

Literacy Notes

Winter 2013

A Piece of Thunder

Of course, learning to read is a dream come true, but for one adult learner, another dream came true thanks to his tutor **Suzanne Parker**. Avid OKC Thunder fan **Andrew Rains** was invited to attend a basketball game as the guest of Thunder employee **Angela Parker**, Suzanne's daughter.

Rains, who has not missed a single televised Thunder game in five years, was at the Chesapeake

Arena in November to witness the Thunder victory over the Golden State Warriors. Rains received an additional thrill when player **Kevin Durant** visited with him during the pregame warm-up and signed the jersey Rains was wearing. The shirt was also signed by player Nick Collison, the Thunder's broadcast play-by-play man Brian Davis, and television color analyst Grant Long. Rains was also presented a "#1 Thunder" home jersey.

Parker and Rains are part of the Opportunities Industrialization Center literacy program in Oklahoma City. Because of Rains' interest in the Thunder, Parker often uses *Oklahoman* newspaper sports articles to help Andrew practice reading. The *Oklahoman* article following this game was familiar material as it featured the story of Andrew's birthday adventure.



Kevin Durant signs Andrew Rains shirt before the Thunder game on November 18, 2012.

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Oklahoma Tutors Step Forward

Representatives from nineteen local literacy and adult education programs recently attended a workshop presented by national literacy expert, Jayme Adelson-Goldstein. Attendees learned effective strategies to help English language learners practice vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation skills needed to develop life skill, civics, workplace, and

Continued on page 2

Check Inside

TV411 Webinar	2
Teddy Bears Bring Comfort.....	2
Health Literacy Summit Wrap up.	3
Learner Successes	4
Coming Up.....	5
Reviewing Health Materials.....	5
Honors Awarded in Woodward ..	5

TV411 Webinar



Literacy representatives from throughout the state participated in a webinar to learn how to use *TV411* instructional materials. *TV411* is an Emmy Award winning series that uses video, print, and interactive on-line lessons to help adults improve reading, comprehension, writing, math, and more. The materials can be used as stand-alone curricula or to support other tutoring materials. Oklahoma tutors and learners have free access to the videos at getreadingoklahoma.org and many local literacy programs have dvd copies of the program and the related print materials. If you are looking for something to enhance your tutoring, try *TV411*.

Tutors Step Forward

continued from page 1

academic competencies. “This was a great workshop! I can’t wait to share the ideas with my learners”, said Mary Young, director of Project READ in Edmond.

The Literacy Resource Office provided Goldstein’s instructional book, *Step Forward* to each participant. To borrow a copy of *Step Forward*, contact the Literacy Resource Office.



Step Forward participants with Jayme Adelson-Goldstein [center, first row]

Teddy Bears Bring Comfort

Longtime tutor and board member of the McAlester Regional Literacy Council **Lucille Martinez** was given \$5 from a stranger and told to “have a blessed day.” The generous gesture gave Lucille an idea. She used the money, along with some of her own, to purchase ten stuffed animals. The cuddly animals will be used to comfort children at the local shelter and by the McAlester Police Department to give to children involved in accidents or crises situations. News of the project spread and a playpen was set up in the McAlester Public Library to collect donations. As of early December, more than 150 animals had been donated. It all started with a gift from a stranger. For more information, contact the McAlester Regional Literacy Council at 918-421-4931.



Lucille Martinez [second from left] presents donated bears.

Health Literacy Summit Wrap up

Oklahoma's first Health Literacy Summit, held in October, received positive reviews from literacy and health professionals alike. Attendees took advantage of a wide variety of sessions presented by state and national health literacy experts.

One of the summit highlights was **Toni Cordell**, a former adult learner from Oklahoma. Cordell described how low literacy affected health decisions throughout her life. The connections between health and literacy were brought home when Toni shared how she had once unknowingly agreed to surgery by signing medical papers she could not read.

Thanks to presenters, attendees, sponsors, exhibitors, and planners for making this premier event a success.

To view additional photographs from this event, please visit the news section of the Resource Office website—goo.gl/zmTfT.



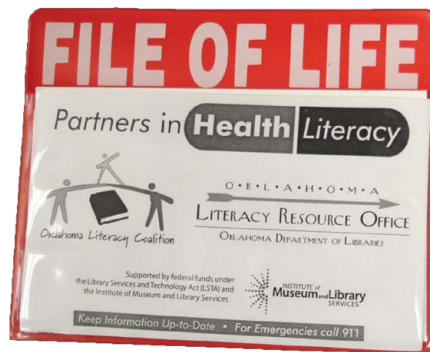
[clockwise from upper left] **Adriana Chavez and Jane Douglass** discover new literacy websites ☺ **Dr. Bella Carroll** reviews a medical form with **Ural Miles III** ☺ **Mary Surbeck** (left), with **Jari Askins** and **Rebecca Barker**, welcomed attendees to Oklahoma's first Health Literacy Summit

New Health Literacy Resources

Oklahoma's new health literacy website was unveiled in October and is the place to visit for health literacy information and resources. Check it out at okhealthequity.org

Updated national health rankings suggest Oklahoma has moved up 3 spots to 43rd place. The continued low ranking is attributed to high numbers of smokers, high prevalence of obesity and diabetes, and limited availability of primary care physicians. For more information visit americashealthrankings.org/rankings

As part of new health literacy efforts, the Literacy Resource Office and Oklahoma Literacy Coalition are pleased to offer tutors and adult learners *Files*



of Life. The fill-in-the blank *File of Life* card provides quick access to important information in case of an emergency. Cards are placed in magnetized envelopes that can be affixed to a handy location such as the refrigerator. The cards are also helpful tools for adult learners to have in hand when they visit their doctor. Contact your local literacy program or the Oklahoma Literacy Resource Office to get your free

File of Life.

For free, plain language health information on a variety of topics one can visit www.acpfoundation.org/materials-and-guides

Hello and Goodbye

- ▶ Best wishes to **Carole Johnson** with the Cherokee County Literacy Council in Tahlequah who retired after many years as program director. Welcome to new director **Sharon Tar-rance**;



- ▶ Welcome to **Jan Wills**, new director of the Northwest OK Literacy Council in Woodward;

- ▶ Goodbye to **Lisette Caveny** who retired from the Wagoner Literacy Group. Welcome to new director **Tyanna Trippany**;

- ▶ Welcome to **Charlene Factory**, new director

Best wishes to **Barbara Belk** who recently retired as director of the Creek County Literacy Program in Sapulpa after nineteen years. Under her direction, the literacy program grew to a premier literacy organization.

of Oklahoma City Family Literacy Program formerly called Oklahoma City Even Start. Best wishes to the previous director, **Vicki Land**, who is now working at Smart Start;

- ▶ Retirement wishes to **John McCarroll**, former executive director of Oklahoma Education Television Authority, and welcome to new OETA executive director **Dan Schiedel**;

- ▶ Welcome to **Rachel Richardson**, new literacy assistant with the Great Plains Literacy Council in Altus. Rachel will assist with the health literacy initiative, Project HELP (Health, English & Literacy Partnership);

- ▶ Congratulations to **Joni Dyer** who retired as the executive director of the Oklahoma Literacy Coalition. Welcome to new Coalition director **Angela Spindle**.

- ▶ Greetings to Creek County Literacy Program's new director **Melissa Muncy**

Learner Successes

Congratulations to—

- ▶ New United States citizens **Francine Drake** and **Alex Garrido** who received literacy assistance from tutors **Steve Francis** and **Ida Fay Winters** and the Great Plains Literacy Council in Altus, and to **Rosa Maldonado** who became a citizen with the help of tutors **Willie Sims** and **Elsa Garcia**;

- ▶ **Terry Terflinger** with Bartlesville Public Library Literacy Services for presenting at Oklahoma's first Health Literacy Summit. Terry was also featured in the September issue of the national publication *The Change Agent*.



Yolanda Moreno became a United States citizen with the help of tutor **Steve Francis** and the support of the Great Plains Literacy Council in Altus. Yolanda enrolled with the local literacy program in 2010 and worked hard to prepare for the citizenship test. "Becoming a US citizen is a present I have given myself," said Moreno. "I feel so relieved and happy to have the rights and responsibilities as a citizen of my adopted country."

Thanks to

- ▶ Rural Oklahoma Community Foundation for awarding a \$5,000 grant to the Great Plains Literacy Council in Altus;
- ▶ Sarkeys for providing \$24,183 to Community Literacy Centers, Inc. in Oklahoma City;
- ▶ Miami Rotary Club, Fraternal Order of Police #121, Miami Police Department, and WalMart for supporting the Miami Literacy Council.

Coming Up

April 9

Join hundreds of children at the Oklahoma City Zoo as they celebrate reading and literacy during *Read Across Oklahoma Day*. Details will be posted at www.odl.state.ok.us/literacy as plans progress.

April 18

Tutors, learners, and literacy staff are invited to attend a one-day continuing education event at the National Center for Employee Development Conference Center in Norman.

The event will begin with an inspirational presentation by **Nelson Lauver** who learned to read at age 29 after being diagnosed with learning disabilities. Lauver went on to become a successful public speaker, storyteller, nationally syndicated journalist, and author. He is the host and creator of *The American Storyteller Radio Journal* where his daily short stories entertain and inspire millions of listeners each year. Following his presentation, Lauver will work with adult learners to explore the storytelling process, discuss where to find inspiration, and practice writing thoughts into stories. In a concurrent session, tutors and literacy staff will learn

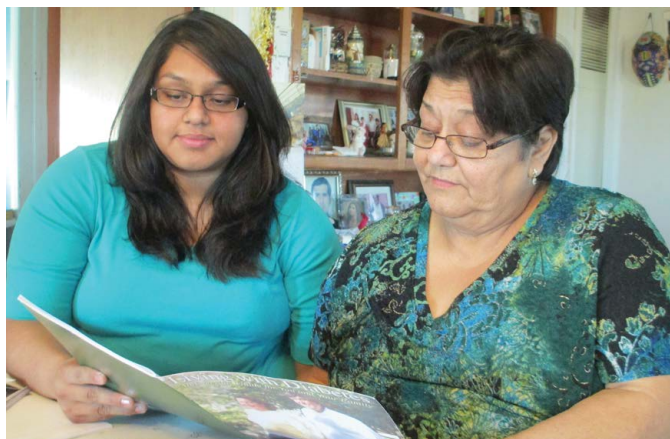


techniques to help adult learners develop skills and strategies necessary for reading success. This *Phonics Intervention* workshop will demonstrate a systematic approach to strengthening the decoding and encoding skills necessary for independent reading and writing. *Phonics Intervention* lessons build on prior learning and can be used to supplement any tutoring curriculum.

Be sure to attend the awards luncheon and help celebrate the accomplishments of the *Bill and Carol Krueger Adult Learners of the Year*. Contact Angela Spindle at deonnejerome@gmail.com for nomination applications. These continuing education opportunities are offered by the Oklahoma Literacy Coalition and Oklahoma Literacy Resource Office. Mark your calendar and watch for details coming soon.

Reviewing Health Materials

Volunteers, tutors, and adult learners in Altus, Tulsa, Claremore, Edmond, and Sapulpa, were invited to review and comment on new diabetes materials distributed by the American College of Physicians. Reviewers evaluated the materials for content, ease of reading, and understandability. An Oklahoma physician also volunteered to provide feedback. While most of the national review sites were medical facilities, these Oklahoma sites were local literacy programs participating in health literacy activities.



Adult learner **Mariana Briones** and tutor **Elsa Castro**, both with the Great Plains Literacy Council in Altus, review material on diabetes.

Honors Awarded in Woodward

The Northwest Oklahoma Literacy Council in Woodward recently established three new awards to honor members of the literacy program. The *Eloisa Tapia Award*, named for a longtime literacy advocate and tutor, is presented to tutors who have made outstanding commitments to literacy. The 2012 recipients were tutors **Mauren Mora** and **Silvia Routh**.

The *Jessie Vanderpool GED Award* recognizes adult learners who have participated in literacy services for at least 12 months and who earned their GED. Recipients receive \$50 to cover part of the GED test fee. Congratulations to 2012 winner **Christina Perez**.

A third award honors longtime tutor and advocate **Mary Ann Hawkins**, and is presented to tutors who have worked with their students for more than two years. 2012 winners were **Betsy Baker** and **Georgia Pope**.

Looking for Great Resources on the Web?

- ▶ Check out americanhistory.si.edu/citizenship for a wonderful US History and Civics for Citizenship site. Interesting and colorful graphics, audio and video clips, and helpful information make this user-friendly site a great find!
- ▶ **Sandy Tharp** with the Iowa Tribe recommends this site as a great resource for free computer classes. Hundreds of helpful topics including iPad Basics, Excel, PowerPoint, Publisher, Word, iPhone Basics, are at your fingertips. This site is perfect for anyone who wants to learn how to better use technology. Visit gcflearnfree.org/topics
- ▶ Check out the wonders at Wonderopolis.org. The site, created by the National Center for Family Literacy was named one of the *Best 50 Websites* by Time Magazine. The site's mission is to make learning an everyday fun activity for the whole family. Ever wonder how jello keeps its jiggle? why flamingos are pink? or why we vote on Tuesday? The answers to these and many more interesting facts can be found at Wonderopolis.
- ▶ For a resource on budgets, credit, debt, and identity theft—consumer.gov/section/managing-your-money. This easy-to-read and understand site provides excellent information and easy-to-use worksheets in English and Spanish. Download the information or order bulk copies for free, all thanks to the Federal Trade Commission.

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