



The Letter

SGB
Youth
Literacy



Volume 2, Issue 1

Newsletter of the South Grey Bruce Youth Literacy Council
467 10th St, Suite 303 Hanover, ON N4N 1R3

January 2008

In This Issue

January is a month to look back and take stock of progress, and it is good to see that we have accomplished much with the dedicated help of our volunteers. We are very pleased to welcome Harvey McFadden as writer of our Community Letter, contributing an article on what tutoring has meant to him. Harvey is currently chair of our board of directors, and a long time tutor with our organization. We are proud of his dedicated and engaged teaching. We are also glad to have Kyle Heard, from our program, contributing the Youth Letter. Undoubtedly, Kyle is one of our program's successful graduates.

Check our other regular columns as well. Inside you will find a new feature, "Tutor's Toolbag," with tips for tutors, as well as a report on some of our new learning resources acquisitions. As always, we welcome contributions for the next issue for our Community Letter and Youth Letter, so if you have something you would like to share with readers through this column, please let us know.

Opening Hours for Literacy Office

Tuesday through Friday: 9 AM to 5 PM

Saturday, Sunday and Monday: Closed.

Other times possible by appointment.

THE LETTER

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SGB Youth Literacy Council

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The editors welcome submissions of news, facts, links or articles written by community members on topics of interest. Please send submissions by email to info@sgbyouthliteracy.org.

Progress in Our Office

We continue to support learning for all ages

The Youth Literacy Office continues to be a hive of activity. Our Summer Experience Intern, Katie Barclay catalysed the creation of new learning games for our tutor use. She was also our active collaborator with The Hanover Parks and Recreation Department's Summer Reading Program. We also appreciated the good work of Shelby Tilker, our J.D.S.S. co-op student for this autumn, who worked hard to create the carpet of words for the Words Aloud Festival, as well as putting many hours into maintaining our database.

Our resource centre continues to expand. The generous sponsorship received from the Hanover Rotary Club and Rotary International District 6330 contributed vital funds for the purchase of more high interest, easy vocabulary books, and the creation of educational games supporting phonics and sight words. Elizabeth Hahn, our Learning Resources advisor, continues to guide the selection of learning materials, utilizing the grant received through The United Way of Bruce Grey's Rotary Children's Fund.

Two tutor enrichment workshops were implemented in this six month period. Rose Chaplan, a children's literacy specialist from the Toronto District School Board, presented a full length workshop entitled "Comprehending Comprehension" to a capacity audience of participants. Professional Tutor Linda Byers of Hanover led a workshop highlighting the use of concrete manipulatives in tutoring math. Tutors now carry their materials in bright blue bookbags contributed by The Meridian Credit Union.

We are also very proud of our work with the Words Aloud Spoken Word Festival Nov.1-4/07 at the Durham Art Gallery. The festival was a huge success with the integrated involvement of the SGB Youth Literacy Council co-hosting the Teen Poetry Slams, Children's Storytelling Concert and PEN Canada presentation at the Hanover Civic Theatre. The involvement of youth in the cultural enrichment of our community continues to be our mandate.

View from the Bookshelf

With consultation from Elizabeth Hahn as well as many hours of labour from several volunteers, the Youth Literacy Council is putting together a truly impressive collection of new learning resources. Most lately we have built, with volunteer help from Sara McKenzie, Susan Lindsay, Maryanne Buehlow and David Ziegler, 20 new kits of small sound and letter blocks which are a part of the learning strategy taught by Linda Soehner called "Everyone's a Reader." This is an excellent support program for young learners with learning difficulties. These kits may be checked out of the resource centre together with the manual compiled by Soehner, which is helpful in guiding the use of the kits with all types of learners. David Ziegler has also put much hard work into building some new kits of counter beads for math instruction. Guided Reading DVDs, which were donated by Cathy Vassiliadis, are also available in our resource centre

While we specialize in resources for learners, we also have a growing library of resources for parents, in which tutors may also be interested. These include books on strategies for teaching children with learning difficulties. A recent donation to our collection is a book called *Proust and the Squid: The Story and Science of the Reading Brain*, by Maryanne Wolf. This is a beautifully written book that covers, in clear accessible language, the history and neurology of the reading brain.

As always, we are on the lookout for good resources, so if you have a request or know of a sure winner, please let us know.

NATO Phonetic for the Letter C - Charlie

Morse Code for the Letter C _ _ . _ _ .

Artists Donate For Youth Literacy

The Youth Literacy Council has implemented a new donor program. Artists have come forward and have offered the proceeds from the sale of their work. We are grateful to Ken Dunn, Anna Green, Dr. Adam Gavsie, Liz Zetlin and Frederick Turner for translating their generous visual gifts into support for youth literacy. We welcome more artists in the community to contribute.

Susan Lindsay artist, tutor and board member of the Youth Literacy Council, will be presenting an art show of her new work, inspired by books in the collection of Frederick Turner, antiquarian bookseller. The exhibit will run from April 19th to May 17th, 2008, Thursday to Sunday 2 to 5 at The Hedges in Durham. 519 369-6313.

Community Letter

Notes from a Tutor

There came a time when the children were away from home and life seemed to be defined by what I did at work. Having arrived at this point I was thinking about the possibility of something like volunteering to expand my horizons. When I saw an ad asking for volunteer tutors, I was very interested as reading was one thing that has put me ahead in many work situations. The ability to research and solve problems using others' information rather than making the same mistakes yourself is a great advantage.

My training as a mechanic has been an asset when tutoring some young boys as they are interested in cars and machinery. One of my students has gone on to restore and drive a vehicle after starting to learn auto basics from me.

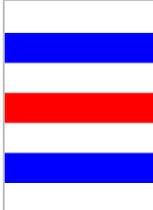
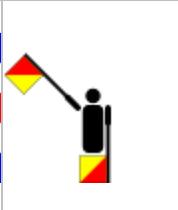
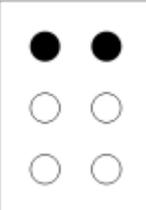
Tutoring has become a learning situation for me. After a day of school and not being able to keep up, the students are less than enthusiastic about more studying. But they might get up and look for words in their surroundings to play hang-man, and spelling a word out eight times (while I make guesses at the letters) teaches them the word. If they cannot sit still, as happens on some days, I have played catch while spelling out words, starting with two letter words and working up. If the student likes hockey we read hockey books, and if they want information on the latest sports cars we read about that. And if I thought rabbit was a one word study, I was wrong. I found out there are about sixty breeds of rabbits to name!

I have been rewarded in many ways while tutoring. Interacting with young minds keeps me feeling younger. The students have improved and that is rewarding. It helps to feel I am contributing back to my community and I have met some wonderful people within the organization that have a commitment to helping students.

Harvey McFadden

Harvey McFadden has been working with learners since 2001. See the Youth Letter for a learner's perspective.

Alternate Representations of the Letter C

			
Signal flag	Flag semaphore	ASL Manual	Braille

Youth Letter

One Learner's Experience

I first began working with my tutor Harvey McFadden as a grade six student in 2001. I needed extra help with my reading and spelling and I had always found math to be a little hard. I really enjoyed science and even at this age I knew that I wanted to study to become a mechanic. I needed to do better at school to realize this goal.

In grade eight, I received an award for being the most academically improved student. I purchased an old pickup truck and with Harvey's help, began to restore it. My tutoring then involved studying welding manuals and calculating complicated math equations relating to my truck. Not only did I restore the truck and now drive it, I thoroughly improved in my studies at school. Because of my interest and participation, I was also given the opportunity to travel to the Vimy Memorial in France with my high school. I also credit my tutor, Harvey, with helping me to achieve this. I am looking forward to entering the college apprenticeship program in mechanics next year after high school.

Harvey understands me. I learn better hands-on, not being a textbook sort of person. Rather than reading a novel that didn't interest me, at first we read books about cars or science magazines. He managed to capture the way I learn individually, rather than being in a whole classroom of kids. Harvey is a wise friend.

Kyle Heard

Please note: The Youth Literacy Council guards the confidentiality of all our young learners. Kyle Heard has kindly offered this article highlighting his experience, and has given us permission to print it.

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/C> An interesting website to learn more about the Letter C.

Spotlight on Family Literacy

- **L**et children count out the change when making a purchase. Reinforce the importance of math in everyday life!
- **M**ake everyday tasks learning experiences. Ask your children to write out shopping lists, address an envelope, or help make a calendar of weekly activities.
- **N**urture good literacy habits by having a quiet place in your home with reading and writing material always handy.

From ABC CANADA's Family Literacy Tips from A to Z, <http://www.abc-canada.org/flid/about_fld.shtml>

Tutor's Toolbag

Tutor Cathy Craddock has created a unique teaching strategy. She holds her young learner's interest by arriving at each session with a small, and often varying box with a curiosity inside. A guessing game of twenty questions leads to revealing the treasure within. Objects which she included have been an antique musketball, a piece of deerskin and an Inuit woman's knife, all of high interest and valuable for learning.

Tutor Susan Lindsay exchanged postcards throughout the summer with her young learner. His responses included original art and photographs depicting his travels and adventures. He also made excellent practical use of literacy skills.

Susan initiated a peer support group for our Youth Literacy tutors with an open evening at her home. This peer support is now available via a Yahoo Group, where members can exchange tips, share experiences, and help each other resolve problems. Tutors who wish to join may contact the moderator, Claire Fanger cfanger@bmts.com.

Poetry Books Galore!

The Youth Literacy Council has been the happy recipient of several hundred new books of poetry. Kitty Lewis, manager of Brick Books, has gifted our organization with new poetry books from the Brick Publishing House. As well, CBC Arts & Entertainment has donated poetry books from the broadcaster's shelves. We thank Liz Zetlin and Philly Markowitz for their assistance with these book donations.

In honour of April as Poetry Month, the Youth Literacy Council will be collaborating with our region's high schools to make these poetry books available as a gift to students in English classes. Again thanks to Doug Abell of J.D.S.S. for partnering this project.

Family Literacy Day in Canada January 27

The South Grey Bruce Youth Literacy Council is keeping Family Literacy Day on the map! Mayor Kathi Maskell and Hanover Town Council will issue the annual proclamation to regard January 27 as Family Literacy Day in the Town of Hanover. This gesture is given additional spotlight by The Post, Hanover Honda, QUILL Network and ABC Canada. The immeasurable value of celebrating literacy in the home is receiving the precedence it deserves.

www.freerice.com Build your vocabulary and help alleviate world hunger.

Tutor-Learner Matches

Welcome to new tutors: Linda Abell, Judy Heggie, Sara MacKenzie, Cathy Messer, Heather Murray, and Chelsey Reich, joining our strong base of volunteers. We are currently supporting 18 tutor-learner matches, and have a steadily growing waiting list of young learners. Help us grow!

Fundraising Activities and Support

Our Fundraising events in this past six month period have included the Christmas Word Wreath at Brucedale Press, Port Elgin, the Queen's Bush Book and Author Fair at Nature's Millworks in Paisley, the Summer BBQ at Grant's Independent, Hanover; a Pampered Chef Fundraising Sale, in Hanover; a Vesey's Autumn Flower Bulb Sale; and our Kids' Book Fair, in Hanover.

These successful events greatly benefit our organization. We appreciate the continued support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation and the United Way of Bruce Grey. We extend, as always, a hearty thank you to our many supporters and volunteers.

Would you like to donate? We gratefully accept monetary donations and issue income tax receipts. You can also donate online through the Canada Helps charitable donation service. See our website www.sgbyouthliteracy.org. Book donations are also beneficial. The Millennia Bookstore in Hanover offers the opportunity for customers to transfer their book points to The Youth Literacy Council. The community's generosity directly strengthens our organization.

Upcoming Events

We will be hosting another tutor enrichment workshop this spring. Day and time will be mailed out and posted on the web. www.sgbyouthliteracy.org.

The date for this year's annual meeting will be June 12, 2008. Keep an eye on our website for further details of both events.

Thank you to our many Supporters, Donors, and Volunteers for helping Youth Literacy to grow.

The South Grey Bruce Youth Literacy Council, a community-based organization, will strive to assist youth, ages 6-18, who are struggling in school, in their quest to improve basic reading, writing and math skills, so that they may enjoy full participation as citizens in the community.

--Mission Statement

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