

Christmas 2014 Newsletter



Our Literacy Programmes in the 2014-2015 school year:

1

We are running volunteer-staffed Paired Reading programmes in all the public primary and secondary schools in Grand Cayman this year. We hope to extend the programme to the primary schools in Cayman Brac.

2

We are running Leveled Literacy Intervention (LLI) programmes for Year 2 students in all public primary schools in Grand Cayman and for Year 7 & Year 8 students at John Gray High School.

3

We are running Partners in Print (PIP) workshops in the public primary schools in Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac in 2015. We are also hoping to reach parents in their homes by televising a few workshops.

4

LIFE and Rotary Sunrise are jointly running the Computer Assisted Literacy Solution programme ('CALs'), aimed at older students and adults, at the Family Resource Centre in George Town.

Welcome to our Christmas 2014 Newsletter!

Life Ltd ('LIFE') is an independent charitable organisation. Our mission is to significantly increase literacy levels across the Cayman Islands. LIFE stands for 'Literacy is for Everyone' and we aim to help transform lives through our literacy programmes. We believe that education is the key to improving living standards in the Cayman Islands. Improved literacy levels will help reduce poverty and unemployment, increase job skills, and increase the opportunities available to residents of the Cayman Islands.

Our Literacy Programmes

We are running three main literacy intervention programmes in the public schools in Cayman this school year.

We run a volunteer-staffed **Paired Reading** programme where volunteers are paired with an individual student to give one-to-one assistance with their reading using levelled books. Volunteers commit a minimum of 30 minutes reading-time each week. We have over 150 LIFE volunteer readers now, and are running Paired Reading programmes in all public schools in Grand Cayman, including the high schools (where our volunteers provide mentoring and reading support for older students).

Our volunteers find Paired Reading very rewarding and the students love their weekly reading sessions. LIFE monitors the reading levels of participating students to check that they are making progress over the school year.





Education Minister Tara Rivers promoting our LLI programme with LIFE Chairman Woody Foster, LIFE Exec Member Su Mander and JGHS Special Education Needs Coordinator Elliot Smith

Leveled Literacy Intervention ('LLI'), is a small-group (1 teacher to 4 students) intensive 16-18 week programme from Fountas & Pinnell (USA) designed to provide targeted instruction for the lowest achieving students through the use of levelled reading books.

LIFE ran LLI programmes for Year 2 students (6 year olds) in seven public primary schools in Grand Cayman during the last school year. LIFE is partnering with the Ministry of Education and the Department of Education Services ('DES') again this year to run LLI programmes for Year 2 students in all the public primary schools in Grand Cayman. We are also working with the Ministry, DES and staff at John Gray High School to help run LLI for Year 7 and Year 8 students at John Gray High School who are struggling with foundation literacy skills. You can read more about the LLI programme at John Gray High School in a recent Cayman Reporter article:

<http://www.caymanreporter.com/2014/12/02/life-ltd-jghs-partner-improve-student-literacy/>

LIFE hopes to boost its LLI programme in the primary schools by introducing a number of external tutors to deliver the LLI instruction at several schools. This will help reduce the pressure on regular teaching staff at these schools and will allow us to run LLI during the school day, which is ideal for intervention programmes for younger students.

LIFE will also be running the **Partners In Print (PIP)** programme this year. PIP is a parent-involvement evening workshop programme in which parents, children and teachers work together on key skills and strategies to help a child with their literacy skills at home. The main aim of these workshops is to encourage, prepare and empower parents to help their children become successful readers and learners. LIFE is partnering with the Ministry of Education and DES to run PIP programmes for Key Stage 1 students (4-7 year olds) in the public primary schools in Grand Cayman and Cayman Brac.

We are also keen to work with older students and adults who wish to improve their literacy skills. This year, LIFE is partnering with the Rotary Club of Grand Cayman Sunrise to run the **Computer-Assisted Literacy Solution (CALS)** programme at the Family Resource Centre ('FRC') in George Town. This computer-based literacy and numeracy intervention programme is ideal for high school age or older students and adults who need a flexible yet structured, self-paced learning tool. CALS incorporates research-based online programmes to help students build fluency in the foundation skills of reading and maths. CALS sessions are held at the FRC on Mondays and Wednesdays from 4.30 – 6.00pm. Please email us at info@life.org.ky for further details.



CALS is available at a number of other locations around Grand Cayman including the National Workforce Development Agency (GT), Savannah United Church, Sunrise Adult Learning Centre and the Frances Borden Girls Home.



Apply to become a LIFE Volunteer Reader today!

Email us at info@life.org.ky



LIFE Paired Reading days & times up to June 2015:

- Sir John A. Cumber Primary School (West Bay): Mondays from 12.30-1.00pm
- George Town Primary School: Tuesdays from 1.15-1.45pm
- Edna M. Moyle Primary School (North Side): Tuesdays & Thursdays from 1.00-1.30pm
- Red Bay Primary School: Wednesdays from 1.15-1.45pm
- Bodden Town Primary School: Wednesdays from 1.15-1.45pm
- Savannah Primary School: Wednesdays, Thursdays or Fridays from 8.00-8.30am
- Clifton Hunter High School (Frank Sound Rd): Wednesdays or Thursdays between 12.00-1.00pm
- Prospect Primary School: Thursdays from 1.15-1.45pm
- East End Primary School: Fridays from 1.15-1.45pm
- John Gray High School (off Walkers Rd): Fridays from 8.00-8.30am

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Christmas is a time of giving and sharing with those we love - a time for celebrating and spending time with friends and family.

Christmas is also a time for reflecting on our accomplishments over the year as it comes to a close. As a LIFE volunteer it gives me a chance to think about the young lives that we are absolutely blessed to be a part of. Having been a paired reading volunteer for over seven years has given me many 'life moments'. The most wonderful of all is when one of my reading buddies sees me somewhere outside of school and gives me a huge smile and a hug. It makes me feel ten feet tall!

My Christmas greeting is to all of our volunteers and sponsors for their efforts. Without your generosity in giving your time and money we could not affect the lives of children in Cayman in the way that we do. You make LIFE possible and we thank you sincerely!

God bless, Merry Christmas and all the very best for the New Year!

Woody Foster, Chairman

DART Companies donate new children's books to the CIPLS and the public school libraries



The Cayman Islands Public Library Service (CIPLS) and the public school libraries will be the recipients of around US\$17,500 worth of new children's books this Christmas thanks to a generous donation from four DART property companies (Camana Bay, Regatta, Flagship, and Island Plaza). The new books will be distributed to all branches of the Cayman Islands Public Library (including Cayman Brac Library) and the public primary and secondary schools in Grand Cayman.

The books are being purchased through Books & Books in consultation with the LIFE Executive Team, the Director and staff of the CIPLS, the Literacy Specialist at the Ministry of Education and the public school librarians.

"Many of LIFE's initiatives are all about encouraging young people to read. Keeping the public libraries and school libraries well stocked with a variety of children's books is a great way to do that. Children will be motivated to read more when they are given the opportunity to choose from a wide selection of books which they can take home to read" said Su Mander of the LIFE Executive Team. "LIFE relies heavily on the generosity of its committed corporate sponsors. We are extremely grateful to the DART property companies for their very generous and thoughtful donation to benefit the children of Cayman" she added.

Please look out for future press releases when the new books arrive on island and are distributed to the libraries.

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Nicholas is a lucky little boy who loves reading and has lots of exciting books to read at home. When his mum was organizing his birthday party earlier this year, knowing how much Nicholas enjoys reading, she asked him if he would like to give the gift of reading to other little boys and girls in Cayman who may not be so lucky to have lots of books at home. Nicholas was very excited by this idea and his mum asked all of his friends to donate a new children's book to LIFE in lieu of getting a birthday present for Nicholas. Thanks to the kindness and generosity of Nicholas, his parents and his friends, LIFE was able to donate a number of new children's books to several public school libraries this year.



Over the course of the year, LIFE also received a number of kind donations of lightly-used children's books in good condition from former residents leaving the island. This Christmas, we distributed over 150 books to several public school libraries for the children to read in class or at home. These students from Sir John A. Cumber Primary School in West Bay were delighted with the additions to their library!

A big thank you to everyone who donated books to us this year! If you would like to give the gift of reading and donate new or lightly-used children's books to LIFE, please email us at info@life.org.ky

LIFE Events in 2015

High School Scrabble Scrum - March 2015 Corporate Scrabble Scrum - September 2015



Our love of literacy is about more than just reading. We love learning about language, grammar and even individual words. Few activities combine words and fun more than the board game Scrabble. In 2014, LIFE created an activity that turns Scrabble into a fast-paced competition among teams that raised money to support LIFE's literacy intervention programmes. The first CI Scrabble Scrum, co-sponsored with the Rotary Club of Grand Cayman Sunrise, was a big success, raising nearly CI\$7,000 to help run our literacy programmes.

In 2015, the Scrabble Scrum is returning with two editions! The KPMG team will be defending their title with corporate teams facing-off to benefit LIFE at our fundraising Scrabble Scrum in September to mark International Literacy Day. A new version of the Scrabble Scrum will make its debut in March during Rotary Literacy Month featuring teams of students from public and private high schools in Cayman. The winning high school team will be invited to the September tournament.

Our 2015 Scrabble Scrums will be lots of fun, and like laying the tiles for SQUASH across triple letter and triple word squares, the fun will be multiplied with the addition of event sponsors, prize donors, event volunteers and corporate teams. To learn more about how you can support or participate in one of LIFE's 2015 Scrabble Scrums, please email us at info@life.org.ky

LIFE joins forces with CIIP for the Lera Parchment Battle of the Books Competition – 9th May 2015

LIFE is partnering with the Cayman Islands Information Professionals (CIIP) to co-host the 2015 Lera Parchment Battle of the Books Competition in May. The 2014 competition (held at George Town Public Library) was a great success and we are planning a bigger and better event for 2015!

Over twenty teams from public and private schools in Grand Cayman have entered the competition and will battle it out to see which team are the best 'experts' on their books. The competition is a trivia quiz about a set list of twenty or so fiction novels that students read in their teams throughout the school year. The competition is a great way to encourage students to read a number of books in-depth.

LIFE is delighted to be sponsoring the teams from John Gray High School, Bodden Town Primary School and Prospect Primary School. Lera Parchment's family is generously sponsoring the team from Sir John A. Cumber Primary School, West Bay.

The 2014 champions, the Neurotic Nerds and the Cadbury Craniums from St. Ignatius School, are busy reading this year's set books and will be eagerly defending their titles. Look out for further details about the Battle of the Books competition on Saturday 9th May.





TO ALL OF OUR SPONSORS
AND VOLUNTEERS FOR
YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT!



We hope you find time to read with your loved ones this Christmas.
Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and all the best for the New Year!

Please visit our website: www.life.org.ky