



# LitBits

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

## Brain Game 2007 Crowns a New Champion!

The 7th Annual LVR Brain Game, presented by Westlaw, was held on Thursday October 4, at the Clarion Hotel in downtown Rochester, raising over \$18,000. Phillips Lytle LLP was crowned as the 2007 champion. Phillips Lytle LLP defeated 13 other legal and accounting/finance firms that came together to test their trivia skills, all for the cause of literacy. Westlaw joined Brain Game this year as the Platinum

Sponsor of the event and joined returning Gold Sponsor, Harter Secrest and Emery as well as first time Gold Sponsor, Excellus Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Rochester. Messenger Post participated as a Bronze Sponsor.

More than 150 people enjoyed good food and drink and the opportunity to cheer on the participating teams who vied for the title of 2007 Brain Game

Champion. The event was hosted again by Kristen Miranda and Evan Dawson from WHAM-TV; Judge Karen Morris served as honorary judge, and John Heveron of Heveron and Heveron, CPA served as timekeeper.

LVR wishes to thank the sponsors, the teams and our volunteer Brain Game committee for making this event a success.

## Brain Game Teams of 2007

Bonadio Group  
 Boylan, Brown, Code, Vigdor & Wilson, LLP  
 Chamberlain, D'Amada, Oppenheimer & Greenfield  
 DocuLegal (played for Ward, Norris, Heller & Reidy LLP)  
 Ernst & Young LLP  
 Harris Beach PLLC  
 Harter, Secrest & Emery LLP  
 Hiscock & Barclay, LLP  
 Lacy Katzen LLP  
 Manning & Napier Advisors, Inc.  
 Nixon Peabody LLP  
 Phillips Lytle LLP  
 Underberg & Kessler LLP  
 Ward, Norris, Heller & Reidy LLP (did not play)



*2007 Brain Game Winners: Jodie Ryan, Kevin Mulvehill, Breanne Skivington, and Ric Tucker of Phillips Lytle LLP.*



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

**Friday, December 7th, 2007**

2-4 p.m. at the LVR Office

# From the Executive Director - Bob Mahar

*Thanks to all of you who are already in the CAR*

Summer can often be a slow, quiet time with vacations, kids home from school, and long days. At LVR traffic in our library, computer use and workshops do slow down a bit, but many other things keep us busy around the office. Summer is also a time for counting – counting all our learners and volunteers and their hours, achievements and gains.

As we begin our fall workshops we are starting a new education process called CAR. CAR stands for Contact Hours,



Assessment and Reporting. We are informing our tutor trainees that we need them to report their contact hours on quarterly and annual reports and to encourage their learners to come in for annual assessments. We also need them to complete their annual reports, sent each spring, to document student achievements.

Over the last several years, you have heard staff and volunteers talk more about the importance of reporting. The information is critical, not just for funding, but to enable us to document the work that learners and volunteers are doing and the impact it is having on lives. In the enclosed annual report, you will see that our learner achievements topped 2,200 this year. Also of note is

that NRS (National Reporting System) educational gains increased by over 70%. These numbers are a direct result of the contributions of learners and volunteers: more than 75% of annual reports were received, 80% of learners returned for their annual assessments, and more than 20,000 volunteer hours were documented again this year.

My thanks to all of you – learners and volunteers (tutors as well as many administrative volunteers including pre-viewers, interviewers, trainers, outreach callers and data entry) as well as LVR staff who worked hard to put these systems in place. You are all certainly in the LVR CAR, and helping it to move forward, as we show the community the fine work you are all doing.

## President's Corner – Jon Lazenby

Despite being late to the Harry Potter reading craze (I hadn't begun the series until this past winter), I was nonetheless standing in line at the East Avenue Wegmans, at midnight, waiting to purchase two copies (one for my wife and one for me) of the seventh and final Harry Potter installment. Because of my late start to these books, I had timed my reading perfectly since I had just finished the sixth book a few weeks before the seventh was released. I must say, getting caught up in the reading frenzy was more fun than I expected. Having that many people, all reading and enjoying the same book at once was something I had not experienced since my childhood days, and even then, only on a much smaller scale.

With that reading experience fresh in



my memory, I am very excited about participating (likely in a passive capacity) in The Big Read, which kicked off here in Rochester on Friday, October 5. The Big Read is a national initiative of the National Endowment for the Arts designed to help reestablish reading for pleasure and enlightenment as a core American value. The Big Read provides citizens with the opportunity to read and discuss a single book. Nearly 200 communities participating across the country will read one of twelve classic American novels (the full list can be found at [www.neabigread.com](http://www.neabigread.com)).

Writers & Books, Rochester's community literary center, is the community organization that was selected by the Arts Endowment to lead our local participation because of the quality of outlined plans to develop and implement a community-wide reading program and the ability to reach and engage new and diverse audiences. Writers & Books will sponsor readings, lectures, book discussions, classes, writing and filmmaking contests, films, panel discussions, and special events across the region throughout October and November.

I encourage you to check out the Writers & Books web site to review some of their plans and events for The Big Read at [www.wab.org](http://www.wab.org).

And so, without further ado, the Rochester selection for the Big Read is Dashiell Hammett's 1930 classic, *The Maltese Falcon*. The Arts Endowment web site declares that this novel, Hammett's third, sets the standard by which all subsequent detective fiction is judged and that "Hammett's clean prose and sharp ear for dialogue produced an exceedingly readable novel with enough twists to keep the reader turning the pages in search of clues."

I look forward to The Big Read for several reasons: I think this is truly a worthy project (indeed, many of LVR's tutors become a tutor simply because of their love for reading); I have neither read the book nor seen the movie; and lastly, this should be fun. So, just as it was with the Harry Potter books, I beseech you not to spoil the ending for me if you happen to see me before I finish the book. And if you feel compelled to talk about *The Maltese Falcon*, The Big Read will provide lots of opportunities for you.

# GIVING CAMPAIGN

Support The Annual

Help LVR  
fulfill its  
mission!

## Changing Lives – One Life at a Time

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

As we continue our work with adult learners, we're also embarking on our Annual Giving Campaign, we ask you to support this important endeavor.

Literacy Volunteers of Rochester provides one-to-one learning opportunities through its volunteer tutors. These tutors provide learners with a chance to learn to read, write, speak, and understand the English language. Nearly 500 learners – people who read below the eighth grade level or who are non-native English speakers – get help each year from LVR.

Learners find hope for a brighter future through LVR. Working with tutors, adult learners often discover their potential and move forward

to more fully participate in life's daily activities. Imagine the joy and greater self-esteem of a learner who can, for the first time, read to his or her child, obtain a driver's license, open a checking account, or understand work-related information!

Please consider a generous donation to help LVR fulfill its mission. A gift of \$250 or more will entitle you to become a member of the LitVol Society, supporting the literacy journeys of many LVR learners.

Thank you and have a great year.

Sincerely,

**Thomas Kubiak**

Treasurer, LVR Board of Directors  
2007 Annual Giving Chair

## Welcome to John Williams, Development Director

LVR is happy to welcome John Williams as our new Development Director. John has taken over for Jane LeBlanc following her retirement this summer. (We hope that Jane will enjoy some additional opportunities to enjoy more golf outings.) John is a recent retiree from Thomson West here in Rochester, where he was an attorney, and officially begins his second career in development, though

he is no stranger to the field. In addition to being an active fundraising volunteer for many local causes, including the Little Theatre, John is also a member of the Association of Fundraising Professionals. John will be focusing his efforts on the LVR Annual Giving appeal, which kicks off this fall, as well as adding his experience and knowledge to many other areas of fundraising for LVR.

## Welcome to Jennifer Eaton, Program Coordinator

LVR is pleased to welcome Jennifer Eaton as our new Program Coordinator. Jennifer takes over for Judy Emerson who left us recently to pursue her new career as a teacher. Jennifer comes to LVR most recently from the corporate world where she worked with Cingular Wireless in customer service for the past 10 years. Jennifer has

a teaching degree and for a time taught migrant families. She is currently completing her master's degree in adult education from Buffalo State. Some of you may recognize Jennifer as a volunteer in our office; she had joined us this spring in preparation for a fall internship for her graduate program.

# Literacy Volunteers of Rochester

## Members of the Board of Directors

President, Jon Lazenby, Esq.  
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Gregory Miller, CPA  
Chris Roberts  
Tara Sciortino, Esq.  
Debbie Warren

## Members of the Staff

Shelley Alfieri, Administrative Assistant  
Jennifer Eaton, Program Coordinator  
Robert Mahar, Executive Director  
John Williams, Development Director  
Mellissa Woodhams, Student Services Coordinator

## Advisory Board

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

## Office Hours

Monday-Friday 9:00 am – 4:00 pm  
Closed Saturdays during July & August  
Thanks to Marie Jolkovski for editing LitBits.  
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Literacy Volunteers of Rochester, Inc.  
249 Highland Avenue  
Rochester, NY 14620-3036

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. Postage

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Rochester, NY  
Permit No. 202

## Changes in LVR OFFICE HOURS



for the fall and winter

*LVR is open Monday through Friday:  
9.00 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Saturdays:  
9.00 a.m. to noon*

### November

Office closed in observance of  
Thanksgiving

Thursday, November 22nd  
Friday, November 23rd  
Saturday, November 24th

### December

Office closed in observance of  
Christmas

Monday, December 24th  
Tuesday, December 25th  
Office closed in observance of  
New Year's

Monday, December 31st  
Tuesday, January 1st

## Tutor Mentors

### Basic – Evening

Mary June Dowd - 392-3811  
Paul Crough - 271-3787

### Basic – Daytime

Susan Boland - 442-2844  
Kathy Hursh - 473-6276

### ESOL – Evenings

Malla Barker - 473-5327  
Peg Warrick - 461-0939

### ESOL – Daytime

Cynthia Goldstein - 334-4557

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

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