

LITERACY NEWS



FLORIDA'S NEWSLETTER FOR LITERACY TUTORS,
TEACHERS, LEARNERS AND SUPPORTERS

Number 115

Fall 2006



The Flight of the Snowbird: How to utilize seasonal volunteer tutors

Florida is well known as a destination for seasonal residents interested in escaping cold weather up north. In 2004, it is estimated that almost 100,000 temporary residents flocked to Florida during the peak winter months.

While many of these folks live an active lifestyle, they are a great source for volunteers if organizations can successfully navigate around the seasonal nature of their residency.

So, how do adult and family literacy organizations, and more importantly, the students, deal with tutor snowbirds' migration cycle?

BEST PRACTICES WITH SNOWBIRDS

Keep students active in summer

One dilemma that arises with snowbird volunteers is how to handle the students whose tutors leave for the summer.

The Martin County Literacy Council (MCLC), will assign two or three students to each active summer tutor. MCLC is now looking at going to a small-group setting where the seasonal volunteer is a supplement or assistant teacher.

Certain volunteers may be interested in staying connected with their student during the summer months. Allow tutors during the summers to stay in touch by e-mail, letters and phone calls. For ESOL students, Sister Exworthy of DePorres Place has seen tutors send letters or call their students on the phone. She also knows tutors that have emailed their basic literacy student exercises and helped them do self-directed study.

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National Study Shows Health Literacy is Significant Issue for Americans

This September the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) released the health literacy component of the 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAAL). The report, *The Health Literacy of America's Adults*, assessed the ability of American adults to read and comprehend health-related information in English.

The first large-scale assessment of its kind, the report showed a very strong correlation between adult literacy skills and grade level attainment and health literacy. The study showed that the same adults (14%) who have below basic prose literacy skills also have below basic health literacy, and 49% of adults who did not complete high school have below

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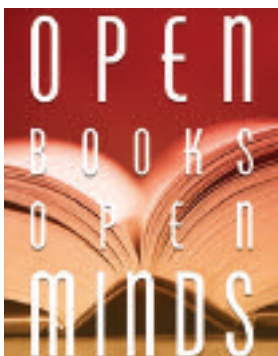
SAVE THE DATE!

Open Books Open Minds

**2007 Florida Literacy
Conference**

May 2-4, Orlando

See page 5 for details.



Florida's Adult and Family Literacy Resource Center

Four Awards that Recognize Outstanding Volunteers

Do you have volunteers who are worthy of special recognition? The following awards provide a few great ways to recognize your volunteers and raise public awareness of your program in the process.

1. Points of Light Awards:

National - The Points of Light Foundation and Volunteer Center National Network engages and mobilizes millions of volunteers who are helping to solve serious social problems in thousands of communities. The "Daily Points of Light Award" may be of particular interest as it is given each weekday in honor of recipients who exemplify the best of volunteerism, a sense of caring and responsibility for others that connects citizens and solves community problems. For more information, visit: www.pointsoflight.org.

State - The Governor's Points of Light Award recognizes a Florida resident or organization that demonstrated exemplary service to the community. Award recipients are announced weekly. A panel of judges comprised of leaders in the areas of volunteerism and service evaluate all nominations and make recommendations to Governor Bush. The Volunteer Florida Foundation manages the program. For more information, or to nominate, please visit: www.VolunteerFloridaFoundation.org.

2. The President's Volunteer Service Award:

Originated from President Bush's 2002 State of the Union challenge for every American to volunteer for 4,000 hours, the Presidential Volunteer Service Award recognizes and honors

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Fundraising Idea: Alphabet Affair

Each summer Learn to Read Jacksonville hosts an "Alphabet Affair." Now in its third year, the next event is a "Celebration of C" as they work their way through the alphabet.

Guests come in costumes beginning with the letter "C" (e.g. cat woman, chicken, Cat in the Hat®) and enjoy food beginning with the letter "C" (e.g. chicken, cheesecake, cola), live music, dancing, chance drawings, a silent auction and of course, a costume contest. This event has a low admission fee to attract the "average Joe" - \$25 per person. Volunteers, individuals from small and large corporations, friends and families regularly attend. The venue, which sits on the St. John's River with an outdoor bar and balcony, is donated. Guests can enjoy a beverage and the picturesque view of the river and downtown skyline.

Executive Director, Heather Corey said, "This past year we had a "Barnyard Bash" and it was a huge success! Guests dressed in western wear or as something or someone that started with the letter "B". The energy of this second year was so exciting! Some highlights were live music by the Back Alley Blues Band, bar-b-que chicken, baked beans, banana pudding and costumes such as a bingo card, bikers and bees."

"There are so many wonderful organizations with great causes in the First Coast area that we hold the event at 6:30 pm on a Friday evening. This reduces competing with large national organizations for Saturday activities. People can come right after work. Both of our main sponsors have already committed for 2007. Our fundraising net goal is at least \$15,000. The event maintained a low expense ratio," said Corey.

For more information, contact Heather Corey at (904) 399-8894 x 13 or h.corey@learntoreadinc.org and mark your calendar with the "Celebration of C" on Friday, June 8, 2007.



Bikers at the 2006 Barnyard Bash.

Submit Your News

Has your organization received funding or planned a major public event? Do you know something that would benefit other adult and family literacy practitioners? Share it with us!

FLC invites you to submit short articles and other news items related to funding, events, staff, hot topics, research and more. Contact Kelley Jain, Education & Training Coordinator, at jaink@floridaliteracy.org or (407) 246-7110 x 203.

Literacy Ambassador Program, January 18-19 Grosvenor Resort at the Walt Disney World Resort, Orlando

Do you know an adult learner with an interesting story to share?

This dynamic workshop prepares adult learners to become effective advocates and spokespeople for their organizations and adult literacy in general.

Adult learner sessions will include:

- Introduction to Effective Public Speaking
- Developing and Making Presentations
- Adult Learner Involvement and Leadership
- Conducting Interviews with the Media
- Adult Learner Advocacy

A special session for program representatives will be scheduled to review public relations and marketing strategies and discuss how to create opportunities for students to share their stories through various venues such as television, radio, newspaper, and community organizations.

Travel assistance is available to attend this event.

Applications are available on-line at www.floridaliteracy.org or by contacting Kelley Jain at jaink@floridaliteracy.org.

FLC Seeks Trainer Coaches

Do you know a tutor trainer who may be willing to help mentor a new trainer?

In 2007, FLC will launch a new resource for tutor trainers and program administrators: a corps of coaches for tutor trainers. This all-volunteer group will work with trainers at community based adult literacy programs to provide guidance, feedback, and resources to new trainers. Travel assistance will be provided as needed.

Coaches will not take the place of the current trainer(s) by providing tutor training workshops. In conjunction with the project, the Coalition will also introduce a discussion list for tutor trainers.

If you know an experienced trainer who may be interested in volunteering or if you would like more information about obtaining a trainer coach, please contact Kelley Jain, Education & Training Coordinator, at jaink@floridaliteracy.org or (407) 246-7110 x 203.

Adult Learner Stories Wanted!

The Florida Literacy Coalition's 3rd Annual Adult Learner Essay Book

The Florida Adult and Family Literacy Resource Center is proud to announce the launch of its third annual Adult Learner Writing Campaign. Adult learners throughout Florida are invited to submit original short stories, poems, or autobiographical narratives to be included in a published book that will debut at the 2007 Florida Literacy Conference this May in Orlando.

The goal of this book is to allow adult learners the opportunity to build confidence while also improving their reading, writing, and critical thinking skills. Organizational representatives can use this book as a way to promote how their programs are having a positive influence within their communities.



The 2006 adult learner essay book.

Adult learners and their tutors/teachers are encouraged to work together in writing, typing, editing and submitting a written piece. Teaching tips/exercises to help start the writing process can be found at www.floridaliteracy.org. We ask that completed pieces be submitted by e-mail to jaink@floridaliteracy.org or by floppy disk or CD only by February 14, 2007. Submissions should be no longer than two pages (700 words). Only one submission per adult learner is allowed. Entries will be edited for readability.

Authors are also asked to complete a "Permission to be Published" form, which can be found at www.floridaliteracy.org. Completed forms can be faxed to Kelley Jain at (407) 246-7104. Authors can choose to remain anonymous or have a short biographical paragraph included with their submission. Each author will be invited to the Florida Literacy Conference on May 2-4 and will also receive a free copy of the book. Free copies of the book will be made available to all participating literacy organizations. Please feel free to distribute this announcement widely throughout your program.

If you have any questions concerning this unique opportunity, contact Kelley Jain at (407) 246-7110 x 203 or jaink@floridaliteracy.org.

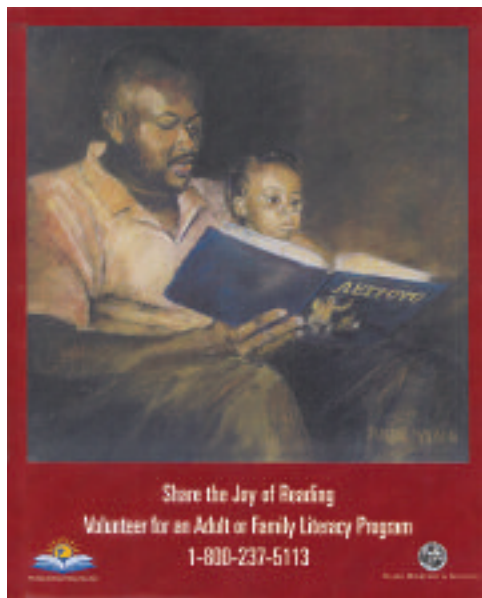
Breaking the Cycle of Intergenerational Illiteracy

One of my favorite childhood memories is sitting on the couch, tucked in beside my mother, listening to her read to my brother and me. This was important not only for the bonding time we shared, but because parent-child activities such as this have been found to improve children's language skills and heighten their interest in books.

But what about homes where the parent is not a reader or struggles with reading? Research shows that the education level of the mother affects preschool children and school-aged children alike. Children whose mothers complete high school earn higher scores on national achievement tests and perform better in school than those whose mothers did not graduate from high school. In fact, the higher the mother's education level, the better the child performs on tests and in school. (National Center for Family Literacy, January, 2003).

There are strategies that instructors can use to help break the cycle of intergenerational illiteracy. They include emphasizing the strengths of the parents, promoting interactive reading, and increasing the use of longer and more complex sentences. Building on strengths promotes success and self-esteem and fuels the desire to persist and continue. Interactive reading enhances both the role of the reader and the "readee" by helping them to become actively involved in the text.

The goal of interactive reading, also known as dialogic reading is to get the child talking. It involves the child, the readee,



FLC worked with artist Sharon Wilson to design this wonderful poster that shows the true Joy of Reading. Call 1-800-237-5113 to order your free copy.

Interactive/Dialogic Reading Tips for Parents

- Read with your child at least 3 times per week.
- Use the book's pictures to make up a story—then have the child make a story based on those pictures.
- Stop and guess what might happen next in the book.
- Talk with your child about daily life—What is for dinner? What are the plans for the day? What happened while you were at work?

participating with the text. The child leads a discussion about the book, while the parent listens and asks "what" questions. However, the parent remains the follower in the discussion.

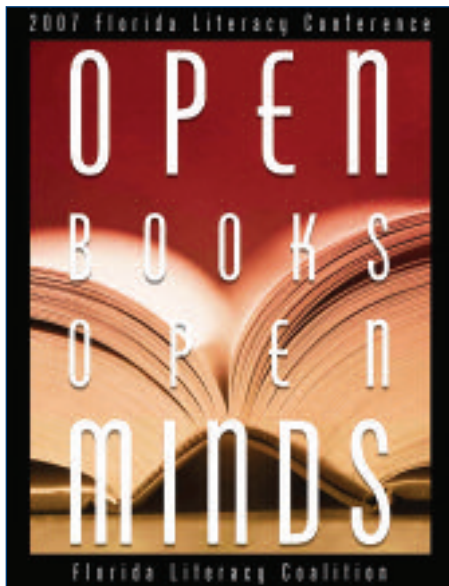
One indicator of a child's language proficiency is Mean Length of Utterance (MLU), which is roughly the average number of words spoken together. A higher MLU indicates a higher level of language proficiency that in turn is a predictor of reading success. If parents increase their MLU, then research shows that the child's MLU will also increase. In other words, encourage parents to talk to their children. Talk about what is happening. Talk about choices for supper. Talk about what happened during the day. Talk about their favorite television show. And then, they should listen to their child.

Parents at a lower reading level face even more challenges. Consider three strategies that can be easily introduced into a family literacy program. **Talk and play** is a simple idea with many benefits: Parents take time to talk and listen to their child. They should have the child tell stories and they should tell stories to the child. **Make-believe-alouds** are a way non-reading parents can share a book with a child. The parents use the pictures to create their own story. This story might or might not be the same as the text in the book. Then it is the child's turn and he/she can make-believe-aloud too.

Wordless picture books are books written with few or no words; the illustrations carry the narrative. There are more ideas for the use of wordless picture books in a resource from the National Center for Family Literacy, *Talking About Wordless Picture Books*. Users can access it from the Florida Literacy Coalition's website at <http://www.floridaliteracy.org/> and click on the family literacy link in the news items. There is also a link to a bibliography of wordless picture books.

A parent is the child's first best teacher. Who knows- maybe one of these strategies can help form the basis of the next generation's childhood memories.

by Susan Hancock



2007 Florida Literacy Conference

May 2-4

Pre-conference May 1

The Orlando Marriott Lake Mary

Registration Prices:

Full Conference Early Bird (postmarked by March 9):
Member \$170, Non-Member \$195

Full Conference:
Adult Learner \$70

(no fee for adult learners attending only on May 2nd for Adult Learner Day)

Call for Presenters!

To help make the 2007 Conference a success, the Coalition seeks session proposals from adult education, literacy and family literacy practitioners and other potential presenters throughout the state and nation. We welcome your participation and encourage you to propose a session by December 13 with our easy-to-complete online form at www.floridaliteracy.org. To request a session proposal form through mail or FAX, contact Kelley Jain, Education & Training Coordinator, at (407) 246-7110 x 203 or conference@floridaliteracy.org.

Make Your Nominations for the 2007 Florida Literacy Awards

Visit www.floridaliteracy.org for nomination form and procedure. Nominations are now being accepted for the 2007 State Literacy Awards, which recognize outstanding accomplishment and achievement of individuals and organizations supporting adult and family literacy throughout Florida. The awards will be presented on May 3 at a special dinner and ceremony during the 2007 Florida Literacy Conference.

Award Categories

- The Mary J. Brogan Leadership Award (honors a literacy leader in Florida)
 - Flight for Freedom Award (honors an outstanding adult learner)
Winner's program will receive a \$100 New Readers Press gift certificate.
 - Outstanding Literacy Volunteer Award
Winner's program will receive a \$100 New Readers Press gift certificate.
- Excellence in Education Award (honors an outstanding literacy program/organization)
Winner will receive a \$100 New Readers Press gift certificate.
 - Outstanding Business Partner Award
 - Outstanding Media Partner Award

Become an Americorps*VISTA Project



Florida Literacy Coalition would like to invite community-based organizations to apply to become part of our statewide

Americorps*VISTA Literacy Project. As a part of the project, your organization can recruit an Americorps*VISTA member to work full time for your organization. There is little to no financial cost to your organization, the living stipend and all benefits are covered by Americorps*VISTA.



VISTA focuses on finding long-term solutions to the problems of poverty by helping programs increase the capability of low-income people to improve the conditions of their lives. To learn more you can visit our website at www.floridaliteracy.org and click on the VISTA announcement under Literacy News or contact Greg Smith at 407-246-7110 x 206.

*The Flight of the Snowbird: How to utilize seasonal volunteer tutors
(Continued from Cover)*

Students may be dedicated enough to take a hiatus, and then continue tutoring with the same tutors when they return. Sometimes, however, this is not the case. Martin County had problems retaining students with this method. For this reason, they will not allow students to wait for their tutors; students are automatically assigned a new tutor once the seasonal volunteer leaves for the summer.

Collaborate with the local community

Networking and collaborating with other organizations can create opportunities to share potential volunteers, good ideas and key information. Perhaps other organizations know where to find snowbird volunteers, or are able to refer prospective tutors. Together, literacy organizations and other adult providers in the local community can best find the right fit for seasonal volunteers and their schedules.

Darlene Kostrub, executive director of the Palm Beach Literacy Coalition, finds meeting and strategizing with other adult non profit service providers to be very helpful. Palm Beach has an adult providers' community group that meets once a month. This way, the community ensures that it is utilizing all its volunteers. The Coalition knows other organizations' needs, so if it can't use them, it can appropriately refer volunteers to other community organizations.

Be Flexible and Creative

"Don't turn snowbirds away," says Elizabeth Acosta, former executive director of the Literacy Volunteers of Collier County. Try to be flexible and work with their schedules. While snowbirds are only available for a portion of the year, it is not untypical for them

to tutor with greater frequency and intensity when they are around. Sometimes they will tutor three or more times a week.

Some literacy organizations offer individual or small group training if seasonal volunteers cannot make scheduled tutor training. Consider letting experienced tutors skip the training or arrange for them to train up north. This way, the snowbirds only need a basic orientation to get started.

Many organizations have small groups or tandem volunteer tutoring. Two tutors will teach a small group of students. By doing this, it relieves some of the tutor's pressure if one cannot attend. Martin County is moving towards small groups, with snowbirds acting as a substitute or assistant teacher.

Seasonal volunteers can also help at a distance. If snowbirds have access to a computer and the internet, organizations can ask them to research topics, edit documents or web pages, or help write.

Break down projects that are manageable for the time volunteers are here, for example, organizing an office library or filing. Acosta had a seasonal tutor who was very handy with office maintenance, saving the organization time and money in hiring a contractor.

Remember, flexibility is the key to a successful partnership between snowbirds and literacy organizations. Most importantly, tell snowbirds and all volunteers "thank you" for their valuable time and assistance.

Upcoming Literacy Events

December 2-5

National Workforce Association 5th Annual Conference

Location: St. Petersburg, FL

Sponsor: National Workforce
Association

The cornerstone of the NWA annual meetings is the Annual Conference. It is here that NWA members come together to elect new officers, and most importantly, the NWA President and the CEO lay out the goals of the association for the next year.

<http://www.nwaonline.org/>

December 6-9

American Reading Forum Annual Conference

Location: Sanibel Island, FL

Sponsor: American Reading Forum

The American Reading Forum is a nonprofit, professional organization composed of individuals who share an interest in the improvement of reading. While the American Reading Forum is an organization that facilitates the dissemination of ideas and research, it places highest priority on providing its members opportunities for critical discussion of ideas, issues, research and emerging research interests and paradigms.

<http://www.americanreadingforum.org>

December 8

Accommodations and Strategies for Struggling Students

Location: Blountstown, FL

Sponsor: Region I Panhandle Adult
Literacy Center

Learn some of the indicators of learning disabilities. Find out what accommodations and strategies may help your struggling student.

Contact: Glenda Norvell
(850) 922-5343 ext. 256

January 17

Region III Leadership Training

Location: Vero Beach, FL

Leadership sustainability, student transition, online learning, DOE update, data collection & reporting.

Contact: Chrissy Burkett at
aimcsb@aol.com

January 18 & 19

Literacy Ambassador Training

Location: Orlando, FL

Adult learners will gain public speaking skills and learn how to share their stories. Program managers will learn to how to work with adult learners to promote their programs.

Contact: Kelley Jain at
jaink@floridaliteracy.org

January 27

Free ESOL Tutor Training Workshop

Location: Lake City, FL

Increase your ESOL tutoring skills by attending this free, dynamic training that is open to new or experienced tutors.

www.floridaliteracy.org

February 2

A Framework for Understanding Poverty

Presenter: Dr. Ruby Payne

Location: Pompano Beach, FL

The seminar offers proven tools that educators and agency representatives can immediately use to improve the quality of their instruction, tutoring and/or community outreach work.

Contact: Region V Adult Literacy
Center at (800) 273-1030 or
regionv@pbcliteracy.org

March 4-6

16th Annual National Conference on Family Literacy

Location: Orlando, FL

This unique professional development conference draws together experts from multiple disciplines to explore the latest in research-based strategies for serving children, adults and families. Discover new approaches and resources that will help you enhance and expand literacy services that meet the needs of your community.
www.familit.org

March 21-24

41st Annual TESOL Convention and Exhibit (TESOL 2007)

Location: Seattle, WA

Network with more than 6,500 of your peers from 100 countries.
www.tesol.org

May 1-4

Florida Literacy Conference

Location: Orlando, FL

www.floridaliteracy.org

Children's Book Drive a Success



The Orlando Magic, Scholastic Books and the Florida Literacy Coalition have again joined forces to collect and

distribute children's books to literacy programs statewide.

Donated books collected through the Orlando Magic book bins were combined with 3,400 new books from Scholastic. These books were then distributed to over 20 family literacy and after school programs throughout Florida. Special thanks to the Orlando Magic, Scholastic Books, Literacy USA and the Region 1 Literacy Center for their support of this special initiative.

Focus on Adult Learners Literacy Ambassador, Andre Rastica

Andre Rastica, an ESOL student with Lee County Literacy Volunteers, is polylingual.

The twenty-one year old Czech Republic native speaks German, Czech, Polish and American English. Rastica first learned a little British English, but after moving to Florida five short years ago with his family, he said, "Now when I hear British English it sounds so weird!"

Currently, the rapidly growing demand for bilingual, trilingual and even polylingual speakers is so great, Rastica could easily obtain a job as a translator. Instead, he's going to take on another endeavor: studying biochemistry in college next year, a field so full of science jargon that one could argue it's a separate language unto itself.

With so much ambition and skill, it's hard to believe Rastica was nervous before his first tutoring lesson in 2002. "I was worried because I didn't really speak English," he said. Fast forward four years later and he has his GED and is now a Florida Literacy Ambassador.



Rastica started ESOL lessons with a tutor from Lee County Literacy Volunteers. His father was the first to start ESOL lessons, but left the program after a few months. Andre picked up the ball and called his dad's former tutor to see if she would work with him.

"It's great because the tutoring is one-on-one. I would go to classes with twenty other people and have questions and the teacher wouldn't have time to answer them," Rastica said.

Once his tutoring began, Rastica said, "I would write down questions or a word I heard during the week on TV and she [Rastica's tutor] would explain the word to me, or if it was slang, tell me it was incorrect."

Rastica thrived under the one-on-one attention and was able to learn, listen and understand English very quickly.

He did so well, Rastica participated in the 2006 Literacy Ambassador Training, sponsored by Florida's Adult and Family Literacy Resource Center. The Literacy Ambassador Program brings together adult learners and program managers for a two-day training on how to effectively promote literacy at the local and state level. There, he was coached on how to tell his story for public speaking engagements and media interviews.

Rastica has advice to students looking to start literacy lessons, *"You have to be interested and work hard,"* he said. *"If you have a question, write it down to remember it. Read newspapers; read what you love."*

FLC's next Literacy Ambassador Program is January 18-19, 2007 in Orlando. For more information, please contact Kelley Jain at jaink@floridaliteracy.org.

Resources

FOCUS ON FAMILY LITERACY

PBSKIDS is a website that offers many fun activities for children and/or children and parents to enjoy together. It offers games, songs to sing and pictures to color based on many of the characters from the PBS television shows. There is a link to a second site PBSKIDSGO that has more games to explore.

<http://pbskids.org/>

<http://pbskids.org/go/index.html>

PBSPARENTS This site offers activities designed for parents and children to share that build thinking skills and creativity. It offers information to enhance a child's development and growth. However, even if you don't have a child to share it with, check it out. It is fun all by yourself!

<http://www.pbs.org/parents/creativity>

Parent Guides for Non-English Speakers- You can download tip sheets that suggest fun ways that parents can help children read. Reading Rockets and Colorín Colorado have created parent guides for non-English speakers in

Spanish, Haitian Creole, Arabic, Russian, Traditional Chinese, Hmong, Vietnamese, Tagalog and Korean. Tips for parents with children in grades K-3 are also available.

<http://www.readingrockets.org/article/7833>

RECOMMENDED READING

The Wednesday Surprise by Eve Bunting-

This is a book about Anna and her grandmother. Every Wednesday evening Grandma comes over with a big bag of books and they work on a surprise for Anna's dad. When his birthday rolls around there is a new reader in the family, however you might be surprised who taught who to read.

We welcome your recommendations on books with a literacy theme. We are looking for all types of books for all types of readers for this resource. If you have a book you would like to recommend, please send an email to hancocks@floridaliteracy.org or call Susan Hancock at 407-246-7110 x 202.

Four Awards that Recognize Outstanding Volunteers
(Continued from from page 2)

volunteers to set a standard for service to others. Awardees are individuals, families and groups that have achieved a certain standard – measured by the number of hours served over a 12-month period or cumulative hours earned over the course of a lifetime. Non-profit groups can also become Certifying Organizations. Doing so offers the opportunity to distribute the Presidential Volunteer Service Award. For more information, visit <http://www.presidentialserviceawards.gov>.

3. Jefferson Award:

Co-founded by Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis, the Jefferson Award system honors volunteers both nationally and locally. The system of recognition, designed to complement your efforts, will tie in your winners to local, regional and national media. Their "Unsung Heroes" awards honor volunteers, who are not paid as well as paid professionals, who are going well beyond their expected duties. The Florida Literacy Coalition is certified to distribute awards in Central Florida. Call Greg Smith at 407-246-7110 x206. For more information on awards for other Florida communities, visit <http://www.aips.org>.

4. Outstanding Literacy Volunteer Award – Presented by the Florida Literacy Coalition:

The award honors a literacy volunteer who has demonstrated exceptional service and commitment in either tutoring or program operations. This award may be given as recognition for a specific outstanding achievement, or for ongoing exceptional service. The recipient will be recognized at the Florida Literacy Awards Banquet and will receive a \$100 gift certificate from New Readers Press. Nominations due Friday, February 9, 2007. For more information, visit www.floridaliteracy.org.

Funding Opportunities

First Generation of College Funds—During the final hours in the 2006 Legislative Session an amendment was passed authorizing scholarships for “first generation in college” students.

<https://www.floridastudentfinancialaid.org/SSFAD/pdf/FGMG.06-07.pdf>

Comprehensive Family Literacy Services – This competitive grant is designed to support and improve family literacy programs through the following activities:

1. Interactive literacy activities between parents and their children.
2. Training for parents on how to be the primary teacher for their children and full partners in the education of their children.
3. Parent literacy training that leads to economic self-sufficiency.
4. An age-appropriate education to prepare children for success in school and life experiences.

<http://www.firn.edu/doe/dwdgrants/grants.htm>

Tutor Tip—Here is a tip to share with your students.

Picture Driven Web Search

When you search for a topic on Google or other search engines most often they will show you many pages of site references. Then you sift through the references until you find the information you desired. This can be a very time consuming task. If your student is not a fluent reader can be an insurmountable task.

One student wants to share his method for solving this problem; he searches by image. Google, Yahoo, Ask.Com, and MSN

Search all offer a search by image feature. The results are displayed as pictures, thus making the winnowing process easier and less reading intensive.



Dollar General , CAAL Launch Independent Blue-Ribbon Adult Literacy Commission

On October 9, 2006 Dollar General Corporation and the Council for Advancement of Adult Literacy (CAAL) jointly announced the launch of the independent blue-ribbon National Commission on Adult Literacy. The Dollar General Literacy Foundation, with a donation of \$1 million, is the lead funder of the initiative. Its Chairman and CEO, David Perdue, is the Commission's chairman. CAAL is the grantee organization and is managing the study. The Commission is comprised of a former governor, Fortune 500 CEOs, former congressional and cabinet members and other business and education leaders.

The Commission will examine all components of the adult literacy enterprise in order to make recommendations on how to effectively chart a productive and comprehensive future course for adult education and literacy service in America. The challenge is to bring about informed federal and state public policy changes, motivate more extensive involvement by the business community, and move the adult education and literacy system out of the shadows into the education mainstream. The overall Commission goal is to increase American economic vitality and competitiveness, civic engagement, and quality of life -- all essential to maintaining our democratic society and our nation as a world leader.

For more information, including a list of Commission members, go to www.caalusa.org.

National Study Shows Health Literacy is Significant Issue for Americans (Continued from Cover)

basic health literacy. Overall, the majority of America's adults (53%) have intermediate health literacy skills, 22% have basic health literacy skills and only 12% possess proficient health literacy.

Older Americans and certain minority populations are among those most at risk.

Adults 65 and older have lower health literacy than younger age groups, and White and Asian/Pacific Islanders have higher average health literacy than Black, Hispanic and Native American adults. Hispanic adults have lower health literacy than people in any other ethnic/racial group, with 41% having below basic health literacy, a fact that is especially relevant to Florida, which has the third highest Hispanic population in the nation.

The study serves to reinforce and validate existing research in the field showing that low health literacy is a significant factor in providing for the health care needs of our citizens. Many health related materials including drug prescriptions/directions, medical insurance forms and release forms are written at a level much too high for many patients to understand. The Medicare Part D application form, for example, is written at a college level, yet 57% of Medicare recipients are below an intermediate level of health literacy.

The full study is available at <http://nces.ed.gov/NAAL>

Health Literacy Teaching Resources

Ask Me 3

A quick, effective tool designed to improve health literacy promotes three simple but essential questions that patients should ask their doctors.

1. What is my main problem?
2. What do I need to do?
3. Why is it important for me to do this?

For more information and free materials go to www.askme3.com
Free Ask Me 3 adult literacy lesson plans are available by calling FLC (407) 246-7110.

Adult Education Health Literacy Tool Kit (Virginia)

<http://www.aelweb.vcu.edu/publications/healthlit/>



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Florida Literacy Hotline: (800) 237-5113

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