

# FRIENDS OF LITERACY, INC.

## AN OPEN BOOK

An Open Book

January 2006

### BRAD MELTZER HALL OF FAME 2006

Join Friends of Literacy and Master of Ceremonies, Bill Williams, for our third annual gala. The East Tennessee Writers Hall of Fame celebrates the literary accomplishments of noted writers who have contributed to the culture and heritage of East Tennessee.

Our speaker for the evening is **Brad Meltzer**, New York Times bestselling author. The Tenth Justice was Meltzer's first published work and became an instant New York Times bestseller. Dead Even followed a year later and also hit the New York Times bestseller list. Other works include The First Counsel, The Millionaires, and The Zero Game.

Meltzer's books have a total of almost six million copies in print, have spent over eight months on the bestseller lists, and have been translated into over a dozen languages.

Mr. Meltzer joins an esteemed list of speakers who have helped Friends of Literacy raise funds for adult education programs in Knox County. Previous Hall of Fame events featuring David Baldacci and Richard Paul Evans have grossed over \$100,000, helping us to combat the problem of illiteracy faced every day by

more than 10,000 Knox County adults.

Friends of Literacy is attempting to break the grip of illiteracy in our region. The Hall of Fame helps us promote quality educational and literacy efforts, raise public awareness, establish partnerships between the business community and adult education programs, and engage other organizations in cooperative action to advance the cause of adult education.

We solicit corporate and individual sponsorships to help us recognize accomplished authors in fiction, non-fiction, poetry, playwriting/ screenwriting, and lifetime achievement.



If you are interested in supporting adult education by sponsoring an award or a corporate/individual table, please contact our office. If you would like to nominate an author, an application can be found on our web site.

**Special thanks** to our previous

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### PARTNER NEWS

**Knox County Adult Education  
Pellissippi State Adult Ed  
Ross Learning Center**

**Knox County Adult Education** held its first mid-year graduation ceremony December 15, 2005. Steve Diggs, Emerald Avenue Youth Foundation Director, was the guest speaker. John Goins, Executive Director of Friends of Literacy and Donna Wright, Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum and Instruction presented certificates to the thirty-three stu-

dents who attended the ceremony. Student speakers were Sandra Singleton who received her GED 42 years after dropping out of high school; Sharon Withrow, 33, who dropped out of Holston High School when she was 17; and Miranda Montgomery, 18 years old who was the youngest student to get her GED.

107 students had passed the examinations since May of

*(Continued on page 2, column 3)*

#### IMAGINE

What it would be like to be an adult and not be able to read

- the instructions on prescriptions
- a bedtime story to your child

#### IMAGINE

What it would be like to be an adult and not be able to

- advance in your job
- pass a driver's license test

#### IMAGINE

• that you are one of the thousands of adults in Knox County who face these problems every day.

# HALL OF FAME

Hall of Fame sponsors.

## Presenting Sponsor

News Sentinel - 2004 & 2005

## Award Sponsors

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Thanks to our many corporate and community supporters over the last two years, including: Johnson & Galyon, Stokely Company, Tennessee Valley Authority, Moxley Carmichael, Image Point, Hines & Company, Saks Inc., Covenant Health, Davis-Newman-Payne, Bullock-Smith & Partners, Brunswick Boat Group-Ray, Inc., Cornerstone Foundation, Denark Construction, Knoxville, Utilities Board, University of Tennessee, Wakefield Corporation, Rural Metro, NAI Collins-Sharp & Koella, Inc., The Trust Company-NBC Bank, Quality Bakers, TN Valley Resources, Inc., Clarity Resources, LLC, Martin & Company, Liberty Technology System, Penrose Farm, Jack & Patricia Watson, Dawn Ford, Ellen and Gordon Fowler, James & Martha Begalla, Andrea White, Jim Proud,

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# PARTNERS—CONTINUED

2005 and six of those students had started the program at the literacy level (sixth-grade and below). Another 100 students are expected to pass the GED and attend the spring graduation. Projections for the total number of GEDs for the Knox County Adult Education in the 05/06 program year is 362. -Jane Knight

**Ross Learning Center** About a year ago, a volunteer tutor was working with some of the students at Ross Learning Center. It became obvious that this additional help was making a big difference in academic achievement and easy to see that tutoring on a more frequent basis would garner even greater results. This volunteer, **Cathy Kodra**, had both the educational background and experience to work with adult education students who have a variety of learning problems. She could quickly assess their needs and use a variety of methods to accommodate their learning styles. Cathy is an ideal teacher!

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# VOLUNTEER CALL

Lots of new things have been happening on the volunteer front lines and it's time to bring everyone up to speed.

First, let me introduce myself, for those of you who haven't already heard from me. My name is Charlie Morgan (but it's short for Charlene)(to all those who've already addressed things "Mr." Morgan, trust me, no offense taken, no harm, no foul.) I started with John at Friends in September and am coordinating volunteer activities as well as doing some administrative work. I previously served as a volunteer at Friends, so I understand the rewards as well as the frustrations. Feel free to communicate either.

Now, I have to extend special thanks to those very special volunteers who've hung in throughout the transitions of the past year. Those folks are:

**David Bush, Carol Devenski, Gene Hale, Pat Walter, Andrea Quarcoo, Tess Anand, Doris Simpson, Janet Beaman, Kristi Bohannon and Joe McNish**, and I hope I haven't left anyone out who stayed with us through changes in everything from how you meet your stu-

dents, to how you sign in for your time.

Speaking of signing in, volunteer hours are reported as part of our program support from United Way. We also use volunteer hours in grant and foundation applications. So, not only are you a valuable asset to the students you serve, you are also a valuable resource to the financial stability of our program. If you are a volunteer help us out and consider signing in as part of your volunteer duty.

I recently held my first orientation for new volunteers on Thursday evening, January 26, at the United Way building.

## VOLUNTEER VALUE

In Tennessee, if they were on the clock, we would pay volunteers \$14.86 per hour. The total dollar value of volunteer time in the United States last year reached about \$266.4 billion. -Nonprofit News Update

We had about 20 prospective new volunteers and we need every one of them.

Why do we need so many volunteers? Well, as some of you know, instead of placing a volunteer or two in the class-

rooms to help out, the Knox County Adult Education program now matches a volunteer to each student who has requested a tutor. Our mutual goal is to actually have all students (o.k., as many as possible) matched with a volunteer, and then measure their progress with additional help. As I write this, there are at least 8 students waiting on tutors. That's one piece of the action.

We will now also supply volunteer tutors to Pellissippi State Adult Ed at both Hardin Valley and Magnolia campus's and the Ross Learning Center in the L. T. Ross building on Western Avenue. Not as many are needed at each of those sites, but that gives volunteers a greater variety of choice and geographic location for tutoring. In all those cases, tutors meet in groups with students outside the classroom.

By the way, everyone knows someone who would be a good, reliable volunteer. Please direct them to our web site to fill out an application.

If I haven't already met you, I look forward to doing so. I'm generally in the office Tues., Wed., and Thur. mornings, feel free to call or drop by. -Charlie

PARTNERS—CONTINUED

We wanted to have her in class more often, but we didn't have funding for another staff member.

Then we were made aware of a possible avenue of assistance. Friends of Literacy had expanded their services to reach all the adult education providers in Knoxville. RLC staff knew that in serving a population of low-income, single parent students with our very moderate budget, any additional help would be beneficial. With 56% of the students entering our program having skills below 9<sup>th</sup> grade level in reading and math and 88% entering with skills below 6<sup>th</sup> grade, individual and small group tutoring of specific skills could help students make great strides.

FOL has helped us expand our services and we are now able to fund a tutor's salary on a part-time basis. Cathy works with our students three mornings a week. She works with the lowest level reading and math students. Equally important, she works with students who have conquered the basics, but have difficulty analyzing GED math and reading test questions.

Our sincere gratitude goes to Friends of Literacy for their funding. Cathy has been a great addition to our staff and has improved the level of goal achievements. The staff and students thank FOL for their much needed assistance. -Lynn Moore

**Pellissippi State Adult Education**

As a result of a volunteer training/orientation session conducted on January 26, we placed four volunteer tutors with the Pellissippi State Adult Ed program. Though we have worked with program director, Joan Newman, this is the first time we have placed volunteers with their program. It is our hope that in the near future we will be able to help this great program with some financial resources as well.

**One way to value a good education!**

1997-99 Average Annual Earnings of U.S. Workers 25 to 64 Years Old by Educational Attainment  
Teaching Tennessee Adults, John G. Morgan, Comptroller of the Treasury  
Office of Education Accountability

\$18,900	No diploma
\$25,900	High School Graduate
\$31,200	Some College
\$33,000	Associate's Degree
\$45,400	Bachelor's Degree
\$54,500	Master' Degree
\$81,400	Doctoral Degree
\$99,300	Professional Degree

♦ 10% increase in the average education of all workers is associated with an increase of 8.6% in productivity —Nat'l Institute for Literacy

DIRECTOR'S NOTE

JOHN GOINS

I once suggested to some of our Board members that since our vision statement was, "Eradicate illiteracy in Knox County," we should set a time limit on getting it done, perhaps ten years. Then I took a look at the scope of the problem.

**Illiteracy is international.** It is not just a byproduct of our geography or culture. "At the outset of the 21st century, there are still an estimated 880 million adults who cannot read nor write in the world; two-thirds of whom

are women...an estimated 113 million children of primary school-age are not attending..." "In the 1990s...The International Adult Literacy Survey showed that in 14 of 20 [countries in the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development]...at least 15 per cent of adults have only rudimentary literacy skills. Even in Sweden, the country that achieved the highest overall score, almost one in ten adults encountered a severe literacy deficit in everyday life and work." (www.uis.unesco.org- Denise Lievesley & Albert Motivans)

**Illiteracy is national.** Based on the most recent national survey of adult literacy, USA TODAY reports that, "Eleven million U.S. adults — about one in 20 — have such poor English skills that they can't read a newspaper, understand the directions on a bottle of pills or, in many cases, carry on a basic conversation. Recent immigrants with limited or no English skills account for most of the group, adult education advocates say, but the survey suggests that even the average adult has low skills. Only 13%, for instance, are able to compare viewpoints in two editorials; interpret a table on blood pressure, age and physical activity, or compare the per-ounce costs of two cans of soup. Only 52% could look at a heating bill and figure out that a five-cent-per gallon deduction on a purchase of 140 gallons of oil would yield \$7." -Greg Toppo, USA TODAY

**Illiteracy is local.** In Knox County between 10,000 and 12,000 people read at or below a sixth grade level. KCAE Curriculum Guidelines for Levels I-III indicate that many of these adults have little or no comprehension of how print corresponds to spoken languages, can have difficulty us-

ing a writing instrument, and have a limited understanding of connected prose. There is some control of basic grammar (e.g. present and past tense) and some consistency in use of punctuation. In math there is little or no recognition of numbers or simple counting

skills and may be only minimal skills such as the ability to add or subtract single digit numbers.

More than 46,000 adults in Knox County went

to high school but do not have a high school diploma. KCAE Curriculum Guidelines for Levels I-III reveal that many of these adults read simple material on familiar subjects and comprehend simple compound sentences in single or linked paragraphs containing a familiar vocabulary, but writing lacks clarity and focus. There is some control of basic grammar (e.g. present and past tense) and some consistency in use of punctuation. Math may be performed with a high degree of accuracy in all four basic math operations using whole numbers up to three digits and in identify and use all basic symbols.

**The Tennessee Office of Adult Education's goal is to reach 110,414 students (10% of the eligible population) by 2008. In 2002, 46,971 students were served, a 3% decrease from 1995.**

In Knox County we will add hundreds more to this group next year. In 2000 the national high school graduation rate was only 69%. In 2004 it was 71%. In 2002 the high school graduation rate in Tennessee was 57%. In 2004 it was 64%. (Manhattan Institute for Policy Research) In Knox County the high school graduation rate in 2003 was 82%, in 2005 it was 81%. (2005 Knox County Education Summit, Every School a Great School Report Card)

These numbers haven't convinced us that we need to rewrite our vision statement...but it looks like it might take us a little longer than I thought!

In the agricultural age, post-secondary education was uncommon...In the industrial age it was common for a few...By the space age, it became common for many. Today it is just common sense.

Nat'l Commission on the High School Senior Year- Paraphrased

## FRIENDS OF LITERACY, INC.

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We're on the Web!  
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### Our Vision!

Eradicate illiteracy in Knox County!

#### Donation Report through December 31, 2005

Student Membership	\$10.00-\$49.99
Individual Membership	\$50.00-\$99.99
Family Membership	\$100.00-\$249.99
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