



# STUDENT VOICE

A Publication for and by Students of The READ Center

Spring 2017

## Summer Vacation

by Somaia R.

We are going to Egypt on 5/12 and we'll come back on 6/11 because my brother-in-law is in the Cairo Hospital.

We'll make the schedule for what we'll do in Egypt. The first visit, we'll go to my brother-in-law. My husband's family will be the second visit because they live in Cairo. Then we'll go to my city, visit my relative, sign paper for my share inherited from my father.



With the money from my inheritance I'll do charity for my dad, mom, my older sister and I'll buy clothes, toys and candy for orphans. I like to spend good time with them. Also I'll visit a children cancer hospital and a house of seniors to talk with them and bring gifts. Then I'll visit the cemetery of my granddad, mom and my relatives.

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## My Choice

by Barbara F.

Life is a combination of choices. One of my choices was to better myself by joining the reading classes. It has helped me to pronounce words and to seek out other words that I might not have tried to use.

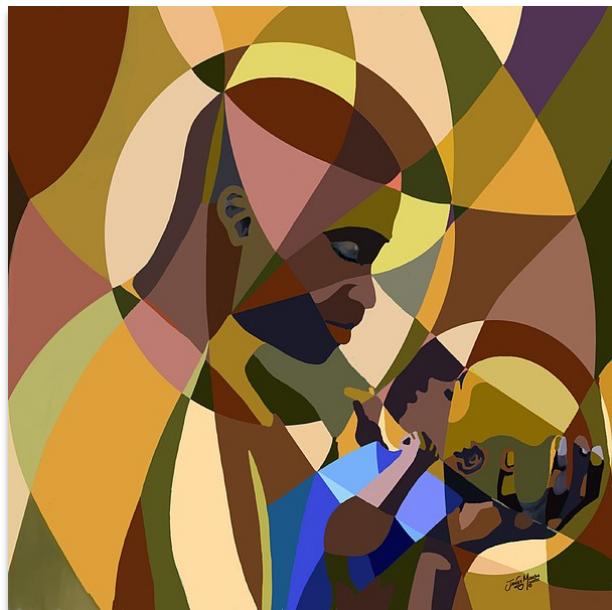
I thank the tutors for their patience and willingness to help with a glad heart.

It means a lot to me, being a student.



**My Niece and I**  
*by A.D.V.S.*

My niece and I was reading an article online and I came across some words I didn't know. She said to me, "How did you teach me to read and you don't know some of these words." I reply "When I was in school read was hard for me. Because no one took the time to work with me like I worked with you so you don't have to struggle through life like I did before I came to the Read Center." The Center has made a big difference in my life though out the years I have been coming here to The READING PROGRAM.

**My Son**  
*by Cecil W.*

I am happy my son is staying with me. Sometimes it is hard because he is bad! He is eight years old and he's already in trouble at school. He is smart and good at sports.

His favorite is football. He wants to play next fall but he have to keep his grades up.

I am proud of him and I love him.

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**Never Too Late To Learn**  
*by Calvin*

I woke up one morning, and I realized I could not read. My first thought was to find help. I started asking around about schools. I heard someone at work talking about the Read Center. I asked how I could sign up to start classes. My first Read Center class was 5  $\frac{1}{2}$  years ago, and I have worked with some fine teachers.

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## The READ Center

by Lauren P.

Come to the Read Center! You will learn to read and write and improve your spelling. Tutors will work with you. They are very nice. I have fun at the Read Center. You will too!

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## Smile for Life

by Tonya J.

Smile for Life is the name of my organization that I would like to start in the near future.

My program would provide a service for all people that are victims of sexual assault and domestic violence. I would like to give a safe place to provide counseling, case management, parenting classes and self esteem building. I would also like to start a school for children that have learning disabilities. I would like to provide a place that children in their early stages could come after being properly diagnosed.



## I want to Help the Homeless

by Ida H.



I want to help the Homeless people by providing clothes, meals, and shelter. I fear for their lives. It is so dangerous to be living on the street. There are more and more Homeless people every day even young children. I am very fortunate. I have to get up at 4:00 to go to work. On Tuesday and Thursday I come from work to the Read Center at Northside. I work very hard on Reading, Writing and Spelling. I want to get a better job. I wish I had the money to provide food, housing, and shelter.

This is my prayer.

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## A Mother's Love

by Jessica S.

My name is Jessica. I'm the mother of Makala and Jazmin. I'm the youngest of five siblings. I'm from Richmond, Virginia. I was born in April 12, 1977. My mother is Carrie Norwood. I'm a single mother and a part-time employee at Wendy's. I love my job and it helps with everything. I work hard for my kids and myself. As a single mother I have to do everything, like going to doctor's appointments, birthday parties and much more. I love my job but I wouldn't trade it for being a parent for nothing in the world.

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## My mother's life

by H.T.

My grandfather on my mother's side was a very strange person. My mother would tell us stories about him all the time. He would go out and leave them for weeks and months at a time. My mother had four sisters and three brothers. Mother would tell us sometimes they didn't have clothes to wear or food to eat. My mother only had an 8<sup>th</sup> grade education. She would tell us

how she had to take care of the family. My mother didn't talk about her mother very often. She died before I was born. Mother was not well educated, but she was a very smart woman in her own way. She raised all of her sisters and brothers. Later on in life, she got married and had a family of her own. She had 15 children, 11 boys and 4 girls. My mother was a very outstanding and amazing woman.

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and I would like to move to California. It is a safe place where regular people live. They have good schools.

I would like to go to the U.S.C. (University of Southern California) and play sports like basketball, football and soccer. Lots of people surf at the beach and have fun. Many people have good jobs and live in nice neighborhoods. I got my information from the computer.

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### **Las Vegas**

*by Rashad W.*

I have wanted to go on an airplane to Las Vegas. It looks fun. I would like to travel more. I will look to see how it is. I would like to go to the restaurant because they have good food and a nice looking inside. I think it is fun to go to theme parks. I could go swimming while I'm there. I would like to go to the show to see the celebrities. I would like to go to the clubs and stay until six in the morning. I would like to go shopping at the mall. I have not gone yet because I don't have the money right now. I need someone to go with. I could try to save my money. I could go with my family and they could split the bill with me.



## My Trip to Daytona Beach

by Charles B.

I went to Daytona Beach, Florida to the National Motorcycle Bike Week.

I rode my Bike and enjoyed fun time with my friends.

I am looking forward to going next year.

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## Tangier Island

by Jenny H.



Tangier was started in 1939. Tangier Island is off Chesapeake Bay. They are famous for their crab cakes and their soft shell crabs.

Tangier is a dry Island. They do not sell beers and cigarettes. There are no TVs or phones on Tangier Island. On the island their power comes from Maryland. How to get to Tangier Island: You have to go to Reedville and you can ride the boat. The name of the boat is Chesapeake Breeze. It takes one hour to get there. You can stay there at the Crockett home.

## My Travel to Europe

by Irving



My wife and I traveled to Europe to take a tour trip across five countries. We loved the view. We saw the most beautiful hillsides and mountains. The tour started at Frankfurt for the first day. Then we went to Adelsried, Germany, on the second day; to Fulpmas, Austria, on the third day; on the fourth day, to Verona, Italy; and on the fifth and sixth days, to Switzerland. The seventh and eighth days, we went to Appoigny, France. On the ninth and tenth days, we went to Paris, France, to see the Eiffel Tower. It was a beautiful city. Then we went to the Netherlands on the eleventh and twelfth days, winding up back in Rhein, Germany, on the thirteenth day; then back to the good old USA on the last day.

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## The Trip

by Janine B.

It was a cold early Tuesday morning. I believe it was in the month of February.

Christine knew it was about time to take that trip something she always wanted to do.



Christine had been so busy with her business that she built that she wanted to take a trip around the country being that she has a lot of money now.

Now which of my friends could I invite, she thought. I haven't heard from Linda for a while being that she has a new job at the doctor's office. She's been so busy and never gets a break.

Carolyn never answers her phone and if she does she'll be like "I'll call you right back". That "right back" can be a second, minute, or an hour. I guess she won't be going. I could invite Ro but she's always complaining and I heard once that she can be trouble, but I love trouble!



Where is my shoe shopping girl Michelle?

She's always ready to do something. I know she said she would go on a trip with me anytime I'm ready but I can't find her.

I can't forget about my girl Alison with that beautiful red Lexus. It's been half a century since we spoke. I remember one of her favorite quotes. I'll never lose. I just wonder where she is right now.

I just wish that I can get in touch with these beautiful women. I can take them all, being that I have a lot of money now. I guess I'll be taking this trip by myself. I just hope I enjoy it.

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## A Day at the Races

by George M.



When I went to the NASCAR race on Saturday I had to park in a field far away from the track. While walking to the race I met a couple and we talked about the race. After buying a bottle of water for \$4.00 I found my seat and saw a lot of police around the fence. It was very noisy even wearing ear plugs. The air was hot and the cars coming around made it hotter. You could smell the hot rubber of the tires. I stayed for three hours and it was horrible! I did not have a good time here, I would rather go see the drag races.

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## New York

by Timothy W.

I always wanted to go to New York because I have never been there. Something always prevented me from going to New York. I will not let anything stop me from going anywhere else.

## My Last Day at the Circus

by Maurice W.



I love the Circus but it is shutdown. The last time it was in town my brother bought me a ticket. I went by myself. I went to the Circus at 7:00. I saw a lot of people at the Circus. Before the show I got popcorn, a hotdog, and water then went to my seat. I enjoy watching the people at the Circus, I saw Clowns, dogs, horses and lots and lots of lights. I had fun at the Circus.

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## King's Dominion

by Jammar E.



I would like to go to King's Dominion. I would like to work selling hot dogs. They didn't hire me because I didn't apply. I have a job with responsibilities, so I didn't have time. The reason I want to work at King's Dominion is so I could get free rides.

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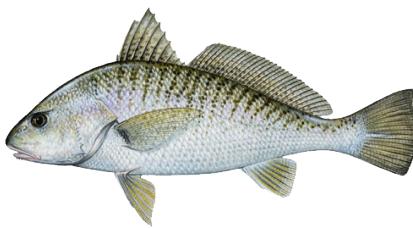
**Smith Mountain Lake is Beautiful***by Kevin M.*

I have good times. I rent a home and a boat.

Me and my son went fishing, but I did not catch anything it was raining.

I met a friend he have it all – but no one to share his wealth.

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**I Love Fishing***by Linwood*

When I fish I normally fish in the York River.

I like to fish in the morning. I love to eat the fish I catch. My friends and I fish for croakers.

Croaker can be cooked three different ways. You can deep fry or you can bake or you can broil the fish. My favorite way is to deep fry the fish. I make it with corn bread or grits.

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**Our Philadelphia Trip***by Patricia B.*

My husband and I rode the train to Philadelphia. My husband is from Philadelphia. We rode together laughing and talking, having a good time. We arrived at the 30<sup>th</sup> St. train station. The food court there is great. They have pizza, Chinese food, hoagies and cheese steaks to eat.

My husband used to live on 32<sup>nd</sup> street. He could see the Philadelphia Art Museum from his front porch.

We saw the Liberty Bell and the Rocky statue at the Art Museum.

I had a great time in Philadelphia and I would like to go back there.

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**The Horse Farm***by William*

I am happy when I work with horses. Charlie is my favorite horse. I ride a horse name Snoopy. I feed the horses. I groom the horses. I take the horses out of the gate. I clean the stalls. I transport horses to the stables.

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## How Would People Lives change if there's no television?

by Isatu B.

From my own personal experience with my kids and people around including myself, I have seen kids as well as adults get hooked on TV and forget their daily responsibilities or task. I have seen kids imitate the dress code and even worst repeat the bad vocabulary they heard on TV. Back in the days, in our generation television was not a big deal or a must. We enjoyed outdoor activities with our peers. We enjoyed telling each other stories. We enjoyed being able to use our head and imagine what is, what was, and what could be. Sitting in front of the TV all day long and getting lost in it was not part of our generation. We was not obsessed with television as much as the kids/adults these days are. We loved to spend time with our families by talking, playing and just 100% involving ourselves with each other.

I believe that people lives will change for the better if there were no television. People will get use to other people again. People will love to interact and communicate with

others again. Families will be stronger once more, and kids will stay kids by learning the good qualities from life from a loving and caring source.

I strongly believe that television reinforce bad behaviors. Television teach kids/adults how to be bad, violent, aggressive, and introduce them to early sex behavior. Just

because something happened on television doesn't mean it's okay for people to practice it in real life, but not everyone understands that.

In conclusion, I will like to say that life itself is already fill with its daily challenges. What we all

need is love, just unconditional love. We need our families and kids to understand that sometimes grabbing a chair and sitting next to a love one talking to them asking how their day was is much more important than watching hours giving the TV your time and energy. We need this generation to understand that television is only television. Half of what being shown is hardly real.

Whatever show you're learning from is just a show, even the people in those shows are just acting, so please drop the TV remote and go out with your family and friends and



spend some time with them. A time spent with love one is more beneficial than a time spent in front of a television. Television is not all bad once it's used the right way and not misused. Like having a movie night with love ones rather than spending the entire day in front of it by yourself. Too much of one thing is good for nothing. A little bit will do no harm depending on what channel you're watching.



### I Do Not Cheat

*by H.Q.*

Yesterday I had a bad day.

My husband called me at home to let me know we had trouble. The man at Pet Rose called my husband to tell him he owed the store money. I went to the store to talk to the man. The man didn't give me the chance to explain to him. He said I don't have the receipt.

"I paid already" I told him. I came to pick up the stones and a man took my receipt to load up my stones never gave it back to me. Another man remembered me paying, so he helped me to explain. I was mad because the first man didn't believe me.

### Too Much TV

*by Dempsey R.*

My favorite time of day is the time that I get off of work. I look forward to going home, thinking that I am going to get some rest, but I wind up watching TV. The next thing I know, it is so late and I know I should have been in bed. Now I have to pay for it when I go to work. I am so sleepy, and the same thing goes for school.

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### The day I robbed the bank

*by F.P.*

I became invisible when I entered the bank safe. "Put the money in the bag.", I said. I went home and the police were there.



**Untitled***by C.P.*

May our homes be filled with dancing.  
May our streets be filled with joy.  
May injustice bow to Jesus.  
As the People turn and Pray.  
From the Mountain to the Valley.  
Hear our Praises rise to you.  
From the heavens to the nations.  
Hear the singing fill the air.  
May our light shine in the darkness.  
As We Walk before the Cross.  
May your glory fill the Whole earth.  
As the Water over the sea the earth.

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**Praying and Singing***by CJ*

My best day is Sunday because I go to Church. I like praying. I like singing too. After church I go home and cook and eat dinner. I watch a little TV and go to bed.

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**An extended choice***by B.A.F.*

Learning to read the Bible helps me to see and learn more about my Savior. If I am going to follow him I need to know him in his Fullness. Reading helps tremendously.

My tutor helps make it so easy for me. Vickie always takes time to explain whatever I need to know.

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**A Great Experience***by H.T.*

Every Wednesday I attend class at the St. Philip's Episcopal Church from 10:00-11:30 am. I go there to improve my reading skills. My classmates and I have wonderful tutors. I think they are nice to work with us because they are very understanding people.

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**I am proud of myself because...***by Nettie*

A few years ago I made up my mind to go back to school. An article was in the Sunday paper about the Read Center. The article was written by William and it inspired me to call the Read Center. In a few weeks I received a call to come to the Main Street Library to start classes. I was very happy. I have been going to the Read Center ever since.

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**Life Getting Better***by Nicholas C.*

If I become a better reader I will get a better job. It will also allow me to get my driver's license. Also, I think that I will be able to get better housing and live a better life. And I believe my family will be proud.

The Read Center has become an important part of my life and I look forward to coming to class.

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**I Am Determined***by Viola W.*

I am trying to get my GED.

Some people were trying to help me but they forgot what they learned.

They could not help me. But I tried to work with them best I know. I have been trying to learn so long. But I will not give up because I want to learn.

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**I Want Wheels!***by Kelia M.*

I'm from Northern Virginia. I moved to Richmond in May 27, 2016. I joined the Read Center on Tuesday, April 25, 2017 so I can learn to read better. One of my goals is to get my driver's license. I don't like to wait for the bus to see my sister and niece. I don't like to wait on people. I might be late for appointments. When I want to go places I can just get up and get in the car and go. I want a Ford truck. I want to have a purple truck.

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Winnipeg Free Press

## Theater Rules

by P.H.

Viola Desmond's ideas were similar to Rosa Park's ideas. Viola and Rosa Park did similar things. Viola was in a movie theater, she sat in the wrong seat and was arrested. Rosa Park was in a bus, she refused to give up her seat and was arrested. Viola will now be on Canada's \$10.00 bill.

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© NASA JSC/Michael Benson/Kinetikon Pictures/Corbis

## Earth

by Lillie B.

The Earth was formed by the force of the big bang. There was no land or water and no air. After a long time the Earth

started to lose some of the heat, clouds formed and also the ocean. More than two-thirds of the earth is covered in water. When people dig in to Earth they can find rocks, metals and crystals. Earth is the fifth largest planet. Earthquakes can be so strong that they cause whole buildings to collapse. When magma pours out of the volcanoes, it is called lava. It rolls slowly downhill in a huge river. They can also find fossils that help us to understand the past. The Earth has different climates. Examples are desert, the rain forest, and cold areas. We need to take care of our Earth. We can do this by recycling, planting trees and not littering.

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## The Importance of Education

*by Pat W.*

My name is Pat. I have been in the Reading Center for about a month or two. I have met wonderful people there who have patience. It is hard to try to work the hours that I work but I have not given up. Education is important to have during this time.

When I was growing up, education didn't matter much. I see so many

young folks throw their life away and not taking a chance to get their education. These days you need education just to be a janitor. I advise anyone regardless of age or sex to get all the education that they can get while it is free. At my age they say education don't matter but it does matter because if you can't read or write people will look at you like you are dumb or stupid. I have worked with doctors. I have worked with nurses. I have saved a person's life in a burning building. I have saved a child's life from choking to death. I have worked in a nursing home and learned how to feed people with a feeding tube. So, if you have the knowledge to do so many wonderful things without an education, you have nothing. So please don't let anyone say you are dumb or stupid. Get all the education that you can while you can. You will find it will take you to a place that you will enjoy for the rest of your life.



# Don't Quit

*by John C.*

I am glad that I came to the Read Center because it has changed my life completely and it has been a joy to learn and I am going to continue to learn as much as I can.

It's been kind of hard working a full-time job and coming to the Read Center, but I'm not going to quit!



## Difficult Times

by Pamela T.

In these difficult times  
Life is getting hard to handle,  
People are on hard luck street  
Actually burning their final candle  
It's a state of desperation  
Jobs are hard to find,  
The homeless number grows  
People stand in a welfare line  
  
So, if you have a Job  
Please be glad you do  
Always try and remember  
Those less fortunate than you  
  
Remember the difficult times  
Your grandparents had.  
Remember them well,  
Listen as they tell their stories  
When people couldn't buy nor sell  
  
Nothing to put on your back  
Not a stitch of clothes to wear,  
To complain about the hard times  
Was something you didn't dare.  
  
You remembered that old story  
About the man who had no shoes,  
On the street, a man with no feet  
He learned not to sing the blues.  
  
True, these are difficult times  
Just do your best along the way  
Try and help other people  
And never forget how to pray.



My recommendation is, to those who have  
A job, count it as your blessing.  
And also we get three meals a day  
And we do have a safe place to  
Stay. Because some people are  
Less fortunate than you.

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## Untitled

by Tyrese N.

I have always wanted to get famous by  
dancing and singing. I would like to be like my  
idol Michael Jackson. But it is hard to practice  
singing and dancing when the world is cold  
and dark. People have made me sad. They

think I'm dumb. I don't  
have friends or any  
real friends and I feel  
lonely. That has made  
it hard for me to know  
my place.



## The Longest Week Ever

by Linda A.



On May 13<sup>th</sup> I will be staying at my daughter's house. I have to keep my grandsons for that week. There are four boys there. I have to put up with what they go through. My oldest grandson told me "grandmom, I will help you out." He's seventeen years old and his brothers are a handful. You don't know what my grandsons can get into. The youngest likes to pick on his brothers. The only time I will get any rest is when they are at school and in the bed. It will be my longest week but I know I can do this, as long as I have my phone. I will be waiting until the 21<sup>st</sup> to get here so I can go home.

## My Time With My Kids

by Ronald W.



I carried my four kids back and forth to school. I helped them with their homework. I cooked breakfast every morning, and dinner in the afternoon. We all ate together. Our routine was doing homework, eating together, watching TV, showers and getting ready for bed. This went on for 15 years. It was very routine. Most of the kids' fun was at church – church choir and church activities. The kids also enjoyed school parties and sleepovers. My kids are grown now. The oldest is 45 and the youngest is 27. They are raising their families the way I raised them.

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## The READ Center

by Samuel P.

Contact info: 804-288-9930. Want to improve your Reading? Are you over 18? Call the Read Center. I can read the newspaper now. I can comprehend things that I read. Come and join me at Read Center.

# Love for The READ Center...

*by Dewin T.*

When I got here from Africa, I had trouble understanding the English language. Some friends told me about the reading center. So I decided to go and get help with my English education. My first day at the center I was excited but scared because I really wasn't understanding what they were teaching me. The more I went the more I started learning. Now I love going to school because I am happy learning.

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*by Hazel W.*

What can the Read Center do for you? Teach you how to read! So swallow your pride and ask for help.

There are teachers and tutors there to make your dream come true.

Reading can give you confidence. It will give you understanding and it'll also give you knowledge to do the thing you need to do. So go ahead make that choice, call the Read Center today "804-288-9903". You'll be glad you did.

Now! You can read what God's words say about you.



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*by Shawna L.*

Do you feel frustrated or upset because your reading skills are not at the level you would like them to be? I was. Well the place called the READ Center changed that for me. They have tutors and teachers who will help you with all different types of skills. The READ Center can help you to reach your life goals.

The READ Center teachers and tutors will help you build up your confidence level. They also do one-to-one tutoring. If you have any problem getting there, they have several locations too. Also, if you need to talk to anybody the teachers and tutors always have an open ear ready.

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**by Audrey J.**

Hey get Excited!

The Reading Center is offering you a free opportunity to read!

No Cost. Day and Evening Class. "A couple hours a day".

There are experience teachers and tutors who work with you one on one. They have compassion for your need and understand.

Come join these reading classes where you can enjoy, relax in a good environment.

They will place you in the right class for your level.

Read Center have many locations in Richmond, Seventh Street Christian Church on Grove Ave, Northside, Chesterfield, East End, and the Franklin Library.

**SIGN UP!**

Call The Read Center: 804-288-9930

Teachers and Tutors are willing to work with you!

**WHY?**

If they did it for me, they do it for you. Come have fun Reading!

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**by Ebony E.**

I came because I wanted to learn.

I like to come here to get out of the house.

I like my teacher because she is funny.

**by Janet P.**

The purpose of the READ Center is to help adults with low level reading and communication skills in order to improve their lives. They also have one-to-one tutoring. This is a place to be to achieve your goals. So, I encourage those with low level reading and communication skills to come quickly to register. This is the contact number: 804-288-9930.

God Bless You.

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**by Mary A.**

My name is Mary A. I am a student at the Read Center. I have been studying here for two years and I would like to encourage you to come to the Read Center because Read Center is a good place to start your education.

Teachers and tutors are very friendly and helpful. So do not waste your time my brothers and sisters, please come and join us and you may be amazed for the choice that you have made.

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## Thank You!

by Pam T.

I would like to give a shout out to my Teacher, and also the tutors. I'm so thankful for being a student at the Read Center.

My Strength

Reading more books.

My dignity

Getting my G.E.D.

My future

(finding a job) getting a good paying Job!

Without any fear

Those are my goals.

Faith

Having more faith in God

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## Love

by Andretta L.

What is love? To me love is happy.  
Love makes me feel jittery.  
Sometimes love makes me smile.  
I also cry sometimes because of love.  
I love my family, boyfriend and pet dog.  
I love to be loved.  
Sometimes we do crazy things for love.  
For love we might run around and scream out  
I'm in love!  
I love to eat a lot when I'm in love!  
That's what love means to me.

## The READ Center

by Marie G.



Hi! My name is Marie, and I go to READ Center on Grove Street. I go to the READ Center to learn how to read and write. First of all I would like you to join us because we have wonderful teachers and tutors that are willing to give up their time to help us. I promise you, you will not

regret this decision if you come join us. It's a beautiful program geared to helping people further their education free of charge.

It doesn't matter how old you are, they accept all ages and all types of people. So come join us! You will be glad you did!





## Books

by Hiram H.

Our teacher Kay uses many different kinds of books to help students learn. One special book is called a teacher's manual. It helps instructors plan what to teach in each subject area. Some other examples of books students will find in school include picture books, chapter books, young adult novels, biographies (books about famous

people written by someone else), autobiographies (books about famous people written by the person himself), encyclopedias, dictionaries, and the thesaurus. Students also use textbooks in many of their classes. Examples of textbooks include spelling books, math books, science books, and workbooks. Most books fall into one of two categories-fiction or nonfiction. Books classified as nonfiction are books that give factual or true information about a certain topic.

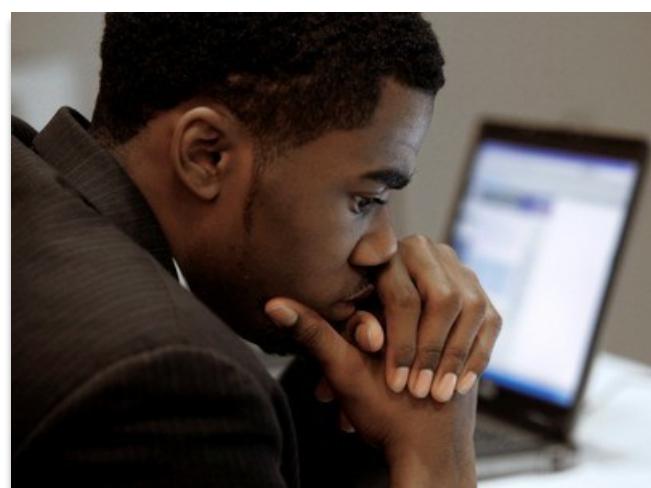
\*In reference to "T is for Teachers" by Steven and Deborah Layne.

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## Untitled

by Marlon S.

I wish that I had known how important education is when I was younger. If I had known I could have a better job, and I could use my mind for big things. I know a lot about electrical insulation, but I have trouble proving to employers that I have the skills required for the job. They want certification, but not being able to read has stopped me from getting it.



## My Story

by Helena H.

I moved back here from N.C. in Sept. 1998 after serving time, because I was on drugs really bad when I was there. I moved there to have my first born which was in 1985, then I had my son March 1986 and I got so huge then someone said to me "I know what can help you lose weight." Because they knew that I used to save my money check I was getting each month so we went out and bought crack. From that point on I was off to the races and boy did I lose weight. It was fun in the beginning, but once you start doing things against your will and going to jail for wrongful stuff, it's no longer fun. I would always blame everybody for my stuff, my mother, the P.O., the judge. So when it was time for me to get out in September, 1998 they ask where did I want my bus ticket to. I quickly said Richmond, Va. I was ready to come back home and decided to do some different stuff once I got here. The very next day I went out looking for work and put in for public housing. So Nov. or Dec. they called me for my place and from that point on I set a goal. In 10 years I would be out of public housing and into my own home and Dec. 2007, I was in my own home. So I know now as long as I keep drugs out of my way and my system, I can have anything I want and do anything I put my mind to doing. That's just a little bit of my story.



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## Norfolk Convention

by Isabelle J.

I traveled to Norfolk, VA, for an N/A Convention. I met a lot of new people there. Conventions are a part of N/A. It lets me meet people from other cities and states. It also helps me with my sobriety. It lasts for three days: Friday, Saturday and Sunday. All Regions come to celebrate their sobriety or clean time. Even people with less clean time than me. I'm going on 5 years clean. I didn't do it on my own. God helps me. Praises go to him.

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## Plan for Retirement

by D.P.



At sixty-one, I am close to retirement myself. If I had known in my twenties what I have learned since then I would have made a decision not to cash a twenty-four year 401k because you lose 30% of your 401K. At a late age, I have to come up with a plan to increase my future income on my second 401k. I am thinking about ways of increasing the amount without creating hardship on myself. At this time in one's life one should be going forward. Don't forget to plan for your future.

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## Doing for Myself

by Floyd W.

I feel better in doing reading and writing. Going to the doctor and feeling confident when filling out forms, recognizing signs when traveling, and reading to my grandson.

I like to ride my motorcycle in the summer with my church club ministry.

## My Comb

by Franklin H.



I invented a comb for long hair. It begins with small teeth and as it gets to the back it gets wider to open up the hair. My comb is unique because it goes through hair more smoothly. It doesn't get stuck so it is also less painful. I sold it in twelve difference states.

Unfortunately, the hair style I made the comb for was becoming less popular. Eventually, sales slowed down and I had to discontinue the comb.

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## Untitled

by Bryant A.

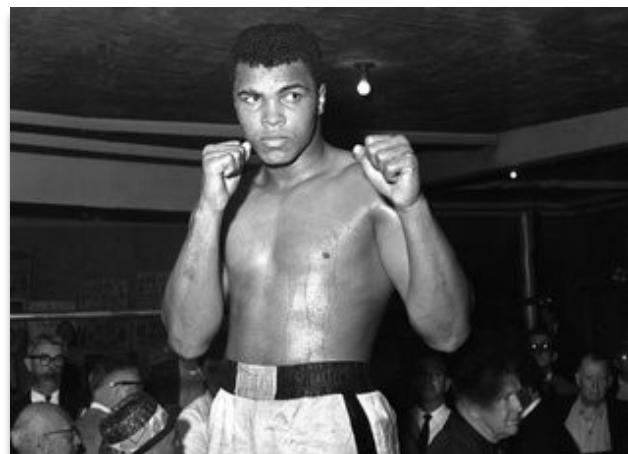
I have wanted to open my own business because I have my own certified custodian card. I got my card because I had to go to Woodrow Wilson School and stay there for nine months. I went to class and I also cleaned there. After my nine months was done I got my certified housekeeping card.

## **Boxing**

*by Wayne H.*

When I was 18, I wanted to box. I had to train very hard to be good. Sometimes I would win and sometimes I would lose. I soon learned to be very good and started to win but sometimes I got hurt. Once I learned the tricks of the trade I did not get hurt as much but now I have retired. So now I watch boxing with my family.

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## **I Wish**

*by Momaht G.*

I wish now that I had gone to school earlier in life. I'd have knowledge to help me. In Senegal I only went to grade eleven. Then I started farming with my dad. When I was 22 I came to the United States. Now I come to The READ Center. I want to read and write better. It will make my life easier.

## **Bob Marley in JAMAICA**

*by Lloyd H.*

I am from Jamaica. Reggae and Jazz are my most favorite types of music. Reggae is very popular there. I heard it was invented in Jamaica. When I lived in Jamaica Bob Marley was the biggest most popular singer in the Country. He played with a band called the Wailers. I saw Him play with the Wailers twice when I was young. The last time in Montego Bay. Now I live in Virginia and hear him on CD. When I hear his voice it reminds me of home.

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## **The READ Center**

*by Alice C.*

They help people learn how to read and write. They do a good job teaching us to write. They also have good tutors. I enjoy going to class all of the time. I like to do my homework. It is a good place to go on Tuesday and Thursday.

## My Sisters baby Shower

by Olivia N.



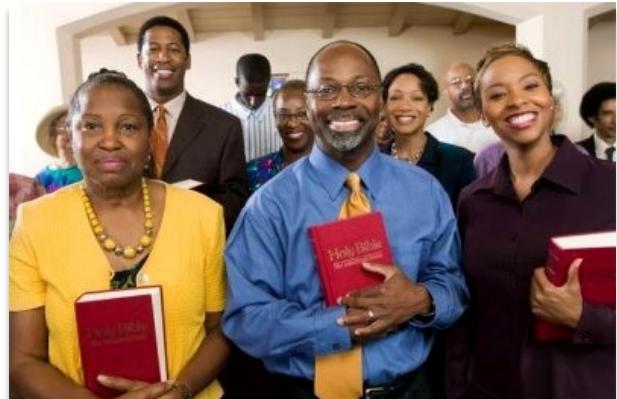
My sister Tamira's baby shower took place on Saturday April 22, 2017. The father's name is Cole and he showed much support.

The decorations looked beautiful with lots of light and dark blues. All the bright colors looked beautiful especially by the dark blue wallpaper. We had a variety of foods to choose from and enjoy.

My little sister Tamira's baby shower gifts were wonderful. Both families were there and showed support on this wonderful day. I wrote two other stories but this one I wanted to share.

## My Family

by Kyle J.



My family is very important to me. I am the only child, so I have both parents to myself. I have 3 uncles, 1 aunt, and my dog Teddy. My mother works very hard as a USDA Program Coordinator. She has Rheumatoid Arthritis, but she works through her pains. I call her a fighter. My dad is a very, very hard worker, with great work habits. He is a Senior Machine Operator. I enjoy cooking with my Dad and our guy time together. My Aunt Calcine is a great Aunt. She's an accountant who also works very hard. I have a lot of fun with her. She helps me to keep track of my finances. My uncle Eugene has his own business, which he has to work long hours and days. He always has time for us to talk weekly.

I want to thank my family for showing and providing me what a strong praying Christian family is.

## RICE PUDDING

by Lloyd C.

I like to cook Rice Pudding. This is my favorite recipe that I will share with you.

2 Pounds of Rice  
1 Can of Milk  
1 Tablespoon of Vanilla  
1 Stick of Butter  
1 Tablespoon of Lemon  
2 Small Boxes of Raisins. You may want more or less.



1. Cook the Rice.
2. Cook until all the water is gone following instructions on the bag.
3. Let the Rice cool. Mix in all the ingredients. Then I stir it all in with the Rice. I put it in the Oven at 350 degrees. I let it cook for 45 minutes.

Let it cool. Then I enjoy the best Rice Pudding ever.

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## I Like To Cook

by Gladys

I like to bake cakes and pies. I like to cook chicken and ham and other things. I cook for my family on Sunday. Also dinner parties are fun to have with family and friends.



## Expecting A Cake

by ACB

I thank God for his goodness for waking me up. I eat breakfast and go to the YMCA and exercise and see my friends. For the longest time they want me to make a cake for them. Every time I come to the door, they ask for the cake. When I will bring the cake? I will surprise them with the cake.

**I want to be a Chef***by Tywhan B.*

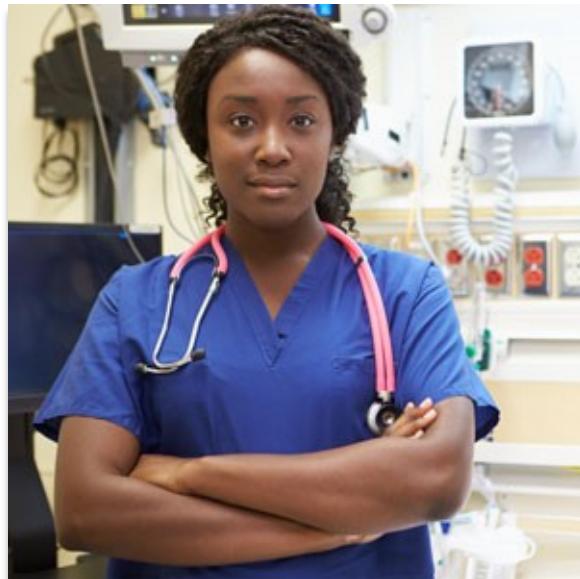
One thing I have always wanted to do is become a chef. I want to open Tywhan B's Restaurant in Richmond where we will serve chicken, pasta, and hamburgers. I took a cooking class where we baked cookies and I liked it. I would like to continue cooking but having trouble reading has slowed me down. When I can read, well, nothing will stop me.

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**Untitled***by Lavado G.*

The nicest thing someone has ever said about me is I am a nice person. I think they said this because I do things for people. I spend time with people. People tell me I am friendly. Sometimes I believe them. Sometimes I have been used by people and so I don't believe them. I believe my lady friend, my best friend and his wife, customers at work and the people at the barber shop. I believe them because I have been around them long enough.

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**I want to be a Nursing Assistant***by Priscilla G.*

I want to be a Nursing Assistant. I want to help other people. I come to the READ Center to learn how to be a better reader. In my class we work hard on reading and sounds. I can read words and stories now. We work on spelling and writing every class . The READ Center has been very helpful to me.

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## Heart Disease

by H M W

What is heart disease?

It is when there is a problem with the blood vessels in the heart. The rhythm of the heartbeat changes. The blood vessels become clogged or blocked.

There are symptoms that will tell you when you are having a heart attack: hard to breathe, chest pain, pains, numbness, weakness, or coldness in the legs and arms.

Heart diseases are caused by eating unhealthy food, not exercising enough, being overweight, and smoking.

We could check with the doctor and our family history or you can believe and trust in GOD, he knows the heart better than we do.

A godly heart is a healthy heart. So trust and believe in the one who created the heart and you will be fine.

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## Swimming

by Albert B.

I enjoy watching children playing in the hot sand. And playing in the water at the beach. And being overcome by the smell of salt air drawing me to the water. And playing with my family and loved ones.

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*The READ Center's mission is to help adults with low-level literacy develop basic reading and communication skills so they can fulfill their roles as citizens, workers, and family members. This mission is accomplished by providing classroom instruction, one-to-one tutoring, and adult literary curriculum and educational resources to support students.*

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