



SASKATCHEWAN LITERACY NETWORK
ANNUAL REPORT 2003-2004

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Practitioner Training Coordinator – Lisa Erickson

Curriculum Developer – Ruth Blaser and Terri Peters

PGI Tournament Coordinator – Hilary Dahnke

OUR HISTORY

The Saskatchewan Literacy Network (SLN) was established in 1989 in response to requests from literacy practitioners for improved communication and coordination. It was the first Saskatchewan organization bringing together all agencies and individuals involved in adult literacy. Also, SLN was one of the first literacy coalitions in Canada.

Since its inception, the Saskatchewan Literacy Network has continued to grow and change, adding direct public awareness, resource development, training, and government relations to its original goals. The SLN has also taken a leading role in family literacy in family literacy throughout the province.

OUR MISSION

The Saskatchewan Literacy Network promotes and supports literacy in Saskatchewan.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

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The past year has been an exciting one for board members, staff and volunteers involved with the SLN.

The SLN board invested a lot of time and energy on board development to help each of us understand our roles and responsibilities as a policy governance board. With the help of outside consultants, we looked over and made clear our organizational goals, and changed our reporting and meeting procedures to better reflect our policy governance framework. Because of this work, our board has a clear vision, additional tools and renewed energy to lead the SLN in fulfilling its mandate. A special thank you to each and every board member, all of whom volunteer a great deal of their time to ensure the SLN keeps running smoothly.

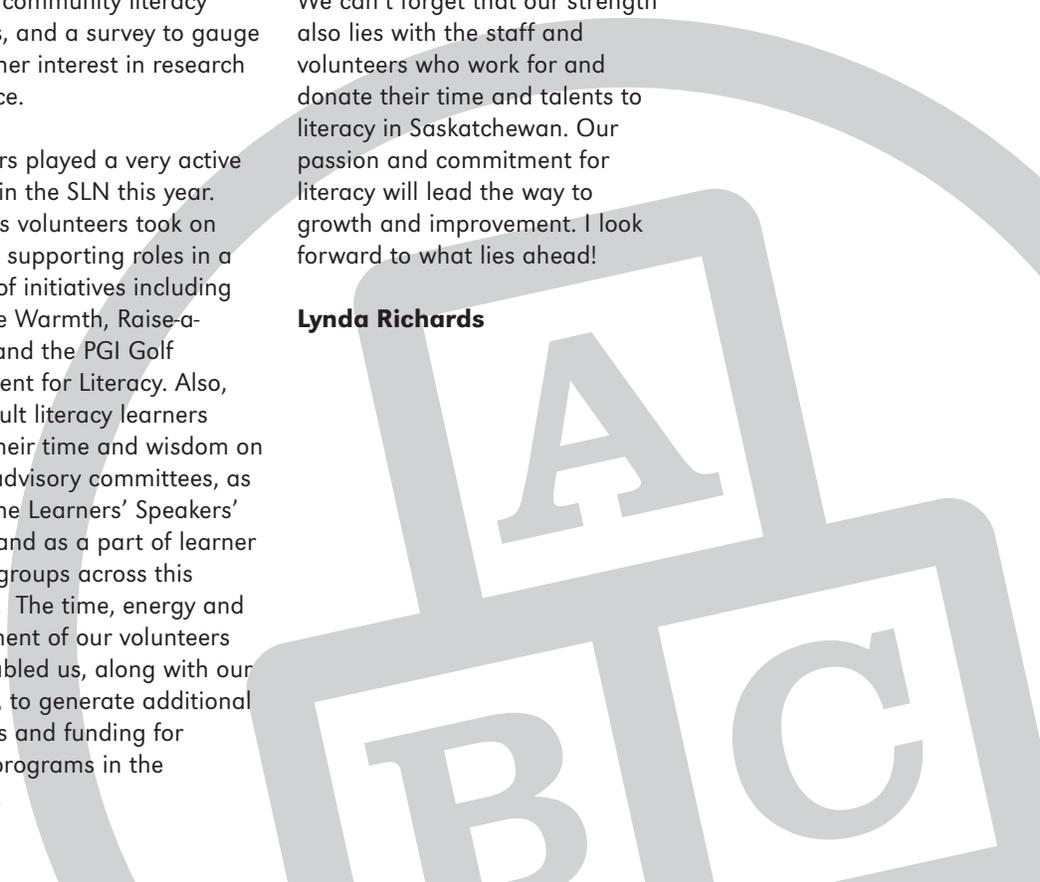
The SLN staff was involved in many projects that were planned because of needs expressed by the field. A few highlights include: more development of literacy benchmarks for Saskatchewan, research and a draft plan on the professional development needs of literacy practitioners, increased learner involvement and a mini provincial learners' conference, delivery of a broad scope of adult and family literacy training, community literacy meetings, and a survey to gauge practitioner interest in research in practice.

Volunteers played a very active role within the SLN this year. Countless volunteers took on lead and supporting roles in a number of initiatives including Share the Warmth, Raise-a-Reader, and the PGI Golf Tournament for Literacy. Also, many adult literacy learners shared their time and wisdom on various advisory committees, as part of the Learners' Speakers' Bureau, and as a part of learner support groups across this province. The time, energy and commitment of our volunteers have enabled us, along with our partners, to generate additional resources and funding for literacy programs in the province.

As a provincial literacy coalition, our strength lies in our ability to connect with and respond to many different needs and requests – from learners, practitioners, the public, media, our partners, funders and government. We are proud of the connections we have made and are committed to strengthening these relationships and developing new ones in the upcoming year.

We can't forget that our strength also lies with the staff and volunteers who work for and donate their time and talents to literacy in Saskatchewan. Our passion and commitment for literacy will lead the way to growth and improvement. I look forward to what lies ahead!

Lynda Richards



PUBLIC AWARENESS

What is literacy? Who is involved in literacy? Where can I get help? These are just some of the questions the Saskatchewan Literacy Network tries to answer each year with our public awareness campaign.

In 2003-04 the SLN continued to work with community partners to successfully promote the cause of literacy, to advertise our toll-free literacy information line, and to gather and distribute books and dollars to literacy related organizations around the province.

The SLN initiated:

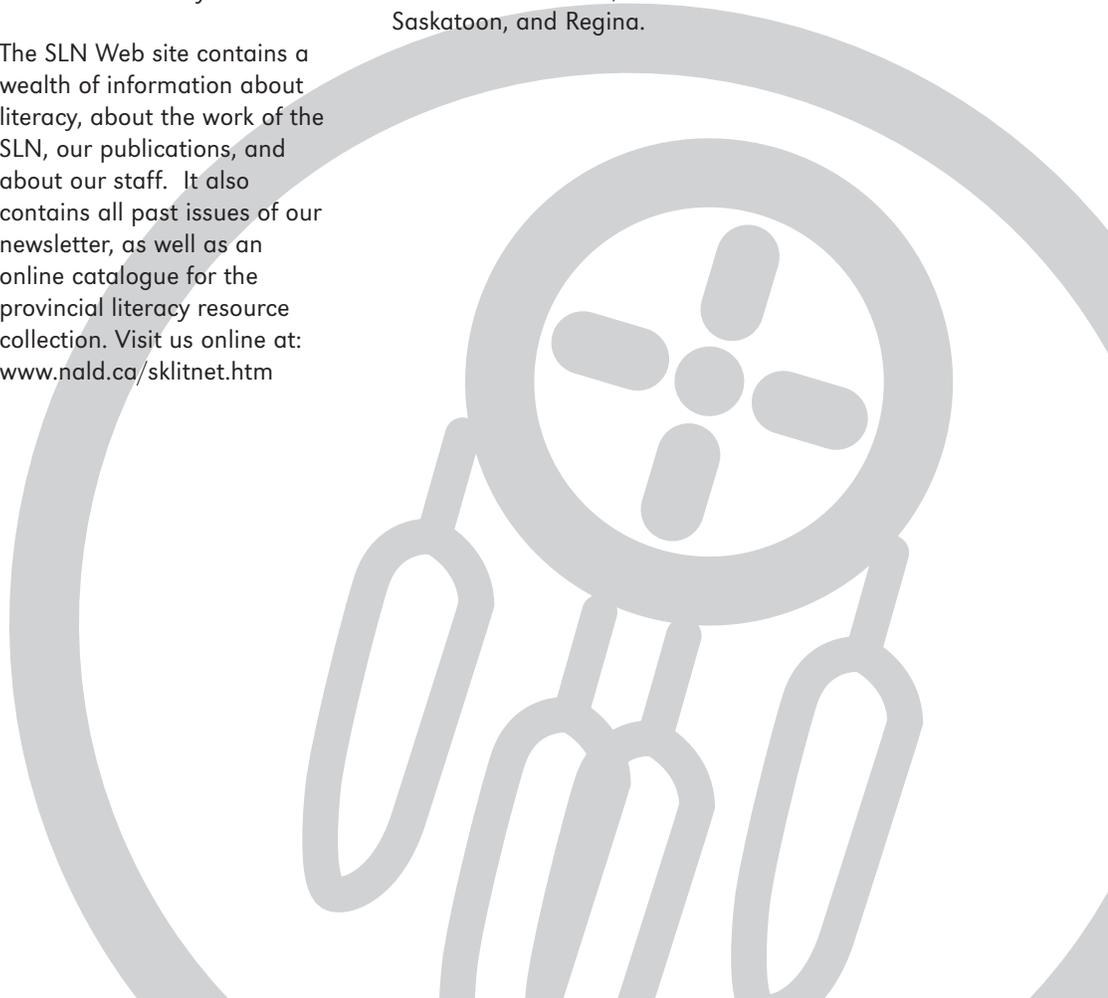
- A media campaign to celebrate International Adult Literacy Day, Adult Learner Week, and Family Literacy Day. This campaign included newspaper ads in four daily newspapers and several weekly newspapers, 10 billboards, and SLN representatives attending special events.
- Attendance at conferences and other special events. The SLN display drew people in and staff handed out a variety of promotional materials.
- In partnership with other organizations, the SLN planned and participated in:
 - The Saskatchewan Literacy Awards. This event provides a venue to celebrate successes in the literacy field, and to share experiences. Family, friends, literacy workers, sponsors, volunteers, and funders shared an evening of emotion and joy as we celebrated the accomplishments of adult learners, a volunteer, a literacy professional, a literacy organization, and a corporate supporter.
 - SaskEnergy's Share the Warmth project – with the assistance of SaskEnergy employees and volunteers, the SLN was able to distribute over 30 000 books to over 100 families and literacy related programs around the province.
 - Can-West Global's Raise a Reader - In 2003-04, the SLN helped to raise over \$30,000 that was distributed to organizations throughout Saskatchewan.

- CBC Radio's Canada Reads Event –CBC Radio held celebrity readings from the five finalists in the Canada Reads contest, and held a silent art auction and book sale to raise money for the SLN. Over \$2000 was donated.
- PGI Golf Tournament for Literacy – in its third year, the PGI Golf Tournament for Literacy continued to be a wonderful event to raise awareness for the cause of Literacy, as well as raising some much needed dollars for the Saskatchewan Literacy Network.

SHARING INFORMATION

The SLN uses various means to promote the cause of literacy, but one of our goals is also to provide accurate information about literacy issues, upcoming events and training, literacy facts, and training materials. We also strive to promote our toll-free literacy information number. In 2003-04 the SLN distributed information to the general public, to the literacy field and others interested in literacy through the following methods:

- In the SLN Quarterly newsletter, Literacy Matters, readers found provincial and national information, recent research results, and special pages for adult learners and Aboriginal literacy. It also includes many interesting articles written by literacy practitioners from around the country.
- The SLN Web site contains a wealth of information about literacy, about the work of the SLN, our publications, and about our staff. It also contains all past issues of our newsletter, as well as an online catalogue for the provincial literacy resource collection. Visit us online at: www.nald.ca/sklitnet.htm
- Promotional materials like brochures, fact sheets, "For the Love of Reading" booklets, and ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation materials.
- Attendance and support at community literacy meetings and the three monthly regional coalition meetings held in Prince Albert, Saskatoon, and Regina.



TRAINING

Since its inception, the Saskatchewan Literacy Network (SLN) has been providing various training opportunities in direct response to requests from the literacy field. In the past few years the SLN has expanded the scope of training to include adult literacy learners, and other organizations not directly related to literacy.

In 2003-04, the SLN staff offered training to 269 participants in twelve locations across the province. Twenty-two training sessions were held throughout the year, with a total of 2526 person hours of training offered. Training included the following topics:

- **Proposal Writing Workshop:**

Facilitators provide information and guidance to participants regarding the required elements in a proposal for funding. A list of potential funders is also supplied.

- Humboldt (23 participants)
- Belcarres (9 participants)
- Saskatoon (10 participants)
- Meadow Lake (14 participants)

- **Volunteer Tutor Training:**

The SLN developed both Level 1 and Level 2 tutor training manuals. While these manuals are intended to enable facilitators to deliver their own training workshops, the SLN staff are often invited to share their expertise and facilitate this training.

- La Loche (14 participants)
- La Ronge (14 participants)
- Buffalo Narrows (14 participants)

- **Learner Centred Intake and Assessment Workshop:**

Weyburn (10 participants)

- **New Coordinators Training:**

An in-depth look at the literacy field intended for newcomers to literacy. The SLN provides information about literacy in general, the literacy field in Saskatchewan, and literacy organizations and contacts across Canada. This gathering of new coordinators also allows for networking to take place.

Saskatoon (11 participants)

- **Plain Language:**

The SLN has become a leader in the plain language movement in Saskatchewan and as such offers a training workshop to introduce participants to plain language writing skills working with their own documents.

Saskatoon Cancer Centre (10 participants)

FAMILY LITERACY TRAINING

Family literacy is not just about reading and writing... It is also about developing stronger relationships between parents and children. It's about getting parents involved in their children's education. It's about building stronger families and healthier communities.

FAMILY LITERACY TRAINING

- **Come Read With Me:** programs use children's books as a starting point for the development of literacy skills and discussion of a wide range of parenting issues. The three-day facilitator training covers: basic principles of adult education, background and philosophy of family literacy, the principles of small group facilitation, and the importance of assessment and evaluation. It also looks at choosing age appropriate books, modifying books to suit older and younger readers, using crafts, finger plays, songs and rhymes and informing parents about literacy and learning. La Ronge (12 participants) Prince Albert (8 participants) Meadow Lake (9 participants) Weyburn (7 participants)
- **Aboriginal Literacy And Parenting Skills (A-LAPS):** Literacy and Parenting Skills (LAPS) is designed to strengthen the literacy skills of parents by focusing and building on their parenting skills. By developing discussion and learning on issues that are meaningful and relevant to parents, parents begin to work on their own literacy skills in a way that builds on their expertise and life experience.

Aboriginal Literacy and Parenting Skills (A-LAPS) is an extension of the LAPS program. It is a gentle, culturally sensitive approach to literacy and parenting issues.
Yorkton A-LAPS (14 participants)
Balcarres: A-LAPS (7 participants)
- **Keys to Family Literacy:** The Keys to Family Literacy was developed at Pine Grove Correctional Centre as a way to help inmates build literacy skills and for parents to maintain contact with their children from within the correctional center. The three-day training provides information and practice for participants in all components of the program. Saskatoon (9 participants)
- **Family Literacy to Deal with Parenting Issues:** This training was developed for the Intercultural Grandmothers Uniting, to assist them in their work in inner city schools in Regina. The training helped participants use books as a non-threatening way to approach issues such as bullying and peer pressure with parents and students and to generate discussion about ways to deal with issues facing students and families. Regina (12 participants)

LEARNER SUPPORT

At SLN, we know that adult learners must be central to everything we do. Learners have input at our board level, and through national, provincial, and regional learner focus and support groups. Their voices are powerful... they must be heard.

LEARNER SUPPORT

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Adult literacy learners continue to be at the centre of the work of the Saskatchewan Literacy Network.

The needs of adult literacy learners are a part of everything the SLN does, from promotion and information sharing, to training and government relations. In 2003-04, learners were invited to participate regionally, provincially and nationally in the following ways:

Learner Support Groups:

Regina

The Regina group was established in January of 2002. In 2003-04, a group of learners met monthly at the Regina Public Library and were coordinated by a volunteer adult learner. Two learners from the group were representatives on the provincial Learners' Focus Committee.

Prince Albert

This partnership between the SLN and Riverside Community School was established in October 2002. This year, the group addressed parenting and literacy skills. Three learners were a part of the provincial Learners' Focus Committee.

North Battleford

The support group began in January of 2003 as a partnership with the SLN and the North West Regional College. The group was established to help learners make the transition into adult basic education programs at the college. One learner was a representative on the provincial Learners' Focus Committee.

Saskatoon

Established in September of 2003 (in partnership with READ Saskatoon), a volunteer adult learner facilitated the group in READ Saskatoon's office and the Frances Morrison Library. One learner from the group was a representative on the provincial Learners' Focus Committee.

Provincial Learners' Focus Committee:

In 2003-04, the Committee contained 11 learners representing many of the geographic areas of the province including: Prince Albert, Saskatoon, North Battleford, Regina, Swift Current and northern Saskatchewan. The learners also represented various literacy strands: English as a Second Language, Aboriginal, special needs, learning disabilities and college based programs. There were three meetings held in Saskatoon this year. The final meeting was a learner-organized

mini-conference called "The Wisdom Within" in which 19 people attended.

The SLN encourages learner involvement in every aspect of its operations, and provides opportunities for learners to participate in provincial and national planning committees. In 2003-04:

- three learners from the Committee joined the SLN board.
- two learners were members of the Provincial Literacy Steering Committee
- two learners participated on the Advisory Committee for the Provincial Literacy Benchmarks Project
- Miao Ma attended one meeting of the Learner Advisory Network (LAN) of the Movement for Canadian Literacy (MCL) in Ottawa. At the MCL-LAN meetings, learner representatives share information about programs and events in each province and provide a voice on national issues. Carey Rigby-Wilcox from Saskatoon was selected to be the new MCL-LAN representative in January 2004.

Learners' Speakers' Bureau

The Learners' Speakers' Bureau is the most rewarding learner related program offered by the SLN. Adult literacy learners are invited to attend a special weekend training session, where they are introduced to the skill of public speaking. Within this training, learners write their own speech, documenting their learning journeys. After the training is complete, each learner agrees to volunteer some of his or her time to attend different functions to deliver their speech and talk about literacy experiences. The voice of the learner is very powerful, and the SLN staff are extremely proud of each learner who shares a piece of his or her life with the rest of the province. In 2003-04:

- The SLN coordinated 20 speaking events involving nine learners across the province reaching an estimated audience of 1200 people.

GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

The SLN has focused its efforts on working with the literacy community to identify key literacy issues and strengthening links with key government officials to heighten awareness of and commitment to literacy issues in the province.

This year, the SLN organized a "Speaking Out on Literacy"

forum with Saskatchewan practitioners to identify key issues and challenges to share with provincial Ministers and government officials during upcoming meetings. In partnership with Saskatchewan Aboriginal Literacy Network, literacy information kits were developed as advocacy tools.

- SLN representatives met with Saskatchewan MPs and Ministers on Parliament Hill on *Literacy Action Day*.
- Representatives also met with key government officials to increase awareness of literacy issues within Saskatchewan.
- The SLN prepared literacy articles for inclusion in selected MP newsletters.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Each year, the SLN develops special projects to encourage the continued growth of new knowledge within the literacy community of Saskatchewan and to ensure that the literacy needs continue to be met. This year, the SLN undertook the following projects:

Practitioners as Learners: A Professional Development Project

Throughout this year, the SLN embarked on year one of a three-year project exploring the professional development interests and needs of adult and family literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan. Staff:

- Developed and distributed surveys to 152 literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan. 43 completed surveys were returned.
- Conducted 13 interviews with literacy practitioners.
- Consulted individuals who have responsibility for supporting and delivering literacy professional development.
- Compiled information and statistics about past delivery of literacy professional development and reviewed related literature.

Shared information about the project with the literacy field in Saskatchewan and Saskatchewan Learning.

An eight person Advisory Committee guided this work, resulting in a draft professional development plan for literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan. We will take the draft plan to the literacy field for review and feedback in the fall of 2004.

SPECIAL PROJECTS continued

Literacy Research in Practice

The SLN received funding to explore possible interest in and possibilities for research in practice in the literacy community in Saskatchewan by:

- Exploring interest in research in practice through a survey and conversations with practitioners.
- Finding out what activities were underway in other provinces, territories and coalitions.
- Sharing information about research in practice generally and this project specifically with literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan and those doing literacy research in practice work throughout the country.
- Reviewing the literature about literacy research in practice.

The information and feedback gathered through these activities were compiled in a detailed project summary. Copies of this summary are available from the SLN.

Based on the favourable feedback we received, we decided to further support practitioners interested in research in practice in the province. To do this, we planned to:

- offer an accessible opportunity for literacy practitioners in Saskatchewan to learn about research in practice
- promote and support research in practice activities in the province
- make and maintain links with literacy research in practice initiatives throughout Canada, and
- provide research stipends to support and assist practitioners who want to conduct research in practice.
- Recruited Project Advisory Committee
- Conducted 20 focus groups in eight communities in Saskatchewan and received essential agreement on The Circle of Learning framework or model and input on what needs to be added and/or changed
- Agreement from focus groups, Project Advisory Committee, and Project Management Team that The Circle of Learning will contain four quadrants: Communications, Numeracy, Lifelong Learning, and Interpersonal skills
- Prepared first and second drafts of Level 1 and 2 Benchmarks for the Numeracy and Communications quadrants.
- Recruited content experts to assist with developing Lifelong Learning and Interpersonal quadrants.

The SLN applied to the National Literacy Secretariat for funding to support this work and received a limited amount of funding that will allow us to offer a research in practice learning opportunity for practitioners in the coming year.

Levels 1 and 2 Literacy Benchmarks

The goal of this project is to develop literacy benchmarks for Level 1 and 2 for use by both formal and informal literacy and basic education programs and services within Saskatchewan. The following are some highlights of the development of The Circle of Learning Levels 1 and 2 Literacy Benchmarks over the past year:

FUNDERS, SPONSORS, DONORS, & VOLUNTEERS

Each year, the Saskatchewan Literacy Network relies on the support of many people, organizations, and companies in our province to ensure that our work can continue. 2003-04 is no different. Words cannot express our appreciation for the dollars given, and the countless hours donated. The staff and board of the Saskatchewan Literacy Network would like to acknowledge these contributions by listing each one below.

The National Literacy
Secretariat/Human Resources
Development Canada
Saskatchewan Learning

SaskEnergy
Saskatchewan Government Insurance
(SGI)
SaskTel
Bradbury Branding and Design
Impact Printers
SaskTel Pioneers
Leader-Post
Global Television
DirectWest
Displayco
Taylor Automotive Group
Stonecreek Financial
Hotel Saskatchewan Radisson Plaza
CBC Radio
Air Canada
Canada Post
Great West Life/London Life
The Co-operators
Epson
Florida Panthers Hockey Club
ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation
Honda Canada
Lorne Drugs – Regina
Carey Shaw Photographics
Ken Jefferson Jazz Trio
Iris Dutton
The Office of the Lieutenant Governor

Canadian Tire (North) Regina
Saskatchewan Centre of the Arts
Indian Head Golf and Country Club
Royal Saskatchewan Museum
Regina Symphony Orchestra
Regina Court and Fitness Club
Artistic Design Gift Baskets
Saskatchewan Roughriders
Mackenzie Art Gallery
Katepwa Beach Golf Club
Elk Ridge Resort
Saskatchewan Science Centre
Ramada Hotel
Maggie Siggins
Pasta Prima
Garret Wilson
Bill Argan
Construction Labour Relations
Association of Saskatchewan Inc.
ReMax
Curves
Boston Pizza
TG Marketing
Gale's Florists
Houston Pizza
Florida Panthers
Alfa Engineering
TD Canada Trust
Dr. Claude Ibbott
Assiniboia Gallery
Book and Briar Patch
Avanti Office Products
Centax Books and Distribution
Zebra Crafts African Imports
Olive Waller Zinkhan & Waller
Hall & Rae
Star Electric
Medland-Devonshire Development
Corp.
Crown Life Insurance Company
Cook's McCallum Hill Insurance
Dundee Securities
Wallace Construction Specialties Ltd.
Dene Dent
Dr. Roberta MacKay
Dundee Development Corporation
Hill Avenue Drugs Ltd.

Jacqui Shumiatcher
Charlie Knight
John Hrycak
Regina Family Literacy Project
Rachelle Moberly
Medland Devonshire Developments
Stantec Architecture Ltd.
Brownlee Beaton Kreke
Parkland Regional Library (Yorkton)
Balcarres Community School
Kikinahk Friendship Centre
Southeast Regional Library (Weyburn)
Prince Albert Literacy Network
Seniors' Education Centre, University
of Regina
Kids First, Meadow Lake
Punnichy Community Elementary
School

Volunteers

Amber McLeod
Ernie Pawliw
Arlene Lloyd
Ilene Roy
Virginia Jedlic
Jeffie Anderson
SaskTel Pioneers
SaskEnergy staff and families
Raise a Reader volunteers
CBC Canada Reads celebrity readers
and volunteers

Saskatchewan Literacy Network

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