



TRI-COUNTY LITERACY VOLUNTEERS

Helping Hands

Winter 2006

www.tricountyliteracy.org

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Member Agency of United Way
of Mid-Coast Maine



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REPORT FROM THE CHAIR - Judy Dillon

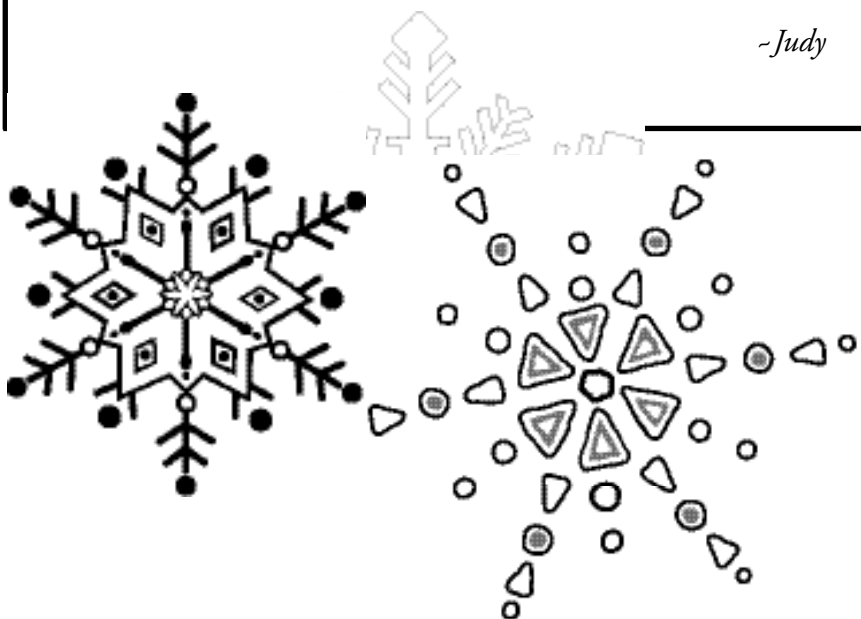
Dear Friends of Tri-County Literacy,

As many of you have probably read in the newspapers, the literacy skills of adults in the United States have not changed in ten years. This is truly discouraging news. You, the volunteers who work so diligently and you, the financial supporters of our work, give so generously of your time, talents and treasure that this news must come as a surprise. Yet, the complexities of our world and the knowledge needed to be a competent reader as well as the influx of non-English speaking people into our country offers some explanation for the seeming lack of progress. I would ask each one of you, "What would the results of this latest study be like if we were not present and offering the services that we offer?"

Our efforts must be increased to combat this lack of proficiency. When 14% of individuals age 16 and over in our country read so poorly that they cannot calculate a five cent per gallon deduction on a heating oil bill, then we must step up to this challenge and ensure that our community has the resources within our organization to meet this need.

Those of you who are interested in tutoring, interested in serving on our committees or on our board and those who are willing to donate time, talents and treasure, please contact our offices and let us know. Together, we can make a difference.

-Judy



Tri-County Literacy Receives Grant from The Alfred M. Senter Fund

The Committee of The Alfred M. Senter Fund met in November to review applications for grant funding. We are very pleased to be one of the many charitable organizations selected to receive a grant award!

Our \$2,700 grant will be used for the purchase of several badly needed pieces of office equipment. These purchases will improve our administrative functioning and will contribute to more efficient and effective service delivery.

THANK YOU, SENTER FUND!

United Way Funding Continues

We are very excited to report that United Way funding will continue for the second half of the current fiscal year. There had been some concern that the uncertainty in the local economy would adversely affect United Way's funding capability, and we had been cautioned that funding for the period of January-June 2006 could not be guaranteed.

Because of a successful campaign, United Way of Mid-Coast Maine is able to continue to fund our program for the same amount for the second six months of the funding year as we had for the past six months.

Thank you United Way, and thanks to all in the community who helped to make the United Way campaign a success!

PROGRAM COORDINATOR UPDATE

Happy New Year to you all! We will be starting 2006 off with a bang or at least a POP!

TUTOR GET-TOGETHERS: The tutors will be offered a chance to get together in groups to chat and compare notes. Our first get-together will include training for the Goal Attainment Scale (GAS). This goal setting and evaluation process is a tool that tutors may choose to utilize with their learner to identify realistic goals and to achieve them. Due to the size of our region, we will meet in small groups designated by area. If the tutors enjoy this opportunity to meet and share information, the meetings will continue on a regular schedule. Stay tuned for the upcoming dates for the tutor get-togethers!

NEW VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION: I will be offering a New Volunteer Orientation for all interested volunteers on an as needed basis. The Orientation will give me a chance to meet the interested volunteers all at one time, fill out required paperwork, and most importantly, give an overview of what is expected of Tri-County Literacy Volunteers. After completion of the Orientation class and before the actual tutor training, new volunteers may assist current tutors or help with other needs within the organization.

HOURS: It is that time again to retrieve your hours so the tutor advisors will receive their assignments shortly so tutors.... prepare for a call to record your hours. PLEASE, PLEASE, if you don't receive a call within the next month, please call me or email me. I have spent a lot of time trying to corral all of the matches, but there may still be some miscellaneous matches out there that I am unaware of. I will be visiting all 'group tutors' to meet you as well as discuss a more efficient method of reporting group activity. Thank you all for your support in this tedious process. ATTACHED you will find a copy of an hours reporting form for your use. It breaks down the hours as I need them to be reported so I hope this helps! Please copy and use!

COORDINATING MATCHES: Due to the amount of

time that it takes to complete a match from start to finish, I am experimenting with a new matching process. I am creating a "tutor opportunity list" that I send out to tutors (by email) who are not currently working with a tutor. I list the basic criteria of a learner (age, gender, location), their schedule and any other information that will help. The tutor can let me know if they are interested in possibly working with this tutor and then I follow-up with a meeting, etc.

So far, the results have been good. Tutors that were listed as being on hiatus and wanting to be called have contacted me with their updated schedules, matches are being made and the responses to the process from everyone have been positive. Those that do not have email...don't worry - I will still contact you by telephone.

BROWSEABOUT: The Maine State Library Web Coordinator has offered us an opportunity to test out their speech-enabling software for the government's website that they are considering purchasing. If it is purchased, it would be possible for individuals to log on to the government website and "listen" to the steps for whatever it is that they are researching (driver's license, etc.) Are there any tutors who would like to experiment with this tool with their learner? If so, contact me and I will provide you with the information.

NEWS FROM STELLA HERNANDEZ (Executive Director of Literacy Volunteers of Maine): Literacy Volunteers of Maine has launched a successful and widespread run of media purchases that will benefit all of our affiliates and ultimately, our adult learners throughout the state. These media products are radio and television public service announcements (PSAs) that will cover the entire state exposure to assist our mission for learners. Tens of thousands of Mainers are hearing and seeing the message of the LV Network and how literacy access is just a phone call away. LV Maine plans for this kind of publicity to be an ongoing commitment. What this means for us at Tri-County Literacy is more phone calls from volunteers and learners!



Reading for Better Business helps tutors evaluate learner progress

On December 2nd the first training session was held for tutors working with adult learners in the Reading for Better Business project. Experienced volunteer tutors Ken Wiley and Lori Harris facilitated this interactive seminar on the Goal Attainment Scale, which has been selected as a learner-centered evaluation tool. This can be used by all tutors, with the participation of their students, to measure response to tutoring. Tutors participating in the first session were Jolanda de Levie, Nick Mason and Tinker Barron.

Reading for Better Business is a business- and community-oriented initiative of Tri-County Literacy Volunteers, which was developed in 2005 with support from the Senter Fund of Brunswick and the Davenport Trust of Bath. The Bath Career Center was a partner in the initial phase, which determined there was a strong interest in the business community due to the need for employees to better their literacy skills. Former adult learners have told us how improved literacy skills changed their lives, enabling them to get better jobs and feel a pride in their achievements. The project focuses on outreach to businesses, with our Literacy Volunteers providing tutoring to employers in the Bath, Brunswick and Topsham area at the present.

The latest National Assessment of Adult Literacy (NAALS) finds an association among levels of literacy, employment and earnings. At each increasing level of literacy, more adults are employed full time. Median weekly earnings also increase with each level of literacy.

Low literacy costs businesses through reduced productivity, need for more supervision, higher employee turnover and higher health care costs. The Reading for Better Business project is offering a win-win situation for both employers and employees.

We currently have seven adult learners enrolled through their employer. With the help of the Southern Midcoast Chamber of Commerce and local newspapers, as well as personal contacts with large employers by the RBB Project Committee, we are spreading the word to employers in the area.

It is extremely important for us to know about the success of this project, and to be able to report on it to the current and future funders so that our reach can be expanded. After consultation with evaluation professionals, the Goal Attainment Scale has been adopted to measure the effectiveness of tutoring on the learning needs and goals of students, as well as the overall effectiveness of the project. We would like to offer training to all tutors interested in using this motivational goal attainment tool. It is an excellent way to work with your learner to identify realistic goals and to achieve them. We will be offering both an afternoon and an evening training session in the near future for any and all interested tutors.

If you are interested in participating in the Reading for Better Business Project as a tutor, outreach volunteer or committee member, please contact Barbara Collins at 442-8312 or barbara@jsea.net.

-Barbara Collins

If you once forfeit the confidence of your fellow citizens, you can never regain their respect and esteem. You may fool all of the people some of the time; you can even fool some of the people all the time; but you can't fool all of the people all of the time.

- Abraham Lincoln

Read With Me Update

Read With Me is excited to join the Midcoast Community Read project, currently going on in Bath, Brunswick, Topsham and Wiscasset. All RWM sites will be participating. Each site will read a book about lobsters or the sea, and all families will be receiving a copy of "Lobsterman" by Dahlov Ipcar. Down East Books has given us a substantial discount on this title so that Read With Me families can have a copy of the picture book highlighted by Midcoast Community Read. For more information, check out the website at www.curtislibrary.com/commread/index.shtml.

On November 5, the Starlight Café in Bath sponsored a benefit breakfast for Read With Me during the Early Bird Sale. We had a week-long display and drawings for T-shirts, bags and children's books. Many

thanks to Susan Craney and the friendly staff at the Starlight Café for their support.

The Orchard Foundation has funded Read With Me with a generous grant of \$10,000 for this year's program. We would also like to acknowledge with thanks the financial support we have received since July 1, 2005 from United Way of Midcoast Maine, the City of Bath, the Bath School Department, Bailey Evening School, Merrymeeting Regional Adult Education, Union 74 Adult and Community Education, the Town of Wiscasset, Bath Sunrise Rotary, Elijah Kellogg Church, Huntoon Hill Grange, Reny Charitable Trust and local individual donors.

-Carolyn Hall

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

We are pretty well settled in our new digs in Bath. Our old postal mail box is generally empty when I check it now, so most folks seem to have made the change to our new address. As a reminder, the address is 2 Sheridan Road, Bath, ME 04530

The phone number is: (207) 443-6384 or (877) 885-7441 (toll free)

We each have our own email address, too.

You can email me at dmarciniak@tricountyliteracy.org
Emmy (Literacy Volunteers program) can be emailed at literacyvolunteers@tricountyliteracy.org

Carolyn (Read With Me family literacy program) can be emailed at readwithme@tricountyliteracy.org

We also have a general address that you can use if you're not sure who to send something to. That address is tricountyliteracy@tricountyliteracy.org

Since each of us works only part-time, please bear with us as we endeavor to return your calls and emails!

I must say, these past few months have been a fast-paced learning experience! Taking on many tasks that were previously completed by lots of different board and staff members meant several months of not-so-organized chaos, but I now seem to be able to find most things that I need when I need them!

One of my biggest responsibilities is to obtain and maintain funding for our wonderful programs. In my first week with Tri-County Literacy, I learned that the deadline for a national grant competition was fast-approaching. Although it was a somewhat stressful way to start out, it also proved to be a terrific way to learn a great deal about the organization in a very short time. I have submitted several grants, most of which will be reviewed after the first of the year. The only grant submitted for review before the end of the year was to The Alfred M. Senter Fund, and this was a successful application. We have gratefully received \$2,700!

As I continue to learn about Tri-County Literacy, its programs, and its people, I am more and more pleased to be involved with the organization.

I have learned that there are so many people who participate in the work of Tri-County Literacy. We are so grateful for your continued contributions. Without your time, energy and/or financial support, we couldn't fulfill our mission and make a difference in our community through improved literacy.

Thank you all so very much!

-Darlene Marciniak



Library Resources Committee Report

The goal of the Tri-County Literacy Resource Centers is to provide adult learners and tutors with the books and tools required. Currently, the main collections are at the Patten Free Library in Bath and Curtis Memorial Library in Brunswick. Satellite collections are at Topsham Public Library, Boothbay Harbor Memorial Library, Wiscasset Public Library and Skidompha Public Library in Damariscotta. The focus of these collections is on the instructional material for basic literacy and English as a Second Language (ESL).

We are in the process of identifying and purchasing books of interest for all levels of readers. If you have any requirements which are not met in the library you are using, please email Emmy Kappler at literacyvolunteers@tricountyliteracy.org or call (207) 443-6384.

Each library is staffed with knowledgeable and welcoming people to guide you with any questions you may have. Please call or check the website to find the days and hours of the library you are interested in utilizing.

Patten Free Library and Curtis Memorial Library

Both libraries have over 300 books available to tutors and learners. Books available to tutors include Laubach Way to Reading and Writing skill and teachers' books, Challenger Series teaching and workbooks, and Voyager Series teaching and workbooks. There are many books for learners covering a wide range of interests, and in each library there are books on living skills, math, references, humanities, reading, literature and ESL. Both libraries have a resource room available to tutors and learners. The resource rooms have a box of learning tools. Note: these rooms are very busy, so please call ahead for availability. In addition to the resource room, the libraries have open areas where tutor and learner can meet.

Patten Free Library general information:

location 33 Summer St., Bath

website www.patten.lib.us

tel. (207) 443-5141

Curtis Memorial Library general information:

location 23 Pleasant St. Brunswick

website www.curtislibrary.com

tel. (207) 725-5242

Topsham Public Library

Included in the LVA section of the library is Laubach Way to Reading skill and teachers' books and Voyager Series books and workbooks for the Adult Basic Reading Program. These books are located in the CD Books section of the library. The library has three tutor rooms for your convenience. Located in one of the tutor rooms is a box of learning tools and miscellaneous books.

General information:

location 25 Foreside Rd., Topsham

website www.topshamlibrary.org

tel. (207) 725-1727

Boothbay Harbor Memorial Library

The library has a small section dedicated to Tri-County Literacy. Currently we have a limited number of books available to tutors and learners. More resources will be added as the need is identified.

General information:

location 4 Oak St., Boothbay Harbor

website www.bmpl.lib.me.us

tel. (207) 633-3112

Wiscasset Public Library

At this time, Tri-County Literacy has only a few reading books, dictionaries and tutor training books located in the Tri-County Literacy section of the library. More resources will be added as the need is identified.

General information:

location 21 High St., Wiscasset

website www.Wiscasset.lib.me

tel. (207) 882-6698

Skidompha Public Library

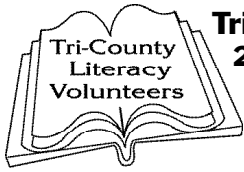
A section of books dedicated to tutors and learners is located on the 2nd floor of the library. Included in this list is Laubach Way to Reading skills, workbooks and tapes, Challenger books, Voyager Reading and Writing for Today's Adults books and workbooks, and an assortment of reading books.

General information:

location 184 Main St., Wiscasset

website www.skidompha.org

tel. (207) 563-5513



Tri-County Literacy Volunteers
2 Sheridan Road
Bath, ME 04530

DATES TO REMEMBER

The next 2006 Board meetings:

Tuesday, February 28, 2006

Tuesday, March 21, 2006

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

Tri-County Literacy Volunteers **(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 LVA adult learners and volunteers.

GARDINER SAVINGS INSTITUTION, FSB

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Tri-County Literacy Volunteers **MISSION STATEMENT**

Tri-County Literacy Volunteers, 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 Volunteers, 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 Volunteers volunteer tutors and learners.

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