Western Quebec Literacy Council
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Annual Report
2015 - 2016

Putting literacy first!

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Western Quebec Literacy Council
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The vision of the Western Quebec Literacy Council is to help and encourage members of our community to develop the skills needed for life-long learning.

The mission of the Western Quebec Literacy Council is to help English-speaking adults, families, and youth improve their reading, writing, listening, speaking, numeracy and other life skills through programs adapted to the needs of the individual. As a charitable volunteer organization, Western Quebec Literacy Council recruits and trains committed volunteers as tutors and support personnel. We are dedicated to promoting community awareness with sensitivity throughout the region of West Québec.

Who we are

The Western Quebec Literacy Council (WQLC) is a charitable organization that offers free individual lessons in reading, writing and mathematics. Volunteers are trained to tutor one other English-speaking adult with the goal of improving literacy skills. We recruit students and tutors in the region of West Quebec—from Chapeau to Gatineau to Buckingham to Kazabazua and points in between. WQLC was formed in 1984 in association with the Western Quebec School Board. Since 1992 WQLC has functioned as an independent, community-based, charitable, volunteer organization.

Staff

Marilee DeLombard, Executive Director; Deborah Gauthier, Office Assistant

2015-2016 Board of Directors

President
Deb Powell, Norway Bay
Vice-President
Michel Chabot, Bristol
Treasurer
Peter Gauthier, Shawville
Secretary
Rick Valin, Shawville
Member
Monica Dodson, Sand Bay
Member
Nancy Arniotis, Shawville
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2015-2016 Board of Directors

Deb Powell
Michel Chabot

Rick Valin
Monica Dodson

Peter Gauthier
Nancy Arniotis
Our delivery of service model continues to be popular with adult students. One-on-one free lessons is still a winning combination. Meeting with a tutor once a week for a 90 minute lesson fits into a busy adult's schedule.

The individual nature of lessons allows the student to tailor their subjects and pace to their own learning styles. Students enrich their lessons by bringing in learning materials from their lives: hobbies, work-related materials, computers and internet-sourced materials.

- 31 adults inquired about individual lessons during this year.
- On average there were 22 students working at private, individual lessons during the year.
- Student-tutor lessons took place in different locations throughout West Quebec: Aylmer, Bryson, Shawville, Pontiac and Gatineau
- Ongoing support and record-keeping with students and tutors
- Cooperation with the Pontiac Continuing Education Centre in Shawville resulted in 15 student-tutor teams
- Note pads and pocket agendas were distributed to students and tutors.
- The ABC Life Literacy's "A guide to Voting; A Literacy Practitioner Workbook" and Elections Canada's "My Voter's Guide" were distributed to tutors
- "Census Canada Toolkit" was distributed to tutors.
- Literacy Quebec Student Solidarity Fund
  - 3 awards were received for students in 2015-16
  - Adrianna, Lucy & Gabrielle received their awards from their tutor, Rick Valin.
- Facilitated police checks for 2 volunteer tutors to work on the W.Q. School Board premises, Pontiac Continuing Education Centre, Shawville.
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Activity Report

II Recruit Volunteers and Students (Outreach)

Training in Essential Skills was emphasized again this year as many students in continuing education programs requested tutors in math and reading. Adult students realize that improving one's basic skills is an intrinsic part of upgrading one's education in preparation for the workplace.

In addition to our partnerships with educational and social institutions, outreach through local media and social media resulted in new adult learners who required basic literacy tutoring as well as academic upgrading.

Our Outreach Agent contract with Emploi Québec continued until November. Melissa Lamothe developed our contacts with young families and workers through promotion at special events and social media.

- Outreach staff position
  - Outreach Agent contract with Emploi Québec (part 2)
  - Employed Melissa Lamothe to November 20th, 2015
    - Salary subsidy for 30 hours/week
    - “Clear writing” lessons
    - Monthly reports to Emploi Québec
- Activities designed to increase client (learner) base
  - Developed partnerships with other community groups
    - CLC Pontiac,
    - Maison de la famille of Pontiac, Fort Coulange
    - Community Development Corporation of Pontiac (CDCP), Campbell's Bay, Québec
    - Regional Association of West Quebecers (RAWQ), Gatineau, Québec
    - Pontiac Continuing Education Centre (PCEC), Shawville
    - Table des Aînes et Retraités Pontiac (TARPontiac)
      - WQLC representative on TARP board of directors, 3 meetings
    - Literacy Quebec (LQ)
      - WQLC representative on LQ board of directors, 6 meetings
  - Family Literacy Day, January
    - Partnered with Shawville-Clarendon Library and Pontiac Artists Assn. to present a plasticine art project
    - Family Literacy Day books and games were given to the ten children and 8 parent participants
    - Article in Pontiac Journal newspaper
Senior's Fair, "Breaking the Walls of Silence"
○ November 6, 2015
○ Fort Coulonge, QC
○ W.Q. Literacy Council created & staffed literacy kiosque
○ Gave out WQLC brochures, literacy brochures, pens, Circle of friends disks
○ 400 seniors attended
○ Gained 6 volunteers and 1 future student

"Business Services Networking" event by Pontiac Chamber of Commerce
○ Norway Bay Golf Course on January 28, 2016
○ Presentation made by Executive Director to 30 participants

Senior's Fair "Breaking the Walls of Silence"
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Recruit Volunteers and Students (Continued)

- Actions to reach more of the Region
  - Newspapers articles
    - WQLC AGM articles in The Equity & Pontiac Journal
    - Family Literacy Day articles, January 28, 2015
  - Radio interview, Darcy James, Radio Pontiac
    - March 21, 2016
  - Newspaper and radio advertisements
    - Advertisements for literacy events appeared periodically in each of the 5 regional newspapers
    - Notices appear regularly in the classified section of the Pontiac Journal and on Radio Pontiac.
  - WQLC appears in all regional Yellow Pages under "LEARN".
  - An advertisement for WQLC services appears on the back cover of the big print telephone directory, Télé Pontiac.
  - Website: www.wq-literacy.org
    - Monthly updates
    - Newsletter posted
  - Facebook
    - Page updated weekly
    - Posts made to community organizations, promoting tutor training, student recruitment
  - Other social media (LinkedIn, Twitter)
    - Monitoring only due to lack of staff
  - Correcting contact information
    - Change of service provider for toll free number was required with subsequent loss of service for 3 months.
    - Email address corrections required to funder and provincial coalition (info@wq-literacy.org)
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III Governance and Management

Regular operations of the charitable volunteer organization include a volunteer board of directors, an annual members meeting, financial management, internal communications and volunteer support.

- Board of Directors
  ◊ Met 6 times during the fiscal year 2015-2016
  ◊ Six volunteers made up the Board of Directors, there was one vacant seat on the board.
  ◊ New board member recruited for 2016-2017
- Annual General Meeting
  ◊ October 24, 2015 at Café 349, Shawville, Quebec
  ◊ Invitations sent to 260 contacts (volunteers, students, public)
  ◊ Invitation notices in 5 regional newspapers
  ◊ Annual financial review completed and approved
  ◊ Annual activity report compiled
  ◊ Thirteen members attended
- Policies & Procedures
  ◊ Emergency Succession Plan completed
  ◊ Procedures continue to be recorded in Operations Manual
- Finances
  ◊ A mission d'examen financial statement was prepared by the firm of Smith, Porter, Hétu.
  ◊ Negotiated annual rent increase with landlord for office at 381 Route 148, Shawville
  ◊ Prepared and submitted Charitable Return and Annual Declaration
- Newsletter
  ◊ Three issues of “Literacy Information Network in our Communities” (LINC)S, were written and sent to a circulation list of 250.
- Volunteer recognition
  ◊ Volunteer contributions were acknowledged at the AGM, during National Volunteer Week (Ap. 10-16, 2016) and in the newsletter
- Operational funding through Programme d'action communautaire sur le terrain de l'éducation (PACTE) was solicited and received
  ◊ New reporting and application regime implemented
      ◦ Action Plan 2016-2017 developed by Executive Committee
The main business of the Literacy Council is training. In addition to tutoring adult literacy learners, the Literacy Council offers training to volunteers and staff. Volunteers are trained to be literacy tutors. Staff and volunteers are trained in the skills needed for adult education and volunteer organization management. Webinars and workshops provide training opportunities. The skills gained fall within the Canadian Essential Skills: reading, document use, numeracy, writing, oral communication, thinking, working with others, computer use and continuous learning.

- Tutor Training Workshop
  - Workshop to train volunteers as literacy tutors was held April 1-2, 2016
  - Tutor training seminar was held at the W.Q. Career Centre, Aylmer Sector, Gatineau
  - Tutor Trainer, Kate Strickland, Hudson, Quebec
  - Advertisements: in five regional newspapers and through partner organizations
  - Training materials were created and disseminated
  - Pre-workshop study packages were posted on-line for participants
  - Seven volunteers successfully completed the tutor training
  - 70 hours of training total

New tutors: Aylmer, April 2, 2016
Rose Regimbald, Louise Paradis, Ray Cleary, Donna Cushman, Kate Strickland (Trainer), Salwa Elalaoui, Yinglin Lu, Bernie Nunn
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IV Training Continued

- "Volunteers Matter" one day conference, May 20th.
  ◦ Held in Wakefield, QC
  ◦ Organized by Québec Community Groups Network
  ◦ To promote volunteer recruitment and support
  ◦ Exchanged contact information with 21 participants
  ◦ Provided transportation for 4 staff & volunteers to attend

- First Aider in the Workplace training
  ◦ Provided by Santinel Inc., accredited by CSST
  ◦ Sixteen hour course
  ◦ Course completed by two WQLC staff: Deborah Gauthier and Marilee DeLombard, Certificates received.

- Literacy Quebec (LQ):
  ◦ Literacy Quebec Conference, Sept. 23-24. WQLC President and Executive Director attended LQ AGM conference in Montreal, Sept. 23-24
    - LQ 35th anniversary celebration & AGM
    - Networking amongst 13 member organizations
  ◦ Literacy Quebec Conference, February 15-16, 2016
    - Hands-on learning to present our first on-line conference (anymeeting.com)
    - Resource sharing: new student-recruitment videos from Literacy Quebec, Volunteer recruitment project, changes to LQ website (accessibility, resources)

- On-line webinar participation
  ◦ "HSBC Family Literacy First" by ABC Life Literacy Canada; Oct. 27: introduction to presenting a family literacy workshop to parents and children
  ◦ "Growing Numeracy Skills: Resources to Support the "Understand and Use Numbers" competency", March 9, 2016; Community Literacy of Ontario
  ◦ "Workforce Skills Deficit: What Does It Mean for Canada?" April 19, 2016, ABC Life Literacy Canada, with T. Scott Murray, Data Angel.
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**Tutors Active in 2015-2016**

- Louise Carisse, Aylmer
- Ray Cleary, Aylmer
- Venetia Crawford, Shawville
- Nora Duncan, Shawville
- Deborah Gauthier, Otter Lake
- Peter Gauthier, Shawville
- Janet Intscher, Chelsea
- Douglas Kent, Nicabau
- Christine Larin, Aylmer
- Kathleen Lemieux, Gatineau
- Martha McGinn, Aylmer
- James McKenzie, Masham
- Bernie Nunn, Breckenridge
- Brian Ray, Chelsea
- Margaret Ruppel, Low
- Richard Valin, Shawville
- Clifford Welsh, Bryson

A huge “Thank you“ to our tutors - you are life-changers!

**Supporters**

Throughout the year we received donations and services in-kind from the following people and organizations. Thank you for helping to further literacy in W. Quebec!

- Kate Aley, Luskville
- Nancy Arniotis, Shawville
- Westley Becker, Gatineau
- Patsy Bourgeau, Shawville
- Jonathan Cameron, Otter Lake
- Louise Carrisse, Aylmer
- Michel Chabot, Bristol
- Venetia Crawford, Shawville
- Marilee DeLombard, Thorne
- Norma DesRosiers, Luskville
- Monica Dodson, Sand Bay
- Anne-Chantale Fontaine, Sutton
- Élaine Gaudet, Quyon
- Deborah Gauthier, Otter Lake
- Peter Gauthier, Shawville
- Louise Grenier, Emploi Quebec
- Peter Haughton, Bristol
- Tracy Judd, Clarendon
- Margo Legault, Literacy Quebec (LQ)
- Melissa Lamothe, Otter Lake
- Leila Nulty-Senf, Greermount
- Pontiac Journal, Mansfield
- Deb Powell, Norway Bay
- Rachel Plamondon, TARP
- Darcy James, Radio Pontiac
- Margaret Ruppel, Low
- Kate Strickland, Hudson
- Regional Assn. of West Quebecers
- United Way donors
- Bruce Walsh, Clarendon
- Richard Wegner, Bristol
- Robert Wills, Thorne
Heartfelt thanks!

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We also wish to thank all our volunteers for taking time from their busy lives to help WQLC carry out its work. You provide valuable help, support, guidance and inspiration! We especially thank our students. Your determination to make learning a priority in your busy adult lives is an inspiration to us all!

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

- Nelson Mandela

Photo Highlights of the Year

Scenes from WQLC AGM 2015

Deborah Gauthier & Monica Dodson

Peter Gauthier & Rick Valin

Leila Nulty-Senf & Deb Powell

Michel Chabot, Marilee DeLombard & Deborah Powell

Venetia Crawford, Elaine Plummer & Rose Regimbald
Photo Highlights of the Year

Family Literacy Day 2016: making plasticine art illustrations at the Library

Plasticine art instruction and photo by Kate Aley
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Photo Highlights of the Year

Tutor Training Workshop, April 1-2, 2016
Face-to-face learning

Donna Cushman, Salwa Elalaoui, & Louise Paradis

Donna Cushman & Yinglin Lu (Luke)

Kate Strickland, & Bernie Nunn

Rose Regimbald & Ray Cleary