

TRI-COUNTY LITERACY

Helping Hands

Spring 2007

www.tricountyliteracy.org

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Member Agency of United Way
of Mid-Coast Maine



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Judy Dillon, Chairperson
 Tricia O'Reilly, Vice Chairperson
 Kathy Kenyon, Secretary
 Barbara Croston, Treasurer

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Dennis Copeland	Cyndy Lewis
Paul Dostie	Pamela Moody
Harriet Gray	Ken Wiley
Molly Hahn	Steve Williams

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Stella Hernandez, LVA State Liaison, LVA Maine
 Darlene Marciniak, Executive Director
 Carolyn Hall, Program Coordinator, RWM
 Suzanne Gastaldo, Adult Literacy Coordinator

REPORT FROM THE CHAIR - Judy Dillon

Happy Spring!

The snow is just about gone - ah, but wait - another storm is forecast! My frustration with the weather is so small compared to those who cannot read and struggle daily to make sense of words that many of us take for granted. For those of you who volunteer weekly to help another learn to read, you are the stars of literacy and you are the ones who make a difference in their lives. Thank You for your volunteer service. You are the unsung heroes!

Your board has been very active! The Training Committee has changed the training in time and content. The Personnel Committee has completed the staff reviews and has presented a new set of Personnel Policies to the board for review and acceptance. The Fundraising Committee has sent out a major letter to businesses to secure financial partners to support our programs. They also have a Wine Tasting event planned for Sunday, May 6th from 5:30 at Treats in Wiscasset. Additionally, you all will be receiving the Annual Membership Letter. The Candy Cane Train was such a huge success that we are preparing for this year's train. Tickets may be reserved after July 1st. Since we are a United Way Agency, we cannot advertise from September 15th through November 15th, which is their fundraising period. We will, however, still have tickets available through the Internet. For questions, please go to our website at www.tricountyliteracy.org or www.candycanetrain.com, or you may always call the office.

The Annual Meeting will be held in early June, please plan to attend and check the website for details.

As I look back on the last two years as board chair, I am very pleased and proud to have worked with such a forward thinking board. They made a giant leap of faith when they hired an executive director, secured a home for our organization with a monthly rent and expenses, supported the Candy Cane Train as a major fundraiser and set up an active and vibrant fund raising committee to ensure that Tri-County Literacy would endure. A special thank you to those who will be leaving the board in June with me, Steve Williams, who has served faithfully for over 6 years and has taken on the groups at the Tedford Shelter and at the Highlands as well as spearheading the Scrabble Tournaments. Steve, your support and commitment have been amazing and you will leave a huge void. Cyndy Lewis has championed the Read With Me Advisory Group and was very supportive of the Candy Cane Train as well. Cyndy has so many other activities that she has chosen to leave the board after one term of office. Our gratitude and best wishes go to you both.

It is a time for gratitude and for new beginnings...

-Judy

Remembering Debbie Warren

We are saddened to report the passing of Debbie Warren who served Tri-County Literacy in significant ways. Debbie was trained to be a tutor and as such worked with the Mobius Group in Damariscotta. Debbie, who was an accountant, volunteered her services to the affiliate for three years keeping the books and doing the payroll. One of her passions was playing board games of all kinds and Scrabble was her favorite.

She loved being an enthusiastic part of the Scrabble Committee and helped to get it started. Debbie's husband, David, has also actively helped TCL with the accounting that was needed for the accreditation process and our non-profit status. Debbie Warren was a generous, remarkable woman who will be missed by David, her family, and the community.

-Molly Hahn

Life is a succession of lessons which must be lived to be understood. Unless you try to do something beyond what you have already mastered, you will never grow. The reward of a thing well done, is to have done it.

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

PROGRAM COORDINATOR LETTER

The trees are budding, the robins have arrived, the sun feels hot as a summer day but I am still up to my ankles in snow. Hmm. However, it has been a terrific year for maple syrup which my family and I enjoy boiling down on the cook stove. The children enjoy ladling it on fresh snow. (Spring snow showers have some benefits.)

The (ESL) English as a Second Language tutors enjoyed gatherings last month at the Merry meeting Adult Education Center. We shared wonderful conversation and greeting skills with the ESL students and a variety of dishes from around the globe. It provided some unmatched tutors with an opportunity to meet some ESL students waiting for a match. Bev Roet, the ESL instructor, shared some insightful ideas to complement instruction. Currently, half of the individual tutor/learner matches are ESL. It is one area that is growing in our community.

Sometimes it is difficult for tutors and learners to get their hands on high interest easy-to-read text stories for the struggling adult reader. Tri-County continually strives to stock our libraries with texts in this category. You will find Timeless Tales in your library. We received a Proliteracy Book Grant which

provided us with many texts such as these to distribute in our libraries as well as citizenship manuals, grammar workbooks and GED prep books which are housed at the Tri-County office to be utilized by our tutors.

A new tutor training is being offered this spring. Our next batch of new tutors will have completed their training by June 4th. It is our hope that this next group will have a significant impact on our waiting list. Currently we have from 15-20 individuals waiting for services. The majority of these individuals live in Sagadahoc County.

Also, we are looking for a dependable office volunteer or two that could donate a few hours each week filing, stuffing envelopes, copying, adding data to our database, answering the telephone and other office related responsibilities. Please call the office if you can offer your services in this capacity at 443-6384.

Lastly, I welcome anyone interested in becoming involved with our Adult Literacy Program. There is much to do and I look forward to putting you to work for a worthy cause.

-Suzanne Gastaldo



From The Executive Director

We were saddened to learn recently that Debbie Warren, a long-time Tri-County Literacy supporter, has passed away. Debbie passed away on March 4, 2007 of cancer. For many years Debbie was a key member of the Tri-County Literacy family, and she provided invaluable bookkeeping services to us without charge. She and her husband David were instrumental in helping this organization negotiate the tangle of paperwork required in obtaining our 501(c)(3) tax-exempt status several years ago. All of us at Tri-County Literacy join in conveying our sympathy to David and all of Debbie's family.

Hopefully by the time this newsletter is distributed it will finally feel more like spring! Last week I was happy to see that the osprey has returned to her nest on Route 1, which is always an encouraging sign that winter is over. We have had a busy few months changing gears from the Candy Cane Train wrap-up to thinking about membership and a new springtime fundraiser. This event will be a wine tasting, scheduled for Sunday, May 6, 2007 from 5:30 - 7:00 p.m. Please join us at Treats (80 Main Street in Wiscasset) that day! This will be a nice time to visit with old friends, meet new people, taste some new wines, and enjoy some tasty appetizers, all while supporting literacy in the Midcoast area. Donations are \$25 per person or \$40 per couple. Call the office at 443-6384 for more information or to reserve tickets.

Our most recent funding news includes the exciting announcement that The Davenport Trust will again be the sponsor of our Candy Cane Train fundraising event. In February The Davenport Trust generously awarded us \$5,000 to be used toward anticipated expenses for the 2007 event. The Candy Cane Train is scheduled to run on December 8th and 15th this year. Obviously lots more information will be coming in future newsletters. We would like to express our great thanks to The Davenport Trust for their support of this event and of the work of our organization! We value their sponsorship!

We have also just received notification that we have

been selected to receive a 2007 Bowdoin College Common Good Grant. The Common Good Grant Program was established at Bowdoin College in 2001 to provide students the opportunity to learn about grants, foundations and philanthropy while becoming familiar with the work and challenges of non-profit organizations. Tri-County Literacy applied for a \$1,260 grant to purchase books for use in our Read With Me Family Literacy Project during the 2007-2008 academic year. Along with the classroom work, one of the Read With Me goals is to provide good quality books to our beneficiary families. The book funded by the grant will be the first hard cover book we have ever included in our program. We are excited that we will be able to provide this book to our participating children, and it will likely be the first hard cover book in these children's personal home library.

We are still looking for a volunteer to help out on a regular basis in the office. Anyone who might have an interest in volunteering administrative hours, please contact Darlene at the office (443-6384). Examples of work that someone might do would be to assist in mailings, organize files, data entry, answering phones, etc. Call us at the office (443-6384) or email us if you would like to learn more!

Friends of Literacy, Literacy Leaders & Partners

We have recently launched a new funding initiative, appealing to business executives to contribute to the work of our organization. We have invited members of the business community to contribute at one of three higher giving levels. They will be members whose financial assistance will greatly improve the welfare of individuals served by Tri-County Literacy, as well as improve the community as a whole. As key supporters of Tri-County Literacy, these business contributors will be acknowledged publicly in a future newsletter and in our Annual Report. We are very pleased that we have already begun to receive some favorable responses.

-Darlene Marciniak



Read With Me Update

Reading aloud and sharing books with children is fun! It offers children and adults a chance to look at books together, talk about what they see on the page, and enjoy each other's company. It is also the single most helpful and important thing parents can do to get their children ready to learn to read.

Mem Fox, an Australian children's author and literacy expert, has a wonderful book on this topic: *Reading Magic: Why Reading Aloud to Our Children Will Change Their Lives Forever* (Harcourt, 2001). It is available at Curtis Memorial Library, Patten Free Library, and Skidompha Library, or through Interlibrary Loan (ILL) at other libraries.

Babies learn language from birth by being spoken to and read to. They learn the structure and rhythm of their native language, and build their usable vocabulary when we read to them and invite them to participate in conversations. Mem Fox believes that children need to hear 1000 stories before learning to read themselves. Imagine how many stories children will hear before starting school if we start reading to them as infants.

In addition to learning what print looks like, and how

books "work," children who are read to benefit from learning about places and events they might not experience on their own. Families can revisit happy memories as they look at books about places they've been and things they have done together. Books can prepare children for new experiences and even provide an entry into difficult conversations, such as talking about anger or fears.

How do you choose books to read to your children? Listen to what your children are interested in. What do they talk about with great excitement? See how they react to different types of written material. Some children are fascinated by informational books at a very young age. Others enjoy stories, or poetry, or are attracted to books with certain types of illustrations. For young children, books with rhyme, rhythm and repetition are a good choice, as they invite children to participate in the story.

Ask your local public librarian, or your child's school librarian, for lists of books that are recommended for your child's age. Most of all, don't forget to have fun!

-Carolyn Hall



The presentation of the \$1,260 Bowdoin College Common Good Grant award. Pictured from L-R: Tracy Rapp ('09), Bowdoin College Common Good Grant Committee member, Taneisha Wilson ('07), Bowdoin College Common Good Grant Program Student Leader, Darlene Marciniak, Tri-County Literacy Executive Director, Susie Dorn, Director, Bowdoin College Community Service Resource Center

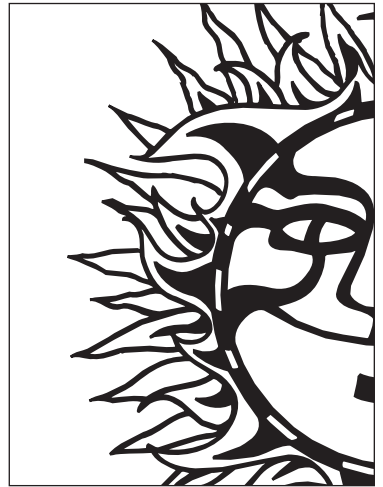
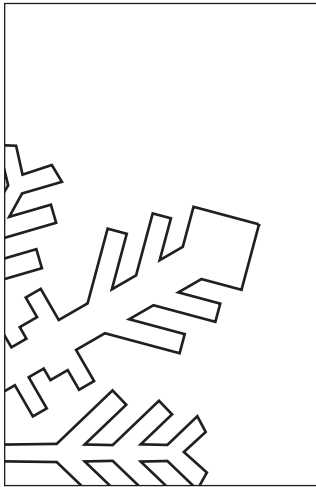


The Annual Meeting is Coming Up

The Annual Meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 13th from 6-8 p.m. at the Curtis Library in Brunswick. We will be serving dessert and coffee, etc. The annual business meeting will be conducted, and awards will be given out. Tutors are encouraged to

bring their learners.

The next Board meeting will be May 22nd at 6:00 at the Patton Free Library in Bath.



Membership Reminder

Our new fiscal year will begin on July 1, 2007 and we are accepting membership contributions.

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

or bring your contribution to the Annual Meeting, which will be held on June 13th.

-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



Tri-County Literacy
2 Sheridan Road
Bath, ME 04530

DATES TO REMEMBER

The Spring 2007 Board meeting:

Tuesday, May 22, 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.

Annual Meeting on June 13 from 6-8 p.m. at the Curtis Library in Brunswick.

Tri-County Literacy

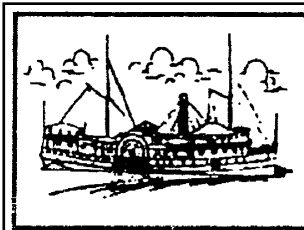
(207) 443-6384 • (877) 885-7441

Executive Director: tricityliteracy@tricityliteracy.org

Literacy Volunteers: literacyvolunteers@tricityliteracy.org

Read With Me Program: readwithme@tricityliteracy.org

www.tricityliteracy.org



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

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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.