



War of 1812 Community Book Project Shifts Into High Gear

(September 4, 2012; Thorold, Ontario) Literacy Link Niagara (LLN) in partnership with the Early Childhood Community Development Centre (ECCDC) is coordinating a region-wide book project called the **Past is Present**. The project is made possible by a one year Ontario Trillium Foundation grant of \$58,800.

Two books have been selected – one for adults and a second for children under six. Both have strong themes tied to Niagara's past and the 1812 celebrations. The adult book is *"The Invasion of Canada"* by Ron Dale. The children's book is *"Past is Present: A Look at Then and Now"*, and was written and contributed especially for the project by Nancy Rotella, an Emergent Literacy Consultant with Speech Services Niagara. The books will be promoted together to emphasize the importance of family literacy.

A family literacy toolkit will be available this fall for download on the LLN website along with an innovative War of 1812 inspired, online scavenger hunt. A formal scavenger hunt was originally planned to take place at Brock University on Saturday September 22. However, due to a scheduling conflict with two other major community events – *Touch A Truck* and the *Pied Piper Parade* – a decision was made to instead offer an online scavenger hunt so that families could explore Niagara's historical sites at their leisure and from their homes. Gay Douglas Broerse of Literacy Link Niagara is pleased with the new direction; "We and our community partners are thrilled with this new online approach which we believe will enable a greater number of families to learn about Niagara's historical sites while providing more opportunities to promote other war of 1812 inspired activities taking place all across Niagara".

Lorrey Ariel Bonilla of the ECCDC is also enthusiastic about the project's next steps; "the Past is Present is such an exciting community project to be involved in. The ECCDC is pleased to have the opportunity to share a locally written book and War of 1812 inspired curriculum ideas with Niagara's licensed child care programs and we are thrilled with the online scavenger hunt concept. We believe it will be an innovative learning and literacy tool to increase children's and families' awareness of Niagara's historical sites."

Copies of the adult book will be distributed to local libraries, senior residences, and employment agencies. Local literacy organizations will receive a toolkit and training to engage adult literacy practitioners in the book content. Niagara's licensed child care programs will receive copies of the children's book, a toolkit of related curriculum activities, and training.

LLN hopes to engage adults, children, and families in literacy activities to celebrate the bicentennial while the ECCDC is pleased with the opportunity to provide Niagara's licensed child care programs with innovative learning materials.

For more information on the project, please contact

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- 30 -