

# LIA at Work

Literacy InterActives, Inc.

a nonprofit organization [www.literacyinteractives.org](http://www.literacyinteractives.org)

VOL. 1 NO. 7 2018

## Literacy InterActives, Inc.

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2018-2019

Angelita Reyes, PhD  
President and CEO

Inez Arnett-Ferrer  
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Minneapolis, MN

Douglas B. Sydnor, FAIA  
Architect  
Scottsdale, AZ

*Galleria on the Lake*  
Clarksville, VA



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## Parker Sydnor Historic Site Initiative Progress Report: Our Mission, Impact, and Full Steam Ahead

In 2007, nine members of the Board of Directors launched the beginnings of Literacy InterActives, Inc. (LIA) in southern Virginia as a “new dimension of performance.” We are “interactive” because our mission defines education, culture, history, and technology as



diverse and inclusive “literacies” that are needed, shared, advanced, and used in today’s world. In this sense of interactive learning, LIA sustains, advances, and applies reading and

writing, computer skills, and K-12 education and beyond, and encourages active partnerships in order to make a positive difference in our community and the larger society.

With the significance and vitality of interactive literacy as a driving force, LIA established its major program initiative by sponsoring the historic preservation and development of the Parker Sydnor historic log cabin site located in Mecklenburg County, Virginia. LIA is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

“This historic log cabin site is a very appropriate place to showcase interactive literacy because of its connections to the cultural history and education of African Americans in Virginia and its integrity connected to the national sense of historic place as defined by the National Park Service,” states Dr. Angelita Reyes, the founding director of Literacy InterActives. “When the site is opened to the public—our goal—we want people from all nationalities, racial backgrounds, ethnicities, and generations to make their way to the historic site

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## Spotlight on LIA Board Members “Giving Back” and Going Forward

Literacy InterActives has a dedicated, enthusiastic, skilled, and diverse group of men and women who serve on the Board of Directors. Serving on the board of a nonprofit has many rewarding benefits and usually defines “giving back” to the beloved community. An entrepreneur of a major organization tells us, “nonprofits have needs beyond just financial donations so they can become sustainable. Many rely on the expertise and knowledge of business and community professionals—especially board members—to help them advance their missions.” This is certainly the case for LIA. Our board members’ commitment and expertise also extend to other praiseworthy causes in their beloved communities.

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“A while back, the marble yards charged so much that the colored people down in this part never had any stones in the graveyards at all. But I’ve brought ‘em in reach and now they’re puttin’ ‘em up, even for people been dead 50 years.”

Parker Sydnor  
Friday, September 13, 1946  
*Richmond Times-Dispatch*



### 2017-2018 LIA Highlights

2017 [Preservation Virginia](#) / Virginia Department of Historic Resources, St. Petersburg, VA

Literacy InterActives, Inc.  
Sponsorship St. John Baptist Church Summer Camp 2018

“From the Virginia Forum to Visiting with “The Old Plantation.”  
[www.parkersydnorhistoric.org](http://www.parkersydnorhistoric.org)

“Parker Sydnor Virginia Historical Highway Marker Dedication.”  
Trailer and Promotional Video:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dm-X0AUBNA>  
1:16

In May 2018, LIA co-hosted with [Galleria on the Lake](#) the monthly Business After Hours meeting of the Clarksville Lake Country Chamber of Commerce. We had a full house! Thank you to all the Chamber members for your support. Thank you Linda Davenport for sharing your venue.

#### Spotlight, con't from page 1

**Peter V. Bergstrom**, vice president of the LIA Board, also serves on the Board of Directors of the Virginia Forum. The VA Forum brings together an interdisciplinary group of educators and other professionals who are engaged in the study and interpretation of Virginia history and culture.

**Mattie M. Cowan** was recently appointed by Virginia Governor Ralph Northam to serve on the Henrietta Lacks Commission, which oversees the development of the Henrietta Lacks Life Science Center in Halifax County, Virginia.

**Inez Arnett-Ferrer** diligently and lovingly coordinates the St. John Baptist Church Summer camp for children in Mecklenburg County. Inez volunteers as the camp’s Executive Director and has received government and generous private funding for the camp’s operation.

**Dorothy M. David** had the grand open-

ing of the office of DMD Tax & Accounting Services in Norfolk, VA. Congratulations! Dorothy is a member of the American Association of Notaries and the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants.

**Alexandria J. Reyes, Esq.** serves on the Philando Castile Memorial Scholarship Committee. Philando Castile was fatally shot in 2016 in Minnesota by a police officer while Philando was driving his car with his girlfriend and her 4 year-old daughter. The scholarship honors Philando who had a “passion for education.”

**Doug Sydnor** received the 2018 Arizona Governor’s Heritage Preservation Honor Award. The award is presented to a volunteer who contributed over 25 years to historic preservation through civic leadership and accomplishments. Doug is a direct male descendant of Fortunatus Sydnor, the first Sydnor Englishman, to come to the Colony of Virginia in 1653. ❖

**It's Not Too Late...**

I see the urgency to begin stabilization and restoration of the Sydnor log cabin site. Visit LIA’s website for updates on making your contribution to the LIA Building Fund Campaign!

Dr. Peter V. Bergstrom, Vice President  
Literacy InterActives, Inc.

## Literacy InterActives

*Welcomes*

### Annual Board Meeting Guest Speaker

## Matt Leonard

Executive Director  
Halifax County Industrial  
Development Authority (IDA)

**Saturday  
October 13, 2018  
11:30am – 12:15pm**

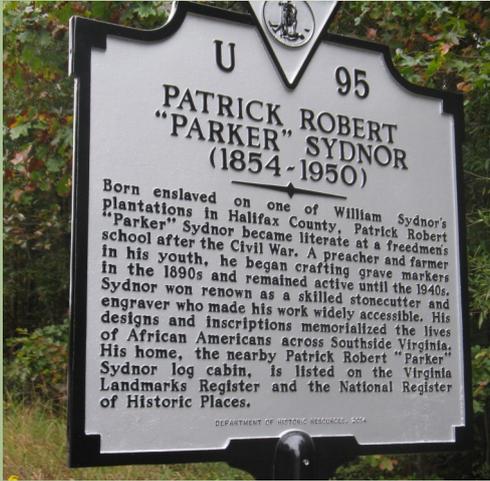
SVHE  
Hope-Smith Classroom  
820 Bruce Street  
South Boston, VA 24592

*Complimentary Buffet Lunch*

Progress Report, con't from page 1

for learning and interactive gathering,” Reyes added.

Who was Parker Sydnor and how was literacy so important for him? Parker Sydnor (1854-1950) was born enslaved in Halifax County and owned land and farmed in both Halifax and Mecklenburg counties in southern Virginia



after the Civil War. The Sydnor log cabin was originally located within one of the outlying slave quarters of Prestwoud plantation. After Reconstruction, Virginia had the highest

percentage of freed or First Generation African Americans who bought land and established new home places. As a former enslaved person, Sydnor attended a local Freedmen’s Bureau School after the Civil War.

Aside from being a farmer, Parker Sydnor was one of Virginia’s few literate African American tombstone makers from that era. It was because of this integrity that the site has made an impact in southern Virginia. With LIA’s sponsorship the Sydnor site is listed on the National Register of Historic Places and the Virginia Landmarks Register; and the site has a distinguished Virginia historical highway marker authorized by the National Park Service and the VA Department of Historic Resources. These major accomplishments advanced the LIA initiative to new visibility and impact.



Virginia Tech CDAC Team, 2013

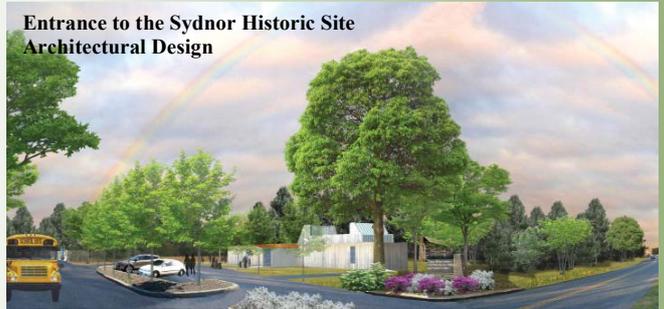
What story do you want to tell? Virginia Tech’s Community Design Assistance Center (CDAC) produced the site’s architectural master plan that synthesizes civic and educational needs within the programming, structural, and

landscape concepts. Coordinating with CDAC, LIA invited stakeholders, including representatives from church and civic leadership, to attend a series of four all-inclusive town



meetings over a period of six months. During this time, CDAC architects and graduate students worked at

the historic site to produce a 57 page print and digital book that constructs an exciting architectural conceptual design for



the site. The community’s compelling involvement established that the conceptual design must unabashedly recognize the antebellum past; and the struggles and triumphs of the African American legacy during different time periods at the site.

LIA’s mission includes partnering with other organizations.

**Next Steps:**  
**Shovel Ready for Stabilization and Rehabilitation**

- a place to learn
- a place to work
- a place to play
- a place to gather
- a place to nurture
- a place to conduct use-inspired research
- a place to remember the past...the log cabin

[www.parkersydnorhistoric.org](http://www.parkersydnorhistoric.org)

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# “Bridging Our Communities”



May 2018  
Lake County Business After  
Hours meeting hosted by  
LIA and Galleria on the Lake.  
Our next co-hosting:  
May 19, 2019



## Literacy InterActives, Inc.



*A Nonprofit Organization, 501(c)(3)*

### Mission Statement

Literacy InterActives, Inc. promotes and advances the interactive learning and literacy of cultural history, education, and technology. Through interactive literacies, we bring diverse communities together as stakeholders making a positive difference in today's world.

Visit our YouTube video at  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FiuCQvE3yho>

### Progress Report , con't from page 3

In promoting its mission, goals, and project initiative, LIA has been represented at more than 200 conferences, workshops, community events, social networking, and print publications throughout the area of its immediate constituents. But as we engage our local communities, we are also regional and national because of the far-reaching significance of the vital principles of education and community engagement that are mutually inclusive. For



example, LIA invited Paul Nichols, Superintendent of Mecklenburg County Schools, to speak at the 2016 annual board meeting about the well-being and challenges of the schools in the County. Other well-known and diverse civic leaders who continue to support the LIA mission include Senator Frank Ruff; Sheila Cuykendall, Executive Director of the Lake County Chamber of Commerce; Glenn Edwards, Edwards Construction, Inc.; and Jim Hare, Director of Survey and Register Division at the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. LIA is enthusiastically ready for the next major steps of the Parker Sydnor historic site initiative. Please visit our website at [www.literacyinteractives.org](http://www.literacyinteractives.org) to Become a Friend with your support. ❖