

The Leaf



Newsletter of the Bedford Sackville Literacy Network

Winter 2006

Funded by the NS Department of Education's Community Learning Initiative, BSLN is one of 30 provincial Learning Networks that offer adult literacy programs to students in their community.

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Welcome to the New Year.

May everyone connected with BSLN look forward to a brighter future with the sense of renewal that a new year brings.

Message from the Network Director

The poet, William Butler Yeats, once said "Education is not the filling of a pail, but the lighting of a fire". How true these words are.

Here at the Bedford Sackville Literacy Network, we strive to "light the fire". BSLN is one of many organizations that offer free adult education programs in the HRM and is funded by the Nova Scotia Department of Education's Nova Scotia School for Adult Learning and the Peter Gzowski Invitational Foundation.

BSLN offers both a classroom program and a one-to-one tutoring program from

September to June. Our adult learners receive help in reading, writing, and math.

I would like to welcome back our returning learners and tutors and also welcome our new learners, instructors, and tutors. I encourage anyone who could use our services or volunteer as a tutor or Board Member to please contact us.

May your fire burn brightly!

Paul MacNeil

Adult Education Classes

BSLN offers the following services:

Level 1 English and Math

Level 2 English and Math

One-to-One Tutoring in English/Math/Pre GED

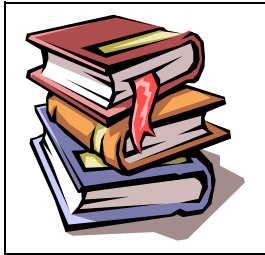
Location of Classes:

Opportunity Place, 205 Sackville Drive;
Anchor Industries, Glendale Avenue

years of age, have been out of school for a period of one year, and not currently enrolled in an education program.

The success of our programs depends on the commitment of our learners, instructors, and tutors and the partnerships with Opportunity Place, Anchor Industries, and the Bedford and Sackville Branches of the Halifax Regional Libraries.

Our adult learners must be at least 19



Success Stories

Steven Findlay, a former Learner at BSLN has successfully passed his GED examinations. Congratulations Steven and all the best in your future learning endeavors.

Don Thompson has worked in the Print Shop at Anchor Industries for the last four or five years and during that time he

also attended the literacy class on Monday mornings held in partnership with BSLN. Don has now been accepted into a Student Placement Program. The program works on developing job readiness skills, leading to a job placement. Congratulations, Don.

Events at BSLN

BSLN has been actively involved in International Literacy Day, Word on the Street, and Literacy Action Week

BSLN recently had a very successful fundraiser and special thanks go to the All Saints Bedford Players who donated tickets to their play "Who's in Bed With the Butler" By Michael Parker on October 27th or 28th. Proceeds from the fundraiser will go to purchase literacy resources for BSLN.

There was an article on BSLN in the November 18th edition of the Bedford-Sackville Weekly News. Thanks go to reporter Suzanne Vanmurik for interviewing BSLN staff and learners and writing the article.

Upcoming Events:

January 27, 2006 Family Literacy Day

March 29, 2006 BSLN will be offering a Tutor and Instructor Certification Program, beginning on Wednesday, March 29. This program is recognized by the Nova Scotia Department of Education. The course is free and open to anyone who would like to improve their tutoring skills. If you are interested please phone 869 3838 to register.

Stay tuned for details of Literacy Solutions on April 8/06.

"If you can see the beauty of what you aspire to, it doesn't matter if you achieve it all. Simply to aspire is no mean achievement. ."



Volunteers Needed

The Bedford Sackville Literacy Network (BSLN) is actively seeking volunteer board members who have the abilities and commitment to serve on the board. The board meets on a monthly basis and if this opportunity interests you please

visit our website for a more in-depth look at the programs and services of BSLN. Please contact Paul MacNeil, Network Director, at 869-3838 or E-mail bsln@chebucto.ns.ca. Please include a resume in your E-mail.

"Learning is a treasure that will follow its owner everywhere."

Chinese proverb

Bedford Sackville Literacy Network Learner Award

At our year end celebrations on June 7th, 2005, Stephanie Bishop was the recipient of the Bedford Sackville Literacy Network Learner Award. To qualify for this award, the learner is required to have attended a classroom program or one-to-one tutoring at BSLN for a minimum of six months and to have excellent attendance. In addition, the learner is required to act as a role model by demonstrating persistence and determination in pursuing his/her goals and by being supportive of others. Stephanie more than met these guidelines. She was a committed and enthusiastic learner in both a Communications and a Math class, Level 2, and in addition received one-to-one tutoring in both subjects for a total of six hours of instruction per week, all year. She always came well prepared for class and made excellent progress in both her learning and in her self-confidence.

Stephanie's commitment to learning is obvious as she continued to be tutored

through the summer months and has returned to BSLN for classes again this year. One of her major writing accomplishments at the end of last year was a story based on a picture from a magazine around which Stephanie used her imagination and creativity and significantly developed her writing skills.

Stephanie (Left) receiving her award.



The Mailbox

It is a beautiful summer morning. The sun is just coming up for the day. I am perched in the bay window of my new log cabin which overlooks my neighbour's home, sipping on a hot, steaming cup of coffee. As I'm enjoying the sunrise from my window, I suddenly catch sight of an older lady as she pops her head out the doorway of her English country cottage. She has a very distinguished face, is short, and moves quickly down her long, winding drive-way to the mailbox. The mailbox is white and sits atop a post with the number sixty-seven standing out in black. It is surrounded by a wonderful array of coloured flowers. At the base of the mailbox there are dainty, purple flowers and to the right is a huge mass of yellow daisies. Creeping up the post are red, vibrant clematis vines. She seems

to have put a great deal of care and attention into making the mailbox as attractive as possible. When she opens the mailbox, she discovers nothing there. I watch as she slowly retraces her steps back to her cottage and I wonder what it is she is waiting for. As the time passes slowly, I tell myself to get up and start the process of unpacking my belongings and getting my home in order. But I can't get the image out of my head of this lady going to her mailbox every day for the past two weeks and returning empty-handed.

About an hour later I am in the kitchen unpacking and washing dishes ready to put them away, when I hear a knock at the door. I am surprised by this because I don't know anybody in the neighborhood. As I open the door, I see

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We're on the Web!

See us at:

www.chebucto.ca/Education/BSLN

Mission Statement

*The Bedford Sackville
Literacy Network is
committed to addressing
adult learning needs by
providing learner-centered,
results-oriented services
through one-to-one tutoring
and small group study.*

that it is the old lady from across the street. She has a coconut cream pie in her hands. She said, "Hello, my name is Donna Smith and I live across the street. I wanted to drop off this cream pie and welcome you to our neighborhood". "Thank you so much", I replied. "My name is Magenta. Would you like to have a cup of tea or coffee and share the pie with me?" Donna accepts the offer and I start to boil the water for tea. As we sit and chat, Donna begins to complain about the postal service, and how long it takes for mail to arrive. "What is it you are waiting for?" I asked gently, not wishing to pry. "Well. I have not received a letter from my grandson, David, for the past two weeks. He left to serve in Iraq months ago. He is hoping to help the Iraqi's get their lives back in order, but I'm worried because I haven't heard from him", she replied sadly. "Yes, it just so happens that I've seen you the past two weeks going to your mailbox. I'm sorry to hear that you have yet to hear from him", I said. We share the tea and pie and promise to talk again.

A few days later I notice an official-looking car draw up outside Donna's house and a military officer knocks on her door.

"Oh dear", I think to myself, "I hope nothing has happened to David". Donna opens the door and the officer enters her house. It is some time before he leaves again. Days go by and I haven't seen Donna go to her mailbox or even leave her house. "Time to visit Donna", I say to myself as I put on my shoes. It takes her some time to answer my knock and when she appears, she looks terrible. Her hair is unkempt and she is still in her pyjamas. She looks very distraught. "What's wrong?" I ask. "Come on in and we'll talk", Donna replies. We sit at the kitchen table and

she breaks down in tears. Eventually she is able to tell me what happened a few days before. "My grandson's Commanding Officer came by to let me know that David has gone missing in action and that they are trying everything they can to find him", she explains. I ask her if there is anything I can do for her. She tells me that just my being there is enough. "Why don't I stay with you and keep you company while you wait to hear from them again?" I ask. "That would be great, but it's too much for me to ask you to do", Donna replies. "I'm offering", I said. For the next week I take care of Donna while she waits. I cook the meals and try to think of ways to distract her so that she's not thinking of David all the time.

On Monday afternoon we are both watching TV when the door bell rings. Donna jumps to her feet and rushes to the door. It's the commanding officer again. Donna looks at him in anticipation as she hangs on every word he says. "We found David", he said, "and he is being flown back home today from Iraq. I will be meeting him at the airport around midnight and will bring him here as soon as he arrives". Donna is overwhelmed by this news. She had been expecting the worst. She can not contain her emotions any longer. She grabs my hand and squeezes it hard. She thanks the officer and he leaves. Both of us scramble to get the house in order in preparation for David's arrival. When we finally finish, we sit down and plan a celebration for the next day. Donna decides to have a BBQ because David has always enjoyed this. We sit and anxiously wait for midnight.

Stephanie Bishop

April 2005