

THE RECIPE for perpetual ignorance is: Be satisfied with your opinions and content with your knowledge," said publisher Elbert Hubbard.

happen to agree with my longtime friend and onetime enemy **Donald Trump**. If we are rebuilding anything in the footprints of the World Trade Center towers, let's just redo the buildings much as they were with better, vastly improved

safety features. Why didn't they just ask Donald to do it in the first place? Has everybody forgotten the lesson of how he restored the Central Park Wollman skating rink when nobody else in the city had a clue how to do it? The **Daniel Libeskind** idea for a different kind of building at the World Trade Center was not right anyway. Let Donald Trump do it!

MONDAY NIGHT we scored another triumph for Literacy

Liz Smith



Partners with our annual author's readings in the New York State Theater of Lincoln Center. We may have appeared to be rattling around in the vast auditorium, but we had more than 600 people

there and we made \$1.1 million in the effort to try to change the condition of the 1 million New Yorkers who can't read and write at the fifth-grade level. The dinner after, in the Promenade with its tree-

laden centerpieces from **Robert Isabel** and dance music by **Bob Hardwick**, was just a great big whomping hit!

In this effort, **Arnold Scaasi**, **Parker Ladd** and I, with the help of our dedicated board, had the assistance of our fabulous honorees ... **Christine** and **Stephen Schwarzman** and **Sarah** and **Lachlan Murdoch**. We were definitely "honored" by their generosity and presence. And let me tell you, the entire evening was enhanced by the beauty of — no, not Steve and Lachlan — but Sarah and Christine, who should probably be in movies they are both so good-looking.

I got a big kick out of the readers this year. Distinguished authors and talents one and all — Charleston's phenomenon **Sue Monk Kidd**, who wrote "The Secret Life of Bees," which sold 3.5 million copies (her latest is "The Mermaid Chair") ... **Edward P. Jones**, Pulitzer Prize winner for "The Known World" ... Opera great **Renée Fleming** reading from "The Inner Voice," (who knew she was so witty and funny in her appreciation to divas great and small?) ... and one of the American Film Institute's top 25 "film legends," **Lauren Bacall**, who personifies New York itself. Miss Bacall's 1979 autobiography "By Myself" won the National Book Award. (She has added to the original, and called it "By Myself and Then Some.") The great star had snapped a tendon in her foot, but the show went on as she came out in what I described as her "Manolo Blahnik moccasins."