



MESSENGER

WINTER 2024

Letter from the President

Dear Fellow Tutors, Board Members and Friends,

2024 has begun on solid footing with new Learning Centers, an engaged Board at our January meeting and over 60 tutors at our Spring Tutor Training event!

Picture this: You're in your classroom, surrounded by eager learners, each with their own story, dreams, and quirks. It's like hosting a lively dinner party every class, where the main course is language learning sprinkled with laughter and camaraderie. In my own experience and talking to many of you, I'm constantly reminded that teaching adults can be challenging, but oh boy, is it rewarding! We are planting seeds of communication that blossom into beautiful conversations. We're not just teaching words; we're fostering connections, breaking down barriers, and empowering our students to express themselves.

We know it's not just about textbooks and grammar rules, although those are valuable tools in our toolbox. It's about instilling confidence, sparking curiosity, and making learning feel like a journey, not a chore. We keep the conversations flowing, sprinkle in some personal stories, and watch our students thrive.

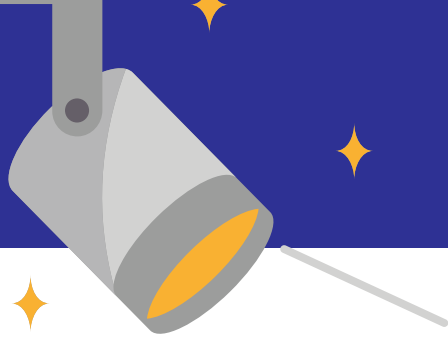
I am grateful for each of you and all you do in giving the gift of English. Don't hesitate to reach out to me with your suggestions and ideas as we work together and support each other.

Warm regards,

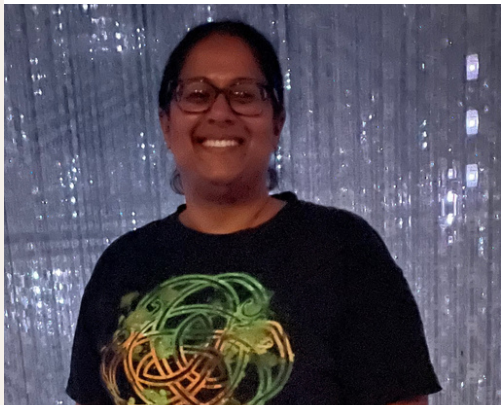
Laura

Laura Casellas
President and Tutor
eslorangecountysclc@yahoo.com





In the Spotlight



Aparna Venkateswaran

Today the spotlight is on a volunteer who holds a very important position on SCLC's Board of Directors.

She is **Aparna Venkateswaran**, Treasurer.

Aparna is one of about four active members who does not tutor, but has found a different way of volunteering with SCLC. She has agreed to share her volunteer story.

How did you get involved with South Coast Literacy Council and when?

Jerry Kostka reached out to a colleague of mine to inquire about any CPAs looking for a volunteer opportunity to replace the then Treasurer on SCLC's board. I was very interested in the mission of South Coast Literacy Council once I learned of the organization and volunteered to take on the role. I started volunteering in May of 2017.

What is your favorite memory from volunteering with SCLC?

I don't have a specific memory per se. However, one of my favorite experiences has been hearing about the experiences of our long-time volunteers. It is a testament to their passion for the mission to still be involved with the organization 20, 30, 40 years later!

What's the best part about volunteering with SCLC?

I am thankful for all the wonderful people I get to interact with and meet through my involvement at South Coast Literacy Council, be they board members, tutors, or students! The gift of English to non-English speakers in an English-speaking country can mean the difference between an individual surviving versus thriving. I am proud I get to be a part of offering that gift to our students. The work our tutors and board members do to support this mission continues to be so vital given the growing melting pot of the community we live in.

Tell us more about yourself.

I come from a family of immigrants. My parents were first-generation immigrants from India. My father was raised in the US since he was 9, and my mother moved here after my parents were married. I was born in the US, but had the opportunity to soak in the Indian culture my family grew up with. I am a CPA and a partner at a national CPA advisory firm, Moss Adams LLP.

My favorite things to do are travel, read and spend time with my family. As I have a lot of family living all over the US, I am happily able to accomplish two goals with one trip!

Resources Galore at the Spring Tutor Workshop

On Saturday morning, February 3rd, over 60 dedicated SCLC tutors came together for our Spring tutor training workshop. We had a packed agenda and room full of tutors, experienced and brand-new, sharing ideas and learning new strategies from each other. We began with a *TedTalk* called “How to Make Learning as Addictive as Social Media” from the founder of the world’s most popular language learning app (see link below if you want to watch it). The app makes use of games and reminders and positive reinforcement. We followed up with a discussion of how we can use the ideas from the *TedTalk* in our own classrooms.

Roundtables were next. Led by our own tutors across several Learning Centers, participants picked up new tools, shared resources that have worked in their own classrooms and engaged with the latest teaching materials and trends.

The workshop overall was about supporting our community of lifelong learners, just like our adult students, by constantly refining our craft. Thank you to the planning and hospitality teams, Mariner’s Church for hosting us and the facilitators for sharing their ideas. At the end of the day, our English Language Learners will reap the benefits of our commitment to our mission of giving the gift of English to our community.

TedTalk link in case you missed the workshop: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P6FORpg0KVo>



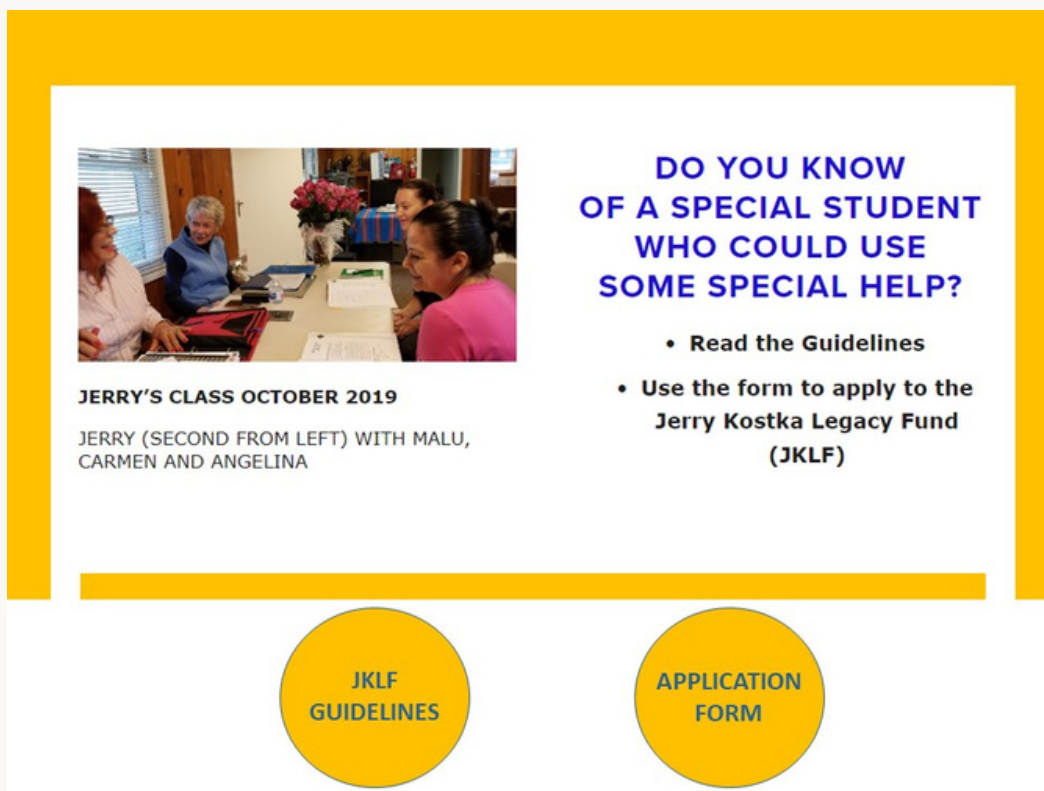
Center Director Representative Report

by Sandy Williams

info.southcoastlit@gmail.com

The Center Directors met online for a great meeting on Wednesday, January 24, at 4:00 p.m. Why the odd time? We have been moving our meetings around to different days and different times, to give everyone a chance to participate.

One topic was the **Jerry Kostka Legacy Fund**, a student-assistance fund established by SCLC in 2021 to honor Jerry Kostka, our much-loved volunteer who passed away in 2020. Guidelines on how to access funds for your students are on the website on our CENTER DIRECTOR AND BOARD page <https://southcoastliteracy.org/center-directors>. If you need help accessing the page or the Guidelines, let me know. The bottom line is there are funds available to help with specific student needs, such as books, transportation, child care, and even tech devices. Check it out!



DO YOU KNOW OF A SPECIAL STUDENT WHO COULD USE SOME SPECIAL HELP?

- Read the Guidelines
- Use the form to apply to the Jerry Kostka Legacy Fund (JKLF)

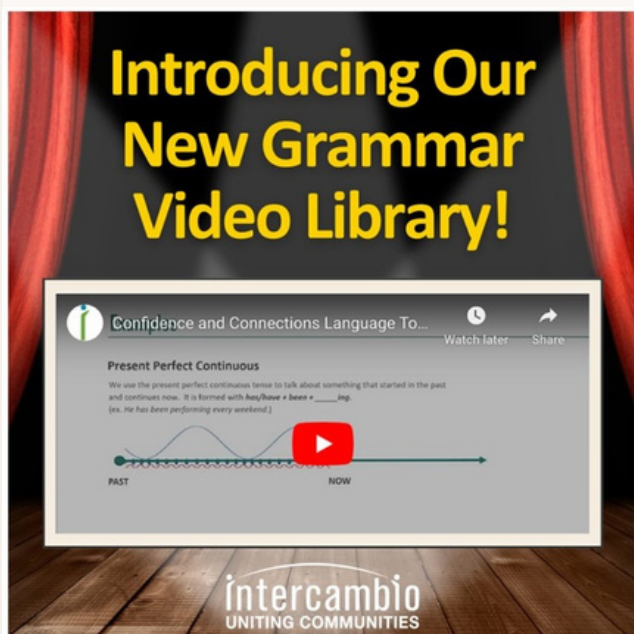
JKLF GUIDELINES

APPLICATION FORM

We also announced that **volunteer data will be collected from CDs starting in March**. So – heads up! I will ask you to confirm your Center volunteers' names, email addresses, and start dates. Meanwhile, keep our volunteer database information up-to-date – **notify Barbara Goward bgoward@cox.net, SCLC Database Officer, of any changes to your volunteer roster.**

I requested all CDs to **please respond to all inquiries from students and volunteers, even if you cannot help them.** Refer them back to the website to check with another Center. If you fail to respond, they will contact me again. That means that I have to field their contacts twice, so I really need your help in this area. Thanks for understanding.

I also asked all CDs to **check your Center's 2024 listing on the ENGLISH LEARNERS page on website <https://southcoastliteracy.org/all-classes-1>** including the links and the EVENING and ONLINE pages. Thank you!



Sharon Miller, Hospitality Chair, announced SCLC's Annual Awards Luncheon is being planned for May 2024

Vicki Sommer, Intercambio liaison, asked that all SCLC-Intercambio Family Members **update your Intercambio dashboard** and remove any names of nonactive volunteers. Vicki also pointed out that new Intercambio resources are on the SCLC website, at <https://intercambio.org/>, and on YouTube. Their materials are very helpful even if you are not using the Intercambio curriculum.

Barbara Looney reminded us that **ProLiteracy Webinars** can be very helpful. They are available on Youtube and at <https://www.proliteracy.org/resources> SCLC's ProLiteracyMember # is ORG032415.

Barbara also mentioned **Community Action Partnership of Orange County** <https://capoc.org/> which is another resource for **practical help for students** (food, water bills, etc.) CAPOC spokesperson, Maria Rosas, explained the program at Barbara's class and later provided food assistance to a student. We are asking Maria to speak at our March CD meeting.

SCLC has a new Newsletter editor, **Emily Ryan**. Send articles about your center and photos to Emily at emilyjryan@yahoo.com.

Peggy McAllister talked about the plans for live, in-person **Tutor Training at Mariner's on February 3, 2024**.

Jim Gustafson explained an exciting new idea: **A task force is being formed to explore the idea of a name change for South Coast Literacy Council!** Jim brought up the suggestion at the January Board meeting, and the task force was approved. It plans to report back to the Board by May.

We took a poll during the meeting, and the results were extremely interesting. There were only four questions: 1) Do you need more tutors? 2) Do you need more students? 3) What resources are you using (about 10 were listed). 4) Do you prefer online or in-person CD meetings? About half of us would like more volunteers. About half would like more students. All of the website (online) resources are being used, several are using paper materials, and several are using other online and paper resources. That means that the SCLC funds being expended for online resources are not being wasted. That's good news.

The one nearly unanimous answer was a preference for online meetings! It appears that, as awful as the Covid years were in some respects, the pandemic did show us the value of meeting on Zoom – it's faster, it's far more convenient, and I can wear my bunny slippers while hosting. So our next meeting will be online sometime in March. The date will be announced soon.



More photos from the tutor workshop

SCLC Members Attend Summit

Maggie Gibson, SCLC's Grant Writer and Barbara Looney, Vice President, represented SCLC at the OC Community Foundation's Giving Day Summit where OC nonprofit organizations came together to learn how to best tell their stories for fundraising purposes. Sydney Stoudmire who works with Giant Squid Group, a social impact consulting agency that helps small nonprofits build their fundraising and leadership capacity, spoke on ethical storytelling and connecting to your audience.

Submitted by Barbara Looney



Summit attendees wrote about What Fills Your Heart on post-its for the wall

Meet Emily Ryan, New Newsletter Editor

Many of you may remember Emily as a volunteer for several years with Barbara in Irvine. She has two sons, Rafael (9) and Ronen (7) who go to Bonita Canyon Elementary in Irvine. They love languages like their mom and are learning Vietnamese and Japanese!



What is the JKL Fund?

In November 2020, SCLC lost a much-beloved volunteer, Jerry Kostka. Jerry took her tutoring and her mentoring to a higher level. She helped and encouraged students, tutors, and SCLC. She served in every capacity in our organization: volunteer, tutor, Center Director, Vice President, President, and an all-around helping hand when one was needed.

Two of Jerry's remarkable qualities were empathy and creativity. She had a real gift for turning those qualities into action. For example, she provided an iPhone for a student and then used class time for her English learners to input their contact information into the phone's database. What a fun and productive learning experience for everyone!

In honor of Jerry's memory, in the spring of 2021, the SCLC Board voted to establish the Jerry Kostka Legacy Fund. The purpose is to help SCLC English learners by providing educational resources and support for students who are in need and at risk. It would be Jerry's wish that no one fails to fully participate in English learning due to lack of a resource such as a book, an iPhone, or transportation to a class.

There are Guidelines and, obviously, limits on the JKLF. On the SCLC website, on the CENTER DIRECTORS AND BOARD page, there is a section on the JKLF. It includes two buttons. One takes you to the Guidelines; the other brings up the Application Form.

All Application Forms to the Fund must come from the Center Director. The purpose of that rule is to ensure that the tutor (who will know the student best) and the Center Director work together with the student toward a personalized solution.

Once an Application Form is received, the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors will consider it. The Executive Committee may refer an application to the entire Board for consideration if it decides to do so. After a decision is reached, the CD will be notified. It is anticipated that either the English learner, the tutor, or the CD will advance any funds allotted, and reimbursement will be made from the JKLF.

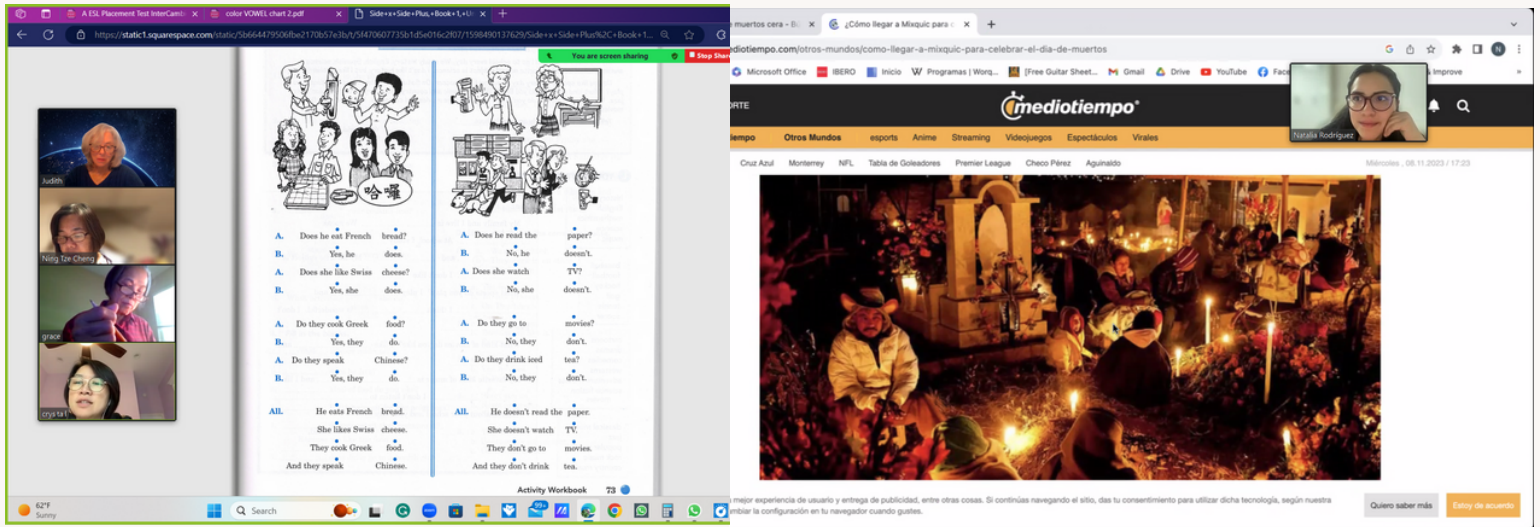
Submitted by Sandy Williams



Around the Centers

San Clemente - St. Clements Church

Judith Slotsky's Taiwanese ladies like to do the dialogue in Side by Side Book 1. Natalia (from Mexico City) screen shared about Dia de Los Muertos. Judith teaches online and in-person classes.



Northwood Community Center

Classes meet in the morning, so the students and tutors held a brunch before the holiday break last December. Many good foods were shared, students received attendance certificates, and they had fun playing the Mr. and Mrs. Wright game where everyone received a prize.



Tutor Tarek Issa in deep conversation with a student.

More from Around the Centers

Dana Point Learning Center

The students at Dana Point Learning Center organized a fabulous international potluck lunch to warm our hearts and tummies for a chilly January class. Students from China, Israel, Italy, Iran, Japan, Mexico, Morocco, Taiwan, and Ukraine teamed to create a wonderful repast. Students shared information about the background of the dish they prepared as to whether it was traditional, for a special occasion, or every-day fare, and told us about the ingredients. One student made origami flowers for the table; some students shared their recipes. Needless to say, we shared a marvelous afternoon together with good food, good friends, and lots of English language!

Submitted by Sharon Miller



News Items

Extra Help for Students

Tustin Library's OC READ program has started a new walk-in program, and SCLC's ELL students are invited to participate and get some extra one-on-one time between classes. They can sit with a tutor for 20 minutes, or longer if no one is waiting. (It is first come, first served.) Get information from this flyer and the Tustin Library website. You may also call [714-566-3070](tel:714-566-3070).



WALK-IN TUTORING

OC READ ADULT LITERACY SERVICES

Mondays, Wednesdays, & Saturdays
10 AM - 2 PM

Visit Walk-in Tutoring for quick help with job applications, reading, writing, and more in personal 20-minute sessions.

Walk-in Tutoring is available at the Tustin Library on a first-come, first-served basis. For more information, visit ocread.org/learner.

This service is for adults ages 16+.

TUSTIN LIBRARY
345 E Main Street
Tustin, CA 92780
714-566-7725

Sun: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
Mon - Thu: 10:00 AM - 7:00 PM
Fri - Sat: 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

OC Public Libraries | @OCpublicLibraries | @ocpublib | OCL.org

Fun Facts

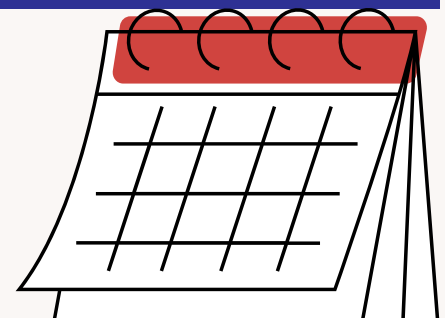
Ruth Colvin, founder of Volunteers of America which merged with Laubach Literacy to become ProLiteracy, is **107 years old**. She has authored 15 books, one being her auto biography, *My Travels Through Life, Love and Literacy: A Memoir* (2020).

Ruth is the oldest living person in the Women's Hall of Fame, and she received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2006.



Upcoming Events

- March 16** Board Meeting 10:00 am Virtual on Zoom
- March 20** CD Meeting 3:00 pm Virtual on Zoom
- May 11** Annual Awards at Norman P. Murray Luncheon Community Center, Mission Viejo
- May** Board Meeting 10:00 am TBD



Website Wonders

The SCLC TUTOR TOOLS page on our website includes a button that takes you to a separate page of Intercambio materials. The button looks like this:

[Click here for SCLC Family - Intercambio Resources](#)

If you are using Intercambio's Confidence and Connections curriculum, this link is a quick and easy way to access C&C accessories, such as the Digital View Slides, the C&C Placement Test, Jeopardy and other Games.

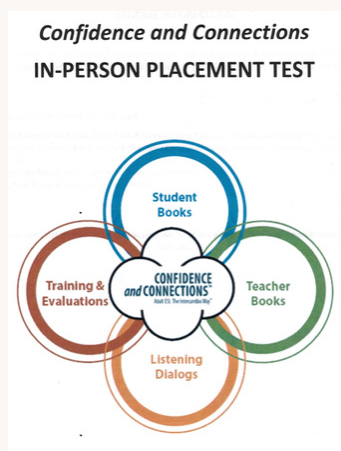
If you are NOT using Intercambio's Confidence and Connections curriculum, many of these materials are still useful, including games, the placement test, and the slides. Also available are monthly Teacher Tips, worksheets, and videos. All of these are easily adapted to non-Intercambio classes.

Recently, Intercambio has added a Grammar Video Library, Pronunciation Videos, and Extra Practice Worksheets to their offerings. You can access these resources quickly and easily through the link on the SCLC TUTOR TOOLS page of our website.

Additionally, Intercambio hosts a supportive and friendly twice-a-month online teacher forum, called Networking Calls. These are listed on the Intercambio Events Calendar which is also on the SCLC TUTOR TOOLS page of our website as well as the Intercambio website (<https://intercambio.org/>).

To fully access all of the materials, sign up as an SCLC-Intercambio Family Member. It is FREE to all SCLC volunteers. To sign up, contact your Center Director or email SCLC.Volunteer@gmail.com. As an SCLC-Intercambio Family Member, you will receive links to their Networking Calls and many other resources delivered directly to your inbox.

If you need the password to the SCLC Tutor Tools page, email info.southcoastlit@gmail.com.



Submitted by Sandy Williams, Website Manager/CD Representative

Membership Dues & Donations



Once a year, we invite tutors and friends of South Coast Literacy to become members and/or make a donation to support our students. Our primary goal is to help adults acquire the English language skills they need for daily living, to gain confidence in using English for jobs and to communicate for many purposes.

There are nearly 800 ESL students from many language backgrounds served by over 150 volunteers in our South Coast Literacy Centers from Rancho Santa Margarita to Newport Coast. Centers appreciate financial help for newspapers, books, digital resources and other materials to enhance student learning and engagement, as well as tutor training conferences, and administrative costs (insurance, affiliate dues and fees.)

If you would like to review the details about South Coast Literacy Council, its history and its goals, be sure to visit the website at <https://southcoastliteracy.org/our-story>.

Membership is \$10 and is voluntary. If you would like to send your dues/donation via check to our treasurer, please identify your center in the memo line. Make checks payable to: South Coast Literacy Council and mail to
South Coast Literacy Council
c/o Aparna Venkateswaran, Treasurer
23615 El Toro Rd. Suite X #422
Lake Forest, CA 92630-4707
Or make your dues/donation at our website: <https://southcoastliteracy.org/support>.

Please note “Membership Dues” or “Donation” in the additional comments line.



Please consider signing up with Ralphs' donation program, whereby they donate a small percentage of your purchases to our organization. This is part of our ongoing fundraising effort, and it doesn't cost you anything. Plus, every little bit helps!

To register, go to www.ralphs.com. Have your rewards card handy and go to 'Create an account' then Get Started, Sign Up Today. Then you can link your online account with SCLC by editing your Community Contribution information on your profile page. Our nonprofit organization number is **BS799**.

Please email all Newsletter Submissions to: Emily Ryan at emilyjryan@yahoo.com
Call or text 714-317-4299 with any questions.