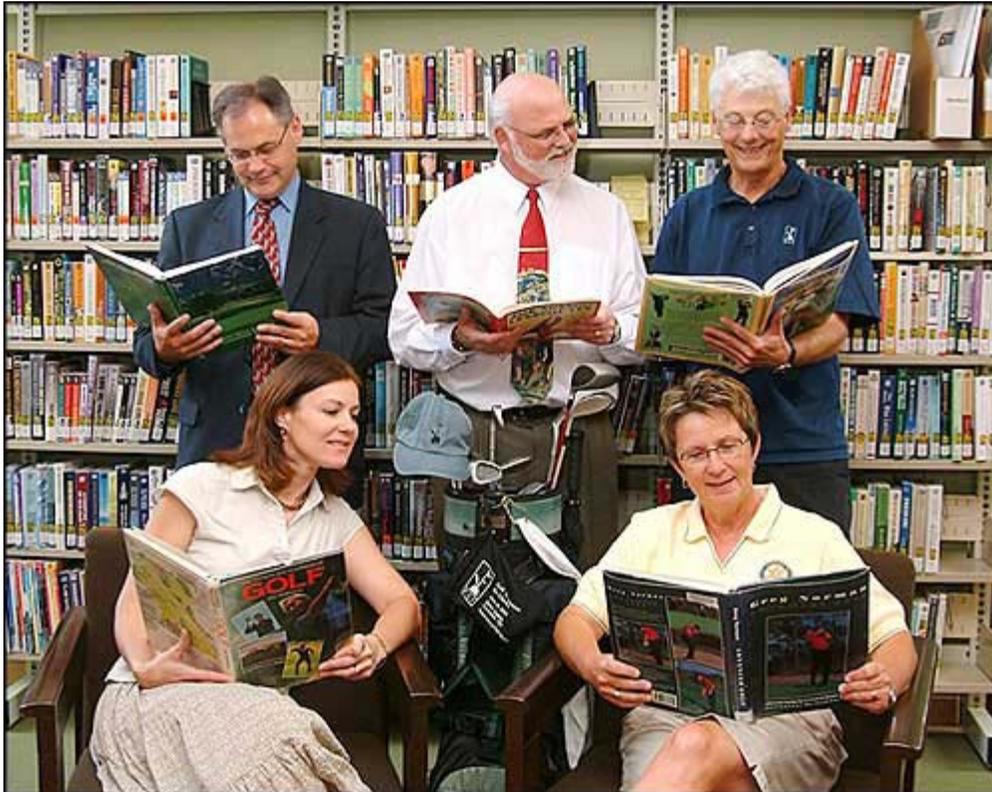


Live & Learn

Fall 2006

The Newsletter of the PEI Literacy Alliance



Photograph by Louise Vessey

Members of the PGI golf tournament planning committee study up for next year. Each year the tournament raises \$30,000 for literacy programs in PEI. From left to right: (back row) Bernard Gillis, John Young, Norman Finlayson, coordinator. Seated are Lori St. Onge and Joanne Ings.

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Live & Learn

The Newsletter of the PEI Literacy Alliance

Live & Learn is published by the PEI Literacy Alliance.

Edited and designed by Catherine O'Bryan and Norman Finlayson.

We would like to hear from you if you have:

- learners' stories
- creative writing by learners
- articles or news about teaching adults
- upcoming events
- new resources for adult education

Please send your material to:

Live & Learn
PEI Literacy Alliance
PO Box 20107
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Visit our web site at

www.pei.literacy.ca



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by funding from the
PGI Golf Tournament for Literacy.*



Angela Larter

Meet our new Chair

I have been involved in adult literacy as an instructor in the Adult Education program at Holland College since 1998. Originally from West Prince, I have taught in rural settings and in Summerside.

When I joined the PEILA in 2003 I was a coordinator for Adult and Community Education at Holland College for programs in the western half of the province. In my classroom experiences I have had the pleasure of meeting hundreds of adult learners. Their experiences with literacy and learning are widely varied, always interesting, and often heart-warming.

I have been fortunate to work and volunteer with people who deeply care about literacy in this province. We have all heard the staggering statistics associated with literacy in this province. Compounding literacy issues is the economic boom in Western Canada and the draw for Islanders to leave PEI and take their skills with them.

Political and community leaders are responding to educational and literacy issues and it is exciting to be involved. We can voice our opinions and concerns and be a part of plans to develop a culture of learning in our communities.

I am a Learning Manager with Related Services at Holland College teaching math, computer, and communications to learners enrolled in trades programs. I am also pursuing a Masters of Education degree at UPEI. I am interested in research involving adult education and literacy issues. I look forward to working with the membership, the board, and the staff of the Literacy Alliance to serve the people of PEI in moving literacy forward.

Angela Larter

FUNDING CUT

CHARLOTTETOWN – On Monday September 25 the Harper government released a detailed list of program funding cuts to meet debt reduction targets. The government hit programs that they think are wasteful.

This announcement included a \$17.7 million cut to the Adult Learning, Literacy and Essential Skills Program that affects all provincial literacy funding in Canada.

On September 27 Donna Kirby the Director General of the Office of Literacy and Learning told all the provincial and territorial literacy coalitions that, unless their contract had been signed before September 25th, there would be no funding for local and regional activities. The Literacy Alliance two-year proposal would not be funded.

FUNDING RESTORED

CHARLOTTETOWN – After weeks of lobbying, We heard on October 31 that the federal government will approve the PEI Literacy Alliance two-year funding proposal.

“This is good news for literacy in PEI” said Catherine O’Bryan, Executive Director of the Alliance. “We want to thank everyone who has supported us in these difficult times.”

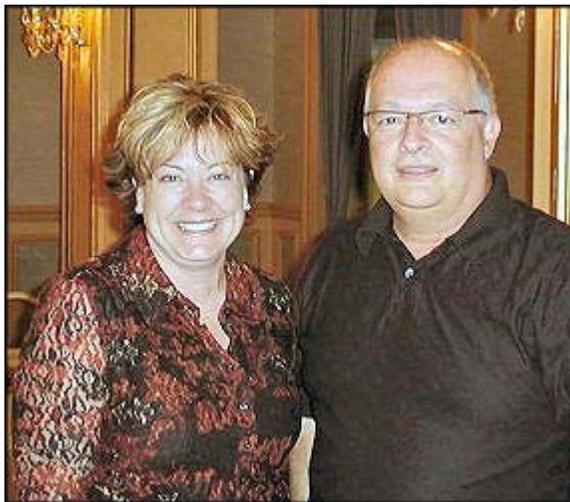
Premier Pat Binns was also pleased to hear that the funding has been restored. “This is good news for the Alliance and for all Islanders. The Literacy Alliance makes a great contribution to literacy in our province by providing leadership and coordination to a great many projects. Without the Alliance, we would not be achieving the same level of success in literacy, which is an important social and economic issue in our province,” said the Premier.

Literacy Alliance chair Angela Larter said the Alliance will keep pressing for the reinstatement of the \$325,000 annual funding to the PEI government for the many literacy grants and projects they support. Some projects that receive this cost-shared funding from the provincial government include Workplace Education PEI, the Morell Community Learning Centre and PEI Volunteers for Literacy (formerly Project L.O.V.E.

2006 Annual General Meeting September 11, 2006



In-coming Chair Angela Larter presents former Chair Ray Doiron with a gift of thanks and appreciation



New Board member Sonya Corrigan of the Early Childhood Development Association is welcomed by Ray Doiron.

Wendy MacDonald of the PEI Home & School Federation also joined the Alliance Board for 2006-2008.



The PEI Literacy Alliance welcomes returning Board members: Karen Chandler, Eric Donovan, Ray Doiron, Past-chair, Angela Larter, Chair, Audrey Penner, Dianne Smith and Carrie St. Jean

Canadian Council on Learning releases Learning Index

The Canadian Council on Learning (CCL) has released a new Composite Learning Index (CLI) that could help shape the focus of future public policy priorities.

This new annual Index gauges Canada's performance on lifelong learning by using a "basket" of 15 indicators to measure progress. By assigning varying weights and connecting the dots between these 15 indicators, the Index provides an overall national score on Canadian learning. Over time, comparing annual scores will allow Canadians to measure progress. This year, the Council assigned a national CLI rating of 73 out of 100. It's like getting a B-minus on our national lifelong learning report card.

As with all indexes, it is crucial to consider what the Council chose to include among its 15 constant indicators. In this respect, the Council was far-reaching in its scope. Borrowing from the UNESCO definition of lifelong learning as "learning to know, to do, to live together, and to be", the Council looked at a wide array of indicators from availability of workplace training (learning to do) to volunteer rates (learning to live together) to literacy (learning to know). Linking our performance on each of these scales provides one composite score.

Canada is the first country in the world to develop and employ this tool as a catalyst for discussion and for change. Of special note, is the Council's stated intent: "to move beyond the rhetoric about lifelong learning to find ideas, strategies and

programs that really work."

Full results of the Composite Learning Index, with regional breakdowns, are available through an interactive Canadian map at www.ccl-cca.ca/cli.

Learning Index highlights adult literacy as key challenge

The Composite Learning Index shows that low literacy among adults is a serious challenge that is undermining Canada's overall performance in lifelong learning.

The Council on Learning reports that Canada is doing a fairly good job of fostering literacy among students, but we fare poorly on adult literacy. This is not surprising to members of the literacy community. Nor is it new, considering that the Index relies on the results of the Adult Literacy and Life Skills (ALL) Survey to gauge Canada's progress. In the report's supporting documents, it is pointed out that not only is the number of adults with low-level literacy skills relatively high, but also adult literacy does not appear to be improving.

What is clear is that the CLI release will lead to further research on literacy as a key indicator of Canada's success in creating a life-long learning culture in Canada.

This article first appeared in Federal Literacy Facts, a publication of the Movement for Canadian Literacy, May 2006.

Award Winners

Kathie Stevenson recently received the Atomic Energy of Canada bursary at the PEI Literacy Alliance annual meeting. The Atomic Energy of Canada bursary is awarded to a person who passes the GED tests the first time around and has been accepted into a post-secondary science-related program.



Kathie Stevenson



Joan MacFarlane is the proud winner of the Canada Post Literacy Educator award for 2006.

Joan works as education director at the Provincial Correctional Centre.

Left to right: Brian Hurley, Regional Manager for Canada Post, Joan MacFarlane, award winner, and Avril Vollenhoven, Communications Manager Atlantic, Canada Post

Links to great teaching and learning resources

AlphaRoute

This is an online literacy learning environment where learners work with a trained mentor.

alphaplus.ca/alpharoute.html

GED Practice

www.gedpractice.com

Learning Edge

A fun interactive online magazine that's easy to use!

www.thewclc.ca/edge/

The Learning Puzzle

Multimedia learning resources for parents and teachers working with children who have learning disabilities

www.thelearningpuzzle.net/English

Learning Disabilities Association of Canada (LDAC)

Information and resources on learning disabilities.

www.ldac-taac.ca/

Math & Reading Help for Kids

www.math-and-reading-help-for-kids.org

Northern Edge

A fun interactive online magazine from the far North!

<http://www.nwt.literacy.ca/northernedge/NEissue2/index1.html>

The Book of Changes Project

The Book of Changes is a collection of stories by adult literacy learners who share their experiences about what literacy means to their lives. The project was started as a way of showing government decision-makers how important literacy programs are in the lives of real people across Canada.

The project received dozens of submissions. Some were long, some were short but all of them were special, unique and heartfelt. The one common message was that learning literacy skills changes lives in many different ways.

Since 2002, the Book of Changes has traveled to Parliament Hill and other important meetings. Some of the messages have been included at conferences and in reports.

Many decision-makers said how powerful it is to find out about the experiences of adults with low literacy. New learners are also encouraged and inspired when they read the stories because they realize they are not alone.

The Movement for Canadian Literacy would like to add more stories to the Book and keep it constantly growing. They will also create a print edition so that it is more widely available. Here's how you can help. If you are someone who has experienced literacy challenges as an adult or know someone who has returned to learning as an adult send in these stories. MCL needs your help to build their collection!

To read the Book of Changes go to:

<http://www.literacy.ca/lan/bookchng/cover.htm>

This information comes from the Movement for Canadian Literacy's Learners' Section at www.literacy.ca

The Back Page



Anne Morrison (centre) with two of her students

2006 Premier's Literacy Award

Premier Binns presented the 2006 Council of the Federation Literacy Award to Anne Morrison, an outstanding school teacher and adult educator from Morell.

Ms. Morrison is the second Islander to receive the award established last year by Canada's premiers to recognize individuals and organizations involved in the field of literacy across the country.

Ms. Morrison is a long-time teacher and adult educator at the Literacy and Adult Basic Education Program in Morell. She is known for her passion for people and learning. By recognizing the unique needs of every learner, she helps them to set learning goals and identify steps to achieve them. By providing constant encouragement, she has helped many adult Islanders improve their literacy skills and the quality of their lives.

Congratulations

Congratulations to The Guardian and Journal Pioneer newspapers for organizing the Raise-a-Reader newspaper campaign on September 28. We raised over \$31,000. All donations made during the campaign were donated to the Summer Tutoring Program for Kids.

Provincial Literacy and Learning Strategy Update

Co-chairs Faye Martin and John MacQuarrie of the Literacy and Learning Strategy committee spoke at the Alliance Annual meeting. Faye began by giving a brief history of events that led up to this initiative. She complimented the Alliance on the work that we have done through the years promoting the need for this strategy. Mr. MacQuarrie stated that senior managers from many government departments comprise the committee. He indicated that the strategy should be released by December 2006.

Protest the funding cut to literacy!

The provincial government has supported projects and literacy grants through a cost-shared program with the federal government. On September 25 the federal government cut \$325,000 to the province. Some projects this funding helps support include Workplace Education PEI, Morell Community Learning centre and PEI Volunteers for Literacy (formerly Project L.O.V.E.).

For information on who to contact in Ottawa to protest this cut call the Alliance at 368-3620.

Spring Adult Bursaries Available

Five \$500 bursaries are available this spring to adults who are enrolled in an adult education program that does not exceed high school graduation. Laubach Literacy students are also eligible to apply.

For information and an application form go to our website www.pei.literacy.ca or call Catherine or Norm at 368-3620.

Deadline for applications is February 14, 2007.