

## **WHAT'S HAPPENING IN LITERACY?**

February 2005 Issue

At Literacy BC we use a variety of methods for disseminating news and information to the field. Yet, still more information passes through our office that we would like to pass on to you. To that end, we have instituted a 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, general news, and much more. As well, it includes a list of new acquisitions available for borrowing at our Provincial Literacy Resource Centre.

**[GOODBYES AND WELCOMES](#)**

**[POLICY MATTERS](#)**

**[PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT](#)**

**[UPCOMING CONFERENCES](#)**

**[CALL FOR PROPOSALS](#)**

**[RiPAL-BC BULLETIN](#)**

**[CALL FOR APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS](#)**

**[CALL FOR CREATIVE EXPRESSION](#)**

**[NEW ACQUISITIONS AT THE PROVINCIAL LITERACY RESOURCE CENTRE](#)**

### **GOODBYES AND WELCOMES**

A number of staff changes have taken place recently in the literacy field in BC and elsewhere in Canada as we say goodbye to old friends and colleagues and welcome new ones.

#### **Project Literacy Kelowna**

Last fall Patti Boyle retired as Executive Director of Project Literacy Kelowna in order to move to the lower mainland. She is replaced by **Glenn Kissmann**. Glenn has an extensive health care management background and has always had a special interest in literacy and education. Phone: 250-762-2163 Fax: 250-762-0764. Email: [glenn@projectliteracykelowna.org](mailto:glenn@projectliteracykelowna.org)

#### **Laubach Literacy of Canada (Kamloops)**

Laurie Zwick has joined the Kamloops Laubach Literacy Council as the new Volunteer Coordinator.

Phone (250) 554-1040 Fax: (250) 554-1050. email: [klle@mail.ocis.net](mailto:klle@mail.ocis.net). Web: [www.literacykamloops.com](http://www.literacykamloops.com)

## **SkillPlan**

Long-time literacy practitioner **Elizabeth Thompson** has retired. Elizabeth had an association with SkillPlan for 12 years where she focused on workplace essential skills. One of the last projects she worked on was How Do Your Skills Measure Up? [www.skillplan.ca](http://www.skillplan.ca) Currently, she is happily walking on the beach, doing yoga, playing with her grandchildren, and singing in two choirs.

## **Literacy Alberta**

**Janet Lane** took over as Executive Director of Literacy Alberta in January, replacing **Marnie Schaetti** who has left to pursue new adventures. Janet was the manager of a family literacy program at the Calgary Learning Centre for five years and has more than 20 years of varied experience in business and financial management.

Phone: 403-410-6994. Email: [janet\\_lane@elit.ca](mailto:janet_lane@elit.ca)

## **Literacy Partners of Manitoba**

Marg Rose has left Literacy Partners of Manitoba for a position with the University of Victoria as the Recognition and Stewardship Officer. **Lorri Apps** joined Literacy Partners of Manitoba as the new Executive Director on November 1st, 2004. Lori has worked in the non-for-profit field for more than fifteen years, including management and fund-raising positions in the health, environment, and arts fields. In addition, she has worked in the areas of seniors, juvenile correction and addictions.

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## **POLICY MATTERS**

### **The Promise and Problem of Literacy for Canada: An Agenda for Action, Canadian Education Association**

The Canadian Education Association released its first policy brief on October 14, 2004. [The Promise and Problem of Literacy for Canada: An Agenda for Action](#) outlines a comprehensive national literacy strategy for the country. Canada faces many literacy challenges; two in five Canadians lack the necessary literacy skills to be full participants in society. While many literacy programs do exist, they are fragmented, poorly implemented and lack coherence. In the 12-page policy brief, CEA calls on all levels of government to provide the necessary leadership for a strategic framework and the necessary actions to give all Canadians the literacy skills they deserve and the country needs. The full text of [The Promise and Problem of Literacy for Canada: An Agenda for Action](#), can be downloaded for

free from the CEA website. Hard copies are available by contacting CEA at [info@cea-ace.ca](mailto:info@cea-ace.ca).

## **Learning What Works: Evidence from SRDC's Social Experiments and Research**

The **Social Research and Demonstration Corporation's** two-part mission is to help policy-makers and practitioners identify and implement social policies and programs that improve the well-being of all Canadians, with a special concern for the effects on the disadvantaged, and to raise the standards of evidence that are used in assessing social policies and programs. SRDC publishes a newsletter called ***Learning What Works*** that is available through complimentary subscriptions or online at [www.srdc.org](http://www.srdc.org). The fall 2004 edition of *Learning What Works* includes a report on **Sustaining: Making the Transition from Welfare to Work** by Wendy Bancroft which takes an in-depth look at the lives of several lone-parent mothers and their families over a two-year period as they attempt to make the transition from welfare to work.

**The Literacy Enquirer**, <http://www.literacyenquirer.ca/>

The Literacy Enquirer is produced by the policy learning circle in Ontario. The policy learning circle is an informal group of practitioners in Ontario whose goal is to bring practitioner knowledge to the policy-making process. If you have anything pithy to say about literacy policy from a practitioner perspective, you're invited to write a short article or make a cartoon. Phone: 416.532.1605, Email: [literacyenquirer@yahoo.ca](mailto:literacyenquirer@yahoo.ca)

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

**Adult Literacy Education Wiki\*** (wiki wiki is a Hawaiian word meaning "very very quickly" - wiki alone means "quick")

A wiki is a web environment where colleagues can go to think together and write together. Practitioners can carry on conversations, write proposals or poems together, and it all stays in one place on one wiki page or with links to multiple wiki pages. The [wikipedia](http://wikipedia) is one of the most well-known examples of wiki technology.

Using the wiki, teachers, tutors, administrators, researchers, adult learners and others can add and discuss research questions using knowledge from research, experience teaching adult learners, or experience as an adult learner. Discussion topics include: Adult New Readers Who Plateau at Second or Third Grade Level; Evidence-Based Adult Education; Self-Study Among Adult Learners; Learner Persistence; Prison Inmate Tutoring Programs; Assessment Information; Adult Literacy Professional Development; Participatory and Emancipatory Education;

Accountability. Explore this new resource:  
[http://wiki.literacytent.org/index.php/Main\\_Page](http://wiki.literacytent.org/index.php/Main_Page)

## UPCOMING CONFERENCES

**Towards Clearer Communications, Fédération canadienne pour l'alphabétisation en français (FCAF) and other leading provincial literacy organizations. BC provincial conference, Vancouver, BC, March 31, 2005.**

A series of provincial conferences across the country, culminating in a national conference in December 2005. At each conference, the following information will be shared: How to communicate with less-literate Canadians? How to design more effective forms? How to implement plain language in the workplace? Register on-line at <http://www.clearercommunications.ca/registerhere.html>. The daylong conference will be in English and French with a simultaneous translation. Contact Tobias Keogh, Project Manager, FCAF, (613) 749-5333 ext. 225 or 1-888-906-5666 Email : [tkeogh@fcf.net](mailto:tkeogh@fcf.net) or visit <http://www.clearercommunications.ca/>

**Celebrating Heritage, Culture and Education, 2005 Conference of the Adult Basic Education Association of BC. April 27-30, 2005. Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, Merritt BC**  
<http://www.nald.ca/PROVINCE/BC/abe/confe.htm>

**National Conference and Exhibition Opportunity - the Canadian Association for Distance Education (C A D E) and SFU: Learning Virtually ... Anywhere, Vancouver. May - 9-11, 2005**

Meet and exchange ideas with decision-makers and influencers in the distance and online education space across Canada. The program covers a wide range of topics on distance education practices. You can also participate as an exhibitor at the "Solution Seminar Series" to present your product offerings or services. For more information see the CADE website: [www.cade-aced.ca/](http://www.cade-aced.ca/)

**Essential Skills in Action: Contributing to Canada's Workforce. May 16 & 17, 2005. Winnipeg, Manitoba**

SkillPlan and the Essential Skills Capacity Building project partners are pleased to present a national practitioners' conference on Essential Skills. The conference themes are: Awareness & Promotion – plug into your essential skills network; Implementation – strategies to use in any learning environment; Materials & Tools – relevant, practical instructional resources; Research & Theory – what we have learned from others. To register, visit [www.skillplan.ca](http://www.skillplan.ca).

**Adult Basic Education, Literacy, Media and Technology: Points of entry, points of connection. Views from here and abroad. Montreal, June 27 – 29, 2005. Co-sponsors: The Centre for Literacy, AlphaPlus,**

### **CTAD (UK), NALD. With David Rosen**

The 2005 Summer Institute at The Centre for Literacy in Montreal will focus on the ways that technology can be used to create communities of practice. Some questions to stimulate conversation: What do we mean by “technology” (old vs. new) and how does it fit into the definition of literacy?; Can technology serve as a point of entry to literacy?; How can technology help us share and manage knowledge?; How does technology support information literacy?; How can we foster a positive attitude toward technology?

<http://www.centreforliteracy.qc.ca/whatsnew/sli2005/1.htm>

### **CALL FOR PROPOSALS**

#### **Integrating Literacy, National Literacy Secretariat, Human Resources Skills Development Canada. Call for preliminary proposals for the 2005-2006 Integrating Literacy national funding stream.**

To be eligible for funding, projects must be national in scope and support one of the following five activities: the development of learning materials, research, the improvement of access and outreach, the improvement of coordination and information sharing and increasing public awareness. Projects will be considered on the basis of the strategies and partnerships they bring to the task of integrating literacy in Canada’s social and economic life. Current activities include projects that increase access to literacy for people with different learning requirements, address literacy as an indicator of quality of life, and engage cultural institutions in the promotion of literacy. **The sole deadline for 2005/06 is May 15, 2005** (postmarked). Further information can be found at:

[www.rhdcc.gc.ca/asp/gateway.asp?hr=en/hip/lld/nls/call/callipe.shtml&hs=1xa](http://www.rhdcc.gc.ca/asp/gateway.asp?hr=en/hip/lld/nls/call/callipe.shtml&hs=1xa)

### **RESEARCH IN PRACTICE NEWS**

#### **RiPAL-BC e-bulletin <http://www.nald.ca/ripal/ebulletin/feb05/1.htm>**

RiPAL-BC’s goal is to support and promote research in practice in adult literacy in BC and to build a structure that will sustain it in the years ahead. RiPAL-BC has produced its first project bulletin which includes information about research in practice activities and resources in BC and Canada. If you would like to be put on the RiPAL-BC mailing list, contact [ripal@literacy.bc.ca](mailto:ripal@literacy.bc.ca).

### **CALL FOR APPLICATIONS AND NOMINATIONS**

#### **Conference Board of Canada Awards for Excellence in Workplace Literacy**

The Conference Board of Canada invites organizations to apply for a workplace education award, or to nominate another deserving company. The **Awards for Excellence in Workplace Literacy** showcase companies whose workplace literacy programs enhance employee reading, writing and numeracy skills through in-house training, core competency evaluations and skills promotion.

Winning organizations will be showcased and honoured at the **2005 International Workplace Education and Learning Conference: Developing People—Maximizing Performance** (Visit the conference website). To enter, submit a description of your company's program by March 18, 2005. For more details, visit the [Conference Board's Awards for Excellence in Workplace Literacy website](#) or contact Linda Scott, Awards Program Manager, at 1-888-801-8818 Ext. 277, or by e-mail at [scott@conferenceboard.ca](mailto:scott@conferenceboard.ca).

## CALL FOR CREATIVE EXPRESSION

### **What Counts? Who Counts? Explore! Create! Express! Festival of Literacies. [Ontario Institute for Studies in Education \(OISE\)](#).**

Literacy practitioners, learners and volunteers are invited to create visual images of our pressing questions about literacy and learning. The Festival of Literacies at OISE wants to collect your art over the next few months and show it publicly at the time of the release of the new International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS) statistics. This visual art show will give an alternative view of adult literacy from how it is represented in the IALSS. For more information visit [www.literacies.OISE.ca](http://www.literacies.OISE.ca) or contact Sheila Stewart at [sstewart@oise.utoronto.ca](mailto:sstewart@oise.utoronto.ca) Phone: (416) 923-6641, ext. 2708.

## TEACHING RESOURCE

**Literacy Information and Resources, Literacy for Independent Living** **Literacy for Independent Living (LIL)** is an online project of the **Canadian Association of Independent Living Centres (CAILC)**. CAILC developed LIL in partnership with the [National Adult Literacy Database \(NALD\)](#). The Literacy Information and Resources section of LIL invites you to explore various online resources that are useful for literacy practitioners, for facilitators at disability and community organizations, for adult learners with disabilities and for their community-at-large. Information and resources are given for disabilities in general and for specific types of disabilities.  
<http://www.nald.ca/lil/english/litinfo.htm>

## THE WORLD OF READING AND LIBRARIES

*"To choose a good book, look in an inquisitor's prohibited list."—John Aikin (1747-1822, English doctor and writer)*

- **February 20th to 26th** marks **Freedom to Read Week!** This annual event led by the Book and Periodical Council encourages Canadians to think about intellectual freedom, censorship, and the value of the right to read. For more information, ideas for activities, posters, visit <http://www.freedomtoread.ca/>. Helping to spread the word this year is [Bookcrossing.com](http://www.bookcrossing.com), which is encouraging Canadians to release challenged

books into their community.

- Looking for a good book to read?? **Canada Reads** (<http://www.cbc.ca/canadareads/>) is on again! Starting February 21st, five panelists will face off on the CBC for this year's battle of the books. Five books will be defended, but only one will be crowned champ... And, all of the publishers have agreed to donate a portion of sales proceeds to the Movement for Canadian Literacy. The elaborate website for Canada Reads not only describes the books and their defenders, but also provides their additional reading lists and teachers' guides
- How has a **public library** made a difference in your life? Want to write about it? If so, **Beyond Words** may be the competition for you. Partly sponsored by the British Columbia Library Association, the contest is awarding \$500 for the highest scoring personal essay about your experience with a public library in BC. Entrants must be 19 years or older. Hurry! The deadline is midnight, **February 28th, 2005**. More information is available at <http://www.beyondwords.ca/default.aspx> or inquire - where else?- at your public library!
- Looking for a way to encourage reluctant readers? The non-profit [Adopt an Author](#) program helps provide teachers with curriculum for specific books, as well as direct contact with the authors using personal appearances, telephone contact, and interactive websites. Should a program like this be started in Canada?
- The international library community has started to examine the impact of the Boxing Day **Tsunami** on Sri Lanka. Many libraries were completely eliminated. The International Federation of Library Associations (IFLA) has been involved with establishing planning and resources. Just as communities here in Canada have decided to adopt or twin themselves with an overseas community, the same principle is being developed in the library community: twinning an overseas library with one that was devastated in Sri Lanka. For more information: <http://www.ifla.org/V/press/tsunami04.htm>

## NEW ACQUISITIONS AT THE PROVINCIAL LITERACY RESOURCE

**The Literacy BC resource centre catalogue is online at:**  
<http://www2.literacy.bc.ca/catalogue>

**Requests can be made via the catalogue, by email to [library@literacy.bc.ca](mailto:library@literacy.bc.ca) by telephone 1-800-663 -1293, or by interlibrary loan through your public library.**

- **Building adult literacy research capacity in Ontario: a university/community approach. Final report of a consultation process.** Daniel Schugurensky, et al. and the Adult Literacy Working Group (OISE). 2002. Reports on the results of the consultation to investigate the research capacity building abilities by the ALWG. The consultation strived to explore potential collaborations between academics, practitioners and learners in the literacy field. Research was conducted via focus groups and workshops.
- **Developing successful strategies for at-risk youth: an annotated list of resources for those designing youth programs.** Nunavut Literacy Council. 2004. A selective directory of programs, classroom resources, web links, and publications from across North America.
- **From coast to coast: a thematic summary of Canadian adult literacy research.** Pat Campbell, September 2003. The purpose of this report is to identify major themes within the Directory of Canadian Adult Literacy Research in English in an effort to determine areas of coverage and gaps in Canada's body of research. The secondary purpose is to provide the key findings for the research conducted within each theme. (NALD).
- **Hana's suitcase: a true story.** Karen Levine. An award winning biography of a Czech girl who died in the Holocaust, told in alternating chapters with an account of how the curator of a Japanese Holocaust centre learned about her life after Hana's suitcase was sent to her. Winner of the Canadian Library Association Book of the Year for Children and the Silver Birch Award.
- **Hardwired for Hope: effective ABE/literacy instructors.** Evelyn Battell, Leora Gesser, Judy Rose, Jan Sawyer and Diana Twiss. Malaspina University-College, 2004.

*I don't want to do good to people. Sometimes in a staff meeting someone will say, "You know, we're not doing them any good to let them come in late all the time." I say, "I didn't sign on to do good to people. They didn't come in and say, 'Do me some good.'" I'm not interested in whether it's good for them or not good for them. I figure it's up to them to figure out what's good and what's not good [for them]. (p.82)*

Those are the words of Kate Nonesuch of the Reading and Writing Centre of Malaspina University-College in Duncan, BC, reflecting on her belief that students have the right to make their own decisions. Kate is one of 17 ABE/literacy instructors in BC interviewed for the recently released study, *Hardwired for Hope: Effective ABE/Literacy Instructors*. In *Hardwired*, five long-term instructors research the characteristics, motivations,

beliefs, styles, strategies and skills of effective instructors. In addition to the interviews, the research team members examine their own practice.

If you would like the opportunity to talk to the team about their research and to share insights from your own practice, **stay tuned for an electronic conference** about *Hardwired for Hope* to take place in spring 2005. If you are interested in receiving registration information, contact [conferences@literacy.bc.ca](mailto:conferences@literacy.bc.ca). The publication is also available online at: "[Hardwired for Hope](#)".

- **The Informal learning practices and media perceptions of adults with low literacy skills series.** Maurice Taylor, et al. Partnerships in Learning, 2004.  
This study investigates the types of learning activities adults with limited literacy skills engage in outside of formal basic education programs. Data were collected using an ethnographic approach by a team of five field researchers under the direction of Maurice Taylor, **Partnerships in Learning**, Ottawa. A key finding is that adults with limited literacy find creative solutions to everyday problems through a diverse range of informal learning activities. In fact, the field researchers were often "surprised and delighted" by their new awareness of the strengths and assets of learners. The "Informal learning practices and media perceptions of adults with low literacy skills" series is also available online at <http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/mtaylor/media/cover.htm>.
- **The more we get together: The politics of collaborative research between university-based and non university-based researchers.** Marina Niks. University of British Columbia, 2004.  
This dissertation explores the experiences and understandings of university-based and non-university based researchers about their collaborative work: their motivation to engage in collaborative projects, how their understandings of research and of collaboration influence their relationships with each other, and the conditions they believe promote collaborative research. The interviewees in the study chose to do collaborative research because of its potential to involve different perspectives and enrich the research process. However, the study finds that influences such as funding requirements and academic reward systems often mean that traditional academic notions of research overpower the collaborative process and limit the emergence of different perspectives. For collaborative research to realize its potential as a space where researchers from different locations come together to generate knowledge, existing conceptions of research need to be deconstructed, and new meanings explored, through dialogue. "The more we get together" is also available online at: <http://www.nald.ca/fulltext/together/together.pdf>.
- **VISION: seeing the possibilities beyond. Exploring the use of structure of intelligence (SOI) and sensori-motor integration**

**exercises within literacy programs. Final report.** Michelle Lebeau. October, 2003.

Evaluates the integration of Structure of Intellect (SOI), sensori-motor, and other tools and exercises in a literacy project in Squamish. VISION explores and documents the learners' and facilitators' perceptions of how these tools impact learning disabilities, measures the impacts on 26 learning abilities, and identifies other factors that affect learning, such as environment and group cohesiveness.

- **Women's journeys in self discovery.** Judy Murphy, 2004.  
*I made the block of Hope [for the quilt] because I believe we should all have hope. As long as we have hope, we can discover who we are and make the necessary changes in our life for the better. The hope to make our dreams come true, to stand tall and face the good and the bad that arises daily, and to accept things that we cannot change.*  
A learner-produced quilt acts as a thematic thread through this reportage on a four year project that invited women who were either involved with the correctional system or at risk of being involved, to extend their learning by participating in an integrated literacy and life-skills project. The resource is for adult educators, facilitators, program planners, and those "interested in a literacy and life skills project that was participatory, learner-centre and holistic in nature". (Intro.) It includes planning information, activities, illustrations, diagrams, and poetry.