



The Centre for Family Literacy Centre Page

Golfing for Literacy

Our Vision:
*A healthy,
literate society
where all
are able to
contribute and
succeed.*

The fifth annual Links fore Literacy Golf Tournament took place on Wednesday, August 19 at the Links Golf Course in Spruce Grove. By all reports it was a great event for everyone – perfect weather, good food, low scores and a great cause – raising money for the Edmonton Literacy C.O.W. bus.

Most golfers will know about mulligans – the opportunity to “do-over” a stroke without penalty – but few have heard of string as part of the game. At the Links fore Literacy tournament, each player can purchase string to use to improve their lie or position on the course, without sacrificing a stroke.



The winning team (Sean Andrews, Andrew Lejeune, Kyle Reid and Corey Maunu) came in 22 under par – a great game of golf and some strategic use of string and mulligans. Members of last year’s winning team presented them with their “green jackets”. There were four teams tied at 19 under par for second place.

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Teaching Soft Skills to Immigrants

The annual Literacy & Learning Symposium is taking place in Calgary October 13-16, with the theme United by Design: Moving Forward Together. Thursday’s keynote speaker is Dr. Lionel Laroche, founder and principal of MultiCultural Business Solutions. Dr. Laroche has provided cross-cultural training, consulting, and coaching services to over 50,000 people in 16 countries.

His keynote presentation will examine what immigrants need to learn to get work in Canada. Learning English is just one of the challenges they face as they adapt to Canadian culture. The cross-cultural challenges they encounter at work and in their daily lives are often mired in unwritten rules that we as Canadians take for granted.

Dr. Laroche compares cross-cultural challenges to that of an iceberg with the majority of the rules hidden beneath the surface. Everyday activities such as waiting in line, shaking hands, paying for coffee, or being on time differ from culture to culture. At work, immigrants have the technical skills to do their jobs, but they often find that soft skills such as communication, problem solving, and teamwork are very different in Canada.

As English-speaking Canadians, we often use idioms like “it’s raining cats and dogs,” “that’s a hot potato,” or “at the drop of a hat” to describe a situation. Our use of idioms, acronyms, and slang are unfamiliar and confusing to those learning a new language. There are also subtle meanings to words that are not defined in any dictionary. When someone says “that’s interesting,” do they

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September
2015

Golfing for Literacy

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Scott Vreeland once again volunteered to represent the committee for the Beat the Committee Member challenge held on a par three hole. Players who paid \$10 to try and beat Scott were entered in a draw to win a \$500 BBQ Country gift certificate. Players who were successful had their name entered an additional two times. A double celebration took place when Tim Vreeland, Scott's father, beat his son and also won the draw.

In the end, the tournament raised a net profit of \$36,000, which brings the total raised for the C.O.W. Bus over the past five years to more than \$150,000.



The Centre thanks everyone who participated in the tournament, especially our sponsors:

Eagle Sponsor:	Jacobs Canada
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The Centre would also like to thank our Hole Sponsors (Arrow Engineering, Clark Builders, and Impark) and all who contributed prizes and gifts to the tournament.

Teaching Soft Skills to Immigrants

Continued

mean it is absorbing, fascinating, compelling, or do they mean, "I don't really agree with you but I am too polite to say so?"

Dr. Laroche's presentation will provide his audience with concrete tools and solutions that they can use in their work to support their English language learners' adjustment to Canada's written and unwritten rules.



Literacy Impacts Social Engagement

We often talk about the impacts of low literacy levels on people's lives. We cite statistics that show they are less healthy, more prone to unemployment, unable to access educational opportunities, and struggle to support their children's literacy development.

One area we often overlook is how individuals with low literacy levels are less likely to be involved in their communities, or to participate in societal activities such as voting in elections. This has become more top of mind for people working in the literacy field in Alberta as we have just gone through a provincial election and are in the midst of a federal campaign.

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Political campaigns often stress the need for "informed voters." But how can an individual be well informed if he or she has difficulty comprehending the written campaign literature or the media coverage of the issues and the candidates. The result is individuals with low literacy skills are less likely to vote than individuals with strong literacy skills.

People must be aware of their rights in order to assert them. Literacy gives people access to that information. Whether it is a workplace issue, a local bylaw change, or a health care issue, people with low literacy skills often do not know or understand their rights. They lack the skills and confidence to advocate for themselves. This leaves them at a disadvantage compared to other citizens.

In the broader context of community engagement, we take for granted that we might help on a school field trip, volunteer at a senior's residence, or help raise money for a cause that is important to us. These are all opportunities that connect us to our community. For many with low literacy skills, these opportunities are too intimidating and stressful, so they do not participate. They are robbed of the opportunity to learn new skills through volunteering, and their limited connection to their community contributes to a sense of isolation.

The vision of the Centre is a healthy, literate society where all are able to contribute and succeed. Supporting families and learners in improving their literacy skills provides them with the opportunity to be more engaged in their communities and to be more informed citizens.

Important Dates

Free Wills Workshop

September 16, 7:00–8:30 p.m.
Centre for Family Literacy

Literacy Champion Award Ceremony

September 23, 10:30 a.m.
Heritage Room,
Edmonton City Hall

READ IN Week

October 5-9

Literacy & Learning Symposium

October 13-16
Deerfoot Inn, Calgary

Reading the Future: Planning to Meet Edmonton's Literacy Needs

October 27, 1:30–4:00 p.m.
Abbottsfeld Recreation Centre

Check the Centre's website for more information.



Online donations to the Centre can be made through CanadaHelps.org



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



Fall Programming at CFL

To switch to our email newsletter: please send us an email at info@famlit.ca and reference Centre Page in the subject line.

The Centre offers a variety of high-quality family literacy programs in partnership with community organizations. We provide a continuum of programs that enable families to participate at many stages in their own development.

This fall we have created a cluster of programs that build on the continuum concept by offering a number of programs within one specific neighbourhood. The Brander Gardens area will have a Rhymes that Bind program, the Edmonton Literacy C.O.W. Bus, and the 3,2,1, Fun! program in its neighbourhood this fall.

Parents with infants and toddlers can join the **Rhymes that Bind** program at Riverbend United Church on Wednesday mornings. The **Edmonton Literacy C.O.W. Bus** will visit the area on Wednesdays as well. Parents and their 3-5 year old children can participate in the **3,2,1, Fun!** program offered at Brander Gardens Elementary School.

Demand for the **Rhymes that Bind** program has grown so much that we have added three new sites this fall: Bissell Centre, Family Futures Resource Network–Westbrook, and Meadows Public Library. Rhymes that Bind is an oral language development program for parents and their infants and toddlers that promotes language development through the use of rhymes, finger plays, songs, and simple movement games. All of the new sites are drop-in programs and run for 10 weeks. Rhymes that Bind and Multicultural Rhymes that Bind will also be returning to their usual sites.



Literacy Links is a training service that the Centre provides for parents, caregivers, community partners, and other organizations to increase their knowledge of how to develop and support children's early learning and literacy skills. This fall the Centre will work with the YMCA Welcome Village staff to create a number of opportunities for families to participate in sessions that specifically address their needs.

The Centre will also be running **Books for Babies**, **Edmonton Literacy Classroom on Wheels**, **Alberta Prairie Classroom on Wheels** and the **Adult Tutoring** programs. Please check our website famlit.ca for more details about times and locations.

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.

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