

Learning is Living

HCLN



Halifax Community Learning Network

"a bridge to a brighter future"

YEARBOOK 2016



The Halifax Community Learning Network is a registered charity (# 85750 9335 RR0001) and donations can be made at:

<http://www.canadahelps.org>

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Dedication

The 2016 Yearbook of the Halifax Community Learning Network (HCLN), *Learning is Living* is dedicated to longtime educator and friend of HCLN, Lynne Wells-Orchard of the Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education.

Whether it's showing up at 8 am on a Saturday to help with professional development workshops or driving to Sheet Harbour to train literacy tutors, Lynne leads by example. She shows an interest in who we are, listens to our ideas, and inspires us to achieve the best for the learners we serve.

Thank you Lynne for your commitment to literacy. You help make our community a better place.



Photo courtesy of Literacy Nova Scotia

The Halifax Community Learning Network (HCLN) is one of thirty-seven community-based adult learning programs funded through the Nova Scotia Department of Labour and Advanced Education's Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning.

If you know someone who needs help improving his or her literacy skills or are interested in volunteering as a tutor, please contact us at:

(902) 422-7648

info@hcln.ca

www.hcln.ca

 @HalifaxHCLN

For information about other learning opportunities in Nova Scotia, check out the new Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning web site at:

www.goNSSAL.ca or call 1-877-466-7725

Many thanks to those who served on the 2015-16 Board:

Joshua Judah - Chair
Constance Glube - Honourary Chair
Bonnie Boivin- Secretary
Kacy Burn – Treasurer
Sandy Crocker – Member at Large
Margaret Cameron – Member at Large
Heather MacKenzie – Member at Large
Gary Mullins – Member at Large
Janice Hudson – Member at Large



*Josh and Bonnie celebrate a generous donation from our friends at
the Bookmark Halifax*

Introduction & Thanks

Denise Morley

The frogs (Northern Spring Peepers) are singing as I work on this yearbook - a sure sign of spring and of the end of another busy program year.

The title of the 2016 HCLN yearbook is ***Learning is Living***, and comes from a story written by Josephine Smith of the Central Library Adult Learning Program. Thank you Jossie, for sharing your learning journey with us. Your

passion for knowledge is inspiring and has made me reflect on what I've learned this year without having even set foot in a classroom. I took part in an excellent online course offered by Cape Breton University: Learning from Knowledge Keepers of Mi'kma'ki. And in March, I learned how to tap trees and make maple syrup - and also that it takes a lot longer than you think!

It is an honour to be involved in helping Josephine and so many others, and it is a pleasure to share in the success that ***Learning is Living*** represents. I am continually amazed by what HCLN students are capable of, and the courage they show in overcoming challenges. Their enthusiasm for learning is clearly evident all through these yearbook pages. In addition to the writings from



After days of tapping and boiling, one delicious jar of maple syrup!

our learners, the yearbook includes messages from staff, community partners and many of those who volunteer as tutors and board members. Your efforts and continued work are inspiring and appreciated.

Have a great summer of sunshine and learning!

Thanks to the following groups and individuals for being friends of the Halifax Community Learning Network:

Association of the Nova Scotia Community Learning Organizations

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Bedford-Sackville Learning Network

Bookmark Book Store

Chebucto West & Halifax Community Health Board

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Learning is Living

By Josephine Smith

It's funny how the thing we might be looking for can be right under our nose, and yet we miss seeing it. Even though I worked footsteps away from Halifax Public Library for years, I never considered it as a location for continuing my education as an adult.



Krista & Josephine learning together

On my daily walk to work, I would often stop and talk with a friend of mine in the neighborhood— Mr. Ford. We enjoyed a good chat and would have a laugh talking about everything under the sun. One day, his daughter, Jen, was visiting. We had a great conversation, and ended up talking about personal goals. I told them how I would love to have gone further in school and wished I could go back. I told them how I wanted to improve my reading, writing, and spelling. Jen told me that the library offered free continuing education courses for adults. I was so surprised - it seemed too good to be true. I called the next day and made an appointment, an action which ended up being a huge turning point in my life.

I met with a woman named Jen, who coordinated the literacy program at the Halifax library at that time. I was very nervous, especially when I discovered I needed to

complete a test- an assessment of my level of literacy. Jen helped me relax- she was wonderful – and discover that instead of being nervous I could be myself, and even find it fun. She checked out some books for me to read, and said she would be assigning me a tutor and would call me soon. I remember leaving, my bag full of books, feeling inspired, excited, and blessed.

I didn't anticipate how difficult it would be to be in the role of a student again, but I feel God gave me the strength and will to persevere. The skills I knew most people around me took for granted and found easy – like writing a simple sentence or turning on a computer – were challenging. I even found listening difficult, but I knew it was important.

Spelling and grammar were tools I was challenged with improving, and still are. They are skills which might seem merely technical, but are actually very meaningful. They have allowed me to communicate more clearly, more completely, and to describe things with greater detail. Being able to write and read properly has transformed my understanding of what it means to share. I now have the ability to tell my own stories and to appreciate literature—books, films, theatre, all stories— in a new light. I have learned how to be reflective and critical, to really think about what I'm reading or writing about.

I now know that learning is a never-ending process. It's not just a way of living, it IS living. It's made me more socially confident, and added to my overall well-being. I have learned above all that there will always be more that I can learn. What a blessing.



Photo courtesy of the Canadian Jewish News

Halifax Community Learning Network Board Member Constance Glube passed away in February. Constance was a retired judge who achieved much during her 84 years, and she shared her kindness and wisdom with HCLN for more than a decade. The HCLN yearbook is one of the many results of her generous support. A heartfelt thank you and farewell to you, Constance Glube, from all of us at HCLN. You will be greatly missed.

Remembering Mrs. Glube

By Joshua Judah

When I left private practise in Bedford and joined HRM Legal, I also left the Bedford Literacy Network and joined the Halifax Community Learning Network Board. I was the legal advisor to the Bedford Literacy Network and was asked to fill the same role with the

Halifax Community Learning Network. Just prior to the first meeting, the Executive Director informed me that she had recruited, “an interesting recently retired person to also serve on the Board.” I then received an email informing me that it was Constance Glube. I immediately contacted the HCLN Director and told her that I could not possibly serve on the Board as the legal advisor. The Director asked me if it was because I disliked Mrs. Glube. I smiled at the misunderstanding. I explained that I had known Constance Glube all my life and that she was a wonderful person. My problem was that it was not possible for me to provide legal advice with her sitting at the table. She knew infinitely more about the law than me and I would be afraid to open my mouth.

At our first meeting, Mrs. Glube asked me to call her, “Connie”, but the best I could do was “Mrs. Glube.” She was not my peer. I could, however, think of her as my Mother’s friend. My personal hang up aside, Mrs. Glube always introduced herself as, “Connie” and as, “retired” and was always warm and welcoming to our students, tutors and teachers.

I had the good fortune of being welcomed into the Glube household at an early age. In my neighbourhood, many of the kids played in her family’s house and fished off their wharf. My earliest memories are of a kind, welcoming and gentle person who was always happy to see us. I recall an afternoon on the wharf at age seven during which, in a moment of excitement, I dropped my fishing rod in the water. Someone ran up to the house to tell Mrs. Glube. She came down, very quickly assessed the situation and came up with a solution. Using someone else’s rod, she fished mine out of the ocean. I remember

thinking, “boy, she is smart!” I had no idea. I think about my childhood revelation and laugh. I was correct. Mrs. Glube was brilliant.

During law school I had the opportunity to Clerk for Mrs. Glube. I remember a file involving a company that was going out of business. She asked me to read through it and offer my opinion. The company was unable to restructure their debt and the Order seems appropriate to me. Mrs. Glube agreed that the file supported the issuance of the Order. She noted, however, that the Company employed many people and was located in an economically depressed part of the Province. She did not want all those people to lose their jobs. When Court opened, she told the Parties just that and suggested they make another attempt to save the Company. There was no sense of threat in her direction. Even as a law student I understood her request as an expression of her compassion. She was not upset, she just seemed determined to do her best for others. About an hour later the Parties returned. The debt had been restructured and the Company survived another day.

Decade after decade I saw the same thing in Mrs. Glube. Always welcoming and compassionate. Always resolved and determined.

Between the time a person passes away and the burial, the Jewish people do not like to leave the body alone. I was granted the privilege of staying with Mrs. Glube’s body for a few hours. My plan was to read Torah and pray. I ended up spending most of the time just thinking. Not profound thoughts. I thought about what makes me happy. I thought about the joy of being welcoming to

others. The joy of being connected to the people I love. I thought about how much easier life is when you have a positive attitude and embrace life. I thought about how a positive attitude enhances resolve and determination. I thought about how my thoughts were being guided by Mrs. Glube's spirit.

Reprinted from Nova Voce (Spring Issue), the newsletter of the Canadian Bar Association-NS

I wish I had listened to the people trying to help me a long time ago but I'm really excited to be learning now. I have lots of support and feel certain I can reach my learning goals.
~ HCLN student

Message from the Honourable Kelly Regan, Minister of Department of Labour and Advanced Education

Congratulations to the learners, staff and board of the Halifax Community Learning Network for another successful year. We are extremely proud of our partnership with the Halifax Community Learning Network (HCLN), which plays a vital role in the development and delivery of quality literacy and upgrading programs that meet the needs of adult learners. We know HCLN works tirelessly to promote and advance literacy and life-long learning.

The importance of adult literacy to the Province of Nova Scotia cannot be underestimated. Your work and learning are important; you play vital roles in ensuring Nova Scotia has the people with the necessary skills, knowledge, and credentials to succeed at home, in the community, and in the workforce.



Your volunteer board, dedicated staff, and volunteer tutors are to be commended for their long-standing commitment and contributions to adult literacy. Thank you for all the work you do to help Nova Scotians achieve personal, employment, and higher education goals.

Message from Mayor Mike Savage

As Mayor of Halifax and on behalf of Regional Council, it is my distinct pleasure to extend congratulations and sincere best wishes to the Halifax Community Learning Network (HCLN) for another successful year of providing support to adult learners working toward achieving career and life goals.

Literacy is the foundation for all learning and allows us to fully experience the world. Thank you for encouraging people to pursue their aspirations, fulfill their ambitions,

and satisfy their thirst for knowledge throughout their lifetime.

I want to acknowledge, with gratitude, the commitment and dedication of HCLN, the Community Board of Directors, Volunteers, Tutors, Learners, and supporters for their valuable contributions to the success of the Network and for enhancing the quality of life of adult learners here in our region.

Thank you for making a difference.

Message from Janet Frittenberg, tutor

In September I started tutoring with the Halifax Community Learning Network for their adult literacy program. It was recommended by my supervisor to take the Practitioner Training Program offered through Literacy Nova Scotia. I have found

that it has helped me immeasurably with all areas of work with my learners, and I cannot recommend it highly enough.



Janet graduating from the Literacy Nova Scotia Practitioner Training Program in April

As a non-techno person I was apprehensive about taking a course on-line, but the instructor was very helpful and I learned a great deal which will help me in the future with my computer use. One particularly enjoyable experience was when one of my learners helped me by being the subject for two of my assignments. We worked together, and she had the satisfaction of knowing that I could not have done it without her, which really helped with the motivation to work towards her future. Top marks for the Practitioner Training Program!

Message from Helen Desmond-Morris

Adult Education Coordinator (Metro)

Nova Scotia Department of

Labour and Advanced Education

The Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning (NSSAL) is proud to partner with the Halifax Community Learning Network (HCLN) who deliver tuition free adult learning programs on behalf of NSSAL. This non-profit organization continues to empower and enrich the lives of adult learners who enroll in their tutoring and GED prep program.

The Executive Director, Denise Morley is to be commended for her exemplary work and commitment to adult education – thank you Denise! Thank you also to the staff, trained volunteers and committed Board members of the HCLN whose hard work and dedication is so essential in promoting literacy and life-long learning.

Once I was embarrassed about not finishing high school. Now I'm telling everyone I have my GED and telling others to join the class. Everyone at HCLN is so encouraging and Brendan is a great teacher.

~ HCLN student

Message from GED instructor Brendan Tarry

I want to take a moment to recognize everyone involved in the HCLN programs. Whether you are a motivated student, a dedicated volunteer or a hard working employee, together we've made a positive impact to each other's lives as well as a constructive difference to the entire community.

I couldn't imagine my past year without the interactions I've had with such wonderful students. A huge congratulations go out to every one of the Spryfield GED class participants for your massive personal achievements. You've made the program an overwhelming success. Thank you. Looking forward to hearing about the great things you get up to in your futures.



*Brendan and Delgan Reginald
Tarry*

My Grandfather

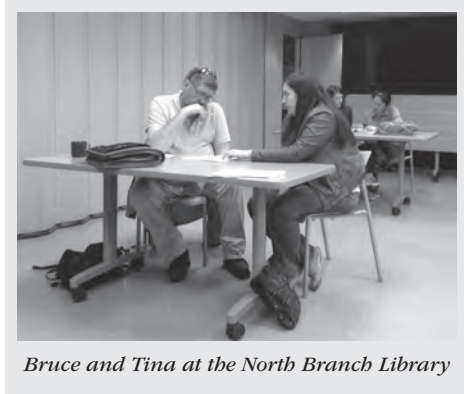
By Bruce O'Neill

My grandfather was a great man. He fought for Canada in the First World War. As a child, I was proud of him for fighting for his country.

During the war, he witnessed many horrible things. He was also gassed while serving in France. So when he came home from the war, he was never the same.

During our conversations when I was a child, we would start out joking and laughing and then things would change. His expression would change from happy to sad, then he would start yelling. My grandmother would tell us not to worry: it was because of the war.

My grandfather came home from the war a changed man. I admired him for what he did: going to war and coming home, and trying to live a normal life afterwards.



Bruce and Tina at the North Branch Library

Message from Rita Francis

As Acting ALP Coordinator at the Keshen Goodman Library it has been a pleasure getting to know all the hardworking learners and their dedicated tutors. It takes commitment and perseverance to accomplish your goals whatever they may be, and I was privileged to watch that happen every week over the past three months. B. B. King said “The beautiful thing about learning is that no one can take it away from you”, I couldn’t agree more; it truly is a gift you give to yourself. I hope that everyone has an amazing and safe summer and look forward to having you return to the program in September.



Rita and the Thursday gang at Keshen Goodman

Future Plans

By Melvin Neil

I’ve been coming to the Halifax Community Learning Network for a few years. This year I studied for my driver’s license and studied some Biology. Erica will not let me give up, so I keep coming back. Now I have plans to study Biology in September of 2016 and



Melvin reads his story at the year-end party

academic math in September 2017 so I can get into a 44-week course called Primary Paramedic in September 2018. Thank you to everyone at HCLN.

You never stop learning. If more people knew they could have a free tutor, I think more people would want to learn. I would recommend this program to anyone who can't read or write very well.
~ HCLN student

Message from Rachel Lebowitz

Back in March, Denise asked me to compile notes on the learners' goals and successes for the final report. I knew some of them already of course, but so often, I'm rushing around getting things organized (and the coffee made, natch) that I don't always get to sit down with each match. I knew this would be a big job. I got out the tutor reports from last June and the learning logs that tutors (and sometimes learners) fill out every week. And I got to work.

It was a rough time for me. I was exhausted with the work I'd been doing with both jobs at the library, plus I was dealing with other stuff in my life. I felt burnt out. But the work had to be done, so I came into the library on a quiet day and holed up in my office.

Here's some of what I found: learners who got help for other programs, like NSCC's Adult Learning Program or a Medical Transcriptionist Course or Licensed Practical

Nursing. A learner who continued working at a bakery, where her skills and self-esteem improved. Learners who have passed all of the GED tests taken thus far or who will soon be going in and giving them a try. A learner who voted for the first time in his life. A learner who wrote an excellent draft of her resume. A learner whose tutor noticed that she is now more willing to try new things and to read aloud.

From tutor extraordinaire Natalie MacIsaac, on her fabulous learner, Carson Fraser: His reading improves every week. I am very impressed with his progress.

Thank you so much to the tutors who come every week and work so hard, to the excellent staff at Halifax North Library, to everyone who supports this program. But thanks most of all to you learners for teaching the rest of us, over and over, how to persevere.

That day in March, I finally finished my report. I compiled all the notes and sent them off to Denise, and the feeling I had when it was done was, yes, relief at a job completed but, more significantly, satisfaction and joy in being a part of all this. I am so proud of you all.

A letter from Mariam

By Mariam Nikuze

Hello! My name is Mariam Nikuze. I was born in Congo and came to Canada in October 2013. I came 2 months pregnant, with 5 children and my younger sister.

When I came here I understood a little bit of English, so I went to Bedford to study English, but I didn't go there for a long time because I was pregnant and I was not feeling well. Then after 6 months I gave birth, and they sent



me someone to teach me at my house for 3 months. After that I got to continue at ISANS. I was in level 3.

In June 2015 I went to Cunard to do the test. I passed it for level 2. Even though I passed it was very difficult for me. That's why I come to look for help at the library. I have two tutors for English, mathematics and computers. They are so helpful, nice, and kind.

I also appreciate Rita and Erica for finding me the tutors. I wish this program can continue because it's so helpful to everyone.

Thank you for your kindness and help.

Catching Up with some of the Spryfield GED Class!

HCLN offers GED classes in Spryfield. We've seen a lot of people come and go over the years and decided to check in with those who attended the program to see

where they are now. This is what we heard:

Matthew: It felt really good to pass the GED. I did it for myself and to show my kids they should get grade 12. I couldn't have done it alone. The teacher and my girlfriend helped a lot. I work evenings and had to get my three kids to school then go to class. I really liked the class. It was a small so we all got the attention and help we need. The teacher made all the difference. He treated us like adults. We had a friendly competition to see who would pass each test. Now I'm thinking of taking more courses. My dream job is to be a motorcycle mechanic.

Nicole: I still remember how nervous I was when I started the class. I was out of school for a long time. I thought I'd be the oldest person there but I wasn't. I tried other classes. They were downtown and too far to travel. I was glad the class was close to home. Everybody there was nice and the workshops were great. I liked the CPR course and decided to look into nursing. I didn't have enough credits to get into the LPN (Licensed Practical Nurse) program so I tried for the Continuing Care Assistant course. I was on the wait list for 6 months and then the call came. I was in!

I had to figure out a way for my kids to get to school and how to get to Dartmouth by bus every day. It was hard because I needed time to study and my kids wanted help with their homework. My sister helped me out and a year later I passed the course. I took the summer off and started looking for work when the kids were back in school. I got nervous again when I was called for an interview and the teacher in Spryfield let me come

to the workshop, Acing the Interview. The other lady there told me to find something nice to wear at Frenchy's and to hold my head up high. Who gets a job with one interview? I got hired at Shannex. I was worried about shift work but my sister told me to go for it and she would help. I love my job and last summer we went to Ontario to visit my dad. My first real vacation in twelve years. I'm glad I didn't chicken out of the (GED) class.



Rick: I came back from out west in December and started the (GED) class in January. My girlfriend made me do it but I wanted to quit almost every day. Well that didn't happen. I got used to doing homework it wasn't hard to keep up except for the math. That was really hard. I wouldn't have passed math without a tutor. My girlfriend helped me too and you guys wouldn't let me give up. I passed everything but math the first time I wrote. I couldn't believe it. It took me two more tries to pass math but yeah, I did it. We had a party to celebrate. I still have the GED paper on my wall.



The teacher told me to try Metroworks to look for jobs. I got a job as a bricklayer but it didn't pay much. We went back out west and I got a job in Saskatchewan but my girlfriend was homesick. We came back. I thought about going to the Community College to do a Steamfitter course but I'd have to leave my job. We have a daughter now. It's not easy to know what to do.

Tanya: Oh my god, that class was the best thing I ever did! I had a tutor at the library. We did the practice test and she said I could pass the GED with a little help. I was out of school for twenty years and thought it would take a lot of help. She told me about the class in Spryfield and I figured, why not? The teacher and everyone there were nice. I was the oldest person in the class and I got teased about it. I didn't know how to turn on a computer but I wasn't the only one.

Social Studies was my worst subject but I passed the GED with flying colours. I was finished with school for good. You guys told me about the Women's Employment (Outreach) program and to check out their workshops. I met with someone there and signed up for a course to improve my self-confidence. Passing the GED test made me brave. I didn't care if I was the oldest one in the room. I took another course on looking for a job after 45. They were really good courses. I'm still looking for the perfect job. I work evenings at Lawton's but I might apply to NSCC for an Office Administrator course.

Derek: I dropped out because of the bus strike. It was hard to get there without a car. I took the class so I could turn my life around. My parole officer said it would be a good idea. I liked the writing workshop

with Jenny.

My grandfather was a fisherman. I don't like boats. My mother moved to Halifax to get away from my dad. That's why I ended up here. I got kicked out of every school in Nova Scotia but you guys let me in. Now I wish I had stayed. There's a lot going on in this town and I found some trouble. Guns and drugs and stuff. I left town to get away but I'm back now. Need to lay low for a few months. I'd like to get my GED some day. I want to get my life back on track.



Chris: My girlfriend took the class and got her GED and she told me to try it.

I did a lot of jobs over the years. I worked at Dairy Queen and a bottle depot. We went out west and lived in Brooks, two hours from Calgary. It's so different from here, it feels like another country. We didn't like it. It doesn't feel like a community. Everybody's there for work. I got a job in a meat plant. We stayed as long as we could then decided to come home. That's when I signed up for the GED class. I couldn't have done it

on my own. Math and writing were my worst subjects. The teacher taught me not to panic when I go to write the tests. That helped a lot. I was excited when I passed. Now we have to figure out how to take more courses at NSCC. The teacher told me about the test-drive program so I might do that.

It took me a while to start the program but once I went to my first session, I loved it. The fact that I can learn new things on my own makes me really happy. I now believe I can get my GED and start focusing on the career I want, which is hairdressing.

~ HCLN student

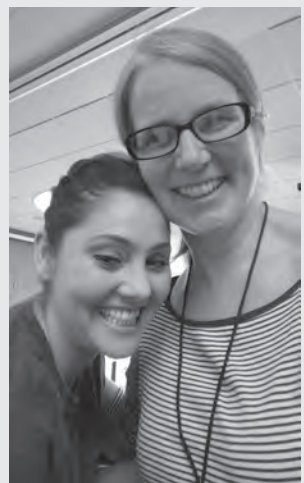
Message from Erica Butler

I can't believe another year of learning, studying, preparing, and practicing has come and gone.

A hearty "Congratulations!" to everyone who took the time out of their busy lives this year to focus on learning.

It's not always easy to learn as an adult. We face challenges, from the responsibilities of our lives and our families, to understanding our own learning styles and differences. But the

learners in this program have taken on their challenges head on. And because of my job, I get to witness it



Nicole and Erica share a selfie at Central

every week. It's impressive and inspiring. It reminds me never to give up on my own goals.

Have a great summer, everyone. You deserve it.

Returning to School

By Magdi Kori

I have been in Canada for two years. Since I arrived in Canada, I started school at the Halifax Regional School Board Adult English Language Program in Bedford. Then, I changed to Cunard Learning



Magdi and Alex at the Central Library

Center because it has extra subjects like Math and Science. I started lessons at the Public Library as well with a gentleman named Alex who is my tutor. I met nice people there at the library like tutor coordinator Erica and Alex.

I benefitted a lot from all these programs. I improved my listening, speaking, reading, writing skills and sending emails. Before, my English was bad, I could just say “hi”, “water” and “how are you”. I didn’t think one day that I would be good, so I look forward to getting my high school diploma. I am motivated to return to school. I feel that doing homework and getting good marks in school will help me get good work. I know that if you have a good education your salary will be better than a

person without one.

Finally, I would like to say thank you so much to all my teachers.

God bless you, all of you.

Learning

By DMC

I wish that when I was young they had tutors. I had problems with pronouncing some words and when I had to read in class some of the kids laughed at me, so I wouldn't say anything.

It was hard to help my kids with their homework. We would sit at the kitchen table. Math and reading were easy for me at first because they were in primary or grade one, but when they got in higher grades it was hard. I am proud of my kids. They are both good readers without my help.

I am learning how to read and spell thanks to my tutor Elizabeth. I still have some trouble pronouncing some words but she doesn't make me say them over and over. She has patience with me and she makes learning fun. She will start a story and I will add something to it, then she will add something. Sometimes I only write one line then on other times I can write a few lines. The stories are different all the time.

Growing Up

By Diane

When I was little, I had speech trouble and I stuttered so that made me withdrawn and it was hard to make friends. Because all my life people would make fun of me. They would call me stupid. I had been taking reading and speech therapy all my life since the age of six until I was 16 years. Since this happened to me it left me shy and with low self-esteem. Now I have trust issues. But these issues are getting better with Rachel and Laurie and this place, knowing that we all need help once in a while. Thank God for the understanding and patience of these people who give their time and support to help us.



Laurie and Diane at the North Branch Library

Thanks for offering Tutor Basics. It was a long day but we learned a lot. I liked meeting tutors from other programs and the chance to share ideas.

~HCLN tutor

Shauna's Life Journey

I remember my father let me come up to Toronto when I was 5 years old he showed me around town. It made me feel good to spend time with my father.

When I was 6 or 7 years old I met some new friends at school. Some people bullied me when I was at school. They called me bad names and it hurt my feelings.



Kevin and Sbauna take a break from learning

I started working when I was a teenager and the best was when I was working with kids. I helped the daycare workers when the kids napped and I got the food ready for them to eat.

When I was in my 30's I learned about life experiences through my mistakes. I learned from other people that I sometimes do things wrong in my life. I try to fix the mistakes but it does not always work out as planned.

I learned from someone at a coffee shop about the Halifax Community Learning Network and I had to fill out paper work for the program. I want to learn to read better and get a good job. I like the program and it makes me feel good to learn new things.

The best thing about the Adult Learning Program is the welcoming atmosphere and the connection I make with my tutor.

~ HCLN student

The Canadian Flag

By Emmanuel Negash

The flag of Canada is rectangular and the colour is red and white and the middle has a leaf. The colour of the leaf is red. The colour around the leaf is white.



Kim and Negash at Halifax North

The first section of the flag is red. The second section is white with a red leaf. The third section is red.

I like the design of the flag of Canada.

I am proud to be Canadian because they received me. Before, I was living in Sudan. I came to Halifax in 2006.

Why I Show Up

By Kimberly M. King

When I was a child, my family had a friend with a Volkswagen Vanagon. He would come to visit and park in the driveway, popping up the roof of the Vanagon to reveal a sleeping space—it was like having a tent in your vehicle! It was a big treat for me to be allowed to read while stretched out inside. It was cozy and secure

and a place I could be alone with a book. I could travel back in time or across the globe! I could get to know characters and spend time with them. I could escape for a while...and still hear someone when they called me back inside for supper.

The memory of that sense of freedom is part of why I tutor with the Halifax Community Learning Network. I understand the power and the joy of being able to read and express oneself through the written word and I want to help others improve these skills.

One of the other reasons I come to the Halifax North Branch every Wednesday is because I sense such a desire to succeed in the learners who participate in the program. That desire motivates me to find new and creative ways to help the learning happen.

The fact that there is usually laughter, often good conversation, and regularly an exchange of smiles with almost everyone connected to the library and the tutoring program is a welcome bonus, too!

My Interview

By John Cromwell

I was interviewed by CBC-TV about how I felt about voting. The interview happened outside of Hope Cottage after I had voted in the Advance Poll. They asked me if I wanted to be interviewed. I was happy to be interviewed. The interview was alright but I was a little nervous about being on TV.

She asked me about how I felt about the election. I told her that it was my first time voting for 20 to 30 years. I told her I like to vote because it gives us a chance to know where we are heading and gives us hope for a better future. Then she asked me how many people eat at Hope Cottage. I told her at least 160 to 200 people come every day.



Robert and John at the North Branch Library

Then I also said what about the people who don't have anything. How are we going to live in the 2010-2020? What are we going to do? Are we going to live better lives or are we going to be pushed around?

The whole point of voting is to change things so we can live a decent life.

Christmas With My Family

By Raymond Drake

A long time ago, at home around Christmas time, my family & I spent



Raymond and Maureen work on computer skills

Christmas time together. We all spent time sitting around a real wood fireplace passing out presents.

This is my favourite memory.

Steering Me Away

By Don Murphy

There's a peaceful group of people in the literacy program. Everyone keeps real busy, teaching and studying. It's not a bit dull.

Carly and Rachel push at times. Rachel is an old timer kind of worker, relentlessly attacking the job. She is helpful to all the pupils.

This program gives people courage to live on. Getting a set time to work and study and calm down, not under or overdoing it. Finding a clean, quiet atmosphere. I have come here for many years and I always see the people who work in this library being extremely helpful and kind, with lots of patience when dealing with the public. Sometimes addiction problems get in the way. This program helps steer me away from my addictions.

Mexico Wedding

By Maria Terrio

I received a wedding invitation from a Mexican friend whom I haven't seen for a long time. We were long-term good friends, although we were busy in our life, but we haven't forgotten each other.



Princesa and Maria

Often time we will check each other out by Facebook. Thank goodness, someone had created all those social networks. It helps us stay connected in friendship together. Sometime we will chat a little bit on Facebook or on Facetime. We haven't seen each other for seven years, but I have a great friendship with her. She is a kind, patient, friendly, lovable, and loyal friend. I am so happy that she was sharing her happiest moment with me. She found the man she loves and was ready to spend all her lifetime with him.

On the wedding day, we all arrived in the beautiful Catholic church. My friend and I sat down and looked all around our surroundings. The place and people were breathtaking. The church was big, and everywhere there were amazing flower arrangements. They were mostly tropical roses. It reflected love. All the guests and family members were dressed up very fancy, especially the ladies. I could see all the colorful dresses contrasted

with bright sunny light and tons of jewelry on perfect dark tan figures. I patiently waited for her to arrive down the aisle. I had imagined how beautiful a bride she was. I could imagine the groom being anxious to see her, and ready to take her in his heart. Once the bride arrived the classical music started and everyone was standing up as the bride's father gave her away. He gave his daughter to a man that he trusted would take good care of her.

At the middle of the ceremony, both sides of the parents put on and take off the crystal lasso rosary around the groom and bride. It is popular in Mexican culture to do this, when a couple marries. It's a symbol of unity. After the ceremony, the bride and groom walked out of church and everyone gave them hugs and kisses and offered best wishes to them.

My Baby Forever

By Kionna Tasco

Your little button nose,
your sweet baby feet,
that amazing little giggle
that sweeps me off my feet.

So sweet and so innocent
just the way you are;
the way your imagination flows
every where that you are.

Your smile and your laugh

will always make my
day.
The day you were born
was my ultimate best
day.

Today, tomorrow and
always
my baby forever you'll
be!

Today, tomorrow and
always
your mom forever I'll be!



Kionna and her boys

A Brave Woman

By Mary Thompson

This story happened in Upper Canada. Ontario is what we call it today. It happened in 1813.

A war started in 1812 between the British and the Americans.

Laura Secord was married to James. James was wounded in this war. Laura heard the American soldiers talking. The soldiers said that over 500 U.S. troops would attack 50 British troops. Laura's husband was still crippled. She took it on her own to warn the British.

She walked 20 miles. She hid from the U.S. soldiers. She was hot and tired and lonely and scared. She was bitten. She was not dressed for a long walk. There were also

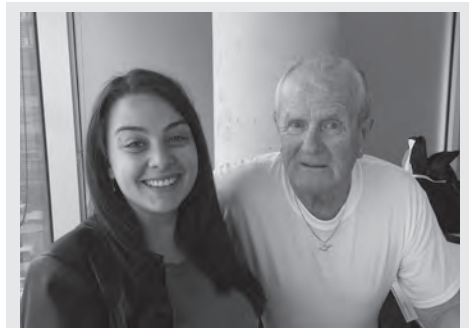
wild animals around.

She met some Indians. First they thought she was a spy for the Americans, but they took her to the British just the same. She told the British Commander about the American plan. The Commander got the Indians to help fight the Americans. The British won the war in 1814. Laura was a brave woman. She is a heroine for Canada now.

My Short and Sweet story

By Frank

This year I read a couple of books and a lot of newspaper articles. Now I can read the Metro newspaper by myself and I feel good about it. I like to read the newspaper when I go to Scotia Square when I am having a coffee. I also like to go to the Public Gardens when it is nice and sunny and I like to read a book there.



Emily and Frank at Central

Dreams

By Diane

We all have dreams when we are growing up. Some dream of being doctors, nurses, police officers and

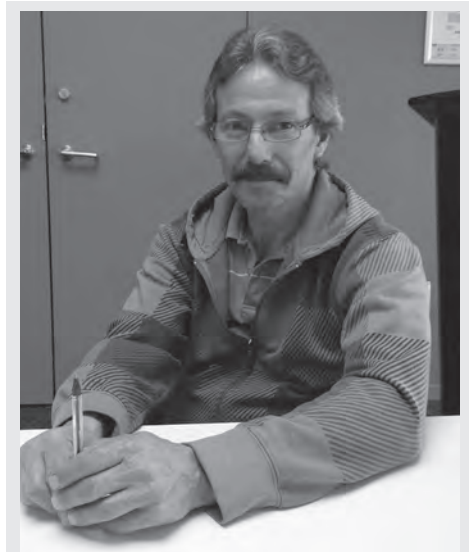
firefighters. I dream of changing the world. My dream is to stop pain and hunger in the world. No fighting and learning to leave well enough alone. Back in the day, kids got along and played together. They played jump rope and hopscotch and it was safe to play outside until supper time when your mother called you. Now, 30, 40 years later you hear stories of people getting shot and raped. Our kids are being bullied. No one is around for them. We need more support and better places for our kids to hang out with their friends, talking about sports and doing homework. We have to save the planet and stop cutting down trees and polluting the water in the ocean. We are taking everything away from the animals. I wish in the future everyone would take a step back into the quieter and greener times.

Volunteering

By Paul Whynacht

I always used to help people before, just doing odd stuff around their yards and houses. But when I helped do Sunday Suppers, I told a girl, I never served people before. She said I would be okay. So I gave it a shot.

I went around from table to table pouring



Paul at the Central Library

drinks. I met a lot of nice people. I talked to quite a few of them. I felt good serving people. And when I left that evening, before I got to the door, I felt like I was glowing. I felt like God was blessing me for being a good person.

The Choir Fundraising Concert

By April Sherman

I am part of a choir in my church which is called the Revival Tabernacle. I've been in the church choir for 19 years.

Our choir is preparing for a fundraising concert for the Cornwallis Baptist

Church. It will be held at the Spatz Theatre at the new Citadel High. Two of the songs that we'll be singing will be: Kirk Franklin's song "Pray for Me", Barnes and Brown's "At the Foot of the Cross".

We did a fundraising concert for the East Preston Church in March.

I'm looking forward to being a part of this fundraising concert.



My New Apartment

By Darlene Coulstring

I am glad to be moving because people in my building are not getting along and fighting with each other. In addition, the landlord doesn't maintain the building very well. Many things are left undone and tenant requests are ignored. Housing doesn't care about the wellbeing of those who live there. One day, the housing secretary gave me a week's notice to move, and I have been there for 16 years. The landlord wants my old apt and another to make a new foyer for his building in an attempt to improve it.



Leigh Anne and Darlene at Central

I am busy packing and cleaning up the old apartment, which is a huge amount of work. My friend Dale is helping me in this respect because I cannot do it all myself.

Housing found another apartment for me, a one-bedroom not too far away. I already signed my lease and paid my rent. The new apartment has a kitchen, bathroom, living room and storage. I have hardwood floors and my own doorbell. I think I'm going to be happy there.

My Life as Working Woman

By Julie Stanhope

I like to work because it keeps me out of trouble! At my jobs, I get to meet lots of people, which I enjoy. I have two jobs right now; one of my jobs is at a bakery, the other is at a store. In total, I work twenty hours a week.



Julie Stanhope, working woman

The Bakery

I work at Stonehearth Bakery. I work sixteen hours a week from 9:00 to 1:00 from Monday to Thursday. The Chefs at the bakery are very nice and kind. My co-workers are too. My bosses' names are John and Shawn and I like them both. At the Bakery, we make bread, bagels, buns, rolls, focaccia and, sometimes we make cookies.

In the morning I get up, dressed, go downstairs and eat breakfast. After breakfast, I walk to the bus stop where I get the bus to work.

Once I get to work, I put my lunch in the fridge and pick up my keys. I go into the bakery and say good morning to everyone. Then I wash my hands and put on a pair of gloves.

By the time I get to work, the chefs have already mixed and baked the products. My job is to take the bread off the tall racks and put it on the long rack to cool down. Then I clean the trays and parchment paper to get rid of the seeds.

I am learning to weigh and mix the dough but I still have a lot of practicing to do before I can do it on my own.

The Store

I work at Winners on Mumford Road for four hours a week. I have been working there for seventeen years. I work part time on Saturdays and some times on Sunday. At Winners, I work in the fitting room. I count the items customers are taking into the changing rooms. My supervisor sometimes asks me to work in other departments or puts me on bathroom duties.

I like the customers at Winners. I also like my co-workers and the managers because they are nice to me.

I like working because I enjoy meeting the customers. I like learning new things and keeping busy. My dream is to open my own business down the road. I would like to be my own boss and be independent.

My Life Story

By Carolyn Goyetche

My name is Carolyn and I was born the 2nd oldest of 5 children. I have three brothers and one sister. I was raised in a financially challenged home. The greatest joy in my life is that in April 1980, I became an Aunt for the



Carolyn celebrates at the year-end party

first time I was so proud and then I had three more nieces and then in 1990, I became a godmother to my 4th niece; we have a very special relationship. Another joy in my life was in May 2000 when my oldest niece made me a great Aunt so all together I have two great nieces and two great nephews and also I am a great Aunt to my niece Brittney's fur baby a 110 lb. French Mastiff. With all the joy in my life, it's is perfect, well almost: I never received my high school diploma.

My mother had a stroke; we needed to look after her. When I was at school most subjects were difficult for me to understand, including math which frustrated me greatly. The school system told my parents they figured I had a learning disability and they recommended for me to go to Special Education classes and Work Study Programs.

In the fall of 2011, I went to the GED class offered by the Halifax Community Learning Network where I worked

my way through a thick and sometimes confusing GED book. I learned about grammar, fractions, geometry, the dreaded algebra, and how to write an essay. I have already passed the Language Arts tests and I have three more to go. I have been working hard with my tutor.

At times, I was doubted but my sister in law reminds me of how proud she is of me and she is behind me 100%. Now that my studies are well underway, I realize that this journey isn't just about getting my GED; it shows me that I have the ability to learn.

So now I have two goals. I may not be able to change the past, but I can certainly change my future. I can do it and I will prove it.

My parents brought me up to have compassion and respect for all people. Also my father had a saying that if you do not have anything nice to say that you do not say anything at all. The two guiding principles in my life have been: Everything happens for a reason and It's not what you do, but the fact that you share special gifts. My family and those I have met over my life's journey planted the seeds and nourished these values and beliefs. It not just by example or philosophical thought but through experience that I have developed and adopted these principles and incorporated them in my life.

A special thanks to all the people that helped me through this journey:

HCLN staff Denise & Pat, tutors Steve, Kathy, and Katherine and the staff of the Captain William Spry Library. Thank you all.

Message from David Hansen

Branch Manager, Captain William Spry Public Library

The Adult Literacy Upgrading program at CWS library is not just about students improving their skills. It is also about creating relationships, such as those that happen between learners and tutors. But also between library staff and learners, who are also library customers.

One learner in particular this year has developed a close relationship with many branch staff. We often all share a laugh or two, talk politics and grumble about the weather. I was touched recently when she presented me with a slip of paper with the answer to a question I had pondered during an earlier conversation. This HCLN learner had went online, found the answer, wrote it out in beautiful handwriting and presented to me. I was pleased to know the answer, and even more pleased at her thoughtfulness.

My Tribute to Gazia

By Heather Myatt

My cat's name is Gaz. Sometimes I call her Gazia when I want her attention. She is a multi- coloured tabby cat who is very loving and cuddly - but she



Aileen and Heather at Keshen Goodman

can be very moody. She likes supper ! She loves her Seafood Supreme !

Gaz doesn't like other cats so I cannot take her visiting. She would get hissy and fight with the other cats and she may get hurt.

She makes me happy because she loves me. She shows her love by greeting me with cuddles and meows. I love her because she makes me laugh. She is really funny after she eats and licks her lips to let me know it was tasty!

Gaz is the best pet because I would be very lonely without her. She is always there when I need her. And, I will always be there for her.

Tutoring with HCLN

By Rachel R. Sly

Hello! My name is Rachel. I am an educator and mentor with a keen awareness of both innovative and traditional curriculum; and an enthusiasm to inspire others with the importance of life-long learning.



Rachel & Abubakar learning together

Recently, I was given the opportunity to become a volunteer tutor with HCLN at the Halifax Public Library. With busy lives, it can be hard to find time to volunteer. On the other hand, the right match can help you find friends and learn new skills. This experience lets you learn about yourself and others while promoting personal growth and self-esteem.

Being my first time tutoring, I was excited to see what was in store for me. This program is remarkable! The coordinating staff and volunteers are truly making a difference; and it is a pleasure to be able to contribute to the organization in such a positive way. Watching students develop and strive academically has been one of the most unique and rewarding experiences for me. I am thankful for the opportunity to work with such extraordinary people.

HCLN provides programs that enhance learning and facilitate academic growth. Helping a person improve his or her reading, writing, math or English skills is truly very rewarding. In order to succeed it is important to face learning with determination. Work harder than you did yesterday by constantly challenging yourself. A successful person begins with 2 beliefs. That the future can be better than the present; and that you have the power to make it so. Always remember to be kind, work hard, stay humble, smile often and never stop learning.

Thanks for coming to speak with us yesterday. We learned a lot about the new GED test and some of our clients are interested in free tutoring. You guys rock!
~ Community Health Worker

Recovery, Change & Success

By Jessica L Coiffi

I chose this title for this story because it sums up my life up to this point in time. I would like to write about my recovery from an opiate addiction. Unless you have been addicted to opiates yourself, you probably don't know what such an addiction is like. Let me explain it this way, it's like a bad nightmare that you can't wake up from. If I were to pick a color to describe that period of my life it would be black. It was a very dark period and one to which I would never return.



Jessica at the Central Library

I started using drugs when I was 15. I started going through puberty and my personality changed. I went from being a pleasant, family –oriented, “goodie two shoes” to a rebellious angry teen. I thought I knew everything but I was only fooling myself. I wouldn't listen to my parents, family or any authority figure. I started hanging out with kids that my parents wouldn't approve of, I moved in with my grandmother because I knew that I wouldn't have to follow any rules.

At this point of my life I wasn't very nice to my family. My Aunt said that it seemed like a demon took over

my soul. Ever since I was a little kid I kept my feelings hidden and didn't express my anger or thoughts. I came from a difficult family situation where there was a lot of violence and I learned to keep quiet. I was described as being too agreeable and too obedient. This all changed when I started using drugs. Suddenly I had a voice but it wasn't a pretty one. I felt like I could express myself when I was high. Drugs opened up the flood gates.

But then drugs started taking over my life. I dropped out of school got into trouble with the law and headed to a path of self-destruction. I was hooked from that point forward. A lot of bad things started happening and I would do anything to support my habit. I became really unhappy and I lost everything- my family, my self-respect and no one trusted me. The only people I had in my life were other using addicts or people that wanted to exploit me. I was sick and tired of this misery. I sunk so low I knew I had to make a change if I wanted to live. I wanted to get clean a couple of years before I actually did but was held back by the Nova Scotia health care system. I had to wait until I was 19 to get on the methadone maintenance program and I had to move all the way to Halifax as well. I arrived in Halifax via one-way bus ticket. I knew no one in Halifax and I had no money. So with nowhere to go I ended up in a women's shelter.

Six months went by and I finally ended up on the methadone treatment. It was like someone threw me a life raft that saved my life. I started making healthier choices like going to meetings and taking all the help that's available. The dark started to lighten. The road to recovery hasn't been a easy one it's been a lot of hard

work but it was totally worth it. I have been sober for over three years and I feel really proud of what I have accomplished. This year I have participated in the GED preparation at the local library. At this point in my life I am really happy. I learned a lot from my mistakes, it has made me into a better person. I now don't take things for granted and I have an attitude of gratitude. If you were to ask me what color that describes my life right now I would say pink.

I read this quote and it sums up how I feel about what I been through. "Never let success go to you head and never let failure go to your heart" By Ziad K. Abdeinour.

Ron at the Library

By Ron Oxner

I come to reading at the library every Thursday. Kevin brings me. I play bingo. I do some counting. I add and subtract. I match up pictures that look alike or different. I choose a book that Janet and I read. I have a good time at the library. When it is time to go, I stop at the store and buy pop and chips to take home and share with RJ and Dan.



Ron at the Kesben Goodman Library

The thing I liked best about the GED class was when we talked about the news, politics and stuff. The teacher made us think.
~ HCLN student

Tips for the Burden

By Percy Oliver with Lorely Gaunt

A person can be working on their burdens without knowing it sometimes. I was looking for one piece of paper in my bag and I couldn't find it. So we decided to clean out the bag.



Percy & Lorely working together at North

We took everything out of the bag. I had to go through all the papers; I realized that I didn't need all those papers. I would look at each paper as I took it out and consider if I needed it anymore. It could be out-of-date; it could be an old math or an old grammar exercise. If it was old or of no use, I would put it in a pile beside the bag. I was also making another pile of papers, those that were important to me. These were the ones I would keep.

After the bag was empty, I put the old rejected papers in the recycling bin, and the other papers back in the bag.

We only had up-to-date papers or things that I needed to keep left in the bag. So it made it easier to find whatever I was looking for, and it made the bag lighter – an extra plus!

We saw this exercise as a metaphor for the burdens that we all carry. In this case, your papers equal your memories. Some burdens we can get help with, but with others we need to help ourselves. Try to think of these burdens as papers in your bag. The challenge is to see which papers you need to keep and which to throw out. The burdens are the things you can't deal with – they are the things you can't control so you need to just stop thinking about them. These are the papers you need to throw out!

When a person is thinking about their burdens all day it's like carrying a heavy bag, a big bag, full of many things one doesn't need. The burden is the papers in the bag. To work with the metaphor, try to think which papers you need to keep and papers you really don't need. Papers one does not need are equal to bad memories in this metaphor. Trying to get rid of memories and situations that you can do nothing to change is like throwing out papers that are out-of-date or useless to you. When you get rid of these papers, you'll lighten your load. Your bag will be lighter and you can carry on with your travels.

Central Library Volunteer Appreciation 2016

Here's what learners had to say when asked to complete this sentence:

My tutor helped me...

- improve my writing skills
- learn the computer
- with math and spelling and grammar
- see fractions in a new way
- get all my foundation methods down
- read and get excited about learning
- see the importance of reading
- not to be afraid of math
- spell, email, play a game
- understand math problems and getting my homework done
- to understand English
- use the laptop
- set goals
- be patient
- extend my vocabulary
- voice my opinion
- support me in my studies
- understand topics and how to do exercises
- overcome my lack of confidence
- with my study skills
- develop social confidence
- gain confidence in my ability to learn
- to understand math very well
- do my homework in math and grammar

Message from Heather MacKenzie

Manager – Diversity Services - Halifax Public Libraries

As the manager responsible for Adult Literacy

programming at Halifax Public Libraries, I continue to be so proud of what we accomplish each year in our partnership with the Halifax Community Learning Network. On the surface, our program is fairly basic – we help adult learners upgrade reading and math skills so that they may successfully complete educational or employment goals. However, the impact of these programs goes much deeper than getting a certificate or even a job.

What this program gives to so many of our learners is hope, dignity, and self-esteem – it is not overstating to say that lives have been changed. The human victories achieved every year are significant and moving – a grandparent able to send an e-mail to a grandchild for the first time, someone being able to read for enjoyment for the first time, writing one’s first story – the list can go on and on.

The 2015-2016 year was another successful one for our Adult Literacy Program at Halifax Public Libraries. Students and tutors worked hard together on their learning goals, supported by our outstanding team of program coordinators at Captain William Spry, Halifax North, Keshen Goodman and Halifax Central libraries and our Regional Coordinator, Sandy Crocker.

It seems that each year brings some change to our working environment, and the major change this year was that our Adult Literacy and ELL program coordinators became members of NSUPE Local 14, the union group that represents all library employees. The coordinators are now included in our Collective Agreement and the negotiations were positive and productive, leading to

greater job security and other benefits for this group of staff.

At Halifax North branch this year, Coordinator Rachel Liebowitz initiated our first Book Club for ELL and Literacy learners, giving an additional learning/ social opportunity for those participating in both programs. Graded readers are used and the focus is on covering one chapter per week, so that readers do not have the pressure of reading a whole book before the discussion. This has been a successful pilot project that we hope to continue.

At time of writing, we are also about to provide each program with an Ipad loaded with Literacy/ELL learning apps for use by the tutors and learners. This will add to our resource “tool kit” and provide additional opportunities for students to practice IT skills as part of their learning.

In closing, I would like to again congratulate our committed program coordinators and tutors for their dedication to their learners, and also recognize the courage of our learners, for sticking with their programs and overcoming often challenging personal circumstances in order to succeed. Special thanks to those who have been willing to share their stories in this Yearbook – they will definitely move and inspire you!

Thanks for all the information. I didn't know there were so many free learning options for adults. This is excellent news to share with other service providers.



Publish It: a resource worth checking out!

A few years ago, Dr. Jane Baskwell of MSVU had a great idea. What if learners of all ages could write and illustrate a book and publish it themselves? Her great idea became the program Publish It! and HCLN learners were some of the first to try it out. Tutors and learners are encouraged to check out the most recent version of Publish It! at: <http://pub1.msvu.ca>

You will see lots of stories including three by Keshen Goodman ALP student Ken McDow who wrote *My Story of My Going Back to School*. Ken learned how to add his own photos as illustrations and his family in other provinces were really pleased to see them.

If you or your learner wish to write a book and Publish It! please let your Coordinator know and we will set you up.

The Bus

By Raymond Drake

On the bus, on the way home from work, I saw this girl.
She had her hat on backwards and looked sad.

All the seats were taken. People were listening to their
music and reading the paper.

*Thanks for all that you and HCLN do! You guys do the
hard work and for that you deserve all our thanks.
~ Friend of HCLN*

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<http://www.canadahelps.org>

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Thank you to:

