

Our successful year

The Adult Community Learning Centre at Bedford High has had its busiest year ever, with thanks to Wigan Council's ACL funding.

Having traditionally offered just computer courses and Skills for Life courses, the Centre has now

delivered Complementary Therapy, Jewellery Making, Card Making, Spanish, and Digital Photography, attracting many learners. For more information, please contact Pauline Birchall, Community Development Officer on 01942 760264 email: adultlearning@bedford.wigan.sch.uk



Jack Swift attended the computer course at Westleigh High and has dedicated his poem to Neil Vincent, his tutor.

My Computer Course

My family said: "Dad, you're 82, and it's time that you did something new. There's lots of things come on the scene since you left school at just fourteen."

And so at Christmas I went to the shop and bought myself a new laptop. But of one thing there was no doubt, about computers I knew now't. To save me looking such a fool, I said: "Jack, for you, it's back to school. Show that you're one of the winners, join the class for complete beginners."

And so with much trepidation, I went along to the indoctrination. The instructor said: "My name's Neil, and I know exactly how you feel, Have no worries, don't you fret, I'll soon have you surfing on the Internet." I thought, 'you've another think coming, 'Sonny Jim', I'm doing no surfing, 'cos I can't swim.' And when he asked: "How many Rams?" I said: "I bought a computer, not a load of lambs." Well shortly he was having fits, sorting our 'Midgebytes' from our 'Gigglybites.'

But with dedication and patience galore, he soon had us all knowing the score. Using a mouse and making it click. Opening windows that didn't stick. Texting and formatting with no messing, we even learned clip-art wasn't hairdressing. Now here we are ten weeks on, budding experts every one. All thanks to him who taught us well, cleared the mysteries, broke the spell. And there's just one thing that makes us sad, were going to miss you Neil owd lad.

Wonderful writers!

Two Working Wonders' learners were North West finalists in the BBC's Raw story writing competition.

It was held to celebrate the National Year of Reading and there were only three finalists from the region. The Raw campaign highlights the importance of reading and writing for adults. Nearly 2,500 stories were submitted to the competition.

Working Wonders' winning learners were Sylvia Kenyon, who wrote a wonderful children's story called 'Why are You Green?' and Christine Doherty who wrote 'Lokankee's Star Turn' also a wonderful story showing huge amounts of

imagination and creativity. Author Julia Jarman, who was one of the judges, said: "I was knocked out by the creativity of the writers. Just think, all those wonderful ideas were locked inside people's heads, until writing released them from captivity to give us so much delight!"

Sylvia and Christine had their stories included in a BBC book called 'Winning Short Stories'. Neither learner had written a children's story before and lacked confidence in their writing ability. Working Wonders' tutor Ann Hirst saw their potential and guided them to success. Now, they want to develop their newly-found talent!

Shevington's story sacks

Story Sacks are a very good way of encouraging children to read as they contain many interesting things to help to bring the story to life.

A group of parents has enjoyed a 6 week Family Learning course at Shevington Children's Centre, developing the Story Sacks Library. This will help to give parents and carers the confidence to enjoy books and reading together with children. One parent said: "We've really enjoyed the course and got a lot out of it. I can't wait to start using the Story Sacks with my daughter."



**Pictured are Christine and Sylvia receiving their prizes from TV personality Vanessa Feltz.*

Celebrating Success

Neighbourhood Renewal Fund celebrations have taken place at Sunshine House, Scholes and Bramble House, Worsley Hall.

The events were organised to show the local communities where the community funding was invested and to celebrate the achievements of local people.

Two successful bids, put together by Working Wonders, provided Literacy, Numeracy and ESOL classes as well as six week taster sessions such as, First Aid, Nail Care, IT. All the sessions were successful and feedback from the leaders was very positive. There were 72

learners enrolled at Bramble House and 141 at Sunshine House, with some learners achieving a national qualification.

Barbara Nettleton from 'One Voice' Sunshine House and Eileen Horrocks from Bramble House said that holding the Working Wonders sessions had encouraged people to use their Centres and they hoped the provision would continue.

The courses at Sunshine House ranged from Computers, English and Numeracy to Flower Arranging, Art Classes, Health and Beauty. Some courses have become self-sufficient, creating a social network of local people. Funding has also provided a new computer suite and kitchen at the



Centre. Volunteers have taken Health and Safety courses and Food Hygiene, opening employment opportunities for them. Funding now needs to be secured from the Workless Agenda, in order to ensure people have the choice to continue their education.