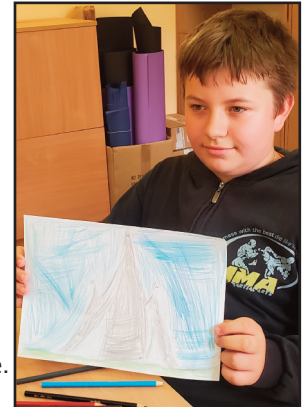
I arrived at the Warsaw Chopin Airport on May 27th and was picked up with some other volunteers, and driven ninety minutes east to a small rural area outside the town of Siedlce. We were housed at Reymontowka House, built for the Rózański's family in the middle of the XIX century, about 110 miles from the Ukrainian border.

My mornings began with teaching English at a Polish grammar school about

30 minutes away. The class had both Polish and Ukrainian children. The younger ones did not speak much English while the 7th and 8th graders knew a bit more.

The younger students were happy singing simple American songs while the older grades were very interested in American pop culture. During one fifth grade class, the children were shown unusual architectural buildings around the world and were then asked to draw their dream house. One boy shared his drawing which looked like a castle, with the Polish flag on one turret and the Ukrainian flag on the other. He said it was to show the unity between the two countries.

On many afternoons, we hosted the Ukrainian mothers and children at Reymontowka. They were being housed at  
*(continued on page 3)*



## THOUGHTS FROM THE CORNER OFFICE

Hi everyone,

This is a time of year which, for many, is marked by graduation. This past weekend, I traveled over 800 miles to go to my youngest cousin, Logan's, high school graduation. She is headed to Emerson College this fall and plans to study Writing, Literature, and Publishing. Recently, we have been communicating via e-mail and Zoom, discussing writing, family, and life. It's been nice; I've known her since she was born and this is the first time I have viewed her as a contemporary instead of as a child.

Logan's graduation party was held on Saturday, and I was surprised when (on more than one occasion) she came and sat down next to me to chat. Her gaggle of 17-year-old friends followed, and we engaged in pleasant conversation. The next day, at the ceremony, I sat in a row of approximately two dozen of her closest family and friends. One of the speakers encouraged the graduating class to consider the people in attendance and make it a point to thank those who have helped them on their respective journeys. As they received their diplomas, they were each given a single red rose.

After the commencement exercises ended, it was time for me to get back on the road and begin the sojourn home. Logan took a photo with me and exclaimed, "Wait! I have something to give you." She ran off and returned moments later with the rose. "They said to give this to someone we're thankful for," she explained. "I'm thankful for you." Those four words meant more to me than she will ever know.

It's good advice - to be generous with your gratitude - so I felt it appropriate to share it here. I wish you all a happy summer, and in case you haven't heard it lately, *thank you* for all that you do!

*Karen* 😊



## TUTOR REFLECTIONS

WE LOVE THE CREATIVE ACTIVITIES THAT OUR TUTORS PLANNED THIS SESSION AND THE STRONG RELATIONSHIPS THEY HAVE BUILT WITH THEIR STUDENTS. WE THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR DEDICATION TO THE PROGRAM!



"My class enjoyed playing concentration homophones, scramble sentences, word ladders, and sight word concentration." (Denise A.)



"We played Bananagrams and had a wonderful time. Everyone was laughing; they even tried to add words in Spanish. Then they had the idea to share letters and make one huge bananagram." (Bob H.)



"My worst activity this session was teaching dictionary usage...it went over like a lead balloon. The students told me, 'All I need is my phone.' The best activity this session was my weekly, 'What did you do this weekend?' assignment that evoked dialogue and interest. Often they shared everyday activities such as cleaning and shopping, but there was always one person who did something flamboyant like 'I went to Philly for a baseball game.' We all enjoyed learning more about each other's lives and practicing our conversation skills." (Bob P.)



"Whenever you give students an opportunity to talk about themselves and share about their own lives, it has more relevance to them and they are more engaged." (Adrienne C.)



"I asked my students, 'What level of education do you have in your country?' This opened up a conversation about all of their backgrounds and I realized how highly educated my students were. They began to share about how they are employed so far below their education level in the US due to their struggles with speaking English. It gave us a chance to discuss their goals and encourage one another."

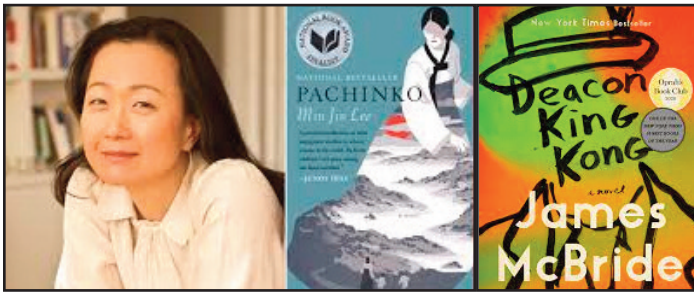
(Nick D.)



From Adrienne Carlton/Tutor:

My 1st reading recommendation is *Pachinko* by Min Jin Lee (this may have been recommended before but it's a great read) This book is such a great read on so many levels. The fictional story takes you through 4 generations of a Korean family from around 1900 to 1989. Themes of racism, sexism, poverty, war, culture, etc. are addressed as the story evolves. It's an easy and fast read despite its 500 pages.

For me, I had a greater understanding of the cultural and racial conflicts between the Koreans and the Japanese (that have existed for generations) after reading this book. It is particularly poignant given the populations we teach. Knowing a country's history helps you understand their culture and vice versa.



My second recommendation is *Deacon King Kong* by James McBride. This is a fictional NYC story that takes place in a housing project in south Brooklyn in the 1960's. Getting to know the deacon and the characters is a journey that's witty, as well as dark. You can only imagine the stories that come out of the projects, and this one is told with hope and compassion. You won't want to put this book down!

From Staci Siegel/Tutor:



I enjoy reading historical fiction and noticed that several books referenced The Barbizon Hotel in their work. This book introduces the reader to several female pioneers that resided at the Barbizon and it's significance in the twentieth century. Some very note-worthy residents included Princess Grace Kelly, Cloris Leacham, and Joan Didion. The author, Paulina Bren, reminds the reader of the societal norms and how progressive it was for these female residents to reside on their own and to earn a living. "New York glamour" plays central role in this book. It's nice to see NYC depicted in a positive light and as a city that welcomed young professionals to establish themselves and live the "American Dream."

**Happy Reading!**

## MY POLAND MISSION (CONTINUED FROM COVER)

different shelters and were dropped off. Some of the volunteers watched the children while others stayed with the mothers, giving them some free time to do whatever they wanted such as baking, dancing, and just talking. One afternoon, a 14 year old girl was holding a Magic 8 Ball, not knowing what it was. I told her if you ask it a question, turn it over and it will respond. She then asked the Magic 8 Ball, "If I go back to Ukraine, will I be killed?"

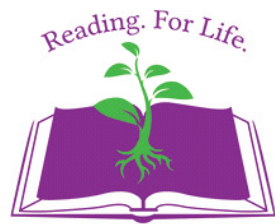
One of the shelters I was sent to needed to have some furniture assembled. It was housed in an abandoned school building. To say it was bleak was an understatement but the children and mothers were at least safe. While I assembled furniture, many young children came into the room and would hug me and my fellow volunteers. As we spent the day assembling small storage closets and dressers, one mother took the time and baked bread for us. This had to be my toughest day.



These are only a few of the heart rendering memories I bring home. Each mother and child has been affected by the invasion, having to leave their families, friends and careers. One note resonated with every mother I met- they just want to go home. They don't know what they will find if they get home but they do not care. It is clear that the Ukrainians are proud and strong and love their country.



- Denise Abraham – Amina Ahmed – Barbara Alster  
 Alison Auerbach – Janet Baram – Eleanor Blackman  
 George Bleckman – Eric Bonge – Shelly Brennan – Elinor Brown  
 Joanne Brun – Sid Burgreen – David Caines – Janis Caravello  
 Deborah Cavalieri-Arden – Carol Ann Ceraldi  
 Evelyn Chevalier-Richards – Michael Chiappardi  
 Miriam Cobian – Stephanie Coons – Andrew Corsi – Erin Daly  
 Aisha Deljanin – Helene Doleyres – Eileen Eder – Judy Elfenbein  
 Barbara Entes – Jerry Fitzgerald – Susan Fitzgerald  
 Ed Friedman – Gloria Glick – Brian Grady – Marcie Granick  
 Audrey Green – Anita Greenman – Maureen Gunderson  
 Patricia Hanlon – Harriet Klein – Elise Knauer – Debbie Levine  
 Robin Lillyreed – Carmen Lloyd – Helene Marcus  
 Christine Martin – Roseann Michelson – Angela Milora  
 Phyllis Modiano – Mike Moran – Camille Mowatt – Linda Napoli  
 Lynn Newman – Janet O'Keefe – Amita Patel – Nancy Reedy  
 Mary Jane Regan – Patricia Regan – Nancy Reibling  
 Susan Risberg – Patricia Rossi – Kevin Ryan – Dianne Saccone  
 Esther Salorio – Ann Scavetta – Jane Schwartz  
 Susan (Peedee) Shaw – Cynthia Spiletic – Claudia Stern  
 Trish Szendrey – Elizabeth Tilton – Reed Toscano  
 Eleanor Turino – Suzanne Valls – Glenda Vieites – Bridget Ward  
 Susan Woodward – Anne Zajac – Nathalie Zephirin



**LITERACY**  
N A S S A U

1 Ivy Lane, Wantagh, NY 11793  
(516) 867-3580 ~ www.literacynassau.org

NON PROFIT RATE  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**P A I D**  
Wantagh, NY  
11793  
Permit No. 29

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



**A SIMPLE CLICK CAN HELP US. WHEN YOU SHOP ON AMAZON JUST GO TO [WWW.SMILE.AMAZON.COM](http://WWW.SMILE.AMAZON.COM), SELECT **LITERACY NASSAU** AS YOUR CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION TO RECEIVE DONATIONS FROM ELIGIBLE PURCHASES BEFORE YOU BEGIN SHOPPING. AMAZON WILL REMEMBER YOUR SELECTION, AND THEN EVERY ELIGIBLE PURCHASE YOU MAKE AT [SMILE.AMAZON.COM](http://SMILE.AMAZON.COM) WILL RESULT IN A DONATION TO US.**

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT :)**



Instagram: @literacynassau  
Facebook: Literacy.Nassau  
Twitter: @LiteracyNassau

### BASIC LITERACY PAIR SPOTLIGHT

*(submitted by Kate Quijano)*

Justine has been a Basic Literacy tutor (who work with adult learners with low reading/writing skills. for the past year. ) We were so happy to receive this update from her and want to offer our congratulations to her student McKenny.

“McKenny Francois is a hard working student who has just earned a high school diploma. He has persevered through many hardships and is eager to use his degree to further his education. He is a pleasure to work with and I look forward to helping him become a better reader.”

We asked McKenny to share a little bit about his experience in the Basic Literacy program. He shared, “Literacy Nassau referred me to Miss J. and she has been working hard with me. We have been reading magazines and books. She helps me understand how to sound out words and she tells me the meaning of them so I can build my vocabulary.” We are proud!

