



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

WOW! Reading Challenge begins for Elementary Schools November 3rd and Junior High, High Schools and other groups on December 1st!

(Monday, October 20, 2014) Pictou County, NS - The WOW! Reading Challenge began in Pictou County eight years ago, and has grown to international acclaim for all ages. The Elementary School division competitions begin November 3rd (with over 55 elementary schools currently registered). The Junior High, High School, Special Needs and the Adult Divisions are all set to begin their journey towards the title of 'Best Readers in the World' on December 1st, 2014. Being competitive isn't reserved for the athletic, and as people can see the WOW! Reading Challenge is a fun and friendly way of celebrating the sport of reading. The reading competition is free, and open to schools world-wide.

To learn more, go to www.fightingcrime.ca. Anyone who wants to register can contact Karen MacNeill (kmacneil@nsngp.library.ns.ca) or Const. John Kennedy, Provincial Coordinator of the Adopt-a-Library Literacy Program, (aal@parl.ns.ca). The Reading Challenge is hosted by the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library through a partnership with the RCMP, local policing agencies, schools, school boards and community sponsors.

About the program:

The WOW! Reading Challenge (or World Literacy Championship) began in the Salt Springs Elementary School as a challenge by Const. John Kennedy of the RCMP to see how many books the kids could read over a certain period of time. Now the WOW! Challenge has grown into an annual international competition, for all ages - from the elementary schools to Junior High Schools, High Schools, Colleges, Group Homes, Special Needs facilities, Provincial Institutions such as jails and prisons.

The slogan "Fighting Crime one Book at a Time" is based on Const. Kennedy's belief that if we teach our children to read today, we can keep them out of jail tomorrow. After learning from the National Literary Secretariat that 65 per cent of inmates entering Canadian jails for the first time had difficulty reading, Const. Kennedy approached the RCMP with this crime prevention program idea. After seven years, the WOW! Reading Challenge averages over 100 schools in Nova Scotia participating annually - consisting of roughly 15,000 students, and they read over 1 million books at the elementary level and over 2 million pages at the junior high level.

The Adopt-a-Library Literacy Program is coordinated by Const. Kennedy, and is hosted by the Pictou-Antigonish Regional Library. Several other NS RCMP detachments are involved in the program, including First Nation communities as well as detachments in Digby, Liverpool, Cape Breton, Pictou County, Colchester and Cumberland Counties, and several other NS municipal police agencies, including significant support from the Truro Police Force and Cape Breton Regional Police.

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