

For Immediate Release

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For more information: Contact Louise Bentley at [715-834-2531](tel:715-834-2531)

Parents Sharing Books Program Meaningful at Local Jails

For the past 11 years, Literacy Volunteers Chippewa Valley has held one of their most meaningful events during the holiday season: Parents Sharing Books.

Parents Sharing Books is a Literacy Volunteers program in partnership with the Chippewa, Dunn and Eau Claire county jails. Inmates who are parents, and who will be incarcerated for Christmas, have the opportunity to share something special with their child – a book.

The program goes like this: Literacy Volunteers receives donated children's books from the L.E. Phillips Memorial Library and the Chippewa Falls High School Honors English Class. The program directors at the three county jails determine which inmates who have children would like to record a book for their children as a holiday gift. This list is given to Literacy Volunteers, and then staff members and jail tutors bring a variety of books to the jails, and inmates get to choose a book for each child that they would like to read to. As the parent reads to a volunteer, they are recorded. Then the recording is put on a CD and is mailed to the child along with their individual book and a Literacy Volunteers special bookmark in a wrapped package. Packages are sent so they are received on time for Christmas.

"This may sound like a simple gesture," said Literacy Volunteers Corrections Instructor Louise Bentley, "but it means the world to the children and to their parents. For the nearly 100 children involved this year, the book may be the only gift that they receive from their incarcerated parent. And to hear their parent's voice on the CD, it is that much more special to them."

It is also very important to the inmates. Each year, they fill out an evaluation form on Parents Sharing Books and express how much it means to them. They are very thankful for this opportunity, and have hopes that next year, thanks to rehabilitation programs in the jail such as this, they will spend next Christmas at home with their children.

About Literacy Volunteers Chippewa Valley

Literacy Volunteers Chippewa Valley is a community-based literacy program that offers adults the opportunity to gain the skills they need to make a better life for themselves and their families. We do this by taking the time to understand the unique needs of each learner and tailoring our services specifically to them. Founded in 1986, LVCV's mission is to provide flexible literacy programs to help adults and their families reach their education, employment, and life goals. All programs utilize **tutoring** provided by trained and supported volunteer **tutors**. With offices in Chippewa, Dunn and Eau Claire counties, LVCV is classified as a tax exempt, 501(c) (3) non-profit organization.

For more information, please visit <http://www.lvcv.org> or contact MaryJo VanGompel, Executive Director of Literacy Volunteers Chippewa Valley at [715-834-0222](tel:715-834-0222).