

Board of Directors

President

Leanne Brittain

Vice-President

Barbara Bliss

Treasurer

Gary Prewitt

Secretary

Rick Leissner

Barbara Brackett

Doris Fullwood

Kara Harrison

Jasper Hemphill

Amanda Icard

Robert Lathan

Betty Pennell

Peggy Saunders

Kaye Taylor

Frances Wheeler

Staff

Browning Rochefort
Executive/Program
Director

Valerie Hightower
Family Literacy
Coordinator

Ariel Benfield
Support Staff

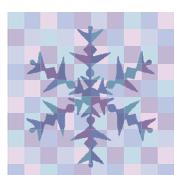
Miguel Sebastian
Immigrant Outreach
Coordinator

Stephanie South
Project Citizenship
Coordinator

Shirley Brown
Project Citizenship
Instructor

Lisa Schell
Project Citizenship
Instructor

April Scott
Child Care Instructor
Worker



The Reader Leader



The Literacy Newsletter of Burke County

December 2009



A Note from the Director

Dear Friends,

“From a distance, a snowflake, just like any organization, appears to be very simple, but look closer and you see it for what it truly is – an intricate, intertwined, multi-dimensional structure.” Here at the Literacy Council, we understand that just as no two snowflakes are alike, each of our students comes to us with a unique set of needs. Many students want to learn to read to their children, some want to read the Bible, and others want to learn to communicate in English. I love their personal desires and motivations and I love even more to see the changes in these individuals as they learn. It is exhilarating.

This has been a good year for the Literacy Council and with your help we have been able to serve 879 adults with our 29 dedicated tutors. Our Project FLOWER children (English as a Second Language) numbered 76. A total of 958 children received a book from us this year. It is fantastic to know that we have been able to put that many books into homes. It might seem like a small act, placing a new book in the hands of a child; but we know that giving a book is just the beginning of the story. We want to thank you for your assistance and interest in our programs and our students. Progress is being made and it is exciting to see the students learn and reach their goals.

Economic times are hard, but if you have any spare change the Council can use it to enhance our programs by providing snacks to the children at Flower or to the students studying so hard to pass the Citizenship exam, or to provide books and study material for our students.

Have a wonderful Christmas as you enjoy your family and your blessings.

Brownie

Tutor Spotlight

Elinora Miller

Once a teacher, always a teacher, so the saying goes... and I believe it! After thirty years teaching at Hillcrest Elementary and one year of retirement, I read about Amanda Icard volunteering for the Burke County Literacy Council and was ready to teach some more. I had known Amanda from our many school meetings and called her to see how I could become a volunteer. Mary Marcia Salisbury, the director of the Literacy Council at that time, had written and received a grant from Dollar General to fund Project FLOWER. The goal of the grant was to teach Hispanic ladies how to read and speak English.

In 1998 I took the required courses on volunteering and teaching “The Laubach Way To Reading.” I then began volunteering for Project FLOWER which was held at the Salvation Army Church on Summit/Center Streets. From the very beginning I enjoyed working with the Hispanic ladies in Project FLOWER. Two of the ladies are still with us: Eulalia F. and Eulalia H. I have also tutored Eulalia F.'s daughter, Maria. Maria has four daughters who were accompanying her to Project FLOWER.

If you asked the ladies why they came to class, they inevitably would say: to learn more English or to be able to speak better English. Many wanted to learn enough English to get a job. Some students would ask me if I spoke Spanish. I would always answer "No, but I am ready to help you learn English." I was always willing to help them as best as I could. It has been very rewarding to me to help them learn. I have made friends with other tutors as well, especially Rose Shook, who became a volunteer about the same time as I. Volunteering with Project FLOWER has fulfilled that desire to keep on teaching.



News at BCLC

Celebrating 20 years of the Burke County Literacy Council!

A reception was held in recognition of all students, tutors, staff and board members from the last 20 years on Sunday, November 15. Founders, Sylvia Milne and Leslie Kern of The Literacy Council were on hand and discussed how BCLC was formed.

Mayra Moore, a former student, spoke about the difference BCLC has made in her life. It was a very emotional speech that made those present realize that BCLC is worth their time and involvement. Mayra is now fully employed and giving back to those who helped her so much by teaching others through BCLC.

A Certificate of Acknowledgment and Congratulations was sent by the North Carolina House of Representatives, “Now, therefore, as a member of the North Carolina House of Representatives, Representative Hugh Blackwell, representing the County of Burke, acknowledges the record of success of and extends sincere congratulations to Burke County Literacy Council on the occasion of celebrating its 20th Anniversary.”

Save the Date - Wednesday, April 21st!

Author Ron Rash will join BCLC on Wednesday, April 21st for a reading. He is the author of three prize-winning novels: One Foot in Eden, Saints at the River, and The World Made Straight; three collections of poems; and two collections of stories. Mr. Rash, a recipient of the O. Henry Prize, also holds the John Parris Chair in Appalachian Studies at Western Carolina University. More information to come...

Literacy study: 1 in 7 U.S. adults are unable to read this story

By Greg Toppo, USA TODAY

A long-awaited federal study finds that an estimated 32 million adults in the USA—about one in seven - are saddled with such low literacy skills that it would be tough for them to read anything more challenging than a children’s picture book or to understand a medication’s side effects listed on a pill bottle.

Though many communities are making strides to tackle the problem, it’s worsening elsewhere—in some cases significantly.

Overall, the study finds, the nation hasn’t made a dent in its adult-literacy problem: From 1992 to 2003, it shows, the USA added about 23 million adults to its population; in that period, an estimated 3.6 million more joined the ranks of adults with low literacy skills.

How low? It would be a challenge to read this newspaper article or deconstruct a fuel bill.

“They really cannot read. .. paragraphs (or) sentences that are connected,” says Sheida White, a researcher at the U.S. Education Department.

The findings come from the department’s National Assessment of Adult Literacy, a survey of more than 19,000 Americans age 16 and older. The 2003 survey is a follow-up to a similar one in 1992 and for the first time lets the public see literacy rates as far down as county levels.

In many cases, states made sizable gains. In Mississippi, the percentage of adults with low skills dropped 9 percentage points, from 25% to 16%. In every one of its 82 counties, low-skill rates dropped — in a few cases by 20 percentage points or more.

By contrast, in several large states — California, New York, Florida and Nevada, for instance — the number of adults with low skills rose.

David Harvey, president and CEO of ProLiteracy, an adult-literacy organization, says Mississippi “invested more in education ... and they have done innovative programming. We need much more of that.”

U.S. Education Secretary Margaret Spellings says efforts in adult literacy are inefficient and “scattered” across government agencies.

“We’re not using research-based practices, broadly applied,” she says.

Harvey cites undiagnosed learning disabilities, immigration and high school dropouts as reasons for the poor literacy numbers.



Program News

Project FLOWER

Project FLOWER is off to a strong start in 2009. Since we resumed in September, sixty-five students have enrolled for class. On average, around thirty students attend class each day. The students have been working on the following skills: improving conversation, navigating practical situations such as shops and healthcare offices, as well as reading and writing. Most of these students are parents and many bring their young children to class with them. Our Project FLOWER children are doing very well in their school while their parents attend our English as a Second Language class. We have had the privilege of caring for and teaching a total of 49 infants and children thus far this year. April Scott, our new preschool instructor, has been working with the older children on body parts, colors, letters, and many other exciting concepts. Her creativity and commitment to the children's learning is really making a difference in their lives. Our infants are being well cared for by a wonderful combination of staff and volunteers: Eulalia Francisco, Veronica Martin, Rosalina Jose, and Heather Williams. We have also enjoyed collaborating with Western Piedmont Community College's Early Childhood Development class this fall. Service Learning Volunteers from this class have been assisting with the children on Tuesdays and enhancing their own education through the process. This has definitely been a win-win situation for us all! As 2009 comes to a close, we look forward to continued success for our FLOWER students in 2010.

One-on-One Adult tutors are needed! Free training and materials are provided by the Burke County Literacy Council.

What Can I Do To Help The Burke County Literacy Council?

We offer many ways you can help:

1. Become a tutor:
 - ◇ One-on-One Tutor - Help other adults learn how to read or improve their reading level. Days and times are flexible to suit your schedule. 1-2 hours a week.
 - ◇ ESL Tutor - Help non-English speaking adults and children learn English. (Knowing how to speak another language is not required) 2 hours a week. ****A Tuesday, 10-11:30 am tutor is needed immediately.****
 - ◇ Civics Tutor - Help adult immigrants study for the INS exam to gain their citizenship. 1-2 hours a week.
2. Read to children in the waiting room at participating Reach Out and Read doctors' offices throughout the county.
3. Clerical/Office assistance at our office located in Morganton.
4. Join our Committees:
 - ◇ ABC Soup Luncheon (Event in February) Assist with the planning, advertising, delivery of orders, cooking or serving the food, or setting and cleaning up the event.
 - ◇ Spelling Bee (Event in April) Assist with the planning, advertising, recruiting, setting up and tearing down the event, or getting sponsors for the event.
 - ◇ General Fundraising (Year round) selling fundraising tickets for different fundraisers and planning new fundraisers.
 - ◇ Community Outreach (Year round) be an advocate for the Literacy Council and let people in the community know what services we offer. Word of mouth is the best recruitment tool for our program.
5. Donate gently used children's books – we offer these books in pediatrician offices, Health Department, and Social Services waiting rooms.
6. Financially support our programs through a donation to help alleviate illiteracy in Burke County.
7. Many onetime opportunities are available as needed. Please don't hesitate to contact us if you are available.



Literacy Council Wish List

- ◇ Bottled water for Project Citizenship participants and Project Flower children
- ◇ Cheerios, Teddy Grahams, or Goldfish for Project Flower children
- ◇ Copy paper
- ◇ Ink jet paper
- ◇ Pens/Pencils
- ◇ Manila file folders
- ◇ Expanding file folders
- ◇ 6x9 envelopes
- ◇ 4x9.5 envelopes
- ◇ Small pencil sharpeners
- ◇ Notebooks for students
- ◇ Scissors
- ◇ Pencil Pouches



New Intern

The Literacy Council staff and board would like to welcome our new intern:

Gemma Leszczewski

Gemma joins our team as our Americorps worker intern. A recent graduate from Belmont Abbey College, she works as our volunteer coordinator for Project FLOWER. Gemma is also a tutor for the One-on-One program. She is an enthusiastic addition to our team and is grateful for the opportunity to promote literacy awareness near her hometown in Hickory.

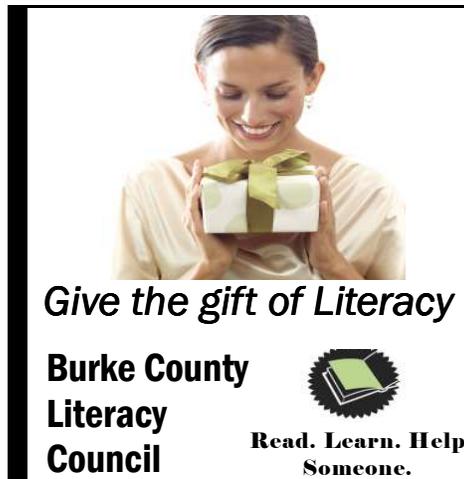
New Volunteers Welcomed

Project Flower

Denny Bridges
Thelma Brown
LaShawn Caldwell
Nanier Caldwell
Terri Collett
Audrey Coulter
Soutchay Labang
Beverly Lunsford
Veronica Martin
Renee Rogers
Kayla Smith
Traci Wakfield
Heather Williams

Office Support

Amy Canterbury
Brenda Edney
Elizabeth Sebastian
Josue Sebastian
Maria Sebastian



Fundraising News

Mark Roberts Santa Fairy Raffle

To benefit the Burke County Literacy Council a drawing for a Mark Roberts Santa Fairy was held December 15, 2009. The Santa Fairy winner is Beth Walker! Congratulations Beth!

Sponsored by:

More Lace

605 S Green Street

Morganton, NC 28655

ABC Lunch for Literacy

The Literacy Council will hold our annual ABC Soup Luncheon on Thursday, February 18th at St. Charles Catholic Church. A lunch consisting of vegetable or potato soup, a grilled cheese sandwich, a drink and a cookie will be served. Delivery will be available for multiple orders (drinks will not be delivered). Tickets will be available on site or purchased in advance from the office or a board member. For delivery call the office at 437-7477.

Belk Charity Day

What a successful fundraiser we had for Fall! Total earnings so far are \$535! Thank you for helping support literacy in Burke County!

Council Donors

The Literacy Council is sincerely grateful to the following for their donations given between June 9, 2009 and December 15, 2009.

Individuals

Ms. Carolyn Atwell
Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Benfield
Mr. and Mrs. Hugh Blackwell
Ms. Edith Brothers
Ms. Joy Buff
Ms. Sonia Chambliss
Ms. Margaret Church
Mr. William Connelly
Dr. and Mrs. Rocco DiSanto
Ms. Kelby Dobbins
Mr. Robert Ervin
Mr. Danny Fox
Mr. and Mrs. Allen Fullwood
Harris Teeter
Ms. Doretha Hemphill
Mrs. Lynn Henderson
Mr. and Mrs. Jamie Hightower
Mr. and Mrs. Richard Icard
Mr. Edward Jaynes
Ms. Jenny Kurzer
Mr. Robert Lathan
Mr. and Mrs. Robert McDaniel
Ms. Brandy Mills
Mr. and Mrs. Rick Moody
Ms. Jean Powell
Mr. and Mrs. Randy Rhyne
Mrs. Browning Rochefort
The Rosenberger Family
Ms. Hattie Rostan
Mr. and Mrs. Robert Townsend
Turning Point Services, Inc.
Ms. Frances Wheeler
Mrs. Doris Wilson
Mr. Michael Wilson

In memory of:

Mr. Thomas Rochefort
By Mr. and Mrs. Harper Thayer
Mr. Thomas Rochefort
By Mrs. Le Erwin
Mrs. Mary B. Newell, who loved words.
By Mrs. Le Erwin

In honor of:

Mrs. Doris Fullwood
By Mr. and Mrs. J. Ray Leonhardt
Mrs. Ariel Benfield
By Mrs. Browning Rochefort
Julie Norman and the 8th Grade Teachers at WJMS
By Matthew and Rhonda Bonfield
Kadie Tonsic and the 7th Grade Teachers at WJMS
By Adam and Rhonda Bonfield
Lisa Foy and the 4th Grade Teachers at FHES
By Sage and Rhonda Bonfield

Community/Service Organizations

First Presbyterian Church
First United Methodist Church
State Employees Combined Campaign Employee Fund

Grants/Private Foundations

Beatrice Cobb Foundation
Burke County Smart Start
Burke County United Way
Huffman-Cornwell Foundation
North Carolina Community College System
Sam's Club
Target

In-Kind

Mrs. Mary Cmiel
Mr. and Mrs. Allen Fullwood
Mr. Robert Smith

Link Up For Literacy

Bi-Lo, Food Lion, Harris Teeter, and Ingles are giving away money and supplies to support organizations like ours and we would love to get your help! To link your shopping cards there are three ways to sign up. 1) Go to the website listed below. 2) Use the code provided when you present your shopping card to the cashier. 3) We can do it for you if you call Ariel at 437-7477 with the requested information or return the form in this newsletter to BCLC.

Your **Advantage Card** from **Ingles** can be easily linked by signing up at your local Ingles store by using our code of **12163** or at the Ingles web site http://ww2.ingles-markets.com/toolsforschools/cardlink_step_1.php You must re-enroll each year after August 1st.

Signing up your **Bonuscard** from **Bi-Lo** is simple. Included in the newsletter is an enrollment form. Take the form to your local Bi-Lo and provide your Bonuscard with the enrollment form to the cashier. You must re-enroll each year after July 1st.

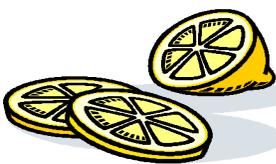
Linking your **MVP Customer Card** from **Food Lion** is easy. The website for signing up is <http://www.lionshopandshare.com/cardno.php>

You can link your **VIC Card** from **Harris Teeter** by asking the cashier to link your card to our number, which is **6099**. You can also link up online at <http://www.harristeeter.com/default.aspx?pageId=32>

Lemons for Literacy

How many Americans struggle with literacy?

A. 1 Mil. B. 10 Mil. C. 25 Mil. D. 40 Mil.



Answer: D. 40 Million, The effects of illiteracy are felt in every aspect of a person's life and can be one of life's worst "lemons." With the support of effective reading instruction however, these people can turn their lemons into lemonade. Lemons for Literacy is a vocabulary building game that is available to anyone, anywhere. Players must identify a series of vocabulary words. Every correct answer helps someone learn to read. To play visit: <http://readinghorizons.com/lemonsforliteracy/>



BURKE COUNTY
Literacy Council

300 North Green Street #204
Morganton, NC 28655
(828) 437-7477
literacydirector@bellsouth.net
www.burkeliteracy.org

NONPROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
MORGANTON, NC
PERMIT NO. 77

Return Service Requested

*Warmest thoughts and best wishes for a
Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year!*



Donations Now Online, BCLC Causes Facebook Page and Toolbar



The Literacy Council is now accepting online donations. We have a link on the bottom of our website (<http://www.burkeliteracy.org>) that will accept payments from your credit card, electronic check, or wire transfer from your checking or savings account via Paypal. Another way to donate and show your support publicly is through our new Facebook page from Causes. (<http://apps.facebook.com/causes/268030/27752064?m=71bb3202>) From this site you can publically show your support by adding the Literacy Council to your Facebook page, make online donations, request your friends donate to your cause, or spread the word about your cause. Causes on Facebook has a new toolbar you can add to your web browser that will donate one cent every time you use the search function. We have a really exciting opportunity to earn a lot of money for

our cause just by doing what we're doing anyway this time of year - shopping for the holidays. Over 1,500 websites like Target, Best Buy, Ebay, and Expedia have agreed to donate a percentage of any purchase you make to our cause. All you have to do is download the Causes Toolbar and then it will track your online shopping and automatically donate a percentage to our cause. You don't have to do anything else — download the toolbar and you're done! Go to <http://shopping.causes.com?m=c28b51b1>

Free Rice

Visit www.freerice.com and With each answer you get right a donation of 10 grains of rice is given to the UN World Food Program to help end hunger. Choose from many different subjects to answer questions on to help end world hunger.

Go Green with BCLC

The Burke County Literacy Council would like to invite you to read our newsletter online or via email. Please email Ariel at literacysupport@bellsouth.net with the subject line "Newsletter" to join our electronic mailing list. All issues of our newsletter are available in PDF format on our website www.burkeliteracy.org