

June 2013

TUTOR NEWSLETTER



Adult Literacy



and Basic Education

Aoife McCormack **County Adult Literacy Organiser**

It is May once again, although it doesn't seem like it! Not only did another academic year fly by but the warm sunny days are still to come hopefully!

It has been a great year with really wonderful learner centred and creative tuition taking place. There are great examples everywhere in the county. The 1:1 tuition is helping so many learners to build their confidence and skills. In 2012 205 learners received 1:1 tuition in eight centres around the county. 17,280 hours were delivered voluntarily.

There is wonderful group tuition taking place in every centre. While many groups are now making final preparations for FETAC, others are winding down, and no doubt you have felt this pressure over the past number of weeks. The sense of achievement that learners feel makes this all worth-while. It is great to see how learners have grown in confidence and skills. Now we hear them talking about next year and moving on to other courses with us or to other programmes.

I can't tell you how impressed I am with all the greatly creative and collaborative work that has taken place over the past year. This newsletter has

managed to capture a mere taster of the work and is by no means an exhaustive list. However, in this publication you will see references to examples such as the Killarney Literacy through Music group, the Tralee Stepping Stone programme and in Kenmare the ITABE programme which has opened many doors for learners. In ESOL it was really wonderful to see the tutors come together to work on the development of the ESOL Assessment Tool. This real sharing and close working is a great example of the wonderful collaboration that takes place right throughout the service.

This year there has been a focus on Continuous Professional Development. Many in-services took place and a WIT module was delivered here in Kerry. I hope that you found these to be beneficial and I hope too that you participated in the recent survey on training needs as this will help shape our future delivery.

Finally, I want to say thank you for all your time, energy, enthusiasm and generosity in sharing your skills and knowledge, being open to learning and development and showing great care. It is wonderful to work with such a dedicated Team. Thank you.

I hope you have a lovely summer!

Cahersiveen Centre News

Maggie O'Sullivan Graham, (Acting)
District Literacy & Education Organiser



The big news in the O'Connell Centre this term was the happy news that Deirdre Fitzgerald, District Literacy and Education Organiser, gave birth to a lovely baby girl, Zoe. This lucky girl has two lovely older sisters, who are a big help to Deirdre I'm sure. Tutors, learners and centre staff all send Deirdre our heartiest congratulations.

To celebrate World Book Night, members of the Cahersiveen VTOS group were given some free books. The idea of World Book Night is to spread the joy of reading, and it's a joint venture between a range of big publishing houses and authors. People vote all year on what books they think should be distributed - find out more and cast your vote on www.worldbooknight.org

Here's a picture of me and Joe Brennan, VTOS Co-ordinator, having a chat and a look at the books with some of the VTOS learners at the O'Connell Centre.



I have really enjoyed getting to know the learners, tutors and centre staff at the O'Connell Centre over the last few months while Deirdre has been away, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank you all for the help and support I was given while looking after the service in that part of the county.

Writing and reading decrease our sense of isolation. They deepen and widen and expand our sense of life: they feed the soul. When writers make us shake our heads with the exactness of their prose and their truths, and even make us laugh about ourselves or life, our buoyancy is restored. We are given a shot at dancing with, or at least clapping along with, the absurdity of life, instead of being squashed by it over and over again. It's like singing on a boat during a terrible storm at sea. You can't stop the raging storm, but singing can change the hearts and spirits of the people who are together on that ship.

Anne Lamott: *Some Instructions on Writing and Life*

Dingle Centre News

Bill McConnell
Adult Literacy Organiser

Hello agus fáilte go dtí notaí as an Dain-gean.

Hello and welcome to the Dingle news. We have had a good term this Spring with classes being held in Ventry, Clahane, and in Dingle town. The Ventry group appeared in an issue of *West Kerry Live* again after their inaugural appearance last autumn. They consist mainly of older people who will resume their class in the coming September.

The Clahane group are parents of pre-school or early school-going children. The parents are learning Irish in order to help their children with their homework and to use Irish in their everyday lives within the community. Their tutor Marie Ní Shúilleabháin is seeing them through this Family Learning course until mid-June with a view to resuming again in the Autumn term.

In Dingle, we have our *English Using Multimedia* class with Andrew Duggan and our *Read Write Spell* class which is aiming for Communications Level 3 under the tutelage of Joanne Ní Shúilleabháin. We hope to be able to deliver these classes again in the Autumn.

Learners from both classes, along with two new hopefuls, attended a KAGS session with Ita Lane at the monastery where a lot of information on FETAC, BTEI and Community Education courses was delivered.

Again, I would like to thank our one to one tutors and learners. There are a number of these sessions going on for two hours each per week and the dedication and commitment of our tutors and learners is heart-warming. We will certainly be continuing with these sessions in the coming year as they are the backbone of the literacy service.

Many thanks.



Education make a people easy to lead, but difficult to drive: easy to govern, but impossible to enslave.

Peter Broughan

Instruction ends in the school-room, but education ends only with life.

Frederick W. Robertson

www.inspirational-quotes.info

Kenmare Centre News

Maggie O'Sullivan Graham
District Literacy & Education Organiser

Greetings from sunny Kenmare where the Adult Education Centre garden is showing the full forty shades of green and we are all enjoying bags of fresh salad delivered to our offices and classrooms!

It has been a busy year here with record numbers of learners attending one to one tuition in our centre. National Volunteers Week took place this month so it was a great chance to celebrate the great work our volunteer tutors do. It is not always easy to work one to one; it can be very challenging, but also very rewarding. It is great to see learners grow in confidence and move along, learning new skills.

A meeting of ABE tutors for the Kenmare area was held this term, thanks to all who came along. It was primarily a chance for new tutors to meet and share ideas, but it was very well attended and was a very enjoyable evening. We looked at ways of teaching spelling, and all the tutors went home with two free books, to celebrate World Book Night.

Kenmare's ITABE group will be coming to an end this month. They have been working on a broad range of skills, with the course title *Lifeskills for the Workplace*. The underlying theme has been preparing for the world of work, and content has included looking for jobs online, writing cover letters and developing a strong CV. The group have had guest speakers discussing their own career paths, and are planning a trip to the Skelligs Chocolate factory later in the month. I hope they bring me back some



Killarney Centre News

Mary Concannon
Adult Literacy Organiser

Well we are just coming to the end of another very busy year at Killarney Adult Literacy and Basic Education Centre. I want to thank every tutor for the kindness, professionalism and dedication they have displayed especially towards the students of Killarney Adult Literacy and Basic Education Centre. However our interaction together is just as important and in this regard it remains a great pleasure for me to come to work each day knowing that I will meet a team who look for solutions instead of finding problems. The fact that you have taken this "can do" attitude into the teaching and learning settings in the centre has contributed in no small way to the hugely positive attitude to learning among the student population. The benefit of your work ethic and ethos is increasingly reflected in the learning outcomes and improved self-assurance of our students. As a result we can all be justifiably proud of our input to the services offered by Killarney Adult Literacy and Basic Education Centre.



Better World Books Fund

In January, we were successful in securing a grant of €273 under the Better World Books Fund. This funding was used to purchase much needed books for our Learning through Geography and Learning through Gardening programmes. We also purchased books for our tutors to provide them with new ideas and approaches to delivering programmes.

Learning through Music

This is a collaborative project between Killarney Adult Literacy and Basic Education Centre, Community Education and Kerry Parents & Friends Community Programme. Until now the two disciplines were taught as separate programmes. However, Jane Savage and Ruti Lachs devised a programme titled *Learning Through Music*. This is being developed to FETAC Level 1 and Level 2 and the preparation of the module descriptors is proceeding apace. The ethos of the programme is of embedded learning whereby the group will develop their literacy skills through the medium of music. The programme concluded with a concert on the 26th March, 2013. The worksheets are available in the Resource Room.

Continued on Page 9

Focus on Numeracy

Jenny O'Reilly
Adult Literacy Organiser
KILLORGLIN

All sound structures are underpinned by strong foundations. Maths is no exception. Maths skills start not with counting—that comes at ground level, but with a sound knowledge of more basic concepts. While literacy skills do not have a specific order maths concepts and skills follow a sequence. One builds on the next. So what sort of concepts are we talking about here?

Classification

The ability to discriminate between same and different and to understand opposite (important in grasping negative number). Being able to match, group and categorise according to a specific criteria is a critical pre-maths skill. A set may be a knife, fork and spoon.

Ordering

Sorting objects into categories and ordering objects from smallest to largest or the reverse and helps the students to later solve problems requiring a knowledge of sequence and later working with sets.

Conservation

Understanding sameness—that a given amount remains the same though its appearance may change. For example: a bowl of cake mix makes 12 cup cakes. This aids the understanding of $6+4=10$, equivalent fractions and later simultaneous equations.

Spatial and Positional

Explore simple concepts like top, bottom, middle and follow with more complex concepts like parallel, curved, intersecting. Three dimensional real object shapes must be named and explored before 2D which have no substance.

A good grasp of these basic concepts ensures that students move on quickly with learning more advanced maths and enjoy the experience.



Students need a good grasp of maths vocabulary and abbreviations

Size	large, small, big, little
Weight	heavy, light
Length	short, long
Width	wide, narrow, thick, thin
Height	tall, short, high, low
Spatial	top, bottom, middle, centre, diagonal, parallel, perpendicular, angle, intersecting, rotating

Tips for tutors

1. Check that students have a full grasp of basic maths concepts. Identify and plug any gaps.
2. Teach maths vocabulary and check often for understanding.
3. Ensure that students are totally on top of a maths topic before moving on.
4. Hands on experience is essential.

Listowel & Castleisland Centre News

Mary Swaine
District Literacy & Education Organiser

We are coming to the end of a very busy term. I wish to thank all the tutors for their dedication and support both here in Listowel and in the Castleisland centre. We had a great number of learners from both centres for FETAC certification in many different modules like Child Development & Play, Functional Maths, Word Processing, Information Technology Skills, Internet Skills, Digital Photography and Career Preparation. The work for this certification was excellent in both the presentation of the folders by the tutors and in the content prepared by the learners.

A big thank you also to our team of volunteers tutors both in the Listowel centre and the Castleisland centre. This service could not survive without your huge input.

Both Listowel and Castleisland centres were successful in receiving the NALA Student Development Fund. The learners will be organising a day for learners. I will be writing to some learners who have volunteered to help organise this day. There will be plays, singing, dancing, poetry reading, and lots more on the agenda.

On behalf of all tutors and learners, I would like to wish both John McGrath and Jerry Hurley a very happy retirement. Both will be dearly missed by us all. A heartfelt thanks for all their hard work and invaluable contributions over the years.

Awards Day in Listowel Community College

A great day was had by all who attended the Adults Learners Award Day in the Listowel Community College on Thursday 16th May. On this day the learners received a certificate of attendance and they will be receiving their FETAC award in the coming months.



Tralee Centre News

Maeve Tuohy
Adult Literacy Organiser

Hello to you all! Here are some highlights from the Tralee scheme this year to share with you.

I am delighted to welcome **new volunteer tutors** who joined the team in January. I hope that you will find your role enjoyable and rewarding.

You may have read about the World Book Fund in the Christmas Newsletter. We were fortunate enough to receive €200.00 from this fund to buy books for the ladies **Reading Circle** at Eden Court. There are eight students in the Reading Circle working with their tutor, Nigel Hull, who has nurtured their interest in reading books. At present, they are reading *Angels in my Hair* by Lorna Byrne and are thoroughly enjoying it.

Fourteen students achieved a full FETAC Certificate in General Learning through their participation in the NALA **Write On Programme**. This course was delivered using the blended learning approach - a combination of online delivery and tutor delivery. The students were awarded their certificates by Aoife McCormack in a ceremony to mark their success and achievement.

Stepping Stone - a new ABE programme - commenced last October and finishes in May. The programme was aimed at adults who wished to become more self-confident and who were interested in preparing for opportunities in further education, in volunteering or in becoming more 'job-ready'. There were eight students - three men and five women - on the programme. The programme modules were: Personal Development, Communications, Preparing for Opportunities, Everyday Maths and Internet Skills. The programme will be evaluated in the coming weeks and we will take the valuable learning from that evaluation forward to the next Stepping Stone Programme.

By the time you read this newsletter we will have had our first student event at Eden Court. The event - **Moving On, Moving Up** - is an opportunity for students to celebrate the end of the year, get together for a cup of tea, exchange experiences and find out about other learning options both in ABE and other KES programmes.

Tutors Thank You Evening will take place on 30 May. I'm really looking forward to seeing you on the 30th. If you cannot make it, I would like to say a sincere thank you for the work you have done with your student and also for the support you have given me throughout the year.

Have a lovely Summer and fingers crossed for some good weather.

Tutor Support News

Isabelle Dumont



This has been a busy term with respect to in-services and training. In January, Rico Stein, from the Kerry Adult Guidance Service, went out to Cahersiveen to talk to tutors and also delivered an in-service in Tralee. In February, in the spirit of refreshing ideas and concepts learned in tutor training, we ran a series of refresher in-services including Read Write Think, which focussed on how tutors can and should incorporate thinking skills into lesson plans. Also in February and March, a Reading and Writing Refresher in-service was delivered.

During the Easter break in April Waterford's Institute of Technology *Psychology of Adult Learning* module was delivered to 20 tutors for Adult Basic Education and other KES programmes. Also in April, Tom O'Mara from NALA delivered an information session for tutors who deliver the *Write On* Programme for accreditation.

Thanks to you all for your dedication and support this year. It has been a pleasure working with you, and I hope you have a good and restful summer.

Try to get some sunshine — if you can find it!

Killarney Centre News

Continued

Learning through Geography

Learning through Geography is a programme which covers literacy, numeracy, ICT Skills, elements of geography, general wellbeing and personal development. Learners prepare a project about a country of their choice and present the findings at the end of the course. The programme is an innovative adaptation of learning outcomes to benefit the learner in a variety of real life situations. The programme was devised by Elaine Clifford.



Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another.

G.K. Chesterson

Intelligence plus character — that is the goal of true education.

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Education is the best provision for old age.

Aristotle

www.inspirational-quotes.info

ANNOUNCEMENTS



AONTAS STAR AWARDS

The seventh Adult Learners' Festival was a massive success with 417 free events taking place throughout the country. There was a huge range of events to cater to all tastes and interests from a range of providers including libraries, VEC's, adult education providers, community groups and private businesses.

AONTAS announced the winners of this year's STAR Awards at the STAR awards ceremony in Dublin on February 25th.

The winners were:

- ***Nationwide Category***—
Training for Success
- ***Connaught Category***—Goal to
Work Sports Coach Training
- ***Munster Category***—
Ballybeg Horticulture Project
- ***Leinster Category***—
On The Edge, The Chair Project

Ballybeg Horticulture Project

Ballybeg Horticulture Project in Waterford began with the aim of tackling food poverty in the local area but discovered there was a lack of skills, so they started out with one module course in vegetable crops.

The project, which began in 2009, has run courses in horticulture at Level 4 and 5 and currently run a Level 3 course in Employability skills.



For detailed information on the awards and the winners log onto: www.NALA.ie

Clare Family Learning Tutor Training June 27 and 28, 2013

The Clare Family Learning Project will deliver a two day training at the Adult Education Centre in Ennis, County Clare.

Please contact mflanagan@clarevec.ie or 065 6897645 for more information.

Registration Fee is €100

ANNOUNCEMENTS (cont'd)



Numeracy Conference

NALA and the Institute of Technology Tallaght (ITT) are hosting a numeracy conference on
Thursday, June 13.

The focus is to assist adult numeracy practitioners to help meet the challenges of delivering maths provision.

Please contact NALA at www.nala.ie for more information.

KES In-Service Education & Training Fund

If you are planning on attending an in-service or completing a WIT module, you *may* be eligible for a 50% refund of fees .

Your application must be made within 12 months of starting the training or in-service and be accompanied by a receipt. Also, it must be approved by your centre manager.

For more information and an application form please contact:

Theresa Deane at KES Head Office:
tdeane@cokerryed.ie or ring
066 71 21488.



DID YOU KNOW!

www.did-you-knows.com



Lemons contain more sugar than strawberries.

The most commonly used letter in the alphabet is E.

Most lipsticks contain fish scales.

Stewardesses is the longest word that is typed with only the left hand.

Honey is the only natural food which never goes off.

Coca-Cola originally contained cocaine.

ANNOUNCEMENTS (cont'd)



NALA's Family Project

The Family Project is a new six-part series that follows families around Ireland working Together to overcome educational issues that affect their lives. Each week, a different family sets out to tackle a problem that has a particular impact on them. They work together with educational experts and well-known mentors to find a way to overcome the problem.

Not only does it show how families can work together improving collective learning, but also how they can apply these methods to activities that involve everyone.

The Family Project was broadcasted on **May 20 at 7:30 p.m.** on RTE and will run for **six weeks**.

National Family Library Day – June 11th

To coincide with the TV series, NALA has organised a national open day in every library. Libraries will show resources and fund things to help parents support their child's literacy and numeracy.

Contact your local library to find out what is happening in family literacy work.



Help My Kid Learn.ie

www.helpmykidlearn.ie is a new website for parents, guardians, family members and childminders of children aged between 0–12 years. The purpose of the website is to provide fun activities that parents can do with their children to help develop their child's literacy and numeracy skills.

Activities are split into five age groups and into five areas: Talk, Play, Read, Write and Count. The website provides parents with easy fun activities they can do as they are going along, in the house and when they are out and about together.

Developed by the National Adult Literacy Agency with 40 stakeholders (including the TUI). www.helpmykidlearn.ie is part of the National Strategy to improve Literacy and Numeracy among children and young people.

ANNOUNCEMENTS (cont'd)

GLOBAL CITIZENS: Development Education Theory & Practice for Adult Basic Skills/Literacy Educators



A Training Course for Adult Education Tutors/Course Coordinators

Monday June 17 - Friday June 21, 2013

Join with an international group of professionals and peers to enhance your skills and improve your capacity to assist your students to learn in an environment that encourages active citizenship. Development Education (DE) methodologies will be introduced by an expert team and participants will be facilitated to explore how to integrate DE approaches and resources into their work.

LOCATION: 5 Friary Lane, Kerry One World Centre, Tralee, Kerry

COURSE COST: Irish participants' course fee **€75 for the week**

REGISTRATION: Attendees must register by emailing KADE by Wednesday, June 10th, 2013.

FURTHER INFORMATION: Mary McGillicuddy by email- coordinator@kade.ie |

TED Talks

TED Talks is a non-profit daily video podcast of the best talks and performances from TED conferences and events. (TED stands for Technology, Entertainment, Design.)

TED talks began as a simple attempt to share what happens at conferences. TED Talks runs under the slogan *ideas worth spreading*, and as of 2012, TED Talks have been viewed one billion times.

Check out the website at www.ted.com.

Search *Education* or *Adult Education* or anything you want, and it is amazing what you will find!



TED

**Ideas worth
spreading**

How Good is Your Grammar? (Answers on Page 15)

1. _____ shall I say is calling?
A. Who
B. Whom
C. Whose
D. Who's
2. _____ hour ago we met _____ history teacher.
A. A/an
B. A/a
C. An/a
D. An/an
3. Charles and _____ are attending the conference.
A. me
B. I
C. myself
D. Mine
4. Homophones are:
A. Two or more words that share the same pronunciation but have different meanings.
B. Two or more words that share the same meaning but have different pronunciations.
C. Two or more words that share the same spelling but have different meanings.
D. Two or more words that share the same pronunciation but have different spellings.
5. Love, courage and childhood are examples of:
A. Proper nouns
B. Abstract nouns
C. Relative nouns
D. Countable nouns
6. The other boys or Henry _____ to blame.
A. is
B. are
C. were
D. Will
7. Which of the following sentences is correctly punctuated?
A. Our manager rejected our proposal, we were stunned.
B. Our manager rejected our proposal; we were stunned.
8. The number of lawsuits _____ increasing.
A. are
B. is
9. Denise _____ the contract on my desk.
A. lay
B. laid
C. Layed





DID YOU KNOW!

www.did-you-knows.com

The average person falls asleep in seven minutes.

Unless food is mixed with saliva you can't taste it.

Dreamt is the only word that ends in *mt*.

The names of all continents both start and end with the same letter.

The first letter of the months July through to November spell JASON.

If you try to say the alphabet without moving your lips or tongue every letter will sound the same.

Cats spend 66% of their life asleep.

Macadamia nuts are toxic to dogs.

Contact Information



If you have recently changed your email address or phone number please inform your Adult Literacy Organiser and Isabelle as soon as possible.



Education costs money, but then so does ignorance.

Claus Moser

If someone is going down the wrong road, he doesn't need motivation to speed him up. What he needs is education to turn him around.

Jim Rohn

Answers to *How Good is Your Grammar Quiz*

1. A
2. C
3. B
4. A
5. B
6. A
7. B
8. B
9. B



Useful Links and Resources



Numeracy

Primary maths worksheets. Generate basic maths worksheets. Quick and easy to use.

www.softschools.com/math/worksheets/print

Spelling

www.spellingcity.com/handwriting.html

(Submitted by Lucy Henehan, Tralee)

Mind Mapping

Free online Mind Mapping App

www.wisemapping.com

(Submitted by Paula Tiller, Kenmare)

Adult Literacy & Numeracy Resources

Although it is North American based, there are lots of worksheets and ideas.

www.skillsworkshop.org

(Submitted by Angie Kissane, Listowel)

Collection of Photos

Useful photos that are available to tutors for free. Please be sure to acknowledge your source when using them.

www.flickr.com/photos/eltpics/sets

(Submitted by Maggie O'Sullivan, Kenmare ALO)

In-Service Questionnaire Results

Isabelle Dumont, Tutor Support



Thank you to all of you who completed this questionnaire. Your feedback is important to us and we will use your comments to guide our planning for the upcoming term.

Your feedback gives us an opportunity to identify your collective interests and issues. I cannot list all of your responses here, but **below** is a *brief* summary of some of the commonalities that your responses produced.

To put it in perspective, **169** tutors were **emailed** the questionnaire and **22** tutors were sent a questionnaire in the **post**. So, in all **191** tutors received a questionnaire. Of the tutors who responded electronically, **52** replied, and **2** tutors posted their responses; therefore, a **total of 54** tutors responded to the questionnaire — or **27%**.

In response to the question about in-services you would like to see offered many of you identified I.T., Initial Tutor Training Refresher and Numeracy. Specifically though, FETAC training, Spelling, Phonics & Grammar and Creative Thinking were identified.

Your responses as to the time of day that suits you best for attending in-services in your own local centre and in either Killarney or Tralee surprised me. Weekdays and Saturday mornings was rated the highest. Next was 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. and 7 to 9 p.m.

The number of in-services most of you are available to attend is one to two per term.

With regard to my role as Tutor Support most of you are most familiar with me because of an in-service you attended, Tutor Events or through the Initial Tutor Training Programme. Some of you have requested material or resources and assistance with lessons or a student. This was most prevalent in Tralee, which is no surprise as this is where I am based.

The issue of networking groups and meetings on an informal basis came up again. I did attempt to organise networking groups in centres last year, but was unable to attract the numbers we would need to form a group in each centre. If anyone has an idea of how we could better approach this concept, given our resources, I would be interested to hear your ideas.

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New ESOL Assessment Tool March 2013

The new Kerry Education Service ESOL Assessment Tool has been re-designed to provide a more comprehensive and coherent guide in placing our ESOL learners. Its main focus is to accurately place learners at the correct level and pinpoint any literacy problems that may arise during the initial assessment. Over a number of years the population of Kerry expanded to include other nationalities from within and beyond the EU. These people came to create a new life and new opportunities for themselves and their families. In moving to Kerry some people face difficulties in integrating. One of the main barriers is language.

Kerry Education Service (KES) works to ensure that English language classes for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) are delivered and in doing so has built a collaborative partnership approach to identifying learners most in need. Proper placement of learners ensures that learners are motivated to learn at their own level and pace, can practice safely and can gain confidence.



In-Service Questionnaire Results cont'd

Establishing a space on the KES Intranet for tutors was mentioned several times.

Very Good to Fairly Good is how you rated the Resource Room in your centres, and most of you said you develop your own materials, use the internet and the resource room to access material for your learners.

Under the *General Comments* section, you requested training for tutors who deliver FETAC, a tutor



website for posting the Tutor Newsletter, training notes and worksheets.

There are too many comments to list here, but your centre ALO will receive a copy of the results, so your comments will not go unnoticed.

If you would like more information about this questionnaire please feel free to contact me.

The Gardening Centre

By Celia Blinkhorn

Well who would believe that it is the third week of May? As I look out of the office window, the dank and dreary view is more reminiscent of early November and it's not that warm either. The gardening season has got off to a very slow start this year and the biting cold winds in March and April knocked back shrubs like my Hydrangeas considerably. I had made the mistake of deadheading and cutting back too soon and am now going to have to do further work to remove scorched lead buds and ends of branches which don't look too appealing.

However, some things, my daffodils in particular, have flourished this year. The early spring display of bulbs was lovely, but I think there is going to be a rather longer than usual gap before the summer flowering plants come into their own. Last year I planted a few blue bugle ground cover plants in various spots around the patio and put a couple into tubs. These have spread like mad and have been a profusion of blue flower spikes above red/bronze foliage. They make excellent evergreen perennial ground cover plants and I would recommend them for edges of beds and patios. They spread by runners (rather like strawberry plants) and will root from the "nodes" that form along the stems.

I dug and potted up a good few and have given them to my friend Kathleen across the road and Lucy and Aoife in the office here in Tralee. Isabelle will be this week's lucky recipient! I have attached a photo of a specimen ready to be liberated into the wild.

Unless the weather improves radically, I wouldn't advise putting out any summer bedding for a while yet so there is still time to make a plan for window boxes, tubs etc. I am considering fuchsias as focus plants this year, possibly with helichrysum for greenery interspersed with trailing white lobelia but this could all change when I get to the garden centre and see what tempting displays they have on offer. There is so much to choose from nowadays but if you need some filler plants that are guaranteed to flourish and flower while being unattractive to slugs and snails, old fashioned Antirrhinums (Snapdragons) and Pelargoniums take some beating. However, let's hope that whatever we choose we get some warm sunny weather to enjoy it.

Happy Gardening!



THIS IS YOUR LIFE.
DO WHAT YOU LOVE,
AND DO IT OFTEN.

IF YOU DON'T LIKE SOMETHING, CHANGE IT.

IF YOU DON'T LIKE YOUR JOB, QUIT.

IF YOU DON'T HAVE ENOUGH TIME, STOP WATCHING TV.

IF YOU ARE LOOKING FOR THE LOVE OF YOUR LIFE, STOP;

THEY WILL BE WAITING FOR YOU WHEN YOU

START DOING THINGS YOU LOVE.

STOP OVER ANALYZING, ALL EMOTIONS ARE BEAUTIFUL.

LIFE IS SIMPLE. WHEN YOU EAT, APPRECIATE
EVERY LAST BITE.

OPEN YOUR MIND, ARMS, AND HEART TO NEW THINGS

AND PEOPLE, WE ARE UNITED IN OUR DIFFERENCES.

ASK THE NEXT PERSON YOU SEE WHAT THEIR PASSION IS,

AND SHARE YOUR INSPIRING DREAM WITH THEM.

TRAVEL OFTEN; GETTING LOST WILL
HELP YOU FIND YOURSELF.

SOME OPPORTUNITIES ONLY COME ONCE, SEIZE THEM.

LIFE IS ABOUT THE PEOPLE YOU MEET, AND

THE THINGS YOU CREATE WITH THEM

SO GO OUT AND START CREATING.

LIFE IS LIVE YOUR DREAM

AND SHARE

SHORT. YOUR PASSION.