

# Building Community Capacity to Address Rural Literacy Challenges

Pan-Canadian Literacy Forum – Atlantic  
Canada

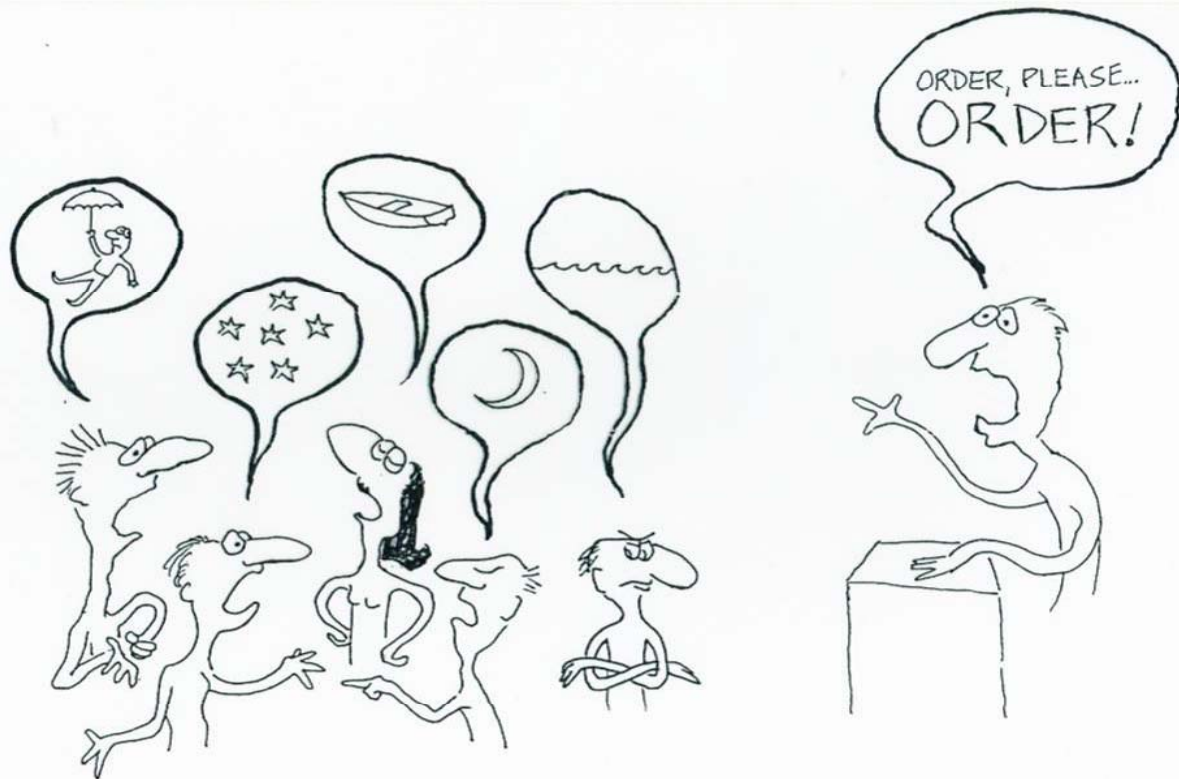
April 14, 2008

Saint John, New Brunswick

# The Community Education Network

Stephenville, Newfoundland





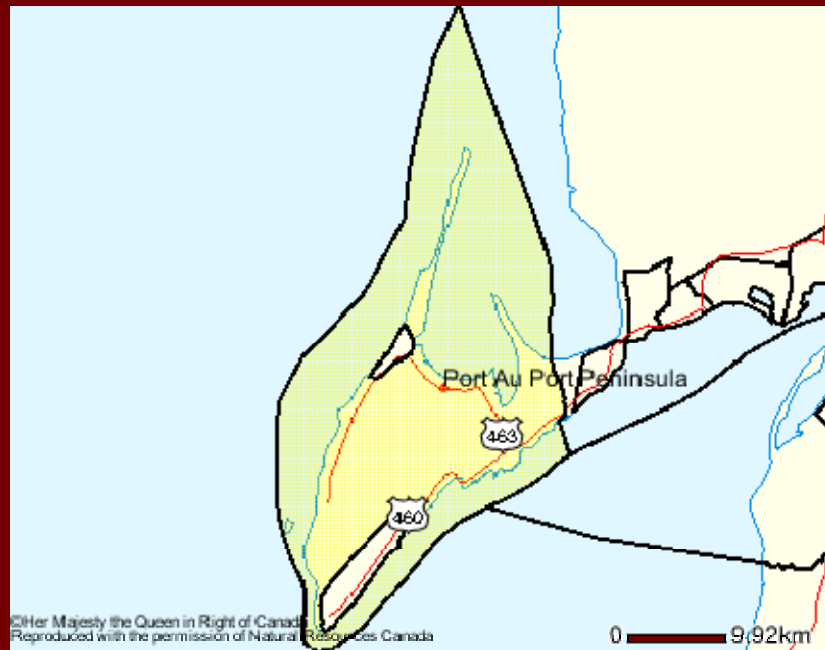


# Community Education Network (1991 - 2008)

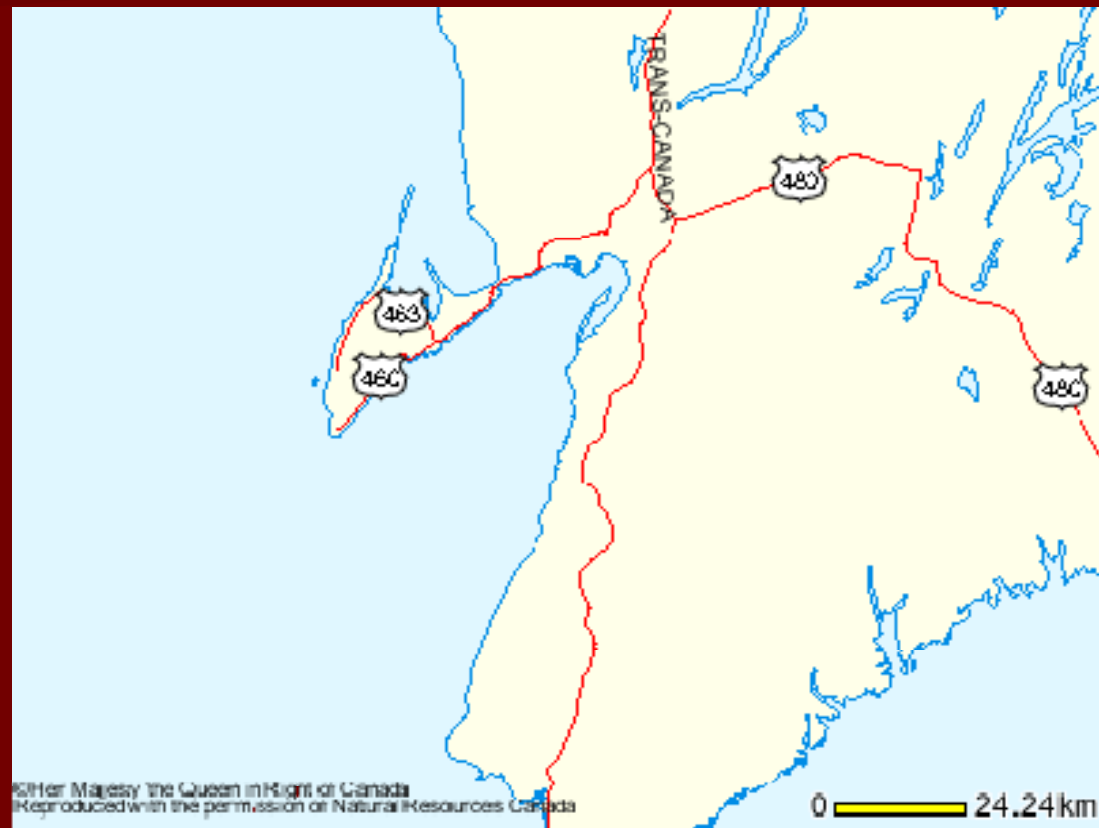
“A Partnership of Agencies”



# Port au Port Community Education Initiative



# Community Education Network for Southwestern Newfoundland



# Community Education Network

Western Region Map





# Building Capacity

- Like-minded approaches
  - Learning Communities (Ron Faris, B.C.)
  - Comprehensive Community Initiatives (Caledon Institute)
  - Weaving Literacy (MCL & FRP Canada)
- Our approach
  - Community Education (CACE)

# Community Education Principles

- Self-determination
- Localization
- Self-help
- Integrated service delivery
- Maximum use of resources
- Inclusiveness
- Institutional responsiveness
- Lifelong learning
- Leadership development

# Community Education Principles

- Community Involvement in Schools
- Community Capacity Building
- Citizen Engagement
- Participatory Practices

# Mission

- Guided by community education principles, the mission of the Community Education Network is to create a learning culture through a lifelong learning process which promotes personal enrichment and healthy, sustainable communities.



# Challenges and Lessons Learned

## ■ Isolation

- Partnerships work
  - Transportation
- Networks and clusters create synergy
- Connections must be local, provincial, national

# Challenges and Lessons Learned

## ■ Bureaucratic thinking

- Find champions
- Colour outside the lines
- Value non-linear and informal approaches

# Challenges and Lessons Learned

- Mismatch of funding and programming needs
  - Need for flexibility and ongoing collaboration
  - Community-based involvement in program design

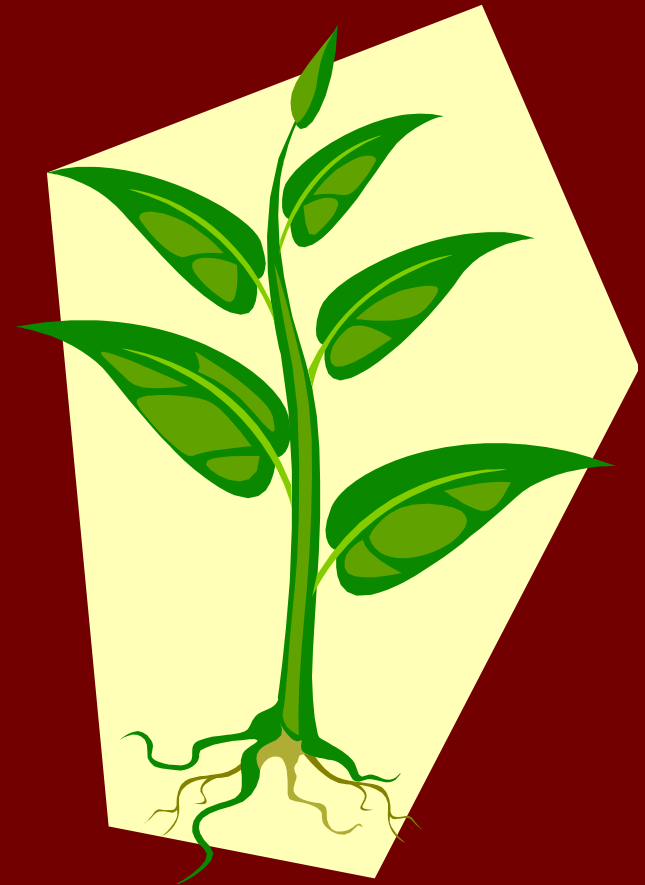
# Challenges and Lessons Learned

- Inappropriate evaluation tools
  - Qualitative vs. Quantitative
  - The "How" vs. the "What"
  - Stories count too



# Challenges and Lessons Learned

- Sustainability
  - Build vs. reinvent
  - Spin web of understanding



# Challenges and Lessons Learned

- Community Engagement
  - Community Roundtables
  - "People Helping People"
  - Support volunteers

# Collaborative Structure & Process

- Community Fora & Roundtables
- Networking Group
- 4 incorporated organizations (CEN, CAC, CIS, CYN)
- Leadership Group
- Programs & Projects



Providing a supportive environment is the cornerstone which leads to participation/involvement and capacity building. It is a natural progression.