

Newsletter

Fall/Winter 2014 Edition

Tri-County Literacy Council - October 30, 2014

Tri-County Literacy Council is a community-based, non-profit organization that enriches both community and individuals by addressing literacy needs

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On Target

Dina McGowan, Executive Director

Hello Everyone. The agency is a little past the halfway mark of its fiscal year (April –March) and already celebrating much success. You may have read, in our local newspapers, about the agency’s selection for a National Award given by ABC Canada, Great West Life and London Life for “Innovation in Literacy”. The program called Occupational Curriculum was nominated and chosen for the award. This program provides training based on the Essential Skills required for most entry-level positions in today’s world of work. Partnerships with local agencies and businesses lead persons to employment, that otherwise, may be overlooked. Please feel free to call the agency should you know of someone that may benefit from such instruction. The award is on display in the front foyer of the office. Along with the award, the agency was given a \$5,000 “string less” gift that will be combined with the Sunrise Rotary donation of \$9,000 and put toward the purchase of digital signage.

The agency is currently in deliberations for digital signage. The current sign is large, costly, and can only be changed twice monthly. New signage will allow the agency to control its messages from a computer,

while keeping the community more up-to-date concerning courses and events. The Heart of the City grant will provide \$3,000 - matching funds. In total the agency is very close to achieving the sum required to pay for the sign. Hopefully, the sign will be installed before the ground freezes. We are close to having all the details (engineer's drawings etc.) required for the permit application. The details are many but they are important to ensuring the specifications of the job.

Speaking of details, the agency just completed a very successful site compliance visit. This is a day set aside for the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities to visit the program to ensure the Service Provider Guidelines are implemented in a fashion that results in an effective and efficient literacy program. Files are analyzed, database entries are verified, and learners are interviewed. This year a Risk Assessment was conducted as well. Although it is a tense day, it is also a fruitful day, as the Ministry field consultant assigned to the agency, Ms. Pina Gilmour provides feedback, guidance, and direction intended to complement the existing programs and services.

On Target (Continued)

Tri-County Literacy Council offers FREE training programs (from Literacy Basic Skills to Occupational courses) in the environment that best suits your learning style and goals. We provide:

- One-on-One Tutoring
- Small Group Classroom

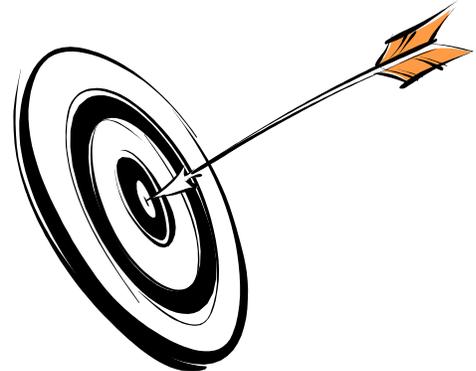
Courses are offered at various times of the year, depending on labour conditions and learner needs.

Visit our website regularly; to learn about the latest FREE courses being offered, or call 613-932-7161.

Shortly after the visit, the agency receives a written report and areas in need of development are outlined. A plan to remedy such areas is drafted and returned to the consultant. The plan was forwarded to Ms. Gilmour today and I assure you it was one of the easiest this agency has undertaken. Two very minor points were stated, otherwise, the agency experienced its most successful site compliance visit on record. The Risk Assessment analysis states the agency is a “low risk”. Several factors contribute to this type of success:

- Board of Directors who knows how to steer an agency
- creative and passionate staff who work well under pressure and equally well individually and/or in a team
- volunteers who work tirelessly and patiently to share the gift of literacy
- ministry consultant like Ms. Pina Gilmour who provides input and feedback on an ongoing basis

Of course, no visit is even necessary without learners. Our learners are eager, motivated and recognize the agency is but a brief stop, albeit an important stop in their journey toward employment, independence and/or further education.



In closing, I can tell you the agency is on course to successfully meet its annual targets. At the end of October the agency served 163 learners (160% of its annual target) and other dimensions recorded in EOIS-CaMS (provincial database) show:

- Customer Service is measured at 99% versus the provincial target of 90%
- Service Coordination is at 72% versus 50%
- Effectiveness is at 28% versus 30%
- The overall Service Quality score is 7.12% versus the provincial target of 5.90%

In short, the agency is busy and, for the most part, it is surpassing its goals.

Now, the Community Homework and After-School Program (C.H.A.P.) is open. Children can be seen studying and learning the skills they will need to continue to make our community grow.

Tri-County Literacy Council is proud of its contribution toward the creation of a community legacy.

The Assessment Process

Carolyn Eva, Educational Assessor

The purpose of assessment at Tri-County Literacy Council is to ensure that you are registered in the correct program for your needs. Whether your goal is:

- employment
- apprenticeship
- secondary school credit
- post-secondary education
- independence

Our assessment process will help you define your goals and identify the steps needed to reach those goals.

Many people feel nervous and uncertain when beginning the assessment process. Making an appointment is the first step. During this appointment we will discuss

your background, school experiences, goals, and work history. The next step is a combination of formal & informal testing.

I am here to guide you through this process and I understand that many people don't like tests. The testing tools that I use will be based on your goals and abilities. I'm looking to find your strengths, as well as the areas you may need to work on. Your results will give me clues about your learning style and needs.

Finally, together we decide on the best program option for you. I will answer any questions you might have about the next step of your literacy journey.

Basic Computer Training

Kristina McDermid, IMS Coordinator & Literacy Trainer

Everywhere you look you will find a demand for some form of Digital Technology, from the workplace to your own home. It surrounds us more and more every day. Employers are becoming more eager to find employees who can properly use Digital Technology. Simply by searching the Job Bank website, you see how essential computer use is.

Digital Technology doesn't only include computers - in fact the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities includes the following items for training:

- Cell phones to send text messages
- Personal computers to produce documents
- Internet to find information
- Debit machines for banking
- Online banking websites
- Alarms for various uses

Tri-County Literacy Council offers Digital Technology training, at various times of the year, in a small group or one-on-one with a tutor. Such a class is starting November 10, 2014. It will run 4 days per week during the morning and will introduce learners to the basics of computer use. Some of the topics included in this training are:

- Terminology
- Email
- Social Media
- Your Computer Files
- Safety and Security
- The Internet
- Microsoft Word
- And more

For more information on the class, to know when the next course will run, or to register, call Kristina at (613) 932-7161. Please note that the focus of this training is for employment purposes. Referrals to other agencies may also be made.



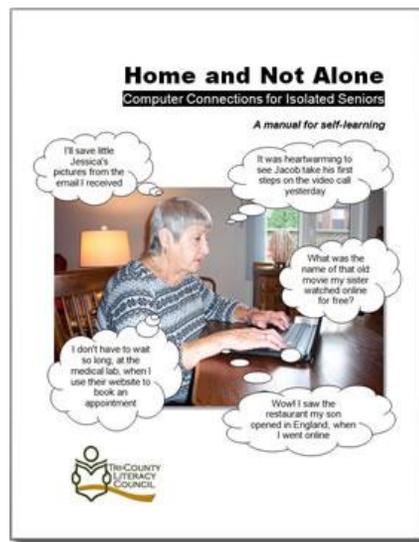
Home and Not Alone (HANA) - Computer Connections for Isolated Seniors

Danielle Bray, HANA Project Coordinator

“It does not matter how slowly you go, as long as you do not stop.”

Confucius

Tri-County Literacy Council will soon be releasing a user manual for seniors 65+ to self-learn how to use a computer and search the World Wide Web to stay in touch with family, friends, and community. The title of this project is Home and Not Alone (HANA) – Computer Connections for Isolated Seniors.



Manual topics (based on free online programs, websites, and tools) will include:

- Email
- Saving photos and other files
- Video calling
- Viewing the world by virtual globe and live Web cams
- Searching the World Wide Web
- Booking local medical laboratory tests (shorter wait times)
- Where to use a computer and Internet service for FREE

Printed manuals will be available to seniors 65 years of age or more, free of charge, while quantities last (at Tri-County Literacy Council and various organizations throughout the region), with the understanding that feedback related to this learning experience is required by our funder, in order to assess the project's "effectiveness" (seniors *may* be contacted for their opinion, should they not have already done so via manual surveys). These guidebooks are expected to be available in the late fall/early winter.

As part of this project, seniors may also apply to:

- Borrow a laptop from Tri-County Literacy Council, in order to decide if they would like to buy a computer in the future (home Internet service will be needed to do the manual's exercises)
- Be matched with a one-on-one tutor, should they want help with this learning experience

If you are a senior resident of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry or someone who works with seniors (especially those that are isolated), call 613-932-7161 and ask for the HANA Project Manager.

The HANA Project is made possible due to the funding of the New Horizons for Seniors Program.

Literacy Basic Skills (LBS) Upgrading

Nancy Pilote, Literacy Trainer

The students from the Literacy and Basic Skills class continue to work on developing their 9 Essential Skills to achieve their individual goal paths. These goal paths range from:

- employment
- post-secondary education
- apprenticeship
- secondary school credit
- independence

Practical tasks beneficial to everyday life, such as applying learned addition and subtraction to understand one's phone bill are practiced regularly.

During the recent municipal elections, LBS learners researched the electoral candidates and held a mock election, to compare their results to the actual elections. Not only did they learn how to perform a computer search, they also learned the benefits of choosing a

mayor and city councilors, as well as identifying their assigned roles.

Learners recently completed their portfolio reviews. This gives students the opportunity to provide input into their individual learning plan and adjust the plan if necessary. It helps them stay focused on their ultimate goal. Making and demonstrating progress in the LBS classroom creates the bridge to the next stage of their journey.

Sponsor a Book

If you would like us to purchase a book or a resource in memory of someone, or as a special gift like a birthday or retirement, we will place a nameplate in the book. It will read that you donated it and include the name of your chosen person.

The book will be placed in our Lending Library.

As well as, giving a gift to your friend, you will be giving the gift of literacy to a learner.

Warehouse Worker / Material Handler Training

Nancy Pilote, Literacy Trainer

This 10th Warehouse Worker / Material Handler occupational training session graduated 13 learners.

Training is based on the 9 Essential Skills, as they relate to a Material Handler's responsibilities. This 8-week program develops workplace, literacy, and numeracy skills, as well as transferable skills for entry-level positions.

The students are supplied math books which focus on calculating areas, perimeters, and volume. The following is a sample learner challenge for you to try:

How many 16 cm³ boxes can fit in a cargo van with a holding area of 1,926 and a height of 12 cm?

Assessments, milestones, and testing are conducted throughout the course.

Many classroom activities use authentic workplace materials to prepare the students for real job tasks.

The highlight of the course for many students is the visit to the Benson Auto Parts warehouse, where an explanation of the various jobs and processes of a warehouse are provided by a tour guide.

The demand for the Warehouse Worker program continues to be strong. This is likely based on the number of positions available at the moment and because new facilities are planned.



Pictured Front: Literacy Instructor. Back: October 2014 Warehouse Worker/Material Handler Graduates

The Community Homework & After-School Program (CHAP)

Kimberley Timalsina, CHAP Coordinator
 Lauren Boucher, Assistant Teacher



The Community Homework & After-School Program (CHAP) is operating once again for the 2014-2015 school year. The program focuses on the growth and learning of children ages 4-13.

CHAP will assist students with daily homework completion in a variety of subject areas. The children will have a personalized binder geared to their learning and academic needs. The materials will help them strengthen skills in the subject areas that they are struggling with. In addition to this, the CHAP teachers are currently planning and organizing ongoing activities to help enhance academic and social skills. This will include:

- Weekly Math Mad Minute
- weekly book club
- journal writing and creative thinking
- book reports
- skill building activities

The children will have the opportunity to do some hands-on learning with science experiments, art activities, and computers.

CHAP embraces all learning styles. This includes visual, auditory and kinesthetic.

Some time will be spent on occupations and careers. The goal of this is to help students in junior grades begin thinking about where their interests lie. A variety of people from the community will be coming in to speak to the children. These include a doctor, firefighter, police officer, writer, and photographer.

This year CHAP will also be addressing character building and growth. The children will focus on the importance of connecting with and helping the community. This includes:

- respect and showing appreciation for the elderly
- kindness towards the community (by donating to the Agape Centre)
- courage and self-esteem building
- good citizenship by contributing and giving back to the community

We look forward to another exciting and successful year!

The Royal Bank of Canada makes the Community Homework & After-School Program possible.



Tri-County Literacy Council Board of Directors

Carol Potts,
Chairperson

Shirley Fraser,
Acting Treasurer

Catherine Levac,
Secretary

Angus Kelly,
Property Manager

Barbara Petepiece,
Member at Large

Dina McGowan,
Executive Director

Volunteering is Good for You & Your Community

Carol Anne Maloney, Coordinator of Volunteers & Literacy Trainer

Without volunteers our community and country would be substantially different.

Each year Canadians give their time to 175,000 non-profit organizations. Unfortunately, statistics reveal that only 1 in 3 Canadians chooses to volunteer. Even more surprising is the fact that nearly 75% of the total number of volunteer hours come from less than 10% of all Canadians (Source: Volunteer Canada). Research reveals that volunteering is a great way to:

- Put free time to good use
- Meet new people
- Gain experience
- Take on new challenges
- Feel good and build self-esteem
- Keep your mind active
- Stay healthy

In a recent study commissioned by Volunteer Canada, Manual Financial and Health Canada, Dr. Neena Chappell, Director of the Centre on Aging, University of Victoria, examined the link between volunteering and health. Dr. Chappell concluded, "People who give their time to a volunteer activity, especially if it involves others, are happier and healthier in their later years. In addition she suggests, "Volunteering is a people-to-people business. A lot of benefit comes from being in touch with others and having an impact on their lives".

Tri-County Literacy Council volunteers make a big impact on our students' lives. Through volunteers' mentorship, they empower students through literacy. By expanding their world, students gain self-esteem and hope for a better future for themselves and their families. We are fortunate to have so many generous individuals living in our community. **Thank you.** Ways our volunteers are making a difference include:

- One-on-One Tutoring Program
- Community Homework & After-School Program (CHAP)
- Administrative Assistant
- Instructor's Assistant
- Guest Speaker
- Board Member

The One-on-One Tutoring Program is made possible due to the generous funding of the United Way.

*"In a gentle way,
you can shake
the world."*

*Mahatma
Gandhi*



**United Way
Centraide**

Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry

Retail Associate Training

Carol Anne Maloney, Coordinator of Volunteers & Literacy Trainer

Tri-County
Literacy Council
Staff Members

Dina McGowan,
Executive Director

Carolyn Eva,
Literacy Assessor

Kristina McDermid,
Information
Management
Systems

Carol Anne Maloney,
Coordinator of
Volunteers

Danielle Bray,
Business Development
Coordinator

Nancy Pilote,
Literacy Trainer

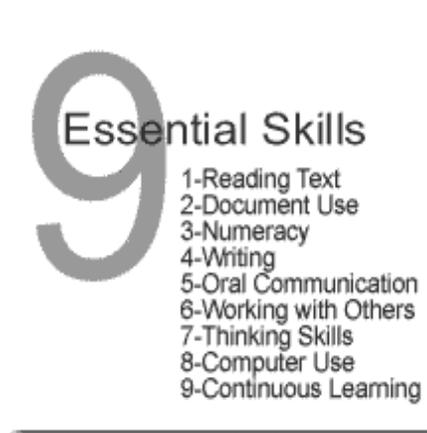
Ruth Laplante,
Bookkeeper

Kimberley Timalisina,
CHAP Coordinator

Lauren Boucher,
Assistant Teacher

We have just completed another 8-week Retail Associate training course, which graduated 16 students.

Throughout the training, students worked through a manual designed to help them find employment in the Retail Industry. This manual was created in partnership with Literacy Link Eastern Ontario and Prince Edward Learning Centre and focused on the 9 Essential Skills needed for the workplace. These are:



Throughout the program, local business entrepreneurs shared with learners, which attributes and skills they look for in potential employees.

Life Coach, Tracy O’Flaherty got students' job search off to a positive start, by inspiring them.

We thank Job Zone for conducting mock interviews, as well as Value Village who gave students the opportunity to experience the Retail Industry first-hand, as part of a Job Placement opportunity. We also thank TSC Stores for interviewing our qualified graduates.



Pictured: October 2014 Retail Associate Graduates

Promoting Literacy

Danielle Bray, Business Development Coordinator

Tri-County Literacy Council offers free Essential Skills training, as well as Assessment services to residents of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. Look for our ads in a variety of mediums:

- outdoor sign
- posters and flyers
- Press Releases
- TV Cogeco/Cable 11
- CFLG FM radio
- newspapers
- website
- website posts (which notify you instantly, if you are a follower)
- Facebook
- Twitter

Be the first to know of free upcoming courses by receiving instant notification from our website. To do this, visit us online and click the **Follow** button, at the bottom right corner of any Web page, then enter your email address.



Our site contains dynamic content, from past learners' audio and video testimonials, to a course voting widget.

If you are a past learner of Tri-County Literacy Council and would like to promote literacy within our community by way of providing an online audio testimonial, please email the Business Development Coordinator at busdev@tricityliteracycouncil.ca to schedule a recording session.

Did you know?

Danielle Bray, Business Development Coordinator

Tri-County Literacy Council offers a free Trading Post Library. The wooden weatherproof structure erected outside our office at 101 Second Street West, is used as a pay-it-forward lending library.



The concept is "take a book, leave a book". This community venture is to promote literacy and get people reading. It has proven to be very successful. The agency refills the structure regularly. We encourage everyone to use it.

Involved in the making of this project were volunteer craftsman, Gerry Godard, who built the structure, Home-Depot who donated the materials, and Sign-It who provided the signage.

Tri-County Literacy Council

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FAX:
613-932-5121

We're on the Web!

See us at:
www.tricityliteracycouncil.ca

Visit our website regularly; to learn about the latest FREE courses being offered.