

TRI-COUNTY LITERACY

Helping Hands

Fall 2007

www.tricountyliteracy.org

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- Darlene Marciniak, Executive Director
- Carolyn Hall, Program Coordinator, RWM
- Suzanne Gastaldo, Adult Literacy Coordinator

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR - Tricia O'Reilly

Dear Literacy Friends,

Hello to all of you who contribute your time and energy to this wonderful organization. As the new chair for Tri-County Literacy, I am pleased and certainly honored to serve all of you for the next two years. I come to TCL as a paralegal, working for the past 21 years in Wiscasset. I live on a small farm on Westport Island, with horses, dogs and cats. Oh - and the occasional moose, deer and wild turkey in the yard. I began tutoring about five years ago, in Bath, and worked with the same student for three years, until she married and moved away. Since then, I have been actively serving on the board of directors.

My passion for literacy begins with a simple belief that reading opens all doors. It's a straightforward concept that reading is an invaluable skill, which should be available to anyone who has the desire and commitment to learn. This is why all of our tutors and learners are the keys to our organization. Whether it is working with the Read With Me families, Reading for Better Business employers, ESOL foreign language learners, or adults who have the desire to read, we could not do this without all of the effort put forth by all of you. Thank you.

Please check our website for news of the Candy Cane Train at www.candycanetrain.com, or at www.tricountyliteracy.com, for more news of the train dates, and other activities going on. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact our office, and leave your telephone number and/or questions, or you may contact me directly at pjo@ssllaw.com, and I will see that you receive a response.

- Tricia

We ourselves feel that what we are doing is just a drop in the ocean. But the ocean would be less because of that missing drop.

- Mother Teresa

Travel with Santa and Elves on the Candy Cane Train

Help wanted: Train Stewards
Train Galley Chefs
Train Platform Guides
Ticket Takers

We need more volunteers to make the Candy Cane Train a bigger success than it was last year. The trains will make four round trips from Bath to Wiscasset on Dec. 8th and 15th. It will leave Bath at 9 a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m., and 3 p.m. on both days.

The special evening train will run at 5:30 p.m. on Dec. 15th, and for this train we need wine and hors d'oeuvres servers. We are also looking for additional entertainment for this adult train: entertainers that can move through the aisle of the train such as mimes,

magicians, etc.

HO HO HO! Don your best elf hat or reindeer antlers and join the fun on the Candy Cane Train. Sign up now for the morning trains or afternoon trains on either day, or the adult train on the 15th.

We are also looking for a creative, can do, person to create a Candy Cane Christmas Carol booklet with the words to the carols that the Nor'easters Barbershop signers sing on all the trains. We see this as an opportunity to acknowledge the businesses and other organizations that help sponsor the train.

Call Barbara Collins 442-8312 or email barbara@jsea.net or call Kathy Kenyon 443-9531.

PROGRAM COORDINATOR LETTER

Joining our crew in the LV Bath Central Office is Lillian Pease. She is our hardworking, dedicated office volunteer. That is, when she is not vacationing at her house on Swan's Island. Lillian resides in Dresden. She came to Maine in 1990 from Massachusetts. We are very pleased with this additional support as there is much to do!

Currently, we have 50 one to one tutor/learner matches. We have 13 learners on our waiting list. Last month, our ESOL learner population grew to dominate the LV program here at Tri-County. Traditionally, our geographic area has served a much smaller proportion of ESOL learners to Basic Education learners.

Many LV tutors volunteer in various other settings throughout the year. We have two tutors, Barbara Collins and Sandi Updegraph, offering their services in the learning lab at Merrymeeting Adult Ed Center in Topsham and one tutor, Ray Burgess, tutoring several learners working towards their GED at Two Bridges Jail in Wiscasset.

Additionally, with the onset of fall, many of the group literacy programs will begin such as in the Brunswick area, the Fun-With-Words weekly meeting held at Curtis Library. Steve Williams heads this program with the faithful support of several other Tri-County tutors: Ken Wentzel, Bob Lezer, Mary Sistare, Doug Palmer and Red Mulligan. These group tutors assist a large group of LV learners using literacy games, stories and recreational activities. Steve and Ken continue this program at the

Tedford Homeless Shelter for men and at the Highlands where they work with seniors. This builds automaticity (word recall) in all areas of Literacy whether it increase their ability to recall words in their language or even automaticity in their reading and writing.

In the Bath area, we have two tutors, Molly Hahn and Cyndy Lewis who have worked religiously with a large literacy group at the Patten Free Library. Again, this group focuses on building and maintaining reading, writing, and language skills in an enjoyable and relaxing setting. Lastly, we have three tutors Ellie Day, John Price and Ginny Berry who have worked independently in the Lincoln County area. Again, their primary focus is recreational reading and fun. They also include a weekly theme-based craft project and incorporate new vocabulary in a weekly word bingo game. This is an excellent introduction to our Tri-County organization and the world of literacy. Please contact Suzanne Galaldo 443-6384 if you would like to become a volunteer. We need you!

Lastly, perhaps you were flicking through those television channels and you caught us and our logo. Betsy Cantrell of Bath Public Community Television televised an interview with both the Read with Me and LV program coordinators. It was a wonderful opportunity to recruit both tutors and learners in the Sagadahoc County area.

Volunteers are not Paid – not because they are worthless, but because they are priceless. -Unknown Author

~Suzanne Galaldo



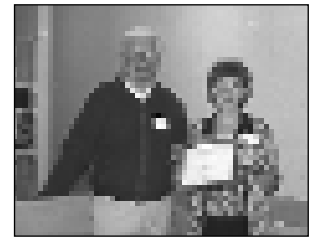
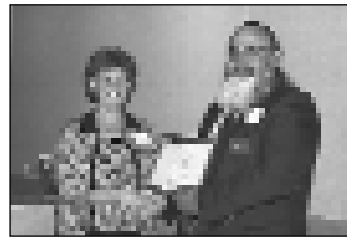
From The Executive Director

We worked our way through spring and toward the end of fiscal year '07 at a very busy pace. In April our Scrabble Committee held another successful Scrabble Challenge that was fun for all participants and which raised \$515 for our Literacy Volunteers program. In May our fundraising committee organized our first ever wine tasting fundraiser, which was really wonderful. The event was held at TREATS in Wiscasset, and was an enjoyable evening filled with old friends, new friends, tasting new wines and some tasty appetizers! Thank you to all the board and committee members involved, who orchestrated the event and supplied the delicious appetizers. A special thanks goes out to Ryan and Stacy Linehan from TREATS for their great assistance, hospitality, and generous contribution of 10% of all wine sales.

The organization's Annual Meeting was held on June 13th. The dessert reception was "very sweet!" and the evening was full of opportunities to recognize and thank our many volunteers. We were able to individually recognize each volunteer present with flowers donated by several area florists. We also recognized two agency Community Partners. Both of our honorees this year were key to the success of our first Candy Cane Train event last December. Community Partners honored at the annual meeting were The Bath Elks Lodge (BPOE Lodge #934), represented by that organization's former Exalted Ruler, Leon "Mac" McCreary, and Peter "Pop" Robohm.

The Bath Elks Lodge permitted us to use their spaces on Lambard Street for our staging area for the Candy Cane Train, providing an area for Santa's elves to change into their costumes and for the elves and other Candy Cane Train workers to rest and warm

up between train trips. We also had the full use of the lodge kitchen for preparing hot chocolate and storing cookies. Mac worked with us on both days of the Candy Cane Train, and was an invaluable help.



Recipients of the 2007 Community Partner Award - Leon "Mac" McCreary, left, BPOE Lodge #934 and Peter "Pop" Robohm, right.

Peter serves as chair of the Bath Transportation Commission and has a passion for trains. Peter has strong connections with Maine Eastern Rail Road and speaks their language, so he was instrumental in negotiating the specifics of the train rentals. He was involved in so many other areas of the planning, and he was present and helpful both days of the event, greeting each and every passenger, welcoming them aboard and inviting them to enjoy the ride.

Funding News: We are very pleased to announce that we have received a grant from Target for the second year. Target awarded \$2,500 in July to support our Read With Me Family Literacy Project. We appreciate their continued support!

We have also been notified that we have been approved for a \$5,000 grant from the Verizon Foundation. This grant was awarded to Read With Me for assistance in expanding the program to eight sessions in all Head Start Centers in our service area. We are very grateful to Verizon for this assistance!

~Darlene Marciniak

NEW LITERACY RESOURCES AT CURTIS MEMORIAL LIBRARY

Among the tools offered to tutors at Curtis Library are some resources that capitalize on the ubiquitous digital environment.

"Don't Bother Me Mom - I'm Learning!", by Marc Prensky, received starred reviews from Scientific American and Booklist. Prensky contends that games can teach a multitude of skills, including problem solving, language and cognitive skills, strategic thinking, multitasking and parallel processing.

Digital Game-Based Learning, also by Marc Prensky, illustrates how to combine computer games and learning, defines new roles for trainers and teachers and provides real-life case studies from organizations utilizing

game-based techniques.

James Paul Gee's *What Video Games Have to Teach Us About Learning and Literacy* turns the notion that video gaming is a "waste of time" on its head with 36 learning principles illustrated by video gaming.

Curtis Library also now subscribes to *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, a monthly. Each issue contains practical new ideas for instruction, reviews of student and teacher resources, including young adult literature, tips on how to integrate technology, media, and popular culture in your classroom, and reflections on current literacy trends, issues, and policy.

-Paul Dostie



Read With Me Update

Read With Me Family Literacy Project

Jeanne Harrington of Woolwich has been hired as the new site coordinator for Read With Me. She is a former teacher and coach and the mother of two children, ages 3 and 5. Jeanne comes with rave reviews about her skills as an educator, and brings a very positive attitude and strong work ethic. We're very happy to have her on the staff!

There is more good news as well. The Tri-County Literacy Board approved the expansion of Read With Me from six to eight sessions at all of our sites. This will make a huge difference in the depth of the services we are able to provide. There will also be a change in the number of sites we have thanks, to the Wiscasset School Department including us in their successful grant request from the Barbara Bush Maine Family Literacy Initiative. Read With Me will be visiting each

of the two classrooms at Wiscasset Head Start and also making individual visits to all three kindergarten classes in Wiscasset. We're very excited to be working with another public school.

Read With Me's partnership with Midcoast Maine Community Action (MMCA, formerly CED) Head Start has taken a big step forward through our acceptance by the National Head Start Family Literacy Center as an example of excellence in working together to encourage and support families to engage in experiences that promote literacy. More about this involvement in SPARC (Strengthening Partnerships and Resources in Communities) will appear in another newsletter.

Read With Me sessions for 2007-2008 begin on October 2. We're looking forward to a great year!

-Carolyn Hall

FOLLOWING DOCTOR'S ORDERS ISN'T HARD, IF YOU CAN READ

From the New York Times, July 24, 2007

ESSAY By ERIN N. MARCUS, M.D.

Last year, the community clinic where I work began requiring patients with managed-care insurance to go elsewhere for their blood and urine tests. The managed-care plans had signed contracts with private laboratories to perform these tests, and the clinic, which serves low-income patients, could no longer do the lab work.

Most of my patients have been able, with some time and effort, to navigate their way to the private laboratory. For others, figuring out how to go elsewhere for part of their medical care has been a seemingly insurmountable task, for reasons they haven't always wanted to share.

One patient, compulsive about keeping his appointments with me, routinely waits on a hot sidewalk to catch the bus that brings him and his rumpled grocery bag of pills to the public clinic. But whenever I've asked him to see a specialist or to have tests done elsewhere, he has had an excuse about why he couldn't do it. He lost his appointment slip. He forgot the date. He couldn't find the place.

And then one day, because of his Medicaid managed-care plan, he could no longer get his routine tests done at our clinic.

Knowing his history, I did what I could to help him locate the private laboratory. I looked it up on the Internet and printed a map. I even called the place and handed him the phone so that he could get verbal directions.

But when he returned for his next appointment, he still had not had the tests done. And so I was stuck with a pleasant, but complicated, patient and no way to monitor the effects of the medicines I had prescribed.

Some people might blame the patient for being "noncompliant." But I think the reason he never got those tests done is something else, something he will never admit: He can't read.

The Department of Education's 2003 National Assessment of Adult Literacy estimates that 14 percent of adults in the United States, or 30 million people, have "below basic" prose literacy, meaning they generally cannot read and understand information in a short, simple text when tested. Twelve percent of adults demonstrate below basic "document skills," meaning they generally cannot read and understand information in simple documents, including maps, when tested.

Although I've never formally tested my patient's literacy, he shows several signs that suggest a problem. He never earned a high school diploma, and the plastic bag he carries with him is usually a mess of pill bottles and papers. Whenever I've written down his medications and asked him to read the list, he has begged off, saying he doesn't want to do it. But whenever I've asked him if he has problems reading, he has denied it.

This isn't surprising, because research indicates that low literacy is associated with high levels of personal shame. One

continued on page 5

“Following Doctor’s Orders...” continued from page 4

study of low-literacy patients found that a majority had never told their spouses that they could not read, and nearly one in five had never told anyone. Forty percent said they felt ashamed about their reading problem.

"If high-quality health care is to be provided to all patients, changes need to be made in the health care delivery system to accommodate low-literacy patients," the authors, writing in the journal Patient Education and Counseling, concluded.

But we live and work in an increasingly disjointed health care system that presumes patients are quite literate. Health educators commonly recommend that patient materials be written at or below an eighth-grade level, within reach of the average American adult. Yet surveys have found that handouts, informed consent documents and Hipaa forms - those long, legalistic papers detailing patients' privacy rights - are often written at much higher levels. And many literacy experts believe that when it comes to health information and prescription labels, an eighth-grade level is too high for many adults to understand.

Most medical schools don't spend much, if any, time teaching their students how to cope with low-literacy patients, and

most doctors aren't particularly adept at detecting reading problems - or knowing what to do when they identify someone who can't read. And with the specter of "pay for performance," in which doctors' reimbursement will be tied to meeting certain quality goals, there is concern that physicians will shun low-literacy patients, seeing them as too tough to treat.

For us to take good care of these patients, we need to be given more time for office visits and more support from nurse educators, social workers and reading specialists. And our patients need a simpler, one-stop shopping approach to their health care, like easily accessible, comprehensive community clinics that perform - and get reimbursed fairly for - simple tests.

Otherwise, I worry that many people simply won't be able to navigate the system, and more doctors will be left without the basic diagnostic information they need to provide good treatment.

Erin N. Marcus is a general internist and associate medical director of the Institute for Women's Health at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine.

Membership Reminder

Our new fiscal year began on July 1, 2007 and we welcome all membership contributions. About 15% of our members have responded so far, and we are very grateful for the support.

As a reminder, "Anyone who gives \$1 or more during the fiscal year is considered a member and will be included on our membership list. Every member is entitled to receive the organization's newsletters and is entitled to one vote at the annual meeting."

If you are in a position to give a membership contribution and have not yet done so, we would appreciate hearing from you. A form is provided for your convenience. Please send your check to:

Tri-County Literacy
2 Sheridan Road
Bath, ME 04530

Thank you!

-Darlene Marciniak

Membership/Donation for Fiscal Year 2008 (July 1, 2007-June 30, 2008)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____
(optional) (optional)

Also, in order to keep our mailing list up-to-date, please indicate your preference below:

- I would like to continue to receive the Tri-County Literacy newsletter by mail
- I would like to be notified by email that the newsletter is available on the TCL website
- I would like more information about becoming a volunteer
- Please remove my name from your mailing list

My contribution is
\$ _____

Please send check to:
Tri-County Literacy
2 Sheridan Road
Bath, ME 04530



LV Affiliates and Board Presidents,

We wanted to let everyone know as soon as we had the schedule finalized about our upcoming event.

Turning a New Page: Celebrating Adult Literacy in Maine

Abromson Community Education Center

University of Southern Maine, Portland

Thursday September 20, 2007

Reception 5:00-6:30 and Readings from 6:30-8:00 p.m.

An entertaining program with:

- Barbara Bush, keynote speaker
 - Angus King, emcee
- Author readings and book signings by Monica Wood & Colin Woodard
 - Learner success stories
 - Exciting auction

Tickets for the reception and readings \$50

Tickets for the readings \$25



About the painting

This painting was recently donated to Tri-County Literacy by Dick Miller. Dick is a member of the Nor'easters Barbershop Chorus that entertained us so well with their wonderful singing on the Candy Cane Train. Dick painted the picture as a composite of two photographs taken by J. Collins during last year's Candy Cane Train rides. Thank you, Dick, for painting this and for donating the beautiful painting to the Tri-County Literacy office!

Note: Dick uses the name RH Myller when he paints.



All About the Candy Cane Train...

What a great opportunity! Support literacy in your community, while enjoying a scenic holiday train ride that's fun for the whole family!!

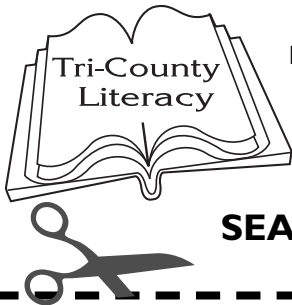


The Candy Cane Train will depart the **Bath Train Station in Bath** on **December 8th** and **December 15th** at **9 a.m., 11 a.m., 1 p.m. & 3 p.m.**

The train will travel to Wiscasset, turn around and return to Bath. The total time of the trip will be 90 minutes.

The price of the ticket for both adults and children will be \$15. Hot chocolate and cookies will be provided – and be prepared for a visit from **Santa and his elves!**

A special **Fundraiser Train for Literacy** is scheduled for **December 15th at 5:30 p.m., for adults only.** The price for the fundraiser event is \$25 per ticket. Wine and appetizers will be provided on this train.



Payment for your tickets can be made with cash, check or credit card. See the order form below for details. All proceeds benefit **Tri-County Literacy**, which includes the Literacy Volunteers and Read With Me Family Literacy programs.



SEASON SPONSOR: DAVENPORT TRUST FUND

Order Form for Candy Cane Train Tickets

Sign me up for the Candy Cane Train to Support Tri-County Literacy!

Circle the date & time of train:

December 8, 2007 - \$15 per ticket
9 a.m. 11 a.m. 1 p.m. 3 p.m.

December 15, 2007 - \$15 per ticket
9 a.m. 11 a.m. 1 p.m. 3 p.m.

Adults Only - Fundraiser Train
December 15, 2007 - \$25 per ticket
5:30 p.m.

Alternate Date & Time (used if tickets for first preference are not available)

December 8, 2007 - \$15 per ticket
9 a.m. 11 a.m. 1 p.m. 3 p.m.

December 15, 2007 - \$15 per ticket
9 a.m. 11 a.m. 1 p.m. 3 p.m.

Number of children: _____ Number of adults: _____

Donation to Tri-County Literacy: \$ _____ Total amount: \$ _____

To purchase tickets:

- Order by check** using this order form. Mail request and check to Tri-County Literacy - 2 Sheridan Rd., Bath, ME 04530
 - Order by credit card** online at www.brownpapertickets.com (search word Candy Cane Train) or call 1-800-838-3006 (processing fee will apply: \$1.36 for \$15 tickets; \$1.61 for \$25 tickets)
 - Order in person** with cash, check or credit card at **Lady Theresa's Closet** located at the Bath Train Station, open Monday-Saturday 9 a.m.-6 p.m. and Sunday 10 a.m.-4 p.m. (a \$1.00 service fee per ticket will be added).
- For additional order forms and more information, go to www.candycanetrain.org.

Name: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

E-mail: _____ Phone: () _____





Tri-County Literacy
2 Sheridan Road
Bath, ME 04530

DATES TO REMEMBER

The Fall 2007 Board meeting:

Tuesday, October 23, 2007

Tuesday, November 27, 2007

All board meetings are held in the Patten Free Library in Bath, from 6-8 p.m. and they are open to all Tri-County Literacy members.

Tri-County Literacy

(207) 443-6384 • (877) 885-7441

Executive Director: tricountyliteracy@tricountyliteracy.org

Literacy Volunteers: literacyvolunteers@tricountyliteracy.org

Read With Me Program: readwithme@tricountyliteracy.org

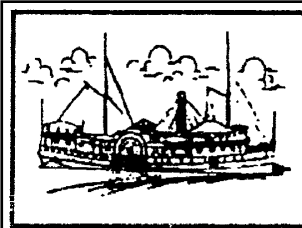
www.tricountyliteracy.org

Design and layout of Helping Hands is provided courtesy of **in Demand arts Graphic Design** ~ www.indemandarts.com.

"Turning a New Page" LV Maine celebration, Abromson Community Education Center, USM, Portland. September 20, 2007 - reception 5:00-6:30, readings 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Candy Cane Train December 8th and 15th.

For **Tutor Training** dates and **Scrabble Tournament** call the office for information.



A special thanks to the community spirit of the folks at Gardiner Savings Institution, FSB who have funded the production, printing and mailing of this newsletter to benefit all TCL adult learners and volunteers.

GARDINER SAVINGS INSTITUTION, FSB

Tri-County Literacy **MISSION STATEMENT**

Tri-County Literacy believes that the ability to read and write is critical to personal freedom and the maintenance of a democratic society. The mission of Tri-County Literacy, therefore, is to promote increased literacy for adult learners through the effective use of volunteers, the provision of support services for volunteers and learners, and collaboration with individuals, groups, or organizations desiring to foster increased literacy.

As such, Tri-County Literacy Volunteers is committed to:

Enabling adults and families in need of basic literacy skills to achieve their potential through one-to-one or small group instruction.

Training, supervising, and supporting Tri-County Literacy volunteer tutors and learners.

Strengthening and improving the organization's capacity to provide literacy instructions and services to the community.