

PALMETTO LITERACY COUNCIL

BUILDING A STRONGER COMMUNITY THROUGH LITERACY



A Message From The Director

Hello everyone!

Happy 4th of July! I hope your summer is fabulous! We had an exciting June. As the Charity of the Month for WPDE, we had a lot of people calling to volunteer to become tutors and students as well. The 4th Annual Golf Scramble was a great success. Just to add to the events, we participated in the Belk Store Charity Weekend.

Whew! We continue to pair students and tutors and train new volunteers!

5 YEARS OF PALMETTO LITERACY COUNCIL!

I can't believe the number of lives our volunteers have changed over that timeframe! You have done the work. We're so proud of our students for doing the work and their parents for making sure they showed up for tutoring and made sure the students read 20 minutes every night and/or practice their basic math facts!



We invite all our Tutors, Volunteers, and Students (past and present) to join us and the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce in celebrating our five-year anniversary!

Please celebrate with us in our parking lot under the tents on **Thursday, August 1, 2024, at 10:30 am!** We will have refreshments!

We are in this together! Again, thank you for supporting Palmetto Literacy Council!

Please stay safe and healthy,

Dodi

Story And Photos!

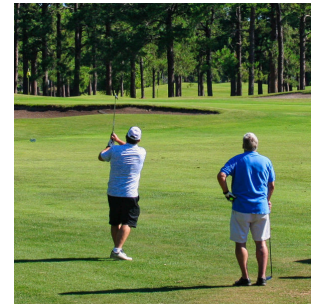




The day began sunny and cool with the promise of heat to come, as 48 golfers converged at Burning Ridge Golf Course in Conway. A flurry of pink-shirted Palmetto Literacy Council (PLC) volunteers mingled with the arriving golfers to ensure the day's events began – and remained – as smooth as glass.

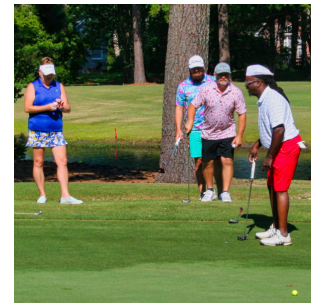
It all took place Saturday, June 8 – the culmination of months of planning – at the PLC Fourth Annual Golf Scramble, the organization's largest annual fundraiser.

You know that somewhat trite saying, "It takes a village?" Well, it took a village of PLC volunteers months to plan every detail of the golf scramble and it would have been impossible without the help of numerous community members who donated gifts, money, and raffle prizes.



Krispy Kreme donated six boxes of coffee and 10 dozen donuts for those golfers who weren't quite awake and needed a small sugar rush. Also available were bagels. The Bagel Factory sold bagels to PLC at wholesale cost. Later, after the golfers finished their games, they returned to the clubhouse with an appetite where Burning Ridge Golf Course provided box lunches (and there were plenty of donuts left for dessert).

Before and after golfing, raffle tickets were sold for numerous prizes including tickets to Long Bay Symphony, foursomes at Arrowhead Golf Course, Barefoot Resort, and the Founders Group. A big-ticket item from the silent auction: luxurious accommodations for a week's stay in Cozumel, Mexico. Bonnie Kelley was the highest bidder at \$1,500.



The first-place golf team included

- Gil DeCicco
- Gerry Gardner
- Tom Kerling
- Steve Fleishaken

Dr. Dodi Hodges, executive director of PLC, called the Golf Scramble an unqualified success.

The second-place golf team included:

- Marian McRoy
- Harold Timmons
- Rhett McRoy
- Gregg Mcleod

"Everyone came together to make this happen. I am so grateful to the golfers, donors, and our volunteers for giving of their time and money to help students who struggle with

reading and math. Because that is what it's all about," she said. "Today we all – golfers and volunteers – helped ensure that our students can achieve academic success, success that will remain with them throughout their life."



Some of the volunteers who made the tournament possible.

To close with another trite but true phrase, there is "no resting on our laurels." Plans are already in the works for what will be PLC's fifth annual golf scramble.

See ALL of the pictures from the 2024 Golf Scramble in our online photo album. [Click Here!](#)



The Golf Scramble Team gave Joanne Cherry a purple orchid to show appreciation for all she did behind the scenes to make the tournament successful. In an orchid, the color purple represents appreciation.

Bryana Hipkins Completed a Section of Her Binder!



Lee Doty (Tutor) is with **Bryana Hipkins** (Student). Bryana completed the second section of her binder! She's doing a good job of listening and learning from Mr. Lee.

Donations

We are a nonprofit 501c3 and we operate from the grants and donations we receive from our community. We have been open for 5 years on August 1, 2024. Thank you to all who have donated to our organization. Your donations have provided materials for our Volunteer Tutors to use and helped our students learn!

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>

Jett Walantus Graduates from the Palmetto Literacy Council



Jett Walantus

Group Picture, L to R: Tracye Watson-Volunteer Liaison-Socastee, Uncle Larry, Joann Bohnet-Tutor, Jett Walantus-Student, Barb-Grandma, Dodi Hodges-PLC Director

Jett didn't think he needed to learn math when he started. At the graduation ceremony, he shared that he thought math was "easy." Joann did a great job improving his skills and more importantly his confidence.

Julia Smith Completed a Section of Her Binder!



Julia Smith completed
Passages to Comprehension
- Level 3

Shabrique Spratt Completed a Section of Her Binder!

Mona Prufer, Tutor and
Shabrique Spratt, Student.
Shabrique completed
Passages to Comprehension
- Level 2.



Bobbie Lipman, Tonya Robinson, Bonnie Kelley,
Preston McKeever-Floyd, and Sallie Walbourne at The
Belk store in Coastal Grand Mall for Belk's Charity
Weekend Sale. They sold a lot of tickets to raise
money for PLC!



Aryia Anderson Has Completed a Section



Congratulations to
Aryia Anderson
for completing
Passages to Comprehension
- Level 2. Aryia is with
her tutor, Delilah Knowles.

Madison Fletcher

Madison Fletcher (R) passed a chapter test in Math. Madison is with her tutor, Arant Odriozola (L), at the Surfside Beach Library.



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, or math. We provide materials and training which are designed to meet the individual student's needs. We also provide training and opportunities to learn from other tutors (Tutor Talks).

If you can help, please attend one of our **Volunteer Orientation and Training** sessions or give the office a call (843) 945-9278. You can check when the Volunteer Orientation and Training sessions are scheduled on our [Calendar](#) on our website. We welcome you to bring friends to these sessions.

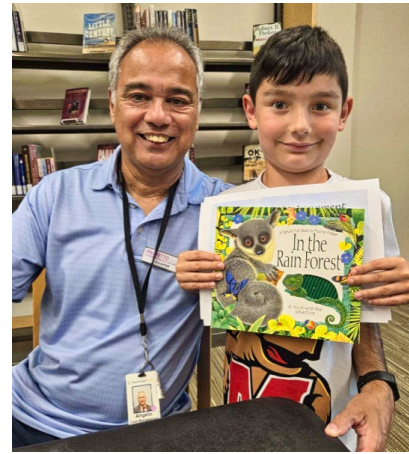
Caden Smith Completed a Binder!



Caden Smith completed a binder! His tutor, Joan Stillwell, is so excited and proud of him! We're proud of him too!

Jace Webb Completed a Binder!

Angelo Melendez, Tutor and **Jace Webb**, Student. Jace is really working hard and has completed a binder already! Rock on Jace! Angelo is so impressed with your progress and so are we!



WPDE Television Charity of the Month



We are so grateful to WPDE for making us their Charity of the Month in June 2024! Our office received dozens of calls from people wanting to volunteer or request tutoring. YAY! Please check out the show *Living Local* with **Amanda Kinseth** for her 3-minute piece on the Palmetto Literacy Council. [Click Here](#), and then play the video on that page.

Haleli Cohen Completed a Section

Haleli Cohen received her certificate for finishing *Smart Steps Level One - Section One*.



Five Years of the Palmetto Literacy Council

To our tutors, volunteers, and students both past and present: You are all cordially invited to celebrate the Palmetto Literacy Council (PLC) at a ribbon-cutting commemorating our fifth anniversary on August 1 at 10:30 AM. The event, hosted by the Myrtle Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, will be held in the parking lot of the PLC office, 1010 Fifth Avenue North in Surfside Beach.

"This celebration is for all of you. Together, we are in the business of improving the lives of our students. Please join us," said Dodi Hodges, executive director of PLC.



It all began on August 1, 2019, when the Palmetto Literacy Council first opened its doors, but in reality, the work began in the months prior—and what an immense amount of work it was (and still is).

The spark that began in the heart of Dr. Dodi Hodges, (our executive director then and now), became first an ember, then a flame because of an ever-growing number of volunteers.

“Tony Mackey, from the Chapin Foundation, is my mentor. She called me at the end of May 2019 and told me there was room in the area for a literacy council and I was the one to make it happen. Of course, that was very flattering to me, but it echoed what I’d been thinking for months.”

That phone call put Dodi on a trajectory to make it happen, no matter the difficulties.

In other words, that spark ignited Dodi to found a literacy non-profit that would serve both parents and children in Horry County.



According to statistics, more than 22.4 percent of adults in the state have “low literacy” while 39 percent of fourth-graders are below the basic reading level.

“Those statistics need to improve. So, I talked it over with my husband, Mike, and we decided to sink some money into it and just do it. Then I went to a realtor in Surfside who said, ‘I think I’ve got a place for you.’ We also began requesting grants.

August 1, 2019, was the date set to open the PLC doors. Dodi’s determination and perseverance went into overdrive (actually, five years later, Dodi is still in overdrive).

“The Chapin Foundation sent us our first grant money. Our office was a 14x15-foot room with two desks. Donations for office furniture began to come in. Anne Rider came aboard as our first volunteer. Tori continued to mentor me for the first few years. I actually thought this was going to be a part-time job where I could take Fridays off. That was a pipe dream,” Dodi laughingly said.

Building a curriculum for the tutors to use with students was a challenge. But Dodi’s skills (and PhD) in special education with a focus on organizational change, leadership, and curriculum and instruction, fit hand in glove with what was needed at PLC.





The result: A room in the current PLC office that houses binders containing stories, worksheets, and lesson plans, each binder age-appropriate for the level that student is at. Those binders are maintained by volunteers. Math binders are also on hand for the students who need a little help in math, a curriculum that was also developed by Dodi.

“By year’s end PLC had 10 students, ages 5-37, being tutored at various libraries throughout the county. By March of 2020, PLC had 18 students being tutored, 37 requests for tutoring, and more than 40 volunteers willing to help in various capacities. I looked for help from wherever I could get it.” Thus, what began as a spark became an ember as Dodi pounded the pavement doing whatever possible to spread the word about PLC.

Then COVID hit, and PLC, in its infancy, was forced to shut down on March 17 for six weeks. Despite the roadblocks, like the proverbial phoenix rising from the ashes, PLC persevered – and grew.

As of June 2024, PLC has 59 active pairs (students paired with tutors) with an additional 34 volunteers who serve in other capacities. In short, PLC is on fire.



“Ensuring the fire has fodder – keeping PLC strong and vital - - is the work of hundreds of people since May of 2019,” said Dodi.



“We would not exist, could not have grown without our volunteers. They give so generously of their time – in fact, in May (2024) our volunteers worked 271 hours. That’s amazing, and I am so grateful,” she said.

But volunteers aren’t the only people responsible for the growing success of PLC.

“Since May of 2019, businesses, community members, parents of PLC students, and many more have helped us monetarily or by donating precisely what we needed at any given moment,” she said.

“Through the tough times, and in the good times, I truly believe that the universe will provide.”

And that it has, through the caring of volunteers and the community.

**Rebecca Andrade-Marin Graduated
From The Palmetto Literacy Council**



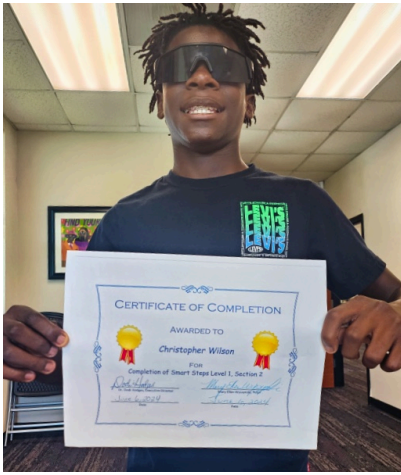
Rebecca Andrade-Marin Graduated from the Palmetto Literacy Council. Her Tutor is Mona Prufer. Rebecca loves science and is a published author, of *"BiBi"*. *"BiBi"* was written for our Pen Warrior Writing Contest and Rebecca won First Place in that contest. We gave her a STEM kit as her graduation gift. In attendance at her celebration was Johanna Baca, Mom, Adrian Andrade-Marin, brother, Mona Prufer, Tutor, and Dodi Hodges, Director of PLC. We are so proud of this family! All English Language Learners!

Katrina Ferrell Has Earned a "Read Closely" Certificate

Katrina Ferrell has earned a "read closely" certificate for completing a portion of her binder. Katrina insisted the "little friend" she was clutching share in celebration of Katrina's accomplishment. Katrina is tutored at Soccastee Library by Jennifer Wingerter. Jennifer says that Katrina is a delight to tutor and is learning by leaps and bounds.



CJ Wilson Completed Another Section



This is **CJ Wilson** (Student) who just completed a section in his binder. His tutor is Mary Ellen Wyszynski. We are so proud of CJ! Rock on buddy!

Palina Ferrell Completed A Section of Her Binder

Palina Ferrell has earned a certificate for completing a section of her binder. Pictured with Palina at the Socastee Library, is her tutor, Barbara Slife-Shipley. Barbara said that Palina is smart, engaged and a pleasure to tutor. Congratulations, Palina. You're doing a wonderful job!



Dr. Hodges Speaks to the Rotary Club



Dr. Darla Domke-Damonte invited **Dr. Dodi Hodges** to speak to the Carolina Forest Sunrise Rotary Club. **Steven Ganz** presented Dodi with a beautiful encased globe paperweight as a thank-you gift.

Speaking Engagements

If you have a service organization and need speakers, we would be happy to provide your organization with information about the Palmetto Literacy Council. Contact us here:

Email: info@palmettoliteracy.org

Office Phone: [\(843\) 945-9278](tel:(843)945-9278)

Dates to Note

You can always check the Calendar on the PLC website. [Click Here](#). These events (except the Spelling Bee) take place at the office,

1010 5th Ave N, Ext., #102, Surfside Beach.

Volunteer Orientation and Training

- Wednesday, July 17, 2024, 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
- Tuesday, July 30, 2024, 5:30 pm - 7:30 pm

Tutor Talks

Tutors share ideas, ask for ideas, and get to know each other! Light refreshments.

- Tuesday, July 23, 2024, 5:30 pm
- Friday, July 26, 2024, 10:00 am

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

5-Year Anniversary Celebration!

- Thursday, August 1, 2024 at 10:30 AM.

Celebrate with us in our parking lot under the tents. We will have refreshments!

1st Annual Adult Team Spelling Bee

When: Saturday, November 2, 2024, 7:00 pm

Where: St Michael's Catholic School Duffy Center

This event is for adults only and adult beverages will be available (cash bar). Teams are up to four (4) members (\$250/team) and you are competing for the honor of being the Champion Spellers of Horry County. There will be raffles, 50/50, a silent auction, and so much more fun.

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!

Platinum
Transparency
2024

Candid.

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

Email not displaying correctly?

[View it in your browser](#)

[Unsubscribe](#)

