



the Lantern

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A newsletter of the Presentation Lantern Center, Dubuque, Iowa
Sponsored by the Sisters of the Presentation, Dubuque, Iowa

The Long Journey to Citizenship

by Sr. Beth Kress, PBVM

Coming to the United States and becoming a citizen is the dream of many newcomers. The journey from Iran to the U.S. began sixteen years ago for Maasoumeh and Farhad.

In 1996, Maasoumeh's sister Nikki, already a U.S. citizen and living in California, initiated the process to sponsor them. They waited eleven years for an invitation from the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement to go to a U.S. embassy for an interview and health check. Because there is no U.S. embassy in Iran, they had to travel to an embassy in Naples, Italy. Nikki also traveled to Naples to assist Maasoumeh and Farhad with the process. She returned to California with Maasoumeh at her side.

When Maasoumeh came to the U.S. from Tehran, Iran, in 2007, she received a Permanent Residence Card (Green Card). Her husband, Farhad, came the next year. They lived with Nikki in San Diego, Calif. Farhad had difficulty finding a job there, so they responded to an invitation from Farhad's cousin Mohammad to come to Dubuque two years ago. Farhad is employed at Loras College and he and Maasoumeh have a house in Dubuque. They come to the Lantern Center weekly to continue learning English.

After the required five to six years of U.S. residence, Maasoumeh applied to become a citizen and paid the standard fee of \$680. She studied the 100 questions for several months.

"Preparing alone for the test in civics and language skills could be difficult," states Maasoumeh. "With my teacher's help it was not hard."

In December 2012, Maasoumeh passed the test to become a citizen; she took the oath of allegiance to the United States in Cedar Rapids in March.

"I have known my English teacher, Dianne Roche, for two years," states Maasoumeh. "Dianne gives her life and time for other people like me. She is interested in politics, music, bicycling, sail boats and art — we talk about these things."

Farhad continues to study English with Sr. René Laubenthal and also plans to apply for U.S. citizenship.

"My very good friend, Maasoumeh, and I met at the Lantern Center about two years ago," shares Dianne. "I was so proud of her for passing the citizenship test. When she took her citizenship oath, she changed her name to Nasrin as a sign of her new life."

Learning at the center includes awareness of culture and language. Maasoumeh, now Nasrin, likes to travel and will visit Iran this summer.

"She is a great cook and I have been lucky to taste some of her dishes," remarks Dianne. "Meeting Nasrin has been a wonderful thing for me. I am fortunate to have her for my friend."



Left to right, Nasrin (Iran), formerly Maasoumeh, and her tutor, Dianne Roche, study English, share cultures and enjoy a rewarding friendship.

LANTERN CENTER

Welcome

by Sr. Corine Murray, PBVM, Executive Director



When we count our blessing we count you twice. At our 10th anniversary event, November 8, 2012, we heard encouraging

words from the leadership of the Presentation Sisters and powerful stories from tutors, visitors and our Board President. Thanks to the many people who served on the planning committee and our friends and benefactors who blessed us with their presence.

It is significant that in our 10th anniversary year, Presentation Lantern received a 365 IMPACT Award in the category of Non-Profit Excellence. The IMPACT Awards highlight people, businesses and organizations that make a positive impact in the Dubuque community.

Recently we welcomed people from Nepal and Jordan. To date, people from five continents and 46 different countries have come to work one-on-one with our volunteer tutors who do a great job. I am thankful for each of them.

In each April issue, we recognize our friends and benefactors who help us keep the lantern light burning as we welcome the new immigrants among us. We are very grateful for your support and your partnership in our mission.

SUPPORTING THE MISSION

Friends of the Presentation Lantern Center

Presentation Lantern Center is sponsored by the Sisters of the Presentation. We are deeply grateful to all who partner with us in this ministry of hospitality, educational opportunities and advocacy to newcomers from across the street and across the globe. We appreciate your generosity and remember you in our daily prayers.

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Left to right, Sr. Corine Murray, Catherine Basten, Kevin Deeny and Kevin's daughter, Ella, enjoy conversation at the Block Party, February 1, hosted by the Community Foundation of Greater Dubuque.



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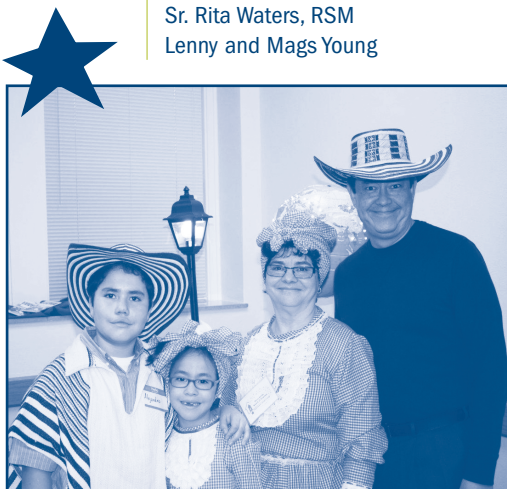
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Dora Serna and Luis Rojas (Colombia) and their children, Alejandro and Daniela, share native costumes, reflection and music at the November 8, 2012, 10th Anniversary celebration.



Lantern Center Wins Honors★

Presentation Lantern Center was selected as the 365 IMPACT Award Winner for 2013 in the category of Non-Profit Excellence.

Winners in twenty-four categories received awards from Dubuque 365.com on Tuesday, February 26, at the Diamond Jo Casino.

In accepting the award for the Lantern Center, Sr. Corine Murray gave tribute to the persons from many countries who share their cultures and stories with all who come to Presentation Lantern Center.

"The new immigrants have so much to teach us about the courage of new beginnings," stated Sr. Corine. "I am amazed at their desire to learn English and to tell their stories."

Left to right, Board President Mary Jean Gregory and Executive Director Sr. Corine Murray receive the 365 Impact Award, February 26.



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Presentation Srs. 50th Jubilarians:
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"Although I was hesitant about volunteering, I found excellent teaching aids. The diligence of the visitors is remarkable. I admire them and hope we are helping them meet their goals." comments Franciscan Sr. Mary Clare O'Toole, pictured above right. She works with Budo (Bosnia), above left.

2012 Outstanding Service Awards

by Sr. Corine Murray

Meghann Toohey and Sister René Laubenthal received the 2012 Presentation Lantern Outstanding Service Award at the December appreciation dinner for volunteer tutors, the Board of Trustees and the Leadership Team of the Sisters of the Presentation.

During the past four and one-half years, Meghann has met and worked with people from several different countries. Her service has enriched her knowledge and experience of the world.

As a volunteer tutor Meghann is patient as she explains the meaning and pronunciation of words and the structure of good sentences. Her knowledge of Spanish is very helpful and Meghann knows that there is more to life than verbs.

"Through the Lantern Center, I have had the opportunity to work with and meet people from many other countries around the world. All of them inspire me with their dedication and hard work. As we practice English together, I often feel that I am the one who is learning the most," remarks Meghann.



Left, Meghann Toohey, and right, Sister René Laubenthal, hold their lanterns as they follow the example of Nano Nagle in her service to others through the ministry of hospitality.

After a teaching career where she unlocked the mystery of reading for hundreds of elementary students, Presentation Sr. René Laubenthal continues to share her teaching skills with the adults who come to the center to learn English

or improve their language skills. Over the years she has taught a diverse group of individuals and learned so much from their life experiences. She treasures each and every one of her students and can call them all by name.

Currently she works with visitors from Bosnia and Iran. Her students past and present appreciate not only that she is an excellent teacher, but also that she is gentle and wise.

"The Lantern Center is a great place to serve. There is a welcoming and friendly presence," comments Sister

René. "I feel blessed to tutor English to those from other cultures. They desire to learn and have grateful hearts. Friendships grow as visitors and tutors work together and share life's stories."



1584 White Street
Dubuque, Iowa 52001
563-557-7134
lanterncenter@aol.com

The Presentation Lantern Center is a drop-in center offering hospitality, educational opportunities and advocacy to women and their children who are striving to better their lives. Sponsored by the Sisters of the Presentation, Dubuque, Iowa, the center is a non-profit organization.

HOURS

Monday, Wednesday, Friday
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM

Tuesday, Thursday
1:00 PM - 7:00 PM

Contact us at
563.557.7134
lanterncenter@aol.com

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We welcome your support and prayers. Your generosity touches many lives and hearts from around the world.

Please make checks payable to Presentation Lantern Center.

Visit us at
www.presentationlanterndbq.org

SHINING LANTERN LIGHTS

Area Catholic Sisters Tutor Visitors

Many Presentation sisters and other wonderful volunteers share in the mission of Presentation Lantern Center. Among them are many other Catholic sisters in the Dubuque area who are presently or have been tutors. All bring an excellent background in education to the role.

"I continue to learn from those I tutor," says Franciscan Sr. Susan Ivis. "They truly value the opportunity to learn the English language."

"I find this experience so enlightening and refreshing," comments Visitation Sr. Ruth Jackson. "The young women from China are dedicated to perfecting English and learning our culture. I love learning with them!"

"I love teaching English to newcomers," remarks

Franciscan Sr. Carol Ann Berte. "Having learned a second language, I can appreciate the struggle."

"I meet the world at the Lantern — an education in cultures greets tutors here as we meet beautiful people from around the world," remarks Franciscan Sr. Ruth Elsbernd.

"The Lantern is aptly named — a guiding light that helps all see the world about them more clearly," states Franciscan Sr. Sally Frommelt.

Other sisters who also have served over 10 years are Dominican Sr. Liana Glynn, Franciscan Sr. Charlotte Enright and BVM Srs. Mary Crimmins, Laurian McDonald, Mary Nojwicki and Janine Wolff.



Top, left to right, Sr. Mary Lou Reisch and Sr. Carol Ann Berte. Bottom, left to right, Amanda (China) and Sr. Ruth Jackson.