

# *Live and Learn*

Fall 2008

The Newsletter of the PEI Literacy Alliance

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## Alliance Wins Award



Premier Robert Ghiz presents the PEI Literacy Alliance Chair Angela Larter with the Council of the Federation Literacy Award at the September 8 meeting of the Rotary Club of Charlottetown.

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## ***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:

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Web site: [www.pei.literacy.ca](http://www.pei.literacy.ca)

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

**Mark your calendar**

June 18 2009

### **2009 PGI Golf Tournament for Literacy**

Andersons Creek Golf Course  
Stanley Bridge

**Fun Golf - Great Food  
Music - Prizes**



**Great Entertainment**

#### **\$500 Bursaries for Adults**

The next bursary deadline is November 14, 2008.

For information and to get an application form, please visit our web site or call us.

Website:  
[www.pei.literacy.ca](http://www.pei.literacy.ca)

Telephone:  
902-368-3620

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## Happiness Linked to Reading Skills

Adults with low literacy skills are less likely to get married or buy their own house.

A British non-profit organization called the National Literacy Trust looked at the effects of literacy on the nation's happiness. The report found large differences between those with good literacy skills and those without.

The report was based on figures from the last 10 years. It defined poor reading skills as those that are the equivalent to the reading level of a 7-year-old. Good reading skills are the equivalent to the reading level of an 11-year-old.

The report focused on men and found that those with low literacy skills were less likely to:

- be satisfied with their life
- be married or living with a partner by the age of 34
- own their own home

The report also found that those with low literacy skills were more likely to:

- drink more than 40 units of alcohol per week
  - smoke every day
- 

## CanWest Raise-A-Reader



On September 24, Premier Ghiz, Jinny Greaves, Brandon Street, Mark Kiervin, Sandra Gamester, and Gary MacDougall turned out for The Guardian and Journal-Pioneer's Raise-A-Reader day.

Thanks to the generosity of Islanders more than \$12,000 was raised for literacy programs in PEI.

## **PEI Literacy Alliance Honoured with Award**

By Doug Gallant

The PEI Literacy Alliance was honoured Monday as this year's recipient of the Council of the Federation Literacy Award. PEI Literacy Alliance Chair Angela Larter accepted the award from Premier Robert Ghiz during a meeting of the Rotary Club of Charlottetown. The award recognizes outstanding achievement and excellence in literacy.

In presenting the award, the premier applauded the Alliance for raising awareness on the issue of literacy across PEI. Ghiz said the Alliance has worked hard to decrease gaps and overlaps in literacy services and to reduce barriers to people with low literacy levels. The Alliance has also informed Islanders about the costs associated with low literacy levels.

He said that for the past 18 years the Alliance has advised government and educational institutions about programs and services available to improve literacy levels. The staff of the Alliance have offered plain language editing services to government and community organizations. They have also coordinated conferences, workshops and round tables on literacy.

The Alliance has offered bursaries and scholarships to adult learners to help them with the extra costs of going back to school. The staff maintained a toll-free LEARN line where callers are told about learning and tutoring opportunities. In addition, each summer they coordinated a summer tutoring program for children with reading difficulties.

*The original article was printed in The Guardian. We have edited it for length. Used with permission.*

## **Literacy Foundation Grants Presented**

The Rotary Club of Charlottetown Literacy Foundation presented its first round of grants on September 8, 2008. Three organizations received grants of \$1,000 to assist them in improving the literacy of Islanders : AIDS PEI, the Central Queens Elementary School Home and School Association and Adult Connections in Education (The ACE program.)

The grant awarded to AIDS PEI will be used to produce culturally sensitive plain language brochures that will describe the needle exchange program.

The Central Queens Elementary School Home and School Association will use its funding to engage parents in math activities with their children.

The grant awarded to UPEI's ACE program will be used to purchase literary resources.

*PEI Literacy Alliance Executive Director Catherine O'Bryan is a member of the Board of Directors of the Foundation.*

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## 2008 Annual General Meeting Highlights



At our September 8 Annual General Meeting, Minister of Innovation and Advanced Learning Richard Brown awarded Benjamin Elwood with a plaque for achieving the highest GED score in PEI during the last year.

Barbara Macnutt read a letter of congratulations to Benjamin from Sylvia Robinson of the Washington DC GED office.

Katie Kurylyk tied with Benjamin for the highest GED score and received a plaque as well. Unfortunately, she was unable to attend the meeting.

Marion Stordy gave highlights from her study *Exposing Regimes of Truth in ADHD: The Ancient Mariner Speaks*.

She gave a spirited account of the experiences of her son and grandson in the school system. Although they had similar personalities and temperaments, her son thrived but her grandson was labelled with ADHD and had a very negative school experience.



## ***Essential Skills for Work***

The PEI Literacy Alliance has expanded its mandate to include both literacy and essential skills promotion. Here is a list of work tasks that require specific essential skills.

<b>Essential Skill</b>	<b>Used to:</b>
Reading Text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read instructions and employee policies</li> <li>• Read emails and letters</li> </ul>
Document Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read signs, labels and lists</li> <li>• Fill out employee forms</li> <li>• Interpret charts and drawings</li> </ul>
Numeracy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Budget</li> <li>• Schedule</li> <li>• Figure out payments due</li> </ul>
Writing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write letters and reports</li> <li>• Organize, record and document</li> </ul>
Oral Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share ideas with co-workers and employers</li> <li>• Present reports</li> <li>• Greet customers in person and on the phone</li> <li>• Resolve conflicts</li> <li>• Seek, obtain and share information</li> </ul>
Working with Others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop good working relationships with co-workers, employers and customers</li> </ul>
Thinking Skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Find information or tools</li> <li>• Plan tasks</li> <li>• Manage time and resources</li> <li>• Think critically and make decisions effectively</li> <li>• Take initiative</li> </ul>
Computer Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Send email</li> <li>• Use a cash register</li> <li>• Type letters or memos</li> <li>• Input information into a database</li> <li>• Find information online</li> </ul>
Continuous Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attend professional workshops or training</li> <li>• Learn from co-workers</li> </ul>

## Trade Essentials: More Skills Means More Opportunities

Trade Essentials is a 3 year pilot project that began in March 2007. It is the only one of its kind in Canada. It is both a research project and an essential skills training program. The goal of the project is to encourage and help trade workers to take the apprenticeship path allowing them to move further ahead in their careers.



Manager Sheila Lund MacDonald and Essential Skills Coordinator Ruth Rogerson hard at work.

### Training

The free training program is for trade apprentices or for people who are eligible to register as apprentices. It focuses on six essential skills: reading, document use, numeracy, writing, oral communication, and computer use.

The skills training classes are adaptable and practical. Classes are held when it is convenient for the students. Students finish the training when they are ready and not on a fixed date. Those that need more help are assigned a tutor. The classes are designed to increase students' essential skills using trade related material. A licensed tradesperson who has experience in adult education teaches each class.

### Research

The research goal of the project is find out if the training increases the number of people who pass the national Red Seal exam. So far, all indications show that it does. In 2007, the pass rate was only 55%. In 2008, 26 people took part in this training program and wrote the Red Seal exam, 90% passed.

### For more information

The manager of Trade Essentials is Sheila Lund MacDonald. You can reach her at 620-3618.

Trade Essentials is the newest member of the PEI Literacy Alliance.

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## Announcements

### LEARN Line

The PEI Volunteers for Literacy have taken over responsibility for the LEARN Line. Coordinator Mary Burke will be matching tutors with students and scheduling training sessions for tutors. If you would like to be an adult literacy tutor please contact:

Mary Burke  
PEI Volunteers for Literacy  
PO Box 20151  
Charlottetown PE C1A 9E3  
Tel: (902) 368-4695  
Email: [peivol@isn.net](mailto:peivol@isn.net)

### Grass Roots Biographies

#### By Terry Barber

Grass Roots Press has just introduced 30 high-interest, low-vocabulary biographies for adolescents and adults. These readers portray the lives of fascinating people. Each book:

- provides an historical context, which enhances the student's knowledge of the past
- uses familiar language, which enables students to use context cues to predict words
- uses photographs to illustrate the text, making the words easier to decode
- repeats sentence patterns, making the text easier to read
- provides discussion questions that encourage critical thinking

[www.literacyservices.com/easyread.htm](http://www.literacyservices.com/easyread.htm)

### Confederation Centre Public Library

Become a volunteer ESL tutor at the library. We are now taking names for the November training session. If you would like to get more information or to register please contact:

Joey Seaman  
PEI Association of Newcomers to PEI  
Tel: (902) 628-6009  
Email: [joeys@peianc.com](mailto:joeys@peianc.com)

### Family Math Fun!

This is a new free resource manual of family numeracy activities. It is ready to use in early literacy programs, day care centres, primary grades and Adult Basic Education and Literacy programs. Patterns, recipes, and hand-outs are all included in the 109 pages.

To download your free copy visit:

[www.nald.ca/library/learning/familymath/cover.htm](http://www.nald.ca/library/learning/familymath/cover.htm)

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