

Books, Barks and Bowling

From Student, Elmin All the time we talk about books.

I have been with my tutor/mentor for one year. I enjoy spending time with Ms. Carol. We read challenging books and books I like. We also buy books at the library book sale. I like comic books, chapter books, fairy tales, animal books, and books with information. I have learned that I can read and improve my fluency.

I have done a lot of first things with Ms. Carol. We just went bowling. It was fun and I got 2 strikes. We went to D.C. and took the Metro. I went to the movies for the first

Mentor of The Month

time with Ms. Carol. We watched "Captain Underpants." It was a good and funny movie. Ms. Carol also took me to my first bookstore.

Ms. Carol is amazing, because we do fun activities together. I enjoyed watching a video of "The Sneetches," a Dr. Seuss book that we read on Ms. Carol's iPad. Another special thing we have done is read to dogs in the Paws to Read program. I have done it three times. I enjoy going to do the Wright to Read events such as Readers take the Stage and the picnic. I also enjoyed when we painted a snowman. I painted a Snowman Joker. I enjoy talking to Ms. Carol. We talk about hair styles and dogs.

From Tutor/Mentor, Ms. Carol

A chance encounter connected me with Wright to Read (WTR). I met a WTR volunteer in the Alexandria library one day and as we were chatting, waiting for the band to start (that's not a misprint) she told me about the program. I'd been looking for a volunteer opportunity that focused on reading and literacy and Wright to Read sounded like a perfect fit — matching volunteers one-on-one with kids who needed to improve their reading. Even better, the program served the community. The next day I contacted WTR, went through orientation and training and a few months later I was paired with Elmin.

Elmin was eight years old when we met (he's almost 10 now) and we've been together a little over a year. What impressed me most at our introductory meeting was Elmin's enthusiasm for reading. The look of delight on his face when he received his first set of books from Wright to Read is one I won't soon forget — I felt like I had a big head start already.

Because Elmin had never been to a public library, the first thing we did was take a tour of the largest one, Beatley Central. I explained how to find books, how to check them out, how long you could keep the

books you borrowed and what happened if you didn't return them on time (he saw me pay a couple of late fees and caught on quickly). Over the next few months, we visited every library in Alexandria so he could see the different branches. I allowed him to use my library card and in no time at all he was identifying books he wanted to read and became a master of self-checkout. "Big Nate" is a particular favorite. He has full responsibility for books in his care and has never failed to return them on time, always in good shape. Borrowing books from the library gives him lots of options for independent reading and we read his "main" book at our weekly meeting. He's expressed interest in getting his own library card and I'm hopeful that can happen soon. We've also attended library book sales — Elmin loves shopping for bargains — and it's been great seeing him choose books for his personal collection.

Over the past year we've participated in library programs such as Paws to Read, and attended many Wright to Read events, including a visit to the T.C. Williams Planetarium, a yoga class, scavenger hunt in Old Town, the WTR picnic and my favorite, the Kids Cook event where the students made their own grilled cheese sandwiches. We've also been to the movies, visited a bookstore and recently, took the Metro downtown to



Mentor Carol Plemons with her student, Elmin.

go bowling (he was very proud of beating me). All these activities were new experiences.

Since we've been together, I've seen Elmin become a more confident reader, increase his vocabulary and improve his ability to recall content from week to week. Because we read books that are geared to his interests, he's even finished a couple of chapter books, which is a real milestone. I have challenged him to read more chapter books and as he completes them, we'll celebrate with a field trip or other special activity. He also enjoyed reading aloud to other students at a recent WTR event and we hope to do more of that in the future too. When we're not reading, he tells me silly jokes and has a knack for making me laugh — even when he isn't trying — making each session with him special and fun.

I'm lucky to have Elmin as my mentee and look forward to continuing to share my love of books and reading with him, support him as he builds his skills, and encourage his curiosity to explore and try new things.

Visit www.alexandriava.gov/Mentoring.

Drop-off your unwanted medications

SATURDAY

APRIL 28, 2018

10:00AM-2:00PM

PRESCRIPTION FOR
DANGER

PROPERLY DISPOSE OF UNWANTED MEDICATIONS AT THE FOLLOWING LOCATIONS:

- Alexandria Police Headquarters**
3600 Wheeler Avenue
- First Baptist Church**
2923 King St
- Alexandria Fire Station 210**
5255 Eisenhower Ave
- The Neighborhood Pharmacy of Del Ray**
2204 Mt Vernon Avenue

DID YOU KNOW?

- Many people believe prescription drugs are safer than illegal drugs because a doctor prescribed them—they're not.
- More people die accidentally from prescription drugs each year than all types of illegal drugs combined.
- Combining pain killers or anti-anxiety drugs with alcohol multiplies the effect—your heart or your breathing can stop.
- Drug-induced deaths now exceed deaths from motor vehicle accidents in more than 17 states.
- Most kids who abuse prescription drugs report they get them from their home medicine cabinets or from friends.
- Proper disposal of unwanted medication prevents environmental contamination of our waterways and soils.

SYMPTOMS OF PRESCRIPTION DRUG OVERDOSE

- Abnormal pupil size
- Agitation
- Convulsions
- Paranoid behavior
- Difficulty breathing
- Drowsiness
- Hallucinations
- Nausea and vomiting
- Non-reactive pupils
- Staggering or unsteady gait
- Sweating or extremely dry, hot skin
- Tremors
- Unconsciousness
- Violent or aggressive behavior

Suspect an Overdose? Call 911

CAN'T MAKE IT TO DRUG TAKE BACK DAY?

Neighborhood Pharmacy of Del Ray recently launched the first-ever permanent prescription drug drop-off box in the City of Alexandria.

The drug drop-off box provides year-round access to safe drug disposal for all Alexandria residents and is located inside the pharmacy at 2204 Mt. Vernon Ave.

Go to www.PreventItAlexandria.org to learn more

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*Cremation includes basic services of the funeral director and staff, transfer of remains to the funeral establishment and crematory fees. Crematory fee is included. Excludes all merchandise and additional services. Charges may vary depending on selections.

**Burial includes basic services of the funeral director and staff, transfer of remains to funeral establishment, and transportation of remains to cemetery. Price quoted does not include any merchandise, such as casket, or cemetery property or services. Prices may vary based on selections.