



The Literacy Alliance

# Literacy News

A quarterly publication of the Literacy Alliance

2009 Issue 2

**Judith Stabelli**

executive director

[judith.stabelli@fwliteracyalliance.org](mailto:judith.stabelli@fwliteracyalliance.org)

**Brian Schlichtenmyer**

editor

[brian.schlichtenmyer@fwliteracyalliance.org](mailto:brian.schlichtenmyer@fwliteracyalliance.org)

709 Clay Street, Suite 100, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46802  
Phone: (260) 426-7323, Fax: (260) 424-0371

*Literacy News* is mailed to 4,000 homes and businesses and distributed through branches of the Allen County Public Library. Back issues can be read on The Literacy Alliance's web site, [www.fwliteracyalliance.org](http://www.fwliteracyalliance.org).



*Phyllis Cass (L) and Ruth Lahr (R) volunteer at the New Haven Learning Center at New Haven United Methodist Church. They have been literacy tutors at that center since it opened in 1992.*

*Regarding the center and their work there, Ruth says, "If you want to volunteer and you're a teacher, this is a good place to be."*

When the sensation settled, Site Coordinator Cathy Scott-Slayback suggested a lounge nearby, away from the classrooms and testing students, where they could talk about their years at the learning center. The lounge was actually a finished breezeway connecting the main church with the community center, windows to north showed the playground and to south the parking lot. It was a bright space, comfortable and quiet for conversation.

Asked how they first met, they explained it was through their husbands who knew each other and through the church. It was 1963. Phyllis said, "I remember that first day you brought your children in to Sunday school. . . . Do you remember that?"

Both worked for East Allen County Schools, too. Phyllis taught off and on for ten years. Ruth taught for twenty one years, usually second grade. That experience, Ruth said, was great for tutoring at The Literacy Alliance. Working

Two Volunteers, continued on page 2

## Two Volunteers Have Tutored for Seventeen Years

Dedicated volunteers keep The Literacy Alliance going. Most are tutors placed in learning centers or matched one-on-one with adult students. As the adult students need help with their studies, the volunteer tutors are there to lend a hand.

Phyllis Cass and Ruth Lahr are two who have been volunteering at the New Haven Learning Center since it opened in 1992. As members of New Haven United Methodist Church, they were among the first to answer the call for volunteers. Recently, while students were retaking the TABE (Test of Adult Basic Education) to see what improvements they made in their reading, writing, and math skills, Phyllis and Ruth took time out to talk about their years as literacy tutors.

On this particular evening, as students signed in and began their testing, the tutors' arrival caused a brief sensation, particularly Ruth's because she had not been there for a couple of months. She had been injured in a fall last April and just completed rehab. Students and teachers greeted them, asking how they were and if they were coming back in the fall.

Two Volunteers, continued from page 1

with adult students, you have to be able to “teach across the disciplines.” They may need to work on more than one subject, and in elementary school “we taught all the subjects.”

Asked about tutoring experiences that stuck with them, they described rewards related to working with and helping people. They mentioned that romances started and families came to the center together, an uncle and his nephew, siblings, spouses. They recalled a husband and wife who enrolled at the same time. “She got the GED<sup>®</sup> first, and he still stuck to it.” Phyllis remembered a student who made a point of returning to the learning center to tell her he had finished a book she recommended. “It was the first book he ever finished, and after two years he came back to tell me about it.” They declared that it’s always fun when someone passes the GED<sup>®</sup> and brings the certificate in to show the other students.

“Do you remember,” Phyllis asked with a chuckle, “That first meeting we had [tutor training in 1992], how we worried about what we’d do if we ran into one of the students at the grocery store?” They had decided that if it happened, they would wait for the student to speak first. They soon learned that the students were always glad to see them and say hello.

## Announcements

The Literacy Alliance continues to have intake sessions for its adult literacy programs. Morning and evening sessions are available. Each session lasts about two and a half hours. Adults interested in strengthening their basic skills or preparing for the GED<sup>®</sup> Tests must register for one of the sessions by calling The Literacy Alliance, 426-7323.

The next set of tutor training workshops will be 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. on September 19 and 26 at the Main Branch of the Allen County Public Library. For more information, call Laura at The Literacy Alliance, 426-7323.

# Literacy Alliance Board of Directors

Douglas Stephens, President  
*Tower Bank*

Karen Francisco, Vice President  
*The Journal Gazette*

William Herx, Treasurer  
*Lincoln Financial Group (retired)*

Judy Gillman, Secretary  
*Verizon*

Vicki Lee Johnson  
*PHP*

Shequitta Kelly  
*Deputy Prosecuting Attorney*

Mike Landram  
*Greater Fort Wayne Chamber of Commerce*

Mary Lehto  
*IPFW*

Mary McDonald  
*Lincoln Financial Group (retired)*

Jaquelyn Scott  
*Community Volunteer*

Beth Wolf  
*Med Partners/Lutheran Health Network*

# ACPL Small Group Is Busy through Summer



*Sheri assists Blanca at the Allen County Public Library's computer lab. Sheri is one of four tutors, and Blanca is one of twenty one students who meet every Tuesday evening at the Main Branch.*

*Students work on basic reading, writing, math, and computer skills, using web based resources. The library site along with a Tuesday morning site at the Fort Wayne Urban League compliment TLA's One-on-One program by providing tutoring with computers in a group setting.*



*Dennis, Betty, Eva, and Eddie study at TLA's ACPL Small Group Tutoring Site. In addition to individual work on the computers, students spend a portion of class time on a problem facilitated by one of the site's volunteer tutors. The generous support of ACPL and the tutors allow students to build their computer and internet skills while working on basic reading, writing, and math.*

## Comcast Gives to The Literacy Alliance

The Comcast Foundation has awarded a third \$20,000 grant, supporting adult instruction programs. The grant is the final installment of a three year commitment funding materials for Literacy Alliance learning centers.

Many students come to The Literacy Alliance to prepare for the GED® Tests. With the GED®, they are able to pursue higher education or full entry into the workforce. Their preparation is made possible by Comcast's staunch support.

Comcast is a year-round partner of The Literacy Alliance. Ongoing support includes co-sponsoring Report Card Night every February.

Since 1988, The Literacy Alliance has been dedicated to ending illiteracy in Allen County. Learning centers, literacy programs, and tutoring services empower individuals to succeed at work, at home, and in the community.

This grant from the Comcast Foundation is in recognition of Comcast's commitment to the communities where its customers and employees live and work. Since its founding in 1999, the Comcast Foundation has distributed more than \$64 million in cash support of programs implemented locally in Comcast communities.

# Thanks to Individuals & Organizations for Their Support

## Individuals

C. Philip Andorfer  
Marjorie Baumgartel  
Frederick Beckman  
William & Paula Bentley  
Glen & Chris Bickel  
Janet Bircheff  
Robert & Margaret Bliss  
Janice Burgett  
Georgia Carolyn Butler  
Harvey Cocks, Jr.  
John & Marjorie Coe  
John Crawford, MD  
M. Ann Dirkes  
Kenneth & Stephanie Dunsire  
Janice Eplett  
Jerry & Janie Falls  
Carolyn Fast  
Dave Ferguson  
Mary Gilliom

Mary Catherine Hahn  
Jeffrey Halter  
Martha Hatch  
Paul Haughan  
Leonard Helfrich  
William & Marva Herx  
Linda Hugel  
Diane Humphrey  
Donald Jones  
John & Angele Judd  
William & Judith Lee  
Mary Lehto  
George & Pauline Lueken  
Tony & Patty Martone  
Patsy Matthews  
Dave & Mary Ann Menze  
Michael & Mary Musson  
Maurice & Germaine O'Daniel  
Marvin & Vivian Priddy  
Kathy & Barth Ragatz

Paul Reszel  
Carol Shedd  
Richard & Jane Thomas  
David & Faith Van Gilder  
Jean & William Vrabel  
Kelly Wickerham  
David & Bette Worley  
Robert & Jane Wuthrich  
Diane Zent  
**Corporations & Foundations**  
Comcast Foundation  
Delta Gamma Chap/Psi Iota Xi  
Don R. Fruchey, Inc.  
English, Bonter, Mitchell Foundation  
Foellinger Foundation  
Halls Drive Ins  
Kuhne Foundation  
Ladies of Literary Club of Auburn  
Our Lady of Victory Sisters  
Theta Theta Chap/Psi Iota Xi

# In Memory of Doris Cooper

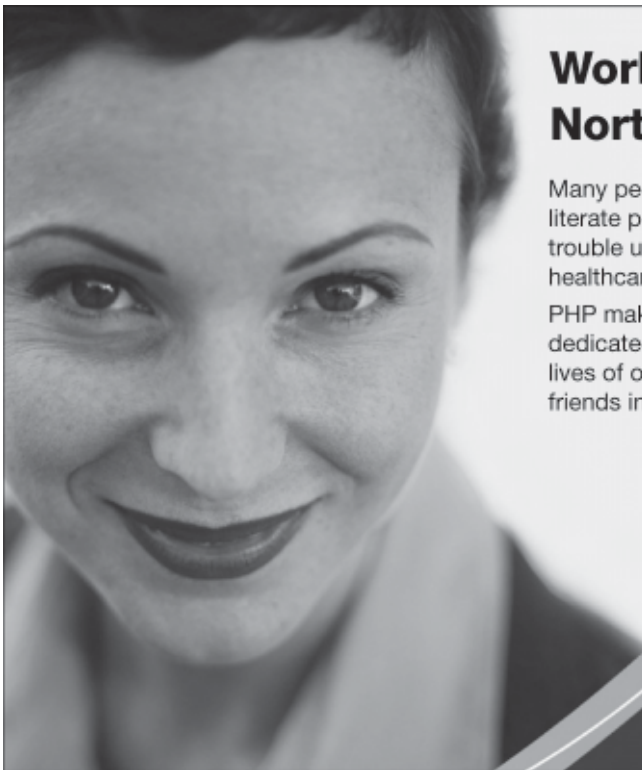
Carolyn Buckmaster  
Joanne Carran-McGill  
Kenneth & Gayle Cooper  
Mary Ann Freymuth  
Doris Gottlieb  
Harry & Phyllis Grady

K. Michael & Sandra Hayes  
James & Barbara Kinsey  
Linda & Stacy Lolkus  
Nancy Mann  
Judith May  
Robert & Christine Michael  
Stanley & Louva Needham

Orthodontic Specialty Services  
Patricia & Manuel Paitan  
Stetzel Dental Group  
Scott & Leslie Timmis  
Richard Vanderwall  
Mary Lou Whatley

# Thanks to Our Sponsors. . .

## . . .for *Literacy News*




**Working for Northern Indiana**

Many people, even highly literate people, often have trouble understanding their healthcare coverage.

PHP makes it simple, and is dedicated to improving the lives of our neighbors and friends in Northern Indiana.



The insurance your health deserves.



*Interested in sponsoring Literacy News?*

*Call Brian at The Literacy Alliance, 426-7323*

# From the Director's Desk

June ended another successful program year at The Literacy Alliance. It was an eventful year, too, with a number of new initiatives.

Previous issues of *Literacy News* described what new things we tried. The volunteer driven Burmese initiative reached 181 refugees. The small group tutoring sites at Allen County Public Library and Fort Wayne Urban League were begun for students traditionally served through the One-on-One program. The new learning center at WorkOne allowed access to web based resources.

In fact, our strategic goal to use technology to facilitate learning and raise awareness about the agency got a good start this year. Placement of the small group and WorkOne sites in internet-enabled computer labs was intentional. Students in those sites gained fundamental computer and internet navigation experience while studying reading, writing, math, and basic English and preparing for the GED® Tests. We placed forms on the Literacy Alliance web site so people can donate and register to volunteer. We created a web page that links to scores of literacy resources and joined the 175 million who use Facebook.

Our new intake process contributed to this year's success. First contact with students involved assessments so that they could be better placed and their needs met.

The Literacy Alliance served the most students in fifteen years, 814.

With the new program year beginning in August, we will continue these initiatives with changes and improvements to better serve adult students.



Judith Stabelli, Executive Director



709 Clay Street, Suite 100 • Fort Wayne, Indiana 46802

The Literacy Alliance



Non-Profit Org.  
U.S. Postage  
**PAID**  
Fort Wayne, IN  
Permit no. 124