



## Princeton Leaders for Literacy

**District Literacy Plan Update: June 2011**

### **Reflections on the current year:**

Presently our community of Princeton is experiencing large changes with the re-opening of Copper Mountain Mine. This has brought more workers and families to town as they build facilities for the new mine and begin operations. With the steady increase in population more services are on the horizon for Princeton and area. The increased demands have also had an impact on our existing local resources. We are looking forward to how these changes will present new opportunities in literacy development for our community.

Princeton Leaders for Literacy (PLFL) Task Group recently experienced a 4 month gap without a Literacy Outreach Coordinator (LOC). At the beginning of April the new LOC, Teresa Martin, was hired and has since been working closely with PLFL to bring literacy to the community. An important focus of our work is to implement a sustainability plan for existing and new literacy initiatives.

PLFL Task Group meets monthly to plan and implement community literacy goals. Active members include representatives from a number of community service providers including: Princeton Child Care Services Society, Workzone, Princeton Parks, Recreation & Culture, and School District #58. We are excited that members from the RCMP and Okanagan Regional Library have recently joined PLFL Task Group to offer their valuable support and input.

Using our Community Literacy Plan, PLFL has developed the following outline to show how PLFL has addressed the community literacy challenges by implementing a positive action and sustainability plan. PLFL has highlighted community development and literacy collaboration throughout this outline.

### **Goal number 1 – Enhancing Community Awareness**

*Challenges:* Although PLFL have successfully reached many organizations in the community there still exists an incomplete understanding of the definition of literacy. Many do not recognize that the meaning of literacy goes beyond reading and writing text and therefore do not understand the importance of their partnership and support for all community literacy goals. A comment that I have heard when I've approached organizations to participate in community literacy initiatives that do not include reading and writing text is "What does that have to do with reading?"

#### *Goals, Actions & Sustainability Plan*

Educate the community at large by:

- LOC continuing to connect with community organizations by attending community meetings
- Including the definition of literacy in all printed materials: brochures, rack cards, labels etc
- Monthly newspaper articles featuring literacy success stories, advertisement campaigns
- Word of mouth

## Princeton Leaders for Literacy

**Challenges:** Avenue to inform newcomers on the existing community literacy programs. Unfortunately, Princeton has been without a Welcome Wagon Representative for months; there has not been an opportunity to inform newcomers of wide variety of literacy programs that are offered in our community.

**Goals, Actions & Sustainability Plan:** Help create opportunities for community organizations to work together on planning and implementing quarterly events to bring newcomers and service providers together in one place for information sharing. The LOC has connected with other interested community organizations and are working on the first community Meet & Greet event.

### **Goal number 2 - Facilitation of ongoing educational opportunities and to arrange for local training**

**Challenges:** Providing services to meet the literacy gaps for seniors and youth in the community

**Goals, Actions & Sustainability Plan:** PLFL has partnered with Community Skills Centre for a successful year of beginner computer classes for seniors and will continue to support those classes for as long as there is the need and PLFL has funding.

The LOC will offer a monthly Lunch Bag Speaker series that will appeal to adults and seniors and focus on such topics as health, finance, gardening, nutrition etc.

PLFL has committed to bring support to youth between 13 and 18 yrs that meet at the Legion once a week on Youth Night. The youth, under the guidance of a Legion member, will form a committee. Once the committee is formed the LOC will survey the committee for interest in literacy based programs and the PLFL will support and help bring those choices to reality.

**Challenges:** To have the One to One Reading program start in the Princeton schools. Although Princeton's grade 4 to 7 school, Vermilion Forks, had the resources to begin the One to One program it wasn't started this school year. Princeton's K to 3 school, John Allison, did not have staff support for the program this school year.

**Goals, Actions & Sustainability Plan:** The LOC has met and is working with both schools for a fall program start up.

**Challenges:** To provide an opportunity for adults to obtain a grade 12 diploma.

**Goals, Actions & Sustainability Plan:** The LOC is working with SCIDES and has planned an information evening for all interested individuals. Once registration is established the PLFL is committed to provide funding for tutoring services. For single parents in the community that struggle with balancing childcare and attending tutoring sessions, the PLFL will dedicate funding to help those parents obtain their grade 12 diploma and attend tutoring sessions.

## Princeton Leaders for Literacy

### Goal number 3 – To build relationships and bridge connections between the age groups

*Challenges:* Educating the community that we never stop learning from one another no matter the age. Literacy has no age limits.

*Goals, Actions & Sustainability Plan:* Continue to support programs that promote the opportunity for generations to work together toward common goals. Continue to support volunteers at different generation levels. Continue to promote youth mentorship and create opportunities for seniors, youth and children to interact in positive, meaningful ways.

### Goal number 4 – Enhancing health and physical literacy

*Challenges:* Shortage of recreational programs being offered for all ages because of lack of interest, the needs for qualified trainers not being met, and shortage of volunteers.

Support for the proposed indoor recreational facility in the upcoming community referendum.

*Goals, Actions & Sustainability Plan:* Princeton has had an influx of new people to the community that are bringing new ideas, new commitment to clubs and organizations, and new volunteer recruitment opportunities. PLFL and the LOC are presently working to connect newcomers to established health and physical literacy programs with the hope that new people will help sustain those programs for years to come. The increase in population brings opportunity for new recreational program ideas. The PLFL is dedicated to help with any new recreational initiatives by collaborating with individuals and groups to help make those program ideas become a reality for Princeton and area.

PLFL and the LOC openly promote, and support, the proposed indoor recreational facility through media, marketing and word of mouth.

### Goal number 5 – Acquire resources to implement the Community Literacy Plan

*Challenges:* Limited funding available to bring literacy opportunities to the community. Low volunteer numbers result in high occurrence of volunteer burn-out.

*Goals, Actions & Sustainability Plan:* PLFL has recently welcomed two key community organizations to their task group; the RCMP and Okanagan Regional Library look forward to working together to bring literacy into the community.

PLFL will maintain a partnership with a steward, has hired a LOC, will hold regular monthly task group meetings and annual community forums on literacy.

The LOC has secured positive working relationships with other community organizations to help offset the costs and manpower for upcoming literacy events and programs.

The LOC will continue to participate in the Regional Literacy Meetings.

## Princeton Leaders for Literacy

The most successful indication of community literacy in Princeton and area has been increased interest from organizations wanting to join together to help develop literacy initiatives in the community. The following is a snapshot of community organizations working together on upcoming literacy projects and events.

### **SCIDES Info Evening**

(Okanagan Regional Library, School District #58 and PLFL)

Information Evening

Date: Tuesday, June 14<sup>th</sup>

Time: 6:45 p.m. – 8 p.m.

Place: Library (6 to 8) Meeting room off the library booked (6 to 9)

Target Audience: Adults 19 and over interested in obtaining Grade 12 Dogwood Diploma

### **Community Meet & Greet**

(PLFL, Thomasinas Restaurant, Okanagan Regional Library, Community Service Providers)

Thomasinas is interested in co-hosting a meet and greet event for all newcomers to the area.

PLFL will partner with Thomasinas to offer an opportunity for newcomers to meet and learn about community services etc.

Thomasinas has offered to provide a pasta dinner for \$5 per plate

LOC Plan: Invite the library, town council, to participate in the event. Once on board this will open up more indoor space – library & library meeting room-public washrooms  
Include Veteran's Square to provide space for service providers to set up displays &/o an information table.

Event Date: TBA

### **Valley First Financial** (PLFL, Valley First Financial, Area Financial Service Providers)

Sean Morin with Valley First would like to partner with PLFL to start a financial series for the public. He would like to connect with other financial experts in the area to share presentations and topics. He will host the first seminar and is open to other organizations hosting future seminars. He has already started a mail out advertising campaign to all current Valley First members.

LOC Plan: June 2011: Research and help connect other community financial experts with Sean

### **Youth Night at the Legion** (Royal Canadian Legion, RCMP, PLFL)

The Princeton Legion & RCMP are offering youth 13 to 18 a place to meet and socialize every Tuesday night from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. The attendance has increased every week since the start up. The Legion's plan is to eventually have the teens form a committee to make their own decisions on what they want to work towards. A committee should be up and running by September.

LOC Plan: Connect PASTRY & Legion for partnership opportunity.  
Once a committee is formed, the LOC will survey the committee for interest on literacy based programs.  
Partner and provide funding for PLFL approved literacy endeavours.

## Princeton Leaders for Literacy

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### **The Red Bookshelf Project** (PLFL, School District #58)

Change the book boxes that are currently in place in the community to the Red Bookshelves  
Label all the books with a new PLFL label (to be developed)

Purchase new books.

Advertising: For new, and like new, book donations  
Launch of first bookshelf with call out for sponsorship of more bookshelves

Materials: For one bookshelf with the hope that other organizations will take the lead to sponsor more

Manpower free: Depending upon PSS shop students constructing and painting shelf

### **One to One Reading Program** (PLFL, School District #58, School PAC's)

John Allison PAC on board regarding One to One. They are hoping at least one teacher will support the program for a fall start-up.  
Vermillion Forks needs volunteer base for fall start up.

### **Brown Bag Lunch – Monthly Literacy Series** (PLFL, Okanagan Regional Library, Community Service Providers)

An opportunity to feature a local speaker over a 50 minute lunch Topics: Gardening, Nutrition, Finances, Health, etc  
Venue: Library Board Room  
Open invitation, participants bring their own lunch

**Monthly Newspaper Articles** featuring local literacy stories / programs / etc  
(PLFL, Similkameen Spotlight Newspaper)

LOC plan: Approach Spotlight regarding free space

In conclusion, the community of Princeton already has a number of wonderful literacy service providers that support lifelong learning. The recent mine opening brings new families and a promising future for literacy development in Princeton.



[www.literacymerritt.ca](http://www.literacymerritt.ca)

Literacy Merritt

Box 4100

Merritt, BC V1K 1B8

250 378 4878

[info@literacymerritt.com](mailto:info@literacymerritt.com)

June 1, 2011

District Literacy Plan 2011

Reporting period July 2010 – June 2011

Prepared by Robyn Grebliunas, Literacy Outreach Coordinator, Literacy Merritt

### ***SUMMARY 2009-2011***

Literacy Merritt has now entered into its third year of operation. A Literacy Outreach Coordinator (LOC), Robyn Grebliunas, was contracted in late 2008 for a three year term, and continues to work on the project. A Literacy Merritt Task Force (LMTF) representing sectors of the community continues to operate as the governance for Literacy Merritt.

### ***Implementation***

Coordination and plan implementation is carried out by the LOC and the LMTF. The task force represents a broad sector of the community: literacy, library, school district, social development, early years, Aboriginal, crime prevention, health, adult education and business. There have been some changes to the task force this year, which has only strengthened the group's leadership. Literacy Merritt continues to focus on keeping a balance of community representation at task force meetings and ensures that the voices at the table represent the four pillars of literacy: early years, k-12, adult and Aboriginal.

### ***Community Partnerships***

Literacy Merritt has been very successful at building community partnerships. Community partners have included: School District #58, Community Policing Office, Interior Health, Merritt Public Library, Nicola Valley Institute of Technology (NVIT), Merritt Youth and Family Resources Society, CFDC Nicola Valley, local media and private business.

### ***Community Awareness***

Literacy Merritt works in partnership with local media to create community awareness about literacy services, literacy tips and literacy challenges. Merritt News, Merritt Herald, Merritt Morning Market, Q101 radio, and Shaw TV have been very supportive media partners. Articles and stories have been published in local media, along with information about courses and events. Stories have been covered on Shaw TV. Events have been coordinated to help create community awareness. Direct contact has been made with community representatives. Presentations have been made to Merritt City Council, School District 58 Board of Directors, and the Rotary Club of Merritt.

### ***Programming and Services***

*Literacy Pillar - Adult and Aboriginal Services:*

In 2009 the Literacy Merritt Task Force chose to focus on the largest gap in literacy services, which was at the time and continues to be adult literacy in our community. The following action has been taken since then:

### ***English as a Second Language for Adults (ESL)***

In the summer of 2009 we developed ES L for adults program by producing a nine week curriculum package. In September 2009 two instructors were hired to deliver the course – Carmella Mathieu and Mike Tomlinson. Both instructors are working on a master's degree in ESL. The course ran with 12 adult students who attended a nine week program. Students received two one hour classes a week and a one hour ESL Coffee Circle where they could practice their skills. The Coffee Circle was run by a community volunteer. The course was offered for free in partnership with Merritt Public Library. Based on the success of the program, Literacy Merritt committed to three program deliveries in 2010. The original students continued to attend the classes and new students were recruited. The ESL Coffee Circle was later replaced with more classroom instruction, due to lack of interest from the students who would prefer more classroom time. This nine week program was delivered twice so far in 2011. The original instructors continue to teach in the program. Currently an ESL Think Tank is being planned with the instructors and the LOC to look at new initiative for student recruitment and curriculum delivery in 2011/2012.

### ***Computer Literacy for Seniors***

In 2009 Literacy Merritt developed curriculum for a Computer Literacy for Senior's course. The course was offered three times in 2009 and five times in 2010 in partnership with Merritt Public Library. Literacy Merritt could not keep up with the demand for this course and the long student waiting lists. In 2010 we applied for and received \$25,000.00 funding from New Horizons to expand the program. Merritt Public Library is a partner in the program. We have purchased a computer cart (portable lab) consisting of 12 lap tops, software, printer and projector, as well as hired a program coordinator – Jeff Bloom. This has allowed Literacy Merritt to expand Computer Literacy for Seniors into an outreach program. We have been working with the Senior's Society which has 150 members belonging to the Senior's Centre. We have delivered at Senior's homes – The Florentine and Nicola Meadows – and we have excitedly expanded to include Lower Nicola Indian Reserve's Elder's Society.

### ***Get Your Grade 12 for Free***

In late 2010 we were approached by South Central Interior Distance Education School (SCIDES) about the low enrolment of local people in the Dogwood Certificate program. In November 2010 and January 2011 we worked in partnership with SCIDES and Merritt Public Library to host "Get Your Dogwood for Free" information sessions. Fifty Adults attended the sessions and 100 adults contacted SCIDES to find out more information, with 80 adults registering into the Dogwood Program. The promotions were later expanded to include the upgrading services at the local college – NVIT. To further support this program Literacy Merritt hired a Tutor and offered free tutoring and study skills workshops to the adult students five hours a week at the public library. The response to tutoring has been low with approximately 15 adults attending the sessions at various times. The tutoring services will be postponed for July and August while the Tutor and LOC work on marketing and delivery strategies for the program.

### ***Literacy Pillar - Early Years:***

An energetic volunteer committee of the community members launched the ***Dolly Parton Imagination Library Program*** (DPIL) in Merritt in 2008. In 2009 the funding and the energy of the volunteers ran out. Literacy Merritt adopted this program, provided some funding, set up a volunteer committee and helped them plan and implement three fundraisers for 2010. The LOC also successfully worked on community funding for the program. In 2010 over \$6,500.00 was raised to directly support Dolly Parton Imagination Library. Funds were raised through a Reach a Reader campaign, a Literacy Pizza Party and community and business sponsorships. The 50 children who were on the waiting list since 2009 were registered and new applicants did not have a waiting period. In 2010/2011 sponsorship has been received from Success by Six (\$3,000.00) Sunrise Rotary Club (\$300.00) and Punjabi Roots Club (\$300.00). Literacy Merritt attended the youth health fair and had promotional booths at the public library and Coopers. The Reach a Reader campaign scheduled for June 9, 2011 will promote the project. Recruiting volunteers is a key focus for this project. In 2010 we called the 150 families that had benefitted from the program and asked them to pay it forward by volunteering a few hours a year. We did not generate volunteers from the Pay it Forward campaign, but we will keep planting the seed in the community.

### ***Literacy Pillar K-12 :***

In 2010 Literacy Merritt successfully lobbied the school district to implement ***One to One Tutoring Program*** in the elementary schools. This program had existed in the past in the district but had not continued for various reasons. A One to One Program presentation was made to the school administrators in November 2010. In

December we received notice from the district that four Merritt and two Princeton schools had agreed to launch the program. In January 2011 we ran a public relations and advertising campaign to recruit parent and community volunteers to the One to One Program. In February we trained the One to One School Coordinators and volunteers through funding from 2010 Legacies Now. Literacy Merritt sponsored the books for the four Merritt schools and coordinated the book orders for the two Princeton Schools, with billing to Princeton Leaders in Literacy. The four schools in Merritt, with the French Immersion school running a French and English One to One program, are currently completing the first ten week delivery of the program. Approximately 50 students have benefited from the program, and an estimated thirty volunteers have worked in the program.

### **Events**

In 2009 we participated in a **Reach a Reader** campaign with Merritt Herald and coordinated a book exchange for school age children at a youth event. The purpose of the book exchange was to promote summer reading. In 2010 we expanded this service and announced that **May is Literacy Month in Merritt**. City Council officially endorsed this announcement. The following events took place in May 2010:

- Literacy Merritt presentation to City Council
  
- School visits – the LOC and The Cat In the Hat visited two elementary schools to promote Literacy Month
  
- Community wide book exchange – this was held during youth week and symbolized the kick off to Literacy Month. We had music, free books, a fish pond, an early year's booth, a booth from Kindermusic and The Cat in the Hat. This outdoor event was challenged by inclement weather. This event was held in partnership with Community Policing and CFDC Nicola Valley – youth event.
  
- Reach a Reader campaign – held in partnership with Merritt Herald. Two volunteers dressed at Dolly Parton participated. Ten volunteers, including the Mayor, sold papers by donation. The LOC handled the coordination and administration of the program. All proceeds went directly to Dolly Parton Imagination Library.
  
- Literacy Pizza Party – a pizza party was held in partnership with Boston Pizza. Community members attended the event that included a Dolly Parton dress up volunteer, The Cat in the Hat, silent auction and toonie auction. All funds raised went directly to Dolly Parton Imagination Library. The LOC and volunteers coordinated this event.
  
- Plain Language – Literacy Merritt worked in partnership with Nicola Valley Institute of Technology to offer a Plain Language workshop to the community and our literacy partners. Literacy Merritt Task Force members were each offered two free seats in the workshop for their organization.
  
- Literacy awareness – columns were run in two local papers, interviews and event coverage was done by all five of the local media
  
- Sponsorship – NVIT, Rotary Club of Merritt and Merritt Morning Market all became sponsors of Dolly Parton Imagination Library during Literacy month. A business sponsorship package was developed in 2010 and is still offered to local businesses.
  
- During Spring Break we partnered with Merritt Public Library to offer Games 2010 at the library. Elementary school children had the opportunity to attend the library each day and play interactive games. A coordinator was hired to work with the children. The event was planned by the Coordinated and marketing was done by the LOC. The LOC worked at the event on the first day to assist with the



start up. The positive outcomes of this event were new people in the library, large crowds each day, some new library cards issued.

- New-2-U Book Exchange: in 2010 and again in 2011 we will partner with Merritt's Music in the City 2010 to do a weekly book exchange at the outdoor performances held on Thursday evenings in July and August. On Canada Day in 2010 Literacy Merritt gave away hundreds of books to all ages and asked people to come back each week to Music in the City to exchange it for another book.
- In 2011 we chose to announce **June as Literacy Month in Merritt**, allowing us to focus on summer reading messaging. The following events are taking place:
  - June 9, 2011 **Reach a Reader** in partnership with Merritt Herald and Brambles Bakery. Funds raised from paper sales will directly support adult literacy programming. Brambles Bakery will be featuring staff dressed as Dolly Parton, live music and story time to promote the project. Volunteer paper carriers will be out selling the papers by donation.
  - June 16, 2011 **GM Fit** in partnership with Murray GM. The Cat in the Hat will be touring the community with GM to pick up book donations. The books will be delivered to the Community Policing Office at 3:30pm for a press conference and ribbon cutting of Merritt's first **Bright Red Bookshelf**. That evening the book drive and visit by The Cat in the Hat will continue at the launch of Merritt's Music in the City 2011. A book exchange and book drive will continue at Music in the City for the summer.
  - June 23, 2011 will be the launch of **Get Unplugged and Play** – a program that will encourage students, and their families, to unplug from electronics and play outdoors, visit the library, read a book, have fun... A draw for participant prizes will be made at the youth asset development event in August.

### **Sustainability:**

In 2009 Literacy Merritt focused first on building and sustaining community partnerships then on developing and delivering adult literacy programs. While those programs continue to be delivered through 2010 and 2011, the Literacy Merritt Task Force has been focused on sustainability. The discussion around sustainability is about creating programs that will be legacies in the community and finding sustainable funding.

### **Community funding:**

Literacy Merritt has chosen to support partner projects that promise sustainability. The projects supported to date are:

2010 MYFRS Girl's Group – teaching life skills to girls with disabilities – we purchased required resource materials - \$500.00. This program continues to run in 2011 with no further funding required from Literacy Merritt.

2010 MYFRS Our Place – a daycare for teenage parents returning to high school – we purchased required resource materials - \$500.00. This program experienced positive changes this year and continues to run with no further funding required from Literacy Merritt.

2010 MYFRS Speech Therapist – community speech therapist – purchased required resource materials - \$500.00. This program continues to run with no further funding required from Literacy Merritt.

School District #58 Summer Reading Program – for children in grades 1-3 who are a year behind in reading who are receiving an additional 66 hours of instruction in July – we partnered with SD #58 to support the launch of the program. Literacy Merritt funding provided resource materials - \$3,434.00 This program is running in 2011 with no further funding required from Literacy Merritt.

Primary Reading Program – delivered to parents of children in K-3, this was a partnership project with the school district. Literacy Merritt funded the marketing, promotion and materials for the program launch - \$1,000.00. This program will run again in the 2011/2012 school year with no further funding required from Literacy Merritt.

### **Funding:**

The 2010 Legacies seed funding has 10 months left in its three year funding cycle This funding has

been essential to creating Literacy Merritt, building community partnerships, developing programs and creating community awareness. LOC funding for future years is anticipated.

Literacy Merritt has applied and successfully received \$25,000.00 from New Horizons for Seniors to expand the Computer Literacy for Senior's program. The funding contract expires October 2011 and sustainability funding is being sought. Bridge funding has been requested from the Rotary Club of Merritt to carry the services to the end of 2011. Funding ideas such as fee for service are being explored.

A funding application for \$3,000.00 was successfully received from Success by Six for Dolly Parton Imagination Library. This project also received unsolicited donations from Sunrise Rotary (\$300.00) and Punjabi Roots Club (\$300.00).

The LOC and the LMTF continues to search for funding sources.

**Reflections:**

1. Community Context: The economic state of British Columbia is affecting the need for adult literacy in our community. The declining forestry industry is forcing people who depend on large incomes to make career changes. This often requires the person to seek out a dogwood or grade 12 diploma. The local economy is putting more demand on programs like DPIL, Success by Six and Strong Starts that provide services for free to the community. Literacy Merritt will in contact with these programs. We have supported the funding efforts of Dolly Parton Imagination Library since 2009. The task force will be looking at ways to better support adult literacy. The economy is negatively affecting the ability for private business to sponsor programs. The change in government at all levels in 2011 is slowing down the grant application process. There is more demand on literacy needs and less resources available. The social standings of our community show a great need for basic adult literacy services.
2. Task Group:
  - a) Members: Steve McNiven, Assistant Superintendent, School District #58  
Tracy Dunsmore, RCMP, Community Policing  
Kelly Donaldson, Administrative Assistant, Community Policing  
Deborha Merrick, Librarian, Merritt Public Library  
John Chenoweth, VP, NVIT  
Iris Hodson, retired, Interior Health  
Lenora Fletcher, Executive Director, MYFRS  
Liz Touet, Employment Services Councillor, CFDC Nicola Valley  
Associates and alternates: Jane Kempston, SD #58  
LOC: Robyn Grebliunas, R Brand Productions  
Instructors: Carmella Matheiu, Mike Tomlinson, Glen Krajni, Jeff Bloom  
Volunteers DPIL: Callie Langlois, Eleanore Ware
  - b) The LOC is contracted 15 hours per week to carry out the work of Literacy Merritt. The instructors are contracted for delivery of programming. Volunteers carry out the promotion of DPIL. The task force meets once monthly to provide governance and leadership to the project.
3. Community Collaborations:

Literacy Merritt has been a leader at creating community partnerships and bringing a diverse group to the table to tackle community literacy services. In 2009 we set out to form those community partnerships and we have maintained these collaborations through 2011.
4. Goals and Actions:

Literacy Merritt has met its goal to start to fill the gap on adult and Aboriginal literacy services. Our partners in providing these services have been New Horizons, NVIT, SD #58 and Merritt Public Library. We exceeded our goal by also offering services to the early years and k-12 sector also.

5. Indications of Success in 2010/2011:

Computer Literacy for Seniors – expanded our services to four off-site locations and worked with over 100 seniors.

ESL – ran four deliveries and worked with 12 adults in those deliveries

Get Your Grade 12 for Free promotion – attracted 50 participants into the sessions and 100 through the doors of the school, with 80 registering for the program.

Adult Grade 12 Tutoring for Free – have worked with 15 adults in 2011

One to One Tutoring Program – worked with 50 students and 30 volunteers in four schools

DPIL – have signed up dozens more children on this program and maintain an average of 150 children on the program at any time

New to You Book Exchange: offered a community book exchange once a week for nine weeks in the summer of 2010.

Funding: brought an additional \$36,000.00 into literacy programming in 2010/2011

The factors that contribute to the success of Literacy Merritt are:

- An experienced, educated and dedicated task force that represents all sectors of the community
- volunteerism
- BA and MA level instructors delivering all programs
- Instructors, an LOC and task force who are passionate about their programs and about community development
- The LOC has 22 years of successful experience in the areas of communications, events, non-profit management, HR mgt, building community partnerships, granting, fundraising and community development
- Continuous evaluation of program delivery is done casually in the classrooms at the end of each course. Instructors then submit a report that includes recommendations, concerns, and student feedback. Evaluation of community partnerships is measured through repeat partnered programs and events and the continued support of the partners. Evaluation on creating community awareness is measured through direct feedback from the community.

6. Challenges:

a) Funding continues to be a challenge, along with volunteerism. While we have been successful with our programming, we need to still fill the gap of adult literacy services for adults who cannot read and write at any level. We currently had a parent with a child in the One to One Tutoring Program who could not read the level one book with their child. Merritt does not have services available for these situations.

b) New funding and sustainability funding is key for our community. We are focusing on this, but resources, partnerships and support will help. We are campaigning for more volunteers.

Looking ahead:

1. There may be an opportunity to work more closely with local government, the local college, early years programs and the school district to build community literacy services. These opportunities will be pursued in 2011/2012. The vignettes developed by 2010 Legacies now will be key presentations made to City Council. We have made two presentations to City Council but we need to give a stronger more direct message of what we need from the local government

to build community literacy. School District #58 has shown great leadership and is has been working more closely with Literacy Merritt in 2010/2011. 2011/2012 marks the end of our start up funding. The focus will be on sustainability of all programs and sustainable funding. Literacy Merritt requires support in accessing sustainable funding. We want to learn from other community literacy organizations that are sustainable. With the cancellation of the RLC at TRU in 2009, Literacy Merritt hopes to see this region take initiative and continue to meet quarterly. There has been one regional meeting held in 2011.

2. In 2011/2012 we will be focused on new funding, sustainability funding, strengthening and expanding our community partnerships and planning for Literacy Merritt services and structure beyond the seed funding. The actions planned against these goals will be funding research and application, volunteer drive, public relations campaign, sponsorship research and invitation, research of communities who are sustaining their programs and services.
3. To meet our goals we require the task force to remain focused on sustainability and planning. We need our community partners to join in our efforts for sustainability and planning.
4. Our progress in 2011/2012 will be measured through evaluation of program delivery, community participation in literacy activities, growth of volunteerism, obtaining sustainable funding, community partnership and expanded partnerships.



**Computer Literacy for Seniors**

## **JUNE IS LITERACY MONTH IN MERRITT**

Watch for more literacy activities coming your way...

### **June 9 REACH A READER**

Paper carriers will be around town or drop by Brambles Bakery in the morning to see Dolly, enjoy some entertainment by Jody and you read your paper while the kids enjoy story time



Watch for more literacy activities coming your way...

## **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED FOR READING PROGRAM**

*One to One Tutoring is sponsored by Literacy Merritt and 2010 Legacies Now Go to [www.literacymerritt.com](http://www.literacymerritt.com)*

## **It's all FREE right here in Merritt**

Join us for coffee and cinnamon buns to learn more about getting your grade twelve.

**Tuesday, November 30, 2010**

**6:30 pm @ Merritt Public Library**

- Earn Credits for prior learning and/or work experience
- Free English & Math tutors provided at the public library

Sponsored by Literacy Merritt: [www.literacymerritt.com](http://www.literacymerritt.com)

For more information contact South Central Interior

Distance Education School at 250 378 1447

**Do you need help learning English?**

**당신은 영어 학습 도움이 필요합니까?**

**Brauchen Sie Hilfe Englisch lernen?**

**你需要帮助学习英语?**

**for Adults**

# ENGLISH

**AS A SECOND LANGUAGE**

Sponsored by Literacy Merritt

grammar  
pronunciation  
conversation  
vocabulary  
reading · writing  
multi-cultural exchange  
community introduction  
and involvement

For more information contact:  
Robyn Grebliunas, Literacy Outreach Coordinator  
Literacy Merritt  
250 315 5851  
robyn@rbrandproductions.ca  
www.literacymerritt.com

**Dates:**  
October - December 2010

**Location:**  
Merritt Public Library

**Times:**  
2 one hour classes will be held during  
the week, schedule to be announced

**Classes are FREE**  
**Please register at Merritt Public Library**

It has been a pleasure to teach English as a Second Language to students of diverse backgrounds and levels. This is the second year that classes have been running. There are two classes per week offered with sessions running over a period of nine weeks. Classes focus on conversational English, grammar, reading and some writing. Sessions have ended for the summer, but will continue in early Fall. The classes are open to everyone and all levels of speakers. These classes offer the opportunity for students to practice their spoken and written skills and to learn more about the English language.

Submitted by Carmella Mathieu, ESL Instructor



#### Our History:

In 2008 Merritt received funding from 2010 Legacies Now to prepare a community literacy plan. This plan was created through extensive community consultation and published in May 2008. The Community Literacy Plan for Merritt Area, along with community leadership/partnerships and three years of seed funding from 2010 Legacies Now, became the foundation on which Literacy Merritt has been growing since December 2008.

## Our Community Partnerships:

At Literacy Merritt we are focused on building community partnerships to best serve the literacy needs of our community. Our partnerships include representation from early years, k-12, adult education, aboriginal education, crime prevention, health, social development and business development. We plan our literacy services based on the building blocks of the four pillars of literacy: early years, grades k-12, adult and aboriginal.

### Meet the Literacy Merritt Task Force

Steve McNiven, Assistant Superintendent, SD#58

Shelley Oppenheim-Lacerte, First Nations Principal, SD#58

Deborha Merrick, Branch Head, Merritt Library

Tracy Dunsmore, Constable, Community Policing Office

Kelly Donaldson, Administrator, CPO

Trish Rodie, Success by Six

John Chenoweth, Dean, NVIT

Stefan Zabek, Department Head College Readiness, NVIT

Iris Hodson, Health

Liz Touet, CFDC Nicola Valley

Jane Kempston, School District #58

Robyn Grebliunas, Literacy Outreach Coordinator

**Coordinators Report:** Literacy Merritt grew from a seed that was planted in our community in 2008. This seed was planted by funding from 2010 Legacies Now and was nurtured by a community literacy study that sprouted into our community literacy plan. That seed planted in 2008 has grown into a blooming flower called Literacy Merritt. In three years we have grown from an idea, to discussion to literacy services that are reaching the pillars of literacy. At Literacy Merritt we are excited about our growth, energetic about our programs, proud of our talented team and task force and moving forward with momentum. Literacy Merritt is about serving the literacy needs of our community as best we can. Literacy Merritt is about increasing our service and programming by building positive community partnerships. Literacy Merritt is about building a healthy community by helping to increase the literacy levels of our community. If you are looking for a way to get involved with our community then Literacy Merritt is looking for you.

Along with our task force we work in partnership with local organizations and private business to carry out our community literacy mandate.

Literacy Merritt Programs:

### English as a Second Language for Adults (ESL)

Classes are offered Wednesdays and Saturdays at Merritt Public Library. Classes are free and open to adults requesting assistance with ESL. Register for classes anytime at Merritt Public Library. Next session starts March 30, 2011.

### Computer Literacy for Seniors

Classes are offered at the Seniors Centre and are free. To register for our free sessions contact Jeff Bloom, Seniors Connected Coordinator, at 250 315 9170.

### Tutoring for Dogwood and Grade 12 Certificate for Adults

Free drop tutoring sessions are now available to adult learners in the Dogwood or Grade 12 certificate programs at SCIDES and NVIT. Sessions are running at the Merritt Public Library Tuesdays 5:30pm – 8:30pm and Saturdays 1:00pm – 3:30pm. Watch for our Tuesday evening study skills workshops, which are also free.

Study Skills Workshops:

March 15: Essay writing for Beginners

March 22: Math Tricks

March 29: General Study Skills

April 05: Exam Writing

April 12 and beyond: TBA

### One to One Tutoring

Volunteer 90 minutes a week and assist our elementary school children catch the “love of reading”. Volunteer at any of the following schools: Bench Elementary, Central Elementary, Collettville Elementary and Nicola Canford Elementary.

**Primary Literacy Program** – a program delivered by SD#58 and sponsored by Literacy Merritt

Parents of children in grades k-3 are invited to Primary Literacy Nights offered the first Monday of each month at Central

Elementary School. Free child minding is available during the 45 minute session and parents will receive a book for their child at each session. These sessions are drop in sessions are free.

### **Dolly Parton Imagination Library**

Children from birth to their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday can receive a free book a month from Dolly Parton Imagination Library. Register at Merritt Youth and Family Resource Society or Merritt Public Library for this important early year's literacy program.

Meet our team:

### **Mike Tomlinson, ESL Instructor**

I was born and raised in Zimbabwe, Africa, immigrating to Canada in 1971. I got into the construction industry, becoming a carpenter, and working all over Western Canada. In 1978, I married a Saskatchewan girl, and we had three sons - one in Peace River, AB, one in White Rock, BC, and the third in Saskatoon, SK. In 1985, I attended the University of Saskatchewan, earning a B.Ed. and a BA in English. I worked as a social worker to put myself through university, but we moved to Merritt in 1993 to teach, and have lived here ever since. At present, I teach Technology Education and English at Coquihalla Middle School, and ESL once a week, Wednesday evening at the public library.

### **Carmella Mathieu, ESL**

I have been teaching for nine years now. I have spent time overseas teaching both school age children and adults. In Turkey, I taught a Business English course and in Africa I volunteered time doing Focus on English a British radio broadcast meant to help students with their English. I also spent three years teaching in an isolate community where English is a second language. The course covers a variety of material to best help learners grasp a better understanding of the English Language. All levels welcome.

### **Jeff Bloom, Seniors Connected Coordinator**

Hello everyone. My name is Jeff Bloom and I am a recently retired teacher. I possess a Bachelor of Education degree. I taught for 35 years in this valley, 32 of those years at Nicola-Canford Elementary. I was born and raised in Kamloops, but took my Grade 12 at Merritt Secondary. I have always been very involved in sports, especially baseball, running and Team Handball as played in the local elementary schools. Since my retirement from teaching I have been able to concentrate on the passion I have for writing children's picture books.

In working for Literacy Merritt I am providing computer instruction to seniors in the community. At present I am taking a 12 computer lab around to the Seniors Association, Nicola Meadows and the Florentine. The classes cover the very basics of computer use, are very low stress and are held in an environment that is very familiar. We spend a lot of time laughing while learning. I would welcome any seniors (55 years and older) who would like to find out more to phone me at 250-378-9170.

Come learn with us.



**Glen Krajci, Tutor**

Hello everyone! Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Glen Krajci and I have lived in Merritt for nearly three years. Before that, I lived in Lac La Biche, Alberta, where I was a Student Assistant for seven and a half years.

I exclusively worked with grade 9-12s while there, mainly in the English, Social Studies/History, Math and the Sciences departments. I have BA in English

I would like to encourage everyone involved with this program to come to the Library Tuesdays between 5:30pm and 8pm and Saturdays 1:00pm – 3:30pm. Also watch for our special sessions like: Free Adult Study Skills Workshop!





*Robyn Grebliunas, Literacy Outreach Coordinator*



Robyn has been the Literacy Outreach Coordinator for Literacy Merritt since December 2008. Robyn fulfills this role through her consulting business R Brand Productions. Robyn enjoys working with the Literacy Merritt Task Force and the Literacy Team to deliver the programs to the community. Robyn has 21 years experience in non-profit management, community development, communications and program facilitation. Her training includes a Diploma in Academic Studies, a Certificate of Leadership, Certificate of Management Skills, Certificate of Administration and she is one story away from completing a Diploma in Creative Writing – just for fun.



*Callie Langlois, Chairperson, Dolly Parton Imagination Library (volunteer)*

Hi my name is Callie Langlois, chairperson of the Dolly Parton Imagination Library. I have a daughter who is six years old. I love to read, and I love helping my daughter with her reading. One day I hope that she will love reading as much as I do. I am new to the DPIL, and hope to make a difference in all ages in our community.

*Callie*

To get involved with Literacy Merritt programs contact Robyn Grebliunas, Literacy Outreach Coordinator, 250 315 5851, [robyn@rbrandproductions.ca](mailto:robyn@rbrandproductions.ca)

[www.literacymerritt.com](http://www.literacymerritt.com)



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For Immediate Release

June is Literacy Buzz Month

May 20, 2011, Merritt, BC - June is Literacy Buzz Month here in Merritt, BC. Literacy Merritt is offering free programming throughout the year and special activities in June to help you getting buzzing about books for summer.

Literacy Buzz Month:

### Bright Red Bookshelf

Visit the Community Policing Office (CPO) after June 16, 2011 for books and/or book exchange.

Gently used book donations are needed – drop off books at CPO or call for pick up of large donations call 250 378 3955.

\*sponsored by Community Policing and Literacy Merritt

Coming to Merritt June 16, 2011

GM Fit

The **Cat and the Hat** is back on June 16, 2011. Watch for The Cat in the Hat on a GM Fit Book Drive in Merritt

Sponsored by Murray GM and Literacy Merritt

Coming to Merritt June 16, 2011

### Reach a Reader

Purchase Your Merritt Herald by donation from a Literacy Merritt carrier on June 9<sup>th</sup>, with all proceeds going directly into Literacy programs

See Dolly, hear the Music and enjoy Story Time at Brambles/ watch for Dolly and paper carriers out and about in our community.

Sponsored by Literacy Merritt and Merritt Herald

Volunteers needed - call Robyn at 250 315 5851

Approximately \$1,000.00 is raised each year for Literacy through this successful partnership project

### Get Unplugged and Play

Watch for contest details in the Merritt Herald and at a school near in June.

Coming this summer

Literacy Merritt Programs running throughout the year:

### Get Your Grade 12 for Free

Contact Distant Education at 250 378 4245

or Nicola Valley Institute of Technology at 250 378 3300

100 students assisted since November 2010

### Free Tutoring

Grade 12 Adult Students

Tuesday and Wednesday @ Merritt Public Library

5:30pm – 8:00pm, See Glen

sponsored by Literacy Merritt, Merritt Public Library and School District #58

15 students supported since March 2011

### English as a Second Language for Adults

Thursdays 4-5pm and Saturdays 10-11am

at Merritt Public Library - call 250 378 4737

Sponsored by Merritt Public Library and Literacy Merritt

50 students supported since 2009

### Computer Literacy for Seniors

Register at the Senior's Centre/Museum

call Jeff at 250 378 9170

Sponsored by Literacy Merritt and New Horizons

hundreds of seniors have enjoyed this course since it was launched in 2009

### One to One Tutoring Program

Read with elementary school children and help a child learn to love to read.

volunteer at a school near you for the Fall 2011 Delivery

Sponsored by Literacy Merritt and School District #58

50 students assisted so far this year

### Dolly Parton Imagination Library

offering a free book a month to children from birth to age 5

register your child at MYFRS

Volunteers are needed to sustain this program. If you have a family who has benefited from this program we encourage you to pay it forward by volunteering in the project a few hours a year.

Sponsored by Literacy Merritt and MYFRS

Hundreds of children have benefited from this program since its introduction in 2008

Literacy Merritt is a community literacy project that began its journey into Merritt at the end of 2008. The project has been made possible through funding from 2010 Legacies Now and community partnerships. Literacy Merritt community partners include School District #58, Community Policing, Merritt Public Library, Merritt Youth & Family Resource Society, NVIT, CFDC Nicola Valley, Interior Health, local organizations, private business and community volunteers. Literacy Merritt is focused on serving the four pillars of community literacy: early years, K-12, aboriginal and adult literacy. At Literacy Merritt we meet with our community partners to define the literacy gaps in literacy services within our community, then plan and deliver programming to meet the literacy needs in Merritt and the Nicola Valley.

For More Information Contact:

Robyn Grebliunas Literacy Outreach Coordinator 250 315 5851 [www.literacymerritt.com](http://www.literacymerritt.com)

June 9, 2011, Merritt Herald, Reach a Reader

Written by Robyn Grebliunas, Literacy Outreach Coordinator, Literacy Merritt

Literacy Merritt welcomes you to Reach a Reader Day and Literacy in Merritt Month. Today every paper you purchase by donation from one of our volunteer carriers will go directly into community literacy programming. Over the past two years your donations have paid for books for children on the Dolly Parton Imagination Library program. This year your generous donation will directly support our adult literacy programs.

Literacy Merritt is an important part of community development here in Merritt and the Nicola Valley. In 2008 funding was provided by the Province for Merritt to do a comprehensive community study and literacy plan. By the end of that year we had successfully launched Literacy Merritt with three years of seed funding from 2010 Legacies Now. We are not winding down three years later; we are still gaining momentum while we focus on sustainability.

Our first goal with Literacy Merritt was to build and sustain community partnerships. Literacy Merritt is group of leaders who come together to plan community literacy services. These leaders represent the public library, School District #58, NVIT, Merritt Youth Resource Society, Community Policing, health, CFDC and NVIT. This partnership group makes up the four pillars of community literacy: early years, k-12, adult and aboriginal literacy. With these four pillars and multiple partners working together we have been able to fill some of the gaps that exist in our community literacy services.

Along with partnerships we have accomplished extensive programming which includes:

**English as a Second Language for Adults** – offered since 2009 in partnership with the public library and assisting dozens of ESL adults

**Computer Literacy for Seniors** – offered since 2009 in partnership with the public library and New Horizons for Seniors, working with hundreds of local seniors

**Tutoring for Adults** in grade 12 or Dogwood Certificate programs along with promotion of get your certificate for free - launched in 2010 in partnership with the public library, SD #58 and NVIT and reaching 100 local learners returning to school

**One to One Tutoring Program** – launched in 2011 in partnership with SD #58 and community volunteers to assist 50 local elementary school students learn the love of reading

**Dolly Parton Imagination Library** – offering a free book a month to children from birth to their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday, running since 2008 in partnership with MYFRS and helping hundreds of children learn to read.

Along with our programming we have supported programs like Primary Reading, Summer Reading, Girls Group and speech & language by providing the resources they needed to succeed in their programs.

Along with partnerships and programming we have perseverance at Literacy Merritt. This dedicated group of local partners and outstanding instructors just keep clearing the path to partnerships and programming that will help fill the gaps in community literacy. This month as we celebrate Literacy Month in Merritt we are launching new programs like: Bright Red Bookshelf, GM Fit and Get Unplugged and Play.

Red what? GM fits where? Unplug when? I'm glad you asked. Our first community Bright Red Bookshelf will be opening at Community Policing on June 16<sup>th</sup>. These are bookshelves that will hold new or gently used books for people of all ages. You just drop by CPO and find a book to your liking. As we expand this service in the community children will begin to identify that Bright Red Bookshelves are places where they can take the book home. GM Fit also launches on June 16<sup>th</sup> in partnership with Murray GM. The Cat in the Hat will be touring the schools and community groups to say hello and pick up enough book donations to fill the GM. All you have to do is call us to arrange the visit in exchange for a box of gently used books. Get Unplugged and Play will be launched later this month as a summer game to encourage students, and their families, to unplug from electronics and play outside, visit the library, go swimming and more.

If you are interested in building a stronger community check out Literacy Merritt; it's a great place to get started. Most of our programs need volunteer assistance. If you, a family member or friend have benefitted from one of our programs we are asking you to pay the experience forward by volunteering a few hours of your time each year. To get involved contact us at 250 378 4878 and visit our website at [www.literacymerritt.com](http://www.literacymerritt.com)

