



Fall 2006

# LitBits

249 Highland Avenue, Rochester New York 14620-3036 • (585) 473-3030 • [www.literacyrochester.org](http://www.literacyrochester.org)

## Making and Sharing Summer Time Memories

*Melissa Woodhams, Case Coordinator*

On Tuesday, August 15, over 60 students, tutors, volunteers and family members gathered at Genesee Valley Park for the 4th annual Literacy Volunteers of Rochester summer picnic. All who attended enjoyed good food, fun and conversation. We also had background music, which was provided by one of our tutors, Boris Vodotinsky and his sons.

In conjunction with the picnic, we introduced the Writing Celebration, which we hope will be an annual event.

All students received an invitation to participate in the inaugural event. They were encouraged to write at least four sentences, but no more than one page, about their favorite summer time memory. We received 24 incredible pieces. Everyone who participated was eligible to win one of five \$10 Wegmans gift certificates. The winners were Raina, Riley, Wen, Gloria and Beverly.

A special edition of our newsletter, *LitBits*, with all of the writings will be published in the near future. We hope to make the writing celebration an annual event to coincide with our summer picnic, so get your pencils sharpened and ready for next year!



*Photographs courtesy of  
Bonnie Martin*

*Wei He, Chris Taillie, and  
Jaehong Park enjoy the  
LVR picnic at the Genesee  
Valley Park Roundhouse.*



Please join the staff & administrative volunteers for a holiday celebration:

**Friday, December 8th, 2006**

2-4 p.m. at the LVR Office

## From the Executive Director - Bob Mahar

### *Why We Do Assessments?*

You already know that student assessments are required for us to receive funding. But we are sometimes asked how they fit in with our focus on helping students



to set and achieve their individual learning goals. While we hope that each tutor and student pair/group is making strong progress toward the goals established, it is important to remember that the training that each tutor received provided specific skills and techniques designed to help individuals improve their reading and English language skills. Student goals will be achieved by strengthening individual skills.

The best way to measure progress and growth in achieving those skills is

assessment. Assessment tells the student how far they have progressed and how far they need to go. Assessment tells the tutor what areas of strength a student has and what areas he or she still needs work in. In other words, as many educational experts tell us, "assessment drives instruction." This is your opportunity as student and tutor to reevaluate periodically where you are in working toward goals and what adjustments you may need to make. Please also note that while the office must have an annual formal reassessment for each student, there is also a need for periodic assessments by the tutor during sessions – they will help you both draw a better map to reach your ultimate learning destination – the student's goal.

Our office is here for you to offer advice and support: what do the scores mean

and how can we adjust our lessons? How can I, and when should I, informally assess? Staff and volunteers can help answer those questions. And finally remember – we need your annual assessments!

Students, please understand that it is your responsibility to respond to a request to come in for testing. Contact us – we will work with you to find a time that is convenient. To tutors, please give us your support – encourage your students to respond in a timely manner to make an appointment to be tested, and feel free to ask questions about scores and what they mean. I wish you all continued success in meeting your learning goals and hope that as we prepare next year's report – we will count all of you on our list of successful outcomes!

## President's Corner – Jon Lazenby

Several weeks ago, I had the pleasure of sharing an evening with many of LVR's loyal supporters at the second annual President's Reception held at the WXXI studios.



As an LVR board member, I was delighted to have an opportunity to meet in a social setting with people who have worked hard for the betterment of LVR. And since a President's Reception would not be complete unless the president shared a few words, I briefly discussed our fundraising efforts.

LVR concluded what I consider to be a successful first year of a two-year resource development plan. Some of the highlights of the 2005-2006 annual giving campaign are: 100% board participation, over a 25% increase in individual donations (including 97 new donors) and a 16% increase in gifts received. All of this added up to more than \$32,000, beating our bottom line goal of \$30,000.

A significant aspect of LVR's resource development efforts is the support provided by members of our LitVol Leadership Society. A LitVol Leader is someone who gives \$250 or more to LVR. Having the number of LitVols grow year after year is extremely encouraging to see. And so to the LitVol Leaders, I say, "Thank you."

I also say thank you to all those who have financially supported LVR this past year, whether through United Way payroll deductions, purchasing raffle tickets, providing a corporate sponsorship or simply writing a \$10 check. It is through this support that each of us enables LVR to continue its mission of fostering adult literacy.

An annual giving campaign does come around every year, so LVR will soon be kicking off the its 2006-2007 campaign. I understand the bar has been raised (as well it should), so we can build on our previous successes. Indeed, I'm already looking forward to next year's President's Reception so I can thank you all again.

### Super Tutors/Tutor Mentors

Basic – Evening

Mary June Dowd - 392-3811

Paul Crough - 271-3787

Basic – Daytime

Susan Boland - 442-2844

ESOL – Daytime

Cynthia Goldstein - 334-4557

Charlotte Klose – 377-5481

ESOL – Evenings

Malla Barker - 473-5327

Peg Warrick - 461-0939

*LitBits, as well as  
other pertinent  
information, can  
be accessed on  
our website,*

[www.literacyrochester.org](http://www.literacyrochester.org)

# Brain Game 2006 Crowns a New Champion!

This year marks the sixth year of the Brain Game trivia challenge, and the event for 2006 added some new twists to a fun and exciting fundraiser for LVR. The game was held on Thursday, October 5th at the Clarion Hotel. The new 2006 Champions, Chamberlain, D'Amanda, Oppenheimer & Greenfield (champions in 2001) were crowned after battling 12 legal and accounting firms.

Executive Director Bob Mahar noted, "This is the first time we've had a repeat champion. Congratulations to our 2006 Winners, Chamberlain, D'Amanda, Oppenheimer & Greenfield."

Hosted by WHAM-TV personalities Kristen Miranda and Evan Dawson,



*Champions for 2006: from left to right — Matt Fusco, Wade Eaton, Alex Korotkin and Anita Miller from Chamberlain, D'Amanda, Greenfield & Oppenheimer*

the game was supported by a cast of many volunteers, including LVR's in-house "Name That Tune" musician, Bonnie Martin. The event was underwritten by LexisNexis which has been a supporter of Brain Game since its inception. This year Harter, Secrest and Emery LLP also joined as a Silver Sponsor.

New trivia categories and the continuation of the popular "Name that Tune" feature added spice to this popular event. More than \$11,000 was raised to support the programs and services of LVR. Special thanks to all the firms and individuals participating – we look forward to seeing you all next year.

## Brain Game Teams of 2006

**Boylan, Brown, Code, Vigdor & Wilson LLP**

**Chamberlain, D'Amanda, Oppenheimer, & Greenfield**

**Davie Kaplan Chapman Braverman Ernst & Young LLP**

**Harris Beach PLLC**

**Harter, Secrest & Emery LLP**

**Lacy, Katzen, Ryen & Mittleman LLP**

**Manning & Napier Advisors, Inc.**

**Mengel, Metzger, Barr & Co. LLP**

**Nixon Peabody LLP**

**Phillips Lytle LLP**

**Underberg & Kessler LLP**

**Wade, Norris, Heller & Reidy LLP**



*Photographs courtesy of Nicole Brunner*

*Bob Mahar welcomes all to the 6th annual Brain Game. Teams, Harter, Secrest & Emery LLP & Davie Kaplan Chapman Braverman, prepare for the first round.*

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### Office Hours

Monday-Friday 9:00 am – 4:00 pm

Many thanks to Marie Jolkovski for editing  
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Literacy Volunteers of Rochester, Inc.  
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CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

## Bringing Hope for the Future

Dear Friends and Colleagues,

As we look to the future, it is as important to look at the needs of the individual as well as at the macro needs of our society.

Literacy Volunteers of Rochester works with students – one-on-one. Our volunteer tutors have taken on a huge responsibility - to teach the students to read, write, speak, and understand the English language. Over 500 adult students are receiving some level of service from LVR. To be eligible students must read below the eighth grade level, or be non-English speaking.

Tyrone, a student who started receiving services last year spoke at our Annual Meeting in June. He wanted everyone to hear his story. How he now has hope for the future because he can

read. The tutor he works with, Ruby Williams, was seated beside him and he thanked her publicly for opening the door to the future for him. It was a very moving testimonial.

This is what we do. We help individual adult students move toward the future by building their language skills. Our service is free. We welcome all those who qualify.

Please consider a generous donation to help LVR fulfill its mission. A gift of \$250 will support a student for a whole year.

Thank you in advance. Have a great year.

Sincerely,

Tom Kubiak  
Board Member and Annual  
Giving Chair