

First Steps Thanks Sponsors of Imagination Library Program

C.S Lewis, author of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*, said "We read to know we are not alone." Sharing books and reading with your child is a wonderful way to spend time with them and to develop your relationship with them. Research shows that young children whose parents read to them daily have been exposed to at least 290,000 more words by the time they enter kindergarten than kids who aren't read to regularly.

And depending on how much daily reading time kids get, that number can go up to over a million words. All that exposure likely makes it easier for kids to expand their vocabularies and understand the variety of texts they'll need to read as they get older, both inside school and out.

Since 2005, Edgefield County First Steps has partnered with the Dollywood Foundation to get books into the homes of young children. Candi Lalonde, Executive Director of Edgefield County First Steps, states "By putting quality books in the homes of our youngest children, we are helping them start on their way to school readiness and success. We are able to continue to provide this program in our community through the tremendous support of many businesses, groups, organizations, and individuals." Since January 2005, almost 40,000 books have been mailed to Edgefield County children.

The Imagination Library is the creation of country music star Dolly Parton and was started in her home town of Sevier County, Tennessee in 1996. The Dollywood Foundation provides books free to all preschoolers in Sevier County. In 1999, Dolly announced she would extend the opportunity to communities nationally to replicate the Imagination Library in their own area. Each community must financially support the effort, but the foundation provides technical assistance, assists with public relations and marketing materials, and coordinates the ordering and mailing of the books.

The program itself is quite simple. Children who are registered for the program are Edgefield County residents and receive a book a month until their 5th birthday. There is no cost to the family and the books are mailed directly to the children at their homes. Edgefield County First Steps actively raises money through donations from individuals, groups, organiza-

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tions, and businesses (these are referred to as "sponsors"). Almost \$5,000 was raised last year.

This year's goal is set at \$3,346, and the fundraising campaign has begun. All money raised goes directly for books. If you would like to sponsor a child this year, it only costs \$30 for one child to receive 12 books. Donations are accepted all throughout the year. All donations are tax deductible, and checks should be made payable to Edgefield County First Steps. The mailing address is P.O. Box 295, Edgefield, SC, 29824. To sponsor a child, or for more information, please contact Candi Lalonde at candi@edgefieldfirststeps.org or

803-275-0800. You can also go to our website (www.edgefieldfirststeps.org) to donate directly.

Edgefield County First Steps wants to thank the generous sponsors in this edition of the Edgefield Advertiser for their commitment to the education of the children of Edgefield County in 2024.

Edgefield County First Steps Imagination Library Sponsors 2024

1 Child

Kay and Dean Campbell
Leonard and Kat Lalonde
Mary S. Ryans
Renee W. Williams
Sandi Padgett
Moronda Talley
Carolyn Pettigrew
Reel Insurance Agency, Inc.
Dr. Sharon Wall
Philip and Gayle Dorn
Jim and Connie Harling
Jenny Banner
Tommy and Sandra Grandy
Doug and Connie Sutton
Helen and Lovick Mims
Jeff and Candi Lalonde
In Memory of Mack Stewart III by
Bridget Clark
Albert Talbert, Edgefield County
Council Vice-Chair

3 Children

Mr. and Mrs. Doug Painter
Town of Trenton
Randy and Debra Armstrong
Dr. Gosney for Abby, Hannah,
and Laura
Joanne Painter
Mary Allison and John Pettigrew
Nancy Cannavan
Mount Canaan Baptist Church
Sam and Faye Speight

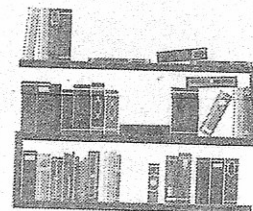
4 Children

Bobby and Millicent Peeler
Ed and Liz Posey
Wiley and Ann Turner
Mrs. Windie Burton



2 Children

Andy and Becky Turner
Roger Lamb and Betty Rhoden
Ray and Lynn Melton
Jim and Betsy Martin
Sandy and Jen Backensto
Jayne and George Rainsford
Helen and Billy Padgett
Bobby and Carla Dorn
Jean M. Walker
Jack and Sandra Reece
Margaret and Dean Childress
Gail Jackson
Danny and Tina Knight
Chris and Linda Clancy
Thomas and Gaye Holmes – In Honor of Jaxon and
Harper
Leisa and Tom Long
Jagger's Grandparents
Crouch Investments
Rob and Susan Keck
Cynthia Bull
Pendarvis Chevrolet Co. Inc.
Heather and David Trotter
Andy and Donna Livingston
In Honor of my Granddaughters Mavis Reeves and An-
nie Kay Seigler by Honey



Other

Jill Jolly	\$135.00
Becky Turner – In Honor of my Six Great-Grandsons	\$162.00
Debby Triplett – In Honor of my grandchildren	\$162.00
Evelyn B. Wainscott	\$200.00
Spann United Methodist Church	\$226.00
Bridget and Denny Clark – In Honor of our Grandchildren,	
Reece and Meredith	\$235.00
Moorecraft Cabinet Co., Inc.	\$350.00
Beth McLeod, Fulcher Hagler LLP	\$540.00
Dabo's All In Team Foundation	\$1,080.00