



## A Message From The Director

**Hello everyone!**

Thank you for taking the time to read our newsletter, which is filled with something of interest for everyone!

A big shout out to those of you who support us financially and/or volunteer your time to the Palmetto Literacy Council. Due to your efforts, we just keep growing.

We ended 2023 with 50 students being tutored. We now have 62! We still have 24 students on the waitlist. This only happens when the whole team is working together! Rock on!

If you know anyone willing to give the community 2 hours/week, please share information about your good work and the dates for the Volunteer Orientation and Trainings (see below). We have several students in Conway, Socastee, Surfside Beach, and Carolina Forest Libraries waiting for tutors. Some of them for almost a year. UGH!

We had 5 Tutors participate in the Tutor Talk in February and 10 in January. These meetings are open to anyone! It is a great place to review how to run the tutoring sessions, share strategies, and get to meet other Tutors from all over the county. We've had requests for two Tutor Talks per month. So, that is what we are going to do! We will have one in the evening and keep one on the last Friday of the month at 10:00 am. See the Dates to Note in the newsletter.

We've added some volunteer staff to the office to help with the administrative duties that are becoming VERY BUSY!

I want to personally welcome:

- **Mike Hodges** to the Grant Writing team joining our Grant Writer Extraordinaire Bobbie Lipman. Mike will help with editing, finding grants, and helping write grants as needed.
- **Niecey Szymanski** has joined us to help with the numerous binders that are turned in and those that are new. She'll be working with Anne Reiter our binder expert.
- **Whitney Wopat** has joined us to help with Data Entry in Laces. She'll be working with Cheryl Burns, Laces Czar, and Lana Miller, Data Expert!
- We added a new Co-Volunteer Liaison in Socastee last month. **Kim Reischling** joins Tracie Watson as a Volunteer Liaison in the Socastee Library.
- **Jodi Weinheimer** joined our team a couple of months ago. When her student wasn't showing up, she still wanted to help. Jodi joins as the Co-Volunteer Liaison in Carolina Forest Library. She'll join Donna Gaynor at Carolina Forest in making sure the volunteers, students, and libraries are getting the help they need.
- **Sarah Wamsley** is a CCU student who has a major (her second), in Spanish. She is bright, sharp and has been valuable as we review programs to help adults in our community who are struggling with reading and are English Language Learners.

Stay safe and healthy,

*Dodi*

**"Building a stronger community through literacy."**

## **Shabrique Spratt Made the Honor Roll!**



Look who got straight As  
and made the honor roll!  
**Shabrique Spratt** - well done!  
**Mona Prufer** is her tutor.

## **Donations**

We are a nonprofit 501c3 and we operate from the grants and donations we receive from our community. Due to our growth, we need funding to purchase computers, and desks, and to move to a larger office space. If you can, we would appreciate any help you could give us to continue to provide Horry County with high-quality, free tutoring. We are grateful for any donations. You can donate on the PLC website by [clicking here](#), or by clicking on the **Walmart Spark Good** website below.



We are registered for the Walmart SparkGood donation hub. Donors can purchase gift cards or other items we have listed to donate to our organization. This is the donation link on the Walmart website:

<https://www.walmart.com/registry/RR/36fa7082-9cde-489a-a5e8-4d31844ea9a1>

*"There is no friend as loyal as a book."* - Ernest Hemingway

## **Speaking Engagements**

We'd love for the community to learn more about the Palmetto Literacy Council and how we can help parents and students. If you have a service organization and need speakers, let us know! We have quite a story to share! But the bottom line to that story is that we exist to serve our clients and open doors to share the love of reading and math. We'd be happy to provide your organization with information about Palmetto Literacy Council.

## **Volunteers**

Want to give back to your community? It only takes 2 hours each week to tutor a child or adult who struggles with basic reading, writing, and/or math. We provide the materials, which are designed to meet the individual student's needs. We also provide training and opportunities to learn from other tutors (Tutor Talks).

- We have students who have been waiting for a tutor since March 2023 in Conway. We have six students who need Tutors at the Conway Library.
- We have 2 students at Carolina Forest Library waiting for a tutor.
- 8 students are waiting for a Tutor in the Socastee Library and 2 of those have been waiting since October of 2023.
- We have 4 students waiting for a Tutor in Surfside Beach.

If you can't help, maybe you know someone who can. Please let them know about our Volunteer Orientation and Training sessions or have them call the office (843) 945-9278.

*"What I love most about reading: It gives you the ability to reach higher ground. And keep climbing." - Oprah*

### Haines Campbell is On The Move!

**Haines Campbell** completed Section 1 of his new binder. **Mariellen Smith** is his Tutor at the Surfside Beach Library.



### Meet Our Intern, Sarah Wamsley

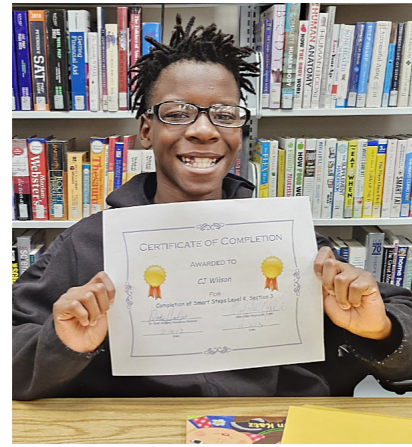


**Sarah Wamsley** is a Coastal Carolina University senior majoring in Hispanic Studies. She started the internship at Palmetto Literacy Council in January 2024. As an intern, she combines language skills with a passion for helping people learn English as a second language.

- Born in Korea. Korean is her first language
  - She came to the U.S. in 2011 when she was 13.
  - She lived with stepparents. Stepmom spoke Korean, but Dad did not.
  - Sarah stayed away from Dad because she didn't understand him.
  - Later she learned that Dad thought Sarah didn't like them.
- 
- Went to school, and took ESL. Other kids were curious and asked lots of questions. She had to learn English to survive.
  - During the 10th grade Sarah started feeling more comfortable with English. She worked herself up to honors classes, made friends, and was finally in higher levels (grades) where the prime focus was on grades.
  - She learned Spanish in high school and ended up majoring in Hispanic studies.
  - In the future she hopes to use her Spanish education in curriculum coordination. "I just want to help people and to use my language skills."

### CJ Earns Another Certificate!

**Christopher Wilson**, we know him as CJ, earned yet another certificate! CJ is tutored in the Little River Library. His Tutor is Mary Ellen Wyszynski. We're so proud of both of you!



## Meet Mike Hodges - New Addition to the Grant Writing Team



**Mike Hodges** is the spouse of our Executive Director and Founder, and the proud father of two, and grandfather to two. He spent seven years in the US Air Force as an officer and pilot. After the Air Force he joined USAirways, and later Jetblue Airways where he retired as an Airbus A321 Captain. He enjoys reading, exercising, and flying. He and Dodi have their own small plane, making their trips to see the grandkids that much more enjoyable!

## Marsha Dickson Determines Key Concepts!

**Marsha Dickson** has completed Section 2 *Determine Key Concepts* of her binder! Her tutor is **Roxus Rubinstein** (right).



## Dr. Hodges Appears on Grand Strand Today



## Grand Strand Today - Palmetto Literacy Council

Updated: Jun. 20, 2023 at 11:00 AM EDT



Grand Strand Today

Watch the interview on Grand Strand Today on WMBF. Dr. Hodges talks about Palmetto Literacy Council and what we do! They will be airing this segment several times. We do not have the days or times for those airings, but you can watch it online here:

<https://www.wmbfnews.com/video/2023/06/20/grand-strand-today-palmetto-literacy-council/>

*"There are many little ways to enlarge your child's world. Love of books is the best of all."* - Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis



### 4th Annual Golf Charity Scramble Supporting Palmetto Literacy Council

Saturday, June 8, 2024, Burning Ridge Golf Course, 500 Burning Ridge Rd, Conway SC.

- 7:30 AM Check-in
- 8:30 shotgun start
- Welcome bag
- Prizes and Drawings
- Closest to the pin & Longest drive awards
- Breakfast & lunch included
- Purchase Mulligans online before check-in

This is a fun event! Lots of competition and just plain old fun! We have sponsorships available for holes, the event, and more. **Sign up for the Golf Scramble - [Click Here!](#)**

Want to help with the Golf Scramble? Please contact Sue Walters at [sue@palmettoliteracy.org](mailto:sue@palmettoliteracy.org)

A one-page copy of our Golf Flyer is attached to this email. You can print it and pass it around to interested parties.

➡ See photos from the last tournament - [Click Here](#)



*"The more that you read, the more things you will know. The more that you learn, the more places you'll go" - Dr. Seuss*

## Nathalia Capuzzi Completes a Section!

**Nathalia Capuzzi** (Student) and  
**Katie Minehan** (Tutor).  
Congratulations, Nathalia!  
She completed a section in her binder!



## Tutor Tips for March



Each month, Dr. Dodi Hodges, executive director of the Palmetto Literacy Council, hosts "Tutor Talks", informal get-togethers for volunteer tutors where they can exchange ideas and discuss what does and doesn't work for their students.

Whether you've been a tutor for years, or are just starting, it's a great way to get to know your peers and share common goals for our students.

We're going to gather some of these tutor tips and ideas for inclusion in future newsletters in the hopes they will be of use to others:

### Tip one from Peggie Anderson:

"Should I correct spelling errors and incorrect sentence structure even when my student has written the correct answer to an exercise question?"

Yes! First, I stress to my students that the answer is correct but needs just a little bit of fine-tuning. Next, I point out the words that are misspelled and direct him to the reading to identify the correct spelling.

Then, I address sentence structure. Often, this can be easily repaired. It's usually just one or two run-one sentences that proper punctuation can quickly correct. And done!"

### Tip two from Bonnie Kelley:

"I find that starting with five to six fry (sight) words really does build confidence that continues throughout the remainder of the lesson plan.

Regarding the frequently long vocabulary list, separating syllables helps the student recognize the word, and then "clapping" the syllables aids the students in remembering the word. The first-grade literature has questions to answer verbally. I usually write the questions on a separate paper and encourage writing the answers in complete sentences.

This is expected of him in his school classroom and I hope it helps him follow through in school.

Lastly, I keep a book in my tote bag and if time allows we take turns reading a page. The student is always excited to do this."

## Jaydin Otis Completes a Section of his Binder!

**Jaydin Otis**, a student with Palmetto Literacy Council, receives a certificate of completion for the "*Read Closely*" portion of Passages to Comprehension. Jaydin has been a student with PLC since August 2023. We are so proud of you, Jaydin! Keep up the great work! Jaydin's tutor is **Kim Reischling**.



*"Books are a uniquely portable magic."* - Stephen King

## Artificial Intelligence - Useful in Writing?



### Are You Ready?

By **Bill Woodward**  
PLC Newsletter Layout Guy

Artificial intelligence can weave words about a subject like a spider spinning a web. Trained on vast amounts of text, it delves into existing information, extracting facts, statistics, and even stylistic nuances. Armed with this knowledge, it then crafts sentences, paragraphs, even entire narratives, mimicking the structure and tone of human writing. It can't

truly understand or experience the subject like a human can, but it can analyze and synthesize data to present a comprehensive and coherent, if not deeply insightful, view. AI is a skilled imitator, not an original thinker, but in its digital inkwell, it holds the potential to write with speed, accuracy, and even a semblance of human flair.

As an example of AI in use, the entire paragraph above was generated by artificial intelligence. I didn't write one word of it. I went to Google's AI writing assistant, Bard [now known as Gemini], and put in this prompt:

*"Write a short paragraph explaining how artificial intelligence can write about a subject."*

Bard "thought" about it for about 4 seconds, then spit out the paragraph. This is quite useful if one is in a hurry or is inclined to cheat. A major problem is that sometimes AI is more artificial and not so intelligent. It can sometimes write a very interesting explanation of a topic and get the facts just plain wrong. It's helpful if the user has a general knowledge of the subject to be able to do some basic fact-checking.

You can try Gemini by Google here: <https://gemini.google.com/app>

The little robot picture was also generated by AI, using the prompt *"A friendly robot is writing in his journal."* This is a case of an intelligent being using artificial intelligence to generate an image of an artificial being doing something intelligent, to portray artificial intelligence. Good luck making sense out of THAT sentence. :-)

## Upcoming Events

### Volunteer Orientation and Training

- Thursday, March 7, 2024, 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
- Tuesday, March 19, 2024, 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

We have a long waitlist of Students waiting for Tutors (Please share with your friends). We have a great need for Tutors in Conway, Loris, Socastee, Carolina Forest.

### Tutor Talks - Optional

- Tuesday, March 26, 2024, 5:30 pm
- Friday, March 29, 2024, 10:00 am

Always a lot to learn and you get to meet fellow Tutors!

### Golf Committee Meeting

- Wednesday, March 20, 2024, 10:00 am

### 1st Annual Adult Team Spelling Bee

- Saturday, November 2, 2024, at St Michael's Duffy Center. This event is for adults only and adult beverages will be available (cash bar). More information to come

### Our Mission:

*The Palmetto Literacy Council's mission is to improve the literacy of youth and adults in our community by tutoring literacy skills for those who struggle with basic Reading, Writing and/or Math.*

**Donate Now!**

If you've read this far, you're obviously interested in what we do. Your donation helps pay for student binders, office space, copy machines, paper, and much more. Please donate what you can today!

Newsletter Editor - Kim Reischling  
Newsletter Layout - Bill Woodward  
Palmetto Literacy Council  
1229 38th Ave N #130  
Myrtle Beach, SC 29577  
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