



WINNEBAGO AREA  
**LITERACY  
COUNCIL**

## September Newsletter

Good morning and happy September!

We hope your month is off to a positive start, as ours is here at WALC. Classes have just started back up after a two-week break to allow our staff, teachers, and learners time to plan ahead. With record numbers of learners, we have brought on two new teachers to join our ranks of fearless educators.

Our new staff have jumped right in and are doing swimmingly. The Executive Director search is well underway, and we anticipate more updates soon.

There are a number of upcoming opportunities to champion WALC and our mission:

- Mihm's Benefit Burger is still featuring us through the rest of September
- We will be at N.E.W Dragon Boat Festival this Saturday September 14<sup>th</sup>
- Also at the Farmer's Market on October 19<sup>th</sup>

Additionally, Spellbound for Literacy is less than ONE MONTH AWAY! Spellbound is a special night, it is such a gift to see the community come together to support our mission. You do not want to miss this night full of giving, connection, fun, and of course, spelling! Purchase a table or individual ticket [here](#).

We have a couple of new segments in today's newsletter including the 'Country Spotlight'. Our learners hail from a myriad of countries, each month we will highlight a different one to learn more about these unique and interesting places and cultures.

With so many inspiring learners, and many more set to resettle in Oshkosh soon, we are always in need of volunteers to support our classes and tutor one-on-one. If you, or anyone you know, is interested, please email [knight@winlit.org](mailto:knight@winlit.org).

## International Literacy Day

Yesterday was International Literacy Day, which has been celebrated since 1967.

There is a conference every year, hosted by UNESCO, to bring together stakeholders from around the globe to discuss literacy. This year's conference will focus on "Promoting multilingual education: Literacy for mutual understanding and peace", a theme very true to WALC and our diverse set of learners.

The conference is today and tomorrow, September 9th and 10th, in Cameroon. It

will be broadcast virtually with a session schedule on UNESCO's website if you are interested in watching, we will be here at WALC!

***In 2023, at least one in ten young people and adults still lacked basic literacy skills, adding up to over 750 million non-literate youth and adults***

***Women accounted for 63%***



***More than 108.4 million people had been forcibly displaced due to persecution, conflict, violence or human rights violations***

***In 2022, the number of refugees, many of whom may need to master a host country's language, reached 35 million***



***Globally it is estimated that about 40% of the population does not have access to an education in a language they speak or understand***



## August Spotlight

### Tina Jeffery

Tina has been volunteering with WALC for over a year as a one-on-one tutor, describing this time as nothing short of inspirational. She is a retired speech therapist who is ready to embark on a new challenge, so she is now going to teach a beginner English class at WALC. Tina is eager to assist people new to this country with the challenges of learning not only to read, write, and speak English but to understand nuances of American culture. She looks forward to garnering positive connections with students as they navigate through this process.



## Country Spotlight

### Democratic Republic of the Congo

The majority of our current and incoming learners are from the Congo.

The Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) is the largest country in Sub-Saharan Africa. DRC is endowed with natural resources, an estimated \$25 trillion in mineral reserves including cobalt, copper, plus potential for hydropower, biodiversity, and the world's second largest rainforest.

The country has seen a long history of conflict and instability from political upheaval and authoritarian rule leading to an ongoing humanitarian crisis. DRC is one



of the five poorest nations in the world, in 2023 around 75% of Congolese people lived on less than \$2.15 a day.

DRC sees 97% of 1-year-olds in 'learning poverty' meaning they cannot read. The rates of school enrollment have been up in recent years, but primary school completion rate is only around 75%.

Only 16.8% of Congolese women have completed secondary school and these women have on average 2.9 children compared to the 7.4 of uneducated women and girls.

There are over 250 distinguishable ethnic groups that live in the Congo and at least as many different languages. 80% of the population speak Bantu languages, though French is the official.

There is a rich tradition of art in the Congo where influence of Congolese artists can be seen wide from inspiring works of Picasso to defining contemporary African music.



## What's Playing at WALC

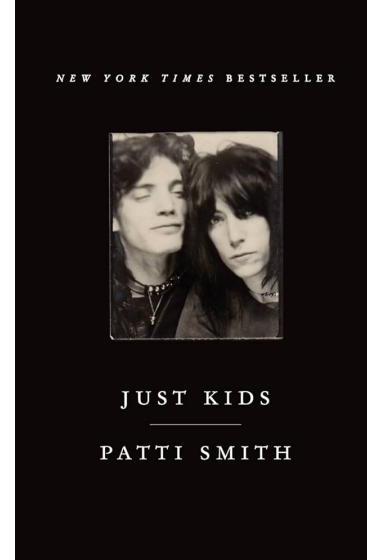
### Read

Our Education Programs Assistant Trent is currently reading *Just Kid* by Patti Smith.

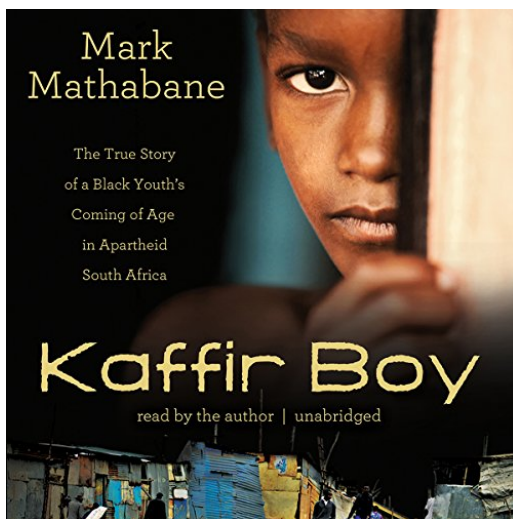
*Just Kids* is Smith's memoir documenting her relationship with artist Robert Mapplethorpe. The two met long before

any fame when they were just kids.

The book is poetic, heartfelt, and thoughtful. It perfectly captures the era and feeling of New York City in the 60s and 70s. The relationship between Smith and Mapplethorpe is as unique as each of them and their work.



## Listen



WALC Board President Judi is currently listening to the audiobook of Kaffir Boy by Mark Mathabane.

Kaffir Boy is Mathabane's account of life under apartheid in South Africa. He was the first black athlete to escape apartheid through a tennis scholarship to the US.

This is a deeply moving piece that touches on unfathomable experiences from the brutality of institutionalized oppression, banning of native languages, and extreme poverty.

## Watch

Julia, our Education Programs Director, is currently watching Only Murders in the Building on Hulu.

Only Murders in the Building is comedy-drama series starring Steve Martin, Martin Short, and Selena Gomez. The plot follows the three, who all live in the same building and are fans of true crime podcasts, as they become friends while solving a string of murders that happened, as you guessed it, in their building.

The show is well written, incredibly acted, and visually fun.



## Upcoming Events

## Benefit Burger supporting WALC

Entire month of August & September | Mimh's Charcoal Grill, Menasha

## WALC at N.E.W Dragon Boat Festival

September 14th | 10 am - 5 pm | Leach Amphitheater

## Spellbound for Literacy

October 3rd | 5 - 8:30 pm | Oshkosh Convention Center

## WALC at the Oshkosh Farmers Market

October 19th | 8 am - 12:30 pm | Oshkosh Main St

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You can always get up to date information on upcoming events, locations and times on our website events calendar

[WALC Events  
Calendar](#)

## Eliminating Barriers to Literacy



### Considering a financial gift?

The community we serve is growing significantly this year - our goal is to respond quickly by expanding class sections and increase services.

Only \$34 covers books and materials for one new adult learner

[Donate Now](#)

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