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# Literacy Plus Newsletter

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Issue #56

Winter 2010

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## Family Literacy Day: *Sing for Literacy*

Sing for Literacy is the 2010 theme for Family Literacy Day. Why singing? Family literacy is about brushing up literacy skills in fun and different ways. ABC Canada reminds us that many activities allow us to practise our skills, from following a recipe, or reading a map, to singing from a song sheet. Singing is great for families because it provides a way to expand spoken vocabulary and creates a strong bond. Singing allows us to learn patterns of words, rhymes and rhythms, and is strongly connected to language skills.



Family Literacy Day, held every year on January 27, was started in 1999 by the ABC Literacy Foundation and Honda Canada. Family Literacy Day encourages families to read and learn together. Thousands of Canadians take part in events and activities at schools, libraries and literacy programs across the country.

Robert Munsch, the well-known author of more than 50 children's books, has been the Honorary Chair of FLD since 2003. This year, ABC Canada received 600 entries from families hoping to win a home visit from Munsch. You can read the winning entry, *Myles the Rockstar*, a story in rhyme about a family that sings, and other top entries at [www.abc-canada.org/en/family.literacy.day](http://www.abc-canada.org/en/family.literacy.day)

*Learning is to the brain what exercise  
is to the heart.*

## Stained Glass Workshop

Literacy Plus is partnering with Kathryn Bossy of the Stained Glass Design Studio in Renfrew to offer a seven-week series of classes on stained glass techniques, along with Essential Skills for employability. Kathryn is working with the stained glass curriculum developed by our network, Literacy Ontario Central South (LOCS) as one of its five-part Literacy and Essential Skills in Industrial Arts (LESIA) project.

The Renfrew classes run two mornings a week through January and February. The six students enrolled are thoroughly enjoying the experience—they are creating a glass panel for themselves and then are planning to create a panel for the Literacy Plus office! One of our Eganville computer students is also taking the course and plans to make a PowerPoint presentation about it. Look for the presentation at the AGM in June.

## Student Newsletter



The student newsletter is starting to take shape, with submissions of writing, poems, recipes (Lazy Daisy Oatmeal Cake, and French Fry Casserole!) and photos of class events contributed by students from the computer and upgrading classes. The editors have begun work on the layout of the paper but are still looking for articles.

Student writers have contributed several stories and pictures to this issue of the newsletter. See pages 5 and 6.

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## How Are We Doing?

Literacy Plus is interested in knowing how we are doing. We are taking a poll of some of our students, volunteers, and community partners. The questionnaires are brief – each one is only a page long. There are 3 versions of the questionnaire: one for students, one for staff and volunteers, and one for community partners. Some of you will receive a questionnaire in this newsletter; others may receive a questionnaire when you attend class in Eganville. If you don't receive a questionnaire and would like to complete one, please give the office a call (613-628-1720 or 800-387-4712) or email us at [literacyplus@bellnet.ca](mailto:literacyplus@bellnet.ca)

We would ask that you return the questionnaire to us by March 19, 2010. You can mail the completed questionnaire to:

Literacy Plus  
131 Queen Street, Unit #1  
P. O. Box 74  
Eganville, ON  
K0J 1T0



You can also email us your answers from the questionnaire, or you can phone your answers into Sue—whatever way suits you best.

We want to hear both your recommendations for improvements and comments about what we are doing right. Please take the time to get back to us. Thank you.

## Skills Workshops

Starting in February, Literacy Plus will sponsor a series of Wednesday morning workshops on variety of topics of personal and work-related interest. Workshops are open to all students of Literacy Plus and, if space permits, other members of the community. Topics planned include WHMIS, SmartServe, Fire Safety, First Aid/CPR and others, as facilitators are available. Please call the office for more information.

## Authors Festival 2010

The Bonnechere Authors Festival is heading into its 8<sup>th</sup> season. We are pleased that two of the four authors are now confirmed: Catherine Gildiner and Maggie Wheeler.

Catherine Gildiner was a clinical psychologist in Toronto for 25 years who became a writer at the age of 50. Her first book was the best selling 1999 memoir, *Too Close to the Falls*, a funny and engaging account of her eccentric upbringing in Niagara Falls, N.Y., which spent 71 weeks on the bestseller list. (She went to work in her father's drug store at the age of four on the advice of their family doctor, to focus her prodigious energy.) Her 2009 follow up, *After the Falls*, carries her story on through her teenage and college years in the activist '60s. [www.gildiner.com](http://www.gildiner.com)

*On a Darkling Plain*, Maggie Wheeler's fourth and final Ferran Mackenzie mystery in the Lost Villages quartet, was published in Fall 2009. The series is set in both past and present, in and around the villages lost to flooding when the St. Lawrence Seaway opened in 1958. The books mix real history with fictional murder. Maggie was a popular author in our 2006 series, when only her first two books had been published. Readers will be anxious to follow the various threads to their exciting conclusion.

Readings will take place on Wednesday evenings through the month of July, starting on July 7. The other authors and the venues will be announced when confirmed.

## The History of Reading

In November and December, TVO aired a 4-part documentary called *The Empire of the Word*. The series looks inside the act of reading and its impact on more than 5,000 years of history. Episodes of the documentary can be viewed online at [www.tvo.org/TVOsites/WebObjects/TvoMicrosite.woa?reading\\_empire\\_of\\_the\\_word](http://www.tvo.org/TVOsites/WebObjects/TvoMicrosite.woa?reading_empire_of_the_word)



## Alexandra Club Donation

Literacy Plus is grateful to the Alexandra Club of Pembroke for its recent donation of \$500 to support our services. As the Auxiliary of the former Pembroke Civic Hospital, the Alexandra Club supports organizations in Renfrew County that are concerned with health.

We are pleased that the Club recognized the importance of literacy to good health—reading plays an important role, allowing people to be informed about medical conditions and health services, to follow directions from their doctors, and even to read and understand directions on prescriptions or other medications. Thank you to the Alexandra Club!

## More Thank-You's

Literacy Plus appreciates the donations, small and large, that we receive from individuals and from other organizations. In this issue we'd like to thank two long-time supporters, Blaine Marchand and James Robertson. Although they live in Ottawa, they summer in Renfrew County and have been faithful attendees at the Authors Festival for years. Some time before Christmas each year, Santa also delivers a couple of cheques via Canada Post. Thank you Blaine and Jim!

The Petawawa Rotary Club has also been a regular and generous supporter of Literacy Plus. Please see the items following for information on how you can support two of their worthwhile projects, Auctions for Afghanistan and ShelterBox, for victims of disaster around the world, including Haiti.



## Auctions for Afghanistan

The Rotary Clubs of the Upper Ottawa Valley – Petawawa, Pembroke and North Renfrew – are seeking support from individuals and businesses for their fundraiser, Auctions for Afghanistan. Proceeds will be used to improve

the lives of the people of Afghanistan through the Afghanistan Assistance Trust Fund. The campaign aims to raise awareness and support for the people of Afghanistan while at the same time supporting the Canadian troops and other workers by providing funds to help them meet their goal to improve lives of the Afghani people.

The campaign is looking for new or gently used, quality items to sell on eBay. Donors of items worth \$25 or more will be eligible for charitable receipts for the full, realized selling price. You can download the Auctions for Afghanistan Donation Form at [www.petawawarotary.ca](http://www.petawawarotary.ca). For information and the location of official drop off boxes, call Mike Lavoie at (613) 687-6461.

## ShelterBox

ShelterBox is charity supported by Rotary Clubs around the world. Operating in 200 countries, 33,000 local clubs can give vital information about major disasters and provide essential help quickly. A ShelterBox contains a tent for 10 people, blankets, a water filtration system, stove, pots, tools, and school supplies, allowing displaced persons to begin to rebuild their lives.



When a disaster strikes, ShelterBox responds immediately with a reconnaissance team to assess need and a response team of volunteers with the boxes to ensure the aid is channeled according to need. The Rotary Club of Petawawa is a ShelterBox partner and invites us to consider ShelterBox as a charitable giving option. For detailed information, go to [www.shelterbox.ca](http://www.shelterbox.ca) or visit [www.petawawarotary.ca](http://www.petawawarotary.ca). There are no professional fundraisers, no phone solicitations and no trading of donor names.

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

## New Board Members

The Board and staff are pleased to welcome to our two newest board members, Bill Lavery and Cathy Lyons. Their appointments bring the board to its full complement of ten.

Bill, from Petawawa, is a retired educator in the fields of math, science and English as a Second Language, who also has considerable experience as an administrator and as a volunteer. Cathy recently retired from Ottawa to Golden Lake. She too has experience with a variety of organizations, and was one of the founders of ABC Canada, the national literacy advocacy organization. We welcome the knowledge Bill and Cathy bring to us.

## New Resources

With our Field Support funding we have purchased many new and updated resources for students and teachers. These are a few.

For reading and writing, we have:

- New editions of the *Challenger* reading series
- *Writing for Challenger*
- *Organize Your Writing*
- *Write It Right!* and more



New math resources include:

- *Everyday Number Sense: Mental Math and Visual Fractions*
- *Over, Around and Within: Geometry and Measurement*
- *Using Benchmarks, Split It Up,* and *Operation Sense*, each on working with fractions, decimals and percents
- *Keeping Things in Proportion: Reasoning with Ratios*
- *Many Points Make a Point: Data and Graphics*

For life issues, we have:

- *A Dream that Walks I and II: A goal-setting workbook and Planning for Change*
- *Living With Stress*
- *Living with Healthy Relationships*

## Websites of Interest

Laubach Literacy Ontario lists some great websites for students and teachers in its Fall e-magazine, *Expressions*. You can access the whole magazine at [www.laubach-on.ca](http://www.laubach-on.ca)

- Are you going back to school as an adult? Check out [www.servicecanada.gc.ca](http://www.servicecanada.gc.ca) for links about finding a job, managing debt, skills development and more.
- On the Job: ESL and Essential Skills for Work has a section for each of the nine Essential Skills (document use, numeracy, writing, oral communication, working with others, thinking skills, computer use, and continuous learning). Each document can be downloaded as a PDF file and gives ideas on how to incorporate these skills into activities and practice. [www.itsessential.ca/itsessential/display\\_page.asp](http://www.itsessential.ca/itsessential/display_page.asp)



- The North Bay Literacy Council has completed its Literacy and Health Project, Phase 2. Their new website with more information on health literacy is at <http://northbayliteracycouncil.ca/index.php?SESSID=O&TMID-JULIE&CMID+TM-JULIE>
- Do you tense up when you sit at the computer for a long time? Visit [www.yogaeverywhere.com/keyboard](http://www.yogaeverywhere.com/keyboard) for easy exercises you can do right there in your chair to relax. Doing even one or two will refresh you.
- The Literacy Tribune is an online newsletter published by United Literacy, a non-profit organization that provides resources and support to adult literacy learners in the United States. [www.theliteracytribune.org/](http://www.theliteracytribune.org/)
- The Quebec Literacy Working Group's Skills for Life Series has 30 workbooks that can be downloaded for free at [www.nald.ca/qlwg/skills.htm](http://www.nald.ca/qlwg/skills.htm) Topics include On the Job, Managing My Money and Smart Shopping.

## Christmas Party

On December 7<sup>th</sup>, 2009, we had our annual Christmas party. Terry Dicks decorated the rooms very nicely. Quite a few of the students from both the upgrading and computer classes were there, approximately twenty in all. Everyone brought a dish of food; there were cookies, cakes, deviled eggs, meat and salads (no calories of course).

There were games as well. One was paperclips mixed with raw macaroni; the game was to see who could get the most paperclips in a timed period, while blindfolded. The other game was a word bingo. Santa even came and gave everyone a candy; everyone was excited to see him. Also, he had bells on him but they kept falling off and had to be picked up.

Everyone had a lot of fun, but didn't forget to clean up afterwards. Great party!

- Mary Veley-Wood



## Raffle Fundraiser: Christmas Basket

For a class project, our computer class decided on creating a book on Environment Friendly Home Remedies. This book turned out to be so successful that at the General Meeting of 2009, people surprised us by wanting to purchase a copy. The next project was to raise finances to make copies of the book. After much discussion, we decided to make a Christmas Basket to raffle off. We made a total of \$447.00. Lois Kuehl, a student of Literacy Plus, won the basket.

During the process of making and publishing our book, we used many different computer applications, such as using word art, clip art, bullets, different font sizes and types, borders, shading, headers and footers, page numbers, watermarks, a book cover and line spacing. Inside the book, we made divider pages, a book index, a bibliography, copyright information, preface, appendix. We collated, printed and bound the book ourselves.

We are now in the process of upgrading our book and hope to have it completed for sale at the 2010 General Meeting of Literacy Plus. Copies will also be available at Literacy Plus in Eganville.

- Pointer Sisters: Tuesday A.M. Class  
Diane Felske, Pat Gordon, Jean Kruger



Santa (Terry Dicks) visited Literacy Plus for our Christmas Party. Santa is pictured here with Upgrading Teacher, Gayle Timm and (above right) Computer Teacher, Terrie Watson

## My Encounter with the Olympic Torch

It was a cloudy day with a few snow flurries in the air. The temperature was tolerable, about -5°C. We had planned to go to Douglas, Ontario, to see the passing of the Olympic Torch at 2:00 p.m. The newspaper said the best stop to see the Torch was at the refurbished clock on the main street in Douglas. We arrived around 1:15 p.m. and were able to park right on the main street (what a bonus) and we waited.

We thought we would use the bathroom before the torch was spotted and went to the Douglas Hotel, and what did we see but the Bishop of Douglas, a green-clad English outfit on a man that later talked to the crowd as the torch was coming through.

The hype was tremendous from the RBC and Coca Cola caravans that were ahead of the torch.

We were perched on a knoll above the street at the clock. I had flags on both sides of my hat and was waving a flag.

The Olympic Torch passed by and stopped a little way up the street for the mayor and the Bishop of Douglas. Arrival speeches made, another torch lit and that bearer went on towards Eganville.

We thought we would walk up the Douglas hill towards St. Michael's School to take in some of the entertainment. It was just winding down, most of the people were starting to go home, and lo and behold, in the parking lot was a Torch Bearer carrying an unlit torch and allowing people to get their pictures taken with the torch and bearer. A great picture was taken. I will never forget that day!



- Sandra Downs

*Top right: Sandra Downs with her husband and the Olympic Torch Bearer.*



## Angel Tree

For the second year in a row, Literacy Plus students, staff and volunteers took part in the Angel Tree program. The results were quite remarkable. It truly is amazing how people opened their hearts and gave of themselves. Gifts ranged from baby toys to books, from stuffed animals to dolls, from clothing to educational things, and there was even a body pillow and a sleeping bag, to name just a few. We ended up with 2 large boxes, 1 medium box and 1 bag full of gifts. They are sure to bring smiles to many faces. We also collected 2 bags of canned goods for the Food Bank. We hope to continue this again next year.

We wish to thank everyone who participated. Everyone was very generous.

- Karen Dombroskie, Tuesday P.M. class

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