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Committee News

The focus of committee members' activities over the past month has been planning for the joint VALBEC/ALA 'LLN to Foundation Skills' forum and finalising the program for the 2014 VALBEC Annual Conference 'and the Learning goes on....'.

The forum has come about through the initiative of Sandra Wolfe and Jan Hagston working in partnership with Sally Thompson from ALA. Sandra also attended the ALA annual general meeting in her capacity as state ACAL representative. It is important for organisations such as VALBEC and ACAL to keep connected and explore opportunities with other 'like' organisations. We will be seeking feedback from participants to assist in planning future events.

[See the forum presentations](#)

The committee encourages member to refer to the links to [ACFE Learn Local Focusing on the Future](#) consultation round.

1. Nominations now open for the 2014 Victorian Learn Local Awards

In 2014, there are some new and exciting award categories with a total of \$50,000 available to winners across the five categories:

- Outstanding Pre-accredited Learner
- Outstanding Pathways Program
- Outstanding Practitioner
- Excellence in Creating Local Solutions
- Innovation in Digital Literacy

Nominations close on 6 June 2014.

[More](#)

2. Membership renewal

Invoices were posted last month. Have you paid yet? Need another invoice?

[Contact VALBEC](#)

3. Next committee meeting

Wednesday 23 April

VALBEC 2014 Conference

4. Early Bird registration available until April 14

[Register now](#)

5. Keynote speaker: Michelle Circelli 'Evaluating adult literacy and numeracy programs: the how, who, what and why'

Michelle spent four months in the United States at the end of 2013 undertaking research into measuring success of adult literacy and numeracy programs. [More](#)

6. Session details

The 2014 VALBEC conference, ...and the learning goes on, will explore innovative responses to the ongoing changes in LLN delivery and ways in which the field is responding to the demands of the digital age.

Language, literacy and numeracy skills form the basis of successful participation in the community, in further education and in employment. Policies, funding and the student profile may change but regardless of whatever occurs the learning has to go on.

[Session details](#)

Professional Development

7. ACAL Conference keynote speakers announced

'Literacy: a learning spiral for life' is pleased to announce the following key note speakers.

Professor Diana Coben, PhD, Director of the National Centre of Literacy and Numeracy for Adults, University of Waikato, New Zealand and **Professor Stephen Reder**, Professor of Applied Linguistics at Portland State University.

[More](#)

8. ACER National Adult Language, Literacy and Numeracy Assessment Conference, May 2014

ACER's two-day LLN Conference in Melbourne gives you the opportunity to network and share your ideas with colleagues—this has been one of the very strong and positive messages from feedback from the first two ACER conferences. There will be sessions from community providers, small enterprises, private RTOs, large TAFE Institutes, WELL programs, and from both school based and non-school based youth programs. There will be presenters from remote Indigenous programs, regional centres and metropolitan programs.

[More](#)

9. Excellence in Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) Practice Award

The Australian Training Awards are the peak, national awards for the vocational education and training (VET) sector, recognising individuals, businesses and registered training organisations for their contribution to skilling Australia.

The Excellence in Language, Literacy and Numeracy (LLN) Practice Award recognises innovation and excellence by an individual involved in improving LLN skills in an educational, community or workplace context.

Applications close Friday 30 May 2014.

[More](#) or phone 13 38 73.

Fine Print

Edition #1 for 2014 will be arriving in letterboxes soon.

Here is the list of Feature articles:

- Reparation through reading: An innovative collaboration to improve intergenerational literacy, prisoner reintegration and family relationships.
- Training days: A critical perspective on the implementation of 'contestability' in VET.
- PIAAC – a quick look at the data related to age: A brief overview of the PIAAC results with implications for work needed in youth and adult education.
- AALL conference insights: Observations from an academic language and learning conference with some common threads for VET and Higher Education.

- Learner voices at Pecket: past and present: An oral history and digital archive project that aims to capture the spirit of 20 years of a people's college in Yorkshire.

We are looking for practitioners to write about work they are doing with their students or resources they are developing in the areas of Digital Literacy and Learning Management Systems such as Moodle.

Contact the Fine Print editor info@valbec.org.au

Resources

10. Lesson ideas

VALBEC is observing 2014 as the International Year of Family Farming, as well as celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the International Year of the Family and offering some related lesson ideas. In the third of the series, committee member Sandra Wolfe reflectson her expereince with family farming and the prickle farm.

The Prickle Farm- a personal journey

Growing up in the country many of my friends and classmates were from wheat and sheep farms so I had plenty of opportunity to experience family farms and rural life.

The rural lifestyle and the outdoors have always had an innate appeal for me, so it was little wonder years later whilst working for the Northern Territory Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries in Darwin, that when I noticed workmates around me buying 20 ha undeveloped blocks, my interest in living a rural lifestyle was rekindled. At the same time I had become fascinated with identifying native grevilleas and after befriending one of botanists at work I progressed to collecting seeds with the idea of propagating my own plants. I soon took advice on how to install a drip system and began to scrounge hay and fertilise my garden with buffalo pads. Ah success. ... Ah the possibilities, surely the stars must be in alignment I thought..

Read more about the [Prickle Farm](#) and see some [lesson ideas](#) based on International Year of the Family Farming.

11. What Works for LLN: Online library of free videos

What Works for LLN: Online library of free language, literacy and numeracy training and professional development videos. Nine new What Works videos have been added to the free online LLN video library.

All 18 videos are now available to view or download for free from the [What Works for LLN website](#)

12. Foundation Skills Assessment Tool (FSAT)

The Department of Industry has contracted the Australian Council for Educational Research (ACER) to develop a free online Foundation Skills Assessment Tool (FSAT) to identify and assess an individual's foundation skill levels. ACER is interested in hearing from interested LLN, VET and employment services providers to be in trials in order to provide feedback about the assessment system.

[More](#)

13. New Parliament of Victoria resources aligned to VCAL and CGEA

A new teaching resource is now available through the [Parliament of Victoria website](#) ... aligned to VCAL and CGEA. It consists of a program of four Units (choose one or more Units) with students engaged in events management (inviting your local State MP as Guest Speaker in your class room, or organising a more critical tour of Parliament House), field research (such as community visits to establish difference in levels of government), complications which arise from this system of three levels of government), and an opportunity for students to be rewarded with \$50,000 by finding the stolen Mace!

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eVALBEC

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How to submit items: <http://www.valbec.org.au/news.htm>