



#205-591 Bernard Avenue, Kelowna BC V1Y 6N9
Phone: 250 762-2163 Fax: 250 762-0764
e-mail: admin@projectliteracykelowna.org

Sharing the right to read and succeed... since 1986

February 2007

Dear Learners, Tutors, Members and Community Friends and Partners:

What an extraordinary year 2006 was! It's difficult to know where to begin; here are just some of the Project Literacy Kelowna Society (PLKS) highlights:

- **New funders support PLKS**
- **Tutor enrolment more than doubled**
- **Learner referrals grew by almost thirty percent**
- **Donations increased Substantially**
- **New partnerships and relationships were established**
- **PLKS held one of its most successful public events in our twenty year history**

and last, but far from least,

- **PROJECT LITERACY WON A PRESTIGIOUS NATIONAL AWARD!**

Let's start at the top:

- **New Funders Support PLKS**

Our thanks go out to the City of Kelowna, the Central Okanagan Foundation and the BC Gaming Direct Access Grant program for responding to our requests for financial support. Our sincere appreciation is also extended to BC Gaming Bingo Allocations, which has been providing financial assistance to PLKS for many years, and to the United Way, another long-term supporter, which last year came through with a substantial additional financial grant.



Project Literacy gratefully acknowledges the financial support received from the Central Okanagan Foundation. These funds were allocated to the training of thirty (30) new volunteer tutors.



Central Okanagan Foundation helps

Thanks to the support of all of our funders Project Literacy was able to: 📖 assist approximately 200 adult learners; 📖 retain all of its learning centre space; 📖 train over thirty new volunteer tutors; and 📖 add many excellent new learner resources and training materials to our library.

- **Tutor Enrolment Has More Than Doubled!**

Now let's talk about tutor enrolment. Elaine Johnston, Project Literacy's Assessment Coordinator, and I agree we've never experienced a year like it. While many not-for-profit agencies across the country are reporting significant declines in volunteer recruitment, to the point where some programs and services are in jeopardy, Project Literacy has seen unprecedented growth in the number of individuals who want to share their time and talents with our learners. We salute each and every one of you for your generous community spirit.

Elaine Johnston

We have a special request: If you know anyone with a trade's background who you think would be interested in becoming a volunteer tutor, please encourage him or her to contact us (250-762-2163). We are embarking on an exciting new trades-related skills upgrading project for which their experience and knowledge will be much needed.

- **Learner Referrals Grew by Almost Thirty Percent!**

I have to say it's a good thing so many volunteer tutors are being added to our roster, because the number of individuals asking PLKS for literacy assistance is also growing substantially. In the first quarter of our current fiscal year (October to December '06) PLKS received more than twice as many requests for literacy assistance as we had in the same time period in 2005. And the needs are as varied as the individuals. Our volunteer tutors are currently providing help with basic reading and writing challenges, plus English as a second language, preparation for GED's and LPI's (Language Proficiency Index exams) basic computer skills and applied math for trades.

We've said it before, but it bears repeating, our learners are some of the most hard working and courageous people we know and it's an honour to participate in the achievement of their goals.

- **Donations Increased Substantially!**

We can't tell you how much we appreciate every dollar we receive, whether it's from government, a community agency or private individuals.

In terms of donations, this past year was at once sad and heart warming. Sad because we lost a former board member and one of our most cherished tutors and heart warming because hundreds and hundreds of dollars were donated to Project Literacy in her memory.

Elaine Bjornson never failed to find an opportunity to promote literacy both within our agency and in the community at large. Her dedication knew no bounds, as the many learners she worked with over the years will attest.



Elaine Bjornson

- **New Partnerships and Relationships were Established**



The PLKS 'Reading Riders' support the Heart and Stroke Big Bike Ride

On May 5, 2006 a team of PLKS staff, board members and tutors donned their distinctive blue Project Literacy Shirts and climbed aboard the Heart & Stroke Foundation's Big Bike for a tour through the streets of downtown Kelowna. Our participation offered an excellent opportunity to support another very worthwhile cause in our community while also creating awareness for our own organization. We're looking forward to an even bigger team in 2007!

This past year was one of our most fruitful in terms of reaching out to other community organizations. Increasing awareness about the issue of literacy is a continuous and fundamental goal for PLKS, so we were extremely appreciative of the numerous invitations to participate in local events and to speak to community and service organizations in and around the Kelowna area.

Rotary clubs in particular were very enthusiastic about learning more about what we do and presentations were made to several clubs over the past year. A very special thank you goes out to member Lois Serwa and the Kelowna Okanagan Mission Rotary Club for their very generous donation of \$1,000.

An opportunity to increase literacy awareness was presented to PLKS by published Kelowna poet, Nancy Holmes.

Sponsored by the Victoria Read Society and Canada Council for the Arts, Nancy is one of more than thirty poets who, once a year, perform Random Acts of Poetry in cities across Canada. Last October Nancy read her poems in support of PLKS.

In the picture on the right, Nancy, on the far left, is performing a Random Act of Poetry for Kelowna, MLA Sindi Hawkins, PLKS President, Pat Roy and several downtown library staff members.



Poet, Nancy Holmes performs a Random Act of Poetry for an appreciative audience

• **PLKS Held One of its Most Successful Events in Twenty Years!**

Our First Annual International Literacy Day Celebration, which took place at the Kelowna Downtown Library on September 9, 2006, was successful beyond our wildest expectations.

First, thanks to a generous donation by the Kelowna Professional Firefighters, the entire city was invited to the celebration via a thirty-foot banner strung across one of the major downtown arteries.

Then, after weeks and weeks of hard work by the PLKS Public Awareness committee and Dawn Silver, Head Librarian of the Downtown Library, an amazing roster of activities was planned. And it all went off without a single hitch!



Here's what the day's line-up looked like:

- Proclamation read by Mayor Sharon Shepherd declaring September 8 through September 14 "ADULT LEARNERS WEEK" in the City of Kelowna
- Canteen services provided by the Okanagan Mission Lions Club
- Book Sale by Friends of the Library
- Presentations by local authors on literacy and writing
- SCRABBLE® game competitions
- Children's treasure hunt (with book prizes courtesy of [Okanagan Regional Library](#))
- A Drum Circle by First Nations performers from Ki-Low-Na Friendship Centre

and...

- A Children's Story Corner with these very enthusiastic local celebrity readers:

- | | |
|--|---|
| 📖 Susan Knight - Sun FM Radio | 📖 Sindi Hawkins, M.L.A. |
| 📖 Mike Roberts - CHBC TV | 📖 Mohini Singh - CHBC TV |
| 📖 Mayor Sharon Shepherd | 📖 Ron Cannan - MP |
| 📖 Marion Barschel - CBC Radio | 📖 Alison Yesilcimen - Daily Courier Publisher |
| 📖 Tom Wilson - Daily Courier Managing Editor | 📖 Mike Roberts - Superintendent School Dist #23 |



and...

**📖 15
UNIFORMED
FIREFIGHTERS**



International Literacy Day Continued...



The Boss



Mike Roberts, CHBC TV



Counting the Footsteps..."224, 225..."



Mayor, Sharon Shepherd



A captive audience



Sindi Hawkins, M.L.A.



Ron Cannan, M.P.



PLKS balloons were a big hit!

Project Literacy Wins Prestigious National Award!



2006 Community Leadership Award Winner

Project Literacy Kelowna Society, Kelowna, BC

At Project Literacy, the focus is on attention to the individual's needs. Learners and tutors are matched carefully, based on their interests, background experience and relevant knowledge. Over the past 20 years, this free and confidential service has helped some 2,500 adult learners rediscover a sense of hope and achieve their self-defined goals.

Community Leadership Awards – Background:

The Canada Post Literacy Awards were first established in 1993 to discover and acknowledge the achievements of Canadians who have made a special effort or an important contribution to literacy. Today, the program continues to recognize grassroots literacy initiatives, and celebrate the achievements of both learners and those who have helped them learn to read and write.

By acknowledging their efforts, the Literacy Awards encourage thousands of Canadians to improve their reading and writing skills, and inspire them to reach their personal literacy goals.

Canada Post Literacy Awards



*Barb Hagan (left) accepts award
from Canada Post's Colleen Frick*

Receiving the Canada Post Literacy Award for Community Leadership in 2006 as we celebrated our twentieth anniversary was particularly meaningful to Project Literacy. However, we must always remember that the accolades this award bestows are entirely due to the dedication of hundreds of volunteer tutors and the 2,500 learners who worked so hard, often in the face of great adversity, to achieve their goals.

Project Literacy Kelowna Society... since 1986

As I said earlier, what an amazing year 2006 was and believe me, we were just warming up!

We are already planning the **Second Annual International Literacy Day Celebration**, which will be held on Saturday, September 8th at the Downtown library. Mark your calendars!

PLKS is also organizing a very exciting, fun-filled, literacy-focused fundraising event. We will have more details to share with you soon!

In 2007 one of our major priorities is to substantially increase our membership. Remember, your tax deductible \$15.00 membership fee directly supports our tutors and learners through the purchase of books and training materials. A healthy membership also tells potential funders that this is a strong and credible organization in which many individuals believe. I encourage you to visit our [membership page](#) and take out or renew your membership today.

Funding for a front line, grassroots organization like PLKS is, of course, always a priority. We are therefore very excited about a new feature on our web site that means you can now make a donation to Project Literacy on line! Here's how it works:

Visit our website at www.projectliteracykelowna.org, open the "[How you can help](#)" page and click on the [Canada Helps](#) link. Canada Helps is a not-for-profit agency that will process your donation on our behalf and send you an immediate printable tax receipt by return e-mail. They will also notify us that a donation has been received from you and ensure that we receive it within days. You'll find several donation options at Canada Helps, including:

- One-time donations
- Automatic monthly credit-card donations
- Donations in memory of a friend or family member
- Gift donations on behalf of friends or family (Christmas, Birthday, or "Just Because", etc)

Of course you can still donate directly to PLKS and we will issue a tax receipt for all donations over \$10.00. The address is:

Project Literacy Kelowna Society
#205-591 Bernard Avenue
Kelowna BC V1Y 6N9

On behalf of Elaine Johnston and myself and the PLKS board of directors, thank you for helping us make 2006 one of the most memorable years in our twenty-year history!

Sincerely,
Barb Hagan – Executive Director

www.projectliteracykelowna.org

Literacy is a legacy; thanks for helping us "pass it on"!
