

Tarrant Literacy Coalition

opening the door to opportunity.

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Upcoming Events

- April is National Volunteer Recognition Month
- International Children's Book Day (4/2)
- National Library Week (4/8-14)
- Volunteer Recognition Day (4/20)
- Take your Daughters and Sons to Work Day (4/26)
- April Training Event (TBD)
- Corporate Spelling Bee (5/2)

Check the website for a complete calendar of events and contact [Jennifer Rollins](#) to have your event added.

Volunteer Spotlight!

Sherri Chambers is a volunteer with the First United Methodist Church in Mansfield-LIFT (Literacy Instruction for Texas). She is a retired English teacher and learned about this volunteer opportunity in the Mansfield Mirror, a local publication. She started out as a classroom aid two years ago and is now a lead teacher for one of the weekly ESL level IV classes.

When asked about why she has continued to volunteer there, she said it was because of the atmosphere. Volunteers and students alike share a positive attitude and a spirit of cooperation. When new students join they are warmly welcomed. She also feels supported by other teachers and the Coalition with training and resources.

One of her most cherished experiences was a lesson she taught about food. She asked all the students to bring a favorite recipe and ingredients to prepare for one another. They filled the church kitchen with ethnic flavors but also with joy as they were able to share their talents and unique cultural heritages.

Sherri's class includes an international blend of Asians and South and Central Americans. They range from 21-60 years in age. She teaches on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 10a-12p and she loves being a part of such a vibrant program.

Thank you Sherri for dedicating yourself to adult education!

For more information about the First United Methodist Church in Mansfield ESL classes contact: **Susan Luttrell**
(817) 473-6650 x204

susanl@firstunitedmethodistmansfield.org
www.firstunitedmethodistmansfield.org

We want to feature you in upcoming issues of the Coalition newsletter. You get to hear about our efforts and events all the time but we really want to hear from you!

Please submit stories and articles to:
[Jennifer Rollins](#)

Be sure to include a short author bio and your program's information.

National Volunteer Recognition Month

Written by: Jennifer Rollins

March 26, 2012

We can never thank our volunteers enough for their active involvement in the literacy community. This includes class tutors or aids, instructors, childcare workers, special event volunteers, board members, and the myriad of other people who gladly give of their time and talents for the sake of adult education.

Volunteering has become a meaningful activity for people of all ages — from adolescents to retirees. Studies have proven the positive rewards of community service and other selfless activities. Some of the recognized benefits of volunteering include: self-satisfaction, altruism, relaxation, socialization, status or reward, career opportunities, community improvement, and potential learning or acquisition of new skills. In addition to the personal benefits volunteers experience we also recognize the direct benefits for the receivers of volunteer efforts. Whatever reason volunteers ini-

tially choose to get involved, it is clear that they often stay because of the community environment that forms.

Another way to encourage volunteer retention is through ongoing recognizing of their efforts. You can recognize your volunteers through birthday cards, volunteer banquets, annual awards, thoughtful gifts at the end of sessions, written thank you letters, take and post pictures of your volunteers, create a volunteer of the month program, and take time to have conversations with your volunteers. Volunteers need to feel valued and that their work is valuable.

If you are interested in ways to improve your volunteer recruitment or management look for our volunteer training event to be announced soon. Also, be sure to contact the [Coalition](#) to be sure your program is on the list to receive volunteer referrals.

Gearing up for the Spelling Bee

Written by: Jennifer Rollins

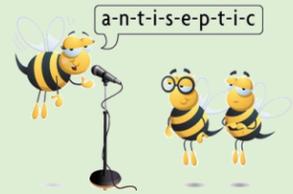
March 28, 2012

Annually, the Tarrant Literacy Coalition hosts an event that is equally challenging, competitive, and entertaining for spellers and spectators alike. Hopefully you have heard something about the Corporate Spelling Bee by now and perhaps you have even attended in previous years. This year the event will be held on May 2nd at the Brown-Lupton University Union at TCU.

There are currently 24 spelling teams registered to participate, each comprised of three adult spellers plus an alternate. The teams meet together months ahead of time to begin practicing for the big event. The official study guide for our Spelling Bee is the Merriam Webster's Dictionary, which just happens to contain nearly half a million words. So there is a lot of studying to do!

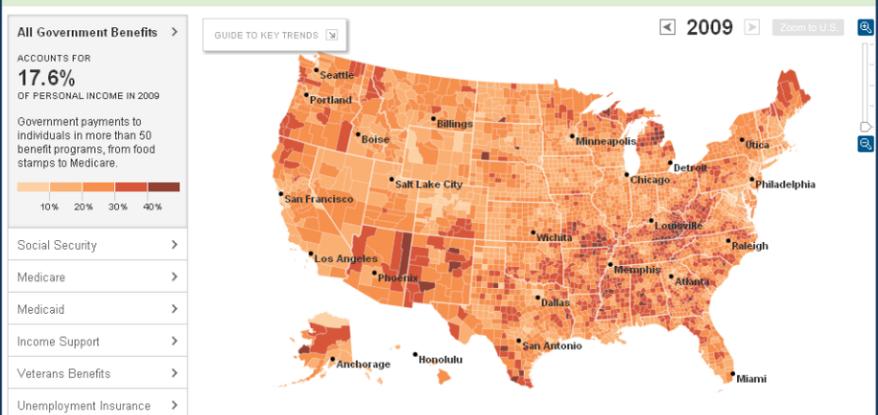
You can check out the winning words from past National Youth Spelling Bees to test your spelling prowess. The first National Youth Spelling Bee was in 1925 and the winning word was *gladiolus*. Other winning words through the years include: *asceticism*, *fracas*, *knack*, *promiscuous*, *chlorophyll*, *Chihuahua*, *shalloon*, *sarcophagus*, and *appoggiatura*. For a complete list of winning words from the Scripps Spelling Bee [check out their website](#).

For more information about attending or volunteering at our local Adult Corporate Spelling Bee contact [Kathryn Thompson](#). We hope to see you there!



The Geography of Government Benefits

Check out this really fascinating interactive [website \(click here\)](#) if you are interested in the evolution of government benefits and geographic distribution. A wealth of information is available through this resource that may be helpful in your ministry, literacy program, business, or for personal interest. Enjoy!



Thanks to all who attended the training event: Spreading the Wealth with Steinbeck!



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