



A L.O.V.E. LETTER

FROM LOCAL OUTREACH VOLUNTEER EDUCATORS

FALL 2007

SPONSORS:

Asbury United Methodist
The Junior League of Savannah
Messiah Lutheran
The Rotary Club of Skidaway Island
St. James Catholic
St. Peter's Episcopal
Skidaway Island Baptist
Skidaway Island Presbyterian
Skidaway Is. United Methodist
Speedwell United Methodist
Trinity United Methodist
St. Francis Episcopal
Savannah Christian Church
Temple Mickve Israel

LOVE BOARD:

Chair: Alice Wright
Chair Emeritus: Fred Loe
Secretary: Joyce Glenn
Project Coord.: David Dawson
PR: Mike Miller, Landon Smith
Recruitment Coord.: Joe McGowan
Training: Catherine Ruhl,
Sherri Brecker, Sandy Heiser
Treasurer: John Kloss
Jr. League: Heather Slamenick
Rotary Liaison: Phil Turek
Speedwell: Carolyn Luten

Site Coordinators:

Bartow: Henry Singleton
Baptist Ctr: Maureen Kouvel
DeRenne: Phil Turek
E. Broad: Wilma Tysse
Gadsden: Bill Monroe
Garrison: Ginny Pierce
Georgetown: Julia Clary
Gould: Alice Wright
Haven: Marian Hofstein
Hubert: Bob & Nancy Schmarge
Islands: Ruth Foster
Low: Dave Dawson
Port Wentworth: Wilma Tysse
Salvation Army: Susan Craddock
Spencer: Alice Wright
Southwest: Russ Dyer
West Chatham: Linda Waters

A Letter from the Chair

By Alice Wright, Chair

This fall has been a wonderful time for LOVE.

We are all enjoying the new website, www.lovementors.org and thanks to Martha Brown, we have a beautiful new brochure. Mike Miller created a new slogan, "Kids Need Love, LOVE Needs You. This was the basis for both an article in the TWATL and a tube flyer. Much interest was created by all this and Catherine Ruhl has been busy training new mentors.

Fred Loe continues to find interested congregations and organizations to join LOVE as sponsors and this has enabled us to move into new elementary schools. Keep up the good work, Fred.

LOVE was given a generous gift from Kevin Ortner in memory of his Father, David Ortner. We are developing a program to honor this gift.

With regret, we accepted board resignations from: John Billingsley, Martha Brown, Pat Cooper, Ruthie Clark, John Schoenecker, Cindy Telljohann and John Tysse. A big thank you for all you have done for LOVE over the years.

We welcome to the board: Susan Craddock, Site Coordinator-Salvation Army; Joyce Glenn, Secretary; Carolyn Luten, Speedwell United Methodist Church; Henry Singleton, Site Coordinator - Bartow Elementary; Heather Slamenick, Junior League of Savannah; and Phil Turek - Rotary Representative; Julia Clary, Site Coordinator - Georgetown Elementary.

LOVE will march in the MLK Parade this year, January 21, 2008 at 10am. We would love to have mentors and students join us. We will have our new LOVE banner to lead the way. It is going to be fun! Come join us. Wishing all the LOVE Family a blessed and wonderful Holiday Season. Thanks for all you do for the children of Savannah - they are the future.

Aren't These Kids Lucky by Mike Miller

"Look me in the eye and give me a firm handshake."

These are the first words Bill Monroe's Gadsden third-grade boys hear when they meet him. And it's a social skill they remember.

The second thing they learn: "Monroe" was the fifth President of the United States, "and the most important!" Seriously, says Bill, "The early Presidents were the foundation of American history - something kids should know."

Bill honchos the L.O.V.E. program and its 15-or-so mentors at Gadsden Elementary School. He's tutored at Gadsden for five years, and has worked with (read that "helped") more than 40 students in that period.

"We help in lots of ways - not always with just reading and math," Bill notes. "We help build self esteem, verbal skills, other communication skills..." For some kids, he adds, "It's the only time they're alone with an adult whose attention is focused strictly on them. I try to be a role model in these 'traditional' areas."

Bill retired early from Xerox in 2001 and moved from Connecticut to The Landings. "I began looking into volunteering - but where? I didn't want just to sit around in meetings." Golfing buddy John Tysse suggested L.O.V.E. "I was skeptical. Then Wilma Tysse got involved, and next thing I know, so did I!" Wilma turned over management of the Gadsden L.O.V.E. program to Bill after his first year.

"I fell in love with the kids," Bill says. "I have fun with them; and I've never had a discipline problem. The most rewarding aspect of tutoring and mentoring is the day-to-day contact with the children."

Bill likes to join the kindergarten kids in the cafeteria - "just to 'small-talk' with them. It's fun." And he attends the school's plays and programs.

Besides tutoring his five students at Gadsden, Bill helps students with homework after school at the Baptist Center; he coaches soccer for the Coastal Georgia Soccer Association two days a week plus game nights; and he and fellow-tutor Tom Thomas conduct a Junior Achievement program at DeRenne Middle School.

"I also judge Gadsden's Spelling Bee, and am captured on tape reading my favorite kids' story, "The Three Billy Goats Gruff."

In addition to all this, Bill continues to mentor - and has a strong relationship with -- three boys from his first year at Gadsden. The boys are guests at the Monroe home for special occasions and may join Bill over the summer for a Savannah sporting event or to visit a Savannah tourist attraction.

As for the L.O.V.E. program itself: The volunteers are its greatest strength, he emphasizes. "The materials are excellent, but it's these great, selfless people who make it happen."

And while there are challenges within the school system, on the whole, Bill notes, the teachers and administration "have come to understand that we can make a difference.

"I'm involved with kids and I love it." says Bill. "That's what I do in retirement."





Dr. Lockamy Appreciates LOVE

Here is what Superintendent Thomas Lockamy has to say about each of you.

“I appreciate all of the support LOVE is giving our students. I cannot tell you how fortunate I feel to have you and LOVE supporting our schools. I don’t know of any other district having this type of support. Thanks a million.
Thomas Lockamy”

FYI – last year LOVE gave the children of Savannah Chatham County Public Schools more than 4,000 volunteer hours. Keep up the good work!



We’re Delighted! By Fred Loe

This fall the L.O.V.E. program has had the good fortune to add three new sponsors: Asbury Memorial United Methodist Church; Speedwell United Methodist Church; and The Junior League of Savannah. Volunteers from each of these locations have been trained and are mentoring at Bartow, Gadsden, Spencer and Gould Elementary Schools.

Among the new mentors, Henry Singleton of Asbury Memorial is Site Coordinator at Bartow, a new LOVE elementary school and will serve on the LOVE Board. Carolyn Luten will represent Speedwell UMC on our LOVE Board. Rev. Brenda Iglehart-Eddings, Pastor at Speedwell UMC, has added mentoring at Gadsden to her busy schedule.

We now have fifteen sponsors and serve thirteen elementary schools, two middle schools and two community centers and have high hopes of adding White Bluff United Methodist Church and Isle of Hope United Methodist Church to our list of sponsors in January. Notre Dame Academy will soon be a LOVE school. The volunteers at NDA have joined LOVE and will be trained in January.



LOVE WEB SITE by Catherine Ruhl

Early last Spring I received a call from a vivacious SCAD graphic design grad student named Alison. It seems that she and her team had a class assignment of producing a web site for a non-profit organization. She asked me if our organization was interested. After I gasped and caught my breath, I excitedly said yes, remembering that this was a goal of our LOVE program.

That began a flurry of activity for Alice and me as we gathered up materials pertinent to the organization. We would then hurry off to meet four very dynamic grad students and share materials as well as our hopes and vision for our LOVE web site. Alice then arranged for a photo shoot at one of our schools, so the web site would showcase our organization in action. Alison would contact us with an idea, question or clarification and we'd quickly find her the answers. Their entire assignment was to be completed in 3 weeks! We were busy.

Our final meeting was scheduled at a cyber café near Forsyth Park where Wilma, Alice and I were shown the work of these four gifted students. There were tears of joy that day as we saw our volunteering efforts displayed so beautifully. Alison explained that her team had worked over 150 hours on our project and they were mighty proud too! The team had become so involved in their project that they were granted an extension, so they could perfect their assignment to their personal standards. As their work evolved, so did a wonderful new logo for our organization. Alison presented us with our web site and hugs of thanks were exchanged. It was such a privilege working with these artistic, talented students. We have a treasure here and we thank our SCAD students for their time and effort for our LOVE organization.

You can find us on the Web @ www.lovementors.org

Behind the Scenes

From its inception the “LOVE Letter” has owed a lot of its being to Samantha Lambert. She designed the original format and has handled the word processing and layout for every issue.

Samantha and husband, Paul, work as a team. She runs “Celestial Document Services” and Paul, a highly qualified computer expert, runs his technology company, “Celestial Business Solutions, Inc.” Samantha does a balancing act between her specialty in computer applications and caring for their two beautiful young children.

The Lamberts have been a great help in getting the SCAD-designed LOVE web site online and up to date. Paul has managed the technical side arranging for space on the server at Skidaway Island United Methodist Church, as well as handling the registration of the domain name and making programming improvements. Samantha has fine tuned the content, added new photos and will keep the site current going into the future.

Communications are essential to the success of the LOVE program. The Lamberts have made a significant contribution to this success.



WELCOME MORE NEW MENTORS

Please give a very warm welcome to the following new LOVE recruits. They have completed training and are in schools mentoring.

Diane Baynes, Chris Beaver, Terry Browne, Edna Wright Brown, Megan Couturier, Susan Hendrix, Mimi Krupp, Joe Krupp, Carla Liptrot, Carolyn Luten, Kathryn McLearn, Mike McLearn, Bill McQueeney, Carol Medinger, Laura Potts-Wirht, Henry Singleton, Brenda Steiner, Colin Stewart, Jackie Stewart, Kristy Thorstad, Linda Tompkins and Dave Walton.

New mentors, please remember, we are here to assist you and if you have any problems or concerns go to your LOVE site coordinator. They are experienced mentors and can help or find help for you.



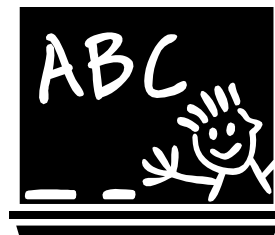


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Important Dates to Remember! Put these on your calendar now!

- Dec 21-Jan 2** SCHOOL VACATION (classes resume Jan. 3)
- Jan 7** LOVE Board Meeting **9:30 am** @St. Peters Episcopal
- Jan 21** NO SCHOOL—MLK DAY PARADE
Come walk with us—meet at SIUMC @**8:30 am**
- Feb 11** Mentors Appreciation Gathering **4 pm** @ St. Peters Episcopal (details to come)
- Feb 18** NO SCHOOL—President's Day
- April 7-11** SCHOOL VACATION



In Memory
Kay Anderson
Mentor at Gadsden Elementary

Training Corner

By Catherine Ruhl

I LOVE visiting and meeting with you at your schools, so please email me for special training or assistance with a student -- ccruhl@bellsouth.net

KIDS NEED LOVE, LOVE NEEDS YOU!