



## Literacy Action of Central Arkansas

February 2009  
Newsletter

Literacy Action  
of Central Arkansas

Mission Statement:

**We teach adults to read and help non-native English speakers to learn English.**

Office Hours

**9:00 - 5:00 Mon. - Thurs.  
9:00 - 1:00 Friday**

Board of Directors

**Mary Bell  
Pat Bell, Treasurer  
Dan Boland  
Samantha Friedman, Secretary  
Joyce Hardy  
Lee Hartz  
Jack Heinritz  
Ellen Justus, President  
Marylyn Parins, Vice-President  
Ron Rainey  
Katherine Wheeler**

Staff

**Clif Ford, Director  
cford@cals.org  
Mary Givens, Literacy Coord.  
[mgivens@cals.org](mailto:mgivens@cals.org)**

Contact Information

PO Box 900, Little Rock 72203  
100 Rock St., Ste 403, LR 72201

**Phone: 501-372-7323  
Fax: 501-371-9888  
Email: [literacy@cals.org](mailto:literacy@cals.org)  
[www.cals.org/laca/home.htm](http://www.cals.org/laca/home.htm)**

## Shine A Light On Literacy

Literacy Action of Central Arkansas will light up the night February 19, 2009, with a first-time event at the Arkansas Governor's Mansion. "Shine a Light on Literacy," to begin at 6 p.m., will feature a silent auction that will serve to cast an even brighter light on LACA's important work. Dozens of Arkansas artists have volunteered their time and talent to embellish individual lamps in their own artistic styles. The unique works of art they have created will be offered for sale to guests to support adult literacy in Arkansas.

Arkansas First Lady Ginger Beebe will not only host the event as honorary event chairman but will also design a lamp. The First Lady recognizes the value of improving the adult literacy rate in Arkansas. The better educated our citizens are, the more they can contribute to the economy and society and better enable Arkansas to become a competitor in recruiting knowledge- and technology-based companies.

Samantha Friedman, High Profile reporter at the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*, is event chairman. A Literacy Action board member and English-as-a-second-language tutor to a native Mongolian speaker, her personal focus on improving literacy propelled her to organize this inaugural event and galvanize a committee of supporting volunteers.

Tickets to Shine a Light on Literacy are \$35 per person or \$60 per pair. Reservations are available in advance. Patron tickets and sponsorships are also available. For more information, please contact Samantha Friedman at [shinealightonliteracy@gmail.com](mailto:shinealightonliteracy@gmail.com) or Literacy Action of Central Arkansas at (501) 372-7323.

**One in six  
adults  
is  
functionally  
illiterate.**

Shouldn't we be doing  
more?



Clif's notes...

Big things are happening. As the first page has suggested, the most ambitious event ever undertaken by Literacy Action is the "Shine A Light On Literacy" evening on February 19<sup>th</sup>. This is a major step for our program, one that brings great excitement and a little trepidation. It is crucial that this first event be successful so that each year it can grow and become something the whole community anticipates and enjoys. I want to share two simple things that I hope you will each take to heart. First of all, this event is already a success. So many volunteers have become involved to make this happen. Both individuals and corporations have already shown their support through financial sponsorships. Over 75 artists have picked up lamps to design. We have the support of Ginger Beebe and the wonderful venue of the Governor's mansion. There is a buzz in the local art world and in the community about this event. One of the main goals of this event was simply to help the community learn more about our mission. This is already occurring. In all these ways this event is already a success. The second thing is this. We need each and every one of you to keep up the momentum. All the work so many have done will be for naught if we don't have a huge crowd at this event. That is where we need each one of you to help, first by buying tickets and attending the event, then by talking about the event to your friends and family and possibly even selling tickets yourself. We are hoping to have 300 people attend. We need your help to make this happen. Please join us in this effort and be a part of its success. It will be worth attending simply to see the amazing lamps that we have already received!

Big events are occurring. No matter what your political stance, the events surrounding the inauguration were an experience most of us will never forget. The greatest thing I took away from the day itself is how hungry our nation is for hope and change. That was at least a part of the excitement that day, the chance before us, the hope within us, that things can change not only for our nation, but for everyone. Another part of that day was about the call to service that our President gave us, acknowledging that such change cannot occur if we are unwilling to roll up our sleeves and get to work.

I share these reflections because Literacy Action is in the business of giving people hope; we are in the business of creating true change in people's lives which in turn strengthens and improves our entire community. Hope and change are what our tutors offer each and every week to our students. I hope that more and more people will feel a call to serve our community and especially to join us in our mission. There is a deep hunger among those we serve to have hope for a better future, to change their lives and circumstances. We can satisfy that hunger by giving them that hope and facilitating that change. All we need is you. Join us in this exciting mission as we "Change lives—One Word at a Time."

Clif



## **A New Partnership with “Our House.”**

**We are thrilled to have formalized a partnership with Our House. Our House is a wonderful nonprofit which serves the homeless with residential facilities, meals, childcare, GED classes, computer classes, and many other services. It has been in existence since 1987 and has received numerous national awards for the services it offers to the homeless. We are partnering with Our House to help low-level readers build their reading skills so that they can take advantage of the GED classes and other services available. We are already tutoring a few students, and we have participated in writing a grant to help fund the costs of materials that will be needed. We are anticipating serving around 100 students in the next year. This of course means that we have need more tutors to help these individuals improve their lives. Our House has wonderful facilities and classrooms, and we will be helping them develop a resource library to help the basic students. It is an exciting partnership with much room for growth. We need to celebrate every opportunity we have to reach more students and to help those who are striving to improve their lives. These students are doing just that. Our House will provide housing to individuals and families for up to two years as long as they are working. It is a wonderful mission, and we are thankful to be a small part of it.**

### **Tutor Support**

**We are committed to offering more support to our tutors. We will seek to do this through two means. First, we will offer every three months or so a night for all tutors to meet to discuss their progress with their student, to share what has worked and what hasn't, and to offer support and affirmation to each other. Secondly, we will be offering various opportunities for continuing education. These will be short courses on specific topics that will help tutors address various issues. We will soon be offering a class that will help our tutors understand what is involved in the post-tests that students take after a certain number of tutoring hours. This test, so critical to our funding, is presented in a variety of formats that may be difficult for the students if they haven't been prepared. Because it is so important for a majority of our tutors to attend , this short class will be offered more than once.**

**We cannot stress enough what we remind our tutors to do each week and that is to turn in your hours and to report any achievements or advancements made by your students. This is not a means of keeping up with you, whether you are really tutoring or not. This information determines whether or not we will receive federal funding in the future. We have two years to reach a certain level or we will lose our funding. The disconcerting part is that I know our students are learning, advancing, achieving many things. Those things are simply not being reported. We know our tutors are working extremely hard to tutor our students. It will be a shame if we are not funded simply because we didn't report our hours or the student's achievements. Please fill out the form Mary sends out weekly and email or mail it back to us. Our program depends on it.**



What Healthy People Want to Know ...

This is the first monthly column brought to you by the Health Literacy Team here at LACA.

This is a pilot; that means we want your input, ideas, feedback, constructive criticism, praise – we need you to tell us if this is helpful & what you our tutors, you our students, and you the friends of LACA want to see more of or less of. What do you want to know to help you on your quest to be well & content?

We will take your questions & answer to the best of our ability. Also we will consult & recruit outside consultants often.

**Q:** Where can I get health care for myself & my kids if I don't have health insurance? I have high blood pressure & diabetes – I need my medications refilled.

**A:** A good place to start is the new Harmony Health Clinic. It is easy to get to on Roosevelt Road, not far from Our House, if you know where that is. Their web site is easy to use – it is [www.harmonyhealthar.org](http://www.harmonyhealthar.org). You can read all about who they serve & you can download an application. If you have been a resident of Pulaski County for at least 3 months & have no other type of health insurance, they can help you with basic everyday health care needs – the problems you would normally take to a family physician or pediatrician or internist. They will soon have dental services which is most exciting. Our Health Literacy Coordinator (Laura) had a chance to see the facility recently; it is pleasant & well equipped & the folks volunteering that night were a delight. The atmosphere is warm & welcoming. There is more to share about Harmony Health Clinic & there are other places that offer services. Let us know if you need more of this type of information or if you have other resources we can collect & share.

Future topics:

Health Insurance that almost any working person & any company can afford

Healthy Brains – food & activities that keep our minds sharp

Prevention topics

How do I help my elderly Mom take her pills correctly?

Making the most of your time with your doctors

Your Health Literacy Team

Email Laura at [LbfstLou@aol.com](mailto:LbfstLou@aol.com) with those suggestions & questions

Education Committee Column for all you wonderful TSPs:

We want you--you wonderful tutor-student pairs (that's TSPs)--to start sending us your best ideas, your questions, your recent accomplishments, especially the ones that make you grin, so that we can share them.

One TSP recently shared with us that the student enjoys watching Wheel of Fortune because it is a good way to watch words unfold, letter-by-letter. It was most exciting when the student guessed the word *before* the contestant did!

See these ideas don't have to be huge – just helpful.

Looking forward to hearing from lots of you – send us your tips, questions, & those accomplishments that make you grin – send to [LbfstLou@aol.com](mailto:LbfstLou@aol.com) Until next month,

Your Education Committee,  
Marylyn  
Katherine  
Laura

LACA needs your truck and *one hour* of your time to transport 4 empty file cabinets from Riverdale to LACA. If you can help – please email or call Clif at LACA or Laura at 353-1303 [LbfstLou@aol.com](mailto:LbfstLou@aol.com). Many thanks.



### Continued Thanks

We often don't take the time to thank our many members who every year renew their memberships to Literacy Action. These individuals are the foundation of our program. Many of you have been giving annually for years. These annual funds are crucial to our ability to offer our services to the students who come seeking help. In the past year you have been encouraged to increase your level of membership, and we have been very pleased that so many of you have done so. With the increasing costs of materials, it is essential that we increase our levels of giving just to ensure our basic services. We would also like to thank those who simply make donations to Literacy Action. There is hardly a month that goes by that we don't receive a donation or a memorial. These gifts are a wonderful expression of support.

### Reminder!

We want to remind our tutors of the wonderful resources available at [thinkfinity.org](http://thinkfinity.org). This is an excellent site for continuing education; it offers free educational resources, a variety of articles, lessons, courses on almost any subject and links to other partners in literacy that offer additional resources.

There is also a special section called "Literacy Network" which offers free, top quality, online educational resources specifically for adult education and life-long learning. There is a special section for tutors and learners that is extremely helpful. This site is sponsored by the National Center for Family Literacy as well as ProLiteracy.

Thinkfinity offers what we cannot always offer you immediately or conveniently, up-to-date information and quality resources from across the nation. It will never replace tutor-training but it is a great resource to use.

If you would like to receive the newsletter by email, or if you have a friend that you think would enjoy the newsletter, please let us know by emailing [mjivens@cals.org](mailto:mjivens@cals.org). Also, please let us know if you have any problems opening or receiving your emailed newsletter so that we can send it to you in a different format. Thanks for reading!

Literacy Action of Central Arkansas is committed to the policy that all persons shall have equal access to its programs, facilities, and services without regard to race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, disability, or sexual orientation.

### Student and Tutor In the News!

We thank student LeRoy Womack and tutor Missy Anderson for recently consenting to appear on Channel 11, KTHV. They were a part of a story concerning new reports just released concerning literacy levels nationally and locally. We are always grateful when any of our students or tutors agree to help us inform the community about our mission and program. LeRoy and Missy certainly accomplished this goal. We thank them for the hard work they do each and every week and for their willingness to strengthen our program in this special way.

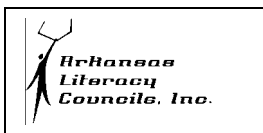


**Put on your calendar!**

**February 10<sup>th</sup> Noon  
Board Meeting  
Christ Episcopal Church**

**February 19<sup>th</sup> 6:00-8:00  
"Shine a Light on Literacy"**

**March 7 and 21  
Next Tutor Training Session**



**We remind all of our tutors that tutor hours must be turned in every week as well as any advancements made. Our funding depends on this! Email [mgivens@cals.org](mailto:mgivens@cals.org)**

What if Literacy Action had a penny for every time you searched the Internet?



**Search the web with [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com) and money from Yahoo advertisers will go to Literacy Action without you spending a dime!**

**To date, over 4200 searches have been made by supporters of Literacy Action. Thanks to all who use GoodSearch!**

**Make GoodSearch your homepage!**



**LACA  
P.O. Box 900, 100 Rock Street  
Little Rock, Ar. 72203**

**Our Mission:  
We teach adults to read  
and help non-native  
English speakers to learn  
English.**