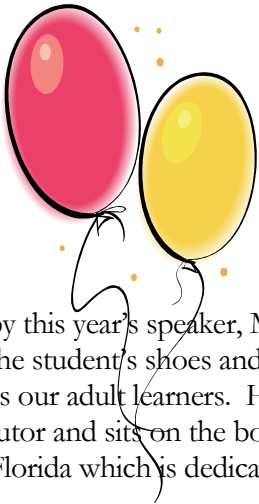


2009 Annual Awards Celebration!



This year's celebration of the student's annual awards was a smash, as always! Many students and their families were in attendance. We celebrated with a terrific guest speaker, awards and lots of great food. Once again we would like to thank the St. Pete Times for allowing us the use of their wonderful facility to throw the party of the year. We also want to especially thank all of the council members who helped to provide the decorations, the food, and their efforts to ensure that everyone had a great time.

The students were particularly impressed by this year's speaker, Monica Baxley. Monica, herself, has been in the student's shoes and has endured much of the same difficulties as our adult learners. Having first been a student, Monica is now a tutor and sits on the board of Value USA, an organization in Florida which is dedicated to adult learners.

Every year the Literacy Council of St. Petersburg presents certificates of completion to every student. It is such a thrill to see their faces and those of their families, when they are asked to come forward to receive their well-deserved awards. The guests were so overwhelmed and cheered every one of them.

In addition to celebrating the students, each year we honor the memory of one of the founders of the Literacy Council of St. Petersburg, Courtland Gildrie. This award recognizes one tutor who has devoted an extraordinary number of tutoring hours since becoming a tutor. This year we are proud to present the award to Hugh Tulloch, who has tutored for the Literacy Council of St. Petersburg, at the Tomlinson Adult Learning Center since September 2007 and amassed over 675 hours. Congratulations Hugh! Keep up the good work.



We are looking forward to the event next year. With the increase in our numbers of students and tutors, we will be scoping out a larger facility for the party. We have out-grown this building and that is a good thing. On now to greener pastures, as they say. See you all there next year.

Welcome (Welcome Back) to 2009 Officers

President...	Ann Palmer
Vice President...	Mitchell Smith
Treasurer...	Edie Randolph
Secretary...	Sandy Thursby

International Praise

From the ProLiteracy Website...

International Praise for President Obama's Support of International Literacy and Microfinance Programs ProLiteracy Muslim Outreach Initiative Focuses on Literacy as Key to Self-Reliance

June 5, 2009, Syracuse, NY - ProLiteracy, the world's largest organization of adult literacy and basic education programs, today commended President Obama's call to support literacy efforts for girls in Muslim-majority countries, as well as microfinance programs for women and student exchange programs.

"ProLiteracy has long been involved in supporting literacy and microfinance programs for women and families in Muslim-majority countries," said David C. Harvey, ProLiteracy president and CEO. "We are pleased the president is supporting an expansion of these programs abroad and specifically is making the link between the need for literacy instruction and how it improves the economic condition of women."

In 1959, ProLiteracy's predecessor organization, the Laubach Literacy Fund, awarded a foreign aid scholarship to an honor student from Kenya, Barack H. Obama. The scholarship allowed him to come to the United States and study at the University of Hawaii.

"Hearing the president cite the education-related support his father received as an example of the type of program he will expand was gratifying because of our organization's special role in supporting his father," said Harvey.

Elizabeth Mooney Kirk, an international literacy pioneer, was named in Barack Obama's book, *Dreams from My Father*, as a key supporter of his father's dream to come to the U.S. She helped to line up scholarships, including the one awarded by the Laubach Literacy Fund.

"President Obama's words in Cairo yesterday greatly advanced the dreams of adult literacy pioneers like Frank Laubach and Elizabeth Mooney Kirk," said Harvey. "To have the president incorporate his commitment to literacy and microfinance programs during his historic speech truly affirms the work of Laubach and Mooney Kirk. We intend to use our existing international programs and networks to both support and be a resource to the Administration as it works to expand these programs abroad. Frank Laubach and Elizabeth Mooney Kirk would expect no less."

Background-ProLiteracy Muslim Outreach Initiative

Through support provided to local programs-nongovernmental agencies such as Roquia Center in Afghanistan, Culture for All in Iraq, and Micro-Credit in Africa in Niger-ProLiteracy's Muslim Outreach Initiative helps Muslim women achieve equality and economic self-reliance through literacy, the reading and writing skills that are the foundation for fulfilling one's potential. The Outreach Initiative involves 24 programs in Pakistan, Palestine, Egypt, Mali, Morocco, Uganda, Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines, in addition to Afghanistan, Iraq, and Niger.

Open Books Open Minds
Florida Literacy
Conference 2009

The 2009 Florida Literacy Conference was a huge success. There were about 450 people in attendance from all over Florida. This year the conference was held in the Clearwater-Largo area at the Belleview-Biltmore Resort. This hotel dates back to 1897 and has had many famous guests over the years. It continues to have some unusual ones as well, you see, the Biltmore is said to be haunted. There were no events reported, they say the ghosts are friendly and rather playful. The Florida Literacy Coalition hosted this great event and they all did a fabulous job.

There was a guest speaker at this year's Opening Session by the name of Toni Cordell, who herself is an adult learner. She told the group her personal story about the struggles in life being a non-reader, and left the audience tearful. Toni is a remarkable woman who has overcome many disasters in her lifetime because she could not read and continues to improve her reading every day.

The conference ended with a very nice banquet and guest speaker whose name was Tim Dorsey. Tim is a New York Times best-selling author of mystery/action novels. He is from Tampa, and has written all of his stories using Florida as his theme. He was a former reporter and editor of The Tampa Tribune.

Jokes were told, food was served and many awards were presented. The St. Pete Times was the recipient of the Outstanding Media Partner award, nominated by Bonnie Mettetal of Even Start and was humbly accepted by Donna Winchester.

Angels on Earth

We have all read the newspaper articles about those Angels on Earth... those who pull a child from the surf and apply CPR until they are able to bring the child back to life. Those stories that bring tears to your eyes make the heart ache and then warm the heart to read a happy ending. And, what about those nurses, doctors, paramedics and heroes that have breathed life back into a stranger?

I also consider our tutors Angels on Earth... through their patience and teaching they breathe life into a student with the gift of reading. They open up a world of new knowledge and information that was not available to the student before. These people are strangers when they first meet, but then form strong friendships that have grown out of tutoring.

Our Annual Awards Dinner allows us to formally show our appreciation to the tutors and also acknowledge the hard work, strength and success of our students by awarding them with Certificates. I applaud our Angels on Earth and their brave students.

My personal story about an Angel on Earth...

I express this from personal experience. My Angel on Earth is Virginia Gildrie. She breathed life into my daughter, who is a smart girl and at 18 years old, she only read at a 2nd grade level. She was labeled dyslexic and for certain had a problem with reading. She was trying to graduate high school with a regular diploma, not a special diploma and this required passing an exit exam. No auditory help would be allowed for this exam. She attended SLD (Special Learning Disability) classes most of her school life for her dyslexia.

Regular paid tutors were not helping. The schools didn't seem to help. I spent every evening after work reading her history books to her so she could gather the information needed to pass her history exams. She was very auditory. I felt helpless all those years not knowing how to help her.

Then, in comes my Angel. One phone call to the Literacy Council of St. Petersburg with Virginia Gildrie answering the phone and our lives changed. In three months my daughter advanced nearly five grade levels. She was given the key which unlocked a new world. She passed her exit exam and walked graduation with her class and earned a regular diploma. My daughter is 26 years old now, has two young boys and is an AVID reader and a smart woman. May I add that Virginia Gildrie is now 89 years old and still does tutoring from her ALF (Assisted Living Facility). I visit her once a week because I enjoy her company and we are lifelong friends. She is someone to look up to and an inspiration.

-Editor

Student Corner:

Thanks to students Mai Adams, Hnya Marino, Leroy Pompia, John Ruiz, Sylvester Williams

Elephants by Mai Adams

Elephants are useful animals in many countries throughout the world. Nowadays, people try to protect these unusual animals.

The Asian government and African government make laws to protect these elephants. These countries use the elephants for transportation and as workers. People train the elephants to pull the trees to where they want them to go. The elephants can go miles and miles.

The elephants use their trunks to knock down trees. They have knobs on their trunks that they use like a hand. They use their knobs to pull up big trees or small branches. The trunk is also used to smell for good things like bananas, grass and leaves.

Asian elephants are smaller than African elephants, are easier to train, and weigh about 12,000 pounds. African elephants weigh about 14,000 pounds.

Elephants have two ears. Each ear is about one and a half to two feet long. Its two tusks are about three feet long. Their trunk is about four to five feet long. It has a tail that is about five to six feet in length. An African elephant has two knobs, while an Asian elephant has only one. The skin of elephants is very tough, thick and wrinkled.

Because the elephant is so useful and valuable to countries in Asia and Africa, the people in those countries try to protect them. Laws have been enacted that protect elephants against those who would kill them for their valuable tusks and have made killing elephants a crime, punishable by imprisonment.

The Unwanted Visitor by Hnya Marino

One hot summer night I was dog sitting for my daughter's dog, Kie. It was a quiet evening. I was in the bedroom reading a book. I heard a noise coming from the bathroom. I thought it was Kie. I got up to look for her. She was sitting in the living room so I went into the bathroom to investigate. After turning the light on, I saw the shower curtain move, so I grabbed the phone and ran outside.

I called Ronnie, my boyfriend, and asked him to call the police. He was instructing me to calm down and go back in to check it out. It was frightening for me to go back into that room, but I did it.

The dog Kie was no help. She was very quiet until I opened the shower curtain and out jumped a very large frog. A loud response followed. I was screaming, Ronnie was yelling on the phone and Kie was barking. The frog leaped and jumped all over the house and finally disappeared.

Needless to say, I did not get to sleep that night. The next morning, it was sitting on top of the stove. Rather than frying it for breakfast, I captured it in a kitchen towel and threw it out the door.

That was one visitor I'll never forget.

My Childhood

by Leroy Pompia

As a little boy, when I was coming up in life, I didn't go to school very much. My mother moved a lot because of her relationship with her husband. As a child, I had to move with her and didn't get to go to school very often.

When I was at school, I felt different from the other kids. I didn't think I was as smart as them. I also never was in one place long enough to make friends.

I made mistakes. One was playing hookey. I played hookey because I felt I wasn't learning and I was embarrassed.

My life moved on. As I grew up I worked helping my mother. I worked on a farm cutting flowers and loading trucks with produce.

In my 30's I realized I didn't read as well as I should and was always asking people to read things for me. I enrolled in Dunbar High School, but I couldn't continue because I had to go back to work.

After my mother died, I left Fort Meyers where we had lived together and came to St. Petersburg. I joined a church and met a friend who told me about Tomlinson School. I came and enrolled and have been going to classes now for about two years. I have finished three Skill Books and have read many stories. I hope to improve my reading even more and get my GED.

Happy Anniversary Kimberly and John Tuesday, August 25th

by John Ruiz

I am happy that I am going to school to learn to read. I am grateful that all the tutors give up their time to help all the students.

My mother reads with me all she can. I hope one day to read a newspaper, the Driver's Handbook, and a regular book. I know it will take a long time. I may even learn to drive one day and take my girlfriend for a drive.

I have been going with Kim since Tuesday, August 25, 1986. Lisa Ann Brown introduced her to me. She is my best friend. I will make a trip to Newark one day to visit my friends.

My Short Story

by Sylvester Williams

I was born to Thomas and Addie Mae Williams on January 17, 1943 in St. Petersburg, Florida. My father passed away in November of 1990. I am the eighth of ten children. One brother and one sister are now deceased.

My mother and I lived at Graham Park Housing until she passed away in January, 2008. After mom passed I was supposed to live with my sister and brother-in-law, but I wanted to live on my own for the first time. My sister applied for residency for me at a beautiful senior's facility near her, I was accepted and moved in a short time later. I have met many friends since I've been there. I am thankful to God to be living alone and doing well in my apartment. My mother would be proud of me.

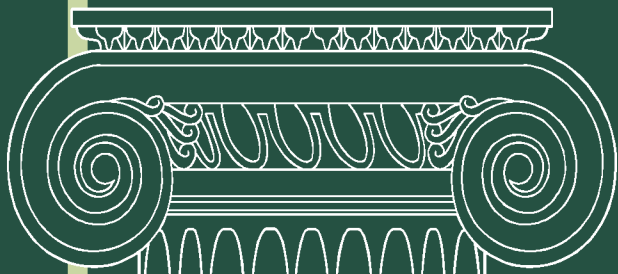
I start my day with a walk around the building and again in the afternoon.

My interests are church, school, family and fishing. I have been a member of Mt. Zion Progressive Baptist Church since August of 2000. My pastor is Reverend Louis Murphy. I attend church every Sunday and sing in the male choir and the mass choir, and serve on the Shepherd's Ministry Team. I attend choir rehearsals on Tuesday and Thursday nights. If my brother-in-law (Lee) can't take me, I can always depend on my brothers, Lorenzo or Curtis. On Wednesdays, I attend school and get a chance to learn from my instructor, Lisa Foster. I have been in the program for one year.

This is the time of year I go fishing with my brother-in-law and my brothers.

I talk to my sister Rose every day. She visits during the week and takes me places I need to go, but on Sunday, we have family dinner at her house and I get to see other family members. I love my family very much.

This ends my short story.



Famous Quotes

I cannot live without books. – Thomas Jefferson

**A book is like a garden carried in the pocket.
Chinese Proverb**

**What's a book? Everything or nothing. The eye that
sees it all. – Ralph Waldo Emerson**

**A good word is like a good tree whose root is firmly
fixed and whose top is in the sky. – The Koran**

A library is a hospital for the mind. – Anonymous

**There is more treasure in books than in all the pirate's
loot on Treasure Island. – Walt Disney**

**The more that you read, the more things you will know.
The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.
Dr. Seuss**

**T'is the good reader that makes the good book.
Ralph Waldo Emerson**

Words are the voice of the heart. – Confucius

We read to know we are not alone. – C.S. Lewis

**An investment in knowledge always pays the best
interest. – Benjamin Franklin**

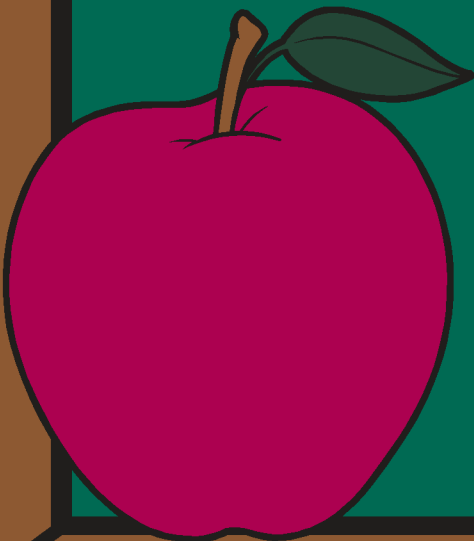
**Learning is weightless, a treasure you can always carry
easily. – Chinese Proverb**

Our Tutors are Special Too!

Wonderful Teacher

With a special gift for learning
And with a heart that deeply cares,
You add a lot of love
To everything you share,
And even though
You mean a lot,
You'll never know how much,
For you helped
To change the world
Through every life you touched.
You sparked the creativity
In the students whom you taught,
And helped them strive for goals
That could not be bought.
You are such a special teacher
That no words can truly tell
However much you're valued
For the work you do so well.

- Author Unknown



The Literacy Council of St. Petersburg
P.O. Box 12866
St. Petersburg, FL 33733-2866
www.StPeteReads.com
727-521-1117

NON-PROFIT
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT # 6072
ST. PETERSBURG, FL 33702

The President's Message

The Literacy Council of St. Petersburg has a new Board of Directors, Ann Palmer is the new President, Mitchell Smith is the new Vice President, and we welcome back our Treasurer, Edie Randolph and our Secretary, Sandy Thursby. This time of year we are very busy celebrating the accomplishments of our students and their tutors over the past year. We are proud of everyone.

Since 1968, the Literacy Council has worked very diligently to serve the community of St. Petersburg by providing tutors for hundreds of adult learners. Our goals include touching as many lives as we can. Our motto has always been and continues to be "Each One, Teach One."

In 2008, the St. Petersburg College – Seminole Community Library and Pinellas Technical Education Center were added to our list of tutoring centers. We have been very successful in fulfilling the needs of students in those areas and building new relationships with the community at large. We continue to receive calls daily from service organizations which have students who need our help, and we are responding to those needs.

Our volunteer tutors are the best. We continue to add a number of new tutors every three months and are looking forward to adding an additional training to our schedule to accommodate the ever-increasing interest to serve others. We can never have too many tutors ready to teach someone else what it is like to have reading skills that open the world of knowledge.

The Literacy Council of St. Petersburg would like to say "many thanks" to all our supporters and to our partners in the fight for literacy, READ Pinellas, Verizon, USF-Region IV Resource Center, and Florida Literacy Coalition. Without their financial support, we could not continue the services we provide. We also want to recognize all the administrators at the schools who provide us the space we need to tutor these adult learners. They have all been very instrumental in keeping our work with the adult community a top priority. A special "thank you" goes out to the tutors and their students, as they are the ones who make it all happen.

Thank you everyone, Ann Palmer, President