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and beyond to the royal courts in Europe and Asia.

While the Silk Road seems part of another, fabled time, textile expert Mary Dusenbury has twice trekked portions of the route, exploring the still vibrant industry. Tomorrow at 4 p.m., the Scoville Library in Salisbury hosts her talk "From Xinjiang to Uzbekistan: In Pursuit of Silk."

"It's more like a human blood vessel," Ms. Dusenbury said of the Silk Road.

She explained that there are so many paths and sections, all very much alive. On her first trip,

from cocooning and spinning to weaving and marketing.

"It isn't all done by one person in one place," said Ms. Dusenbury.

Roughly 30 households collaborate to produce the fabric. Silk worms are kept in separate rooms and fed mulberry leaves. In some countries, the leaves are stripped before placed in the worms' raised cages while in others, the whole branch is thrown in. No one is allowed to watch the actual spinning process as the worms will stop if they sense any disturbance. Because

Uzbekistan silk territory as well as prevalent throughout India, Japan, China and Southeast Asia, when she and her husband moved to Japan. In Kyoto University's Studio Fiber program, she completed field work focused on the rural tradition of hand-weaving work clothes out of wisteria fibers. The Ikat technique involves dyeing tightly bound bundles of warp, or the yarn which is strung lengthwise, before it is placed on the loom, resulting in a predetermined pattern bright with multiple, vivid colors.

After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, those images disappeared, and the industry enjoyed a revival of the traditional patterns. In the past five years, fashion designers have sampled the Ikat style for their collections. Oscar de la Renta created a cocktail dress and ballerina flats and Ms. Dusenbury explained that the patterns have even trickled down to the clothes sold in catalogs.

"It was really amazing the amount that sprang back up," she said.

Ms. Dusenbury, who grew up in New York and Salisbury, is currently a research curator specializing in Asian Art at the University of Kansas' Spencer Museum of Art. For more information on her talk, call 860-435-2838.

Literacy Group Growing

NEW MILFORD—In response to the growing need for English as a Second Language (ESL) classes in Northwestern Connecticut, Literacy Volunteers on the Green (LVG) was formed four years ago. Since its inception in 2005, the nonprofit organization has trained more than 140 tutors and has served more than 400 students, including 10 who have gone on to become U.S. citizens. Today, the organization conducts 60 classes a week in the Northwest Corner, giving language instruction to prospective citizens, to those wishing to improve employment prospects, and to those who want to more fully integrate into the community.

LVG conducts tutor training twice a year to meet the continuing demand for ESL classes. Fifteen new tutors completed a March training session that was funded by the Ellen Knowles Harcourt Foundation.

Taught by longtime ESL teacher Arley Gray, the tutor training

consists of nine hours of instruction, observation of current classes and twice yearly follow-up sessions. Following the training, LVG tutors hold weekly classes in a variety of locations. However, even with the additional tutors there is still a waiting list of students who want to learn how to speak, read and write in English.

"It is with generosity and selflessness that these tutors share their time and talent to improve our community," says Anne Maitland, LVG's executive director. "By helping students improve their language skills, our tutors are ultimately helping them participate more fully in American life and culture."

The following individuals completed the recent Ellen Knowles Harcourt Tutor Training: New Milford residents Ann Clifford, Jacqueline Farrell, Cindy Gugg, Barbara Leahey, and Edna Roman, (Gaylordsville); David Bain, Janet Meth, Roz Molho, and Maura LaRocca from Kent,

Roxbury residents Karen Kopta, Lorraine Tvrdik and Constance Cheever, as well as Deborah Rathbun from Sharon, Karen Kenagy from Litchfield, and Greg Horan from New Fairfield.

"Literacy Volunteers on the Green provides its volunteers with a thorough training program. Taught by Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages professionals as well as by current tutors, it incorporates both theoretical and hands-on experience with its curriculum," said Jacqueline Farrell, a former teacher and administrator in the New Milford public school system. "I was immediately assigned two students who are highly motivated and wonderful to work with. I'm very glad that I decided to volunteer with LVG."

Located at 7 Whittlesey Avenue in New Milford, LVG is a program of the United Way of Western Connecticut and a ProLiteracy America Volunteer Program Affiliate. For more information, or to recommend a student in need, call 860-355-0830, e-mail info@lvg-ct.org or visit the Web site at www.lvg-ct.org.

Author to Speak, Sign in Litchfield

LITCHFIELD—Pamela Keogh, author of "What Would Audrey Do?" will be at the Oliver Wolcott Library on Thursday from 7 to 8 p.m. for a book talk, signing and reception.

The book is a modern update of Audrey Hepburn's life and what readers can learn from her today. Although her character was often upbeat and carefree on-screen, Hepburn's life was marked by many challenges. Yet, as Ms. Keogh points out, she survived these setbacks while maintaining grace and beauty.

Ms. Keogh is the author of several other books, including "Audrey Style," "Jackie Style" and "Elvis Presley: The Man, the Life, the Legend." She has worked for many magazines and journals, as well as being a founder producer for the E! Channel's Fashion Week. A wine and cheese reception will follow the event.

The Hickory Stick Bookshop in Washington Depot will provide

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