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**For Immediate Release****The Saturday Light Brigade Provides Studio, Technical Support for National Launch of *Read With Me: The 2005 RIF Community Reading Challenge***

– SLB to promote event, interview student participants, coordinate day of national media calls for Reading Is Fundamental –

**PITTSBURGH, PA – January 24, 2005** – *The Saturday Light Brigade* (SLB), Pittsburgh's award-winning live public radio program featuring acoustic music and interactive family fun (WRCT 88.3 FM), is pleased to announce its support for the national kickoff of *Read With Me: The 2005 RIF Community Reading Challenge*. This annual program is organized by Reading Is Fundamental (RIF), a national organization dedicated to developing and delivering children's and family literacy programs, and funded by MetLife Foundation. Taking place Wednesday, January 26, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh, *Read With Me* is a nationwide program designed to engage family members and communities in motivating children to read. Children and community members at more than 1,100 participating RIF sites across the country take part in two weeks of creative reading activities between January and March.

SLB will lend its broadcast expertise, equipment and studios to coordinate audio requirements for a kickoff breakfast as well as nationwide event-day interviews with national media, literacy experts, educators, executives and Pittsburgh celebrities involved with *Read With Me*. SLB also will sponsor a "Reading Station" where over 150 participating children can use the SLB broadcast studios to practice their reading skills or talk about the importance of reading. Finally, to ensure that reading stays foremost in the minds of children after the launch, SLB has scheduled a live radio program for March 12, 2005 during which participating children will discuss the books they read on the air as part of the RIF Challenge.

"Providing our studio and technical expertise to Reading Is Fundamental is a perfect example of skills and resources we can offer to worthy organizations and events," says Larry Berger, host of *The Saturday Light Brigade*. "Moreover, this is a very proud moment for Pittsburgh, which, as a result of the combined resources of our region, has been selected to lead this national effort. The program itself, and Pittsburgh's role in it, meshes perfectly with SLB's mission to bring children and adults together through interactive family fun and education, as well as to showcase the assets of Pittsburgh. We are proud to be able to contribute to the launch of *Read With Me*."

Each year, RIF and MetLife launch the competition from an outstanding RIF program. This year, Reading Is Fundamental Pittsburgh, the largest RIF program in the area, was selected to launch the program. Through three local programs that enhance children's academic success, RIF Pittsburgh provides the resources, motivation, opportunities, and skill for children 2-12 to read. Local celebrities joining in the launch festivities at the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh include Mayor Tom Murphy, David Newell (aka "Mr. McFeely"), Dan Onorato, Allegheny County Chief Executive, and Tyler Palko, quarterback, University of Pittsburgh.

On the air in Pittsburgh for nearly 30 years, SLB is one of the longest-running public radio programs in the United States. Live music, on-air telephone calls from kids and adults, fun and educational interactive puzzles and games, and interesting guests have made *The Saturday Light Brigade* a Saturday morning family radio tradition for thousands of people. The *Saturday Light Brigade* radio program broadcasts live from 6:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (Eastern) from its studios in the theater of the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh on Saturday mornings through WRCT 88.3 FM. The public is welcome to watch and participate in SLB's broadcast, free, from 10:00 a.m. to noon every Saturday. For more information, please visit [www.slbradio.com](http://www.slbradio.com).

**About MetLife Foundation**

MetLife Foundation, established in 1976 by MetLife, supports programs that increase opportunities for young people to succeed, give students and teachers a voice in improving education, develop partnerships between schools and communities and strengthen relationships among parents, teachers and students. For more information about the Foundation, please visit the Website at [www.metlife.org](http://www.metlife.org).

### **About Reading Is Fundamental Pittsburgh**

Reading Is Fundamental Pittsburgh, the largest RIF program in the area, founded locally in 1981 provides the resources, motivation, opportunities, and skill for children 2-12 to read. RIF Pittsburgh accomplished this goal through three local programs that enhance children's academic success. In RIF Pittsburgh's Book Distribution Program we have distributed over 180,000 books to underserved children in Pittsburgh. The After School Tutoring Program has assisted nearly 1,000 students in Pittsburgh Public Schools reading below grade level to improve their reading scores with an average gain 5 times greater than those not in the program. The Read to Your Parent Program has encouraged over 4,000 families to read more than 65,000 books together. This year, 18 RIF Pittsburgh sites will take the two-week challenge before March 3.

### **Reading Is Fundamental, Inc.**

Reading Is Fundamental, Inc., founded in 1966, works to build a literate nation by helping young people discover the joy of reading. RIF's highest priority is to serve the nation's underserved children and families through the development and delivery of literacy programs and campaigns that motivate youth to read regularly. Through a national, grassroots network of community volunteers at 25,000 RIF program sites, 5.1 million children are provided with 16.5 million new, free books and other essential literacy resources each year. For more information and to access reading resources, visit RIF's website at [www.rif.org](http://www.rif.org).

### **About The Saturday Light Brigade (SLB)**

*The Saturday Light Brigade* (SLB) is a live, award-winning public radio program hosted by Larry Berger, featuring acoustic music and family fun. Broadcast since 1978, it is one of the longest-running public radio programs in the United States. Quality music, on-air telephone calls from kids and adults, fun and educational interactive puzzles and games, and interesting guests have made *The Saturday Light Brigade* a family radio tradition for thousands of people. Kids listen with adults, adults listen with kids, and everyone has fun together! SLB broadcasts live from 6:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. (Eastern) on Saturday mornings through WRCT 88.3 FM in Pittsburgh from its studios in the theater of the Children's Museum of Pittsburgh. Streaming and on-demand broadcasts are accessible at [www.slbradio.com](http://www.slbradio.com). SLB Radio Productions, Inc. (SLB) created *The Saturday Light Brigade*. The organization is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation steered by a Board of Directors and Community Advisory Board. SLB is a member of the National Federation of Community Broadcasters and Association of Independents in Radio.

SLB welcomes inquiries from parties interested in partnering with, underwriting or appearing on the show. For more information please call 888-SLB-RADIO (888.752.7234), send email to [slb@slbradio.com](mailto:slb@slbradio.com) or visit [www.slbradio.com](http://www.slbradio.com). A media kit, including logos and headshots of SLB host Larry Berger, is available for download at [www.slbradio.com](http://www.slbradio.com).

### **Syndication Information**

Since its inaugural broadcast in 1978, "The Saturday Light Brigade" radio program has been honored with 10 national, state and local awards for its unique mix of acoustic music and family fun combined with listener participation, puzzles, games, live performers and guests. The program is available at no charge to qualified non-commercial and commercial radio stations for broadcast in stand-alone segments ranging from 1 to 6 hours (with 6 minutes per hour available for local content, including underwriting and sponsorship). The program is an excellent way to serve family audiences, build community, and add a timeless, proven, high-quality program to the Saturday morning radio landscape in your area for one or more hours between 6:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon (Eastern). For information, please call 888-SLB-RADIO (888.752.7234), send email to [slb@slbradio.com](mailto:slb@slbradio.com) or visit [www.slbradio.com](http://www.slbradio.com).