

December 2014



### *Mission Statement:*

“... to provide Northwest Ottawa County adults with an opportunity to improve and transform their lives by strengthening their reading and language skills.”

R.E.A.D. is federally tax exempt under Section 501(c)3 of the Internal Revenue Service.

### **To Our Donors.....With Heartfelt Appreciation!**

It is ironic, we are a literacy-based program, and finding the words to express the level of heartfelt appreciation, gratitude and true significance our donors have had toward R.E.A.D. is difficult. Are you truly aware of the impact that you are making...? Throughout the world, the one consistent measure of a strong, creative and free society is access to education and ultimately literacy. By developing the individual mind, we develop and strengthen our own community. Our children, who become our future, learn by what their parent's model. The adults (and parents) that R.E.A.D. tutors meet with are directly impacted by your support in many ways. They gain independence by completing degrees, starting employment, and/or by freeing themselves from dependency on others for thought and action. For some, it is the simple pleasure of just reading a book. However, the most significant impact that you help to create is something which is often unseen...it is hope. Our students come from places where the odds have been against them. Whether by difficulties and/or poor choices earlier in life, or politics from across the world they have witnessed first hand in order to improve themselves they need to be able to read. Your support can improve their lives through literacy and hope.

To our Donors - Thank you for all of the support that you have given. Thank you for your belief in what we do. Thank you for your monetary donations. Most importantly, thank you for the hope and access to literacy you provide to all of our students now and graciously in years to come.

Most Sincerely,  
~ R.E.A.D.

### **Poster Contest Winner for R.E.A.D.**

Sally Salkowski's talented Graphics class at The Careerline Tech Center in Holland was recently challenged by R.E.A.D. to create posters that captured the adult illiteracy problem in Ottawa County and the services R.E.A.D. provides for adults with these literacy challenges. It was a difficult task picking just one winner out of the twenty incredible entries. The winning poster below was created by Anna Carmolli. Anna received a prize of \$50 from R.E.A.D. Her poster will be used to bring awareness of the illiteracy problem in our area and let people who have reading challenges know that R.E.A.D. is available to help them achieve their literacy goals. "It was challenging to develop a poster that communicated a message without words," she said. "I was honored to participate in this competition and help spread the word about the great work R.E.A.D. is doing in our area." Area libraries, social service agencies, churches and other community locations will display Carmolli's design. It will also serve as the main art for a R.E.A.D. brochure distributed throughout Northwest Ottawa County. "Anna did a remarkable job creating an image that communicated a message visually," said Sally Salkowski. "She is an extremely talented designer and illustrator and this poster showcases her skills."



“Literacy is a Bridge from Misery to Hope”

*Kofi Annan*

R.E.A.D. would like to thank all of our partners for their generous support:

Loutit District Library

Spring Lake District Library

Grand Haven Area Community Foundation

100 or More Women Who Care Tri-Cities

Zeeland/Holland Adult Education

## From Arabic to English—Literacy Unites!

### Volunteer Tutors

Bruce Baker  
 Shirley Batchelder  
 Nancy Bauer  
 Cindi Bunna  
 Nancy Carey  
 Ann Carrier  
 Corie DuBridge  
 Katherine Du Vall  
 Nancy Fortuna  
 Jean Grossnickle  
 Richard Hoffstedt  
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 Art Pruikma  
 Fern Pruikma  
 Ann Purvis  
 Laurie Randall  
 Kathy Simmons  
 Penny Smith  
 Bill Smits  
 Penny Smits  
 Mary Springer  
 Tim Stoeper  
 Susan Strobel  
 Mary Sweet  
 Lorelle Sybsema  
 Pam Tongue  
 Amy Van Oordt  
 Renate Watters  
 Janet Wiessner  
 Carol Wilhelm  
 Mary Willink

### Power of the Pen

I first met Jerome in February of 2010 at the Hope Network facility in Nunica. He was not apprehensive at all about meeting me and made it clear that he really wanted to become a better reader. The most difficult problem in conversing with Jerome was his stuttering. Other than that, I was very impressed with his willingness to learn and his enthusiastic attitude in our tutoring sessions.

With her husband and two year old son Mohammed, Awatif arrived in the United States in July of 2013. She could only greet strangers with "Hello." She knew no English. They are legal immigrants, refugees from Sudan, and speak Arabic. The family is sponsored by All Shores Wesleyan Church in Spring Lake, and in their first year in Michigan they found themselves located permanently in Grand Haven. Their next surprise was the discovery that Awatif was pregnant with twins.

Today, Mary Marthey sits with her and her eight month old sons, reading primer books about the fall. Mohammed, as a result of television, the computer, and Head Start, speaks English easily. For Awatif, it is a slow process. She has mastered the sounds of the

consonants, blending them nicely, and has become quite good at sounding out one syllable words. But Mary realizes that her vocabulary is finite, perhaps just a couple hundred words, and comprehension is not there yet. Picture clues are not an option, for when she sees a picture, not knowing the word for the image, she cannot guess.



Determination is Awatif's strength. Alone in their apartment, without Arabic speaking family or friends, she is determined to learn to speak the language of her new home. Mary visits at least once a week. They have coffee and sometimes a treat of Middle Eastern cookies, while the babies climb into their laps and try to chew the corners of their books.

Jerome was 28 years old and read at a second grade level. He set as his goal to be able to read well enough to get into college. This was a tall order, one which he never wavered from. Two things impressed me right away about Jerome: his excellent vocabulary and his ability to understand what he read. He was attentive, cooperative, and his attitude is what every teacher wished all students had. He handed in his homework on time, in a neat and orderly manner. I met with him once a week for 90 minutes and twice a week in the summer.

In my opinion the biggest impediment for Jerome's improvement was his lack of reading outside of tutoring sessions or adult education classes which he attended once a week on and off. During our time together I tried everything in order to

get him to read on his own. I gave him books to read about things that interested him. I tried books on tape and sports magazines. He just would not read out of the classroom setting.

I last met with Jerome in June of 2014. Over the four years that I had worked with him, we became friends. We talked of what he wanted to do in life and where he wanted to be in five years and how to attain that goal. We talked of families and friends and how our families and friends had influenced our lives. Jerome last tested reading at a fifth grade level. In the end, we had stumbled on a way that started him reading books on his own. I had mentioned to him that there were reading pens that helped people pronounce and understand words. With some help he saved his money and bought himself a

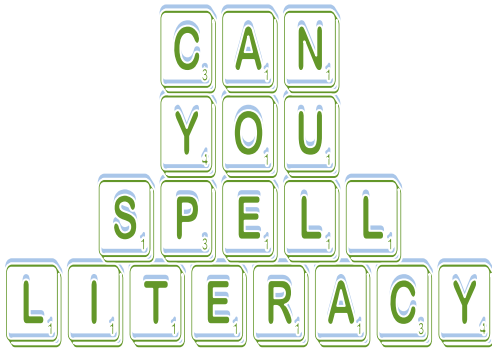
reading pen. After showing him how to use it, he was off to the races and reading on his own. He was enjoying reading and telling me about books he was reading outside of class. When I asked him why the pen was so important to him? He said, "I don't have to ask anybody about a word I do not know,.... I can figure out for myself with the help of my pen."

Jerome has moved away from the area and is no longer part of the tutoring program, but he has called me twice and continues to read on his own. He thanks me for his help when he calls and I encourage him to keep reading and attain the goal of going to college. I pray that he will make it.

*Paul Martin*



# 2014 EVENTS



The first R.E.A.D. (Reading Enables Adult Development) Scrabble Fundraiser was held on November 13, 2014 at Seven Steps Up in Spring Lake. Ten teams enjoyed food from Mancino's Pizza & Grinders, Arturo's Tacos, and sampled recipes from the R.E.A.D. cookbook while competing in two rounds of Scrabble. Prizes were awarded from Seven Steps Up, Grand Haven Islands, Aluminum Mule and the Bookman for high score each round, overall winner and best team name. The winning team was Vicki Coulson, Melissa Heyer, Laura Salik and Kristi Walsh from WGVU. R.E.A.D. would like to thank the teams, volunteers, and sponsors that made the event a success: D. Baker & Son Lumber Company, Brilliance Publishing, Fraternal Order of Eagles Grand Haven Aerie 925, Inc., Meijer, RAMI, West Michigan Molding, Inc., and Woman's Life 868.



## R.E.A.D. Hosts Book Trivia Night

Book lovers were at The Rosebud on February 20, 2014 to help celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Grand Haven's public library. R.E.A.D. hosted the event that was sponsored by Loutit District Library, Spring Lake District Library, The Rosebud, The Bookman and Chocolates by Grimaldi. The teams enjoyed food, drinks and chocolate while they tested their knowledge and love of literature with rounds of book trivia. The winning team was awarded gift cards to The Bookman.

The winning team at Book Trivia Night was Valerie Martin, Paul Martin, Mary Milhovich, Lynnda DeVries, Joanne Lucas and Gay Cole.



## 2nd R.E.A.D. Volunteer Appreciation Picnic

Tutors, students, volunteers, board members, and their families enjoyed food from Grand Haven Islands, prizes and a book exchange at Pottawatomie Bayou Park on July 20th.

Thanks again to all our volunteers for the time you give to adult literacy!



Tutor Robin Meyers decorated her bike for Art Walk Bike Parade September 2014

**R.E.A.D.**  
READING ENABLES ADULT DEVELOPMENT  
P.O. Box 429 Grand Haven, MI 49417  
616-843-1470  
www.readottawa.org

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R.E.A.D. receives \$15,000 grant  
from the  
Grand Haven Area  
Community Foundation



John Martin, Beth Larsen (Grand Haven Area Community Foundation), Susan Lowe, Paul McNergney, & Sherry Mitchell

In February of 2014, R.E.A.D., was awarded a \$15,000 grant from the Marion A. and Ruth K. Sherwood Family Fund and the Helene D. and Bernath P. Sherwood, Jr. Fund of the Grand Haven Area Community Foundation.

# Recipes for R.E.A.D.

All proceeds benefit adult literacy in  
Northwest Ottawa County

To order email [info@readottawa.org](mailto:info@readottawa.org) or call  
616-843-1470



**“A book is a gift you can open again  
and again.” - Garrison Keillor**