

YOUR WEEKLY READER

Rescuing Reading Project

Thomas Nelson Community College
November 9, 2006

Fall Book Circles Engage Students

Over two dozen students and a dozen faculty and staff listened to author Earl Swift (whose book *Journey on the James: Three Weeks through the Heart of Virginia* was one of the featured books) at the Fall 2006 Book Circles. Journalist Swift described how he came to write the series of newspaper stories over a period of three weeks that served as the nucleus of his book.

In addition, Swift recounted the Norfolk origins of Jack Schaefer's classic Western, *Shane*, another of the Book Circles' selections.

The audience was welcomed by remarks from Dr. Tom Long, professor of English whose Rescuing Reading project organized the event, and by Dr. Charles A. Taylor, president of Thomas Nelson Community College.



Author Earl Swift chats with students at Book Circles
(Photo: Marlene Waters)

Thanks for the success of the event go to the Learning Resources Center, Student Activities, Student Affairs (whose SDV 100 course encourages student participation), the President's Cultural Scholarships, faculty who led the discussions, and faculty who assign the selected books or offer supplementary credit for participation in the Book Circles.

Feds Audit US Education Department Reading Program

An internal audit of the Bush administration's [Reading First](#) reading program, with a billion-dollar annual budget, reveals that the Education Department flouted both the law and ethics to steer money into favorite projects, according to the Associated Press.

Review panels were packed with members sharing the director's views and allocated funds to preferred reading curricula publishers. The director has resigned to "return to the private sector" (and not to spend more time with his family?).

Education Secretary Margaret Spellings promised to adopt all of the audit recommendations and to review all Reading First grants.

Locally, a Portsmouth, Virginia, family literacy program, [Even Start](#), has been put on the chopping block by the Bush administration, according to the *Virginian-Pilot*. The program specializes in providing literacy services to parents and children, preparing parents to earn GEDs, and working with pre-school children, while providing child care and transportation.



Earl Swift meets Dr. Charles A. Taylor (TNCC president), Dr. James DellaValle (Physics Department chairperson), and Dr. Tom Long (Rescuing Reading).
(Photo: Marlene Waters)

What They're Reading

Neva Beierle, Department of Information Technology, reports that she's reading, "*Pride and Prejudice* by Jane Austen. What I found appealing about it was the main character's insight into human nature and the subtle plot twists plus I guess I'm a hopeless romantic."

It is a truth universally acknowledged that one need not be either hopeless or romantic to enjoy Austen's gentle irony.

Lovers of Austeneana are invited to visit the Web site of the [Jane Austen Society of North America](#).

An [on-line book club discussion of *Pride and Prejudice*, hosted by the Bergen County Cooperative Library System](#) took place this week.