

Steve's RAW success at BBC awards.

Steve Walker from Thetford won a BBC regional award recently in recognition of the innovative ways he has organised and delivered adult learning across Norfolk and Suffolk. The awards event was held in Bedford. Susie Fowler Watt, presenter from the BBC presented the BBC RAW Tutor award to him. Susie commented on the great achievement and contribution he has made to adult learners across the region and said, "it was great to see the innovative and really exciting initiatives and creative approaches to learning he has shown as a tutor".

Steve is employed by the General Municipal Boilermakers Union, (GMB) as a Project Education Co-ordinator/Tutor, funded by the Learning Skills Council, (LSC) as part of a national Union Learning Fund Project.

Over recent months the BBC has been promoting adult learning with a campaign called, "RAW" (Reading And Writing). The BBC's project lasts three years and it's objective are to attract adults interested back into learning. Some recent story lines in programmes like East Enders have focused on literacy skills, which have highlighted issues around dyslexia with a character called, Keith Miller. It is hoped the public can relate to the TV soap character and the challenges he has faced. For many years the BBC has been involved in adult learning with other projects like Skills Wise which has been very successful.

The BBC has developed a whole host of resources that can be used to make learning fun and enjoyable with current subjects included in sport and TV programmes like Test the Nation that can be incorporated as part of a learning programme.

One such resource was a DVD quiz around the East Enders soap.

Steve used this on a number of occasions in not so traditional learning environments such as pubs, social clubs and work canteens across both Norfolk and Suffolk. Funding came from the GMB Union that paid for prizes and buffets to attract the learners. Each evening session saw an average of 25 attendees that came from companies like Jeyes, TROX, ASDA and Remploy to name a few. At the end of each evening opportunities were given to sample the National Skills Test, which is a literacy and numeracy qualification similar to a GCSE at City and Guilds level.

Future plans are to offer RAW fishing days aimed at anyone with an interest in the sport. These events will gather tales from the riverbank, where learners will take photographs, record stories and put together a storyboard of the days fishing experience. Showing once again how effective the RAW campaign can be in hooking people back into learning.

Learning has certainly changed Steve's life since his days as an engineer a few years ago and he has helped many others to develop new skills.

Over the last two years the GMB learning Project, which he fronts has helped nearly 1500 people back into learning with many gaining level 1 and 2 qualifications. This is the second award the project has received. In 2004 the GMB achieved a Highly Commended National Training Award.

Tel 07905635023 for more information about workplace learning/BBC Raw