

Adult Learning Network

The Adult Learning Network is a quarterly publication of the Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center.

Garland Hankins Announces New AALRC Director

As many of you may already be aware, Marti Hampton, Co-Director of the Arkansas Adult Learning Resource Center, resigned that position as of July 31, 2003. Marti has accepted a teaching position with the Arkansas Department of Correction School District and will begin working in the adult education classroom at Wrightsville in August. During her tenure at the AALRC, Marti was responsible for the leadership in family literacy, technology, and several other areas. One of her most recent accomplishments was the development and delivery of a literacy workshop for reading teachers and tutors that was piloted and very well-received last spring. I personally appreciate all that Marti has done for adult education and literacy and wish her well in her new position.

In July, with the endorsement from the AALRC Advisory Board, I asked Marsha Taylor, who has been serving as Co-Director of the Resource Center, to accept the position of Director. Marsha has accepted this responsibility and we look forward to a continuation of an excellent working relationship with her in that capacity.

Let me take this opportunity to thank the entire staff of the AALRC for their work. Over the years we have accomplished a great deal through their efforts. Adult educators and literacy providers from the entire state have benefited from the many excellent professional development opportunities they have facilitated. I would ask you, the educators in the field, to continue providing input to the Resource Center, so that we can look forward to a continuation of excellent professional development.

Garland Hankins
Deputy Director
Department of Workforce Education

Third Annual Adult Education ESL Institute

Many adult education centers and literacy councils in Arkansas have been working with several thousand adults who are seeking to learn and/or improve English skills in the areas of speaking, listening, reading, and writing. The 2000 United States Census reported that Arkansas' Hispanic population rose 337 percent since 1990. This rate was the second highest in the nation, with 86,866 Hispanics reported living in Arkansas in the 2000 Census. The number reported in the 1990 Census was 19,876.

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Professional Development News

Tuition Reimbursement Program

Contact your Program Advisor at the Adult Education Section or Marsha Taylor at the AALRC for more information on this program. You must use a newly revised form available from the AALRC. Reimbursement is applicable to courses taken for Adult Education Certification ONLY!

Remember: (1) The application form must be submitted to the AALRC **10 working days before class begins**. (2) Your class grade and receipt of payment must be received **within 30 days of class ending**.

There is a new requirement: Applicants must provide documentation that the class will count for adult education licensure.

NOTICE:

If you are unable to attend a workshop for which you have registered, please contact the AALRC as soon as possible.

Participants are often placed on waiting lists because workshops fill up. If you find that you cannot attend a workshop and you call ahead, this gives us time to notify wait-listed participants that they can attend.

For a list of courses available in adult education, please contact:

University of Arkansas
at Little Rock
Dr. Charlotte Robertson
(501) 569-8933

University of Arkansas
at Fayetteville
Dr. Buddy Lyle
(479) 575-5119 or
(479) 575-4578

Arkansas State
University
Dr. David Agnew
(870) 972-3943

University of Central Arkansas
Dr. Sherry Roberts
(501) 450-5431

AALRC Staff

Director:

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Media
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Upcoming Events:

Arkansas Numeracy Campaign

Session 1 – September 17-18
Session 2 - October 22-23
Session 3 – November 19-20

Literacy Strategies

Session 1 - October 2-3
Session 2 - October 20-21
Session 3 - November 6-7
Session 4 - December 4-5

LDTD Lite Training

October 9: Monticello
October 29: Hope
November 17: Little Rock
November 21: Jonesboro
December 5: Bentonville

LDTD Project Training

Session 1 - Sept. 15-16
Session 2 - Oct. 13-14

ESL Basics

Session 1 – October 8-9
Session 2 – November 10-11
Session 3 – December 10-11

Dr. Richard Cooper

September 22-26

Bridging the GAP

September 29

GED Examiner's Conference

Sept. 11-12



TABE Workshop

October 27

BEST Workshop

October 28

AACAE Conference

October 30-31
Hot Springs

Disability News

Learning Disabilities Workshops

The AALRC has scheduled a number of workshops designed to help programs meet the needs of adult students with learning disabilities for the 2003-2004 year. In addition to the regularly scheduled LDTD training, Payne-Jordan training, and Strategies and Accommodations workshops, we have contracted with Dr. Richard Cooper to conduct five days of training in September 2003. Programs should receive the Cooper training announcement in early August, but please contact the AALRC if your program does not receive the registration information.



Anne Henry, Kathryn Mixon, and Jacob Humphrey at the AALRC Payne-Jordan 2003 workshop

For more information about upcoming training events, visit the AALRC website at <http://aalrc.org>

Project Arkansas Work Incentive (A-WIN)

Students (age 14-64) who receive disability benefits from Social Security or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and want to work full or part-time should contact the A-WIN program at 1.888.284.7521. This program was established as a result of a nationwide initiative mandated by the Ticket to Work and Work Incentives Improvement Act of 1999 (PL 106-170). The \$280,349 annual Social Security Administration grant, renewable for up to five years, provides 95% of program costs. The other 5% is provided by the co-operating Independent Living Centers.

The program is designed to help people receiving disability benefits to understand how employment will affect their benefits, develop a plan to be self-supporting, navigate the bureaucratic maze concerning employment and SSI regulations, and get in touch with other agencies that can help with vocational training and job placement.

All services are free.

Microsoft Announces New Accessibility Features

Microsoft keeps moving toward providing built-in accessibility in their systems. In new and upgraded versions of MS Office there are particularly good new features that should help make web sites more accessible.

You can read their press release at:

<http://www.microsoft.com/presspass/press/2003/juno03/06-26Section508AnnivPR.asp>

The new accessibility features were announced on the second anniversary of Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, and include new accessibility improvements in the upcoming release of Microsoft® Office System products as well as in recent releases of Microsoft Visual Studio® .NET and Microsoft Windows Server (TM) 2003.

Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act requires all federal agencies to ensure that all electronic or information technology they purchase, develop or use is accessible to people with disabilities, both federal employees and members of the public.

Readers' Theatre Scripts Available Online



Scripts are available online from the Readers' Theatre at <http://www.literacyconnections.com/index.html>. This Literacy Connections site also offers a "wealth of information on reading, teaching and tutoring techniques,

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Disability News (continued)

New Assistive Technology Materials in AALRC Media Center

The AALRC has recently purchased a number of assistive technology materials and other disabilities-related items to add to the ever-growing supply of resources in the Media Center. Local adult education and literacy programs can check these out for 30 days for use with students who have disabilities by contacting Klaus Neu at the AALRC.

The new materials include:

Alpha Smart Word Processor (1): A word processing tool that looks like a laptop, but weighs much less. Students can take notes with the keyboard, then download the file to a PC for further use or manipulate the font, etc.

Orion TI-34 Talking Scientific Calculator (3): The only talking calculator approved by the GED Testing Service in Washington DC for use during the GED Tests by students who have requested and received notification that they may use a talking calculator as an appropriate accommodation for their documented disability.

Reading Pen II - Portable Scan (3): A hand-held pen that scans text and reads it out loud. Includes a dictionary. Not for use with long passages, but good for students with reading difficulties who would benefit from hearing a printed word occasionally to help decode.

Ken-a-vision 7890 B Video (1): A camera that projects the image to a TV for purposes of enlarging the text or the item. The flexible gooseneck is easily manipulated to help students who need large print adjust the text size and read from the TV screen rather than the book or paper.

JAWS Screen Reader for Windows (1): The most popular screen reader worldwide, JAWS for Windows works with a PC to provide access to today's software applications and the Internet. With its internal software speech synthesizer and the computer's sound card, information from the screen is read aloud, providing technology to access a wide variety of information, education and job related applications. JAWS also outputs to refreshable Braille displays, providing unmatched Braille support of any screen reader on the market. A training tutorial is included. This software will be available on an AALRC laptop only.

Touch Window (1): Turns any PC monitor into a touch screen.

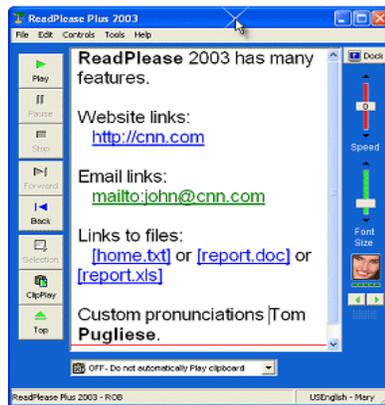
Hearing Helper FM System (1): For students with auditory processing disabilities, this FM Loop includes a microphone for the speaker and a headset for the student, so the speaker's voice goes directly to the student's ears. Eliminates distracting or confusing external noise and enhances focusing and comprehension.

Dragon Naturally Speaking 7 - Preferred Edition (1): A speech-to-text software program that allows the student to speak into a PC microphone; the software translates their speech into printed text. Users can dictate into virtually any windows-based application at speeds up to 160 words per minute.

There are many other items too numerous to describe in a short newsletter, as well as quite a few new books about learning disabilities and ADHD. For a complete list of new assistive technology materials in the Media Center, or to check out one of the items or books, please contact Klaus at klaus@aalrc.org or visit the Media Center next time you're at the AALRC.

Free Multi-Lingual Text-to-Speech Software

Visit <http://www.readplease.com/index/php> to check out the **free** software. This software can read the following out loud in English, German, Spanish, French, or UK English:



- Web pages
- E-mail
- Files (.txt, .doc, .xls)

According to an article on ABCnews.com, "The software allows users to choose one of four different 'personalities' to read back the electronic text displayed on the computer's monitor.

But to make the synthesized speech sound a bit more 'human,' users can also adjust the speed and pitch of the artificial voices.

Students who have reading disabilities and ESOL students could greatly increase their ability to process new information in the classroom with this software.

Tech*Talk*

Note: To keep from typing in any URL (web address) in this newsletter, go the AALRC's home page at <http://aalrc.org>, look up this newsletter, and then just click on the appropriate link.

XP Upgrades

Many people are upgrading their existing PC's to Windows XP. Take a look at these tips and suggestions:

Make sure your computer can handle Windows XP!

Microsoft recommends a minimum of:

- 233 MHz processor
- 64 MB of Ram
- 1.5 GB of hard disk space

The list above may technically work, but it will be extremely slow. I recommend you have at least a 500MHz CPU, with at least 256 MB of ram. Memory has become very cheap these days, and Windows will make good use out of it (as opposed to the Win 9X systems which didn't.), so going to 512 MB of memory or above is recommended. Also, an XP operating system installation can use up to 1 GB of hard disk space, so you will probably want a hard drive that is larger than 1.5 GB.

Also, check out Microsoft's Upgrade Advisor that will tell you if your hardware and software are compatible with Windows XP. It may not recognize all of your software, so be sure to check with your manufacturer's web site on anything in question, especially your educational software. The Upgrade Advisor can be found at:

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/pro/ho wtobuy/upgrading/advisor.asp>

Should I clean, install or upgrade my existing Windows?

Either way you go on your Windows XP upgrade, make sure that you back up your

data. If something goes wrong, you want to be able to recover all of your work. Here are some of the advantages and disadvantages of both methods:

Clean install: **Advantage** - Will be the most reliable for future use. **Disadvantage** - It is a little more time consuming, because you have to re-install all of your other programs (i.e. Microsoft Office, educational software, etc.) You would lose all of your windows settings, if it weren't for Windows XP Files and Settings Transfer Wizard. This works very well and can Transfer all of your settings and files from Windows 98 and above. Be sure to save your data on another medium other than your hard drive (CD-R, network drive, zip disk, etc.) Detailed instructions for this procedure can be found at

http://www.winsupersite.com/showcase/window_sxp_sg_fstw.asp

And remember, you must run the File and Settings Transfer Wizard prior to starting your XP installation.

Upgrade an existing Windows installation: **Advantage** - This is the easiest way to upgrade your PC to XP. **Disadvantage** - Some programs may not function properly, and you will have duplicate and leftover files from software programs that didn't get deleted when they were uninstalled.

For more information on installing Windows XP, go to <http://www.windows-help.net/WindowsXP/setup.html>

Plato Updates - Be sure to upgrade your Plato software to the latest version 4.1; this is a free upgrade for most programs and it supports Windows XP. Go to this web page to get your upgrade: <http://platosupport.plato.com/UpgradeRequest.asp>

Tech Talk

Security

If your computer is hooked to the Internet, be sure to update Windows on a regular basis. There are several updates that will help your computer run better, and just as important, there are security updates that will keep you from becoming a hacker or virus victim.

For example, some malicious web sites might cause your computer to run a virus or open the door for a hacker to gain entry. Microsoft continuously updates Windows and Internet Explorer to prevent this from happening, but if you don't download the updates, you won't be protected.

Email Attachments are the number one reason for getting a virus or trojan, and for clarification, you can't get a virus from just reading an email and not opening the attachment. Be vigilant to the clever ways that people entice you to open attachments! For example: Klez E is the most common worldwide spreading worm.

Also watch out for attachments with benign looking file extensions. You can be easily fooled by files with double extensions. There is a setting in Windows that will turn off viewing

Redistribution of Computer Equipment

Did your Adult Education or Literacy Program get new computers and would you like to pass on the "old" equipment?

If so, please feel free to bring your "antiques" to the AALRC for redistribution! But please make sure these computers have a CD player and run Windows 95 or above, so that other programs can utilize them!

more than one extension and Windows XP has this turned off by default. For example if someone sent you an attachment like OURPICTURES.JPG, you would think that it was just a harmless picture, but with viewing multiple extensions turned on the, attachment would look like OURPICTURES.JPG.VBS. The file would actually be an executable Visual Basic Script file that could do serious damage.

I recommend that you have viewing extensions turned on, and if you have Windows XP, you will definitely want to check this using one of the following methods:

Windows 98 & ME - double click 'My Computer', click on 'View' and select 'Folder Options', click on the 'View' tab, look for this line - 'Hide file extensions for known file types' and make sure that it is not checked.

Windows XP - double click 'My Computer', click on 'Tools' and select 'Folder Options', click on the 'view' tab, look for this line - 'Hide file extensions for known file types' and make sure that it is not checked.

When you take these items out of your inventory, don't forget to follow your local education agency guidelines for disposal or removal. Just in case you are looking for recycling opportunities for older computer equipment, you might give Susan Gele from Hazmert a call at (501) 539-0582 or Sam Light from Central Arkansas Commercial & Industrial Services at (501) 590-4046.

AALRC Technology Committee

Billy Upson
(Texarkana)

Gayla Feist
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(Helena)

Philip Less
(Little Rock)

Rob Pollan
(Fort Smith)

Third Annual Adult Education ESL Institute

(continued from page 1)

The Adult Education Section of the Arkansas Department of Workforce Education conducted an intensive, five-day training for 40 adult education and literacy teachers and tutors throughout the state as part of the third annual Adult Education ESL Institute. Held from July 21 to 25 at the DeGray Lake Resort State Park Lodge in Bismarck, the 2003 ESL Institute focused on the following areas:

- Increasing cultural awareness – gaining a better understanding of the cultural background and values of the adult Hispanic learner
- Personalizing ESL lessons – learning teaching activities that allow students to share their personal and cultural values
- Building reading and comprehension – learning how to motivate readers to understand what they read and to feel successful, with practical instructional strategies
- Developing effective lesson plans – learning how to organize lessons that provide practice in all four language skills.

Phillip Less, the Adult Education Section ESL Program Advisor, coordinated the workshop, which included presentations by Dr. Frank Gonzales of Amherst, Texas, and Sharron Bassano of Capitola, California.



*Danny Wade Smith and Beverly Smith
at the ESL Summer Institute 2003*

Dr. Gonzales has taught on the elementary, secondary, community college and university levels. He developed bilingual education and ESL programs and consulted with numerous schools and institutions. He is the author of several books and recently retired from the Intercultural Development Research Association in San Antonio, Texas.

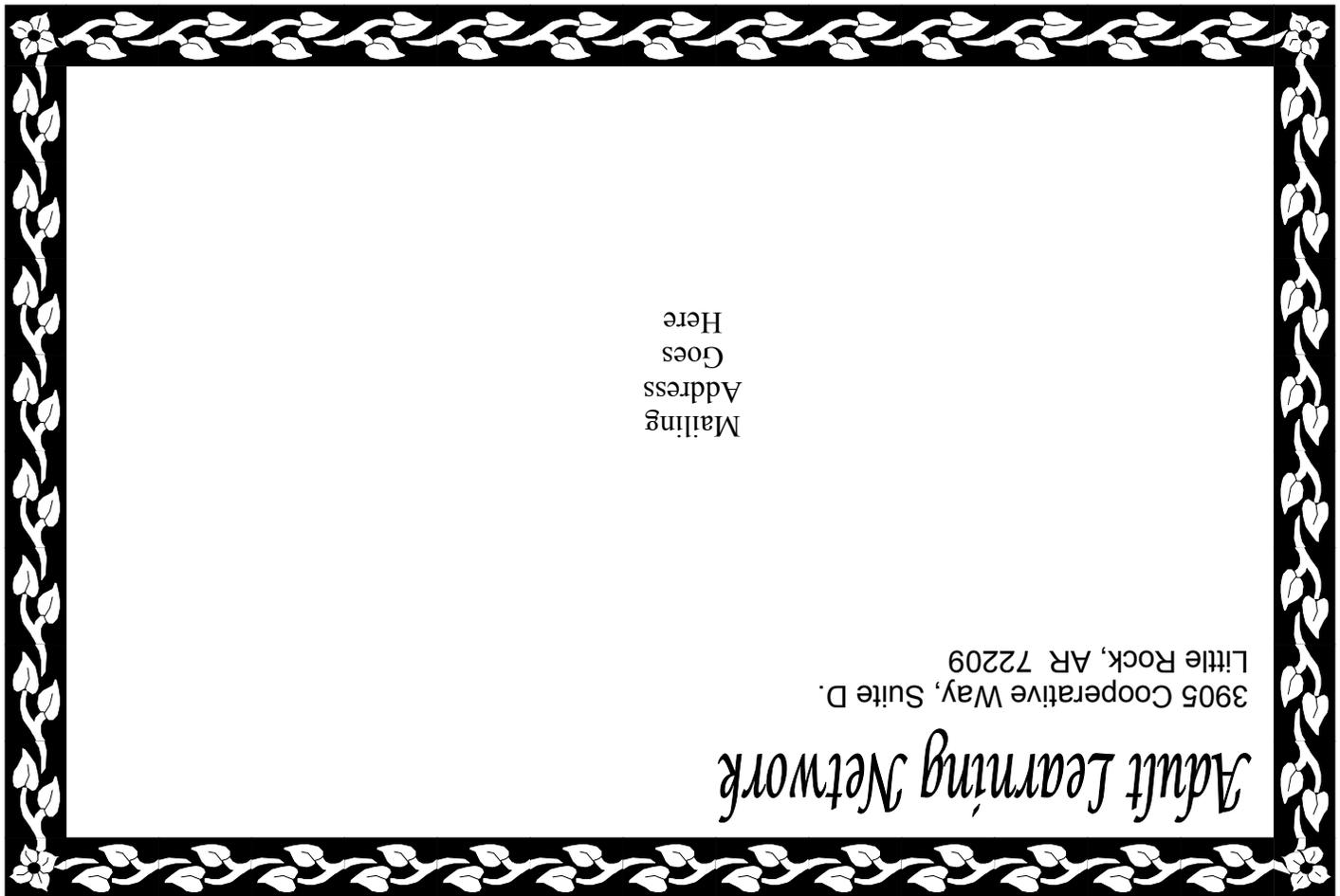
Ms. Bassano is internationally renowned as an author, teacher trainer, and consultant in methods and materials for ESL. An ESL instructor and program coordinator for twenty-one years, she has authored popular ESL texts for teacher and students, published by Alta Book Company.

Readers' Theatre Scripts Available Online *(continued from page 3)*

ESL literacy, and adult literacy.” They have resources that are useful for teachers, volunteers, and directors of literacy programs. Topics include the language experience approach, phonics, word study, and “the best in children’s literature.” They have a ton of information about teaching

adults as well.

If you’ve never seen this website, please check it out. You will be amazed at the amount of information, ideas, and resources they offer.



ADULT LEARNING NETWORK

Vision Therapy Assessment (VTA) software update

The AALRC is happy to announce the purchase of the updated software for the Vision Therapy Assessment screening tool. The new software is joystick-compatible, thus eliminating the problems with screening students who are not used to using the arrows to respond to the stimuli. Also, the software has been updated to be compatible with most printers, so there should not be problems printing the report for the optometrist.

This new software is free to all programs that previously received the VTA software from the AALRC. Please contact Klaus Neu at the AALRC to receive your software package. You can pick up the software at the AALRC office, or we can mail it to you upon request.

The software will run on Windows 95, 98, ME, 2000, NT, and XP. It will also run on Mac 8.6 through 9.0 and OSX. You can load the software onto three computers. The software comes with a complete installation guide, but if you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Home Therapy Systems at 888.810.3937, or call Rod Bortel (HTS contact) at 800.346.4925.

Again, the new VTA program is joystick-compatible. If your computer has a USB port, you can purchase a Microsoft Sidewinder joystick at Radio Shack for \$29.95. If you don't have a USB port, call Rod Bortel (800.346.4925). He'll send you one that works for \$29.95.

If you have any questions, please contact Klaus Neu at klaus@aalrc.org or 800.832.6242 or 501.907.2490.