

# Versed Things First

Palm Beach Banking

Executive Grace Halabi

has been writing poetry since she was 10.

**In the annals of modern verse, published banker-poets are rare. It turns out Grace Halabi, an upper-end executive and familiar face in Palm Beach banking circles, is one of them. She also writes epitaphs.**



***Poet's point of view:** Grace Halabi, Vice President at BB&T's Worth Avenue branch, says writing poetry has helped her prosper in her banking career, because the literary form demands so much creative thinking.*

In progress is a fiction and verse-sprinkled autobiography.

Who'd have thought?

According to Halabi, a 25-year banking veteran who is a Sr. Vice President at the Worth Avenue branch of Branch Banking & Trust, better known as BB&T, "I'm convinced that part of my banking-industry success is a result of my embracing creative thinking. Understanding human emotions, which is a part of poetry, plays a role in everything."

Multilingual Halabi, who grew up in Beirut under the tutelage of her English-professor father, was 10 when she wrote her first poem – an ode to rebirth after death. She has been writing verse ever since and recently published a collection of her poems (*A Renaissance of Heart and Soul*, 2007).

Last year, Halabi – whose Web site([gracehalabi.com](http://gracehalabi.com)) details or links to her writing endeavors – began penning epitaphs by request; she has written a few dozen so far. "So many people who pass away have touched people's lives, and their loved ones can't always put it all into words," says Halabi. "As T.S. Eliot once wrote, "Every phrase and every sentence is an end and a beginning, every poem is an epitaph.'"

*Robbie Bedell/M.M. Cloutier • Pen and writing tablets courtesy of Il Papiro on Worth Avenue*