



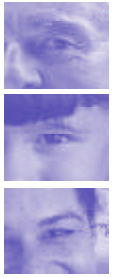
Literacy Partners of Manitoba

WRITE ON!

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Breakfast with Champions on International Literacy Day



The Honourable Jane Stewart

Find out what all the excitement's about on Monday, September 8, at the first annual *Breakfast of Champions*, hosted by Literacy Partners of Manitoba and the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce.

The Honourable **Jane Stewart**, Minister of Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC), will be the featured guest speaker at the *Breakfast*. Ms. Stewart has been invited to talk about the groundbreaking report, "Raising Adult

Literacy Skills: The Need for a Pan-Canadian Response", tabled recently in the House of Commons.

If adopted, the report's 21 recommendations will change the face of adult literacy in Canada and bring new sources of support for aboriginal, workplace, community-based, and family, literacy programs.

Diane McGifford, the provincial Minister of Advanced Education and Training, will then announce provincial government support for adult literacy programs of the Adult Learning and Literacy branch.

The province will increase support for adult and family literacy programs by \$100,000 in 2003-2004, raising the total to \$1.3 million.

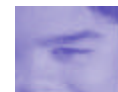
LPM's Executive Director, **Marg Rose**, says the federal report has potential benefits for literacy programs in Manitoba. "We could see a hefty increase in funding through several sources. If, for example, the recommended increase to the National Literacy Secretariat is adopted, the money that comes to Manitoba for literacy projects and research could be doubled."

The Report also highlights the need for a strategy to improve literacy rates in Aboriginal communities. It recommends separate funding for the

newly formed National Indigenous Literacy Association (NILA). Ms. Rose says, "We look forward to working with NILA when it moves its headquarters to Winnipeg soon."

What can you do?

Attend the Breakfast of Champions with Board members, supporters and learners. It may be the best two hours you could spend this year to move the markers forward in literacy from a federal perspective! Join us at the **Winnipeg Convention Centre** on Monday, **September 8**, from **7:30 to 9:00 a.m.** for a face-to-face opportunity to meet the Minister of HRDC with responsibility for the National Literacy Secretariat. Use the attached form to register.

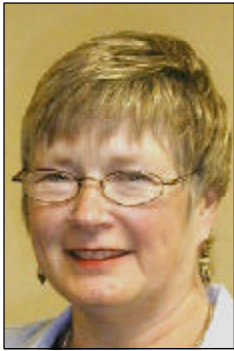


INSIDE

2. **President's Report**
3. **Power Lunch and AGM**
5. **Leadership Opportunities**
6. **LPM News**
8. **Learn Line Report**
9. **Research in Practice**
12. **News from the Library**
13. **Emerging Issues**
14. **Literacy News in Brief**
16. **Upcoming Events**

LPM President's Report

by Marilyn Day



On May 24, 2003, the LPM Board met to discuss and develop a vision and set of priorities. We accomplished this process under the capable leadership of Louise Smith, LPM's Treasurer. We brainstormed a first response to three questions which helped us to focus on LPM's mission and mandate.

- 1 At what point is LPM not going to be needed?
- 2 What is LPM here to do now?
- 3 What is LPM trying to accomplish in three years?

Our response led to a **vision statement** that summarizes what we, the Board, are working towards.

LPM envisions a Manitoba where adults who need help to improve their functional literacy skills can get free access to an efficient, high-quality, legitimate system of adult education. The system is properly funded, and integrated with the private and public sectors to respond to learner goals and needs.

LPM Chooses Strategic Direction

At our meeting, we decided where and how we should focus our energies for the next three years. After lively and extensive discussions, we shaped 17 goals into the following four priorities:

- 1 Promoting the integration of literacy programs into other portfolios of social services to provide maximum benefit to society and to learners. The portfolios suggested were health, aboriginal and northern development, justice, workers' compensation, employment, economic development, immigration and family services
- 2 Working in partnership with LPM members, learners, funders, and the public to build agreement on a common definition of adult and family literacy so that it becomes a legitimate part of the adult education continuum
- 3 Determining LPM's key fund-raising goals and developing a new strategy for fund development

- 4 Linking practitioners to "best practices" in the field and helping establish their work as a professional part of the adult education system alongside adult learning centres

- In response to these priorities, the Board will work towards
- 1 acquiring internal resources and skill sets to achieve the above goals
 - 2 ensuring that all tactics and measurable activities will fit under the top listed priorities

We made these decisions based on two significant events.

First, at their Spring Meeting, the Board of the Movement for Canadian Literacy (MCL) decided to take a somewhat different direction for the next three years. They would promote the integration of literacy programs into other federal government portfolios.

They reasoned that whereas many (54%) of IALS Level 1 are 56+ years of age and are unlikely to be interested in employment-related literacy issues, they may be very interested in literacy issues that are related to health, social security, retirement and care-giving issues. A further 33% of Level 1 does not have either English or French as their first language (labelled Allophones).

Second, the Sussman Report (July 2003; public release pending Fall 2003) shows strong evidence that literacy programs need to be refocused if the needs of learners are to be met.

Consequently, LPM has followed, in a made-in-Manitoba fashion, a direction which has been demonstrated by MCL's example.

With these re-newed goals, both LPM and MCL will continue to use their considerable energies to demonstrate that basic literacy problems persist among those people who are marginalized – older people, immigrants and refugees, people with disabilities, and many Aboriginal Canadians. Please support us in this new direction with all the exciting challenges. Call 947-5757.

Notice of Annual General Meeting

**Come one, come all to LPM's Power Lunch
Provincial Adult and Family Literacy Roundtable
Literacy Partners of Manitoba Annual General Meeting and Think Tank**

Keynote speaker: Christine Featherstone, President and CEO of ABC CANADA, Toronto

Interactive Luncheon Topic: "Reframing and Selling Adult Literacy and Education in Manitoba"

Where: Viscount Gort Hotel, 2nd Floor, 1670 Portage Avenue, Winnipeg, across from Polo Park

When: November 8, 2003, 11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

To register and send in payment, use the attached form.

Also featuring:

- Canada Post Literacy Awards ceremony
- Photo shoot session on Faces of Adult Literacy for an upcoming media relations campaign, based on real people making a difference! Come ready to smile
- Update on new statistics, and literacy's impact on health, justice, employment, income and aboriginal success
- Roundtable discussions on the concrete benefits of literacy work and ideas for expanding programs
- Links to adult learning centres
- Training for how to make community presentations
- Showcase of new resources and travelling trunks for adult learners
- Election of new Board of Directors and updating constitutional bylaws on organizational memberships
- Lifetime Service awards
- Word Monster
- Celebrity guests

This is the best opportunity to meet with Manitoba's top adult and family literacy program coordinators, tutors and partners.

Reminder: To vote at the AGM, you must have renewed your membership before October 8th, 2003.



Christine Featherstone has been with ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation for five years. During her tenure, the organization has expanded its research mandate, as well as its

fundraising and public awareness activities. It has "branded" the literacy cause in Canada and is sought after as the "charity of choice" for major corporations working to support adult and family literacy initiatives.

A graduate of the Voluntary Sector Management Program at York University, Christine has spent her entire professional career in the charitable sector. Previous positions include National Executive Director of the Girl Guides of Canada, Regional Manager for the Heart & Stroke Foundation of Ontario, Director of Programs and Services with the YWCA of Canada and Program Director of the North York YMCA.

LPM Board Nominations

Call for Nominations

LPM seeks **three** Board members with expertise in health promotion, marketing or advertising, aboriginal community relations, or finance and fundraising. Due to the earlier departure of Maurice Montreuil, the Board has appointed **Gay Wiley** on an interim basis. She brings the skills and expertise from a lifelong career in financial planning, banking and human resources management to the organization.

The Nominations Committee, under Chair **Ted Paterson**, worked diligently this summer to approach a half dozen individuals for three Board leadership positions. **Gay Wiley** is willing to take over the Treasurer's position, and will stand formally for election. Thanks to **Margaret Chambers, Alice Cheatley, Sam Koshy, Marilyn Day** and **Judith Hayes** for their contributions to assembling a candidate list. A confirmed slate of recommended nominees will be compiled for the fall newsletter.

Election procedure:

Every member in good standing as of October 8th, 2003 is entitled to one vote. Up to six volunteer Directors will be elected by the members for a two year term.

Five members are continuing their term after last year's election: **Dr. Marilyn Day, Joe Dutra, Monika Feist, Susie Shepherd, and Mary Switek** (President Elect). Stepping down are **Sylvia Provanski, Louise Smith** and **Susan Kelso**.

Willing to stand for a second term of two years are **Yvonne Jordaan** (north of 53 representative), **Emily Johnson**, and the interim appointed **Gay Wiley**.

We then have three vacancies available, to include at least one southern rural rep to meet our constitutional requirements. To be considered, a candidate must:

- be a member by October 8th, 2003
- have the signature of three LPM members on the nomination papers (call LPM at 947-5757 for these)

Nominees for LPM Board of Directors to Date

The following candidates are letting their names stand for the 2003-05 term of the LPM Board of Directors.

Gay Wiley has worked in the financial industry for over 25 years, having served as a bank manager in Winnipeg and rural Manitoba. As a volunteer board member of organizations such as the Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre, the YWCA, and the United Commercial Travellers, she hosted fundraising dinners, served as a Chairperson and Treasurer, and sat on the Personnel committee. She offers the skills and practical experience to foster human resource development, a new fundraising strategy, and serve as a Treasurer for the coming term. A Winnipeg resident, she enjoys golfing, reading, hiking, kayaking and spiritual pursuits in her leisure time.

Marilyn Robinson is committed to the principles of continuous learning. She holds her B.A., an Honours Certificate in Management, and a Certificate in HR Management. She brings 25 years of experience with both the private and public sectors of workforce development and human resource management. She has served for the past three years as the Vice President of HR for Manitoba Lotteries Corporation. She has proven experience in strategic planning and effective governance through her past work with volunteer boards, government officials and corporate partners such as Canada Safeway, Royal Trust, Manitoba Agriculture and Food. She lives in Winnipeg.

Nenita Uygen brings direct experience as an educator in a First Nations community and in the south with ReDirections as a consultant to the board. She believes she can contribute to the board by working with a group of people who have a similar purpose – to help people. She brings public speaking and facilitation skills, and a network among various immigrant and northern communities to the Board. She served on the Speakers' Bureau of the United Way and Toastmasters for six years. She is affiliated with the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre. She lives in Wasagamack.

Leadership Opportunities at LPM

Board nominations are pending submission of papers and biographies. We still have several vacancies to fill. (See article on page 4).

Reminder: All nominees must be members in good standing by October 8, 2003, to be eligible to run for the Board. To be considered by the Nominations Committee slate, please contact Chair Ted Paterson at handpat@hpcweb.net

Job Shadowing Opportunity

The Executive Director of LPM plans to step down soon, after seven productive years at the helm. She needs time to finish her Master's in Adult Education research and thesis. To prepare for her upcoming departure, we are collecting names of candidates who are interested in this position. Leadership priorities will be to continue to build awareness and public support for adult and family literacy through strategic projects and activities.

Do you have these required skills?

- Superior proposal writing and financial forecasting, monitoring and reporting
- Managing a non-profit charitable organization with a budget of at least \$250K
- Sourcing funding annually from various funding partners for projects that further the mandate of LPM
- Public speaking with broad range of audiences (media, government, Board, members, public)
- Staff supervision—able to motivate and supervise small office staff and affiliated contractors and volunteers
- Ability to travel, work flexible hours
- Networking and representing the concerns of the adult and family literacy field to wide range of stakeholders
- Designing an effective fundraising strategy its implementation
- Strategic thinking—able to juggle multiple tasks and priorities and activities
- Analyzing policy and statistical data and designing communication strategy and outreach plan
- Working in cooperation with a volunteer Board of Directors and committees and national groups

Duties: Marg has ensured a base of operational funding is in place for the coming year from four confirmed sources to date. However, in spite of another ten submissions to various sources, we still need \$50K more to maintain the library, support board face- to-face meetings, pay for needed materials and technical equipment and provide support to volunteers. A move to a new office location is on the horizon, as we face a 40% rent increase at the Grain Exchange building.

Benefits: Salary DOQ, ranging from \$20/ hr to \$25/hr. This FT position brings a base benefits package due to our membership in the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce group insurance plan.

Interested? See a fit with what we want and what you could offer? Several candidates will be interviewed and one selected to take part in a job shadowing experience over several weeks this fall, to help in the transition. To sign up, please send in your resume and a cover letter with two references to Job Shadowing c/o Literacy Partners of Manitoba. 998-167 Lombard Avenue, Winnipeg, Manitoba R3B 0V3 or email literacy@mts.net.

Want to spread your wings?

Help us link to sister organizations across Manitoba. Look at social development through a literacy lens. Get higher visibility through face-to-face contacts. Twenty LPM members will be chosen to act as literacy advocates on provincial committees this year. All costs will be covered and an honorarium supplied.

To submit your name for the training, contact LPM at literacy@mts.net or add a note to your membership renewal form.

Indicate which group you would like to join on our behalf: Manitoba Association of Rural Municipalities, Manitoba Association of School Trustees, Social Planning Council, Centre of Excellence for Children's Well Being Network, PGI Manitoba, Q-Net, Manitoba and Winnipeg Chambers of Commerce, Wired Women, Canadian Public Relations Society (MB), A Real Future, Movement for Canadian Literacy, Adult Secondary Education Council, Friends of the Winnipeg Public Library, and more!

LPM News

Starbucks Supports International Literacy Day



STARBUCKS.CO

You have an opportunity to help adult learners and support a good corporate citizen at the same time.

Starbucks Coffee will lend its support of this year's International Literacy Day on Monday, September 8. Donation boxes to support LPM's lending library will be set up for the entire day at each of the Starbucks' eight Winnipeg locations.

Please show your appreciation for the work Starbucks and its staff are doing to help adult literacy programs. Enjoy a coffee, talk to a learner and make a difference with your donation. And don't forget to tell your friends, family and colleagues to stop by their local Starbucks.

International Literacy Day Barbecue



Jim Rondeau, one of the most committed MLAs to the adult literacy cause, was recently re-elected through one of the largest increases in voter support in Manitoba history. Premier Doer has

saluted him as one of the hardest-working backbenchers in government. He is a passionate advocate of access to lifelong learning and the first winner of the LPM lifetime service award in 1999. Once again, he is putting ideas into action through a constituency BBQ for Literacy, in conjunction with his neighbouring caucus colleague, **Bonnie Korzeniowski**. Proceeds will go directly to the literacy program in the area. Please support these two leading legislative members and the Assiniboia Optimist Club.

What: International Literacy Day BBQ

When: Saturday, September 20, 11:00 a.m. - 2:00 a.m.

Where: Ness Middle School, 3300 Ness Avenue

What: Book exchange (bring one, take one home or make a donation!) School supplies drive, Live celebrity reading, Learner Speakers testimonials, Word Monster mascot, bookmarks, free face painting, school bands, refreshments and community news on adult and family literacy and Mature high school credit programs.

Why: Good children's books will be sent to early childhood programs and the local schools. Stevenson-Britannia will select books that are appropriate for their use and the rest of the books will be sent to seniors' homes and schools. All financial donations will be used by individual students at the Stevenson-Britannia Adult Literacy Program.

Canada Post Literacy Awards Finalists Announced!

Congratulations to all nominees to the 2003 Canada Post Literacy Awards. Winners will be honoured on **November 8th** at the **Viscount Gort Hotel**, drawn from these seven finalists in the running:

Individual Achievement in learning: **Tara Duncan** of the Samaritan House Program (Brandon) and **Hazel Mink** from The Pas Friendship Centre

Community Leadership award: **SMD Services** and the **UFCW Training Centre**

Business Leadership: **Kildonan Place** (noted for their PAGE mascot and focus on literacy)

Educator Excellence award: Two Manitobans are in the running to be chosen as one of the five national winners from across Canada: **Terrie Moar** and **Lynn Cory**

Preview the MATH WORKS Television Show

You are invited to an interactive workshop to learn how to use the content of the innovative television shows Math Works that Manitoba Lotteries funded last year. The ten week series of half-hour broadcasts on SCN has had a wonderful reception on satellite television this past spring. Thousands of copies of the free study guide have been downloaded to date.

Learner coordinator and seasoned adult education instructor **Val de Vries** will offer teaching and tutoring tips on how to use the ten modules with adult learners.

Where: LPM office, 998-167 Lombard Avenue, Winnipeg

When: Wednesday, September 10, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

What: This evening workshop will show you ways to make math more exciting in your literacy program.

Cost: \$20 fee for LPM members, \$35 for non-members.

LPM News

Anyone can videotape the programs from the upcoming television broadcasts this fall. Program coordinators can also order a set of the shows on DVD from www.mathworkstv.com or borrow a set and DVD player for previewing from the LPM lending library.

The Math Works kit includes a CD ROM of a study guide for this basic math program that helps learners work from “place values to measurement.” Exercises are included to help master these skills. The CD ROM includes a study guide, explanations, exercises, an index, and a glossary of terms. To complement the CD ROM are two DVDs.

The series’ “innovative approach and entertaining style make it a must for anyone who needs to refresh old skills or learn new skills.” The DVDs include ten easy-to-follow lessons with practical applications of these skills to everyday life.

The package is a great tool for learners to use. Come and find out ways to make numeracy skill development more meaningful to adult learners by tapping into the power of television.

A display on other numeracy resources will also be offered. Time for sharing tips and resources with your colleagues on numeracy and math literacy will round out our evening today. Refreshments will be provided. Parking is free after 5:30 p.m.

Math Literacy Promotional Tools Available

(Adapted from the ABC CANADA newsletter Literacy Works, Spring 2003)

Did you know that improving numeracy skills offers the highest return on investment in literacy classes? Need to calculate pounds to kilograms or litres to gallons in a hurry? Can’t remember how to convert temperature from Celsius to Fahrenheit? Last month, as a follow-up to its successful “Math Solves Problems” print ad campaign, ABC CANADA introduced a set of glossy wallet cards and a MathTips brochure with useful math tips and conversions for adult Canadians who could use a little help with this kind of everyday math. These materials reinforce LPM’s key message that literacy skills lie along a

continuum and affect us all to varying degrees. Sample materials are included in this newsletter.

Your friends, family, funders and clients can use these numeracy cheat sheets. Each wallet card features a different theme (Home Renovation, Travel, Food and Drink) with corresponding math conversions related to each theme. For example, the Home Renovation card shows at a glance how to convert feet to metres and inches to centimeters, to figure out the amount of paint required for a room for example. The travel-themed card helps visitors to the U.S. convert Canadian and US currency, kilometers to miles and Celsius to Fahrenheit. Finally, the Food & Drink card helps kitchen efforts such as changing ounces to grams and milliliters to cups.

The math literacy brochure provides additional tips and tricks, such as pointers on calculating tips and discounts. It also includes a special “Did you know?” section featuring interesting math and numbers trivia.

“The wallet cards and the brochure respond to a real need for practical, simple to understand ‘how-to’ information on everyday math,” explains ABC CANADA president Christine Featherstone. “ABC CANADA’S math literacy campaign is all about showing adult Canadians the importance of math skills in our daily lives – in our workplace, at home and in our community – and offering simple solutions to their everyday math problems.”

Math literacy, also referred to as “numeracy” is defined as the ability and skills required to understand and use numbers as a means of communication. According to the “International Adult Literacy Survey (IALS), approximately 43 per cent of adult Canadians are at a basic or low numeracy level. This means that about four in ten Canadians struggle with everyday numeracy tasks, such as understanding and using media information, calculating the tax on a purchase, and converting measurements.

To see a sample of the tips, tricks, conversions and actual cards and brochure, visit www.mathliteracy.ca. To order customized wallet cards with your agency or company logo, contact ABC CANADA at 1-800-303-1004. They are great give-away items or promotional tools.

Learn Line and Learner Speakers' Bureau Report

by Val de Vries

There have been more than 400 calls to the LEARN Line this year. Most of the callers were learners themselves wanting information about programs. More agencies have also used our services. Calls have decreased with summer holidays, but some callers who wanted to ensure a spot in a program for the fall have already been referred to programs when they start up again. Final statistics for the 2002-2003 year will be provided in the next newsletter.

The Learners Speakers' Bureau has had a busy year as well. Making speeches, participating at events, and manning information booths have increased awareness about literacy and programs throughout the city and province. There have been more than forty opportunities for members of the LSB to tell their stories. Members of the alumni and recent graduates of the LSB training have earned a well-deserved rest over the summer, but we already have calls requesting speakers for next year.

New posters have been printed to advertise the LEARN Line for adults wishing to enter programs and for those who wish to volunteer in literacy programs. Mail-outs have gone to all libraries and community clubs in the city.

Raymond Roy has been chosen as the MCL representative for Manitoba. Congratulations! He held the position of acting representative when **Joe Dutra** was

unable to make the trip to Ottawa. We had some excellent candidates. Thank you for submitting your names. If for any reason Raymond is unable to meet his obligations, I am hoping that one of these candidates will step forward: **Lorna Barley** and **Hazel Mink** have both taken the LSB training and have done an excellent job promoting literacy and their programs. I know that they will continue to be ambassadors for literacy in the coming year. I look forward to visiting programs in the fall and working with learners.

Please let me know your volunteer and program needs, as I answer the LEARN line. I talk to hundreds of people about program benefits, locations, hours and content. We are happy to partner with Global Television to launch a new public service announcement urging people to step forward "for help or to help". We then link them to programs across the province. Help me keep my information up to date. We send out mailings with your program information, so send us any brochures or updates to contact information asap.

Call me to book a learner speaker for your fall recruitment events, company or agency meetings to show the power of improving literacy through personal impact! Val deVries 947-5757 or literacy@mts.net

From the West: A Regional Report

by Alanna Hillis

Well, the summer is almost gone and soon fall will be upon us. I would like to take this opportunity to welcome back all new and returning practitioners, learners, support staff and volunteers of the literacy programs in the West Region and Manitoba.

The next year will be a busy one for the Region. Funding has been secured for another year, thus allowing us to offer the region continuing support through family literacy training events, the learners' conference, and the opportunity to participate with various organizations to plan, prepare and present an Aboriginal Literacy Conference in the fall of 2004.

The West Region will continue to manage the Elit.ca server for the province of Manitoba. If you would like to

sign up for the service, please contact me at 204-727-6017 and I will be glad to get an account set up for you. The service offers a free opportunity for all persons involved in the literacy field to participate in various online conferences, to communicate with colleagues, or to search for literacy-related materials. Over the past two years our memberships for the service has tripled with over 125 people signed up. Further information concerning Elit.ca will be sent to all literacy programs in the province.

The regional coordinators title will be changed to West Region Literacy Liaison, but the mandate of the coalition remains the same.

Please feel free to contact me at the office at 204-727-6017 or email alanna_hillis@elit.ca for further information.

Try Research in Practice!

Three LPM members attended the Research in Practice Institute at Memorial University in June. Here are their personal accounts of the experience.

from Terrie Moar

It is a privilege to share some experiences from the Research in Practice Institute. As I look back at this amazing professional development opportunity, my thoughts turn to my personal experience as a learner as well as the knowledge I gained about research.

I must admit I was somewhat hesitant to apply to attend this conference. I felt it was undoubtedly an extremely important topic. I am convinced that we must have valid research in order to develop effective programming and maintain support for those programs. But could I, a family literacy practitioner, in the field rather than in academia, be a researcher? I also wondered if there would be a place to discuss the importance and impact of the adult literacy component in Family literacy I went to the institute looking for the answer to my question: "What is legitimate research and do I as a family literacy practitioner really have the 'right' to do it?" I decided to enroll in the course named 'Getting Started'.

I was most fortunate to have **Marina Niks**, a research friend encouraging and supporting literacy practitioners in British Columbia, as my course instructor. She was one of the most highly skilled and effective facilitators I have ever encountered. And what was one of her first questions to our group? "What do people think is research and who do people think is a researcher?" I immediately knew I was in the right place!

This woman had an uncanny ability to draw knowledge from the participants while still maintaining focus and sharing her own expertise. And what were our conclusions? I would sum it up as the goal of research is to develop new knowledge. The process is organized, reflective and systematic. There is thorough recording and documentation and a sharing of the information. (It was a relief to get an understanding of the distinct difference between evaluation and research.) And who is a researcher? I would say it is a person with a passion to find an answer to a question that is going to make a

difference. Every researcher I spoke with felt that they needed to have a strong connection to the question they were trying to answer in order to stay focused.

The end of the week saw all of the participants immersed in developing or completing their research proposal: a plan of action outlining the question, participants, audience, support and timeframe. We came away from the "Getting Started" course knowing more about types of research, analyzing and collecting data, ethics, refining our question and creating a realistic timeframe. I personally came away with my basic research proposal which I am refining as time permits. I also have an appreciation of the power and necessity of Research in Practice. My experience as a learner with a valuing, supportive facilitator has improved my practice as an administrator and workshop facilitator. I would highly recommend the *Literacies* research journal and the RiPAL web site to anyone wanting to know more about research in practice. It really is time for the literacy field to create its own reality, based on what we know, on what we can prove, as well as what we feel and believe.

from Margerit Roger

We can all do research. If literacy practitioners were asked whether they considered themselves "researchers", few would answer in the affirmative. Many perceive academic research as something "scientific", or a method of discovering a hidden, objective "truth". It seems something removed from our day-to-day work, something done by specialists in an ivory tower somewhere. It doesn't appear at all related to that generative, often intuition-based, and at times unpredictable process that takes place in the best learner-centred literacy classrooms.

And yet every day, all literacy practitioners gather valuable information about a group of learners, or a teaching approach, or an issue that needs addressing. They mull it over in the context of their past experiences and then they take the information and integrate it into their decision-making, perhaps comparing notes with other practitioners or reading up on the topic before taking action. Every day, they create "theories" about what might work and why something did not. Every day they

Try Research in Practice! (continued)

accumulate grounded knowledge and front-line experience.

The reality is that literacy practitioners “research” every day, consciously or not. Perhaps we do not recognize our work as the source for research and do not meticulously document findings in a formal report, but the information is definitely collected. It definitely leads to action and new knowledge.

So how can *research* and *practice* be brought closer together? This question was the theme of a recent symposium in Newfoundland, supported by the NLS. It was the third in a series of symposia on the topic, and an eye-opening look at ways of bridging the great divides between academe and the reality of the classroom.

I attended the workshop called Feminist Approaches to Research. It was a fascinating four-day discussion about the idea that feminist post-structuralist methods of research might just provide one way of bridging the gap.

What is post-structuralism? At the risk of oversimplifying a huge idea, it's a belief that our view of the world is essentially constructed by the way that we view and describe it. What we talk about and what we choose to leave out is based on very subjective (and perhaps unconscious) filtering that we do as we process our lives and the world around us. For example, depending on our deeply-seated values around education, we may see low literacy as a danger to national economic well-being, a hindrance to a company's productivity, a personal deficiency, an educational opportunity, a reason for pity, a result of social oppression, etc. Certainly how we see literacy would affect how we plan, teach or evaluate. (Feminist post-structuralists would suggest that the voice of women in research has not been adequately heard, contributing to a world-shaping that is based primarily on male values and ideas.) In effect then, how we talk about something (i.e., our discourse) creates the world we believe we live in.

In other words, post-structuralists would say that because we each come with “baggage”, it is impossible to remain as neutral as we like to suppose. Our actions are informed by ideas, beliefs and values. These in turn are shaped by our environment, education, and a myriad of life

experiences. As a result, there cannot really be a tidy, objective “truth” in research, except perhaps in math.

This leads post-structuralists to conclude that research cannot be about the search for an objective “truth”. Rather it is about acknowledging the extraordinary complexity and contradictoriness of most of what we do, recognizing biases and analyzing assumptions for their underlying beliefs. Research should not be relegated to those white ivory towers, but rather done by those people close to the grass roots, so that those voices can be heard as well. Much of the research about literacy - which leads to ideas about new teaching methods, new texts and new funding initiatives - is being done by people who are not directly involved with the struggle of literacy instruction on a day-to-day basis. This means, though, that highly valuable stories are being told in our literacy classrooms, stories that might well inform policy makers and funders, and bring a more complete perspective to what literacy in Canada is all about. And they are not being heard.

The problem of course is that most practitioners don't have time to add research to the long list of things they need to do. Besides, we know that no amount of report-writing can fully capture the impact of a literacy program on a human life. The impacts of literacy learning are so varied and deep that a document simply cannot do them justice.

But perhaps we need to think outside the box and consider the ways in which we can honour the important work we do and make it visible in other ways. Would you like to join a **Praxis Group** in Manitoba, dedicated to linking research to best practice? The **RIPAL website** is a great place to see what is happening in this growing field in Alberta and BC (www.nald.ca/RIPAL). Would you like to learn more about working with adult education graduate students or academics, as research friends? Are you tired of working on problems in your practice in isolation? Would you like to learn more about the Canadian Learning Institute of the federal government as a source of disseminating knowledge that will help us all? Want to look over the latest in research guidebooks and methods?

If you are ready for an energizing new direction in your teaching and tutoring practice, please contact the three of

Try Research in Practice! (continued)

us who attended the Newfoundland conference (Terrie Moar, Marg Rose or me) via literacy@mts.net or call 947-5757. We will set up a networking meeting and demonstration workshop for later in the fall.

from Marg Rose

Imagine a vibrant classroom full of colour, music, meaningful content, creative materials, eager classmates and a focus on individualized instruction! Imagine spending a week with one of Canada's foremost researchers and literacy practitioners, **Dr. Jenny Horsman**. As a delegate to the Research-in-Practice institute in St. John's, Newfoundland in June, I was thrilled to learn from one of my heroines in the literacy field.

After reading one of her books ten years ago, I had reframed my whole perception of literacy from a deficit model to seeing her vision of working with adults with multiple strengths within a complex social context. I was anxious to learn from this talented expert how to help LPM advocate for further advances for our members. Most people working in literacy are women, from a place of passion and dedication to lifelong learning.

Little did I know that this intensive week would bring out deep-seated issues, prompt soul-searching about literacy work, and challenge me to rethink my own methods of approaching social change. Jenny showed us how to begin our research through playing with layers of ideas, questioning our own biases, and planning for thoughtful action. We were invited to muse, puzzle, suspend judgement, discuss, and mull over the psycho-social impact of our work in literacy. Handouts, group and individual activities were prepared for all levels of investigation. Her goal was to introduce approaches to research that question the taken-for-granted, and see the ordinary and the everyday in new ways.

Jenny modelled new techniques for encouraging multi-level group interaction, and a soft, gentle approach to setting the stage for learning. I want to pass on to you two examples of her style that hit home hard.

- I am quite an enthusiast when I facilitate a class, staff meeting or board gathering. I learned to question this use of energy while watching Jenny at work. She never

raised her voice. Since many learners in literacy classes come to classes with a negative home or school experience, she sets up a safety net to help them feel welcome in a new adult setting for learning. For example, when we switched from a large group discussion to a timed small group breakout session, she called us back together through the use of gentle cues such as an African shaker, or a winsome train whistle, or lively music. She never yelled, clapped her hands, or cut into our group work – she has found that these cues may unconsciously set off a panic reaction in learners or even tutors.

- When we entered the classroom, a long table was full of colourful objects. My heart sank, as I gazed at the piles of pipe cleaners, markers, wire puzzles, felt puzzle pieces and slinky toys. Were we going to have to *draw*? I cringed at the thought of revealing my inadequacy with art. However, during the workshop, Jenny explained that many learners find comfort in handling noiseless objects as a way of grounding themselves in their chairs. Some of us, when nervous, keep our hands busy to allow us to process information into our heads. Many relax through smoking, knitting, writing notes, seeking or other kinesthetic outlets. She offered these tools as a way to enhance learning styles.

I could go on. I would rank this week as one of the top learning experiences in my career. Over the past 25 years, I have taught junior high, senior high and adult learners. I'm now enrolled in the Master's of Adult Education. Yet, during this intense week with Dr. Horsman and incredible colleagues, I learned new techniques set the stage for transformative learning. I am anxious to try them out. This experience helped me finally decide to return to the classroom after my six years with LPM focusing on policy and association work. Contact me if you would like copies of the handouts or to talk about this wonderful week (Marg_Rose@eLit.ca). I want to share the wealth.

We have several of her books in the LPM library including *Drawing the Line: Dealing with affective issues in literacy*; *Moving Forward: Approaches and activities to support women's learning*; and *But I'm Not a Therapist*.

News from the Library

by Linda Dubasov

The Thomas Sill Collection



Greetings from the Library!

I hope you all had a marvellous summer, filled with laughter, friends and family!

Now that it is nearly time for the programs to start up again, I am happy to tell you that the **Thomas Sill Collection** is all catalogued and ready to go. With generous support from the **Thomas Sill Foundation**, these items were purchased and catalogued over the last year.

Areas in which we have new materials include life skills, mathematics and numeracy, language arts, research, adult education theory, women's issues, learning disabilities, teaching and tutoring techniques, computer literacy, English as a second language and workplace. I will be compiling a bibliographic brochure of these materials, which I will be forwarding to all members in September. This will provide a brief annotation of each item as well. I hope that it will help you find materials in this collection that you will find useful with your learners.

Here are a couple of examples of some of the excellent items we have acquired:

- *Starspell 2001: A Spelling Odyssey* [compact disc]. A multimedia spelling program for adults, the program is progressive, providing nine levels of spelling instruction and practice exercises.
- *Breaking the Maths Barrier: A Kit for Building Staff Development Skills in Adult Numeracy*. The chapters of this resource each contain theoretical and background information, a sequence of structured activities, and materials for use with students, on five separate themes.

We are really excited about this collection, and hope it gets the use and circulation it deserves!! Remember, all it takes is a phone call—toll free at 1-866-947-5757 if you live outside Winnipeg—and we'll mail the materials to you

with a label **paying for the return postage**. The materials are yours for **two months**—and longer if you wish to renew them and no one is waiting to get them! And remember – you do not have to know exactly what you want before you call the library. We will be happy to help you find materials that will meet your needs.

On-line Catalogue

My other major summer project has been the **online catalogue**. Trevor Price (from NALD) and I have been working diligently to redo the electronic catalogue, making it more user friendly and easier to retrieve records from. We are really excited about the new look and the new possibilities for practitioners. We are hoping it will be up and running by the end of September, so check it out then at the website!

Farewell

As some of you know I will be leaving Literacy Partners of Manitoba at the end of September. We are moving to Edmonton later this fall. I would like to take this opportunity to say how much I have enjoyed my time here, and the opportunity to meet and talk with so many of you from different areas of the province. It has been a real learning experience and I am grateful for the good fortune of being hired for a “short term cataloguing position” three years ago.

We have posted an advertisement for my successor in a variety of places and have received resumes from a large number of highly qualified applicants. Over the next few weeks we will be interviewing the ones who meet the needs of LPM most closely and I will be working with that person before I leave. The library does not change no matter who answers the phone in the library office, so keep those requests coming and the resources moving off the shelves!

Thanks to all of you for the help you have given me over the years and I wish you all success in your continuing endeavours to change lives through increased literacy skills.

Emerging Issues

by Marg Rose

Canadian Learning Institute Update

How do we learn from proven successes in adult education? How can we monitor the progress of Canadians in literacy and learning improvement? These questions will be tackled by the Canadian Learning Institute (CLI) when it becomes operational later this year. At recent NALD and CAETO meetings, CLI Director General **Johanne Bélisle** outlined the final plans and mandate for this massive undertaking. Working with an initial budget of \$100 million dollars from the federal government, it will be an independent, pan-Canadian organization with a mandate to support evidence-based decision making in all areas of lifelong learning. The CLI will respect provincial and First Nations jurisdictional boundaries; its work will complement, not duplicate, work that is already being done.

The operational approach envisaged for the Institute is that it will work in partnership with existing “nodes of expertise” or organizations involved in learning information across the lifelong learning continuum. The report of the consultants (Manitoba’s former Deputy Minister Ben Levin and Shirley Seward) as well as further details on the proposed Institute are available at the Human Resources Development Canada Web site at: www.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/sp-ps/clip-pica/home.html

In the meantime, **Dr. David Zussman**, President of the Public Policy Forum, has been asked to engage the provinces and territories and stakeholders on the final details of the Institute’s design and governance. If you have ideas on the key attributes – commitment to knowledge excellence; expertise in learning and education; extensive networks, including international linkages; collaboration and partnership with the business and labour community, governments, voluntary sector, Aboriginal community, etc. – send your comments to wdesbrisay@literacy.ca.

The Future Lies in Learning Communities

Low literacy limits the life opportunities of millions of Canadians. Improving literacy skills links to better health, jobs, income, parenting skills, civic participation and

integration in society. It is a job too big for any one government department, corporate champion or non profit group. We desperately need all hands on deck to show progress.

My research has unearthed an exciting new trend that could bring many partners to the table, trying to build better places to live and grow through the power of lifelong learning. That is why I spent a week this July at the Summer Institute course on Learning Communities at UBC, organized by Literacy BC, led by **Dr. Ron Faris**.

A colleague from Ottawa, **Susanne Hale** wrote the poem below to summarize her perception of our shared week of intense scrutiny of this idea.

A Brief Reflection on the Learning Communities Workshop

Many of us
gathered, learned, laughed and listened.
We wrote.

Ideas stirred into coals
Building home, our quiet fires

Ron, tall and present
in the middle of this circle
weaver and dancer

dipper and diver, pearls
pirates and treasures still deep

Community a sea
We float, we swim we dive
Tangled and free

Like fish, our school, our class
Phosphorous, wiggling squirmers

Join me on **Friday, October 3, 1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m.**, at the **LPM offices** for a roundtable discussion and presentation of key concepts to see how we can build more learning communities in Manitoba. Cost: \$20.

Literacy News in Brief

ASEC's Sixth Annual Conference

LPM members are encouraged to attend the ASEC Conference this year in the absence of our own full conference. The exciting news is that **Stephen Brookfield** will be the keynote speaker on October 23, 2003. He will also be doing a workshop in the afternoon. Brookfield is a leading adult educator who has taught in England, Canada, the United States, and Australia. Currently a Distinguished Professor at the University of St. Thomas in Minneapolis, Minnesota, Brookfield has won numerous awards and written several adult education books.

Other workshop topics have been planned based on last year's conference evaluations: intake and assessment, barriers created by poverty, learning disabilities, Real Game for adults, Blueprint for Life/Work Designs and online courses. Other features include the popular musical chairs discussion of topics that are of interest to the field and the always well-attended "What's new in the government" session. Note that the conference will be held at two Winnipeg locations: on **October 23 at the Victoria Inn** (formerly the International Inn), and on **October 24 at the Aboriginal Centre**. To register, check the ASEC website in September.

Aboriginal Teacher Training Upcoming

Circle your calendars! Aboriginal literacy practitioners will be invited to apply to take part in an exciting national week of training in London Ontario next spring. Entitled "Strengthening the Learning Circles", the ground-breaking event is being sponsored by the the London based NokeeKwe Skills Development. And there is a Manitoba connection - a Winnipeg First Nations consultancy will be working with NokeeKwe to stage this professional development institute. The event will also attract some of Canada's best experts and facilitators in adult literacy. Delegates will be able to benefit from as many as seven different training workshops over a five-day period. Project funding from the NLS will allow for distance subsidies and assistance with other costs. To indicate your interest in this training or to nominate aboriginal leaders and/or facilitators, please look for the link at the

NokeeKwe website (www.NokeeKwe.ca) which will be up in the early fall when registration and course details will be available.

Double your donation dollars!

Did you know that you can designate your donations to LPM on your pledge cards to the United Way of Winnipeg or the All Charities Campaign of government employees? You get a tax receipt and acknowledgement from these sources, and help LPM deliver its services at the same time! For example, we need to find \$20K to continue the operation of our provincial lending library this year. For pledge cards, call us at 947-5757.

Festival of Literacies Courses Available

Further your professionalism and theoretical knowledge base in adult and family literacy! Contact the dynamic duo of Sheila Stewart and/or Nancy Jackson at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education to discuss enrolling in on-line or on-site courses in research-in-practice. Speakers, policies, theoretical reviews, research circle supports for practitioner and funder research are available. Go to www.literaciesOISE.ca

St. FX Master's Comes to Winnipeg

St. Francis Xavier University is planning to offer their Master of Adult Education program in Winnipeg this fall. This is a distance program that typically begins with a required 3-week residential orientation held at the StFX campus. However, this fall, the orientation will be held in Winnipeg, in a series of three separate sessions (October 5-9; November 13-18; December 11-15).

Now in its 33rd year, the program was the winner of the 2001 Curriculum Innovation Award (from the American Association of Adult and Continuing Education). It uses a self-paced distance model that begins with an orientation where students become acquainted with the foundational literature of the field and develop a custom-designed learning plan with their faculty advisor. Students have up to five years to complete the program at their own pace, with the guidance of a highly qualified advisor with an extensive background in adult education research, theory and practice.

Literacy News in Brief

Students in the program come from a variety of career settings, including adult literacy, human resource development, higher education, and health and social services. Admission is competitive. Successful applicants will have an undergraduate degree with at least a B average, and experience in the adult education field.

Applications are still being accepted for the fall orientation (deadline September 15, 2003). For application details, visit stfx.ca/academic/adulted or contact the departmental secretary at 902-867-3952.

Adult Educators—share your knowledge!

Submit a paper for the 2004 National Conference of the Canadian Association for Studies in Adult Education. The deadline is September 30, 2003. The conference will be held on May 28-30, 2004, in Victoria, B.C., and will feature a pre-conference focus on Adult literacy work.

For more details, see <http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/CASAE/cnf2004/cnf2004.html>

Infant Stimuli tips available

Go to www.infantstimuli.com to preview a new book that was launched at the American Library Association conference this spring. Author Dr. J. Monsoor, a pediatrician, helps parents and family literacy practitioners learn about critical windows in assisting brain development and a detailed program to encourage a child's mental and physical development. The book is 368 pages long, with more than 250 colour illustrations.

NLS Workplace Literacy Special Initiative: Call for Proposals 2003-2004

Deadline for submission is September 19. Visit NALD for more details: <http://www.nald.ca/WHATNEW/papers/2003/workinit.htm>

People in Transit

Rob Sarginson has stepped down as the longest-serving regional network coordinator for LPM. He worked tirelessly for the past seven years to link people to programs and policies, in partnership with libraries, senior centres and schools. His strong relationships with key

government personnel and insightful analysis of key lobby points helped LPM formulate its "literacy lens" stance over the last six years. He will be appointed as one of the new Lifetime Service award winners at the AGM on November 8th. Come and help roast and toast this champion as he moves on to new challenges.

Carol Goossen has replaced Rob as Interlake Regional Coordinator (204 642-7027 or carol_goossen@hotmail.com).

Kim Akins, the renowned literacy instructor at the Brandon Correctional Institute, will be at home with her new baby until June 2004. **Terry Lunan** has taken the position (tlunan@gov.mb.ca, 204-725-3532 ext 211).

Board alumna **Marge Warkentin**, the creator and provincial trainer extraordinaire for the last four years of the Read to Me program, is moving to Carman this fall. **Crystal Kolt** will take over in Flin Flon as the family literacy program coordinator (musicals@mts.net or 687-5413).

Rhonda McCorrison is the new director of the Organizational Staff Development agency, overseeing training for thousands of provincial government employees annually. **Marti Ford** will take over as Director of Education at the Aboriginal Community Campus.

Margery Roger leaves a lasting legacy at the UFCW Training Centre, where she forged new partnerships and directed learner-centred programming during her successful tenure there. She has been seconded to the Manitoba Apprenticeship branch, so we can expect major developments in that department soon!

Sue Turner moved to Vancouver in August to take a position with BC Hydro, after leading workplace training and an award-winning project students using American Sign Language at Boeing Canada Technologies recently. She served as the coordinator of Basic Education in the Workplace with Manitoba Education and Training, providing insightful leadership to assist essential skills programming in dozens of Manitoba companies. She is known nationally for her work with workplace education.

Upcoming Events

September 3, 2003, 8:00 p.m. Launch of the collective effort, edited by Karen Zoppa, of *Read this: Why books matter!* McNally Robinson Booksellers in Grant Park Shopping Centre. This made-in-Manitoba book would make great board and staff and client gifts to promote literacy next week! LPM staff wrote one of the selected chapters.

September 8, 2003, 7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. Breakfast of Champions. Pan-Am room, Winnipeg Convention Centre. (See page 1.) To register, fax the enclosed form to the Manitoba Chambers of Commerce.

September 8-15, 2003. Adult Learner Week in Canada. Go to www.adultlearning.unesco.ca to find out about materials and breaking news on ways to mark this week and raise your profile. This will kick off the UN Decade of Literacy, under the international call to action—Literacy for All: Voice for all, learning for all. Go to www.unesco.org to sign the declaration of support and join the movement. MCL is working on grassroots activities and fact sheets that you can pull off from their website at www.literacy.ca to distribute in your communities.

September 10, 2003, 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m. Preview of Math Works TV Program with teaching and tutoring tips. Val DeVries. (See page 6.) LPM Offices. 947-5757. \$20.

September 25, 2003. Raise a Reader Day across Canada. Celebrities will be selling special editions of the CanWest Global network of newspapers in various centres across Canada. To help, visit www.raise-a-reader.com.

September 30, 2004. Deadline for submission of papers to the 2004 National Conference of the Canadian Association for Studies in Adult Education (See page 14.)

October 3, 2003, 1:30 p.m. - 4:00 p.m. Round table discussion on Learning Communities. Marg Rose. LPM offices. Cost \$20. (See page 13.)

October 5-9, 2003. Master of Adult Education orientation. In Winnipeg, with visiting professors Jane Dawson and Patricia Cranton of St. Francis Xavier University. Five spots still available. (See page 14.) Contact jdawson@stfx.ca.

October 8-9, 2003. Rock and Read. Bookmates, 582-1804.

October 23-24, 2003. ASEC Conference. Victoria Inn (23rd) and Aboriginal Centre (24th) (See item on page 14) Featuring Steven Brookfield. Contact BHandford@shawbiz.ca.

November 8th, 2003. 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. LPM Power Lunch and AGM. Viscount Gort Hotel. (See page 2 and enclosed brochure.)

November 12-13, 2003. Focus On Books (A Parent-Child Book Club) Bookmates, 582-1804.

November 19-20, 2003. Parent-Child Mother Goose. Bookmates, 582-1804.

December 10-11, 2003. Bookmates Rock & Read. Bookmates, 582-1804.

May 28-30, 2004 Canadian Association for the Study of Adult Education (CASAE) Annual Conference. Victoria B.C. See <http://www.oise.utoronto.ca/CASAE/cnf2004/cnf2004.html>.



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