

# Lee County Literacy Coalition Newsletter



## MARTHA DOOLITTLE NAMED LEARNER OF THE YEAR AT ANNUAL DINNER

On Thursday, February 15, 2007, Martha Doolittle was honored as the Learner of the Year at the Lee County Literacy Coalition annual dinner, held at the EAMC Health Resource Center. Each year, the annual dinner offers tutors, learners, and our special guests the chance to relax and find out more about each other and the Literacy Coalition.

This year we were glad to welcome the following special guests: Opelika Mayor Gary Fuller; Auburn City Council member Tom Worden; representatives from Senator Ted Little's office; Dawn Smith and Julie McLanahan from Southern Union's GED program; and Pam Powers-Smith and Robyn Bridges from the East Alabama PRCA.

The highlight of the evening was the recognition of the Learner of the Year. Martha Doolittle was chosen this year because of her hard work with her tutor, Joyce Newland. They have worked together nearly 2 years, and Martha says that it has changed her life. Martha finished the 12th grade without being able to read. Years later, when she met Joyce, she was still unable to read, and felt cut off from the world around her. She said she was just *tired*. She was tired of relying on others for the business of life— for things like applications and forms at the doctor's office. Now Martha checks out books from the library, takes care of her own business, and even reads to her grandchildren. Furthermore, Martha was going to lose her job when West Point Home mill closed its doors. With the help of her reading skills, she was

able to get another job with the branch that is staying open. This opportunity would not have been open to her without the ability to read. Thinking about all those who lost jobs through layoffs this year, we thought Martha not only deserved notice for her hard work, but highlighted some of the special challenges faced by people who struggle with reading. Martha, we celebrate YOUR success this year.



Learner of the Year Martha Doolittle (left) with her tutor Joyce Newland (right)

## COMMENTS FROM TUTOR JOYCE NEWLAND

When I was just six, my Mother read an article to me from *Colliers Magazine* about Frank Laubach and the program he had just initiated. She explained what he was doing. I had been reading by then because my grandparents subscribed to a daily newspaper -- the comics are a great place to start. Even at that age I knew the ability to read would take you many places. I have

always given books as gifts with the admonishment that not reading is the same as not being able to read. When I had time after retiring from my work as a life insurance agent, I went to the Literacy Coalition, primarily because my Rotary Club had guest speakers from the Literacy Coalition. I truly did not know how meaningful the work of the Literacy Coalition was until I

worked with Martha. Her determination and hard work has inspired me. To know that she has been widowed at an early age, raised responsible children, and held a job, but has gone through every day seeing words as just so many letters garbled together without extracting meaning is a testament to her intelligence and determination. The day we applied for a library card

and she checked out a book that she could read was such a gratifying experience. I understand there is much need for others to participate in this program. I can only urge you to become a mentor and help someone learn to read, for an experience that will add meaning and dimension to your life. ☒

## SPOTLIGHT: TRUE DELIVERANCE HOLINESS CHURCH AFTER-SCHOOL PROGRAM

Auburn Education major and football player Keylon Calloway helps Jacoby Foster with his homework



True Deliverance Holiness Church in Auburn has a thriving after school program. Thanks in large part to Rose Grady, one of the driving forces behind getting their program started, they have the use of a great new building and plenty of church volunteers to supervise the learning site. The LCLC is proud to count this program as one of our partners.

Although many churches offer services like this one to members, True Deliverance welcomes all school aged children from the community. Kids and teens get homework help, practice with difficult skills, and camaraderie in

a wholesome environment. The LCLC helps in two ways, with help from other organizations.

First, we provide additional tutors for the program. These tutors usually come from the Auburn University Education department. All Education majors must complete a course that requires 25 hours of volunteer work. Each semester some of these future educators choose to work with the Literacy Coalition, and some of those AU students choose to help tutor children at True Deliverance. The after school program meets on Monday and Wednesday for an hour and a half. Usually about 10-12 kids attend, so Auburn tutors get the chance to work with different students of differing ages and needs.

The Literacy Coalition is also able to provide school supplies and

instructional materials for the True Deliverance program, thanks to the annual Corporate Spelling Bee that is sponsored by the PRCA of East Alabama for our benefit.

The truth is, education is a community-wide effort. We are thankful for the network of people and organizations that contribute to this cause.



Rose Grady, program founder



Auburn Service Learner Meghan Peoples helps student Jasmine Patrick with a worksheet

## LCLC 2007 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Every third Monday of each month you have a group of people who meet to work for you, the LCLC Board of Directors. Serving this year are: Patsy Thomas, president, Tom Brawner, secretary, Debbie Heidepriem, treasurer, Nick Conrad, Bill Walsh, Tara Nolan, and Carolyn Moore. These board members review the financials of the previous month and evaluate goals and accomplishments of the Coalition. The director for LCLC, Jessica Nelson, attends

and presents a summary of monthly activities and gets opinions and ideas from the board on upcoming projects. Each meeting is started with a summary of how many people we are serving and of how many tutors are involved. Tom Brawner, who has been with the Literacy Coalition since its inception, decided long ago that these vital statistics should begin each monthly meeting since tutoring is what the Coalition is all about. Patsy Thomas has

stated that her goal as president for 2007 is to promote even stronger bonds between the tutors and the Coalition. Please know that the board would appreciate any input you might have concerning our Coalition. We need your feedback and your ideas. Call Jessica (705-0001) or email [litcoaliton@bellsouth.net](mailto:litcoaliton@bellsouth.net) or Patsy at [poa@bellsouth.net](mailto:poa@bellsouth.net).

THANKS for your support,  
Patsy

## LCLC IN 2007: A PROGRESS REPORT

I can hardly believe that my second year as Executive Director is already well under way. I am constantly thankful that I have the opportunity to serve Lee County in this capacity.

The LCLC continues to grow, helping more and more people who struggle with reading succeed. We currently have 65 active tutors at work in the community, but we always need more. As our current tutors know, the LCLC is a great way to give back, and tutors almost always feel as though they get even more out of meetings than their

students!

Another thing I should certainly mention are the partnerships that are helping us grow. First, we continue to work closely with Southern Union State Community College to help more people pass the GED. We also work closely with True Deliverance Holiness Church (see article, opposite) and Greater Peace Baptist church, which has a GED prep program.

We hope this will be an exciting year. The PRCA will sponsor another corporate Spelling Bee this summer—it

is such a fun event, no one should miss it! In addition, the LCLC would like to expand the technology available to its tutors and students. In this changing world, literacy means more than reading, and computers are definitely an indispensable skill.

If you have any questions or suggestions for us, please email [litcoalition@bellsouth.net](mailto:litcoalition@bellsouth.net)

All the best—Jessica

## LCLC TO PARTNER WITH PRCA



In 2007, the East Alabama chapter of Public Relations Council of Alabama (PRCA), will be doing even more to contribute to the cause of literacy in Lee County. The PRCA already sponsors our annual Corporate Spelling Bee, a fund- and awareness-raising event that is

also loads of fun. Recently, the PRCA also volunteered to help with other publicity related issues. If you are wondering who these folks are, they are public relations professionals from public, private, and non-profit sectors. They united to help each other as well as im-

prove the profession.

We are grateful to have this chance to work with the great people at PRCA more closely, and hope to see exciting new things come out of this partnership.

### TUTOR SOCIAL

Please join us for a tutor social on **Thursday, April 26 at 7 P.M.** at the home of Patsy Thomas—**446 Scott St., Auburn.** This time together will let us share ideas on what is working with our different tutoring situations. Refreshments are compliments of LCLC, and your spouse or guest is welcome.

**Call 826-8421 by 4/19 if you can come. It is fine to leave a message.**



### Reading Aloud—a Family Tradition

Writer Stephen King's son Joe Hill was recently interviewed about his forthcoming novel. As it happens, his younger brother is already a published author and his older sister is working on scholarly non-fiction book. Their mother has also written several books.

Hill, who used this pseudonym to avoid cashing in on his father's fame, said that their family read aloud to each other weekly, even when they were older—in high school. It reminded me that in all our tutor meetings, reading aloud both to and with our students is a valuable tool that almost always yields results. The King family is undeniably talented, but such an established tradition of reading aloud speaks volumes.

Don't forget to take a few minutes before or after the lesson to read aloud. It can only do good.

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## **SEARCH THE INTERNET THE “GOOD” WAY**

The United Way of Lee County is now listed on Goodsearch, an internet search engine that gives 1¢ to the charity of your choice every time you search.

Simply go to [www.goodsearch.com](http://www.goodsearch.com), and type “United Way of Lee County” below the search field, in the box designated for “Who do You Goodsearch For?” Select the “United Way-Lee County (Opelika, AL)” option, and then one penny will go to our United Way every time you use GoodSearch.