



# The SGB Youth Literacy Letter



Volume 2, Issue 2

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

July 2008

## In This Issue

Welcome to The Letter D; we are marching through the alphabet with our newsletters. In this issue we are pleased to welcome Melissa Grubb as writer of our Youth Letter. Melissa contributes a useful article on her experience devising a new vocabulary game for her learner. As well, we are proud to print some of the enthusiastic comments received from parents in our Community Letter column. We also have news about upcoming events, new sponsors, and a new summer intern – so read on!

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 by appointment.

## Progress in Our Office

*Learning is still on the go*

Though summer is a vacation time for students, our office is becoming even busier as we implement many new workshops and activities. We are fresh from the annual barbecue and AGM on June 12, which was held the home of Harvey McFadden and Jennifer Dimeck. As usual, the AGM was smoothly and efficiently run, and the preceding potluck dinner had a spread of delicious food created by our members. Poet Liz Zetlin attended and read her poetry by the waterfall in the garden. Thanks to all who attended for making this a great event as we take time to honour our volunteers.

We are looking forward to an active summer as we welcome a new summer student intern sponsored by Service Canada. A superbly qualified candidate for this position, Jenna Weber is about to enter her second year at the University of Western Ontario, where she is studying to become a speech language pathologist. Like her predecessor, Katie Barclay, Jenna will be collaborating on the summer reading camp sponsored by the Hanover Parks and Recreation Department. Jenna is also an experienced tutor who has given reading support to students in a school setting at Mary Immaculate School in Chepstow. Jenna will also assist as a tutor to help meet the ever growing needs of learners on our waiting list and create learning new games for growing learning resources.

Finally we wanted to make note of the interesting volunteer tutor opportunities that come up. Over the past spring term, Carole Warren has enjoyed the experience of tutoring an exchange student from Spain, Fernando Martinez, in English as a second language. Fernando is a stellar soccer player and Carole used the sports pages of newspapers as reading material to suit this learner's needs. In the best tutor/learner partnerships learning goes both ways, and happily Carole also learned much from Fernando. We wish this International Student sponsored by Walkerton Rotary Club well in his return home from his stay in Canada. (Fernando's name is used here with permission.)

## THE LETTER

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**Printed by** Print on Demand, Hanover

### SGB Youth Literacy Council

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519-364-0008

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](mailto:info@sgbyouthliteracy.org).

*We acknowledge Sesame Workshops for the letter D in our header. For more literacy activities from Sesame Workshops see their website [www.sesameworkshop.org](http://www.sesameworkshop.org)*

## We Welcome New Tutors

As part of the daily flow of this organization, we continue to receive and train new tutors. Welcome to Alison Hunt and Matt Hill. Congratulations are extended to Sara MacKenzie, soon to become a new mother, and our wonderful group of students about to pursue the next phase of their education, some, such as Evan Moore, at the international level. With six seasoned tutors taking on new learners, we are currently supporting 19 tutor/learner matches; however there continues to be a long waiting list of learners.

Please consider joining our team and assisting a young person for one hour a week to become a more confident learner. The Youth Literacy Council provides excellent letters of recommendation valuable for résumés, scholarship and school entrance for our volunteers.

## Our Learning Resources

Our growing collection of learning resources is an invaluable treasure chest for tutors. With the assistance of our volunteer library specialist, Elizabeth Hahn, we are continually adding to this coffer. Thanks to generous donations in kind from Scholar's Choice and Saunders Book Company, as well as the generosity of our financial donors, we are adding learning games and new books, to tantalize challenged readers. Many valued contributions of used books have been integrated into the collection as well. Our thanks as well to Rudy Derksen for building the popular piano math games, to enliven addition and subtraction.

### Artists Donate For Youth Literacy

We continue to be excited by the response from artists offering a donation to the Youth Literacy Council from proceeds from the sale of their work. Susan Lindsay and Frederick Turner have each made special donations to our program. We welcome more artists in the community who wish to contribute, translating their generous talent into financial support for youth literacy.

#### A Quotation To Share

You may have tangible wealth untold,  
Caskets of jewels and coffers of gold,  
Richer than I you can never be –  
I had a mother who read to me.

— Strickland Gillilan  
quote contributed by Pam Howard

## Community Letter

### Notes from Parents

Several letters from parents have arrived in the past few months. We value and encourage feedback for our program, and are pleased to use this forum to air some positive comments from parent letters, reprinted here with permission from the writers. We are especially pleased at the success in matching tutor to learner attested here.

One parent writes:

*I contacted the [SGB Literacy] council in early 2007 after struggling many hours with my son to improve his reading and literacy skill. The council accepted my son's application and found an ideal tutor . . . a perfect match for him and . . . exactly what he needed. My son and his tutor have been meeting weekly for over a year and as a result of all their hard work, my son's reading level has improved an entire grade.*

And a grandparent comments:

*Our granddaughter lives with us for the past two years and had difficulty to keep up her grades. When I got in touch with SGB Youth Literacy program to ask for help, I could not ask for better results. What a difference it made, and the match between tutor and student was perfect.*

*(Names withheld for reasons of confidentiality.)*

On our own behalf, we are grateful to the dedicated parents and guardians who facilitate the work of our organization and their own children's learning with their positive energy. Literacy begins at home.



### Our Patron Liz Zetlin

Liz Zetlin is our esteemed patron and enthusiastic supporter. Through her many cultural activities throughout Grey-Bruce, she engages the literary community through her multiple roles as co-artistic director of the Words Aloud Festival and Poet Laureate of Owen Sound. In addition to collaborating with us to present poetry for youth during Random Acts week, she is kind enough to grace our annual meeting and barbecue with her readings. Hats off to you, Liz!

## Annual Progress Letter

It is our pleasure to be able to share this Progress Letter of our Chair, Harvey McFadden, with members who may not have been able to attend the recent AGM.

June 12, 2008

To: the Membership of the South Grey Bruce Youth Literacy Council  
Re: Annual Progress Letter

Dear Membership,

This past year has been a year of learning for all of us involved in Literacy:

*For students*

We have increased the outreach of our services - Tutors are active in Durham, Hanover, Walkerton, Paisley, Chesley, Mildmay and Port Elgin Public Libraries plus two in-school programs at St. Peter and Paul's and Sullivan Community School.

This means many more students gaining knowledge and confidence.

*Parents* learn how well their students can do and they tell us how much it is appreciated.

Our *Tutors* have benefited from three successful tutor enrichment workshops which were held in the past year.

As *Directors*, we have learned that being a director can bring involvement in undreamed of areas, but that together we can resolve many and varied issues.

We have also learned the importance of a *Treasurer* who can keep a handle on the smallest detail.

Our *Coordinator* has earned our appreciation for her dedication, enthusiasm and organization. She constantly looks for ways to promote our cause, which leads to a higher profile for the organization. Under her leadership our collaboration with Words Aloud Spoken Word Festival and Youth Roots has increased and she regularly makes presentations to schools, Early Years Centres and inter-agency meetings for both Grey and Bruce Counties.

Each year events such as Family Literacy Day, proclaimed in Hanover by Mayor Kathi Maskell on January 27<sup>th</sup>, increases our community profile. Heightened public awareness of our organization gives us the ability to apply for Private, Foundation and Corporate grants such as Ontario Trillium and United Way Bruce-Grey, which in turn increases our recognition and enables us to reach out to many more students in need.

Last summer we expanded our learning circle to include a co-op student from John Diefenbaker Secondary School and this summer we have once again been given an Ontario Summer Student Experience grant. We will also be assisting Hanover Parks and Recreation Department with their Summer Reading Camp Program.

Currently there are 19 active tutors, but with a waiting list of learners our focus going forward must be on increasing the number of volunteer tutors.

Respectfully submitted  
Harvey McFadden, Chair

## Youth Letter

### One Tutor's Experience: Tricks of the Trade

It has been a privilege to tutor a 12-year-old young learner. It took some time to discover which learning tools helped my young learner to advance his reading. I tried this homemade learning game and it succeeded.

My learner picks a book from the library, and passes it to me to ensure that it is suitable. We first skim the book to see if there are any difficult words. If so, we go over these words beforehand and then, when the student feels ready, we read the book. While reading, if the student stumbles on any words, I write them down. When we are finished the book, I go through these words with my young learner.

Before I meet with him the following week, I write each of the difficult words twice, one word on each of two different cue cards. When we do get together, before beginning any other reading, I lay these cards out, face-down. Turning over the cards, we do our best to find two that say the same word. When a match is found the word is put into a sentence by the player that has found the match. After playing this game a couple of times, and learning how the word fits into sentences, we are ready to go on with the lesson.

This is a simple little game that involves interaction with the student, reading, and fun all in one. I have seen an improvement with my young learner since I have begun this learning tool, and hopefully it will help you if you are considering something new for your learner.

*Melissa Grubb, tutor*

*(The editors note that Melissa's game takes a creative spin on the techniques of Guided Reading suggested in previous tutor workshops.)*

<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/D> is an interesting website with more information about the Letter D.

For craft activities centering on the Letter D, check out [childfun.com](http://www.childfun.com):

<http://www.childfun.com/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=63>

This one is nifty as well:

<http://www.dltk-teach.com/alphabuddies/letter-d.html>

Another fun place to go on the web is the Flat Stanley page [www.flatstanleyproject.com](http://www.flatstanleyproject.com) (The Youth Literacy Council is a participant.)

### Hurray for our Public Libraries!!!

The Youth Literacy Council values our excellent working partnership with our local public libraries as locations for the tutors to support their young learners. We are pleased to have tutors placed in the Chesley, Durham, Hanover, Walkerton, Paisley, Mildmay and Port Elgin Libraries and welcome future connections.

The libraries are offering their dynamic summer reading program for young people, enlivening July and August with Laugh Out Loud! This is a free participatory fun program for young readers at all public libraries.

### Tutor Enrichment Workshop

On the evening of May 7, Ainsley Lewin presented a dynamic workshop for tutors, educators and parents on Creative Approaches for Inspiring the Reluctant Reader. Because of energetic response and the wealth of material and insights she provided, we will be scheduling Ainsley Lewin again for a second complementary workshop on this topic. Our Coordinator Dyan Jones and summer intern Jenna Weber will be actualizing many of these games and activities for inclusion in our learning resources collection. We extend our copious thanks to the Hanover Public Library for offering the use of the Saugeen Room at the Hanover Civic Complex for this workshop.



### **Spotlight on Family Literacy**

- **N**ewborns benefit from reading too!
- **O**rganize a children's book club with friends in your neighborhood.
- **P**ick one night a week to make a regular visit to the library.
- **Q**uiet, cozy reading spaces are good places for your child to read independently.
- **S**tart early! It's never too early to read to your children.

From ABC CANADA's Family Literacy Tips from A to Z,  
[www.abc-canada.org/en/family\\_literacy](http://www.abc-canada.org/en/family_literacy)

Build your vocabulary and help alleviate world hunger at [www.freerice.com](http://www.freerice.com). This is a terrific site.

## Upcoming Events

### Hanover Parks and Recreation Summer Reading Camp August 18 - 22

In team with Cheryl D. Lindsay, Speech and Language Pathologist, the Youth Literacy Council is again facilitating activities at Boost Your Blabber! Summer Camp. This camp will aid understanding and the application of vocabulary skills to enhance reading, writing and communication in a week long morning program of book related activities. For registration please call Hanover Parks and Recreation 519 364-2310 ext. 0.




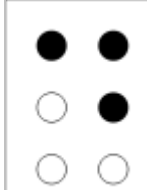
### Words Aloud 5 Spoken Word and Storytelling Festival, November 6-9, 2008 [www.wordsaloud.ca](http://www.wordsaloud.ca)

The Youth Literacy Council collaborates on the Children's Program and Poetry Slam of the Words Aloud Festival. This year's children's event will be on Saturday Nov. 8 at the Durham Town Hall, at 1:00 PM. It's still in the planning and funding stages, but promises to be extraordinary - a performance of Prokofiev's children's classic Peter and the Wolf with the Kitchener-Waterloo Symphony Woodwind Quintet and a mystery narrator. Advance tickets will be sold.

Written in 1936, this perennial favourite is a wonderful opportunity to experience classical music written expressly for a young audience. The performance features story narration and musical accompaniment representing each of the characters in the tale. We are coupling this production with The Wolf Call, a creative writing contest for the children of our region. Four cash prizes will be awarded for poems and short stories about wolves to be performed at the concert by their writers. Also featured will be an information table about wolf conservancy. For more details, contact [info@sgbyouthliteracy.org](mailto:info@sgbyouthliteracy.org) 519 364-0008

*Sponsored by the Words Aloud Festival, The South Grey Bruce Youth Literacy Council, The Hanover Public Library, West Grey Public Libraries, Millennia Bookstore, Edge Hill Country School and The Colour Jar.*

### Alternative Symbols for Letter D

Delta		— • •	
<a href="#">NATO phonetic</a>		<a href="#">Morse code</a>	
			
Signal Flag	Semaphore D	ASL D	Braille D

## Friends of Youth Literacy

### Contributors in Kind

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CBC Radio Arts & Entertainment	Saunders Book Company
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Bruce Power	Ontario Trillium Foundation
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Ontario Ministry of Culture	United Way of Bruce Grey

### Affiliate Organizations & Working Partnerships

ABC Canada, Bluewater & District School Board, Bruce-Grey Catholic District School Board, Bruce County Public Libraries, Durham Art Gallery, Edge Hill Country School, Hanover Public Library & Friends of the Library, Keystone Child Youth and Family Services, League of Canadian Poets, Ontario Early Years Centre – Hanover, Ontario Literacy Coalition, P.E.P.P., Project Canoe, QUILL Network, Walkerton & District Community Living, West Grey Libraries, Words Aloud Spoken Word Festival, Youth Roots.



## Fundraising Activities and Support

We have received some very generous donations from several new sponsors in the past six months. We are proud to acknowledge new sponsorships from several local financial institutions including ING Canada, CIBC, and the Meridian Credit Union. Bruce Power, The Municipality of Brockton and New Life Mills are new donors as well, joining our many valued supporters.

To augment our programs and engage community support, we will again be running the Vesey's Bulb Fundraiser, as we have done successfully in past years. Also as last year, the Queen's Bush Book and Author Fair will also be donating a portion of proceeds to Youth Literacy; the fair is July 12, 10-4 at Nature's Millworks in Paisley. Finally, if you'd like an easy way to support Youth Literacy, remember that you can donate points every time you shop at Millennia Books.

### CD Project 2009

We are excited to initiate our major creative new fundraising project for 2009. The Youth Literacy Council will be producing a CD of original music and spoken word as performed by talented local singer/songwriter poets and musicians. Randy Martin of Track 6 Studio is donating his expertise, as are the many generous participating artists of the Grey-Bruce area. The CD will be launched next spring so watch for notice of the release of this CD and related events!

### Become a Member of the Youth Literacy Council

Our Board of Directors has just sanctioned the implementation of a membership program for interested supporters. While parents and tutors automatically become active voting members of the South Grey Bruce Youth Literacy Council, others may gain this right by subscribing to the \$20 membership. You will receive our newsletters and updates and provide additional support to our organization. Donations above this level will be issued a charitable tax receipt and our heartfelt appreciation.

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



### **Tutor-Learner Matches**

*We are currently supporting 19 tutor-learner matches, and have a steadily growing waiting list of young learners. Help us grow!*

## Tutor's Toolbag

The idea for this issue's Tutor's Toolbag column comes from a website that provides some excellent advice for youth literacy tutors. The page is called *The Literacy Tutor's Survival Guide*, at [literacy.sa.utoronto.ca/resources/LiteracySurvivalGuide.html](http://literacy.sa.utoronto.ca/resources/LiteracySurvivalGuide.html)

The website is highly recommended. This is their Tutoring Idea # 4.

### **Tutoring Idea: WRITTEN CONVERSATION**

*Objective: You and your student are having a conversation on paper. The only reason to speak during this activity is when one of you has a clarifying question to ask.*

Why use written conversation? Written conversations encourage your student to practice writing in an engaging way.

It is an activity to get both of you writing which is much more interesting than if the student is the only one writing.

It allows the tutor to make corrections in spelling in a non-intrusive way.

### **HOW TO DO WRITTEN CONVERSATIONS**

1. Begin with a blank sheet of paper.
2. Tutor writes down an open-ended question.
3. Student responds.
4. Tutor asks another open-ended question perhaps incorporating words spelled incorrectly by the student in the question.
5. Student responds ...and so on and so on.

After the activity, you and your student may want to talk about your written conversation piece.



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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*