



---

# Literacy Plus Newsletter

---

Issue #53

Fall 2008

---

## Christmas Concert

The Ottawa Valley Music Festival will partner with Literacy Plus again this year to present A Bonnechere Valley Christmas at St. James Church on Friday, November 28, at 7:30 p.m.

Mervin Fick will conduct the Ottawa Valley Music Festival Chorus in a program of songs for the season. Storytellers Chris Hinsperger and Shirley Hill will entertain with Christmas stories. Shirley is a member of the Cobden Community Theatre, while Chris is well known in Eganville for his multi-faceted community involvement.

The concert is a family event. Tickets are \$10 per person, or \$25 for a family of three or more. The Ottawa Valley Music Festival will donate all proceeds to Literacy Plus. The Festival will also sponsor a draw for tickets to a concert in their 2009 season.

## Christmas Open House

Literacy Plus will hold its Christmas Open House on Tuesday, December 9, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. The party is a potluck lunch—finger foods please. Please bring something with no nuts, coconut, or nut products. One of our students has a critical allergy to nuts. All tutors, students, volunteers and friends are welcome to come and celebrate the season.

## Holiday Closing

The office will be closed for the Christmas break from December 22 until January 2. The office will re-open January 5 at 8:30 a.m.



## Angel Tree

Terrie and her classes have set up an Angel Tree in the computer classroom as a goodwill project for the coming Christmas season. Students and others are invited to donate gifts for children of needy families. The gifts will be given to the Renfrew branch of the Salvation Army for distribution.

To participate, you choose an angel from the tree with the age and gender of the child you wish to give to. Gifts are needed for girls and boys, from babies to aged 14. They can be of any value as they are usually paired with other gifts. Please do not buy guns or other war toys.



Gifts must be returned to the Angel Tree, unwrapped and with the angel, no later than December 9 (the day of the Open House).

## Raffle

Talented needlewoman Maxine Golden has donated a pair of “quillows” for the latest raffle to raise funds for computer class and office needs. When opened up, the ingenious quillows are full-size quilts with a pocket at the foot to tuck your feet in snugly. When not in use, the quilt can be folded into the pocket, making a pillow. The quillows are on display at the office. Additional prizes continue to be donated for the raffle: to date, a handmade wooden knickknack shelf, a tole painted Christmas sleigh decoration, and two boxed sets of handmade soap from Opeongo Mountain Meadow Soaps. Tickets are 99¢. The draw will be held at the Christmas Open House on December 9.

## Board of Directors 2008-2009

The Literacy Plus Board of Directors for 2008/2009 was elected at the Annual General Meeting in June, and appointed its officers at its first meeting. The directors and officers are:

Linda McLaren	Chair
Faye Larocque-Drake	Vice Chair
Michael Wendt	Secretary
Michele Joyce	Treasurer
Barbara Dubé	Director
Ross Meadows	Director
Ethel Ryan	Director

Laura Zdyrko joined the Board in September. We are still seeking two members to fill out the 10 Board positions. We are particularly looking for representation from the Renfrew/Arnprior area and the north Renfrew area, but we are open to members from other places. If you, or someone you know, may be interested, please contact the office at (613) 628-1720 for more information.



The Board's priority this year is the Community Partnership Campaign launched last June. Fundraising plans are also underway: the Christmas concert takes place November 28 and planning has begun for the 2009 Authors Festival and golf tournament. Board committees are continuing the review and updating of the Bylaws and policies. Revised Bylaws will be presented at the Annual General Meeting in June 2009 for approval of the membership.

## Tutors Needed



Literacy Plus needs tutors everywhere in the County, and particularly in Arnprior, Renfrew, Douglas, Petawawa and Deep River. If you know anyone who might be interested, please tell them about Literacy Plus and ask them to call us to find out more.

## Blankets for Babies

Literacy Plus recently contributed 45 receiving blankets for an international project organized by the Petawawa Rotary Club.

At the Rotary Club's June meeting, Program Director Diane Litchfield and Board Chair Linda McLaren learned of the club's project to collect 1,000 blankets for babies in El Salvador. On a visit to that country, one of the club members had seen babies being sent home from hospital wrapped in newspaper.

Back at Literacy Plus, Linda asked volunteer Maxine Golden if she would sew blankets. Linda donated her own supply of flannelette. Maxine contributed fabric herself and solicited more—enough for 45 blankets. Then she got to work. Linda and Maxine delivered the blankets to the Rotary Club at its September meeting, along with two baby sweaters crocheted by Maxine's daughter.

The Club was very pleased and Literacy Plus was pleased to be able to help out one of its important sponsors in this way. In June, the Petawawa Rotary Club donated \$1,000 to Literacy Plus to support literacy services in the county—and became one of Literacy Plus's first Community Partners.

## International Literacy Day

September 8 was International Literacy Day. Created by UNESCO in the 1960s, the day is dedicated each year to promoting lifelong learning to the nearly 774 million adults around the world who struggle with literacy. Around the world, one in five adults is still not literate—two thirds of them are women. In Canada, nine million people (more than 40%) face some degree of literacy challenge.

In today's work force, the skills and education levels needed are increasing, yet millions of people lack essential skills. International Literacy Day encourages potential learners to seek help and take the first step to upgrade their skills.

## Summer Fund Raisers

Literacy Plus had a busy but very successful summer of fundraising events. We are grateful to the volunteers, community members and local businesses who gave us so much support.

### Bonnechere Authors Festival

The 6<sup>th</sup> annual Bonnechere Authors Festival hosted five first-class authors who drew new attendees in Pembroke, Renfrew and Arnprior, as well as our core supporters who always come to Eganville (and who gamely travelled around to the other locations. "Hometown" author Sandra Gulland drew a large crowd to St. James Church, where she not only read from her new book *Mistress of the Sun* but also demonstrated the intricacies of 17<sup>th</sup> century dress. Elizabeth Hay also filled the hall in Renfrew, reading from her Giller-winning *Late Nights on Air* and talking about her writing life.

The five events netted a spectacular \$7,000 to support our literacy programs. None of this could be achieved without the generous support of the authors, and the hours of work given by volunteers to planning and putting on the events. A sincere thanks to authors Phil Jenkins, M.G. Vassanji, Frances Itani, Sandra Gulland, and Elizabeth Hay. Particular thanks also to past and present Board members Doyne Ahern, Gwen Storie, Rosemary Cammaert and Barbara Dubé, and to Gillian Danby for the use of her lovely garden.

### Swing for Literacy

Golfers at Literacy Plus's 5<sup>th</sup> annual Swing for Literacy golf tournament braved the exceptional heat on September 2 to enjoy some friendly competition and a full turkey dinner to raise over \$3,500 for Literacy Plus. Special thanks to the organizing committee, Rosemary Cammaert, Giles Doth and Phil Butler, and the many volunteers who gathered raffle prizes and helped out at the event, as well as to the Whitetail Golf Club. Next year's date is set for Tuesday, September 8, again at the Whitetail Golf Club.

## Barbecue at the Caves

Caveman Chris Hinsperger of the Bonnechere Caves kindly made the caves and grounds available to Literacy Plus for a barbecue on August 13.

The evening was an opportunity for Literacy Plus to make itself known to local businesses in a friendly, informal atmosphere. Literacy Plus staff, volunteers and participants mingled with local business people over a supper of hotdogs and hamburgers. The \$7 admission included a tour of the caves for those interested. Although the primary purpose was networking, the event also raised \$450 for Literacy Plus. Thanks Chris, and board volunteers Rosemary Cammaert, Barbara Dubé and Linda McLaren.



## Yard Sales

Joyce Gutzeit and Maxine Golden raised net proceeds of \$866 through various raffles and yard sales held this year. These funds have been contributed to the purchase of many items to improve life in the office and computer classrooms: two new computer chairs, a printer/scanner/photocopier, a new fridge, new blinds for the front windows, a new bathroom sink and cabinet, and miscellaneous tools and supplies—all much needed. Thank you Joyce and Maxine!



## KI Donation

KI in Pembroke generously donated two large file drawer cabinets to Literacy Plus this fall. The cabinets give us tidy storage for the boxes of records we are required to keep for several years. Mike and Lorna Felske picked the cabinets up. Sue, Marie and Pam, along with Pam's daughter Kaylee and her friend Savannah, spent a Saturday morning relocating boxes and removing the temporary wall that enclosed the former storage area. Staff are pleased to have more room in the back office and better access to materials in storage. Thank you KI and volunteers.

## Thanks to the sponsors of our summer fundraisers

Afelskie's Shoes, Killaloe  
 Afelskie's Shoes, Barry's Bay  
 Doyne Ahern  
 Paul & Lee Armstrong  
 Barry's Bay Loeb  
 Black Water Designs  
 BMO Eganville  
 BMO Pembroke  
 Bonnechere Caves  
 Botanical Glassworks  
 Sandy Braithwaite  
 Country Cuisine  
 Gillian & Roger Danby  
 Desjardins, Pembroke  
 Giles & Irene Doth  
 Christiane Dubé  
 Frisco's  
 HummDinger Gifts  
 Mike Kelly  
 Matt LeMay  
 LoonsNest Books & Gifts  
 McIntosh & Perry Construction  
 Magelly's  
 McDonald Fuels  
 McDougall Insurance, Barry's Bay  
 Linda McLaren  
 Moe's Toes  
 Pembroke Honda  
 RBC Pembroke  
 Serendipity on the River  
 Simple Elegance Nail Care & Esthetics  
 Teresa Smith  
 The Arnprior Book Shop  
 The Meadows  
 The Vintage Gift Shoppe  
 V&S Stedman's, Barry's Bay  
 Whitetail Golf Club

*Thanks for your support!*

## Craft Classes



Maxine is continuing her popular craft classes this year. She has already done two sessions for beginning knitters in October and a workshop on painting Christmas ornaments on November 7. Through the winter, Literacy Plus will expand its workshop offerings, adding such topics as first aid, SmartServe and WHIMS.

## Making Cent\$ of Literacy

On September 24, at the Literacy Plus office, the Trends, Opportunities and Priorities staff for Renfrew and Lanark counties launched a 12-page booklet created to help employers address the literacy and skills needs of their workers. Matt LeMay, TOP partnership administrator, said the booklet clearly outlines the benefits of skills training to employers as well as workers, and gives information about where to access training services in Renfrew County.



Diane Litchfield spoke about the broader meaning of literacy and essential skills, which includes comprehension, critical thinking and problem solving as well as the basic ability to read. Employers with instruction manuals or safety procedures, for instance, need their employees not just to read them but to understand them well enough to follow them.

“We are living in a time of great transition,” Mr. LeMay said, “with people exiting the work force faster than they are entering it. This environment requires an urgent and immediate investment in our existing human capital.” Statistics Canada reports that a 1% increase in adult literacy generates a 1.5% increase in the Gross Domestic Product.

Literacy Plus and other County literacy programs contributed student success stories to the booklet. The booklets are available throughout the County at literacy training and employment services centres, including Literacy Plus. They are informative and they are free.

## Suggestion Box



Watch for our new suggestion box, soon to be installed in the office. Let us know what we are doing well and what we could do better. We welcome comments and ideas from everyone—students, tutors, volunteers and staff.

## Program Activity



Advertising in newspapers throughout the County at the end of August and beginning of September resulted in many calls from prospective students. Through September and October, Sue took over 200 calls. To date, twenty-seven new students have been assessed and enrolled.

Diane has been exceptionally busy in her student-tutor coordinator role, meeting and assessing the new students and paying follow-up visits to existing matches around the county. A new laptop computer and portable printer are allowing her to involve students in on-the-spot development of their own training plans. Diane is also explaining the new requirements from our funder related to training plans and demonstrating student progress.

## The LearningHub



The LearningHub is an online classroom that offers literacy, basic and essential skills training. This year, there is an extensive list of courses ranging from algebra and fractions to learning styles, to computer and Internet skills, and to GED science and writing essays.

Students can enrol and work on the courses independently, or work with the help of their own teacher or tutor. As well, the Hub provides an online practitioner to deliver each course, administer online assessments and mentor learners throughout their classes.

Students can start at any time, but must register on the LearningHub website at least one week ahead. They must have their own e-mail accounts and be prepared to access their lessons at least once a week as they go through the course.

Two Literacy Plus students are taking advantage of this learning opportunity this fall. For more information and to register, go to [www.learninghub.ca](http://www.learninghub.ca).

## Class Field Trips

The Upgrading class continues to make field trips a part of their learning. On October 15, the class visited OLS, a call centre in Pembroke.

OLS is an online customer support care centre that provides Customer Service Solutions for their clients to customers across America. They have eight locations, two of which are in Pembroke. Pembroke I is located at the West End Mall, and Pembroke II is located at the old Eddy Match building on Crandall Street.

The Open House at Pembroke II gave the public an opportunity to learn about the centre and its operations, and a chance to give a frontline position a try. The Upgrading class took advantage of this opportunity, and two of them write about it below.



*I thought the trip to OLS Pembroke was a great learning experience. I learned a little bit about the company and the people that work there. I got to even try out to help the clients. I learned that the information that I need to give to the customer was already on the computer screen in front of me. All I had to do was read the script that was there and scroll through the information to find the answer and give it to the customer. I was a little nervous at the start but then I thought it wasn't so bad so I tried it again. I got a certificate for helping out.*

- Katrina Tracey

*I enjoyed our trip to OLS in Pembroke. They have a large building that employs about 300 people. I was surprised when I went in and saw their set up; it is a very nice facility. I am not sure if I would like to work there or not. The people there were very nice and very helpful.*

- Garnet Brown

This *Employment Ontario* program is funded by the Ontario Government.

## Student Writing

### The Ring

For many women the wedding ring – is a symbol of marriage, love and stability. This symbol for women is really important. For me it is too. This year is the 35<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our marriage. But my wedding ring at the present time can be worn only on my little finger. After receiving our tax return money my husband and I made up our minds to buy a new ring for me. When we decided how much money I could spend, I started looking for a ring. Actually, I know what I want. My ring needs to be simple, easily worn for every day and not expensive. But, when I went to the jewelry store and spoke with the sales Lady and tried to explain my needs, the Lady proposed to me different styles and ideas. Certainly I started to try on many rings – from family rings to the Scottish wedding rings; from the smooth to the filigree; from the traditional to the modern. It was a funny new experience. After one week searching, on my finger shines a pretty new ring.



- Larissa Sokolova, April 2008

### My Dream

My dream was to experience living in the woods. Where it was peaceful in the morning when I woke up. In the morning or night I could hear the loons and the birds singing and the frogs croak. One day I made a campfire and sat down near the fire to see the sun go down. The nice colours of the sun with the red and pink looked so beautiful.

The leaves of the trees were different colours. Later I went fishing on an aluminum boat. The water was so calm and so quiet. I watched a beaver making a dam and ducks and otter swimming in the water. As I motored closer to the shore I saw many fish jumping for flies in the water. So I cast my rod with a worm. I waited for awhile. Suddenly I got a bite. Was I

excited! So I reeled it in. It was a big trout. I thought this would make a good meal. So I made a tasty breakfast as I had a great appetite. The fish was delicious. Then I roasted marshmallows.

As I enjoyed the campfire I heard the owls singing and felt the soft breeze of the wind. Since the sky was clear, I saw the stars shining and gazed at the Dipper. I marvelled that it was so clear and was amazed how intriguing nature is. My experience in the woods will be a lifelong memory.

- Nancy, September 2008

### No-Bake Peanut Butter Bars

1 1/2 cups Kraft Smooth Peanut Butter  
 2/3 cup honey  
 2/3 cup white sugar  
 3 cups Cheerios  
 1 cup crushed peanuts  
 4 squares bakers semi-sweet chocolate, melted.

Microwave peanut butter, honey, and sugar in large glass bowl, on high 2 or 3 minutes, or until sugar is melted and mixture is smooth, stirring every minute.

When smooth, put in Cheerios and peanuts, stir till well mixed. Pour in 9 x13 pan. Press till all nice and even. Melt chocolate and pour over squares. Put in fridge till cool then cut.

- submitted by Joyce Gutzeit



#### Newsletter Production

##### Editor:

Peggy Bridgland

##### Layout & Design:

Sue Rupert & Peggy Bridgland

##### Contributors:

Peggy Bridgland, Garnet Brown,  
 Joyce Gutzeit, Nancy Rumluskie, Pam Smith,  
 Larissa Sokolova, Katrina Tracey