

# Newsletter

Spring/Summer 2016 Edition

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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## Proof of another Successful Year

Geraldine (Dina) McGowan (B.A., B.Ed.), Executive Director

Another year has passed and once again it is marked with changes to the agency. As you read through this newsletter you will see new courses were developed and delivered. In doing so, staff studies the current job market and, as much as possible, courses are offered depending on realistic employment opportunities. Although it is not the mission of Tri-County Literacy Council (TCLC) to find jobs for people, it is our hope to ready learners enough to meet the counsellors at Job Zone d'emploi who can assist with their job searches. Such a partnership is in each learner's best interest, as each agency can devote the necessary time and resources to become experts in their fields.

Many other partnerships exist to serve learners in their life journey. Ontario Works not only assists with financial needs they also screen potential learners who may benefit from one or more of the many courses offered here at TCLC. I wish I could list all of our partners; however the number of newsletter pages would be endless. Suffice it to say that most any community agency you can think of has referred learners at one time or another. Some referrals even come from afar. It may be that a learner is receiving literacy services in another city or town and is moving to this area. Thank goodness for government websites like Employment Ontario Partners' Gateway that lists all the

agencies, including colleges and school boards that offer literacy training throughout Ontario. Most agencies have a website. If you've never visited Tri-County Literacy Council's site please do so as soon as possible. We are proud of the site and almost daily, updates are made so that persons like you can rely on it for useful and up-to-date information. Refer your friends, while keeping in mind that learning is a lifelong commitment. Something may just catch your eye such as the new Money Management for Everyone program, ever-popular Basic Computers training, clerical training, or even a new program for seniors designed with a grant from the New Horizons for Seniors.

It takes much time and effort to respond to community needs including new partnerships and new courses. It is equally important that all new information be imparted to the community. The new digital sign, donated in part by the Sunrise Rotary, is effective in relaying this very important information. So too, is Service Coordination. The Eastern Ontario Training Board brings many community partners together to discuss how partners can work together in order for consumers to more easily navigate their systems. Referrals are a major topic of discussion at these meetings, to ensure learners land where their needs will be met.

## Proof of another Successful Year (Continued)




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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.

Much goes on behind the scenes, in order for all programs, operating under the Employment Ontario umbrella, to operate like a well oiled machine. Mostly, you just want to know you are doing what you said you would do and that this is making meaningful differences in people's lives. Tri-County Literacy Council affirms this information in many different ways.

A multitude of statistics confirms the agency is on point with its Customer Service, client suitability, learner progress and number of learners recruited metrics. These numbers demonstrate the agency is working effectively and efficiently. However, learners are more than numbers. They are people with dreams and hopes and aspirations. It is important we capture what people feel and we do so by adding learner testimonials to the agency website. The many photos taken of learners throughout their learning experiences are shown on our television in the foyer. There you will see smiling faces graduating perhaps for the first time, family members beaming as loved ones complete their journey and children tackling tasks in the Royal Bank of Canada after-school program. (CHAP) We believe we are doing what we are supposed to be doing. Sometimes you want to hear from those who are "higher up" and grading your performance, to know that you are making the grade. This happened recently.

Pina Gilmour, our Ministry consultant provided us with comments based on the final 2015-16 Quarterly Status and Adjustment Report. We were congratulated on Year End findings and of course, Ms. Gilmour continues to act as a wonderful support throughout the year. Mr. Scott Ravary, the MTCU Service Delivery Manager visited with me as well. This is the first time a person in his position has visited the agency (I have been here 30 years) and I am pleased to share he was very generous with his many kind and encouraging comments. I commend Scott for his decision to meet with the many programs under his care. Not too long ago, Scott also visited with Ms. Jennifer Barton, the new Regional Director of MTCU. Together, they met with learners and spoke with each of the staff. Jennifer shared it was one of the best "welcomes" she received while touring the many programs under her direction. Together with Pina, Scott, Jennifer, our tutors, volunteers and learners, we can proclaim that in spite of ongoing changes, we made it through yet another year of change.

## Award Nomination

Carolyn Eva (B.A. Hons., S.S.W.), Educational Assessor

Recently, I had the privilege of submitting a nomination for Tri-County Literacy Council for the Employment Ontario (EO) Leadership Awards.

### EMPLOYMENT ONTARIO

“The Employment Ontario (EO) Leadership Awards recognize Employment Ontario service providers who have demonstrated exceptional leadership in the areas of innovation, collaboration and customer service. These awards highlight the work of service providers that introduce creative approaches or partnerships to providing high-quality employment and training services to clients. The EO Leadership Awards recognize innovation as the implementation of a new approach to an old problem. This can take the form of a new approach to delivering an existing program or service.”

As such, I nominated our Occupational Training Program. Tri-County Literacy Council strives to be a leader in the community by connecting learners with local opportunities. Most recently, the agency identified a need for occupational training for entry-level positions in the community. Feedback from learners indicated that they were struggling with finding gainful employment because they lacked experience in the field, yet they were not able to secure entry-level positions to gain employers' desired level of experience. It was a frustrating circle for many of our learners. In response to this need, Tri-County Literacy Council designed the Occupational Training Program.



Based on curriculum designed and distributed by Literacy Link Eastern Ontario, Tri-County Literacy Council has created an innovative way to adapt these curriculums to address local needs. The training courses are offered in an instructor-led format, as opposed to learners working through the curriculum independently. By teaching the course in a group setting, learners are able to work in smaller groups to complete activities and projects. This method allows learners to interact with each other in both a formal instructor-student environment as well as in smaller teams. The courses are also augmented with projects, site visits to local employers and service providers, and guest speakers. By providing these important links, the agency guides learners in the direction of employment.

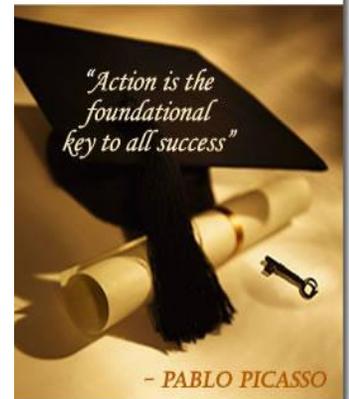
Since April 1st of 2015, sixty learners have graduated from various classes in the agency's Occupational Training Program. Among these courses were:

- Daycare Worker
- Material Handler
- Retail Associate
- Landscaping & Grounds Maintenance Labourer

Agency follow-up reports indicate that 23 out of sixty participants, or 38% of these graduates, many of whom had little or no work experience and/or prevalent barriers to employment, are now employed and/or in further education/training related to their goal of employment.

## Returning to school?

Call 613-932-7161 for a FREE Educational Assessment



### Our Mandate

Tri-County (Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry) Literacy Council is a community-based, non-profit organization. Our mandate is to enrich both our community and individuals by addressing literacy needs. To do this, we assess learners, help them set goals and provide necessary help in reading, writing, basic math, and computer skills. We recruit volunteers from the community to assist learners in meeting their personal, employment and social goals. This method of instruction can be one-on-one with a tutor, or in a small group. Our services are easily accessible and designed for ongoing growth and expansion. Documenting learning outcomes monitors progress.

## From the Coordinator of Volunteers' Desk

**Carol Anne Maloney (B.A.Sc.), Coordinator of Volunteers**

“Volunteers are the roots of strong communities” is the theme of 2016 National Volunteer Week. Just as roots are needed for plants to grow, volunteers are essential for Tri-County Literacy Council to flourish. Thanks to our many dedicated volunteers, our agency has been able to grow and remain strong in our community.



**On Thursday, May 26 at 6:30 p.m., we take time to celebrate and thank our volunteers.** Many local businesses are planning to join us in appreciating our volunteers. The following door prizes have been generously donated:

- 3 \$15 donations - Joey's Fish & Chips
- \$25 - Cornwall Square
- \$15 - King George Restaurant
- \$50 - Best Western Parkway Inn & Conference Centre
- \$15 - Scores
- \$20 - Thum's Cuisine
- \$25 - Farm Boy
- Blooms - TBD
- Roy's Florist - TBD

I hope that you will join us in this celebration.

### Volunteering Facts & Surprising Benefits

- Volunteering gives individuals the opportunity to explore new careers or discover new talents.
- Volunteering provides networking opportunities to gain a better understanding of our community.
- Volunteering fosters new friendships.
- Doing good for others boosts your self-esteem and overall life satisfaction.
- Altruistic emotions and behaviors are associated with greater well-being, health and longevity. (Stephen J. Post, 2005)
- Volunteers live longer! (Harvard School of Public Health, 2004)
- Mental functioning gets a boost. The brain needs exercise as much as the body, and performing acts of kindness and making new social connections help keep the mind stimulated. (Volunteer Canada, 2011)
- In Canada, over 12.5 million volunteers give their time, energy and skills to make our communities better, yearly.

## Landscaping & Grounds Maintenance Training

**Carol Anne Maloney (B.A.Sc.), Coordinator of Volunteers**

On March 3, 2016 eight students graduated the 8-week Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Labourer training program. It is always rewarding to witness students complete a goal from start to finish. The class worked from a manual created by Tri-County Literacy Council in partnership with Literacy Links Eastern Ontario. The curriculum was supplemented with amazing guest speakers, graciously taking time out of their busy schedule to share their knowledge. Namely:

- Scott Porter and Lynn Blanchard, Parks and Landscaping, City of Cornwall
- Alain D'Aoust, Environmentalist, Transition Cornwall
- Carol Would, Owner, Dancause Landscaping
- Justin Roberge, Sales and Service Manager, Cornwall Concrete Products

In addition, students had the opportunity to visit Job Zone and learn of the various services offered, free of charge. They also enjoyed a visit to Home Depot, where Glen Nixon gave a presentation on garden tools. The following is a class photo of graduates.



Pictured left to right:

**Back row** – Justin Cooper, Carol Lagacy, Rachel Malenfant, Andre Cayen, Jacob McDonald  
**Front row** – Anne Marie Phoenix, Julie Dennison, Janet Lefave



### Welcome to the Team

It is with great pleasure that we welcome Anne Marie Phoenix to the team.

Anne Marie is a certified Teacher of Adults and has years of office and database experience. As such, she will be teaching as well as working in Information Management.

## My Field Placement

**Rebecca Genau, St. Lawrence College Placement Student**

As part of my field placement for the Social Service Worker Program (St. Lawrence College), I chose Tri-County Literacy Council. As such, I had the opportunity to assist the trainers and work closely with the Assessor. The teachers are wonderful with their students. They give learners their "all". What I like the most about TCLC is that they make everyone feel comfortable. Learners are not judged. The

programming is for adults, be it in a small group classroom setting or part of the One-on-One Program. My time spent here was wonderful! I have enjoyed my placement and have referred various individuals to take advantage of the valuable, free upgrading and occupational training offered. I couldn't have asked for a better experience and am proud to say that I will be leaving with many new skills.

## NEW Microsoft Word Training

**Danielle Bray (Cert. Hons., e-Business Web Developer)  
Business Development Coordinator & Literacy Instructor**

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**Tri-County  
Literacy Council  
Board of Directors**

Carol Potts,  
Chairperson

Shirley Fraser,  
Treasurer

Catherine Levac,  
Secretary

Angus Kelly,  
Property Manager

Barbara Petepiece,  
Member at Large

Dina McGowan,  
Executive Director

On Wednesday, April 20th, learners of the first Microsoft (MS) Word class received their well-earned certificates. To augment their job search portfolio, Worker Health & Safety Awareness certification was also earned.

In this 8-week training program, participants learned Microsoft Word basics to create professional-looking documents for their job search, Digital Technology being one of the nine Essential Skills identified by the Government of Canada as necessary for success at work, home or play. Course topics included:

- Computer Basics Review
- Introduction to MS Word
- Document Formatting
- Saving Files
- Transferable Skills
- Resume Writing
- Practice Interview
- Job Search Table
- And more

In this program, learners gained ample hands-on experience, as the

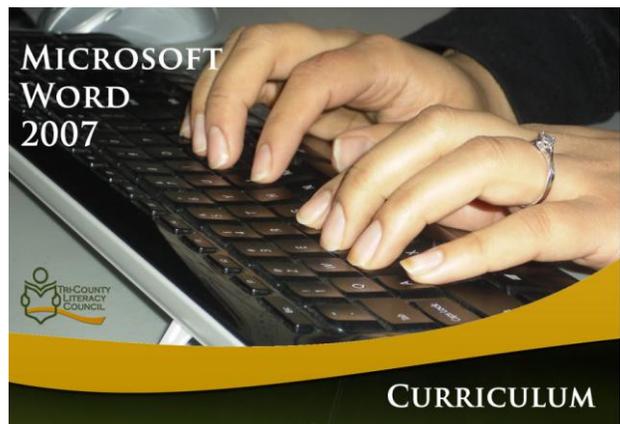
training includes a multitude of activities.

A site visit to Job Zone enabled learners to familiarize themselves with the agency, as well as register to take advantage of the valuable services offered by this community partner. Guest speaker Carilyne Hebert of Contact North also spoke to the class about online learning opportunities, as part of further education.

It was a pleasure to teach this group of motivated, dedicated, focused and hard-working individuals.



Pictured left to right:  
**Back row** - Howard Riley, Donalda Height, Alan Moquin  
**Front row** - Suzanne Currie, Rebecca Mitchell, Melanie Hopkins



## NEW Health Care Support Worker Training

**Danielle Bray (Cert. Hons., e-Business Web Developer)  
Business Development Coordinator & Literacy Instructor**

In Canada, the population is aging and the need for more support for ailing and disabled individuals is rising. The Health Care Support Worker profession is a growing field of employment. As such, Tri-County Literacy Council recently offered its first Health Care Support Worker course. As there was a great response for this career exploration program, the agency happily provided two classes. In this free 8-week course, participants strengthened Essential Skills of working with others, oral communication and document use. Topics included:

- Duties of a Health Care Support Worker
- Diseases and Conditions
- The Human Body
- Health & Safety
- WHMIS Overview

Participants met a variety of industry guest speakers. More specifically:

- Eileen Hyland, Personal Support Worker

- Angele D'Allessio, Canadian Mental Health (also, a client suffering from Bipolar Disorder generously shared his lifestyle)
- Nancy Galway, Elder Abuse, Carefor
- Sandra Deschamps, Falls Prevention, Eastern Ontario Health Unit
- Susan Forget, Susan's Stay at Home Senior Care (Kanata)
- Josée Lefebvre, Alzheimer's Society
- Rebecca Genau, Social Service Worker (spoke of the connection between health and literacy)

Learners also enjoyed a site visit to Glen-Stor-Dun-Lodge, graciously hosted by Susan Monroe and Tracey Delage.

In this program, learners have the opportunity of earning TCLC's Health Care Support Worker certificate, as well as Health & Safety Awareness certification.



Glen Stor Dun Lodge

## Tri-County Literacy Council



**WE HELP  
ADULTS**

1. Our literacy agency fosters a culture of Customer Service
2. Our literacy agency provides a learner-centered, quality learning environment
3. Our literacy agency provides initial and ongoing support to learners
4. Our literacy agency honours the privacy of its customers
5. Our literacy agency values respect, inclusion and accessibility
6. Our literacy agency knows who its key customers are and actively solicits their feedback
7. Our literacy agency seeks to regularly improve its Customer Service practices
8. Our literacy agency has a formal customer complaint and resolution process and encourages customers' compliments
9. Our literacy agency is actively involved in the community to ensure effective referrals and service coordination
10. Our literacy agency has effective communication practices that reflect its commitment to excellent Customer Service

## NEW Program: Money Management for Everyone

Nancy Pilote, Literacy Instructor

Essential Skills are the skills people need for work, learning, and life. They provide the foundation for learning all other skills and are the cornerstone of lifelong learning.

There are 9 Essential Skills:

1. Reading
2. Document Use
3. Numeracy
4. Writing
5. Oral Communication
6. Working with Others
7. Thinking
8. Computer Use
9. Continuous Learning

Tri-County Literacy Council's first financial literacy class (es) have been a great success. This 4-week program is for everyone. Whether you have low income or are on a fixed income, struggle with budgeting and debt, or simply want to learn more about managing finances, you will benefit from this course. Course topics include:

- Money Basics
- Understanding Credit & Debt
- Budgeting to Meet Your Needs
- Linking with Community Resources



A key component of the program included guest speakers from the banking industry, housing, police department and counselling center.

Namely:

- Sheila MacDonald, Banking Advisor, Royal Bank of Canada
- Jamie Tyrell, Program Director, Social Housing Division
- Darrell Blakely, Detective Constable, Criminal Investigations Unit, City of Cornwall Police Department
- Ray Houde, Executive Director and Jessica Lenneau, Director of Administration and Human Resources, Counselling & Support Services of SD&G

Students found the program to be full of valuable and practical advice. They were happy to learn how to track their spending and set goals, as well as the importance of shopping for the best price.

For more information or to register, call 613-932-7161. The next class is scheduled for August.

## General Education Development (GED) Preparation

Eric Heward (M.A.)

Information Management Systems Coordinator & Literacy Instructor

It has been an exciting winter for the General Educational Development (GED) Preparation course. The students have been working hard towards taking the GED test and getting their equivalency degree. It has been inspiring to watch them progress in their math, writing, reading, science, and social studies work. Even better, everyone's confidence in each subject has improved greatly, as well. I expect to hear great

things from the students who completed the test.

I'm also happy to report that **we are expanding the GED course by offering evening courses**. This will allow learners to study at a time which better suits their lifestyle. For more information, call Tri-County Literacy Council at (613) 932-7161.

## Literacy & Basic Skills (LBS) Upgrading

Nancy Pilote, Literacy Instructor

In the Literacy and Basic Skills classroom, learners are busy upgrading Essential Skills. They work at their own level and choose content that is related to their goal path. Some learners are studying to become more independent, others have specific employment-related goals, while others are hoping to eventually move into credit and/or college level programming.

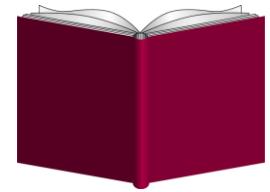
Learners study a number of topics and that is why the program is fun. Some learners need math to reach their goal, while others may require writing skills. Sometimes learners need to complete specific documents for employment and/or for use in their personal lives. When a learner is unable to meet the requirements in the occupational training he/she may study the program independently in the Literacy Basic Skills (LBS) class.

Since the learners in Literacy and Basic Skills are functioning at different levels

and require a range of skills, then it is necessary to have volunteers either assist the instructor in classroom instruction and/or who specialize in the content that is needed by the learners. Marion Therien, Brian Herrington, and Karl Van Leishout volunteer in the program. Together, they bring the wealth of knowledge needed to ready learners for the next stage of their learning journey. Marion has volunteered since 2002; Brian since 2007 and Karl began this year.

Entering the program is like walking into a one room school house. Although serious learning takes place, friendships are made and peer support is abundant. We tip our hats to those learners who, in spite of life challenges, are determined to meet their goals.

If you know of anyone who can benefit from upgrading their skills, please give us a call. We welcome new learners.



### 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.

## Congratulations!

Tri-County Literacy Council Staff

Congratulations go to Nancy Pilote on her retirement.

It's been a pleasure working with you Nancy. Thank you for 5 years of dedicated work. May you enjoy every second of your newfound freedom. We wish you the best.



Nancy Pilote, Literacy Instructor

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**Tri-County  
Literacy Council  
Staff**

Dina McGowan,  
Executive Director

Carolyn Eva,  
Literacy Assessor

Eric Heward,  
Information  
Management  
Systems Coordinator

Anne Marie Phoenix,  
Information  
Management Systems

Carol Anne Maloney,  
Coordinator of  
Volunteers

Danielle Bray,  
Business Development  
Coordinator

Nancy Pilote,  
Literacy Trainer

Ruth Laplante,  
Bookkeeper

Shawna Brassard,  
CHAP Coordinator

Patrick Coristine,  
CHAP Facilitator

## Cultivating Community Citizens

Shawna Brassard (B.Ed.), CHAP Coordinator

The Community Homework & After-School Program (CHAP) students have been learning about Community Citizenship. By meeting guest speakers of various organizations, they have learned how each group uniquely contributes to our community. More specifically, the following upstanding citizens generously gave of their time to speak to the children.



MacMillan's Convenience donates learning and art supplies

Officer Kevin Wells of the Cornwall Community Police Service paid a visit to CHAP to explain the positive role of Police in the community, and of course most importantly, showed us how to work the sirens in the police car. This was the children's first lesson on safety, emphasizing how the informed behaviour of every individual is crucial to the well-being of a community as a whole.

Local Author Troy Guindon made a special appearance, on Family Literacy Day, to share his passion for creative writing; by reading his award-winning children's book "The Reading Promise" to the students. Mr. Guindon emphasized the importance of literacy in all of its forms, as well as how literacy is the starting point in fueling creativity.

Dr. Brian Hickey from St. Lawrence College and the St. Lawrence River Institute kindly brought over a batty friend for the students to enjoy and learn how plants and animal species are needed to create a healthy environment. This allowed students to approach the idea of a community from a more scientific point of view.

Most recently, we had various musicians from the Cornwall area; a guitarist and violinist, pay CHAP a visit, where students were treated to an excellent music lesson. The joy music brings was also discussed. This was a highlight, for many of the students.

As the final week of CHAP quickly approaches, students will continue their learning of Community Citizenship by focusing on community health. To do this, students will take part in various lessons, activities, and inquiry opportunities related to healthy eating and physical activity. CHAP will be taking advantage of the promising spring weather in order to get out, and get active!

From everyone at CHAP, we would like to thank the **Royal Bank of Canada**, volunteers, donators, and community members who have contributed to the 2015-2016 year. Your time and dedication to the children is what truly makes the program a success year-after-year. A special thank you also goes to **MacMillan's Convenience** for their generous donation of school, art, and math supplies. We will be putting these to use in the weeks to come! Value Village has also generously donated books and outdoor toys. Thank You.

**Tri-County  
Literacy Council**

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**We're on the Web!**

See us at:

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

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

**Time for Change?**

**Eric Heward (M.A.)**

**Information Management Systems Coordinator & Literacy Instructor**

In the last newsletter, I mentioned that winter was a season for change. When the New Year begins, we often make resolutions to make new and positive changes in our lives. Now that spring has arrived, there is no better time to act on your resolutions. Spring is an excellent time to consider a new occupation or simply upgrade your skills.



Whatever your needs, Tri-County Literacy Council is pleased to offer multiple occupational courses to help you start your resolutions for change. Please visit our website for more information about latest course offerings.

**WWW**

In the spirit of change, Tri-County Literacy Council would like to remind all our learners, past and present, that we are always available to service your literacy needs. If there are any changes to your career, your training, or your confidence level in becoming a member of the workforce, we would like you to tell us about these changes by submitting a follow-up. As you may already know, the agency conducts follow-ups with all its learners at 3, 6, and 12 month's time, after leaving the agency. This not only helps the agency fulfill requirements to continue receiving additional funding, but it also allows us to assist our learners reach their goals. If there is anything we can do to assist you, please let us know.

If you have made any changes to your contact information or address, please give Tri-County Literacy Council a call to update your information. This will help us keep in touch with you and work towards making your resolutions a reality.



**United Way  
Centraide**  
Stormont, Dundas & Glengarry

