

# Quality Learning New Brunswick Aids Neighbourhood Literacy

By Jane Barry, The Greater Saint John Community Foundation

Anglin Drive, atop a rocky hill in Saint John's North End is not a neighbourhood many of us may travel through, so it may come as a surprise that this is the location of the first of a new kind of friendly neighbourhood library. They are popping up this spring in hopes they will grow a love of reading in homes where books are scarce but wanted. Quality Learning New Brunswick (QLNB) is a non-profit, literacy-based organization, working to support adult, family and community literacies.



From left, Debbie McLeod, Community Liaison for the Department of Social Development, Cheryl Robertson, board chair of the Greater Saint John Community Foundation, Wendell Dryden, Community Literacy Worker/Quality Learning New Brunswick, Charlene Good, Library Founder and member of the Anglin Drive Tenants Association, Roxanne Locke, volunteer, Kelly Kelly (in the back), president, Anglin Drive Tenant's Association, and Brenda Buckley, volunteer at the library, are seen following the ribbon cutting of the Anglin Drive library, a self-serve community library in Saint John's north end. Three of these libraries have been created this spring with the help of Quality Learning N.B. (Photo by Matthew Sherwood/TJ)

As a "Quality Organization" since 2001, its mission is to provide opportunities for individuals and families to become independent learners.

For several years the Saint John Free Public Library's outdoor, summer Storytent program has planted the seeds of literacy in the Crescent Valley area. One day, a parent came to the Anglin Drive Storytent and said, "I want a library at our community centre. I've been collecting books. Romero house has donated a lot. But I need shelves. I just don't think I can do it myself."

That was enough for the storytent workers from Quality Learning New Brunswick (QLNB) to pitch in and help her create the Anglin Drive Lending Library, collocated with the Anglin Drive Tenant's Association Office.

Cheryl Brown and Wendell Dryden are long-time, experienced and dedicated workers for Community Literacy. Through QLNB, they identified funding sources and worked with the resident and community centre to help her create the brightest library on the block. The Greater Saint John Community Foundation and the NB Department of Social Development have given financial support for Quality Learning NB to help support three North End communities in creating and/or maintaining these small community libraries.

Now, in anticipation of NB Literacy Day a Grand Opening, took place last Saturday. April 19 is New Brunswick Literacy day. It is marking its tenth anniversary this year as New Brunswick recognizes and celebrates learning.

Tammy Calvin, who lives in what has come to be known as the Old North End, (ONE) and serves on the board of ONE Change, joined the supporters of these mini-libraries saying, "I've been wanting to do that for years." She was also talking with QLNB Storytent Workers about creating a local library in her neighbourhood. The ONE Change lending library, located in their building's kitchen, could be compared to a "Library Cafe", their own version of Indigo North so to speak. Its Grand Opening will take place On Wednesday, April 21, 2010, 4:00 PM, 223 Victoria Street. There will be a ribbon cutting, cake, story reading and a chance to borrow some great books.

At the Crescent Valley Resource Centre, at 130 MacLaren Boulevard, QLNB was asked to assist in creating a small, self-serve community library that sees about 25 units of service per month. "We assisted with shelves and books for start up" says Cheryl Brown. Lisa Morris, Coordinator at the Centre, is pleased with the results, as are library volunteers Nancy Savoie and Rachel Maillet.

QLNB is providing support to the three North End communities as they have created and start to maintain small community libraries in response to the expressed wishes of residents in these areas. This support includes: information workshops on different types of libraries, catalogue systems and borrowing systems; purchase of book shelves and/or books for children and adults; bolstering the community residents confidence to manage their library, involving children, youth and adults in purchasing books and taking care of their library, along with reading related activities like a story-time or book drive.

Donations of books are welcome at these oases of literacy: call 333-2601/658-9119.



*Community Profile is a weekly column highlighting community causes and work done by non-profit organizations in the Greater Saint John area. It is contributed by Jane Barry, Executive Director of The Greater Saint John Community Foundation. Contact the Foundation at 506-672-8880. To view other Community profiles, visit [www.saint-john-foundation.nb.ca](http://www.saint-john-foundation.nb.ca)*