

# Newsletter

Fall 2016 Edition

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

## Contents:

Assessment	3
Volunteering	4
Office Clerk Training	5
Who knew?	5
Technology Tools for Seniors	6
Follow Us	7
2016/17 Board of Directors	8
Daycare Worker Training	9

## TCLC Makes Dreams Come True

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

Fall is fast approaching and it is the time of year for change. Gradually the wardrobe changes, the leaves form new colours and school bells beckon learners back to school. The holidays are over and it is time for the agency to gear up to accept new learners.

Beginning a learning program can be exciting while presenting a new set of life changes. Meeting new schedules, organizing transportation, arranging daycare can all seem like monstrous chores when first we begin. It isn't long, however, before routine sets in and soon it is hard to imagine life before a learning program. That's because a new venture begins complete with challenges, rewards and a wonderful feeling of accomplishment. Tough as it may initially seem, it means fewer steps are needed to reach personal goals and whether spoken aloud or secretly, most people aspire to achieve a dream.

### Tri-County Literacy Council is in the business of making learner dreams come true.

The agency is equipped with qualified persons who are able to identify learning needs, design learning strategies and equally important, they can make learning fun. Much of the research about adult learning tells us that adults refrain from programs that do not correspond with their interests.

Adults, especially those in need of attaining employment, want to get on with the business of learning content that will lead them to their chosen goal. This is where Tri-County Literacy Council excels.

In order to make learning fun and relevant the agency seeks out occupations that are and/or may be hiring. Research is conducted around the essential skills needed for entry level positions in these occupations. The agency responds to the research by writing material to meet this demand. "Book learning" is accompanied by computer instruction, lively discussion, individual and group learning experiences, community guest speakers and when possible, with visits to related sites. Learners have visited call centres, stores, manufacturing facilities etc., depending on their course of study. Certificates of completion are granted.



Sample certificate

## TCLC Makes Dreams Come True (Continued)

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

- Small group classroom
- One-on-One Tutoring

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.

Tri-County Literacy Council invites community members, organizations, past learners, employers (often in their work places) and many others to share their knowledge with learners regarding their careers. Doing so brings the course content to life. It makes it real and it gives learners opportunities to network with potential employers. Community members, in turn, realize the potential of the learners, and in some cases, learners will be hired.

Additional programs offered by the agency prepare persons to move into higher learning. With preparation, some learners will move into credit programs at local high schools and/or venture over to St. Lawrence College.

Apprenticeship programs will also be a draw while other learners will choose to acquire the skills necessary for independence. Regardless of the path chosen they are all worthy because they represent the steps needed to achieve dreams.

To help learners realize their goals the agency must be able to adapt to change. New courses are researched and

introduced. This means staff must be willing to work outside their comfort levels and accept challenges around presenting new curriculum with new experiences. This is what keeps course content fresh and relevant and it is done in consideration of both learner and community needs. Agency staff mirrors for learners their ability to be flexible and to face change “head on”. They work as a team and support each other as agency needs arise.

So, as the fall season fast approaches and change is on the horizon ask yourself and/or others around you whether you, or they, have taken the steps needed toward achieving dreams. It is never too late and here at Tri-County Literacy Council the dreams of children in the RBC Community Homework and After-School Program (CHAP) and those of adults in the many core program(s) can all be realized. The agency has made the necessary preparations to schedule you into any one and/or several of its learning programs.

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“I hope to see you! Tri-County Literacy Council makes dreams come true - why not yours?”

## Assessment

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

One of the first steps in taking any course at Tri-County Literacy Council is an educational assessment. What exactly is an assessment? Microsoft Word's thesaurus lists evaluation, appraisal, measurement, review, opinion and judgement as synonyms. The Literacy and Basic Skills Service Provider Guidelines has a detailed definition that is tailored to Literacy and Basic Skills programs:

*“Assessment is any process or procedure that gathers information for making decisions about a learner’s knowledge, skills, behaviours and abilities. It forms a critical part of everyday activities in a literacy program as decisions are made on the best way to meet learners’ needs. Assessment includes a wide range of approaches from informal procedures to formal, standardized assessments or tests. LBS service providers conduct assessments at intake (upon registration and placement), during programming (as part of program delivery) and at exit (when learners complete the learner plan).”*

When we think about assessment, it's important to consider that assessment in a literacy program is done for the benefit of many people including:

- The Learner (you)
- The Assessor
- The classroom Instructor/Tutor
- Other service providers (e.g. Job Zone, Ontario Works)
- LBS funder (the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development)

**Initial** assessment, completed at/or around the time of intake into a program, will help us identify a need for the program. We can identify skills that learners need to improve, in order to reach their goals. We can identify areas of strength and weakness, as well as determine what foundational skills a learner can build upon.

**Ongoing** assessment is done throughout a learner's time in the program. This can be done formally through a Milestone activity, a Portfolio Review, or informally through an instructor's/tutor's observations. The purpose of ongoing assessment is to ensure that a learner is making measurable progress in his/her chosen program.

**Exit** assessment is completed when a learner is getting ready to finish his/her chosen program. The exit assessment can be a Milestone and/or a Culminating Task which indicates that a learner has gained the skills and knowledge needed to move on to the next step of their journey. This next step might be further education, apprenticeship or employment.

Overall, it is important to understand that the assessment process guides and informs the literacy learner's steps throughout each stage of his/her journey. Assessment informs the development of a learner plan and the actual delivery of training - for example the method of training and the appropriate resources to be used. Assessment confirms when learners are ready to transition to their goals beyond our programs. And ultimately, it is our goal to help learners achieve their goals.

## 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

## From the Coordinator of Volunteers' Desk

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

### 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.

Even though it is the year 2016, literacy is still a serious issue in Canada.

According to the Canadian Literacy and Learning Network ([www.literacy.ca](http://www.literacy.ca)) 42% of Canadian adults between the ages of 16 and 65 have low literacy skills.

There are clear links between poverty and literacy. Impoverished adults often do not have the literacy skills to be successful in finding and retaining employment. Statistically, less than 20% of people with the lowest literacy skills are employed.

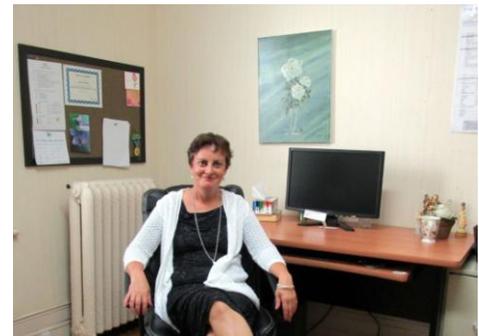
A 1% increase in the literacy rate would generate \$18 billion in economic growth, each year. Interestingly, investment in literacy programming has a 241% return on investment, although adult literacy programs are surprising poorly funded.

By choosing to volunteer in the field of literacy, you are making a real impact and changing lives in our community. Volunteer positions available at Tri-County Literacy Council include:

- One-on-One Program Tutor
- Classroom Assistant - Assisting instructors in LBS (Literacy Basic Skills) and/or GED (General Education Development) classroom and/or one of our many Occupational Curriculum programs
- Guest Speaker
- Administrative Assistant
- Board Member

The first step to volunteering is coming in for a short interview. To make an appointment, call 613-932-7161 or email

[volunteers@tricityliteracycouncil.ca](mailto:volunteers@tricityliteracycouncil.ca)



Carol Anne Maloney,  
Coordinator of Volunteers

- Community Homework and After-School Program (CHAP) Tutor

*“I look forward to hearing from you.”*

## Office Clerk Training

**Anne-Marie Phoenix (Dipl. Bus.Tech./IMS, Cert. Teacher of Adults),  
Information Management System Coordinator**

Tri-County Literacy Council recently offered clerical training, based on curriculum developed by Literacy Link Eastern Ontario (LLEO).



Office Clerk graduates (left to right): Lisa Gabrielle, Pauline Grenier, Joanne Valieres, Susan Currier, Arbert John (AJ) Acedera, and Sharron Greffe

Course participants performed various entry-level office tasks, based on Essential Skills (reading,

writing, document use). Microsoft Word, Excel, email, and typing practices, as well as how to perform Internet searches were also part of the training.

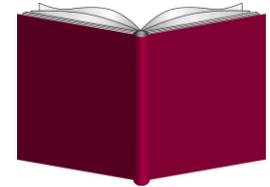
Final projects consisted of preparing a cover letter and résumé, as well as doing a Practice Interview. A goal board was also developed as a focused visualizing exercise.

Guest speakers from varying sectors spoke to the class about their role as an office worker in the clerical field. They included visitors from Job

Zone, Trinity Anglican Church, and Drake International Inc. The students were very receptive, as this provided a better understanding of the diverse types of work an Office Clerk may perform.

Community partner site visits to Job Zone and the Cornwall Public Library gave the learners insight as to available job search and learning resources, as well as allowed them to discover free local computer access.

Congratulations to the clerical training class.



### 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.

## Who knew?

**Anne-Marie Phoenix (Dipl. Bus.Tech./IMS, Cert. Teacher of Adults),  
Information Management System Coordinator**

When contemplating to apply for the free Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Labourer training offered at TCLC, little did I know that the practice interview, which was part of the job readiness training, would lead me to securing full-time employment both as the agency's Information Management System (IMS) Coordinator and a Literacy Trainer.

Work training began with Follow-up calls to previous learners, followed by learning about our main funder's (Ministry of Advanced Education and

Skills Development) reporting procedures, as well as how to use the software which controls the agency's electronic outdoor sign.

There's much to learn when working in a literacy agency. I continue to learn every day.

The Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities is now called the Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development

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### Tri-County Literacy Council Board of Directors

Barbara Petepiece,  
Chairperson

Carol Potts,  
Past Chairperson

Shirley Fraser,  
Secretary

Angus Kelly,  
Treasurer

Catherine Levac,  
Member at Large

Denise Paquette,  
HR Consultant

Dina McGowan,  
Executive Director

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### Tri-County Literacy Council Staff Members

Dina McGowan,  
Executive Director

Carolyn Eva,  
Literacy Assessor

Anne-Marie Phoenix,  
Information  
Management  
Systems Coordinator

Carol Anne Maloney,  
Coordinator of  
Volunteers

Danielle Bray,  
Business Development  
Coordinator

Ruth Laplante,  
Bookkeeper

## Technology Tools for Seniors

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

Today, technology is everywhere. As you go about running errands and accessing services, it's not unusual to find yourself facing yet another electronic device or terminal. If you're a senior, you may feel anxious when this happens, as research shows that many seniors struggle with the use of technology and are the least socially included in this area.

As such, Tri-County Literacy Council is developing a booklet (titled *Technology Tools for Seniors - Making Community Connections*) to show seniors how to perform various tasks electronically around town. This valuable community project is funded by the Government of Canada's New Horizons for Seniors Program. Topics will include instructions for using devices and terminals for everyday life such as:

- the parking lot ticket dispenser at the Cornwall Community Hospital (CCH)
- next-in line terminals at the Registration and Emergency departments of the CCH
- the Check-In Kiosk of the Walk-In Clinic at the McConnell Medical Centre
- a Debit card to pay for purchases or services
- a credit card to pay for things such as restaurant meals
- an Automated Teller Machine (ATM) to conveniently perform banking tasks
- an In-Restaurant Kiosk for faster service

This guide is being written in clear language using large print and plenty of images to ensure understanding, whether seniors are visual or read-write learners. For seniors that are kinesthetic (by doing) learners, additional learning options include:

1. Individual on-site training by partnering organizations (e.g. hospital, banks, etc.); and
2. Small group training by a senior volunteer of Tri-County Literacy Council.

Two hundred copies of this free booklet are expected to be available to SD&G seniors in the fall/winter. If you are a senior, call 613-932-7161 to reserve your copy today.



**Technology Tools for Seniors – Reference Group** (left to right): Gisele Depatie, Ray Riley (Encore Seniors President), Karen Martin, Danielle Bray (Project Manager). Missing: Celia Crawford (CIBC Banking Centre Leader)

## Follow us & be the First to Know of Free Courses

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

TCLC offers more than Literacy and Basic Skills upgrading (e.g. reading, writing and math). Our **award-winning occupational training courses** (e.g. entry-level positions such as Retail Associate, Warehouse Worker, Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance Labourer, etc.), as well as our computer courses (e.g. Microsoft Word, Excel, Basic Computer) are also available free of-charge to adult residents of Stormont, Dundas and Glengarry. **Please note: class seats are first given to those that are looking for work.** We also offer educational assessments.

Although you can find our ads through many online and offline methods, we encourage you to sign up to receive instant notification of free agency offerings, as especially our occupational and computer classes tend to fill quickly. This way, you won't have to remember to check the ads and will be the first to know.

To do this, visit our website at [www.tricityliteracycouncil.ca](http://www.tricityliteracycouncil.ca) and click the Follow button, at the bottom right corner of any Web page.



You will then see the box below appear. Enter your email address and click the "Sign me up" button.



Tri-County Literacy Council advertises using the following methods:

- Cogeco TV (channel 11)
- Fresh FM radio
- Newspapers (e.g. Standard-Freeholder)
- TCLC website
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Kijiji
- Online directories
- Posters
- Community partners

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

We thank our many supportive partners for being “friends of literacy”.

**EMPLOYMENT  
ONTARIO**



## 2016/17 Board of Directors

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

Shortly after Tri-County Literacy Council’s Annual Meeting, the Board of Directors met to determine its new Board for this fiscal year. Given Mrs. Carol Potts’ many years of dedication as Chairperson, she with other members, decided it was time for change.

We owe Carol a huge thank you. She will continue being on the Board as Past Chairperson, while providing the new Chairperson Mrs. Barbara Petepiece, with guidance and support.



Carol Potts, Past Chairperson



Barbara Petepiece, Chairperson

Carol served as the Chairperson of the Board for approximately 15 years and during this time she generously gave much of her time while sharing her expertise. Carol volunteered as a literacy tutor and attended most every event sponsored by the agency. She was often seen around the premises, as she kept up to date with the daily workings of the agency. In turn, she networked with Ministry staff, agency staff and with many of the learners here at Tri-County Literacy Council.

Returning Board members include:

- Ms. Shirley Fraser (Secretary);
- Mr. Angus Kelly, (Treasurer);
- Mrs. Cathy Levac (Member at Large); and
- Mrs. Denise Paquette (Human Resources Consultant).

I wish to thank all Board members for their dedication to the agency. I especially want to thank Carol Potts for her mentorship and kindness toward myself and the agency over the many years she has served.

*Thank You*

## Daycare Worker Training

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

July 28, saw 17 learners successfully complete the Daycare Worker training program.



**Daycare Worker graduates**

Students had the opportunity to work through a curriculum, meet many guest speakers, and attend various site visits.

A highlight of the program was meeting local author, Troy Kent Guindon, who has written two children's books, *The Reading Promise* and *Stinky Blinky*. *The Reading Promise* has received over 30 awards internationally. Other guest speakers included Stephanie Cyr,

Dietician with the Eastern Ontario Health Unit, Jennifer Ratt of the Children's Aid Society, Joanne Brault with the City of Cornwall, Susan Forget, a former nanny, and Frances Odair, a retired teacher.

Students also had the opportunity to visit Richelieu Daycare, the Early Years Centre, Cornwall Public Library and Job Zone. In addition, each student produced a final project complete with a five-day menu and learning activities for a daycare setting. The results were impressive, showcasing many creative talents.

As this training was highly successful, it will be offered again, starting Monday, September 19, 2016 at 9 am. Class will run Monday to Thursday, 9 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. To register, call 613-932-7161. Space is limited.

Learning at Tri-County Literacy Council means having a friendly and knowledgeable instructor to answer any questions you might have, show other examples of learning, make learning easier, ensure you clearly understand how to do things and award you a program certificate for your employment portfolio.

### Tri-County Literacy Council

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613-932-7161

FAX:  
613-932-5121

#### 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.