

# *Live and Learn*

The Newsletter of the PEI Literacy Alliance



Spring 2012

Photo courtesy of johnsylvester.com

## Raise-a-Reader Donation



**(L to R) Sandy Rundle, Journal Pioneer, Catherine O’Bryan, PEI Literacy Alliance and Gary MacDougall, The Guardian**

The PEI Literacy Alliance is the recipient of money raised across PEI on Postmedia’s Raise-A-Reader Day. Last September almost \$10,000 was raised for the Summer Tutoring Program for Kids.

## *What’s inside*

Bursary winners ■ Interview Tips ■ Literacy and Boys

[www.peiliteracy.ca](http://www.peiliteracy.ca)

Live and Learn – Spring 2012

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The Newsletter of the PEI Literacy Alliance

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

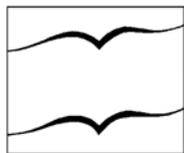
We would like to hear from you if you have:

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

Please send your material to:  
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**PEI  
Literacy  
Alliance**

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

## **Alliance welcomes new Board member**



Gerry Seaward, program manager at Holland College, joined the Board of the Alliance this April. He is replacing Natalie Worthen who has taken on other work responsibilities.

## **What are the implications of higher literacy rates?**

Higher literacy levels result in:

- a better quality of life through reduced poverty, lower unemployment, and decreased public assistance
- improved self-confidence and parenting skills
- increased number of job prospects and participation in community life

To raise literacy levels it is important for governments, business, labour and literacy partners to work together. Literacy and other essential skills are the foundation of life long learning.

## Research on boys' literacy

*The following information is from the University of Alberta's Faculty of Education professor Heather Blair. Her research is about literacy of boys.*

I did a 6-year study with a group of early adolescent boys in Alberta and have lots to say on this topic. During the past 10 years there has been some concern over how boys present their literacy practices and how that is or is not reflected in current standardized tests. Their scores may be lower than the girls' in this area, but that is not to say that they are not developing as readers and writers. It may just be different from the girls.



As teachers and parents we know that generally boys are drawn to non-fictional texts and some kinds of fiction, such as science fiction and fantasy over others. They also prefer to write in these genres. In my view boys are literate in multiple ways - particularly so in the 21st-century/digital/new media environments - and these will serve them well in the long run. Still, the question remains: Do the provincial tests assess these literacies or should other assessment tools be used that will get at the boys' strengths?

I think there is a place for focusing on different needs for boys and girls in classrooms, but I do NOT believe that the problem lies with the boys. It's not like there is something wrong with boys that we have to fix. By having programs such as enrichment programs for boys in reading sends boys the wrong message. We need instead to focus on their strengths and think about what new literacies they have and how to have them connect their understandings of these literacy processes.

In our language and literacy education teacher preparation at the U of A we discuss topics such as these. In my "Teaching reading in the elementary school" course for example, the class works with one child to look at the child's reading practices - including his digital reading practices. We then think about what we've observed and what that means for the boys and the girls. We talk about the boys developing literacies and how to assess their growth.

Literacy is a very gendered phenomena, and we as teachers and parents need to recognize this and think about how we provide a well rounded literacy experience for all of our youth.

## BURSARY WINNERS

Twice each year the PEI Literacy Alliance awards five \$750 bursaries to deserving recipients who are involved in improving their education. Money for the bursaries is raised through our annual PGI Golf Tournament for Literacy. Here are this spring's winners:

### Gloria McNeill



(L to R) Instructor Karen Ford Doyle presents a bursary to Gloria McNeill. "Gloria works extremely hard, often coming to class from 9-1 and then going to work from 3-10 when work is available."

### Mihrije Braha

Instructor Sally Lavern (L) presents Mihrije Braha with a bursary. "Mihrije is a young woman who is positive and committed to reaching her goals. It is my pleasure to have her in my class."



### Rachel Baglole

Instructor Karen Ford Doyle (L) presents a bursary to Rachel Baglole. "I have watched Rachel blossom into someone with very little self-confidence in her academic ability, into a woman ready to take on the world!"



### Mary Paynter



Instructor Lois Praught (L) presents a bursary to Mary Paynter. "Mary is a person with a very big heart, a lot of determination and a great work ethic."

### Blair Gray

Pictured on the right are Blair Gray and his instructor Vaunda Richard. "Blair is a survivor with an extremely positive attitude. He is doing his best to get training so that he can find a job that he can do. He is a wonderful person."



## Online Resources

### Working in Canada web tool

The Working in Canada web tool provides job seekers, workers and those who are new to the labour market with the information required to make informed decisions about where to live and work. The site ([www.workingincanada.gc.ca](http://www.workingincanada.gc.ca)) can assist people who are searching for work or looking to make career decisions.

### SkillPlan: How do your skills measure up?

SkillPlan's most popular and free online-resource, Measure Up! provides authentic, career-related workplace documents for students and instructors to gauge current skill levels. [measureup.towes.com/english/index.asp](http://measureup.towes.com/english/index.asp).

**Office of Literacy and Essential Skills** has tools that show employers how Essential Skills contribute to workplace success. Here is the address: <http://bit.ly/rOO3kK>.

**Job Seekers and Workers** If you are looking for a job or a change in your career, you may want to consider your Essential Skills. Developing your Essential Skills can help you get a job, succeed at work and adapt to change. Check out these resources: <http://bit.ly/GCbO2N>.

## International Adult Learners Week Celebration

On March 29th the Alliance in partnership with Holland College presented a celebration for adult learners.

Dianne Griffin, HR manager from DP Murphy Inc was the guest speaker and spoke about her work experience and the culture at her current workplace. Lennie MacPherson provided comedy and Kenny Lewis, bursary winner, offered inspiration.



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A PEI Literacy Alliance bursary was presented to Mihrije Braha. Close to 60 students from Adult and Community Education enjoyed refreshments and had a chance at door prizes.

## ESSENTIAL SKILLS RESOURCES

### **Job Interviews**

A job interview is considered one of the most useful tools for evaluating potential employees. It also allows the candidate to assess the corporate culture and demands of the job.



### **Tips for Interviewers**

**Prepare**—familiarize yourself with the candidate’s resume and other paperwork. This shows you are respectful, organized and well prepared.

**Set the tone** –Tell candidates that you are happy to meet them and express appreciation that they have come for an interview. Review the interview process and then follow the format as closely as you can.

**Prepare a script**—Have questions prepared beforehand. It is important to ask open-ended questions as well as those that require a detailed response.

**Listen to your instincts**—Some candidates seem too good to be true, while others seem to lack the skills you need. As you assess the interview, be honest about your interviewing performance as well as the candidate’s performance. It may be that you need to pose more pointed questions or ask about different experiences.

**Know what you are looking for**—Be clear on the essential skills required for the position to avoid asking irrelevant questions and confusing the candidate. Making a list can help you ask pointed questions. When the candidate leaves the interview, he or she should have a sense of whether they would be a good fit for the job.

**Manage your time**—Do your best to stick with the time set aside for the meeting. However, you should be prepared to jump straight to the conclusion questions if the candidate is not qualified. There is no point wasting either of your time if the candidate is not a good match for the job.

**Write it down**—Take notes so that your memory will be triggered when it’s time to review the interview. The more people you interview for the position, the more important note-taking becomes.

**Don’t forget that you are being interviewed as well.** Be aware of the impression you are making on the candidate. You are trying to sell yourself, the company, and the job to the candidates just as they are selling themselves to you. Be ready to talk about the company and the position.

## The Back Page

### Check out our new website!

The Alliance has worked with Graphic Communications Group to redesign our website. Go to [www.peiliteracy.ca](http://www.peiliteracy.ca) to see the change.

### New email addresses

Along with the new website we have new addresses:

[catherine@peiliteracy.ca](mailto:catherine@peiliteracy.ca)

[jinny@peiliteracy.ca](mailto:jinny@peiliteracy.ca)

[norman@peiliteracy.ca](mailto:norman@peiliteracy.ca)

### 7th Atlantic Summer Institute

*Leadership for Active Communities:  
Inspiration to Action*

Holland College, Charlottetown  
August 22—24

For information contact  
[asi@thequaich.pe.ca](mailto:asi@thequaich.pe.ca)

### Summer Tutor Job Posting

Are you a full-time student looking for a summer job that will give you the right experience for your future teaching career?

Visit our website to view the full job posting in the news section. Our address is [www.peiliteracy.ca](http://www.peiliteracy.ca).

Deadline for applications is May 1, 2012.

### Literacy Grants Available

Grants up to \$2000 are available to qualifying organizations. For an application form go to our website [www.peiliteracy.ca](http://www.peiliteracy.ca) and click on Services/Events and scroll down to Literacy Grants. Deadline for applications is April 30.

### Lunch and Learn



(L to R) Mark Douglas, Joan Fleming and Jeremy MacEachern

On February 29 the PEI Business Women's Association presented a Lunch and Learn with Mark Douglas and Jeremy MacEachern from Workplace Learning PEI. Pictured above are the presenters with PEIBWA executive director Joan Fleming.

### PGI Golf Tournament for Literacy

Friday, June 15th

Belvedere Golf Course

Reception at Red Shores Top of the Park

Information: [www.peipgigolf.ca](http://www.peipgigolf.ca)