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# Literacy Today

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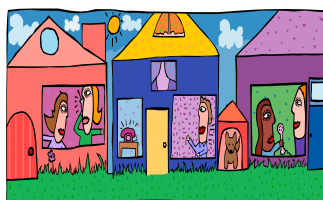
## Community Development and Literacy

1,184,803 adult Virginians (21.4% of the population) do not have a high school diploma. There are 526,000 foreign born residents living in Virginia. Virginia has the 11th largest foreign born population in the United States. Over 20,000 (23%) Virginia families with single moms live in poverty. The single greatest predictor of a child's educational success is the mother's level of education. Children are five times more likely to drop out of high school if their parents are unemployed and lack a high school diploma.

There are 179 full time professional adult education staff throughout the state. One thirty four local education agencies and 14 community based literacy organizations receive adult education funding through the Virginia Department of Education.

**With current funding levels, less than 4% of those in need can be served.**

Literacy Volunteers-Winchester Area does not receive state money to offer services. We rely on the good will of the community, the United Way and a few small grants to provide our services. Currently



there are 80 volunteers working with our paid staff of three. The only way we have to increase services is to increase the number of volunteers.



### 2008 3rd Annual Adult Spelling

The Bee is scheduled for April 17 at the Old Town Event Center. Sponsors and teams are being recruited now.

**Fundraising Goal is \$15,000**

Read more about the Spelling BEE inside



## Look Inside for Details of Antique Quilt Raffle

Our volunteers tutor one on one in basic reading. Assist in ESL classrooms with the Northern Shenandoah Valley Adult Education Program.



Assist in the GED classrooms at the Adult Detention Center. Read to children in nursery schools. Teach basic computer skills. Assist individuals gain an understanding of their finances. Prepare individuals to take the test for citizenship. Help in-

dividuals with life skills. Our volunteers help administratively with a variety of necessary tasks.



# Antique Quilt Raffle



One in five Americans cannot read this news-letter

*“Poor reading skills among adults can be linked to every socioeconomic problem that faces industrialized and developing countries,”*

*Robert Wedgeworth,  
Proliteracy President*



A donation of \$1.00 will provide you with one chance to win. A ten dollar donation will give you 12 chances to win.

## Celebrating One Book One Community

“On Agate Hill” by Lee Smith was the 2007 Book Selection

Ms. Smith signed the Quilt on October 29

Molly, the main character in the story finds a new love and they share a picnic lunch on an “old quilt”. Thus the connection between our quilt and the book. Ms. Smith signed the quilt on October 29 when she visited Winchester to recognize the selection of her book for the program. Chuck and Jo Ann Phares owners of Millwood Crossing, 381 Millwood Avenue, Winchester Virginia donated a portion of the quilt cost to LV-WA. The quilt was made in the late 1800’s. It measures 76X74 inches. The quilt has no tears or rips. It is completely hand stitched and quilted with a homespun backing. The edges are turned and hand sewn. The contrasting colors are vivid and would stand out in any room. Call the office at 536-1648 or email us at [aa@lvwa.com](mailto:aa@lvwa.com) if you would like to purchase tickets.

## Target Supports Family Literacy



A \$2,500 was received from the **Target Foundation** to support a family literacy outreach program. The grant money will be used to connect children, families and reading. A program called **Dinner and A Book** will be provided during the coming year to introduce parents of preschool children to the art of reading to their children. The goal is to increase the

number of times and hours parents read to their children in the home. It is also a desired outcome that through the connection to Literacy Volunteers parents will sign up during the year for another educational experience. Whether it is taking a class, studying for a drivers license or learning how to work on the computer.

Children in the program will receive free books and parents will receive

information on how to become more involved in their child’s education. Greater use of the public library is a goal for all participating families.

**It is a proven fact that reading to children is the single most effective parental practice for enhancing language and literacy development.**

“A little bit can go a long ways”

# It is a Fact: Individuals in Our Detention Center Need Help With Literacy



**“They will be returning to the community ready or not.”**

not going to make it when they get out. Forty seven percent of prison inmates do not have a high school diploma or GED.

In our detention center this translates to approximately 380 individuals who need to study for and take their GED. However, to even begin studying for the GED they must be able to read at the 7th grade level. In a recent survey of 367

individuals to requested education services 16% or 58 were reading below the 5th grade level. Meaning 58 individuals need help just learning how to read better and until they reach the 7.5 grade level they cannot begin to study for their GED.

In September Literacy Volunteers with a small grant from the United Way and the City of Winchester4er launched an effort to recruit and train volunteers to

serve as classroom assistants and tutors for individuals incarcerated in the regional facility.

Currently there is one GED instructor at the facility and she needs our help. As one staff member stated recently, “most when released will return to our community ready or not.” LV-WA thinks that it makes sense to do all we can to give those returning to our community as many resources as we possibly can beginning with a GED.

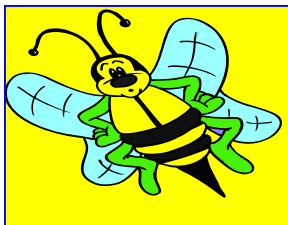
Volunteers are being recruited to work in this very important effort for the health of our community. This is where a whole lot of our youth are these days, especially minority youth. And for many of them, it’s their last chance for education.

Become a GED tutor and help to turn these gloomy statistics around. We currently have five individuals volunteering weekly.

The Northwestern Regional Adult Detention Center houses over 800 men and women. Most of the inmates are from the counties of Clarke, Frederick, Fauquier, Warren and the City of Winchester.

As a group, prisoners are among the least literate in our society. Without training and education, even if they are trying, are

## Two Additional Ways to Support Literacy Volunteers



**3rd Annual Adult Spelling Bee is on the way**

**Mark your calendar now for April 17, 6 to 9 PM. Thursday Evening**

Teams of three individuals work together in this competition. Last year the Winchester Medical Center out spelled the other 9 teams. It was a fun filled evening watching adults squirm as they waited to hear the next spelling word. Everyone was biting their nails. Team members were given a list of potential words two weeks before the event.

You can help by joining a spelling team, sponsoring a team, giving a gift for our Sensational Gift Baskets, helping plan and organize, soliciting gifts and food. Buy a ticket for \$10.00.

### Recycle With Us

Bring your used inkjet and laser printer cartridges and cell phones to us. We are helping to keep the earth clean while earning cash for our operating budget.

Businesses can help by visiting the **Funding Factory** at [www.FundingFactory.com](http://www.FundingFactory.com) and register with our ID number **105416**

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**A ProLiteracy Affiliate**

**Visit our Website**

**[www.lvwa.org](http://www.lvwa.org)**

**To complete a volunteer application**

## *David's Story and How Literacy Volunteers Made A Difference*

*David stayed in school until he was 16, even though he could not read. His inability to connect letters to the sound they represent made him feel that he was mentally retarded. When injuries prevented him from keeping the job he'd had for 28 years, he could not fill out applications for new positions. He followed a job counselor's advice to find an adult literacy program, even though he did not think it would help.*

*His tutor used phonics to teach David the sounds associated with the alphabet along with letter combinations. He still remembers the first time his tutor asked him to put sounds together and to sound out words in a sentence. "I walked out.....knowing that I could learn to read and write," he recalls. "That was the first time in my life I felt I could."*

*Spending one hour per week for a year can raise the reading level of a student by one full grade level.*

**Our Record:** Over the course of the past year Literacy Volunteers touched over 400 individuals and helped them in some way with literacy. Whether it was working with a hearing impaired individual, assisting individuals with their basic reading and math skills, reading to children in day care centers, providing basic computer skills, working with non English speaking individuals, or assisting inmates to improve their lives by helping them earn their GED, our volunteers made a big difference. Thirty three million individuals across the country are functionally illiterate, but there is only money to help approximately 3 million of them. Think about it.