

THE READING SEED REVIEW

Helping children learn to read so they can read to learn.



READINGSEED
CHILDREN'S LITERACY PROGRAM

DECEMBER 2009
Biannual Newsletter

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Significant underwriting provided by the Rotary Club of Tucson

Teen coaches lead the way at Lyons Elementary

This semester 15 young people from Aztec Middle College East are spending an hour each week serving as reading coaches to 30 children in primary grades at Lyons Elementary School.

This collaborative adventure was the brainchild of Sheila Govern, principal of Lyons. "I had a couple of wonderful reading coaches provided by Reading Seed in previous years," she explains. "They did such a great job, that I wanted more coaches. A lot more!"

When she was approached by Tim Flood, the lead teacher at Aztec, to foster a partnership between students at Aztec and Lyons, she immediately thought of Reading Seed because she thought students in the T.U.S.D. alternative education secondary school would be a great source of coaches and Reading Seed provides such great training that all students would benefit. Students who attend Aztec Middle College fulfill their high school requirements at the same time they attend classes at Pima Community College. Aztec's location on the campus of PCC East is also a benefit as it is quite near Lyons Elementary.

"I thought it was a great idea," says Mr. Flood. "When I put the idea to the students, the majority of them were quite excited about the opportunity." The focus of the program is on reading, and the Aztec students are expected to act as mentors to the younger students – modeling positive, responsible behavior for the students they coach. The full Reading Seed training was provided to the Aztec students and Principal Govern and Mr. Flood coached them about expectations and the responsibilities of being both a reading coach and mentor. Students who choose to be reading coaches receive class credit if they fulfill their coaching commitment for at least one semester.

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Aztec student Makenna Woodworth makes a story come alive for one of her Lyons students.



“The program absolutely is working!” says Principal Govern. “My students light up when they see their coaches and can’t wait to get started reading each week.” The Aztec students spend time choosing books for their students or the students bring books to read with their coaches.

“The mentoring and caring that reading coaches provide to their students has always been an additional benefit of the Reading Seed program,” says Elizabeth Campbell, Reading Seed executive director. “The fact that these cool teenagers are volunteering their time and modeling the importance of higher education is a very powerful message for the young children they coach. This positive impact on children could be as long lasting as improvements in their reading ability.”

Margaret Durako at Lyons and Joyce Green at Aztec are the liaisons and monitors for the program. Ms. Durako coordinates all of the packets, assigns volunteers and lets teachers know when coaches are coming. A training is already planned for January when a new batch of Aztec East students will replace those coaches who are graduating.

Lyons and Aztec students will gather to celebrate the first semester of the collaboration on Dec. 9 at PCC East. “We want the Lyons students to see the Pima campus, to reinforce the message about going to college,” says Mr. Flood. “We would like to see the program expand to include other young people.” Some instructors at PCC West want their students to attend a Reading Seed training and receive credit for volunteering as reading coaches to young children. This partnership could provide elementary schools on the west side of town with many additional coaches and hopefully give all young people involved a taste of volunteering that will become a lifelong habit. 

From the Executive Director

It’s been five whirlwind months since I joined Reading Seed. There has been much to learn and much to do and I have enjoyed every minute so far! Let me give a heartfelt thank you to the many people who make Reading Seed great and who have helped me get off to a good start.

The bedrock of the Reading Seed program is its dedicated volunteer reading coaches. The fact that more than 1,000 people each year generously give at least one hour each week to read with children in our community is mind boggling! Of course, none of our work would be possible without the time, resources and energy donated by the Rotary Club of Tucson, our board of directors, committee members, donors, office volunteers, and other stakeholders.

I also want to recognize the continued support and partnership of staff and administration at the schools and school districts we serve. Finally, all these wonderful partners, volunteers and stakeholders are coordinated and supported by our highly educated, incredibly resilient and very modestly paid staff members – just two full time, two part time and one trainer!

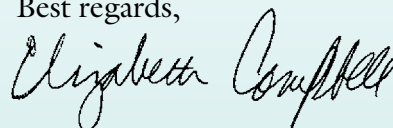
I feel quite humbled and honored to be a part of, much less to lead, this incredible organization!

A couple of things are a bit different about this newsletter. As Reading Seed diversifies its revenue sources, it is important for us to communicate with all supporters including volunteers and donors. In the future, a print newsletter will probably be mailed only twice a year and will cover information of general interest. Ideally, we would like to collect email addresses from all our stakeholders, so we can better target information and deliver it in the most timely and cost-effective manner. However, we will never sell or rent email addresses and you will not be besieged with frequent email blasts. If you prefer not to communicate electronically, we will do our best to accommodate you.

I encourage everyone to visit the new website at readingseed.org. I envision the website becoming a resource for current and potential coaches and we will keep you posted as new features are added.

In the past few months, I have had the pleasure of meeting or talking with many of you and there are many more supporters with whom I still need to connect. Please feel free to call or email me or let’s set up a time to have coffee. I can be reached at 520-798-0700 or ecampbell@readingseed.org. I appreciate your input, whether positive or negative, because Reading Seed can only accomplish its mission with the help of caring volunteers and supporters like you.

Best regards,



Executive Director



READING SEED BENEFITS FROM 2009 TUCSON FESTIVAL OF BOOKS

Save the date for next year –
March 13-14, 2010!

Reading Seed Children's Literacy Program received \$65,000 as a beneficiary of one-third of the proceeds of the 2009 Tucson Festival of Books. The first-time event raised a net total of \$200,000 for literacy providers in Pima County!

"Reading Seed is so grateful to receive this funding," says Jim Murphy, Reading Seed Board President. "The founders and committee members created a fabulous first-year event, and it looks like 2010 will be even bigger and better!"

Tucson Festival of Books board members include co-chairs Bill and Brenda Viner, Bruce Beach of Beach Fleischman & Co., Frank Farias of the University of Arizona Bookstores and John Humenik Editor and Publisher of the Arizona Daily Star. Major sponsors of the 2009 event have stepped up to continue their support in 2010: Diamond Children's Medical Center, Arizona Daily Star, University of Arizona, Target, Tucson Medical Center, Arizona Public Media, and University of Arizona Book Stores.

Funds from the 2009 and 2010 event benefit Reading Seed, the Literacy for Life Coalition, and the University of Arizona.

An estimated 50,000 people attended the 2009 event held at the University of Arizona and more than 800 community members volunteered. Many thanks to those Reading Seed supporters who volunteered at the event and at the Reading



(left to right) Martha Gilliland and Cindy Godwin from the Literacy for Life Coalition, Jim Lubinski and Allan Tractenberg from Reading Seed and Frank Farias from the University of Arizona Bookstore accept a check from the Tucson Festival of Books at a press conference on October 7, 2009.



Seed booth. We will be asking for your help again for the 2010 event.

Hundreds of best-selling authors are already confirmed for the 2010 Tucson Festival of Books including Alice Hoffman, Steve Martini and Elmore Leonard. Authors of children's and young adult books include Frank Beddor – "Looking Glass Wars" trilogy and Mac Barnett – "Billy Twitters and His Blue Whale Problem." For more information about the 2010 Tucson Festival of Books, go to <http://tucsonfestivalofbooks.org> and mark your calendars for March 13 and 14, 2010!

Coaches' survey coming soon!

Please keep an eye out for a Reading Seed survey in early 2010. The survey will have two parts. The first will ask for updated information about your address and other contact information, as well as the schools you volunteer at and children you are working with in the 2009-2010 school year.

The second part of the survey will request your honest feedback and

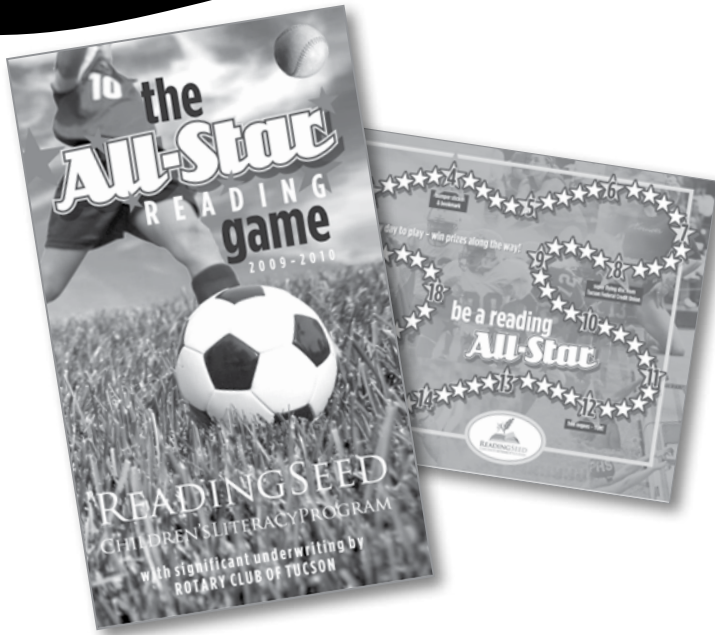
opinions about the Reading Seed program – what is working and what needs to be improved. Your answers will help Reading Seed better support you, our dedicated volunteer reading coaches, and better serve children in our community.

The second part of the survey will be kept separate from the informational portion and will be strictly confidential. A college intern will be

compiling survey results, and overall trends and results will be reported to the staff, board of directors and back to you.

The survey will be administered using print and online methods. Please respond once using the method most convenient for you. We thank you in advance for taking the time to participate in this survey.

Reading Seed



Are you game for reading?

Reading Seed's board game for the 2009-2010 school year is here! Have you begun tracking reading times yet? This year's game has a sports theme with a prize of a pair of tickets to a Tucson Toros 2010 game for the first 500 students who read 20 hours or more. Students have until March 26, 2010 to complete their reading and earn a Winner's Medallion. Thanks to the **Tucson Toros**, **Bookmans**, **Tucson Federal Credit Union** and **eegees** for donating student prizes.

Board games, backpacks and journals – oh my!

If you have not received these student materials or need additional supplies, check first with your site coordinator. If he or she doesn't have what you need, give us a call and we can inter-office the materials to your school or you can pick them up at Reading Seed.

Welcome new coaches!

Let's have a round of applause for those coaches trained in Fall 2009!! More than 200 people attended 12 trainings in August through November. Thank you for joining Reading Seed in achieving our vision of every child in Pima County reading at or above grade level by the end of third grade. Your support will help make that vision a reality! Watch the website for our Spring 2010 training dates.

Donated bicycles

Coaches told us that many students did not understand what it meant to enter a drawing to win a bicycle – which was part of the board game last year. Many of the younger students were disappointed because they thought if they read for 20 hours, they received a bike. This year the bicycles are now separate from the board game. Any child enrolled in the program has an opportunity to win one of 10 brand-new bikes donated by **Ajo Bikes**.



Round-up

Featured coach

Susan Litvak has been a reading coach at Ochoa Elementary School in TUSD for 5 years. She currently coaches six students – three boys and three girls, all 8 years of age. Teacher Delia Barcelo says, “Susan is always happy to be at the school, and she gives the kids great support with their reading. She encourages them wherever they start at and challenges them to do better.” When Susan isn’t coaching and working in her own business, she enjoys cycling, swimming, and hiking, loves to read, and loves to travel all over the world with her husband.



Strategic planning

On Friday, November 6, members of the Board of Directors, Advisory Council and staff joined with several reading coaches for a strategic planning session. Strengths and opportunities for Reading Seed were the main topic of discussion. Board member **Mike Anderson and his wife Susan** hosted the event at their gorgeous cabin on Mt. Lemmon. Keep your eyes open for a future volunteer appreciation event which may be in the works at this beautiful and unique home. 🌿

Board of Directors 2009-2010

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THE ROTARY CLUB OF TUCSON

Long-time Reading Seed Supporters

Those who have been involved with Reading Seed for many years may know the story of the Rotary Club of Tucson's long-standing commitment, but those newer to the organization may wonder about the connection.

In 1995, the Reading Seed literacy program was started by a group of volunteers who wanted to positively impact children's literacy in Pima County. By 2004, Reading Seed had grown to 150 reading coaches working in 13 schools, and coordination and leadership of the program was provided solely by committed volunteers.

The Rotary Club of Tucson identified literacy as an issue of significant community need on which to focus the efforts of the 290-person club in recognition of the 100th anniversary of the founding of Rotary International in 2004.

Members of the Rotary Club of Tucson did extensive research to explore the literacy needs of the community and also met with representatives of existing reading programs to make sure that the club did not duplicate efforts of other groups. The Rotary Club of Tucson decided to partner with Reading Seed.

Goodwill Industries of Southern Arizona provided an in-kind donation of office space for five years, and this commitment was renewed in 2009 for an additional five years. Rotary members provided volunteer labor and secured in-kind donations to build out the donated space into comfortable, modern offices. Office furniture and bookshelves were also donated.

In 2005, the Reading Seed Lending Library came into being with funding from the Qwest Foundation and support from the UA College of Education and the Tucson-Pima Public Library. The library has grown to 16,000 books for children in kindergarten through 12th grade. The Rotary Club of Tucson secured over \$20,000 in donations from its members to purchase the initial supply of needed books.

More than 400 gorgeous cars were on display at the 2009 Tucson Classics Car Show.



Event Chairman 2009, Jon Wang, and Rotary Club of Tucson representatives from the Registration Committee. Reading Seed board member, Joni Condit is pictured in back of Jon.

Beginning in 2004, Rotary Club of Tucson members made multiple-year pledges to Reading Seed. Several members also took on the challenge of soliciting funds from local Rotary Clubs, businesses, organizations and individuals. Between 2004 and 2008, Rotary Club of Tucson provided almost all funding required by Reading Seed. In 2008, Reading Seed became a separate 501c3 nonprofit organization and the Rotary Club of Tucson extended its support until the year 2014. The Rotary Club of Tucson has pledged to continue its financial support and active participation on Reading Seed board and committees.

A major way that the Rotary Club of Tucson supports Reading Seed is through the **Tucson Classics Car Show**. This year the show was held on Saturday, Oct. 17, 2009. More than 22,000 people attended the 3rd annual event and \$30,000 was raised for Reading Seed. Please join us in thanking the Rotary Club of Tucson for their continuing support of Reading Seed and a special thank you to event chair **Jon Wang** and his wonderful committee for all their hard work on the 3rd Annual Tucson Classics Car Show! 🌿

THANK YOU TO THESE READING SEED DONORS



July 1 through November 13, 2009

ORGANIZATIONS

Tucson Festival of Books
Rotary Club of Tucson
Foundation Carinoso
Saguaro Rotary Club
Harlow Gardens
Church Women United
Philanthropic Educational
Organization

INDIVIDUALS

Bruce & Katie Dusenberry
Gary & Gini Gethmann
Danielle Jones
Kathleen Kitagawa
Dean & Virginia Leavitt
Jeff Ronstadt
James & Patricia Seese
Jerome & Kathleen Sullivan
Jesse & Kristian Thorpe
Thomas Warne
Kevin Wong

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Dr. Henry Roe
Kent & Margie Rollins
Isabel Sanchez
Steven & Molly Shenitzer
Kenneth Sliva

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Yaconiello
The Paul and Andrew
Stewart Families
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Della Chuffo & Family
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Please contact Elizabeth Campbell at 798-0700 if you feel your name should have been included or if your name was misspelled. Your assistance will help us improve our donor recognition and mailing lists. If you would prefer not to be recognized in the future, please note that you would like to remain anonymous.



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THE Book Beat

The new and improved Reading Seed website is up and running and has a lot of great information about the Lending and Donor Libraries. There are “frequently asked questions” about both libraries and step-by-step instructions about how to request books from the Lending Library.

Need some suggestions on good books? Book reviews are now appearing regularly on our website and we have a recommendation here as well. In addition, volunteers have added **over 1,000 new titles** to the Lending Library since the beginning of September! Some of these are *Big Moon Tortilla* by Joy Cowley, *Clarence Goes out West and Meets a Purple Horse* by Jean Ekman Adams and *Cindy Ellen: a Wild Western Cinderella* by Susan Lowell.

Had great success with your students and a particular book? Write a book review and see it published on our website.

Dislike computers? Call Betsey at 798-0700 and she can advise you on book selection *over the phone*. Remember, Reading Seed will deliver to most schools – it’s a breeze.

Book Review

Clarence Goes out West and Meets a Purple Horse

Written and illustrated by Arizona resident Jean Ekman Adams

Clarence is a pig who decides he wants to take a trip to a ranch Out West. Once there he is taught all about ranches by Smoky, who happens to be a purple horse. The beautiful illustrations add to the story and provide humor that readers of all ages will enjoy. (Fountas & Pinnell Level G)

