



Greater Grand Rapids Reads

Leading Literacy for all Kent County!

Greater Grand Rapids Reads Leading Kent County to Literacy for All

September 2007

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Dear Fritz,

Welcome to the Greater Grand Rapids Reads Newsletter. You are receiving this because you are a Greater Grand Rapids Reads partner and provided your email address to receive communications electronically.

Our goal is to make you more aware of literacy issues both locally and nationally, provide opportunities for you to volunteer in literacy programs in Kent County and give you the latest information to help improve literacy programs. We welcome your feedback.

- Quick Links**
- waybetterunitedway.org
 - [Online Event Calendar](#)
 - [United Way News](#)

Fritz Crabb
Greater Grand Rapids Reads Coordinator
632.1001
[Click to e-mail me!](#)

New! United Way Photo Album

Greater Grand Rapids Reads News

Literacy Summit October 19

The Greater Grand Rapids Reads Community Literacy Summit will be held **Friday, October 19**, at DeVos Place. Last month we featured Rueben Martinez, our opening keynote. This month we are pleased to feature, Janet Ohene-Frempong, our luncheon keynote. Janet has been a leader in clear communication in the health care field, however, her message will be relevant for all who work with low literate employees or clients.



Join our list

Join our mailing list!
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As President of J. O. Frempong & Associates, she specializes in plain language and cross-cultural consumer communications. Formerly Director of the Health Literacy Project at the Health Promotion Council of Southeastern Pennsylvania, she has over 25 years of experience in patient/provider communications.

Janet has assisted clients with the many aspects of plain language materials design, from concept development to final field testing. She has conducted workshops on plain language and cross-cultural communications for a wide range of health information providers, including: health care systems, government agencies, health insurers, pharmaceutical companies, medical publishers, health and human service agencies and schools of medicine, nursing and allied health. She is often an invited speaker at national conferences. Janet is co-author of *Literacy, Health and the Law: An Exploration of the Law and the Plight of Marginal Readers within the Health Care System*, a monograph for health system and pharmaceutical industry administrators. She is also co-author of "Health Care for African Americans" in *Rethinking Ethnicity and Health Care*, a discussion of the role of marginal literacy as one barrier to optimal care.

Janet has served on several national advisory committees and is currently a founding member of the Partnership for Clear Health Communication.

URGENT: RESPOND BY FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 7!

You know them. You appreciate them. You understand how vital they are to the efforts to improve literacy rates in Kent County. Now, you can help recognize them at the Greater Grand Rapids Reads Community Literacy Summit on October 19 with a Greater Grand Rapids Reads Literacy Champions Award.

Nominate someone you know who has made a difference in our community because of their involvement and dedication to the promotion of LITERACY. This could be someone from a school, a business, a faith based organization, a volunteer or tutor, a friend, or a family member who has given above and beyond to promote and encourage literacy here in Kent County. Nominees may be either volunteers or staff members, but must have made a significant contribution to local literacy efforts. Submit the following by September 7, 2007.

- Name, organization and contact information for nominees
- Name, organization and contact information for nominator
- 100 words or less about why this person should be selected

Submit nominations via email to mbennett@waybetterunitedway.org. **Nominations must be received by Friday, September 7, at 5:00 p.m.**

Summit Registration

Watch for a special installment of the Greater Grand Rapids

Reads Newsletter with registration information. Registration will be possible online this year. The registration fee for the Summit is \$25 and will cover morning snacks, lunch and parking at the government lot across the street from DeVos Place.

Literacy News You Can Use

Get the Word Out !

You have a chance to let a larger public know about your volunteer opportunities and programs. Nationally known author, educator and activist Jonathan Kozol will be speaking at Fountain Street Church on Wednesday evening, October 17, 2007. Following the talk, attendees will be able to browse the "Information Expo" in the adjoining hall.

Rental fee for a space will be only \$10.00 for half of a 6-foot table, or \$20.00 for a whole one. Tables will back up on bulletin boards where displays may be hung.

If you have questions or would like to participate, contact Tom Logan, Social Action Chair at the church, at SocialAction@fountainstreet.org.

Comerica Charitable Foundation Accepting Applications From Michigan Nonprofits

Deadline: September 30, 2007

Funded by Comerica Incorporated (<http://comerica.com>), the Comerica Charitable Foundation was established in 1997 as a nonprofit corporation with the sole purpose of funding charitable causes.

In Michigan, the Comerica Charitable Foundation awards grants at the end of four grant seasons throughout the year with a primary focus on programs supporting economic self-sufficiency for low and moderate income individuals and families; neighborhood revitalization; education; access to health care; and programs supporting diversity and inclusion.

The foundation accepts applications for cash grants to support program and capital expenses of nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations whose mission meets these priorities for giving. The foundation is currently accepting applications from Michigan nonprofits for its Summer Grant Season.

Complete application instructions are posted at the Comerica website at <http://fconline.foundationcenter.org/pnd/10008509/comerica>.

Michigan Merit Exam Results

The Spring 2007 results from the Michigan Merit Exam are

now available online at [Michigan Merit Exam](#). Click on Demographic Reports. There, users can select the test data they wish to view down to the individual school level. For the Spring 2007 Merit Exam, the code is Spring 2007 MME.

The scores show that there is much work to be done in reading across the county as only 64% of all students in the Kent Intermediate School District are listed as proficient. Only 44% met proficiency standards in writing.

The Modern Language Association Language Map: A Map of Languages in the United States

The MLA Language Map is intended for use by students, teachers, and anyone interested in learning about the linguistic and cultural composition of the United States. The MLA Language Map uses data from the 2000 United States census to display the locations and numbers of speakers of thirty languages and three groups of less commonly spoken languages in the United States. The census data are based on responses to the question, "Does this person speak a language other than English at home?" The Language Map illustrates the concentration of language speakers in zip codes and counties. The Data Center provides census data about over three hundred languages spoken in the United States, including actual numbers and percentages of speakers.

This interactive map shows the numbers of speakers of thirty-three languages and language groups. Click the map to zoom in on a region. Add or remove county and city names, rivers and lakes, and highways. A bar graph beneath the map provides the actual numbers of speakers by state; for numbers of speakers by zip code, town, city, or county, use the Data Center. Go to http://www.mla.org/map_single to view the map or paste this link into your browser:
http://www.mla.org/map_single.

Tutor Materials Available!

We would like to thank Cheryl Kaufman for her generous donation of World Book TutorLink, a Peer Tutoring Program, to Greater Grand Rapids Reads. This program, being discontinued by World Book, provides a step-by-step multimedia system to assist your school in developing or improving an individualized, task-oriented peer tutoring program that adapts to fit the needs of your students, parents, teachers, administrators, and curriculum. For more information on TutorLink, please visit www.tutorlink.com.

This program will be donated on a first come, first served basis. If you are interested call Meg Bennett at 632-1002 or email mbennett@waybetterunitedway.org.

Classroom Literacy Enrichment Model Workshops offered

at KISD

This model builds from a child-centered foundation using classroom routines and learning centers as the foundation for planning intentional literacy instructional strategies. **The goal is to provide participants with:**

- research-based early literacy teaching strategies
- alphabetic knowledge
- activities related to oral language
- print concepts
- written expression

Three Fridays:

- September 28
- October 5
- October 26

Time: 12:30 - 4:15 p.m.

Where: Kent Intermediate School District Educational Service Center

Course Fee: \$70.00

Please Enroll for this Professional Development by: September 21, 2007 at

http://www.kentisd.org/teachers/Professional_Development/ , then click on "Browse Courses" or "Enroll in a Course."

Michigan Reads! One State, One Children's Book

We invite you to take part in Michigan Reads!, a statewide program highlighting the importance of early childhood literacy by focusing on a picture book by a Michigan author. Further information is available at http://michigan.gov/hal/0,1607,7-160-17447_26038---,00.html.

Voices for Health Applauds Work in Grand Rapids

In April, Voices for Health, was awarded three "Excellence in Plain Language Writing" awards from the National Institutes of Health for our work with Spanish publications for the National Cancer Institute and National Information Diabetes Clearinghouse? Health literacy is not only a "hot topic" locally, but is also a commitment of the NIH.

Submitted by:
Michelle A. Scott, RN, MA
President & CEO
Voices For Health, Inc.

Literacy Powerline Resources for Local Coalitions

Thanks to Margaret Doughty and Literacy Powerline for many of the national updates listed in this newsletter. Literacy Powerline is the only consulting service dedicated specifically to supporting communities as they develop collaborative solutions for specific literacy issues. Further information about Literacy Powerline is available at www.literacypowerline.com.

Gear Up for Capitol Hill: *Essential Skills and Strategies for Federal-Level Advocacy*

Join national advocacy experts and colleagues from across the country for an online course designed to help you prepare for ProLiteracy Worldwide's Capitol Hill Day on November 7, 2007. This course is specifically designed for adult education and literacy practitioners, volunteers, administrators, board members, and learner leaders.

This four-week course is conducted in two parts:

- **Part I:** September 17th to October 5th, leads up to ProLiteracy Worldwide's Capitol Hill day on November 7th
- **Part II:** November 12th to 16th, follow-up to Hill Day activities

Course Fee: \$75 (ProLiteracy America members receive a 15% discount).

To register, go to www.proliteracy.org, and click on Professional Development.

Free from NIFL

The National Institute for Literacy has a new (free, online and hardcopy) publication called QEd. It's a five-issue series with "ideas and information from the expanding scientific research base on how adults learn to read." For more information, go to: www.nifl.gov/nifl/news_events/07-12-07.html.

Who Reads?

According to a new Associated Press-Ipsos poll, one in four adults (27%) have not read a single book in the last year. Moreover, on the whole, adults claimed to have read just four books within the past year. (The figure rises to seven books if adults who have not read any books are excluded.) Not surprisingly, some groups are more voracious readers than others: women read more than men, people over the age of 50 read more than younger adults, and college graduates read more than the less educated. The Bible and other religious texts were read by two-thirds of adults in the survey, followed by popular fiction, histories, biographies, mystery novels, and romance novels. Classical literature was named by fewer than 5% of readers.

For more information, please visit www.ipsos-na.com/news/act_hit_cntr.cfm?id=3613&Region=us&PDF_name=mr070821-4topline.pdf.

FACTS Volunteers Needed

Got 30 Minutes a Week? FACTS (Families and Community Together for Students) at Heart of West



Michigan United Way is again recruiting tutors who can spend 30 minutes each week helping an early elementary Grand Rapids Public Schools student learn to read. Tutors are required to attend one, two hour training session and are placed in a school located near their work or home. FACTS is already working with over 40 businesses who are allowing their employees to participate. To find out more, please visit www.waybetterunitedway.org or call Meg Bennett at 632.1002.

Kent Literacy Council Volunteers Needed

New Family Literacy Program Launches

The Kent County Literacy Council has launched a literacy initiative called the Family Literacy Program. We are partnering with Michigan Family Resources, Inc., Head Start for Kent County, in an effort to show how literacy positively impacts the lives of both parents and children alike.

The participants in the Family Literacy Program are all parents of children who attend REACH Head Start and Early Head Start. We will provide free, weekly tutoring to the parents in reading or speaking English, and we will also teach about the importance of providing a literacy-rich home for their children.

The Literacy Council is currently seeking motivated individuals to volunteer as tutors for the Family Literacy Program. Volunteers will be trained by experienced staff, and will be matched with an adult student for weekly tutoring in reading or ESL. We will provide free materials, lesson plan ideas, and ongoing support. Tutors should have 1 ½ - 2 hours to devote a week, along with a genuine desire to help others.

Tutor orientations begin in September, so if you would like to help change the lives of an entire family, please contact Shay Kraley at 459-5151 for more information.

You don't need to be an expert-you just need to be willing to help.

Become a Reading or English Tutor

If you want to learn more about becoming a volunteer reading or English tutor, please plan to attend a 1- hour information session. Choose the date that is best for you:

- **September 25 (Tuesday) Cascade Library**, 2870 Jacksmith Ave. SE, Grand Rapids - 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
- **October 22 (Monday) Yankee Clipper Library**, 2025 Leonard St., NE - Grand Rapids - 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.
- **October 24 (Wednesday) Grand Rapids Library** - Main, 111 Library St., NE - Grand Rapids - 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.

Call 459-5151 Ext. 10 to register. Thank you.

Upcoming Events

We will report upcoming events on the local level if our members give us ample advance notice. The general deadline for the newsletter is the 23rd of each month.

Send event information to Fritz Crabb at fcrabb@waybetterunitedway.org or 632.1001.

For more information on upcoming events, please visit the Grand Rapids Public Library website at www.grpl.org or Kent District Library at www.kdl.org.

Greater Grand Rapids Reads Leadership

Executive Committee

Dr. Juan Olivarez, GRCC; Mayor George Heartwell; Bob Haight, United Way; Win Irwin - Workforce Development; Cheryl Endres, GGR Reads Steering Co-Chair; JoAnn Dunker, GGR Reads Steering Co-Chair; Tempy Mann, Kellogg; Sue Schmidlkofer, UPS; Barb White, Mary Free Bed; Edwin Hernandez, RDV Corporation; Judge Dennis Kolenda; Mayor Cindy Bartman, East Grand Rapids; Susan Heartwell, Student Advancement Foundation; Jeanne Englehart, Chamber of Commerce; Birgit Klohs, The Right Place; Ron Shockey, State Farm Insurance; Marcia Warner, Grand Rapids Public Library; Tony Campbell, United Way; Diana Sieger, Grand Rapids Community Foundation; Gordon VanHarn, Van Andel Education Institute; John Schwartz, SBC; Julius Koenigsknecht, Kent City Public Schools.

Steering Committee

Cheryl Endres: Co-Chair, Data Co-Chair; JoAnn Dunker: Consultant, Co-Chair, K -12 Co-Chair; Carolyn Evans: GRPS,

K - 12 Co-Chair; Charles Burt: GRCC Learning Corner, Adult Co-Chair; Barbara Foster: Bethany Christian Services, Adult Co-Chair; Char Firlik: Kent ISD; JoAnn Kelty: Grand Rapids Public Schools, Birth-5 Co-Chair; Susan Ledy, Kent Literacy Council; Ruth Lumpkins, Commissioner, GR Public Library; Erin McGovern: Kent ISD, Birth-5 Co-Chair; Jesse Herstein: Alticor, Data Co-Chair; Jean Seman: Consultant.

Committee Leadership

- Adult: Charles Burt (CBurt@grcc.edu) and Barbara Foster (bfoster@bethany.org)
- Birth to 5: Erin McGovern (ErinMcGovern@kentisd.org) and Jean Seman (jeanseman@comcast.net)>
- K-12: JoAnn Dunker (dunkerj55@hotmail.com)
- Data & Evaluation: Cheryl Endres (endresabc@earthlink.net) and Jesse Hertstein (jesse.hertstein@alticor.com)

Questions? Contact communications@unitedwaycares.com
Or visit <http://www.waybetterunitedway.org>