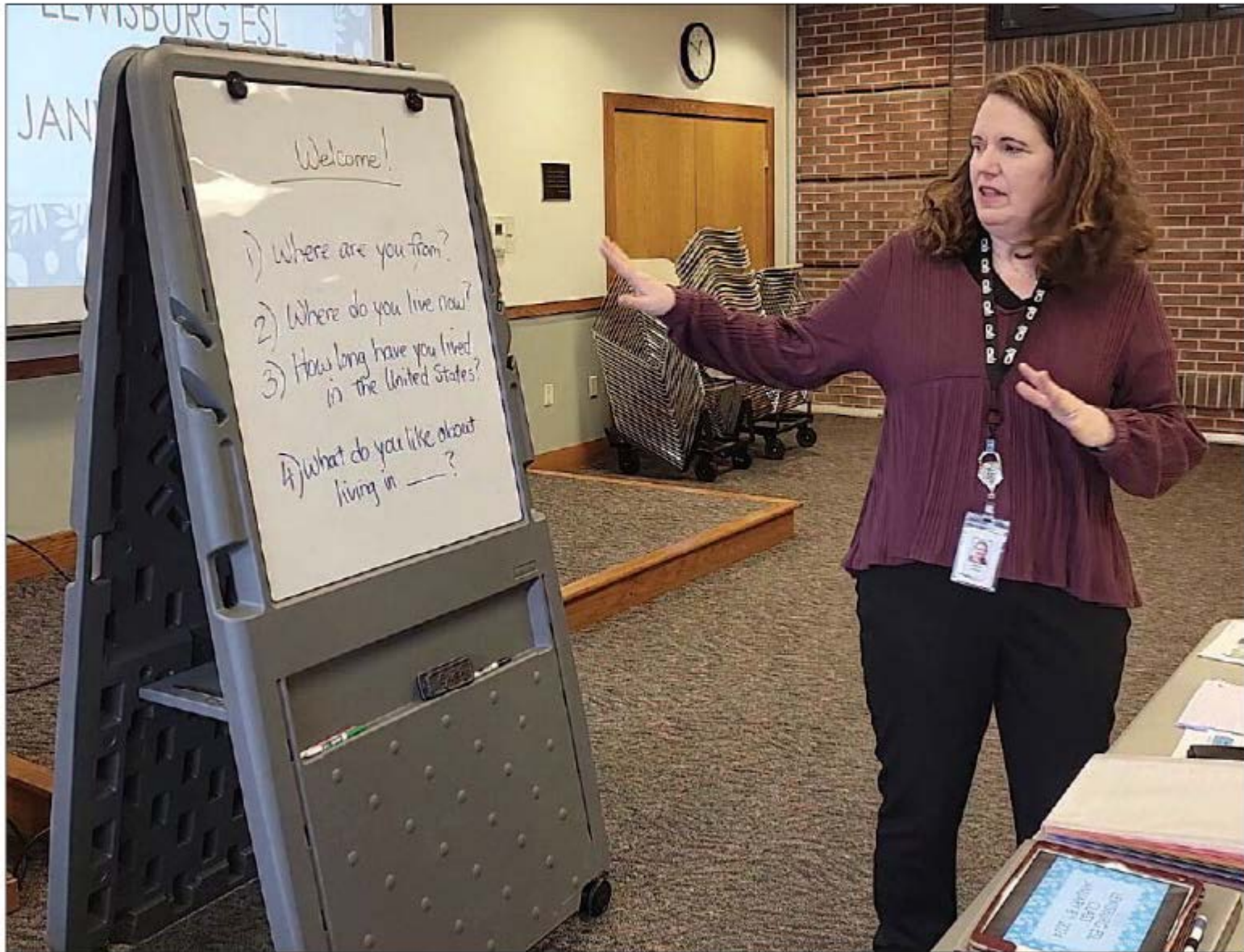


LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT SKILLS

Public Library for Union County launches ESL course with CSIU



Justin Strawser/The Daily Item

Jeanne Crago, English as a Second Language instructor from the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit in Milton, leads an ESL course at the Public Library for Union County in Lewisburg on Monday.

Weekly program developed due to need in area for services

By Justin Strawser
jstrawser@dailyitem.com

LEWISBURG — The Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit (CSIU) and the Public Library for Union County teamed up to introduce a weekly English as a Second Language course.

The first day of the new program kicked off on Monday at the library, 255 Reitz Blvd., Lewisburg, for any adult students of any language background. Students are assisted with conversation, pronunciation, reading and writing skills in English every Monday from 12:30 to 2 p.m.

“The library is a good center in the community where people from all over can meet and gather,” said Jeanne Crago, ESL instructor from the Central Susquehanna Intermediate Unit in Milton.

Crago said she approached the library about the program a few months ago. The library has patrons who need or want the services.

The students want to improve their language skills for careers, job searching, education or helping their children with their homework, said Crago.

The first day of the program on Monday started with basic questions about students’ residences, home country, how long they’ve been in the United States and what they



Justin Strawser/The Daily Item

Suky Han, of Lewisburg, is a student who is part of the newly launched English as a Second Language course at the Public Library for Union County in Lewisburg on Monday.

enjoy about living where they currently live. It was about assessing the needs and wants of the students, said Crago.

Program Manager Mary Mingle said the ESL programs at CSIU are funded through the state and grants. “ESL is our fastest growing ser-

vice,” said Mingle. “There’s such a demand for it.”

See [ESL](#), Page [B2](#)

Public Library for Union County launches ESL course with CSIU

ESL, from Page B1

Individuals who need the service are relocating from other areas for manufacturing or health care careers or as refugees. The Valley is more affordable, said Mingle.

"These individuals come very highly educated," she said. "They have a lot to offer, but English is their only barrier. I

am impressed with these individuals' knowledge and skills. They want to fit into the community."

CSIU has two ESL instructors with a third being trained, said Mingle.

Mingle said CSIU has other ESL courses in Sunbury and Milton, as well as Zoom courses. While there are many Spanish-speaking residents, Mingle said there are a wide

variety of languages and cultures, including Turkish and Ukrainian.

The five students on Monday were from Japan, Turkey, South Korea and China.

Sukyi Han, of Lewisburg, moved to America at age 15 from South Korea with her parents 43 years ago. She and her husband moved to Lewisburg when he took a job as a physician at Geisinger.

Han, who worked as a nurse, took ESL courses from Crago in the past. She said she can offer help to other students.

"It's difficult at the beginning," she said. "I wanted to share my experiences and see if I can help with this class. Maybe I will also learn some English. There's still things I don't know."

Han said Crago is a great teacher.

"She is a very good teacher, very patient," she said. "She goes out of the way to help. I think they will like her and gain a lot."

Mingle also thanked the library for providing the space for the course free of charge.

To join the class, contact Carlee Jarrett by email at cjarrett@csiu.org or by phone at 570-523-1155 ext. 2326.