



PGI

Peter Gzowski Invitational

PGIs for Literacy

2020 Annual Report

Message from the Peter Gzowski Foundation for Literacy

The Peter Gzowski Foundation for Literacy (PGFL) is pleased to present this annual report summarizing the 2020 PGI season.

The PGFL was established following the death of Peter Gzowski in 2002 by the federal government to “support the national co-ordination activities of the PGI Golf Tournaments for Literacy, founded by Peter Gzowski, that promote literacy, raise funds and increase public awareness for literacy at the local level, including bringing together local literacy volunteers from across Canada to share best practises, expertise and advice at an annual training forum.”

2020 will go down in PGI history as the strangest year ever. First, Newfoundland and Labrador had to cancel its 2020 event due to the once in a century “Snowmageddon” that shut down the province with 90 cm of snow.

Then, the coronavirus hit Canada in March 2020. With so much uncertainty about what this meant and at least seven PGIs being cancelled or postponed, the Board of Directors took the following steps to protect the public and our PGI partners:

1. Cancelling the 2020 PGI Season due to public health measures surrounding the coronavirus
2. Supporting our PGI Partners by providing them with the annual distribution from the Foundation in spite of having to cancel all events.
3. Cancelling our annual PGI Partner Forum due to take place in November 2020. We distributed the funds budgeted for the Forum directly to our PGI Partners.

4. Continuing the Learner Achievement Award and the Peter Gzowski Award during 2020.

This year the board welcomed Meghan Dillon and Fiona Bramble as new directors. We appreciate the continued support of our National Events Manager, Alana Sprague

Throughout the year we worked with our PGI partners to develop a way to hold a 2021 PGI season which is described later in this report. 2020 was a year of challenges but we look forward to a brighter 2021.

Brigid Hayes
Chair, Peter Gzowski Foundation for Literacy

Peter Gzowski Foundation for Literacy Board of Directors

Brigid Hayes – Chair

Ottawa, ON – Consultant, strategic planning and policy development adult literacy and skills. Formerly, Canadian Labour and Business Centre and the National Literacy Secretariat, HRSDC.

Fiona Bramble – Director

Victoria, BC – Founder-CEO, Here in Canada and managing editor of Here Magazine. Member of Creative BC Magazine Advisory Committee and the Greater Victoria Alliance for Literacy. Former ELL educator.

Maureen Cavan – Director

Cobourg, ON – Retired. Former national magazine publishing executive and Executive Director NFP sector. ABC Canada Literacy Foundation Board of Directors 1990-2006 (Chair – 5 years).

Meghan Dillon – Secretary

Toronto, ON – Intellectual property lawyer, specializing in trademarks, and member of the Trademark Agent Examination Board. Formerly worked in book publishing, negotiating author contracts.

Alison Gzowski – Director

Toronto, ON – Gzowski Family representative for the PGFL Board of Directors, writer, editor, producer, and event organizer for non-profits.

Joanne Linzey – Director

Canning, NS – Retired. Worked in the not-for-profit community development field in Canada, US, and Brazil. Held several executive positions. Co-founded ABC Canada. Long involvement on the board of PGFL.

Deb McInnis – Director

Moncton, NB – Executive Director of the United Way of Greater Moncton and Southeastern NB Region. Formerly Executive Director for Laubach Literacy New Brunswick. Member, Greater Moncton Literacy Advisory Board, and a volunteer for the Children’s Wish Foundation for over 25 years.

Leah Patry – Treasurer

Toronto, ON – Over 25 years financial market experience. Former Portfolio Manager at one of the nation’s largest pension funds.

Alana Sprague – National Events Manager

Charlottetown, PE – Over 12 years of experience with various not-for-profit organizations, specializing in revenue development. Nature and landscape photographer.

Remembering Peter Gzowski

Founder of the Peter Gzowski Invitational (PGI)

For three hours a day, five days a week, for 15 years, millions tuned in to CBC Radio's Morningside to listen to Peter Gzowski talk with Canada from coast to coast to coast. His insightful yet informal interviews with everyone from the Prime Minister to a chili sauce expert was one reason the award-winning broadcaster, author and journalist was often referred to as Mr. Canada. What many might not know is the legacy he left outside of his broadcasting life.

In 1985, while playing on what had been his grandfather's favourite golf course, Peter Gzowski had an idea...why couldn't he bring together some friends for a fun-filled golf tournament and perhaps raise a dollar or two for adult literacy at the same time? A year later, his 'little fundraising tournament' evolved into the Peter Gzowski Invitational (PGI), a national series of locally produced golf tournaments featuring well-known Canadian musicians, writers, performers and, of course, a learner to talk about their literacy experience.

These events have evolved beyond just golf tournaments and now include gala dinners, wine tastings, a lob ball tournament, and a bowl-a-thon. PGIs are held annually in every province and territory, except Nunavut. Over the years more than 43,000 people have taken part in PGIs across the country. In the process, over \$15 million has been raised for volunteer-based literacy programs. All funds raised directly support literacy initiatives in the provinces and territories where the PGIs are held.

The Peter Gzowski Foundation for Literacy continues to support Peter's legacy and his passion for, as he once put it, "playing for a better world."

2020 Highlights

The year began with the PGI Partners busy planning their events for 2020. Thanks to the successful 2019 Partners Forum in Calgary, the PGI Partners were feeling connected as a group and positive about the upcoming season.

The first hint that 2020 was unlike any other was the postponement, and ultimate cancellation of Newfoundland and Labrador's January event. "Snowmageddon" shut down the province thanks to a record snowfall.

In March 2020, COVID-19 became a reality for Canadians. Warnings to come home and stay home were issued by all levels of government. We checked in with the PGI Partners and learned that seven PGIs had either been cancelled or postponed with others in a 'wait and see' mode. By mid-April, the PGFL Board of Directors cancelled all PGIs for the year. Public safety was more important.

The PGI Partners reported relief at this news as they were all grappling with the same issues. Many sponsors and donors generously let their contributions stand so the PGI Partners were not out-of-pocket for expenses already incurred.

The PGFL Board of Directors provided each PGI Partner with their annual disbursement and re-distributed the funds that would have been used for the annual Partners Forum to the PGI Partners.

Early on, the PGFL knew it would have to support the PGI Partners throughout the year and find ways to support them to mount a 2021 season. We began in July with an informal gathering of information followed by a Zoom call in August with all the Partners to receive updates on their current status. That meeting also explored Partners' experience with online fundraising. We asked the Partners what PGFL could help with in planning for 2021.

By September, the Board had recognized the need for an online option if the 2021 PGI Season was to go ahead. We met with fundraising expert Judi Charman of Mt. Hood Community College who had maximized donations during the pandemic and with former board member Alison Jackson of Tomali Pictures (producer of Huron Carole) to better understand how online events work.

A Working Group of the Board was struck in October to examine options for the 2021 season. Ultimately, that group determined that a national virtual event was feasible for 2021. At the same time, we researched other supports we could provide, settling on offering CrowdChange licenses to Partners to manage their donation systems.

The final proposal for a National Virtual Event was made to the PGFL Board of Directors in December. The PGI Partners were briefed on the proposal and by early 2021, five Partners had signed on to the National Virtual Event with the other Partners feeling confident that their in-person events could take place or they could host their own online PGI event.

A big thank you to all the PGI Partners for their continued participation and support over the last year.

Thank you to the 2021 Season Working Group made up of PGFL board members Maureen Cavan (chair), Leah Patry, Fiona Bramble, Brigid Hayes, and Alana Sprague who worked over the fall to develop options. Maureen Cavan is now leading the Production Working Group with Alison Gzowski, Fiona Bramble, and Alana Sprague to turn the idea of a National Virtual Event into a reality.

2020 PGI Partners

Location	PGI Partner
British Columbia	Literacy Haida Gwaii
Alberta	CanLearn Society
Saskatchewan	READ Saskatoon
Manitoba	John Howard Society of Manitoba
Ontario	Frontier College
Quebec	Yamaska Literacy Council
Newfoundland and Labrador	Community Centre Alliance
Nova Scotia	Literacy Nova Scotia
New Brunswick	Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick
Prince Edward Island	PEI Literacy Alliance
Yukon	Yukon Learn
Northwest Territories	NWT Literacy Council

2020 PGI Awards Winners

Since PGI events were not held in 2020, some awards were not presented, some will be awarded at a future date, while others were awarded virtually.

The Learner Achievement Award was established in 1992 to “reward and encourage individuals who distinguish themselves while engaged in literacy programs throughout Canada.” This presentation is a reminder to all participants that they are at the event to celebrate literacy and to encourage and support learners all over the country.

A **Poet Laureate** is present at each PGI event. They create and share a poem about literacy or the PGI event itself. Some poets have been known to even create the poem on the fly during the event they’re participating in.

The Peter Gzowski Award is named after Peter Gzowski in recognition of all that Peter did for literacy. This award is given to someone who exemplifies a passion for literacy be it a participant at a PGI event, a PGI sponsor, a volunteer or anyone who the PGI Partner feel fits the criteria.

PGI Partner	Poet Laureate	Learner Achievement Award	The Peter Gzowski Award
Literacy Haida Gwaii (BC)			
CanLearn Society (AB)		Blaine Taylor	Lauren Mayell
READ Saskatoon (SK)	Curtis Peeteetuce	MacKenzie Bear	Robert Fisher

PGI Partner	Poet Laureate	Learner Achievement Award	The Peter Gzowski Award
John Howard Society of Manitoba (MB)	Jordan Wheeler	Aaron	Nicole Alty
Frontier College (ON)			Patricia Browne
Yamaska Literacy Council (QC)			
Community Centre Alliance (NL)			
Literacy Nova Scotia (NS)		Amber Gray-Williams Randy Williams	Mayor Mike Savage (to be awarded at a later date)
Literacy Coalition of New Brunswick (NB)			
PEI Literacy Alliance (PE)			Dianne Smith
Yukon Learn (YT)			Mark Davey
NWT Literacy Council (NT)		Susan Chaffee	

Congratulations to all the award recipients and our thanks to the Poet Laureates.