



Elaine Bacon Literacy Program

May, 2019

The Elaine Bacon Literacy Program, which dates from 1969, provides free tutoring for international adults in reading, writing, and speaking.

www.elainebaconliteracyprogram.wordpress.com

Facebook: Elaine Bacon Literacy Program

Thank You Andrea!

Andrea Hauge-Bacon is stepping down as the Director of the Elaine Bacon Literacy Program, passing the torch of leadership to co-directors Beth Flynn and Denise Heikinen. She is leaving the area to be with her son and family in Wisconsin but not until after the canoe season.

Canoeing is her passion. She assumed the leadership role in 1996 when Elvi Ruotsala left. She was concerned that if we didn't have an enthusiastic leader, the program could end.

Andrea made sure the program's materials would not be lost when the Portage Lake District Library moved to its present location. She has been very diligent in ensuring we have new and updated and current study materials for the students and was always on the lookout for new tutors, encouraging people she came into contact with to become one if they were interested.

She also sought out different ways to get the word out about our program, so new foreign students coming to MTU would know we were there. When Michigan Tech began offering ESL classes for their foreign students, she contacted the instructor so they would know about our program.

She was adamant that we have a newsletter to make sure everyone learned about our activities for the year and as a way for students to see their articles in print.

In recent years, her devoted students have traveled to her home for their weekly tutoring session, which has focused on reading and discussion of the newspaper *News For You*, a news venue that provides national and international and special interest articles appropriate for students for whom

English is not their first language. Her willingness to open up her home to her students is an indication of the warmth and generosity that has characterized her work with the Program. She is as passionate about her teaching as she is about her canoeing!

Andrea's direction has modeled the kind of attention to detail needed to hold our program together, but it is her warm spirit of cultural exchange and friendship that makes the program so worthwhile. Thank you, Andrea!

Thank You Donors

Donations this year are from:

Hancock Rotary
 Houghton Rotary
 Hancock Home Study Club
 Elvi Routsala
 Dr. Pichai Sripaipan
 First United Methodist Church Women's Group
 Karen Synder
 Portage Lake United Church for use of their facilities

Jerry Huffman for creating our website

Tutoring Schedule

Monday: 10-12, Portage Lake United Church, Linda Dresch, tutor
 Tuesday: 11:30-1:00, Portage Lake United Church, Beth Flynn, tutor
 Wednesday: 10:30-12:00, Portage Lake United Church, Frann Grossman, tutor
 Friday: 1:00-3:00, Community Room, Daniell Heights, Marianna Ewert and Jerry Huffman, tutors

Board

Elizabeth A. Flynn, Co-Director, eflynn@mtu.edu
 Denise Heikinen, Co-Director, dmheikin@icloud.com 482-4944
 Mary Brunet, Treasurer, marye.brunet@charter.net 482-5381
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Andrea tutoring Junying

Volunteer at Houghton Elementary School

Lucky Li Ronghui--China

I was so lucky to be a volunteer with Eman and Olga in Houghton Elementary school last year.

One day in Frann's class she asked us who wants to be a volunteer to help two boys who just came from China to the Houghton Elementary School. I raised my hand. Beth accompanied me and others to meet Anders, the principal of the school.

Every Thursday afternoon I worked in the third grade. My job was doing some translation for the Chinese boys. We spent wonderful times. The boys talked to me about the stories of their families. They made handmade snowflakes and Christmas cards for me. I helped them at mathematics and science, but I also did some translation for them in the class. They were so cute.

From their classes, I knew some beneficial ways to study English and to find suitable books. I studied the third grade mathematics from khanacademy.org at that time. I knew how to help the kids since I found the teacher teaches mathematics in the same way as khanacademy.org.

When the kids went out to exercise, I could talk with the teacher, Mr. Demske, to learn their daily work schedule. At the break time the kids were friendly and talked with me. They told me their preferences and weekend activities.

Participate in classes volunteering is not only a good way to learn and develop English, but also it is a great opportunity to know the education cultures in the U.S.

Halloween Party

Anna Zhang—China

Before Halloween, my husband took me to a party. I'd heard about the party from his advisor's wife. It's a kind of yearly thing, but he never told me about it. The party was hosted by one of the professors from their department, and the place is at his house. After my husband checked the invitation email from the professor, he said we probably can go to it. So we went there after dinner. I was surprised when we arrived. Because all their yard was full of decorations on the glass windows, mail box, the roof of the house, and also in front of their garage with lots of skeletons.

We were so excited to experience a true Halloween, and we took some pictures before we went into the house. When we went into the house, the host and hostess came over to welcome us. They told us that we can look around by ourselves, and then gave us a bag with some candies and other small prizes. There were several elderly guests sitting on the couch having food and talking. It seems like we were the only students there. We felt awkward and started to regret being there. The only thing we thought at that moment was to run away. We hoped his advisor will be there soon to make us feel better. We even texted him to check when he will come. Anyway, we were laughing at ourselves, because we thought we went to somewhere we shouldn't.

We visited their rooms and restrooms, because they were all decorated for Halloween. Meantime, we were impressed by the effort and cost they made for one day!

After 20 minutes or so, younger people started coming continually, we felt much better since then. We no longer felt like we were people who had just broken into the house. And it was stupid to go there after dinner, because they had a lot of food and drinks.



Skeletons at the Halloween Party

Volunteer Experience

Lily—China

There was a wonderful performance at the Rozsa Center, the Nutcracker, for which I was very happy to be a volunteer. First of all, the Rozsa Center staff told us how to do as a volunteer.

They are so nice which made me not nervous at all. The job I was assigned was to give programs to the audience before the performance started. I just need to smile and say, “enjoy the show.” When the audience entered the theater the volunteer can sit down and watch the performance.

The Nutcracker is very famous and the performance was wonderful. I like it very much. During the performance break, a woman asked me, “Where is the restroom?” I answered politely “downstairs, madam.” It is necessary for me to be a volunteer which makes me improve my English and know the culture of different countries. I am not only proud of myself but also have a meaningful experience.

Letter to Muslim Student Association

March 20, 2019

Mr. Mujeeb Shitter, President
Muslim Student Association

Dear Pres. Shitter,

I write with a heavy heart on behalf of the Board of the Elaine Bacon Literacy Program. We strongly condemn the recent violent attack on the worshippers in two mosques in New Zealand. Our sympathies are with the families directly affected and with the injured. We also sympathize with the great community of Muslims who may feel anger, fear, and pain.

A significant number of Muslim students attend MTU and live in our neighborhoods with their families. Some attend English classes with us—along with many others from various religious traditions. They volunteer in our schools.

Our tutors have gotten to know, respect, and love so many of them. May our bonds of friendship prove stronger than this monstrous act of terror.

With condolences,

Linda Dresch, tutor, 706 990 9676
Elaine Bacon Literacy Program at Portage Lake United Church

Adventures of a Young, Egyptian Wife and Mother

Eman Mostafa Aboesha—Egypt

I am Eman. I am from Egypt. I came here with my husband who is a Ph.D. student in Mechanical Engineering at Michigan Technological University. We have one son who is going to pre-school. My country is so terrific. I love it so much—especially my city—so I faced a problem when I came here. It was the first time I had left my country and travelled to a different country—one with a different culture, language, and environment. At first I was afraid of communicating with people, particularly because I am a Muslim and I had heard bad things about the treatment of Muslims in the United States.

I stayed home a long time—not going anywhere except to go shopping. I was bored and depressed while my husband spent most of the day at the university and my little son went off to school. I began to go walking along without my husband. I went to English classes. To my surprise, I found that people here are so friendly, kind and helpful which is different from what I had heard. I feel comfortable when I have contact with them. Now I have many friends from many different countries. I thank all my tutors in English classes and my friends who made me love it here and helped me to adapt to this place. I have many good memories with all of them. I will miss them so much when I return to my country.

I have had many situations which confirm that people here are helpful. But I had a strange experience one day. With my English class friends I returned to MTU later than expected after a visit to an elderly people's community with our teacher. I had planned to return in time to catch the shuttle bus in order to meet my son's school bus as I always did. But I had missed the shuttle.

I ran as fast as I could to arrive in time, but no way was it possible. I saw the school bus ahead of me and at the same moment I saw a woman pull out from a parking space. I went to her and asked her for a ride to my house to catch the school bus carrying my son. At first she seemed afraid of me. Because I was wearing my scarf she knew I was a Muslim. I repeated my request and she glanced at the female passenger beside her. She agreed and we arrived at the same time as the school bus. I thanked her profusely and told her I appreciated what she had done—especially since it was the first time she had seen me.

Spring

Junying LI--China

The weather improves and the sky is blue.
 The air temperature is getting higher and warmer.
 Every green thing wakes up to sprout and stretch.
 People are cheery and enjoy spring coming.

My First Day of School

Reza –Iran

In my country (Iran), schools start on the first of autumn. My elementary school was not very

far from my house—only about a half mile away.

I still remember that first day. The weather was cold and rainy. My father took my hand and told me to come and he would go with me to school. I felt very happy as he took me to school. I saw a lot of children. At that time in our village or small city six grades meet in one school because the population was not too great.

Anyway, my mother had put some bread, cheese and walnuts in my bag for a snack.

Spring

Reza--Iran

Spring is the first season of the year

And the earth becomes young!

In many countries the year changes

With a grand celebration.

In the spring baby birds are hatching.

Trees are blossoming.

The ice of the river opens—

And everywhere turns green.

I think all people like spring.

Canterbury House

Junying Li,-- China

In 2008, when I came to Houghton from Fort Collins, Colorado, my English was very poor. I needed a tutor to teach me the English language. I went to the Canterbury house where they had a teacher, and I made new friends. In the house there are many books in different languages, as well as, teachers. They have a conversation group, knitting class, dance class, meditation group, garage inspecting group, cooking group, little brother services, and many more. They are nice, friendly, interesting and wonderful, and there are so many things to do.

I often go there to study, learn and volunteer for lots of things. I think it is a good place for foreign people. They make me feel at home and are like my family members, and I feel happy.

I love the Canterbury House, and I would like to thank them.

Consider a Donation

Name _____

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Send donations to Denise Heikinen, 103 W. Douglass, Houghton MI 49931

Thank You!