

Live and Learn

The Newsletter of the PEI Literacy Alliance



Fall 2012

Photo courtesy of johnsylvester.com

Raise A Reader Day 2012

September 18th was Raise-A-Reader Day in PEI. Thanks to the efforts of The Guardian, the Journal-Pioneer, and scores of volunteers, over \$13,000 was collected for the work of the PEI Literacy Alliance.



From left to right: Anthony Welsh, Roseanne MacDonald, Alan Holman and Norman Finlayson offer free newspapers to Tim Horton's customers in exchange for a donation to literacy.

What's inside

Children's Literacy Research • Meet Our New Board Members
Financial Literacy • Document Use
Terry Affleck Wins Again

Live and Learn

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:

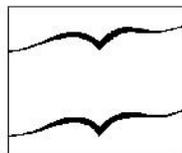
- learners' stories
- creative writing by learners
- articles or news about teaching adults
- upcoming events
- new resources for adult education

Please send your material to:

Live and Learn
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**PEI
Literacy
Alliance**

This publication is made possible by funding from the PGI Golf Tournament for Literacy.

Charlottetown Area Chamber of Commerce Business Mixer

The PEI Literacy Alliance has been getting out to meet business people at Rotary Clubs and Chambers of Commerce. We are spreading the word that a workforce trained in literacy and essential skills is safer, more productive and better able to adapt to change.



Catherine and Norman unveil the new Essential Skills display



The Alliance received a \$1000 book grant from First Book Canada through the generous support of the TD Bank. They sent us over 300 new children's books that we will give to families in need before Christmas like we did last year. First Book Canada provides access to new books for children in need.

A book of their own: how owning books affects children's literacy

Some recent research from the National Literacy Trust found that while 86% of young people in the UK own a mobile phone, only 73% have books of their own. What does that mean? And does it matter?

Personally I love my phone and my life would be very different without it. I have my contacts, my email, my music and my social networking sites all in one place. But as great as technology is, the bottom line is books matter and actually owning books is incredibly important.



Our study questioned over 17,000 young people and revealed a strong link between young people's reading ability and their access to books at home. It's not just our research that suggests a link between owning books and educational attainment. A groundbreaking study from the University of Nevada found that the number of books in the home has as great an impact on children's attainment as parental education levels. The 20 year study by Mariah Evans and her colleagues at Nevada, UCLA and Australian National University found that having as few as 20 books in the home still has a significant impact on propelling a child to a higher level of education, and the more books you add, the greater the benefit. Researchers also found that children of lesser-educated parents benefit the most from having books in the home, with Evans stating: "The results of this study indicate that getting some books into [the] home is an inexpensive way that we can help... children succeed."

In England, the National Young Readers' Program is the program that motivates children and young people to read for pleasure. Children taking part get to choose and keep free books at a series of fun events. The programme also helps children and young people to acquire the skills they need to develop as a reader, from knowing how to choose a book, to where they can find books.

We've long known the positive effects of book ownership on the children we reach and it's great to see research supporting this. In the words of one of the project coordinators, "It is no good encouraging children to foster a love and passion for reading if they don't possess or have little choice in what they read! Being able to choose a book of their very own was a very special event and a turning point in their lives."

- adapted from a blog post by Lizzie Poulton at

<http://www.literacytrust.org.uk/blog/2196>

New Board Members



Judy Bayliss

Judy Bayliss

Judy came to us from our member group the PEI Council of People with Disabilities. Judy is a lifelong learner with extensive board experience.

Judy said, “My working career has been with non profit organizations. Through my own interest and personal and professional contacts, I am familiar with the PEILA and the range (and importance) of the work of the Alliance.”

“I write for a living and consider myself lucky I am able to spend my working life in a pleasurable activity. To engage in ways that that excitement can be shared is a luxury.

Cathy Ronahan

Cathy has worked on various projects with PEI Women's Network, most recently Trade Horizons. Cathy is a community networker and lifelong learner.

Cathy governed on a number of community boards including the Latin American Mission Program, the PEI Association for Newcomers to Canada and the Voluntary Resource Council.

Cathy recognizes the privilege she has had over the years to work on community development projects with youth, women, and people from diverse cultures.



Cathy Ronahan

Katherine McQuaid

Katherine has 20 years experience working with adult learners through the Institute of Advanced Learning and the Academy of Learning.

Katherine said, “A passion for education and literacy have always been a part of my life. I believe quality of life is often tied to literacy and education.”

Katherine is a businesswoman who manages the Institute of Advanced Learning. The organization provides training for adults in GED preparation and high school credits



Katherine McQuaid

Returning PEI Literacy Alliance Board Members for 2012—2013

Chair: Lori Johnston—Workplace Learning PEI

Vice chair: Tom Hilton—University of PEI

Treasurer: Gerry Seaward—Holland College

Karen Noble—Canadian Union of Public Employees

Colette Arsenault—Société éducative de l’Île-du-Prince Édouard

Trina O’Brien Leggott—PEI Public Library Service

Financial Literacy

November is Financial Literacy Month. Financial Literacy is the ability to understand and deal with money in a responsible way. It's about understanding how to save, to protect and manage funds, and how to prepare for unexpected events – all keys to financial stability. Financial Literacy educates people about the short-term and long-term consequences of spending habits.

Do North Americans have good financial literacy skills?

According to an Ipsos Reid poll:

- Four in ten Canadians say they don't put anything away for savings on a monthly basis.
- Seven in ten Canadians are not fully confident that their math and money management skills will help them plan for a secure financial future.
- Four in ten Canadians say their household doesn't follow a budget.

And in the US, according to BusinessWeek.com, the amount that Americans owe on loans for houses, cars, credit cards, and other purchases adds up to nearly 100% of their annual income after taxes, up from 75% in 1992. Another study found that 20 percent of families earning less than \$50,000 a year spend nearly half of their income on debt payments.

What can you do to improve your financial literacy?

If you're an adult Canadian, you likely didn't learn too much about personal finance in school. Even if your parents didn't teach you the basics, you can learn lots of things on your own.

The Financial Consumer Agency of Canada website has lots of good resources. If you scroll down to their "Frequently Asked Questions" section, you will find topics like these:

- Does my financial institution have the right to withdraw funds from my bank account to pay my overdue credit card bill?
- How can I get the lowest interest rate on my mortgage?
- What happens if I make a late credit card payment?
- Does my bank have a right to hold the funds I deposited by cheque?
- How much would it cost to cash my Government of Canada cheque at a payday loan company or another cheque-cashing outlet?

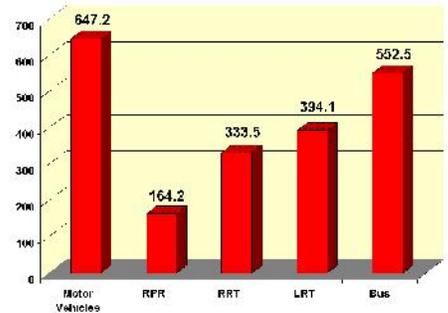
You can find the website at www.fcac-acfc.gc.ca

Essential Skills—Document Use

Document Use is one of the essential skills defined by HRSDC. It refers to tasks that involve a variety of information where words, numbers, and other visual elements such as lines, colours, or shapes are given meaning by how they are arranged on a page. For example, graphs, lists, tables, blueprints, schematics, drawings, signs and labels are documents used at work.

Document Use can include:

- Tasks involving print, computer screens, equipment gauges, clocks and flags
- Reading, interpreting and writing, completing, and producing of documents. We often use these skills at the same time for example: completing a form, checking off items on a list, plotting information on a graph, and entering information on an activity schedule



Here are some practical tips to help you improve your document use skills.

- Use your finger or a ruler to follow rows or columns in a table.
- Use headings to find information quickly.
- Look for visual cues such as font size, bolded or highlighted text that may emphasize important information.
- Look for characters or symbols which may provide special instructions such as asterisks.
- Write legibly and stay within the allocated spaces.
- Use words that are easy to read and understand when entering information.
- Scan documents several times to ensure the information you have entered is complete and accurate.
- Read instructions carefully before completing forms or questionnaires.
- Complete documents in the recommended order.
- Read labels and headings carefully before entering information.
- Identify common shapes and colours to help understand signs and symbols. For example red represents danger or stop.
- Ask questions if you do not understand what you see on a sign, or document.



The Back Page



Premier Robert Ghiz, left, presents the award to Terry Affleck.

Award Winner

Terry Affleck has done it again. Previously he won a bursary from the PEI Literacy Alliance, and he won the Learner Achievement Award at our PGI Golf Tournament for Literacy. On October 15th Premier Robert Ghiz presented Terry with the **2012 Council of the Federation Literacy Award for Prince Edward Island.**

Premier Ghiz said, “In Prince Edward Island, we understand the importance of essential skills, like literacy, to our economic and social well-being. The Council of the Federation Literacy Award publicly recognizes leaders in the field of literacy and rewards remarkable achievement of Islanders like this year's recipient, Terry Affleck.

To top it off, Catherine Callbeck read Terry's story in the Senate on October 24th. She went on to say “Honourable senators, I would like to congratulate Mr. Affleck and all those adult learners who have taken the

steps to improve their literacy skills. I would also like to thank Ms. Dufour and tutors across the country for their work helping to turn the tide on low literacy skills. Without a doubt, we all benefit from success stories like this one.”



\$750 Bursaries for Adults

The PEI Literacy Alliance will award ten bursaries to adults who are working toward a grade 12 certificate or grade 12 equivalency (GED). Each bursary is \$750.

For more information and an application form please visit our web site at www.peiliteracy.ca or call us at 902-368-3620. The deadline for applications is **November 15, 2012.**

Donations wanted

The Literacy Alliance is looking for donations of new or gently used children's books for our Book Bank. No encyclopedia sets, please. Call us at 368-3620.