

Live and Learn

Spring 2010

The Newsletter of the PEI Literacy Alliance

Congratulations Bursary Winners 2009 – 2010

These adult learners won a \$500 bursary from the PEI Literacy Alliance.



Pamela Gallant

Melinda Morris

Garth Carter

Jennifer Constable

Carl Dicks



Donna Lavers

Bernie Earle

Pwaytha Kerhtoo

Levi Cannon

Ann Vincent

What's inside?

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The Newsletter of the PEI Literacy Alliance

Published by the PEI Literacy Alliance.

Edited, written and designed by Catherine O'Bryan, Norman Finlayson and Jinny Greaves.

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:

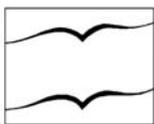
Live and Learn
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**PEI
Literacy
Alliance**

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Notes

Environmental Scan

The PEI Literacy Alliance has completed an environmental scan of literacy and essential skills in PEI. You can read or download the report at www.pei.literacy.ca.

Semi-annual Meeting

The Board and representatives of the PEI Literacy Alliance held the semi-annual meeting at the Culinary Institute on March 25.

Alexandre Martin from the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills attended from Ottawa.

Crystal Matheson, human resources manager of Trout River Industries gave a presentation about their employee program Trout River 101.

Summer Tutoring Program

We are looking for university students to apply to be a tutor for our summer tutoring program. We offer 10 weeks of employment between June and August. For information email Jinny at project@eastlink.ca.

New Brochure

The Alliance has produced a new brochure titled Essential Skills for Home, Work and Community. This is part of our initiative to promote understanding of essential skills.

Literacy and Essential Skills Round Table

In February the Alliance gathered a group of people with some knowledge about the literacy and essential skills scene in PEI. The purpose of the meeting was to find out information to feed into an environmental scan. We asked the participants to comment on these questions:

- Are you familiar with the nine LES as defined by HRSDC?
- What do you think are the LES challenges in PEI?
- What problems are people having?
- What do you think people with these challenges need?
- What do you think is missing in the field?
- What do you think are the assets and gaps in LES in your agency and in PEI?
- What are the priorities in your agency for LES? What are the priorities of the Government?
- What do you see as the linkages between various programs and agencies in PEI?
- What do you think are the possibilities and potentials for LES in PEI?
- What tools and/or programs, supports or expertise have been developed in PEI to address literacy and essential skills?
- Do you know what is currently in place to address the needs of LES in your agency in PEI?
- What are your agency's future plans?
- Who do you think are the literacy and essential skills players in PEI?
- Can you share some success stories?

We collected and analyzed this information and published a document titled "Environmental Scan of Literacy and Essential Skills".

You can download the report at our website www.pei.literacy.ca

For International Adult Learners Week this March we held a creative writing contest. The contest winners were given a cheque for \$100 and invited to dinner at our semi-annual meeting. Here are some of the winning entries:

PARACHUTE

By Betty Bouchard

Not long ago, I got an email called, "Who Packs Your Parachute." My tutor sent the email to me. I always thought of parachutes as jumping from a plane to safety. But the email showed me how to use the word parachute in another way when writing. We are working on basic computer skills, and "Who Packs Your Parachute" was the first email I received. Also, I had just finished a reading lesson that included figures of speech, and the email helped me to better understand figures of speech when writing and speaking. I liked the email so much that I thought I would write about it for the literacy contest.

Who Packs Your Parachute is a true story about an American jet pilot whose plane was destroyed in Vietnam, but the pilot parachuted and landed in the hands of the enemy. Then he spent years as a prisoner of war in Vietnam before he was returned to the United States. Many years later, the pilot and his wife were in a restaurant having a meal, and a man near by recognized the pilot. The man introduced himself, and he told the pilot that he was the sailor who had packed his parachute. The pilot was surprised and he thanked the sailor, whose skill had saved his life.

Later the pilot began to think about the sailor and all the people in his life who had supported him (who had helped him pack his parachute). Many people, too, have helped me pack my parachute. When I read the email, I thought of my family who have supported me so many ways, for so many years. I depended on them for many things, and I am so grateful for their support. They help me every day to pack my parachute.

Seventeen months ago my reading and writing skills were poor. I lacked confidence and I was very nervous. Then PEI Volunteers for Literacy found me a tutor, and gave me the books that I needed. They, too, helped me to pack my parachute. I will soon finish the fourth Reading Skills book, the third Spelling book, and the third Phonics book. I have completed Cursive Writing, and all of the Crossword books. I am also working on Life Skills, which includes grammar, spelling, and writing. My tutor gave me a dictionary, and a handbook, which I use when I need help. I have just started to learn basic computer skills.

My day starts at 5:15 am, and two days a week, I meet with my tutor for three hours each day. Sometimes I am tired when I go to study, and I find it hard to concentrate at first. However, once we start the lessons, I really enjoy the work. My reading and writing improved so much this past year; I notice this every day at work. I am a cook and I also do the grocery shopping for my employer. I shop twice a week for 30 people. Now that my reading has improved, grocery shopping is much easier. Cooking is easier, too, because I find it really easy to read the recipes.

Seventeen months ago, I would never have believed I could have learned so much in such a short time, or believed how these studies have changed the way I feel about myself. My tutor has encouraged me all of this time, she gives so much of her time, and she always finds new learning material to make my studies more interesting. She has helped me pack my parachute.
She helped me pack my parachute.

I am also trying to set goals, and I find they are changing as I learn more. I wanted to volunteer, so I take elderly people to my home for a meal or for the weekend from time to time. I find some elderly people get lonely; they don't get out much. My main goal was to be able to read books. I have read all of the story books that go with the Reading Skills books. I have read Gerry Steele's book, GROWING UP WITH JULIE. Gerry Steele is a local writer. Also, I have read MUD, SWEAT, AND TEARS, Tales from a Country Vet, written by Dr. Bud Ings, another local writer. I enjoyed these books.

I appreciate all of the encouragement and help that so many people have given to me. All of you have helped me PACK MY PARACHUTE.

Fame And Misfortune by Allen Bowles

hollywood's great for the crap that it sells
flawless opinions that aren't of ourselves
so if your less then perfect and in need of some help
tune in and get lost in somebody else

fame and misfortune society's prize
your only salvation so buy into the lies
here's a good question is reality fake
well tell me yourself when this episode breaks

capitalism our fair weather fiend
has told me to buy more junk i don't need
and the powers that be have spared no expense
in raping the youth of all common sense

fame and misfortune society's prize
is wrapped up and given by marketing spies
here's a cold truth our reality's bleak
but see for yourself when you tune in next week

hollywood's fake and has been exposed
for morals so rotten and minds so enclosed
the truth is revealed their cover is blown
so go out and have a life of your own

fame and misfortune society's prize
a gift for the masses unholy disguise
here's a cold truth our reality's bleak
but see for yourself when you tune in next week

What are Essential Skills in Canada?

Essential skills are the basic skills that help people deal with the increasing and ever-changing demands of home, work and community life. People say they are the “Velcro” to which other learning and training sticks.

Essential skills help people advance in the workforce, take advantage of new opportunities, take a more active role in their community and successfully deal with daily tasks.

Human Resources Canada adopted nine essential skills people require for home, work and community life. Canada is not alone in using essential skills. Other countries use them too, however their list of skills are often slightly different.

The chart below shows examples of how you might use each essential skill.

Essential Skill	Reading text	Document Use	Working with Numbers	Writing
In the Home	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read to your children • Read personal mail • Enjoy books for pleasure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read recipes • Interpret warning signs on cleaning products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget your income • Help with math homework • Figure costs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write cards to family and friends • Help children with homework
At Work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read instructions and employee policies • Read emails and letters 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read signs, and labels • Interpret charts and drawings • Fill out employee forms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget project funds • Schedule meetings • Figure out payments due 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write letters and reports • Organize, record and document information
In the Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read food labels • Read notices and posters • Read local newspapers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read traffic signs • Fill out forms • Read warning labels • Vote in the election 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a budget • Calculate costs • Figure out a tip 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write letters to friends • Put your thoughts on paper • Make signs

Why Essential Skills?

Essential skills development is much more than work-skills training. It is important that literacy practitioners, employers and others recognize that developing essential skills can be very positive for adult learners and employees. Research indicates that essential skills development is associated with:

- Greater independence
- Increased self-respect
- Effective problem solving and communication
- Better overall health and well-being
- Higher learning and earning potential
- An increased ability to use technology
- Flexibility and the capacity to adapt to change

Oral Communication	Working with Others	Thinking Skills	Computer Use	Continuous Learning
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present concerns to doctors or teachers • Ask for and share health information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop good relationships with parents, children, partners and siblings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plan family trips and parties • Manage time and money 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send email to friends and family • Help with homework • Find health information online 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learn a new skill • Be a mentor to family members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share ideas with co-workers • Present reports • Greet customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop good working relationships with co-workers, employers and customers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find information or tools • Plan tasks • Manage time and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Send email to co-workers • Use a cash register • Put information in a database 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attend professional workshops or training • Learn from co-workers
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share ideas at meetings • Resolve a conflict • Seek information about local issues 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate in a community project • Attend a community meeting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Find information • Manage time and money • Drive a car 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email friends and family • Use an ATM 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer for a community group • Take a class at community school

Here are more contest entries:

Back in the Game
By Kimberly Baird

“You know, I used to walk miles to school through any kind of weather.”

“Yeah Dad, I know, barefoot and uphill both ways too.” I rolled my eyes.

“You’ve told me before.”

“You don’t know. That one room schoolhouse was hot as Hades in summer and if you weren’t lucky enough to have a seat by the woodstove in the winter, well, your fingers would cramp trying to scratch out your lessons on your slate. And getting water, now that was a pain, chipping through ice at the stream with an old, dull axe. Wonder we ever learned anything.” Dad’s eyes roamed over my school texts splayed across the kitchen table. “Things sure have changed since my day,” he mumbled.

“Trust me, Dad, they’ve changed during my time too,” I declared. His eyes rose inquiringly over the rim of his coffee cup. “I can remember having to search through card catalogues for my research at the library and using Nanny’s old typewriter to hunt and peck out my essay assignments.” I smiled at the memory. “The darn ribbon used to slip. Half the type was red; the other was black.

“Being back in school now as an adult is an eye-opener. It amazes me that I have the world at my fingertips with the click of a mouse. There’s so many more choices now than ever before too and no more traditional roles for women. It’s exciting to be preparing for a career in what would have been considered a man’s job only twenty five years ago.”

Nodding slowly and staring off into the distance, Dad murmured, “Yes, I imagine it would be exciting. Wish I was your age again and had the chance to go back to school.”

“I have an advantage I think too, being an adult – I know what life’s like without an education and appreciate the opportunity so much more because of it.”

“Are there many students at Adult Ed?” Dad wondered.

“Yep, quite a lot. There are people of all different ages, taking all different things. Some are working toward their GED’s, some are getting upgrading for college or university and some are just going out to see what’s out there and what interests them. Everyone has a unique story. Everybody fits in.”

Dad flipped through a sheaf of papers. "Your marks are good," he murmured with a smile.

"Not bad. I'm doing better than I originally thought I would. I wasn't sure how I would do after being out of school for so long, but two plus two still equals four. My self-confidence got a boost to know I can still learn and compete. I just wish I hadn't wasted so much time. Youth truly is wasted on the young," I said with a sigh. I looked up to spy a grin on my father's face. "What's so funny?" I demanded.

His eyes twinkling, he leaned forward and whispered, "You're starting to sound like me, old-timer!"

Love Fear & Pain **By Allen Bowles**

her stare sends a gaze,
that emulates the sky
a send from the heavens,
that makes me feel high
i never can tell
when the heart play it's tricks,
i love this addiction,
that we can't never kick
her voice takes the rhythm,
of a sweet lullaby
with a luminous smile,
that tears a rift into time
and plays me like the fool,
that i really am

baby say that you'll always stay
this love can lift me from the grey
baby say that you'll never go,
no one else in the world you know
the beauty of this universe,
i found within your eyes

her hair is as red
as the fire in her heart
she tore me a kiss

that blew my world apart
this feeling bodes well
on my hearts epic defeat
but girl i keep you close
tucked away in my dreams

baby say that you'll never stray
i want you here and for that i prey
baby say that you'll keep me sane
locked up in love no fear and pain
the beauty of this universe
i found within your eyes

International Adult Learners Week March 1-5, 2010



Mark Haines entertained the crowd with a variety of instruments.

On March 4 we held a celebration for adult learners at Holland College. Lenny MacPherson was the comedian and MC.

Mark Haines provided music and songs. He played on three different instruments: guitar, fiddle and bodhran.

Kim McGrath Myers, a successful adult learner, gave an inspirational talk.

We served refreshments and drew for fourteen door prizes. Lenny,

Mark and Kim were great performers. The audience was enthusiastic and enjoyed our celebration. The event was co-sponsored by the Office of Innovation and Advanced Learning, Holland College and the PEI Literacy Alliance.

Trade HERizons

Trade HERizons is a program that supports women to succeed in non-traditional occupations. This project is for women who are interested in exploring non-traditional careers in trades and technology. Some examples of non-traditional careers are carpenter, welder, machinist, and bioscience lab technician.

This is a wrap-around program that guides and supports women as they explore career options; apply to Holland College; complete their chosen training and enter the workforce. There are some allowances for work clothes and boots, childcare, eldercare, and transportation. This will help reduce some of the barriers that prevent women from learning the skills they need to get better jobs.

This unique approach allows participants to explore their interests and create their own educational pathways and economic well-being. Participants are actively involved in the learning process.

The 14-week career exploration training program began February 1, 2010. With the support of many partners, women have an opportunity to succeed!

Literacy. What Do You Know?

Try this one-minute quiz to gauge your understanding of literacy and its impact in Canada. You'll find the answers on page 12.

- 1) According to the federal government which of the following skills are considered essential?

a. Reading	d. Writing	g. Thinking
b. Document Use	e. Oral Communication	h. Computer Use
c. Numeracy	f. Working with Others	i. Continuous Learning

- 2) According to the Adult Literacy Survey, how many Canadians between 16 and 65 are challenged by low literacy?

a. 2 million	b. 5 million	c. 9 million
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- 3) Each single percentage point increase in literacy level has a corresponding increase in GDP of:

a. 0.5%	b. 1%	c. 1.5%
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- 4) Literacy has a large impact on earnings. Each additional year of education raises annual earnings by:

a. 3%	b. 5%	c. More than 8%
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- 5) In terms of literacy, almost half of the adult Canadians lack the minimum standard necessary to function effectively in our society. Of those people, 51% could receive the literacy and essential skills training to bring them up to standard in:

a. 200 hours	b. 100 hours	c. 40 hours
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- 6) Predicted increases in labour market outcomes for adults moving to Level 3 translates into large gains in estimated annual labour earnings and income tax revenues. At the national level, labour earnings are predicted to rise:

a. \$14,629 million per year	b. \$19,629 million per year	c. \$24,629 million per year
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- 7) According to the Criminal Code of Canada, what rate of interest charged by lending institutions is considered criminal?

a. 30%	b. 40%	c. 60%
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The Back Page

Battle of the Book Clubs

On March 2 CBC hosted the Battle of the Book Clubs. Five Island clubs championed the five books nominated in the Canada Reads nation-wide competition. The winner was the Jade Peony presented by the Friday Night Girls. Proceeds of a raffle went to the Alliance.

Canwest Global Spelling Bee

On Saturday February 27 the regional final for the spelling bee was held at UPEI. Twenty-one finalists tried to out-spell each other until the PEI winner was declared.

Matthew MacDonald of Summerside was the winner. He will participate in the national spelling bee in Ottawa in the spring.

Catherine O'Bryan of the Alliance was one of three judges for the day.

Trade Essentials Tools

On March 10 the Trade Essentials project showcased the many tools they developed. These tools emphasize the use of essential skills in the workplace. They include both essential skills and technical skills inventories, curriculum frameworks and a Professional Skills Record.

For more information visit the website at: tradeessentials.ca.

2010 PGI

Each June many of PEI's business and community leaders gather for a day of golf, entertainment and good food to raise money for Island literacy. The tournament was founded by Peter Gzowski and has been running in PEI since 1991.

To mark our twentieth year, we are teeing off at the beautiful Green Gables Golf Course on Thursday, June 17.

We are looking forward to a fun day of golf, poetry and music. Our feature entertainer will be folk singer Valdy.

Since their beginning, the Island's PGI Tournaments have raised more than \$400,000 for literacy.

For more information, please call Norm at 368-3620.



QUIZ ANSWERS:

- | | | |
|----|------------------|------|
| 1. | All of the above | 5. c |
| 2. | c | 6. c |
| 3. | c | 7. c |
| 4. | c | |