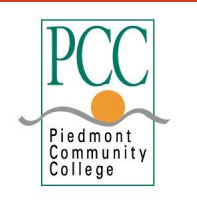


# FRESH FROM THE JAR

## LRC Newsletter



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### Piedmont Community College and Partners Implement Successful BIG READ Lionel Parker, Caswell LRC Librarian

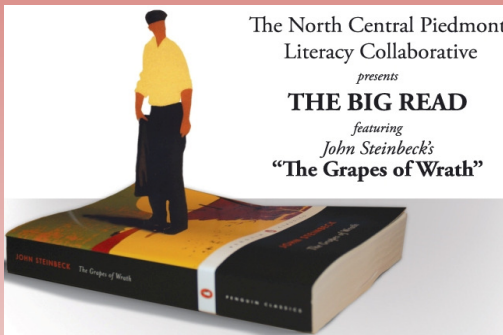
Piedmont Community College, through its LRCs, unified efforts with a loosely formed collaborative known as The North Central Piedmont Literacy Collaborative (NCPLC) to present a

three-county-wide reading program based on John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* and The National Endowment for the Arts' Big Read program.

The NCPLC is a partnership among these learning communities: Piedmont Community College (including the Learning Resources Centers, TRIO, Adult Basic Skills), Hyconeechee Regional Libraries (Orange, Caswell, and Person county public libraries), Caswell, Orange, Person, and Chapel-Hill-Carrboro Schools.

The collaborative, after many months of planning and meeting, accomplished a unified goal of increasing awareness of the need for literary reading, which resulted in more than 43 community-based reading activities in the three county region. This was achieved by expanding access to a broad demographic population and developing ideas across agencies to contribute to program success. Activities were presented in more than 70 pre-schools, 6 elementary schools, 11 middle and high schools, senior centers, 2 community colleges, public libraries, churches, a prison work farm, art galleries, and civic centers. Highlights include the excitement of art

students presenting their Steinbeck-inspired art, kindergarten children experiencing depression-era games and songs, and book discussions flavored with depression-era foods.



Prison-bound inmates experienced confidence-building sessions developed interpretive artwork based on themes in the novel and enjoyed free expression as they learned about Steinbeck's efforts to expose

the wrongs of an affluent society while many suffered from devastating poverty. Young children danced to folk music presented at a family kick-off at Orange County Public Library, which was crowded with families inspired to hear about a Depression-era novel and related songs.

More than 200 persons attended the kick-off and book talk by Steinbeck biographer Susan Shillinglaw where they gained a deeper understanding of both the novel and of Steinbeck. Local auto enthusiasts displayed their restored depression-era automobiles and antique farm tractors at the vineyard for the public to enjoy. This collaborative established a theme of laborers in the vineyard of life by kicking off at the Rock of Ages Winery and Vineyard, located in Hurdle Mills. It was through the many venues and pro-

grams which were developed and facilitated that this novel was made relevant for this time period of a nation which suffers today because of the Depression era's affluence. The six-week programming wrapped up with a 3-D discussion of the question "Is there one soul in the community? And what is the role of the Church in addressing the needs of the community when it is distressed and depressed? Answers from this discussion were included in the closing event, a panel discussion of "A State of Change" calling for collaboration from schools, community organizations, and statewide networks. A highlight of The Big Read project was seeing new partners engage across a three-county region to read, discuss, and take action based on an historic novel. The North Central Piedmont be-



came one community around one book which reminded us that those times are similar to today and that we have responsibilities to each other. We became motivated to pull together. Henry Ford said, "Coming together is a beginning, keeping together is progress, and working to-

gether is success." His quote exemplifies the experience gained through the planning, application, and results of this process.

**Cont. on the back...**

**BIG READ CONT...**

We are also very pleased that our community donated more than 6,100 items of food for Thanksgiving 2008 as a result of Big Read activities.

The impact that The Big Read had on our community was good. To quote Milo Bowes, an 88 year old participant and life-long resident of Person County, "I have never seen anything like this occur in Person County in all my life, and it is wonderful." To see an older generation, which has been described by Tom Brokaw as the "greatest generation", relive some of the times that they

survived, while seeing young children experience games, food and fun of the olden days, was beneficial for the community. To have senior citizens tell the facilitators how much they appreciated the opportunities to discuss things of the past and encourage young people to stay focused, was rewarding. To see the schools and libraries come together to raise awareness of the hunger that exists in our communities and to get the community energized through food drives, is a tribute to the "one Soul" theme expressed in John Steinbeck's novel. For this project to bring out the communal spirit in thought, word, and

deed was a tribute to both the author and to the fabric of this region. All of these efforts, activities, collaborations, and conversations for the specific purpose to make this work and to see the programming in the collaborative, exemplified the strength and progress of our community.

**Student Art Work On Display  
Justin Crosby, Art Instructor**

Several outstanding students taking courses in the Associate of Fine Arts Program have begun displaying their talents in the LRC. Currently on view is Gene Pascocello's mixed media sculpture titled "Nikky". Gene made this piece from broken mirrors and tiles on a wood and metal armature.



**"Nikky" -  
Gene Pascocello**



**"The Old Man and Death" -  
Chance Murray**

On the bottom floor, Chance Murray exhibited his mixed media sculpture "The Old Man and Death." Murray's piece is a free-standing, double-sided painting that blurs the boundaries of traditional painting and sculpture, with images and items he inherited from his grandfather and great-grandfather.

Chance also installed a web of white and burnt flowers from the ceiling made entirely of coffee filters. A pile of these flowers were left on a study table, free to anyone who passed.

Last semester, Dolores Carr displayed her gigantic "Pine Cone" sculpture. Dolores magnified the scale of an ordinary object to allow viewers to take notice of the small things in nature.

Also, on the bottom floor, Sebastienne Smart's "Untitled" lucid aqua colored fabric and foam sculpture. Her piece drapes down from the ceiling onto a book shelf in the back of the LRC. The LRC and its staff have been encouraging and open to displaying student artworks, and we hope to continue exhibiting them in the future.



**"Untitled" -  
Sebastienne Smart**