



Literacy Central Vancouver Island

(formerly Literacy Nanaimo)

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Help someone learn to read and you open their door to hope...and a lifetime of possibilities! R.K.

THE HOME OF: WELL READ BOOKS

Volume 1 Issue 3 page 1 / 3

September/October 2009

From the desk of: Rebecca Kirk - Executive Director

Tutor Coordinators: Jacqueline Webster, Margaret Ames



We extend our thanks to **Altrusa** for sharing our vision early on and partnering with us to complete **Dog Tales Bookstore**. Their encouragement and support kept the project moving. There are many **individuals that also deserve our gratitude** and we will be etching their names on one of the tree trunks in the children's store.

No slowing down this summer. We were in full swing finishing the reconfiguring of **Well Read Books** and developing **Dog Tales Children's Bookstore** on the lower level. Happy to say mission successfully accomplished even while in the midst of embracing a **cultural shift in our organization**.

Projects of this nature and timeline require **assembling the right team, a shared vision** (enthusiasm), reasonable **budget estimates**, a willingness to risk **"failing forward"** (a tip to one of my favorite leadership thinkers, John Maxwell) and **leadership from the ground up**.

When staff and volunteers throughout the organization have the support and freedom to **explore and test critical, independent thinking**, combine it with their **experience and knowledge** and **actively share** their thoughts and suggestions, I make better decisions as a result. **Relationship building and trust** are critical for this leadership model to succeed but I believe the **potential results** on many levels **soars above** most other models, particularly in the Not for Profit world where ownership **nurtures the soul** of the organization.

In this edition we are also drawing attention to our Outreach Program in the **Vancouver Island Correctional Centre**. This is another of our programs whose time has come. Partnering together with **Corrections Management** and **John Howard Society**, we have already achieved success but our **intention and target is to achieve much more**. Together we plan to establish a **leading model** that engages increasing numbers of inmates and presents many of them with an offer they can't refuse.

Inside you will read a letter from one of our learners in VICC. Unfortunately **his story is all too frequent among prison inmates**. Supports are in place that will help him be successful when he is released but everyone involved knows there are many other influences out there that will impact his decisions. We only have time to **plant the seeds**, pass on some **new skills** and give a **glimmer of hope**. Will we be there to carry on if he is not successful this time? You betcha because that's what it takes, we are in the hope business. I am not speaking about the percentage of inmates that cannot be

Executive Assistant - Wendy Chapplow
Computer Technician - Brian O'Rooney
Bookstore Supervisors - Jane Rose, Pat Donaldson, Bronwen Brice, Louise Hamilton

helped.

When people suffer **abuse and trauma throughout childhood**, coping and survival skills along with hyper vigilance become **deeply imbedded**, sometimes a set of circumstance even if self created will bring unbearable fears to the surface causing another string of impulsive choices. The **primal need to survive** is often at any cost. Recovering and becoming well is a choice followed by a difficult process. It takes courage.

Sometime I will speak more about the knowledge and experience gained through my years in the Justice System and through personal experiences supporting traumatized and violated persons. For now let me just say that the longer I was in the system the less judgmental I became. I have learned much about the color grey.

Literacy Central is a very **unique organization**, one of a kind. We can reach much deeper and have much more of an impact because of valuable partnerships. We are developing models within the model. Over time we hope to be in a position to **share our findings, efforts, successes and challenges with other communities** that feel our experiences would be helpful with their particular challenges.

Enjoy **life long learning** and **life long adventures!**

Points of Interest

Well over 200 volunteers consistently dedicate their time and talents to the success of this agency.

Opportunities include:

- **Bookstore Volunteers**
- **Adult Literacy Tutors**
- **Computer Restoration/ Recycling Technicians**
- **BEARS & BEAMS** in Elementary Schools
- **Maintenance and Renovation Volunteers**
- **Outreach Program Volunteers** (tutoring)
- **Newest to our team: Children's Program Volunteers** and ...
- **Reading Assistance Dogs and Handlers.**

WOW!

Membership

New Milestone
752 Members!

This time last year: 239.

Our deep appreciation to our members near and far for your continued support.

\$10.00 annual / 25% discount on book purchases.



WELL READ BOOKS - BOOKSTORE NEWS

19 Commercial Street
Main Floor
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One of BC's leading Social Enterprises...when you shop here your dollars change lives!

Phone: 250-591-BOOK (2665)
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Where in the World are You from? Guest Book

England: Brilliant Selection of Books!

Port Stewart, Ireland:
Excellent Store

Anchorage Alaska: Super!

Westfield, New Jersey:
Awesome Place

Den Bosch, Netherlands:

Love the smell of your bookstore!

Japan: Awesome Store!

France: Great & Clever Store!

Berlin, Germany: Great place, nice idea, thanks!

Durham, England: Could

spend days and days in here

Yellowknife, NWT: Woo Hoo!

Guatemala: Beautiful!

Scotland: Amazing store!

North York, England: Great selection

New York, NY: Great books!

Colwood: W.O.W. Awesome books!

Nanaimo: Keep up the good work!

Boston, MA: Awesome store!

After much hard work on the part of **bookstore volunteers** and **supervisors**, the reconfiguration of **Well Read Books** is now almost complete. We thank our customers once again for their patience and loyalty through the ongoing process. Improved signage is the next task at hand.

We will now be offering a line of **greeting cards** featuring scenic views of Nanaimo donated by local photographers. These unique cards are produced at Literacy Central VI and all **proceeds will go to supporting our programs**. The line of cards will be **ever expanding** and are priced **\$3.00 ea. or 4/\$10.00**. Please keep us in mind when purchasing greeting cards.

We have identified two goals for **Well Read Books**. One is to become a highly recognized **destination bookstore** beyond the Island community and the other is to promote our two social enterprise bookstores in a manner that will move Literacy Central VI from 50% self sustaining to 80% over the next five years. **"Do what we do well and have fun doing it."** Stay turned for new ventures to come.

Dog Tales Bookstore and Learning Centre



L to R: Aux. Cst. **Tammy Marshall**, MLA **Ron Cantelon**; **George Jarvis**, Program Patron; **Levi Sampson**, President of Harmac Pacific and Corporate Sponsor; **Marshall Cooper**, Owner of several A&W's and Corporate Sponsor; **Mayor John Ruttan**; **Rebecca Kirk**, E.D. of Literacy Central VI; **Dr. Cay Holbrook**, UBC Researcher/Professor and Program Founder; **Curt Duddy**, Publisher of the Nanaimo Daily News and Sponsor of Raise A Reader; Cst. **Ben Lanthier**, and at the table in **Dog Tales Bookstore**: **Stacie Lamiranc**, mother of **Kiannah**, both of whom have **multiple visual impairments**, they are joined by a bookstore customer. A special thank you to all the local **Rotary Clubs** that contributed and also provide support for our programs.

One very happy group! After several months of planning and much communication between **Nanaimo** and **UBC**, our **community team** with the help of **Raise a Reader**, has launched the first ever, as yet unnamed, program providing **Early Literacy for Blind and Visually Impaired Pre School Children**. We are very **grateful for each person and agency** that has participated in the development and future success of this program.



ADULT LEARNING CENTRE

To the Literacy Tutoring Program,

My name is Shaun _____. I am 29 years old and I have a daughter named _____ who is 4. I live in _____ on the Mainland. I was incarcerated for stealing cars to support my drug habit. I was sentenced to 18 months and I am due to be released this October. On the outside I was on drugs since I was 12. I have never had a job and jail is the only time I have my own bed.

I volunteered to enter the program at Guthrie House because I wanted to succeed in life. I realize I need to change because I have been on drugs so long. I expected it to be hard, which it is. I was scared to come here because I didn't know what I was walking into.

I applied for a literacy tutor because I knew the Guthrie program was a waste of time if I didn't learn to read and write. Even though I got to Grade 8 in school, they always told me I was just a seat warmer. At Guthrie I completed Challenger 4 in less than 3 months, and I am working on Challenger 5. I have applied to continue my tutoring after my release.

Literacy tutoring helped with my program here. I can take notes now and don't have to try to memorize everything. It also taught me how to do paperwork on my own. This is huge for me; before I had to use my mother. My communication is better. Tutoring made me remember other words. Now the words are coming back, making it easier for me to talk. My self-esteem is better. I was always down on myself because I couldn't read or write.

I'm happy I can read and write, because all the time I thought I couldn't. I feel good about myself. I never really liked myself before. Figured I was useless, good for nothing. I enjoy working on cars and machines and one day hope to be a mechanic.

Shaun

Corrections Canada 2003 Research
Offenders without a high school diploma - 79%
Offenders who tested lower than grade 10 - 82%
Offenders who tested lower than grade 8 - 65%

Vancouver Island Regional Correctional Centre is home to one of our **Outreach Programs**. Shaun happily gave me permission to use his letter in any forum that might **provide encouragement** to someone else and to show **how much tutoring means to some inmates**. This program is growing faster than currently available coordination hours, thankfully **David**, one of our **Adult Tutors has been assisting Margaret and mentoring this program**. David is a retired executive from the corporate world and has shared with me that he feels **he is now involved in the most important work of his life**. These heart felt sentiments and **similar meaningful words** have been expressed to me during conversations with other tutors. Many of our tutors have **fascinating and diverse personal stories** and many have enjoyed remarkable careers. All express fulfillment and gratefulness for the opportunity to give back and offer **a hand up to someone struggling**. We gift our lives with such depth and meaning when we give more than we take.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION



This edition we are happy to feature Dara who has volunteered with us in the bookstore for over 10 years. Dara has shown her dedication over the years and always has a

friendly smile and a positive comment. In addition to her regular duties she has volunteered to head up our Seasonal Flu and Cold response plan with particular thought this year to H1N1 concerns. You are a valued member of our team Dara and we thank you!

Coastal Community Credit Union Harbourfront Branch

Coastal Community Credit Union is a faithful supporter of Literacy Central VI. **Volunteers** from the various branches always show up to lend a hand with their **talents, skills and time** for our fundraising events. Recently they held a book sale at the Harbourfront Branch and donated the proceeds to our literacy programs.

We thank the management of the CCCU Branches for supporting their colleagues in efforts to be helpful, giving neighbors and for demonstrating meaningful and positive corporate citizenship. We at **Literacy Central** truly value our community partners.



Cheryl Messier, Rebecca Kirk and Debra Lovely