



# TRI-COUNTY LITERACY

# Helping Hands

Winter 2007

[www.tricountyliteracy.org](http://www.tricountyliteracy.org)

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## REPORT FROM THE CHAIR - *Judy Dillon*

Dear Friends,

A huge "Thank You" to all those who helped make the Candy Cane Train such a huge success for Tri-County Literacy! Our profit from this venture was almost \$20,000. Although this was primarily a fund raising event, the joy that children and adults had while journeying on the Maine Eastern Railroad from Bath to Wiscasset was magical! From the Nor'easters Barbershop Chorus and Quartets, to the enthusiastic Elves, to the hot chocolate and delicious cookies, to the engaging Storytellers, to the Jolly Santa - everyone had a special trip filled with treasured memories. This was a time for families as well as an opportunity to advertise who we are and what we do. We are now looking forward with enthusiasm to next year! The Bath Train Station will be open and will offer a permanent home for The Candy Cane Train. So, plan now to ride the Second Annual Candy Cane Train on either December 8th or 15th. The dates when tickets will go on sale will be announced in our newsletters and on our website either at: [www.candycanetrain.com](http://www.candycanetrain.com) or [www.tricountyliteracy.com](http://www.tricountyliteracy.com).

Many of you volunteer as tutors yet I would also like to ask for volunteers for the train. We need people to bake almost 2000 cookies or make 1500 hors d'oeuvres for the adult train. We also need people to help coordinate tickets, answer phones and work on the trains on the 8th and 15th of December. If you are interested in helping, please contact the office and leave your name, telephone number and e-mail address or e-mail me at [jognby@clinic.net](mailto:jognby@clinic.net).

Finally, there are many exciting things that have been going on this fall and winter at Tri-County Literacy. Suzanne Gastaldo is the new Coordinator for the Literacy Volunteers. Please read further in this letter to find out all about Suzanne. We are very excited to have her join us. Welcome! Additionally, the Scrabble Tournaments continue, special programs for those with special needs continue, and even a new program at the Highlands has begun.

The Annual Meeting will again be held in June. Look for a new setting and perhaps a new format. Tricia O'Reilly, the incoming chair will let you all know the details in the near future.

I appreciate your support of Tri-County Literacy and look forward to seeing you at the Annual Meeting.

*-Judy*

## Update from Elizabeth McCandless – The Pension Protection Act

Betsey McCandless sent us the following information about the Pension Protection Act (which was enacted in August 2006) and her suggestion for information to prospective donors.

Pension Protection Act. For 2006 and 2007 only, IRA owners who are 70 1/2 or older can make a donation directly to one or more charities of amounts up to \$100,000 from an IRA. This donation can be counted towards satisfying the IRA owner's required minimum distribution from the retirement account for the calendar year. The distribution must be made directly from the IRA to the charity and the distribution will not provide an income tax deduction for the gift to charity. The donation, however, will not be treated as income to the IRA owner.

The following is simple language for a bequest to Tri-County Literacy.

"I give and bequeath the sum of \_\_\_\_\_ to Tri-County Literacy, a Maine corporation having an office in Bath, Maine, for the general purposes thereof."

Tri-County Literacy received its determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service in February 2004 concerning its status as an organization described in Section 501(c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

Retirement accounts are the ideal source from which to make a bequest at death. By simply designating Tri-County Literacy as the beneficiary of a retirement account on the IRA or 401(k) beneficiary designation, the IRA assets will pass at death free of income as well as free of estate tax.

## PROGRAM COORDINATOR LETTER

**Salutations!** It is with great excitement that I introduce myself to you all - members, tutors, learners and interested affiliates. I am a native Mainer as were my parents. I grew up on a farm in Newcastle and I have built a home on the family homestead. I attended Lincoln Academy and graduated from the University of Southern Maine with a BA in Psychology. I am continuing my education at USM, pursuing a career in deaf studies.

My past experience managing the Mobius Day Program Center for developmentally challenged adults as well as supervising the residential program at Mobius provided me with the opportunity to design individually tailored programs for my clients. My responsibilities included overseeing staff, designing both leisure and employment opportunities for the developmentally challenged adults, and overseeing transportation for them to and from the center. These programs were developed through a combination of assessing each individual's desired goals and their needs, no matter how great or small.

For the past six and a half years, I have been employed by Union #74 as a No Child Left Behind "highly qualified" reading teacher. In my position, I diagnosed struggling readers and matched them to

reading programs that would target their individual needs. Some of the reading programs that I have had training for are Reading Recovery, Soar to Success, Great Leaps and a multitude of phonics programs.

Currently, I volunteer on the Newcastle recycling Committee and I help (as needed) as a baker for Great Salt Bay School, Lincoln County Community Theatre (Union #74 Productions) and the Midcoast Dance Company. At St. Patrick's, I help videotape the services for the local cable station in Newcastle for homebound residents who wish to see familiar faces.

My hobbies include raising Nigerian dwarf goats and caring for my horses. I spend time riding trails year round and I love walking in the woods. I love flowers, gardening, camping and the ocean.

I look forward to a successful, fulfilling year. I am easily reached in the Tri-County office Monday through Friday from 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m. I look forward to meeting you and working with you.

Next training for tutors will be in April. If you are interested in our training sessions, then please call me at 443-6384 ask for *Suzanne Gastaldo, Program Coordinator*.



# From The Executive Director

Happy New Year!

I'm hopeful that many of you were among the 1,600 riders on the Candy Cane Train in December. Tri-County Literacy's new signature fundraiser, the Candy Cane Train was a great success.

We were thrilled with the response to the event this first year, and are very excited about future events. We believe it is an excellent way to establish a foundation for long-term funding and financial stability, and to promote the work that we do for literacy. We are very grateful to the many people and businesses that helped us make this such a fun and successful event, including our sponsors, The George P. Davenport Trust Fund and Maine Eastern Railroad; those who purchased tickets, made donations to the event, baked goodies served on the trains, provided entertainment, and provided elf-power for the dozens of "miscellaneous" tasks required to make this very large undertaking such a success. Thank you, and we'll see you next year!

As we settle into the winter season, we are enjoying the addition of a new Tri-County Literacy staff member to the office. Suzanne Gastaldo joined us at the start of the new year, bringing a wonderful and calm approach to the position of Literacy Volunteers Program Coordinator. She is working hard to familiarize herself with the program and participants and to match new learners and tutors. We are so glad to have her as a member of the TCL team. I'd like to take this opportunity, too, to relay a special thank you to board member and tutor Kathy Kenyon for her extraordinary dedication to the LV program in recent months as she filled in as interim program coordinator during the position vacancy. She also helped Suzanne in the first weeks, and helped to make the transition a smooth one. Thank you Kathy!

## RECENT FUNDING NEWS

We have been very fortunate to receive the following positive responses over the past few months to grant proposals written earlier in the fiscal year:

**JTG FOUNDATION** - Tri-County Literacy was awarded a \$10,000 grant award from the JTG Foundation in October. JTG Foundation is a Maine non-profit corporation operating as a private foundation. Among the types of organizations the Foundation supports are those that aid underprivileged residents of the State of Maine; enhance mental health services; and otherwise provide for the unmet needs of low income or otherwise disadvantaged children. This very generous grant will support the services of both our adult Literacy Volunteers program and Read With Me, providing funds for both staff and educational resources. The JTG Foundation grant will help immensely in our efforts to provide enhanced literacy programming to several important groups within our communities.

**TARGET** - Read With Me Family Literacy Project received two \$1,500 awards from Target in October and November. Target provides support to local communities throughout the country, with a focus on education, the arts, and social

services. Our Target grants were awarded to assist in the funding of Read With Me program sessions in Sagadahoc and Cumberland Counties. Read With Me invites families to share books together and supports parents to take an active role in their children's learning.

**SENDER FUND** - In December we were very pleased to learn that we were one of the many charitable organizations selected to receive an award from The Alfred M. Senter Fund. The \$2,000 grant to Read With Me Family Literacy Project was used for the purchase of two books that were specifically requested for this year's Read With Me curriculum. These books were much more expensive than our usual selections. Because of the Senter Fund grant we were able to purchase these books without exceeding our budget.

**WEED AND SEED** - In January we received notification that we have been selected for a \$5,000 Weed and Seed grant award for our Literacy Volunteers program. The grant was awarded by the Capacity Development Office, Weed and Seed Project, Office of Justice Programs. Weed and Seed is as much a strategy as a program. The goal is to reduce crime and disorder by supporting organizations and collaborations to work toward developing strategies, policies and programs that will create positive change within communities. This grant has been identified for services benefiting residents of Sagadahoc County. The Weed and Seed grant will allow Literacy Volunteers to better serve its Sagadahoc County residents.

**WAL-MART** - Just as we were preparing to ready the newsletter for printing, we received a \$250 grant from Brunswick Wal-Mart Super Center! This donation was received as part of the Wal-Mart Good.Works community involvement program which is based on the philosophy of operating globally and giving back locally. This Good.Works grant award will support both the Literacy Volunteers and Read With Me Family Literacy Project.

We have also received several very generous contributions from individuals and from the following businesses, churches, municipalities and school systems:

First Congregational Church of Wiscasset - \$190 for LV & RWM

Gardiner Savings Institution, Boothbay Harbor - \$500 for LV & RWM

Elijah Kellogg Church-Congregational - \$250 for RWM

Town of Wiscasset - \$500 for RWM

Bath Adult Ed/Bailey Evening School - \$1,000 for RWM

School Union 74 - \$1,200 for RWM

Merrymeeting Regional Adult Education - \$2,000 for RWM

Bath School Department - \$4,000 for RWM

City of Bath - \$10,000 for RWM

We are very grateful for these contributions, and the continued support that these groups have shown our programs!

-Darlene Marciniak



# WELCOME TO OUR NEW TUTORS!

Molly Hahn reports that in November, Tri-County Literacy held two tutor training sessions. One was an all day session for ESL training and the other was an 18 hour basic training for tutors. We are very happy to welcome the following people into Tri-County Literacy as newly trained tutors:

Fran Bennatti  
Margaret Brann  
Susan Burroughs  
Martha Downing  
Sue Fossett-Schumacher  
Dominique Harley

Eric Leonard  
John McDonald  
Douglas Palmer  
Linda Pappin  
Pid Rafter  
Sande Updegraph  
Lisa Walton  
Casey Ward  
Margaretrose Zabeline

Congratulations to all of you! (And Thanks Molly and all the other tutor trainers!)

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## Read With Me Update

Family literacy programs in general, and Read With Me in particular, have four main components: adult literacy, early childhood literacy, parent education, and inter-generational literacy activities. Every RWM session incorporates all four of these areas. In January and February we spend a little more time than usual focusing on the adult literacy component.

Representatives from adult education programs visit sessions to talk about their offerings, including GED studies, and we give contact information for the Department of Labor CareerCenters in the area. Many Adult Education programs give RWM participants 20% off classes, and one even offered each adult a free class this year. As a program of Tri-County Literacy, we are easily able to connect people to one-on-one tutoring possibilities.

We travel to local libraries with adults who attend Read With Me sessions and encourage them to get family library cards and spend time at the library with their children. We're trying our first evening library party for RWM families this February. Mid Coast Community Read is underway, and Read With Me will showcase the companion book for young children (POTATO: A TALE FROM THE GREAT DEPRESSION) during February sessions.

All of these offerings are important connections for Read With Me families, and are part of our "message" at every session. However, this is the time of year that we focus on and highlight the adult literacy component of the Read With Me Family Literacy Project.

-Carolyn Hall

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## Reading for Better Business

After a few months' hiatus, the Reading for Better Business Committee has met and is refocusing on the goal of recruiting new adult learners through employers. Now that Suzanne Gastaldo, the LV Program Coordinator is aboard to match tutors and students, we will once again be able to provide tutoring to people in the workplace either individually or in small groups. We want to contact employers, large and small, and inform them that improving literacy can also improve their business. Low literacy often holds back an otherwise capable and trusted employee.

The committee currently consists of LV tutors Barbara

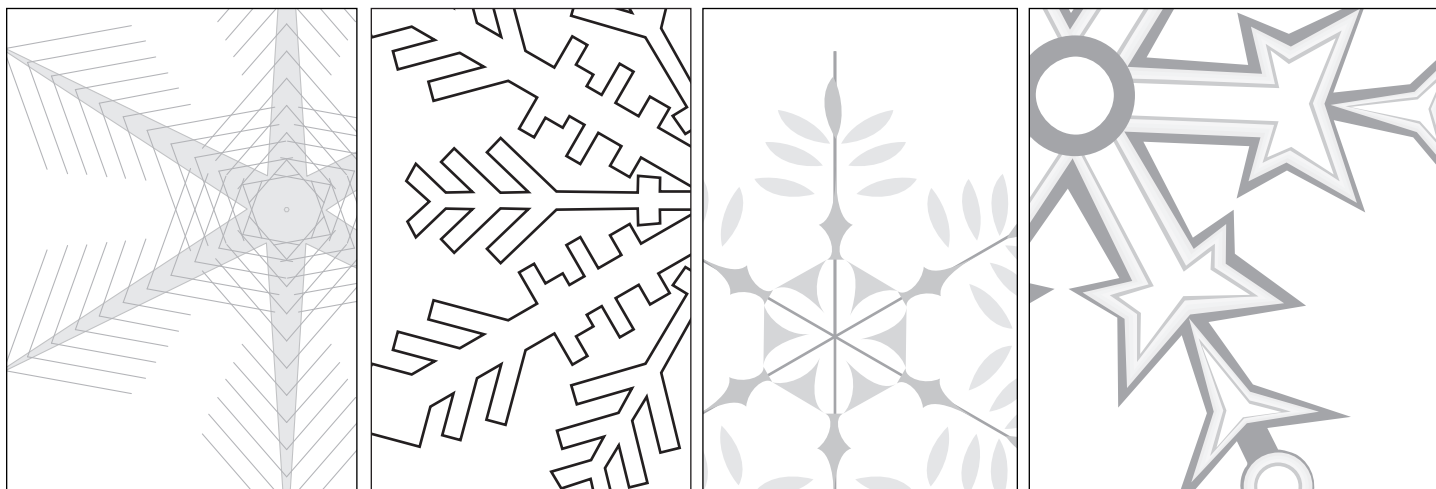
Collins, Lori Harris, Ken Wiley and Sande Updegraph, and Steve Pecukonis, a local businessman and human resources trainer. The Southern MidCoast Chamber of Commerce and the Maine Dept. of Labor Career Center both actively support and assist our outreach to businesses in the Mid-Coast area.

If you would like to be part of planning and implementing this important literacy program, join us. If you know of a business owner or manager that may have employees who can benefit from tutoring, let us know. Contact Barbara Collins at [Barbara@jsea.net](mailto:Barbara@jsea.net) or call 442-8312.

# Call for Non-Tutor Volunteer Assistance

From time to time we find ourselves experiencing particularly busy periods and wishing we had an extra pair of hands in the office. One such time was the extremely busy ticket-selling period just prior to the Candy Cane Train event, but there are other

times, too, when we would welcome assistance for mailings, organizing, answering phones, etc. If anyone has an interest in volunteering administrative hours, please contact Darlene at the office (443-6384). Thanks in advance!



## Membership Reminder

Membership contributions are still welcome for the current fiscal year. The fiscal year began on July 1, 2006 and will end on June 30, 2007. We received a good number of responses following our last appeal, but would love to hear from you if you haven't yet responded!

As a reminder, here is the definition of membership: "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

*-Darlene Marciniak*

### Membership/Donation for July 1, 2006 – June 30, 2007

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
(optional) (optional)

- 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 to receive the newsletter by email
- 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**  
**! Sheridan Road**  
**Bath, ME 04530**

## DATES TO REMEMBER

### The Spring 2007 Board meetings:

Tuesday, March 27, 2007

Tuesday, April 24, 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.*

**There will be a Scrabble Challenge** at the Curtis Memorial Library. Call the office for the date.

**Tutor Training** in April. Call the office for dates.

### Tri-County Literacy Volunteers (207) 443-6384 • (877) 885-7441

Executive Director: [tricountyliteracy@tricountyliteracy.org](mailto:tricountyliteracy@tricountyliteracy.org)

Literacy Volunteers: [literacyvolunteers@tricountyliteracy.org](mailto:literacyvolunteers@tricountyliteracy.org)

Read With Me Program: [readwithme@tricountyliteracy.org](mailto:readwithme@tricountyliteracy.org)

[www.tricountyliteracy.org](http://www.tricountyliteracy.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**

Design and layout of Helping Hands is provided courtesy of **in Demand arts Graphic Design** ~ [www.indemandarts.com](http://www.indemandarts.com).

## 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.