



The RCCUP Reader

Newsletter of the Renfrew County Community Upgrading Program

Issue #47

September 2006

Federal Funding Cuts

The recent cuts announced by the federal government include a \$17.7 million cut to funding for literacy—\$5.8 million this year (2006/07) and \$11.9 million in 2007/08. The government will concentrate on national and federal programs and withdraw support for provincial, regional and local programs and partnerships.

In Ontario, the provincial government, through the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities, funds the delivery of direct service to adult literacy learners, so our core funding is not affected by these cuts. However, the cuts will have a serious impact across the country on the infrastructure that supports delivery: outreach to potential learners, professional development for educators, research, development of curriculum and materials, and the networking and information services provided by partnerships of national, regional and provincial organizations.

The Conservative government's objectives include fiscal responsibility, economic growth, productivity and global competitiveness. Abundant research has shown that investment in adult literacy is money well spent:

- Research from Statistics Canada (2005) shows that an investment in education is three times as important to economic growth over the long run as investment

in physical capital such as machinery and equipment.

- Another Statistics Canada study has shown that educating the least educated has a greater impact on GDP than increasing the skills of those with higher literacy skills.
- A 2005 report from the C.D. Howe Institute states that raising a country's literacy score by 1% relative to the international average is associated with a 2.5% relative rise in productivity and a 1.5% rise in national income per person.

In this United Nations Decade of Literacy (2003-2012), Canada remains one of the few industrialized countries without a national literacy strategy. Funding cuts to literacy are a big step backwards.



Calendar

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| Sept. 8 | - International Literacy Day |
| Sept. 27 | - craft workshop, 1-4 pm |
| Sept. 27 | - Board meeting |
| Sept. 28 | - student yard sale |
| Oct. 21 | - Tutor training |
| Oct. 25 | - Smart Serve workshop |
| Oct. 25 | - Board meeting |
| Oct. 27 | - craft workshop, 1-4 pm |
| Nov. 22 | - Board meeting |
| Nov. 24 | - craft workshop, 1-4 pm |
| Nov. 25 | - Tutor training |
| Dec. 13 | - Christmas party |
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Fundraising Success!

Literacy Plus is very pleased with the success of its two summer fundraisers, Literary Tuesdays and Swing for Literacy.

Literary Tuesdays got off to an exciting start on July 4, when high winds caused a power outage in the area that lasted for several hours. Candles were rounded up and arrangements made to provide cold drinks instead of hot, but luckily the power came on in Eganville just after 7:00 p.m. Attendance was high at all events and the four authors, Erika Ritter, Maggie Wheeler, Frances Itani and Jenifer McVaugh, gave lively and interesting talks and readings. The series raised nearly \$5,000 for Literacy Plus.



Swing for Literacy on September 5, our 3rd golf tournament, managed to land on the only sunny day among several wet ones. 106 golfers enjoyed 18 holes of golf followed by a social hour and a turkey dinner. Literacy Plus received many wonderful donated prizes from local businesses and individuals for the event—every golfer received something, and raffle tickets were sold on the larger prizes. Overall, the tournament raised nearly \$4,000.

Tournament winners were:

Lowest score: Team #24, with a score of 66: Brian McDonald, Ed Owens, Larry Patterson, Les Gorman

Closest to the hole: Connie Renaud (women), Weldon McEachen (men)

Closest to the line: Gail McDonald (women), Gilles Doth (men)

Literacy Plus depends on funds raised from these events to provide some of our essential services. A big thank you to all those who helped put on the events and all those who participated in them.

Tutors Needed

Literacy Plus is looking for more tutors around the County. If you have friends who might enjoy this rewarding activity, please tell them about us and ask them to call the office for more information.

Reminder

Teachers and tutors, please get your reports in promptly at the end of each month. This is especially important at the end of September when our six-month stats are due.

Smart Serve

Literacy Plus will offer a Smart Serve workshop on October 25 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. The \$25 fee covers the cost of materials and certification. Students in any of our courses are welcome to take part. Space is limited to 10 students. Sign up now if you are interested.



TOPS Grant

Literacy Plus will receive one-time funding through the Trends, Opportunities and Priorities initiative (TOPS) administered by Algonquin College. This grant will fund a recruitment campaign for tutors and students, some tutor training, and delivery of a workshop to clients in the Job Connect program.

The TOPS committee brings together representatives from the business, labour, education, literacy, social service and community development sectors to deal with the labour market issues. The TOPS report last year identified literacy and other training as priority needs in Renfrew County for developing a strong and effective workforce.

Fall Programs

Literacy Plus is busy again with classes and activities starting for the fall season.

- **Computer classes** began again the week of September 18. Terrie Watson is teaching Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Our new teacher, Jerome Coulas will teach the Thursday evening class in Eganville, and the Wednesday class in Renfrew.

Jerome has a varied background in technology, human resource management, and direct service with Community Living clients. He is also an accomplished artist with his own gallery; his work is well known in the Eganville area. We are pleased to welcome him to our “team.”

- The **computer class** in Renfrew starts October 11. Literacy Plus partners with Employment Networks to offer 10-week courses to their clients who are working on job skills.
- Our new **adult basic skills and upgrading** course started September 25. The course offers 24 hours a week of instruction in communications, math, computer, personal management and job readiness skills. Six people are now registered, some full-time and some part-time. Lee, Diane and Terrie are instructing. We are also very pleased to have Gus Cammaert teaching the math class. His wealth of experience as a teacher and school principal will make him a great asset to this program.
- The third series of **Workready Online** classes starts October 12. This 10-week course helps students work on reading and writing skills, research and critical thinking, and issues such as problem solving, self-confidence,

and managing time and personal stress. At the same time, they work on computer, Internet and e-mail skills.

- The **one-to-one tutoring** program is ongoing, with tutor training scheduled for October and November. Diane is currently contacting tutors and students to catch up after the summer and offer support.

- Maxine Golden will offer three **craft workshops** this fall: harvest wreaths on Wednesday, September 27; pine cone ornaments on Friday, October 27; and Christmas wreaths on Friday, November 24, from 1:00 to 4:00 p.m.



Tutor Training

Literacy Plus will hold two days of tutor training this fall. We remind you that all new tutors are required to take the basic training. Experienced tutors may welcome a refresher, the chance to learn new things, and the opportunity to meet and share experiences with other tutors.

Workshop topics for Saturday, October 21 are:

- Working with Adult Literacy Learners
- Planning Lessons for Success: How to Motivate Our Learners and Ourselves

Topics for Saturday November 25 are:

- Working with Learners with Learning Disabilities
- Tips for Teaching Communication Skills: Speaking, Listening, Reading and Writing
- Using the Computer as a Learning Resource

The workshops will be held at the office in Eganville, from 9:30 to 3:30. Space is limited, so please mark the dates and be ready to register.

Tip: Forwarding e-mails

Do you know the right way to forward e-mails? Do you ever wonder why you get junk mail or even viruses?

Every time you just hit "Forward" to send on an e-mail, you also forward the names and e-mail addresses of the people who got the message before you. As the e-mail gets forwarded along, the list of addresses keeps building. If someone gets a virus, his or her computer can send that virus to every e-mail address that has come across his computer. Or, someone can take all of those addresses and sell them or send junk mail to them.

How can you stop this? There are two easy ways:

1. When you forward an e-mail, delete all the other addresses that appear in the body of the message. It only takes a second. You have to click the "Forward" button first to be able to edit the message or the header.
2. Whenever you send an e-mail to more than one person, do not use the To: or Cc: lines for adding e-mail addresses. Always use the Bcc: (blind carbon copy) line for listing the e-mail addresses. This way, the people you send to see only their own e-mail address. When you send to Bcc: your message will automatically say "Undisclosed Recipients" in the "To:" field of the people who receive it.

For the same reasons, beware of e-mail petitions. Petitions usually ask you to add your name and address and to forward it to others. This e-mail can be forwarded on and on, collecting thousands of names and e-mail addresses. However, this collection of valid names and e-mail addresses is worth money to a professional spammer. If you want to support the petition, send it as your own

personal letter to the intended recipient. This could protect you, and your position may carry more weight as a personal letter than a laundry list of name and e-mail address on a petition.

Hope you find this information useful. Let's stop the junk mail and the viruses and stamp out SPAM!

- Thanks to Linda McLaren

Ode to the Spell Checker

Spell checkers are a wonderful feature of computers but they can't think for us. They can tell us if a word is misspelled, but they can't tell us that we have the wrong word.

Eye halve a spelling chequer
It came with my pea sea
It plainly marques four my revue
Miss steaks eye kin knot sea

Eye strike a key and type a word
And weight four it two say
Weather eye am wrong oar write
It shows me strait a weigh

As soon as a mist ache is maid
It nose bee fore two long
And Eye can put the error rite
Its rare lea ever wrong

Eye have run this poem threw it
I am shore your pleased two no
Its letter perfect awl the weigh
My chequer tolled me sew



Doublet Answers

CAMP, carne, same, sate, SITE
WELL, dell, doll, dole, DONE
MICE, mite, mate, mats, RATS
MILK, mill, pill, pall, PAIL

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Literacy Basics

Community Literacy of Ontario has a great site for literacy practitioners, volunteers, and board members who want to know more about literacy training. Go to www.nald.ca/literacybasics. The site is easy to navigate, with a good introduction and outlines. There are four modules: Initial and Ongoing Assessment, Instructional Strategies, Exit and Follow-up, and Volunteer Management. There is no registration required and access is free, thanks to funding from the National Literacy Secretariat and HRSDC.

All modules are at entry level, written in clear language. You can work online or print out the pages that interest you to read at your convenience. The introduction says each module will take 2 to 3 hours to complete, but it is up to you whether to use all or part of any module, follow the links, or do the suggested supplementary readings or reflections. Just reading through them will give you an excellent overview of literacy practice.



AutoSkills

Thanks to the support of the Eganville Rotary Club, Literacy Plus will participate in a pilot of the AutoSkills program for adult literacy students. AutoSkills is an international company that partners with various Rotary clubs to provide this on-line support to students.

The program is designed to meet individual needs for upgrading in reading and math, so each student will have a specifically tailored program and activities. The Eganville Rotary Club is paying for up to five students to take part. The Arnprior Rotary Club, which made the original connection for us, is willing to sponsor another five students in the Arnprior area.

Literacy is one of the causes supported by Rotary International. Both the Eganville Rotary Club and the Petawawa Rotary Club have given Literacy Plus support of various kinds in the past. We are most grateful to all three clubs for their interest in literacy and their help with our work.

Quick Reads

Literacy Plus has just bought eight books from a terrific British series for adult students called *Quick Reads*. The books are written specifically for readers who may find a regular 200- to 300-page novel too challenging. The small paperbacks are 90 to 120 pages, with compelling stories and easy-to-read print.

The books are written by popular mainstream authors of fiction, including Maeve Binchy, Ruth Rendell, Joanna Trollope and Tom Holt, and range from dramatic fiction to romance, mystery, action thriller and fantasy. There are titles to appeal to both male and female readers.

Tutors or students in any of our programs are welcome to borrow these (or any other) books from our library.

Doublets

Here's a word challenge. Transform one word into another by changing a single letter at each step. Each step of the chain must be a valid word itself. For example, change MORE into LESS with three links: MORE, lore, lose, loss, LESS

Can you put MILK into PAIL, change MICE into RATS, make WELL into DONE, and CAMP into SITE?

For doublets with four, five and six links, and other kinds of wordplay, visit <http://thinks.com/words>

Answers on page 4

Student Writing

My Goal

My name is Joyce. I am coming to computer class because I want to become more computer literate. I would love to understand the entire lingo related to the computer. I know that this is not a fast process because there is a vast amount to learn.

This is what I know about computers. I have learned to cut and paste, computer terminology, hardware, software, Windows program and also parts of a computer. I have learned how to change the font size, underline and move windows. I admit that I still need more practice with these to become faster. If I knew more about computers, I would most likely invest in one for myself to use at home.

I want to improve my writing skills so that I can go forward in my job performance. My job is to manage staff, report inventory and sales in a fast food restaurant. At the end of each month I report to the staff the customer comments we have received for the previous month.

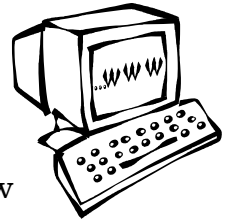
Someday I would like to work in my own home, own a computer and have the privilege to “play” at leisure on it.

- Joyce

Web Log

From our class web log (blog) I followed these links. The first website I visited was the National Adult Literacy Database. What grabbed my attention was the endless links. The first web page had 19 links, from which one link led to another page that had 119 links and so on. It was mind-boggling. But I did learn what a valuable resource the Adult Literacy programs are and how world wide they are. I had no idea. I found it very

interesting that Pope John Paul II and President Clinton were great supporters for adult literacy education and then on the other hand President Bush announced he wants to reduce funding considerably in 2006. He wants to reduce it from \$575 million to \$200 million. That is quite a reduction. The “What’s New” site had a lot of interesting information. I didn’t go into all the sites because there were so many, but the ones I did go into I enjoyed reading. If a person wanted to find out how important the Adult Literacy programs are to people this would be a good web log for them to visit.



The second website that I viewed, Literacy Link of Eastern Ontario, is geared more towards providing the instructors with valuable tools for better teaching. It tells them how to assess students for better placement in a program and gives them access to workshops, meetings and helpful books. If I were an instructor I would find this website very informative. These sites were very easy to follow.

The third website, The Learning Edge, was a fun site to go through. They were easy to follow and it was fun to do all the quizzes. It also provided a lot of important information on real-life situations, both at home and in the workplace. If I were to revisit any sites, this would be the one. With the exception of the first website, which had so many links, I found all the sites fairly easy to navigate.

- Marion Malone

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