

523 The Roy Building
1657 Barrington Street
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3J 2A1

Telephone: 902-422-7648
Fax: 902-422-7536
e-mail: hcln@ns.sympatico.ca
www.hcln.ca

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Getting Across - Spring 2005

Newsletter of the Halifax Community Learning Network

Message from the Network Coordinator

Spring is almost here, and we have much to celebrate at the Halifax Community Learning Network. It has been a busy winter of working toward our goals



and as you can see by the HCLN Honour Roll, everyone has been busy learning together.

April 17th to the 24th is National Volunteer Week, and I would like to take this opportunity to extend a very big THANKS to all of those who volunteer with HCLN. From the long-standing Board Members who help direct HCLN activities, to the many tutors who take the time to teach those with lower literacy skills, your efforts are very much appreciated. Without your caring and dedication, HCLN would never be able to meet the needs of so many students, and your commitment to others is an inspiration. Included in this newsletter is a story about Patricia Padmos, one of the literally hundreds of volunteers who have worked with HCLN over the years. Patricia is just one example of the many community volunteers who help to make our programs succeed and as National Volunteer Week approaches, I salute you for the important work you do for HCLN. We truly couldn't do it without you!

Included in this newsletter is information about upcoming Professional Development opportunities and other events happening in the literacy community. Please consider participating and feel free to contact me with suggestions for any workshops you would like to see in the future. You will also find information

here about some of the fundraising activities we have planned, and I do hope that some of you will take time out of your busy lives to help out by selling tickets or simply show up to enjoy the events- live theatre, folk music, book sales- there's lots happening at HCLN!

Denise Morley

422-7648

hcln@ns.sympatico.ca

Focus on Volunteers: Patricia Padmos

Patricia Padmos has been a volunteer with the Halifax North Public Library literacy program since she moved to Halifax from Kingston, Ontario seven years ago. Patricia has traveled extensively and worked as an instructor at an International School in Saudi Arabia and as an elementary school teacher for several years. Her background in education is one reason that Patricia decided to volunteer as a literacy tutor. "I had never considered trying adult education," she says, "until a friend who is a speech pathologist suggested I do some volunteer work with one of the library literacy programs." Since she initially volunteered, Patricia has tutored more than ten students, including a woman from Somalia and a man recovering from a brain injury. She says she finds tutoring extremely gratifying. "Each student has taught me something and I really get far more out of it than I ever expected. When I come home from tutoring, I feel as if I have really done something useful." Patricia is impressed with the courage shown by all of her students in seeking help to improve their reading and writing skills, as well as the level of commitment they demonstrate despite some of the obstacles they have had

to overcome in their lives. Her current student for example, was removed from school at an early age due to polio and despite her long absence from school and her health problems, is "progressing by leaps and bounds. She is always writing stories and recently has tackled math." Patricia also mentioned the extra work done by Coordinator Rachel Lebowitz, who often goes beyond the call of duty to help students to access bus passes and other services that can improve their quality of life.



Volunteer tutor Patricia Padmos working with her student, Kathy.

In addition to her work as a literacy tutor, Patricia also volunteers with the Heart and Stroke Foundation and the Canadian Cancer Society. Thanks, Patricia, for helping to make our community a better place!

Calling all Book Lovers!

A **GIANT** book sale to raise funds for community literacy will take place on Saturday, May 7th at the Halifax Shopping Centre from 10 AM till 6 PM. If you would like to donate new or good quality used books for this worthy cause, please call 422-7648.



Literacy Solutions: Spring into Learning

Celebrate National Volunteer Week and learn some useful tutoring tips at Literacy Solutions: Spring into Learning which will take place on Saturday, April 23rd at the Halifax Military Family Resource Centre. Workshops are open to those who volunteer with community literacy in HRM and topics will include: Measuring Success, Focus on Phonics and many others. To register, call Dawn at 431-9505 or e-mail dawnboudrot@eastlink.ca



Dawn Boudrot is the coordinator of the Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning Communications & Outreach Project funded by the National Literacy Secretariat. Dawn is responsible for organizing PD events such as Literacy Solutions and NSSAL presentations in the community. Here she is seen helping with the HCLN display at Park Lane Mall. Thanks for all your work, Dawn!

The All Saints Bedford Players present Barefoot in the Park by Neil Simon

Thursday, April 28th and Friday, April 29th at 8 PM
All Saints Anglican Church Hall / 1408 Bedford Highway
Enjoy an evening of live theatre in support of literacy!

The All Saints Bedford Players are a community theatre group that generously offers not for profit organizations such as the Halifax Community Learning Network the opportunity to sell tickets to their plays as a fundraiser. This spring, they will perform the hilarious comedy Barefoot in the Park by Neil Simon and proceeds from two evenings advance ticket sales will go toward HCLN. If you are interested in purchasing or selling tickets to this event to support a good cause, call Denise at 422-7648.

Focus on Programs: HCLN Coordinator Linda Oakley

Linda Oakley is the Coordinator of the Keshen Goodman and Captain William Spry Public Library literacy programs. She has had a long career in education, including work as a preschool, elementary and junior high school teacher in Northern Manitoba and Yellowknife, NT. In 2000, she decided to volunteer as a literacy tutor with the Captain William Spry program and two years later became the Coordinator of the program. Linda says that one of the aspects of the job that she enjoys is working with people- there are always new learners and volunteers starting the program and always new challenges and successes as they work toward their goals together. "I think the one to one tutoring programs are successful because they are so flexible." says Linda, "It gives the students the opportunity to work at their own pace at a time that is convenient for them." She says she is always pleased by how many students achieve their goals and improve their lives through adult upgrading.



Coordinator Linda Oakley with students and volunteers at the annual Winter Party at Captain William Spry Public Library.

Coffee House Benefit Concert: Tunes for Literacy!

Thursday, June 9th / 6 PM
Halifax North Public Library
2285 Gottigen Street

Join Bruce Stewart and members of the Harbour Folk Society (www.chebucto.ns.ca/Culture/Harbour-Folk) for this special Coffee House Benefit Concert in aid of the Halifax Community Learning Network. Come early, sit and enjoy live folk music by Celtic Harpist Cheryl O'Hagen, Fog Along the Coast and more!

The Halifax Community Learning Network helps adults upgrade their reading, writing, math, and life skills, and offers free programs at the Halifax North, Keshen Goodman, Captain William Spry and Spring Garden Road Public Library and the Bloomfield Centre. To find out more information about this event, please call 422-7648.



Charles Ramsey of the National Adult Literacy Database presenting a workshop on literacy resources on the world wide web at the Captain William Spry Public Library

HCLN Offers Tutor and Instructor Training Course

The Nova Scotia Department of Education Tutor & Instructor Training Course provides instructors and tutors with the knowledge and tools to teach adults basic reading, writing, numeracy, and applied skills for everyday living. This 30 hour program, consisting of ten weekly three hour evening classes, will take place in April-May through the Halifax Community Learning Network if there is enough interest. The course costs \$50 but those who volunteer with HCLN for 4 months will be reimbursed for the expense. For more information, or to register, please call 422-7648 or e-mail hcln@ns.sympatico.ca.

Congratulations to the following HCLN students and volunteers for their achievements:

- D.H. Oakley, Ken McDow, Heather Rumsey and Kathy Dobson whose stories have been published either as a Story of the Week at www.nald.ca or on the HCLN web site at www.hcln.ca

- HCLN Treasurer Margie Naish-Buchanan, who will be awarded an HRM Volunteer Recognition Award during National Volunteer Week.
- Julie Stanhope from the Keshen Goodman Library program, who is participating in the Special Olympics in Nagano, Japan
- Chris Bowes of the Halifax North Public Library program who has been accepted to attend a full time program at the Cunard Centre
- Bloomfield Literacy Program student Issa Haggart who has recently become a Canadian citizen

Well done!

Haiku You!

April is National Poetry Month and why not celebrate by sharing a poem with someone? One resource that you might find useful is Enriching Our Lives: Poetry Lessons for Adult Literacy Teachers and Tutors, an excellent workbook for those who wish to encourage their student to write a poem. This book provides examples of poems about work and everyday life, and easy exercises to help anyone get in touch with their poetic side. You might also try some of the exercises found on these web-sites:

www.potatohill.com/exercise.html
www.shadowpoetry.com

Learner Portfolios: a PD opportunity for literacy tutors with Jane MacDonald

- Keating Room in the Hugh Bell Centre on the NS Hospital site
- Tuesday, March 22, 6 pm – 9 pm
- Twenty (20) registrants will be accepted
- Registrants will be confirmed by email

To register, call 902-897-4020 or email to jayne.hunter@nsc.ca

This workshop will introduce the portfolio process as a method of assessment in adult basic education as well as a means for learners to take control of and showcase their learning.

Sign up now for your opportunity to attend this 3 hour workshop where you will receive the manual, Documenting Student Success: The Development of a Learner Portfolio and instruction on how to implement this documentation process into your own class or student. For further detailed information, Documenting Student Success: The Development of a Learner Portfolio can be found at <http://www.nald.ca/cbln/projects/dsuccess/Cover.htm>

HCLN Honour Roll

The Halifax Community Learning Network would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their outstanding support of our programs and activities:

- The Halifax Public Library
- Options Work Activity Society & Bloomfield Umbrella Group
- The All Saints Bedford Players
- Bruce Stewart of the Harbourfolk Society
- Saltscapes magazine
- Tys Hopkins of the Halifax Shopping Centre
- Charles Ramsey and the staff of the National Adult Literacy Database (www.nald.ca)
- Allen White and Richard Hatch for their technical support with the HCLN web site
- Wil Gamble and Matt Likely of Oatmeal Design for their assistance with this newsletter and other projects

Give the gift of reading in more ways than one!

Thanks to the generosity of the Community Spirit program, HCLN will receive \$10 for every subscription we sell of Saltscapes magazine. If you are interested in purchasing a subscription or helping to sell the magazine, please call 422-7648.

Upcoming Events

Contact 422-7648 or hcln@ns.sympatico.ca for more information

March 15th: HCLN Board Meeting

March 22nd: Learner Portfolios Workshop

March 30th: Tutor Orientation

April 5th: Tutor & Instructor Training starts (to be confirmed)

April 7th: Literacy Connections- Practitioners Forum

April 17th-24th: National Volunteer Week

April 23rd: Literacy Solutions Conference

April 28th and 29th: Barefoot in the Park by All Saints Bedford Players

May 7th: HCLN Book Sale

June 9th: Tunes for Literacy: a fundraiser with the Harbour Folk Society

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