



LitBits

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LVR 2009 Reading Rally Concludes with Scrabble Party!

LVR learners and volunteers gathered on Wednesday April 29th in the Cooperative Extension Auditorium for the annual LVR Scrabble Party. Led by Scrabble Coordinator Bonnie Martin and assisted by students from Victor High School, teams of volunteers and learners had a fun night of playing scrabble and enjoying the refreshments.

As part of the Scrabble event the 2009 Raffle for Reading winning tickets were drawn. Grand prize winner of the \$1,000 in groceries from Wegmans was Craig Abbott from Manning and Napier, pictured with LVR volunteer

Amy Williams, seller of the winning ticket.

The complete list of prize winners and the prize donors appear below. Our thanks to everyone who sold and purchased tickets, as well as our prize donors and Reading Rally sponsors, Wegmans and Paychex.

The 2009 Reading Rally, which is an annual event designed to raise awareness and support for LVR, was a great success. This year's Reading Rally raised over \$8,000 to support LVR. Our public awareness campaign has led to a record number of new volunteer tutors joining our organization.



LVR volunteer Amy Williams with Wegmans gift card winner Craig Abbott

Raffle Prizes

- **\$1000 in Wegmans gift cards**
Donated by Wegmans
- **Dinner for 4 at the Green Lantern Inn**
Donated by The Green Lantern Inn
- **\$200 Gift Certificate to Eastview Mall**
Donated by Eastview Mall
- **Red Wings Suite**
Donated by Harter Secrest and Emery LLP
- **Golf Package**
Donated by Blue Heron and Anonymous
- **Rochester Package**
Tickets donated by Geva Theatre Center, The Little, and Blackfriars Theatre
- **Rochester Package # 2**
Gift pack and Rochester Oratorio Society tickets donated by WXXI; Concert tickets donated by the RPO
- **Limo Package**
Donated by Excel Limousine

Winners

- Craig Abbott
- Jen Cesare
- Catherine Schell
- Peg Warrick
- Mark Tommasi
- Lenny Mullen
- Bruce Rumbold
- Scott Sandruck

Save The Date

- ◆ June 17th @ 6:00pm, LVR Annual meeting
- ◆ August 19th @ 5:00pm, LVR picnic
- ◆ September 30th @ 4:30pm, LVR 45th Anniversary
- ◆ October 15th @ 5:00pm, Brain Game at the Rochester Club Ballroom



Director's Update

The Freedom of Literacy



Executive Director Bob Mahar

As I write this we have reached May – the lilacs are blooming outside our office and we are nearing the end of our program year on June 30th.

It is a busy time of year with testing, reporting, classes for learners and volunteers and many events including our recent Scrabble Party, the LVR raffle and LVR's upcoming Annual

Meeting on June 17th.

It is also a time of reflection on the past year and all that has happened. On the surface it is easy to get distracted by the challenges that we have faced this year, including budget cuts and changes in the economy that have impacted many of our learners and our volunteers.

In the midst of the challenges, however, are the bright spots—the stories of our learners' successes in meeting literacy goals. These are the memories that we will take with us from the past year. They are the stories of immigrants who have traveled far to come here and who have worked hard to overcome challenges of language, culture, and economics, as well as those immigrants who have become

citizens. They are the stories of parents seeking help in assisting their children with school work. There are the stories of the laid off workers looking to rebuild their skills to obtain employment in a new economy. What they all have in common is that they are about freedom.

A recent reminder of the freedom of literacy came to us from a former LVR learner who successfully completed ESOL (English for Speakers of Other Languages) instruction. She recently described her circumstances years ago as a new immigrant. Without communication skills, she barely left her apartment and she was afraid to engage the outside world. She went on to say

how her increased abilities to communicate in English gave her the freedom to be able to go out and participate in the community. She thanked our volunteers for the freedom that they provide to LVR learners. Those words are a powerful reminder to us all about the power of literacy and the freedom that it provides.



Library News

As many of you know, LVR has an extensive lending library for our learners and volunteers of over 4000 titles. Throughout the year we add new titles based on various recommendations, including those from learners and tutors.

The LVR library will be ordering new materials again in May. They should be available for borrowing by June or July. If you would like to receive a list of these

new items, please e-mail:

Librarian@LiteracyRochester.org

and request that you be sent a list.

We will then notify you whenever the library receives new items.

Please contact the LVR Library with needs, questions, or your ideas for acquisitions. The best way to do this is through the library's e-mail:

Librarian@LiteracyRochester.org



LVR Summer 2009 office hours

*The LVR office and library are open
Monday through Friday: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.*

*The library is open Saturdays: 9 a.m. to noon until
June 30th*

*The library is closed on Saturdays in July and August-
reopening Saturday September 12th*

**Office and library are closed
in observance of Independence Day**

Friday July 3

Saturday July 4

Mary Sue Schaefer Fund

LVR is committed to more than just teaching its students how to read. At LVR we are aware that experiences inspire people to read and write about what they have seen. That is why Literacy Volunteers of Rochester, and the family of Mary Sue Schaefer, have established a fund to give students and tutors the opportunity to attend cultural and recreational events in Rochester.

The Mary Sue Schaefer Fund subsidizes the cost of tickets to events here in Rochester, opening doors for students and tutors alike to enjoy the many events Rochester has to offer. Each person who receives this grant is asked to write an article on his or her experience, and it is shared with the LVR community through LitBits.

Interested tutors should contact our office at least 24 hours before the event is attended. Preference is

given to those who have not previously received sponsorship from this Fund. Maximum compensation per event is \$35.00 and all receipts should be submitted to the office following the event.

*“LVR
is committed to more
than just teaching its students
how to read”*

Tribute to Sharon

*“You taught
me things I never
thought
I would learn”*

As many of you have experienced, a special bond forms between a tutor and learner. Sometimes a very special bond happens, which is what occurred for Elijah Chaney and Sharon Lockett.

Sharon started as a tutor in 2001 and began

working with Elijah in 2006. Elijah has said many times, “Sharon is my best friend.” Unfortunately, Sharon fell ill and has since passed away.

The following note is Elijah’s thank you to his best friend, Sharon.

Dear Sharon,

You’re the best friend I got. You don’t holler at me or be mean to me.

You asked me about my life and wrote it down in your book.

You taught me things I never thought I would learn. I miss you and am grateful for our time together.

LVR Supports Citizenship

LVR has embarked on several new initiatives that address United States citizenship and the needs of our adult learners. Many of our learners have expressed an interest in acquiring information that will assist them as they prepare for their citizenship test. In response,

LVR has created ten-week citizenship preparation classes, focusing on the information that prospective citizens need to know to be successful applicants, including how to complete the required forms.

Last year the cost of the United States citizenship testing procedure increased

40%, for a total cost of \$675. At the suggestion of one of our LVR tutors, LVR created a scholarship fund directed toward LVR learners who have shown their readiness to successfully take the citizenship test.

With the support of PAETEC and several

individual donors, the PAETEC Citizenship Scholarship Fund provides up to \$200 per qualified LVR learner to assist the learner with the costs of the citizenship application.

For more details about these initiatives, contact our office at 473-3030

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Tribute and Memorial Donations

Please remember that another way to support Literacy Volunteers of Rochester is through your tribute and memorial donations. LVR is pleased to accept donations in celebration of special occasions, such as birthdays, anniversaries, and retirements as well as in memory of volunteers, donors, family, and friends. An LVR contribution is also the perfect gift to honor that person who doesn't need another "gift" and would appreciate knowing that LVR is benefiting from your generosity.

LitBits, as well as other pertinent information,
can be accessed on our website
www.literacyrochester.org