

Literacy Notes

Winter 2008

Oklahoma *Literacy Stars* above and beyond 2008 State Conference

Check Inside

Open Minds Workshop	2
Target Becomes Major Sponsor . . .	3
Phonics Intervention Success	3
Tulsa Benefit for Literacy	3
Learner Leadership Forum	4
Welcome New Directors	4
Voyager	4
Oklahoma's Learner Successes . . .	5
Ponca City Book Club	5
New ESL Resources Available	6
Free On-line Courses	6

The 23rd Annual Oklahoma Literacy Coalition state conference held in September offered tutors, learners, and program directors numerous opportunities to learn new skills and strategies while networking and celebrating Oklahoma's many literacy successes.

Volunteer tutors from throughout the state were awarded Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Master Tutor Awards for outstanding commitments to local literacy programs. Literacy Hall of Fame Awards were presented to **Tina Blunk**, **Ruth McElroy**, and **Alice Semrad** from the Enid Literacy Council, **Jack Easterly** with the Oklahoma City Literacy Council, and **Carolyn Lee** with the Ruth G. Hardman Adult Literacy Service in

Tulsa.

DeVoria Ruffin, an enthusiastic learner with Opportunities Industrialization Center of Oklahoma County, was named the Bill and Carol Krueger Adult Learner of the Year, and



Bill & Carol Krueger Adult Learner of the Year DeVoria Ruffin [center], with her husband Jimmy and her instructor Shannon Carter

the State Department of Education recognized **Maria Beatriz Gonzalez**, **Evelyn Billy**, **William Booker**, **Javier Henandez-Zermeno**, and **Kindria Myers** for their outstanding achievements.

Continued on page 2



O • K • L • A • H • O • M • A

LITERACY RESOURCE OFFICE

Published by the Literacy Resource Office of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries

Open Minds Workshop

Thirty-four representatives from twenty-two literacy programs and a prison recently attended a two day *Open Minds* workshop hosted by the Literacy Resource Office. Participants learned ways to present the revised *Open Minds* tutor training modules to address local program needs.

The new format and updated information was designed to give volunteers the basic information they need to become effective literacy tutors.

Open Minds is a 12 hour tutor workshop



[clockwise from top] **Barbara Belk** runs through the "bubble" graduation ceremony • **Ida Fay Winters** and **Aleida Burchett** show unique review game • **Karen Kerr** and **Patty Leach** take a break from their discussion

covering such things as principals of adult learning, curriculum, reading strategies, accommodations, and lesson planning. The training was designed for Oklahoma programs with input

from Oklahoma trainers and program directors.

For information on becoming a tutor trainer, contact Rebecca Barker at 800-522-8116.

2008 State Conference continued from page 2

The Oklahoman received the Media Print Award and KEYB Media Specialties in Altus received the Media Broadcast Award.

All adult learners attending the conference were recognized for their literacy efforts and were presented special lapel pins.

The annual silent auction helped raise more than \$1,200 thanks to generous contributions of baskets "filled with

goodies" donated by local programs, individuals, and businesses throughout the state. Coalition cookbook sales totaled more than \$900.

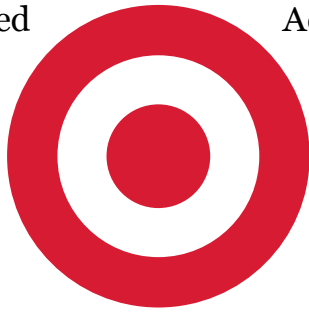
Programs elected for three year terms to the Oklahoma Literacy Coalition board of directors were Creek County Literacy Council, Bartlesville Public Library Literacy Services, Literacy Council of LeFlore County, McClain County

Literacy Program, Northwest Oklahoma Literacy Council, Opportunities Industrialization Center, Inc., and Stillwater Literacy Council. Newly elected officers were Millonn Lamb, Oklahoma City and Rebecca Howard from Tulsa.

The dates for the 2009 conference are already set, so mark your calendar for October 2-3 and plan to be at the Postal Training Center in Norman.

Target Becomes Major Sponsor

The Oklahoma Literacy Resource Office is pleased to announce Target as a major sponsor for the upcoming Read Across Oklahoma event scheduled for April 2009. This annual celebration attended by hundreds of children will promote literacy and reading in the unique setting



TARGET

of the Oklahoma City Zoo. According to project coordinator **Kerri McLinn**, "The generous support provided by Target will help make 2009 our biggest and best reading celebration yet." Watch for details in the next issue of *Literacy Notes*.

Phonics Intervention Success Story

The following paraphrased letter was received from **Jean Williams**, a tutor with Project Read in Edmond, after using Phonics Intervention materials with her learner.

If you were able to peek in the door of the room where **Shawn** and I meet each week to study you wouldn't be able to distinguish between the tutor and learner. That's because the dialogue prompted by the manual is written in such a way that we use the knowledge from the previous lessons to make predictions about the new material, therefore we get there together. In the beginning, the lessons seemed somewhat daunting. They challenged our assumption that phonics is about reading and spelling words the way they sound. We have since learned that there is a lot more to phonics than sounds. Today the lessons go quickly and we look forward to the new awareness that each lesson brings. In fact, we have a whole new vocabulary and confidence that help us decode words. With her new command of phonics, the learner is now tutoring her 4th grade son. He made 100% on his last spelling test. Now, that's an awesome phonics intervention!

Tulsa Holds Benefit for Literacy

More than 200 individuals attended Tulsa's "Chapters: A Casual Evening of Books, Bards, and Bites" to support local literacy efforts.

Guests sampled gourmet food from local restaurants and enjoyed presentations by several Oklahoma authors. A highlight of the evening came from adult learner **Amy Cooper**, who shared her inspirational story of overcoming functional illiteracy.

Funds from the event benefit the Tulsa City-County Library Ruth G. Hardman Adult Literacy Service.

With Condolences

Oklahoma lost a longtime friend and advocate with the recent passing of adult learner **Lillie Pierce**. Lillie had been a learner with the Durant Literacy Council since 1995.

She had not only served on the local literacy board of directors, but also was a board member of the Oklahoma Literacy Coalition. Her many contributions and accomplishments served to inspire and motivate learners and volunteers throughout the state.

Thanks to Our Supporters

Dollar General Literacy Foundation for supporting the Pioneer Library System's literacy and ESL programs;

Dollar General Literacy Foundation for a grant to the Enid Literacy Council;

Inasmuch Foundation, JPMorgan Chase Bank, and Kirkpatrick Family Fund for grants totaling more than \$45,000 to Community Literacy Centers, Inc. in Oklahoma City;

Jackson County and Community Education, Hastings Book Store, Employees Community Fund from Boeing C-17 Aircrew Training System at Altus Air Force Base, and to Wal-Mart for funding the Great Plains Literacy Council in Altus and to the **Altus Car Wash** for promoting literacy on their billboard;



Saint-Gobain Containers for the donation to the Creek County Literacy Program;

First Book for making children's books available free of charge to Oklahoma literacy programs, schools, and libraries;

Junior League of Oklahoma City for collecting and distributing more than 2,000 books during its annual book drive;

General Federation of

Learner Leadership Forum Planned

Adult learners are invited to attend the annual learner leadership day event to be held April 22 at the downtown library in Oklahoma City. The 2009 leadership theme is Literacy for Family, Health, and Safety. Those attending will have the opportunity to meet and network with learners from throughout the state, participate in interactive workshops, and leave with new ideas and resources. Last year, more than 50 learners attended and all reported that the day was fun, informative, and very "student friendly." Details for the 2009 learner day will be sent to local programs in February. For more information, contact Leslie Gelders at 800-522-8116.

Welcome New Directors



During the past few months, several local programs have announced new directors and program coordinators.

Welcome to **Brianna Carolan**, new program director for the Enid Literacy Council; **Karen Kerr**, director of Bartlesville Public Library Literacy Services; **Kim Haile**, Muskogee Area Literacy Council; **Melissa McKee**, Northwest Literacy Council in Woodward; and **Arlene Deavers**, Stillwater Literacy Council.

The McAlester Literacy Council announced that **Lucille Martinez** is temporarily serving as interim coordinator.

Twenty-one tutors, program directors, and literacy trainers recently attended training in *Voyager*, a student centered adult literacy curriculum from New Readers Press. The workshop was hosted by the Oklahoma Literacy Resource Office with assistance from a National Book Scholarship grant from ProLiteracy. Participants learned how to effectively use the *Voyager* curriculum and each program received materials to take back to their literacy organization. As part of the grant, those who attended will train their local tutors in *Voyager*.

Women's Clubs in Oklahoma, Southeast District, for donating books to the Books

for Babies project for distribution to new mothers in Durant, McAlester, and Poteau.

Oklahoma's Learner Successes

With help from Altus tutor **Connie McQueen**, **Juana “Janie” Velazquez** became a US citizen. Connie helped Janie practice for the citizenship test by using resources available at the Great Plains Literacy Council including citizenship books, cassette tapes, DVD programs, flashcards, and practice tests. Congratulations to Janie on becoming a US citizen and on becoming a new mother to son Hector born just 16 days before the Naturalization Ceremony.

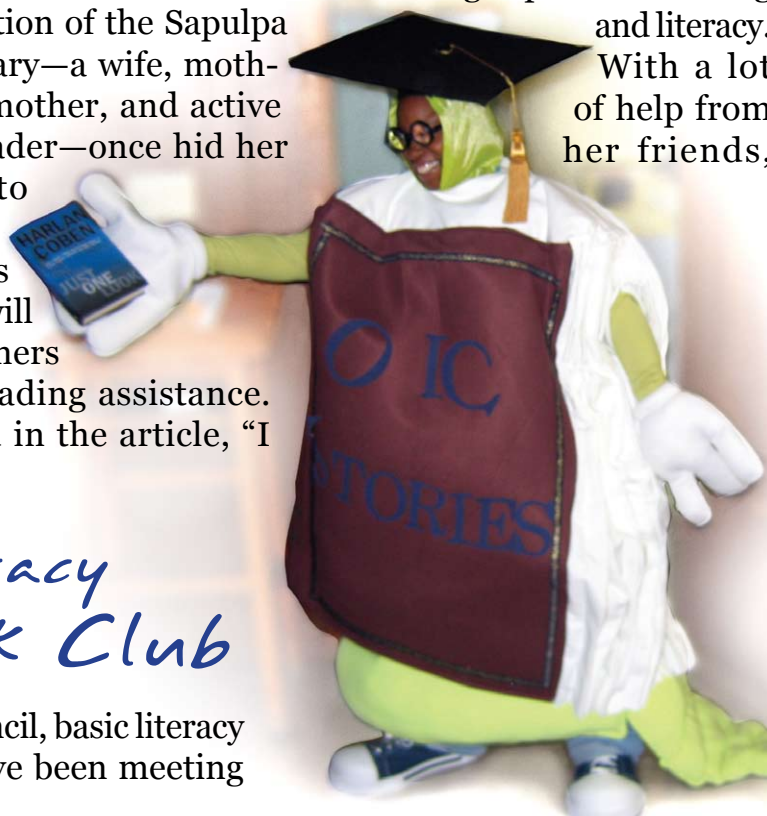
For many years, Panama native **Linda Coloñ** had the dream of becoming a US citizen. Recently, after a lot of hard work and preparation with tutor **Scott Redeen**, Linda realized her dream. Not only did

she become a citizen, Linda was able to vote in the recent presidential election. Thanks to the Great Plains Literacy Council, Linda claims, “I’m an American now and I’ve got rights. Nobody can take my rights now.”

Mary Etta Barnes, a learner with the Creek County Literacy Program, was featured in a recent edition of the Sapulpa World. Mary—a wife, mother, grandmother, and active church leader—once hid her inability to read. Now, she hopes her story will inspire others to seek reading assistance. As quoted in the article, “I

just wanted to learn something about this world, even about me.” The Creek County Literacy Program, located in Sapulpa, serves about 200 adults and children each year.

DeVoria Ruffin, a learner with Opportunities Industrialization Center (OIC) in Oklahoma City, wanted to do something to promote reading and literacy. With a lot of help from her friends,



Shontrel Knox as Wiggles the Bookworm

and encouragement from instructor, **Shannon Carter**, OIC’s new mascot, Wiggles the bookworm was created. The costumed character has made several guest appearances and even performed in a student skit held at Douglas High School.

Promoting Literacy Ponca City Book Club

Thanks to the Ponca City Area Literacy Council, basic literacy and ESL learners of all reading levels have been meeting and discussing books.

A newly formed book club meets twice a month to discuss the story, share ideas and thoughts, and work on vocabulary. Board member **Lynda Fox-Himbury** volunteers to facilitate the discussions, and participants receive free books courtesy of the Ponca City Elks Lodge. The idea of the club came from adult learner **Ann Davis** who heard about learner book groups at the 2007 state literacy conference.

The group recently completed the book *Timeless Tales* and is getting ready to read *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes*. For more information, contact Marcia Hickman at 580-767-0351.

New ESL Website

The new *Communicating at Work* web site was designed for non English speaking immigrants who now work in mainstream American companies.

The web site is very interactive and features dialogues, scenarios and quizzes to help adult learners improve their communication skills with supervisors, co-workers and customers. Check it out at <http://aaca-boston.org/caw>

New ESL Resources Available

The Literacy Resource Office has several new ESL resources available for loan including *Learning English Steps 1-2-3*. This set of 9 video disks is designed for anyone who is new to the language and includes 83 developmental lessons and practice exercises in the basics of listening, speaking, reading, and writing in English. For information, please contact Rebecca Barker at 1-800-522-8116.

Free On-line Courses

Thinkfinity Literacy Network offers a host of short, self-paced professional and volunteer development courses. A variety of topics provide helpful information on such areas as Principles of Adult Learning, Understanding the Reading Process, and Developing Reading Fluency. To take a course, click on the "teach" tab. On the "teach" landing page, click on the "Free Online Courses" in the top menu bar. Halfway down the page you will find instructions for enrolling in a course. Check it out at www.thinkfinity.org/literacynetwork

Please Help Us Save Our Resources for Literacy

If you do not wish to receive this publication or if you are receiving multiple copies, please call 800-522-8116 or email rbarker@oltn.odl.state.ok.us

This publication is issued by the Department of Libraries. 3000 copies have been printed at a cost of \$1492.00. Paid for with state and federal funds under the Library Services and Technology Act and the Museum of Library Services. Copies have been deposited with the Publications Clearinghouse of the Oklahoma Department of Libraries . 12/2008

Address Service Requested

OK 73105-3298

Oklahoma City

200 NE 18 ST

Susan McVey, Director

Oklahoma
Department
of
Libraries

