

## YOUR WEEKLY READER

### Rescuing Reading Project

Thomas Nelson Community College  
November 2, 2006

## TNCC Fall 2006 Book Circles

### Coming Tomorrow!

Friday, November 3, 2006  
1:00-3:00 p.m.

Thomas Nelson Community College  
Wythe Hall Library Gallery

*Frankenstein* by Mary Shelley

*Shane* by Jack Schaefer

*Journey on the James: Three Weeks through the Heart of Virginia*  
by [Earl Swift](#), **Guest Speaker**

Earl Swift will speak to Book Circles' participants about the writing of his own book, as well as his research into the Norfolk origins of Jack Schaefer's *Shane*.



### Books and Politics Mix

Just when you thought that the Virginia senatorial campaign couldn't get any weirder, the *Virginian-Pilot* reports that the campaign of Republican Senator George Allen has undertaken a feminist literary critique of Democrat James Webb's novels (one of which, *Fields of Fire*, characterized by novelist Tom Wolfe as "the finest of the Vietnam novels").

Webb's novels, which typically feature warfare and international intrigue, are said to depict disrespectful treatment of women. The Webb campaign staff claims that characters do not necessarily reflect the attitudes of the author. Senator Allen has not admitted to having read the novels, because he has been busy "reading initiatives and ideas," although he has read excerpts.

The Allen campaign has made these excerpts available to the Fox News Channel and the Drudge Report, paragons of literary discourse and literary criticism, along with grids analyzing the novels' chief characters.

Will the lesbian novel by Lynn Cheney, wife of the Vice President, be next?

Nice to see the focus of the campaign move from policy to fiction, where it belongs.

Books matter, just not the way you hoped.

### Big Win for The Big Read

The Newport News Public Library System has won a significant grant from the [National Endowment for the Arts The Big Read](#) program, which will create community reading experiences late in spring of 2007, featuring a common text, Zora Neale Hurston's novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God*.

Library system grant writer Judy Condra worked in collaboration with numerous community stakeholders, including the Rescuing Reading project, in preparing and submitting this grant proposal, which will include Thomas Nelson Community College Spring 2007 Book Circles' selection of the Hurston novel and a visit by Hurston's niece, Lucy Hurston, a community-college professor in New England.

### Page One of the Virginia Peninsula Literary Consortium

Partners collaborating in Newport News Library System's The Big Read grant application have taken their cooperation a step further by forming the Virginia Peninsula Literary Consortium.

In an organizational meeting late in October, representatives from Thomas Nelson Community College (Dr. Tom Long, professor of English, and Ms. Aileen Schweitzer, director of the Learning Resource Center), Christopher Newport University, Peninsula Reads, and the library systems of Hampton, Newport News, York County, and Poquoson pledged to work collaboratively in grant development and book events.

This initiative was spearheaded by Iza Cieszynski, director of the Newport News Public Library System, and Mary Sellen, University Librarian at Christopher Newport University.

Already underway are plans for a reading appearance by writer Amy Tan in September 2007.