



MORONGO BASIN COALITION FOR ADULT LITERACY



NEWSLETTER

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January-February-March 2020

DATES FOR YOUR CALENDAR

MBCAL Board Meetings—4th Thursdays, call for location and time

No meeting July, August, and December
Spell-A-Thon--March 21, Bruce's Coyote Kitchen,

SPELL-A-THON SCHEDULED

The 29th annual Morongo Basin Coalition for Adult Literacy Spell-A-Thon, sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Twentynine Palms to benefit the MBCAL, is scheduled for Saturday, March 21st, from 9:00 a.m. to noon. The Spell-A-Thon will be in a new venue, **Bruce's Coyote Kitchen** on the campus of Copper Mountain College. Teams of three adults will compete for "Best Spellers" 2020. A sign-up sheet with the information is included with this newsletter. Teams can call, email, or snail mail to sign up.



Word Muses—Cathy Snodgrass, Tami Roleff, Laura James—Most Pledges 2019

VOLUNTEER MBCAL HOURS

JANUARY 1 TO DECEMBER 31, 2019

Every year in January we look back at the hours of service in tutoring or other volunteering that were given to the MBCAL in the previous year, and more importantly to adults in the Morongo Basin who need our help in improving their literacy skills. Special thanks go to Marilyn Clark, Kelvin Easterling, MJ Fiocco, Anita Fultz, Phil Fultz, Mitchell Halicki, Dan Stork, and Kathy Truesdell for the time they spend on behalf of adult literacy.

January 1 to December 31, 2019

Volunteer Activities

Tutoring hours, one-on-one	146
Tutoring hours, CMC's Student Success Center, ESL class	893
Board of Directors meetings	30
Community Outreach	33
MBCAL newsletter	24
Spell-A-Thon	12
Total Volunteer Hours 2019	1138

The previous numbers of hours are, of necessity, approximate. If it were possible to accurately tally all the volunteer hours given on behalf of the Morongo Basin Coalition for Adult Literacy, these numbers would increase substantially..

2020 MEMBERSHIPS IN MBCAL

With the new year, it is time to renew (or start) your membership in the MBCAL. Memberships help pay for books and materials for our students and their tutors, and help fill any gaps in the books available at our Little Libraries. See page 3 in this newsletter for a membership form.

WHY? By Phil Fultz

Over the years we have asked the question of why it is important for people in a modern society to read. We've answered that question in terms of lifestyle support, self-sufficiency, and we have even noted that there may be legal, as well as moral imperatives involved. All of that contemplates more or less ordinary, if perhaps a bit complicated, life. Now there is another, very different consideration.

In the middle of January a remarkable exhibition appeared in Germany. It displayed the notes of Sheindi Miller (nee Ehrenwold) who at age 14 in 1944 was taken from her home in Hungary to Auschwitz. She survived the camp and emigrated to Israel at the end of the war. She kept those notes on index cards from the arms factory where she was put to work. Picking up at approximately the time when Anne Frank's diary concluded, Ms Miller's 54-page work, which she kept in secret until it was published seventy years later, documents what happened on the way, as well as while she was in Auschwitz. I'll not recount here the occurrences she describes in the camp. That is not the point of this essay. Rather, there are three different "what if?" points to be made.

First, this seems to be the only document of its kind. It is both a more graphic and more thorough record of what was done to

MBCAL January-February-March newsletter 2020 Hungarian Jews than any other. It is in fact unique. Ms Miller didn't apparently say why she made the record, except that she could. And that is the point. What if she had been unable to make this record?

Secondly, we have seen many descriptions of the atrocities against Jews in Hitler's Europe. Those descriptions have not been written by the actual victims, with the exception of the noted *Diary of Anne Frank*. Even were it not well-written, it would still be compelling by reason of its authenticity alone. What if there remained a small fraction of people who still needed yet more confirmation of the horrors of WWII?

Finally, the exhibition has occurred on the seventy-fifth anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz in 1945. Sadly, there has been a resurgence of anti-Semitism in several areas of the world, including our own. Ms Miller is ninety years old. Certainly she will not—cannot—forget. But that time is more than two generations past. That is more than enough time to forget, consciously or not. What if the only records were slowly fading memories?

I believe that this is, in the words of Wolfgang Schauble, president of the German Parliament ...*54 pages of priceless historic value, emotional vehemence, and a legacy against oblivion...*

Now a great deal of informal record-keeping is electronic, with all manner of misspellings, alliteration, and abbreviations. If there is someone in Iraq, Afghanistan, Syria, or Pakistan, for example, and if s/he has an *iPhone*, how surely would there be batteries available? Again, what if no one has ever taught them to read and write?



Morongo Basin Coalition for Adult Literacy, Inc.

A California 501 (c) (3) Corporation
PO Box 686, Twentynine Palms, CA 92277
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February 5, 2020

Dear MBCAL Supporter,

No matter what kind of job an applicant is looking for in this economy, reading is still important. You might think you can be a mechanic without having to read until you look at the manual with all the required instructions. At the same time, the percentage of English-speaking adults who are functionally illiterate is still at 1 in 5 or 20%. So we at the Morongo Basin Coalition for Adult Literacy still need to do our part by providing one-on-one free and confidential tutoring to adults in our community who ask us for help with reading basic English, comprehension, and/or spelling and mathematics. We are also helping adults at Copper Mountain College’s Student Success Center, either by tutoring under the direction of the class instructor in the College’s English as a Second Language class or in a one-on-one setting. We also train new tutors and provide materials for tutoring at other sites in the Morongo Basin.

By becoming a member of the MBCAL, you will help provide materials for learners and training for their tutors. Your support in any amount is important to us. Those of you who have become **Life Members** or who have already renewed, thank you.

- ▶ Basic Membership—\$10 or \$17 for two at the same address
- ▶ Supporter Membership—\$25
- ▶ Sponsor Membership—\$50 or more
- ▶ Lifetime Membership—\$200

This year the Kiwanis Club of Twentynine Palms will be putting on the 29th annual Morongo Basin Coalition for Adult Literacy Spell-A-Thon to benefit the MBCAL. The event will be held on Saturday, March 21, at Bruce’s Coyote Kitchen at Copper Mountain College in Joshua Tree. The MBCAL has been supported by money raised from memberships, the Spell-A-Thon, Elsinore Macris Gilliland Funds, in-kind donations from the Morongo Basin Transit Authority, and by donations from community groups, businesses, and individuals. We would like to welcome you as a new or returning member.

Sincerely,

Kathy Truesdell
MBCAL Board



_____ I would like to renew or become a new member of the MBCAL at the _____ level.
(Please make checks out to MBCAL.)

_____ I would like to know more about the adult literacy program.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone or email: _____

*The MBCAL is a 501 (c) (3) not-for profit California Corporation, Federal ID 33-0127371.
Memberships and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.*