

The Centre for Family Literacy is dedicated to helping families grow and prosper.



The Centre for Family Literacy

# Centre Page

June 2010

## Adult Program Responds to Student Needs

**E**liminating barriers, addressing health and wellness issues, and assisting with everyday challenges are the impetuses behind several additional programs the Centre is offering to adult students.

For three years, Functional Literacy classes have been run at the Mill Woods Family Resource Centre, Millbourne Site. The participants are taught reading, writing, and conversational skills that relate directly to their everyday activities such as earning a learner's permit, understanding notes sent home from school, or taking children to the library.

The program is offered in their neighbourhood, thus eliminating the barrier of transportation, and childcare is provided. Offering a group class addresses the sense of isolation that many learners, especially newcomers, experience.

This fall, the Centre will be running a Health Literacy, or Healthy Living and Wellness, class to provide information on a variety of topics including nutritional labeling, eating well, reading menus for healthy selections, and physical activities to do at home.

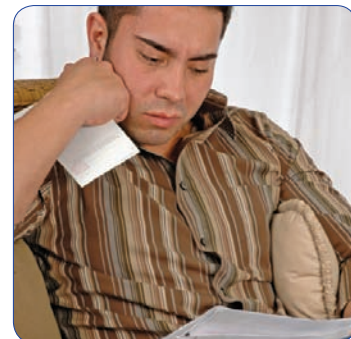
Some days participants may practice chair aerobics, on others take a field trip to a local grocery store to practice reading labels so they can make healthy choices.

Many of the students in our Adult Tutor Program were looking for extra help beyond their weekly session with their tutor. The Drop In Learning program was established to address this issue. Once a week for two hours, a volunteer tutor is available at the Centre so students can drop in to receive assistance. This ranges from help with a resume or completion of a job application to using the Internet more effectively to support their learning.

The highly successful Dollars and Sense program will continue in the fall at NorQuest College. Level 1 and 2 courses will again be offered and will cover basic math and money, spending and saving, budgeting, using bank services, and credit and debt.

Our Adult Tutor program is the foundation upon which these additional programs have been developed. Each program supports our students' efforts to achieve their personal goals.

All of these program options are funded by Alberta Advanced Education and Technology or through ECALA.



“Mothers who eat well [and] exercise ... during pregnancy have healthier babies who are more ready to learn.”

*Canadian Education Association.*  
2004

### Inside:

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## Jim Cuddy & Kathleen Edwards Perform for Literacy

The third annual An Evening of Wine & Words in support of the Centre's family literacy programs was a smashing success.

Returning for a third year seemed to be a theme with Jim Cuddy, Mark Scholz, and about two-thirds of the audience. The evening began with cocktails in the foyer adjacent to the Empire Ballroom at the Fairmont Hotel Macdonald. The GIO Electric Scooter that was one of several items in the silent auction intrigued guests. Rumor has it that someone was seen driving it through the hotel later that evening.

The incomparable man of many hats, Mark Scholz, acted as Master of Ceremonies, auctioneer, and wine "commentator". His wit and humour kept the sold out crowd engaged throughout the night.

The main event of the night was an intimate performance by Jim Cuddy and Kathleen Edwards. "At one point in the evening," said Cindy Rae Tanguay, "I glanced around the room at fellow guests, and through their grins and tears, it was clear that Jim and Kathleen's stories and music left an imprint on us all."

A special thank you to the volunteer committee who put endless hours into making An Evening of Wine and Words a success. Thank you to our sponsors, donors, and attendees whose continued support helps raise money for the work of the Centre.

### Sponsor Listing

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*See more photos on our facebook page!*



## The Role of Culture in Literacy Learning

It is becoming increasingly recognized that the cultural environment in which children are raised is of central importance to their literacy development and their experiences at school. *Many Pathways to Literacy: young children learning with siblings, grandparents, peers and communities* (2004), edited by Eve Gregory, Susi Long, and Dinah Volk, explores the significant role that various literacy practices, parents, friends, and other members of the community play in learning.

The first chapter of this text focuses on the sociocultural approach of the studies. Literacy must be understood within the context of “the complex relationship between culture and cognition”; culture needs to be recognized as having a direct impact on literacy development. “Children learn as apprentices alongside a more experienced member of the culture” and, while these forms of learning may not resemble those within the classroom, they are central to literacy learning.

The participation of children in their own learning is not, therefore, limited to formal literacy activities. It is an ongoing process that involves the active engagement of children within their homes and communities undertaking tasks that, at first glance, may appear unrelated to their education.

**Dr. Eve Gregory is a keynote speaker at Cultivating Connections: Global Perspectives & Practices in Family Literacy, a national conference being hosted by Centre for Family Literacy from July 15 to July 17, 2010.**

Dr. Gregory is currently Professor of Language and Culture in Education and Head of the Centre for Language, Culture and Learning at Goldsmiths, University of London, England.

Further information on the conference can be found on the conference website:

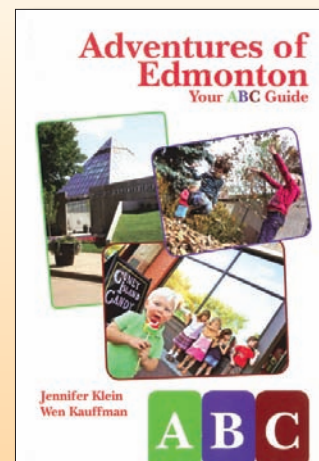
<http://cultivatingconnectionsconference.ca>

Enquiries can be emailed to [conference@famlit.ca](mailto:conference@famlit.ca)

## Book Raising Money for Centre

The recently published book *Adventures of Edmonton – Your ABC Guide* is supporting our work by donating \$1 for each book purchased.

To purchase it or find a list of retailers, visit their website at [www.adventuresofedmonton.com](http://www.adventuresofedmonton.com)



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It's easy to find our page—just look for the link on our website at [famlit.ca](http://famlit.ca). Take a look—we hope you *like* it! We've also added a link to our YouTube channel.



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Online donations to the Centre can be made through [CanadaHelps.org](http://CanadaHelps.org)



The Centre for Family Literacy gratefully acknowledges the ongoing support of the following:

Government of Alberta



Human Resources and Social Development Canada

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## Innovative Workplace Family Literacy Project Concludes

The Workplace Family Literacy Project, undertaken by the Centre for Family Literacy, has come to a successful conclusion. In the final phase of this innovative project, employees at Lakeside Packers in Brooks and at Lucerne Foods in Taber participated in pilot programs delivered before work and during the lunch hour. For those employees who took part in the programs, benefits included improved workplace communication, support for family learning, increased literacy self-awareness on the part of workers, a greater understanding of the literacy skills of their children, and enhanced workers' attitudes toward the importance of family literacy.

The pilot projects demonstrated that it is indeed feasible to offer family literacy initiatives in the workplace, both in terms of literacy practitioners' capacity to develop and deliver such programs and in terms of employers' and employees' willingness to participate. In addition to the pilot programs, the two-year project also resulted in

increased awareness of this approach to literacy development and practical resources that will help other communities implement this type of program. Copies of "how to" guides for employers and for literacy practitioners can be obtained at the Centre's website, [www.famlit.ca](http://www.famlit.ca).



The Workplace Family Literacy Project was funded by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada, Office of Literacy and Essential Skills.

## HOG® Chapter Raises Money for C.O.W.

The quiet neighborhood of Richfield came alive when members of the Old Strathcona Chapter of the Harley Owners Group® made a visit to our Classroom on Wheels (C.O.W.) Bus.

The parents and children on the bus were astonished and delighted when the motorcycle cavalcade came to a stop outside and the riders came on board. Members of this chapter have been raising money for the C.O.W. Bus for the past three years. "I know you will put our donation to good use," said Stephen Rebus during the cheque presentation.



## Longstanding Board Member Retires

The Centre's Annual General Meeting in May saw the end of an era, as Randy Boissonnault retired after 10 years on the Board. Randy contributed immensely to the work of the organization as Board Member, Chair, and Past Chair. "Randy has done so much to support the development of the Centre and to raise awareness of the literacy field," said Board Chair David Hiebert.

Heather Raymond and Mitch Flaman also retired as Board Members. Heather will continue her involvement as a volunteer on the Leading with Literacy Committee.

Eric Hamilton and Patricia Mackenzie were elected as new Board Members for two-year terms.

## Literacy Develops in Families First

The Centre for Family Literacy is dedicated to helping Alberta grow and prosper. Our innovative programs, training, and research help Alberta families achieve what they imagine—improved education, jobs, and health.

