



www.literacy.bc.ca 1-800-663-1293

Today, all over the world, people are celebrating literacy and lifelong learning in honour of International Literacy Day (ILD).

ILD was established in 1965 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). From UNESCO's Paris headquarters to small communities on every continent, ILD is being marked with open houses, community reading festivals, literacy displays, fund raisers, and other local events. In BC two local community groups have developed novel ways to celebrate – read all about it at <http://www.plv.bc.ca/> Project Literacy Victoria and <http://www.nald.ca/nanaimo.htm> Literacy Nanaimo.

The staff and board of Literacy BC would like to mark this special day by extending a heartfelt thank you to our members, partners, donors, sponsors, and our colleagues from all over BC who work with us to achieve our vision of a more literate British Columbia.

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1. Take Action to Influence Change

The Movement for Canadian Literacy continues to work hard on our behalf to influence public policy at the national level. MCL's August 2004 *Federal Literacy Facts* outlines MCL's plans to influence action on a pan-Canadian literacy strategy and renewed federal literacy policy. MCL will be connecting with newly elected parliamentarians, and working with the literacy coalitions to support further advances at the provincial/territorial level.

MCL is also planning a successful Literacy Action Day on Parliament Hill on October 21 and is circulating a petition that encourages the federal government to develop a comprehensive literacy strategy. The signed petitions will be hand-delivered to Parliament Hill on Literacy Action Day. For a copy of the petition visit www.literacy.ca

2. Literacy BC 2004 Annual General Meeting

Please join us on Friday, October 15, 2004 for our Annual General Meeting from 4:30 to 6:30 pm at the Executive Hotel, 1379 Howe Street, Vancouver. Meet federal and provincial representatives, literacy practitioners from across BC and the Literacy BC Board of Directors for 2004-05. Enjoy a wine and cheese reception and celebrate another very successful year for literacy in BC. RSVP by October 8 to info@literacy.bc.ca or 1-800-663-1293 toll-free in BC.

3. New Service from Literacy BC: What's Happening in Literacy?

At Literacy BC we use a variety of methods for disseminating news and information to the field, including our web site, print newsletter, electronic network, and this e-bulletin. Yet, still more information passes through our office that we would like to pass on to you. To that end, we have instituted a new service called **What's Happening in Literacy?** What's Happening? is a compilation of abbreviated information about new projects, upcoming conferences, funding opportunities, teaching resources, and much more. As well, it includes a list of new acquisitions available for borrowing from our Provincial Literacy Resource Centre. View What's Happening? at www.literacy.bc.ca.

4. First Recipients of the Paul Gallagher Access Fund Announced

Literacy BC is pleased to announce the first recipients of the new Access Fund, named in memory of former Literacy BC President, Paul Gallagher.

The Paul Gallagher Access Fund provides community based learning centres with financial resources to assist adult students with emergency needs. Bus fare, daycare, clothing, gas money or other costs that would make a difference between attending and not attending a literacy/ABE program are covered by the fund.

Ten thousand dollars is being distributed this month to 19 community based learning centres across the province who have demonstrated a need for assistance related to adult literacy/ABE student access issues. A list of the recipients will be posted on the Literacy BC web site www.literacy.bc.ca in the near future.

5. BC student honoured with Co-operators Learner Achievement Award at 2004 PGI

The Co-operators Provincial Learner Achievement Award is given every year to an adult learner who has shown exceptional progress in an Adult Basic Education program. This year Literacy BC received more than 25 applications for this award from around the province. The Learners Committee of the Literacy BC Board assessed the applications and selected the person they believe most exemplifies the principles of The Co-operators Learner Achievement Award.

We are delighted to announce that the winner of **The Co-operators 2004 Provincial Learner Achievement Award** is **Shawna Montpellier of Prince George**. Shawna grew up not realizing she had a learning disability, which made her life very perplexing. She would hide her books inside another book, so that people in her school wouldn't tease her. She remembers being called hurtful names by some of her peers as well as some teachers. She quickly became discouraged in school, and dropped out of high school even though she desired to finish.

Later in life Shawna entered Adult Basic Education. It was the help from the Learning Difficulties Centre of Northern BC in Prince George <http://www.nald.ca/ldc/Index.htm> that provided her with the support she needed. Through perseverance she has recently completed her English 11 with a 92% average. Her desire is to complete her lifetime dream of achieving a high school diploma, take a mechanics course and perhaps even become a famous writer. Shawna is a courageous person who is helping all of us realize that we can work to overcome our challenges. She is an

exemplary model of the courage, will and commitment shared by all adults in BC who strive to improve their literacy skills and attain their goals. Congratulations Shawna!

6. Raise-a-Reader Day on September 30

Mark your calendars for September 30! On this day, volunteers and celebrities will hit the streets early in Vancouver and cities across Canada to sell newspapers and raise money for CanWest Global's Raise-a-Reader campaign. The Raise-a-Reader campaign was created by The Vancouver Sun in 1997 to increase awareness of literacy and raise money to fund children's literacy programs. Since its inception, Raise-a-Reader has raised over \$850,000 in support of children's literacy initiatives in British Columbia. The goal for the 2004 Raise-a-Reader campaign is to raise \$275,000. One hundred per cent of all the money raised goes directly to organizations that support children's and family literacy. Last year Literacy BC disbursed its \$50,000 share of Raise-a-Reader funds to 50 family literacy programs in BC.

7. BC Winners of the 2004 Canada Post Literacy Awards

Canada Post has announced the winners of its 2004 Literacy Awards. These awards, in four categories, recognize grass roots literacy initiatives and celebrate the achievements of learners, educators, community organizations, volunteers and business leaders. We congratulate all the winners and finalists:

- **Individual Achievement Awards** celebrate the achievements of learners who successfully overcome social or economic barriers by improving literacy skills. This year's BC winner is **Constance M. Hansey** of Nanaimo. Constance found it difficult to express her thoughts and did not believe she had any value. When she realized her daughter was becoming her mirror image, she knew it was time for a change and went back to school. Besides now being able to mentor her daughter, Constance has also become the Chairperson for the Harewood Family of Community Schools and is starting a writing group for adult literacy learners.

- **Educator Awards** honour English and French-speaking educators, tutors, and advocates who have demonstrated a commitment to the cause of literacy. One of five educator awards this year goes to **Carol Forbes** of Campbell River. Beginning as an adult learner, Carol went on to become the co-ordinator of a Continuing Education Adult Literacy Program, founding director of the Campbell River Community Literacy Association <http://www.readwithus.ca> and trainer to more than 60 volunteer tutors. She also takes part in fundraising campaigns and continues to coach adult learners.

- **Community Leadership Awards** recognize and honour non-profit, volunteer and labour organizations that have demonstrated long-term achievement, innovation, leadership and organizational excellence in furthering the cause of literacy. Two winners were named in this category:
 - ✓ **Building Learning Together (BLT), Qualicum.** BLT champions family literacy and fosters the development of innovative early learning programs. One example is the BLT Backpack program, featuring 180 child-sized backpacks of language-enriched books and toys, which are lent to young learners. The backpacks are taken to community sites by the Words on Wheels Outreach Literacy Bus.

 - ✓ **Project Literacy Victoria (PLV), Victoria** <http://www.plv.bc.ca/> Each year, 75 PLV volunteer tutors donate more than 20,000 hours to provide free one-on-one help and support in basic reading, writing, math and life skills to 130 adult learners. One of the newer programs, Learning Webs, is a computer lab where learners can work independently or with a tutor to access online resources or courses.

8. ABC CANADA launches “Dark Secrets” Campaign

ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation <http://www.abc-canada.org/> has just launched a new television Public Service Announcement (PSA) Campaign developed by Ambrose Carr Linton Carroll Inc. of Toronto. The humorous spots are designed to encourage reluctant adult learners to give literacy upgrading programs another thought and guide them in seeking assistance.

The campaign, entitled *Dark Secrets*, includes two spots that portray situations in which adults feel compelled to share a "dark secret" -- their struggle with literacy -- with a coworker or friend. Just as they are about to reveal this secret, their companion interrupts with a secret of their own. The companions' secrets are outrageous, and are intended to get a laugh, but more important, they make the point that if you have trouble with reading, writing or math, there's no reason to feel embarrassed or ashamed, because there are people with much darker secrets.

You can view and order the PSAs at

http://www.abccanada.org/public_awareness/secrets_campaign.asp.

ABC CANADA: info@abc-canada.org, 1-800-303-1004

9. The Faces of Literacy: Leona Gadsby and Linda Abbott, Women of the Year

Two long time members of our BC literacy community were honoured with the **2004 Woman of the Year** award this spring by the Cranbrook branch of the **Canadian Federation of University Women (CFUW)**. **Leona Gadsby**, an instructor with the College of the Rockies and our **Regional Literacy Coordinator** for the East Kootenay Region, shared the 2004 CFUW award with Cranbrook literacy practitioner, Linda Abbott. The two were honoured at a reception in Cranbrook on March 31.

Leona received the award for her work in adult and family literacy over the past 25 years -- her unyielding commitment to educating people about literacy issues, her leadership qualities, and her passion and drive. Leona's wide-ranging accomplishments are well known to many in the literacy community -- congratulations from all of us, Leona! Congratulations, as well, to Linda, a retired teacher and school administrator recognized for implementing the One to One children's literacy program in Cranbrook elementary schools and for inspiring adult volunteers.

Stay tuned for the next Literacy BC e-bulletin coming soon!

If there are changes to your contact information, or if you do not wish to receive the e-bulletin, please let us know by replying to e-bulletin@literacy.bc.ca.

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