

Adult Learners Communique'

Fall 2005

East Hants Resident Wins Literacy Award

September 8, 2005, was proclaimed as the UN International Day of Literacy, and as a UN proclamation, all countries adopting the resolution emphasize the value of literacy for the enhancement of quality of life for their citizens. Premier John Hamm was the keynote speaker at the International Literacy Day 2005 event "Celebrating Success" which was held at the Holiday Inn, Dartmouth. Premier Hamm stated,

"So much of what makes our province a special place to live and work is built around our well-educated and highly skilled work force. And, at the core, there is no skill more fundamental to education – no skill more fundamental to success – than literacy. Strong literacy skills



Crystal Simmons Receiving 2005 Council of the Federation Literacy Award from Premier John Hamm

equip us to meet the demands of today and the opportunities of the future. Literacy...is more than simply reading skills. Using a computer, doing basic mathematical calculations, working with a team and solving daily problems are all essential tools that Nova Scotians need, and that some have never had the chance to acquire. As many of you know through experience, improving your literacy and essential skills isn't

an easy task. For many adults, returning to learning it is a major challenge, requiring them to balance their home and work lives to make room for their continued education."

For a single mother of two residing in Lantz, this challenge for improved learning was the desire to provide a better life for herself and her children. Crystal Simmons left school in grade 9 and found herself unable to find a well paying job. In 2002, she decided to improve her lot in life and enrolled in the Elmsdale Adult High School program sponsored by the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board. Over the next two years, she successfully acquired her high school diploma. Crystal's hard work and perseverance paid off as she was awarded the honours of class valedictorian and recipient of the Staff Award of Excellence. Crystal was able to secure funding to attend the Nova Scotia Community College - Medical Office Assistant Program wherein she graduated with honours in June of this year. Her desire to give back to the community came in the form of volunteering to be a board member of the Hants Learning Network Association where she served as the board secretary. Following the incorporation of the East Hants Adult Learning Association in the spring of 2004, Crystal was one of the very hard working and dedicated key community volunteers who believed that promoting adult education was vital to the well being of the her community. Her dedication, drive and enthusiasm was rewarded as she was elected to the positions of Vice Chair and then as Acting Chair of the Association.

Premier Hamm presented Crystal Simmons with the 2005 Council of the Federation Literacy Award as the person who most exemplifies an outstanding adult learner in Nova Scotia and who has taken major steps to improve their literacy skills. If you were to ask Crystal what was the key factor that she embraces daily as a result of her education experiences? She would tell you that it is the "amazing opportunity to grow."

THE EAST HANTS ADULT

SO WHAT IS THE BIG DEAL

About going back to school and getting a diploma?

The most recent census denoted that of those persons surveyed in East Hants thirty percent (approximately 3900 persons) have less than a High School Education. Public demand for action to address this adult high school diploma deficit resulted in the Nova Scotia Department of Education developing a continuum of educational programs targeted to meet the learning needs of adults from basic literacy to high school graduation. The *Nova Scotia High School Graduation Diploma for Adults* is a graduation diploma recognizing the recipient as having successfully completed a high school or secondary education program.

A myriad of reasons exist why an adult person desires to return to an educational setting to attain their diploma! Educators would say that, it is to improve their employability, or to assist them in gaining entrance into post-secondary programs in colleges and universities. Attendees can learn new skills or improve existing abilities.

Adults who have returned to education programs provide more personal comments. They say that they become role models for their children or that they can help their kids with homework. Some say that completing even the Level I program has resulted in greater self-esteem, enabling them to overcome anxieties or apprehensions. One very satisfied attendee who could not read or write said, "Now I can read my hunting and fishing magazines."



IS A NON-PROFIT CHARITABLE ORGANIZATION ADDRESSING THE LEARNING NEEDS OF ADULTS THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS, OUR GOAL IS TO PROVIDE LONG LEARNING FOR THE B

ADULT LEARNERS & COMMUNITY

Spring is the time to start planting and Fall is the time to start Learning. So what are you doing this fall? Have you given any thought to upgrading your computer skills or learning something new? The Chignecto-Central Regional School Board with the Community Education & Partnerships, has put together a fantastic assortment of adult learning adventures.

Do you parents that have kids stuck in front of the family computer most evenings ever wonder how do they do that stuff? Then you may want to enroll in our introductory Computer and Windows program. Maybe you want to improve some skills or learn more about word processing or databases and spreadsheets. We are offering a number of Microsoft programs. For you active seniors who can only find time on Saturday mornings then you are in luck. Two new programs are starting, Surfin' Seniors and Basics and Beyond.

For those who are looking for some Personal & Professional Development, then check out some of these programs: Basic & Intermediate French, American Sign Language, Creative Writing, Small Business Bookkeeping and Starting a Bed & Breakfast.

Have you thought about taking up a new Leisure Pursuit? Some great programs are being offered, ranging from Tole Painting, to Home Decorating, Quilting and Fall Gardening.

The Fall 2005 Program Guide is available throughout East Hants at most convenience stores, community centres, libraries and of course at the Nova Centre (224 Hwy 214, Elmsdale). If you can't find the brochure and would like more info contact Rob at 883-5376. You can also go online @ www.ccrsb.ednet.ns.ca

LEARNING ASSOCIATION

***ABLE VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO
G NEEDS OF ADULTS IN EAST HANTS. THROUGH
IS TO PROMOTE, PROVIDE AND FACILITATE LIFE
ENRICHMENT OF OUR COMMUNITY***

WHAT HAS THE EHALA PROGRAM DONE FOR ME

Elizabeth Cox— Level II/III Participant

Who are the people who leave school prior to the completion of a high school diploma? Often times, stereotype personalities are portrayed by the media, a loner, a disturbed youth, a juvenile offender or someone who grew up in a rural area where the skills of a high school diploma were of less value than the skills needed on the farm.

I would like to tell you about a beautiful lady I recently



met who is none of the above. Elizabeth is dyslexic and she left the Great Britain School System at the end of grade 9. It wasn't because she was bored or that she wanted some romantic life and left

for greener pastures; it was just too difficult to continue.

Dyslexia is an impaired ability to comprehend written words, usually associated with a neurological disorder. Letters become mixed up and without proper testing and help people with this disorder often don't get diagnosed and higher education is not pursued.

"In England there are no free adult classes like the ones that are here", said Elizabeth. "I can decide what I want to do now that I'm here. The class really helped me to understand math and reading so I can help my kids in school."

She is referring to the Level II Adult Learning Program

sponsored by the East Hants Adult Learning Association (EHALA). When asked if she is going to continue the training, she replied enthusiastically, "Oh yes, I'm going to stick with it to get my High School Diploma. This first program has given me the confidence to want to take some computer courses and to write letters to my family back home." Elizabeth, her husband and their two children moved to Canada and East Hants four years ago and she loves the incredible opportunities she and her family have experienced in our schools and the community. She is going to pursue additional Adult Training courses this fall.

On a side note, she is concerned about transportation to and from the training locations, but is very thankful the **East Hants Alternative Transportation Service** also developed by the EHALA is available to transport her to her courses at a reasonable non-commercial cost.

ORGANIZATIONAL VALUES



East Hants Adult Learning Association

1. We Value Life-Long Learning
2. We Exist For The Learner
3. We Respect Cultural Diversity
4. We Believe In Learner Involvement
5. We Respect The Requirements Of The Individual
6. We Believe In Equitable Opportunity
7. We Are Accountable To All Stakeholders
8. We Believe We Are Building Stronger Communities Through Adult Learning

EAST HANTS ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION SERVICE

EHATS offers alternative, affordable, inclusive transportation to residents of East Hants. Transportation requirements may include Medical Appointments, Job Training, ALP Education, Employment, Household Errands, Volunteering, Recreation and Social Events. By providing affordable and available transportation, everyone in the community can grow and prosper. For more information please phone 883-4716. EHATS is looking for Volunteer Drivers and new members to use this valuable service.

THE NOVA SCOTIA ADULT LEARNING PROGRAM

What is the Adult Learning Program, you may ask, and of what benefit is it to me? To begin with the ALP as it is known was developed by the Dept. of Education as an outcome based education program, which means there are specific skill sets that a learner needs to attain before moving on. It is designed to help adults who left school prior to attaining their high school diploma. More importantly we help adults gain the literacy and essential skills needed to learn, live and work in the community. Adults enrolled in the program work toward any number of personal goals such as;

- ⇒ increased self esteem or team work skills,
- ⇒ develop problem solving skills to assist in adapting to work-place change,
- ⇒ develop oral and written communication skills and mathematics skills,
- ⇒ improve employability,
- ⇒ completion of the Nova Scotia High School graduation Diploma for Adults,
- ⇒ preparing for the GED High School Equivalency Certificate
- ⇒ Gain personal satisfaction by learning new skills and increasing ones existing knowledge and skills.

First Annual EHALA Dinner and Auction

Join us for a superb evening of dining, entertainment and a silent auction, all in support of Adult Learning Programs.

This fantastic event will be held at the Elmsdale Legion on November 19, 2005.

Price: \$40.⁰⁰/person or \$75.⁰⁰/couple



For tickets or information contact Mitchell Nimeck, Promotions and

Funding Coordinator at 883-0408

Future Events

Valentines 2006

A Heart for Learning—Chocolate & Rose
Spring 2006

Driving for Learning Excellence

Who Pays The Bills??

The entire burden for meeting the goal of Adult Education through the Provincial Government Adult Learning Program (ALP) initiative has become the burden of many local and regional residents who desire to make a difference. East Hants Adult Learning Association is an incorporated, not-for-profit, charitable association of concerned citizens dedicated to the support of Adult Learning and in helping East Hants Adult Learners attain a Grade 12 Diploma. A dedicated Volunteer Board of Directors along with the Associations Executive Director and a small staff work to coordinate funding initiatives and promote awareness of offered programs. Funding comes from several sources: the Dept of Education (Adult Education Division), the Chignecto-Central Regional School Board, the Corridor Community Options for Adults, the Dept. of Community Services, Service Canada, the East Hants Community Health Board and the Dept. of Services Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations. Because current funding is based on grant applications, there is never a guarantee that a program will operate from one session to another. To ensure that the Association has the financial security and resources to address grant shortfalls, fund raising initiatives will be undertaken. These extra funds are needed to hire instructors, pay for administrative expenses, and program promotions. To this end The East Hants Adult Education Association has hired a promotions, and fund raising coordinator, Mitchell Nimeck, who will be working to raise both the awareness and funding support for the East Hants Adult Learning Association.