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Committee News

1. New VALBEC Committee meets

The first meeting of the new VALBEC committee was held on Wednesday 26 June. It was a full meeting and members contributed a range of ideas for professional development and projects that we will continue to discuss and make plans for terms 3 & 4.

Sandra Wolfe and Linno Rhodes attended the 'Confident Communities' ACE Aotearoa and ALA conference in Wellington, NZ, June 18 -20 and met colleagues from both Australia and NZ at what was a vibrant and interesting Australasian conference.

Jan Hagston was interviewed on SYNFM radio to talk about the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC) results of adult literacy levels in Australia.

The '[Building Strength with Numeracy Resource](#)' has been receiving positive feedback and we have had to increase bandwidth to accommodate the number of downloads.

2. 2013 International Year of Statistics

- Of the hundreds of thousands of women who die during pregnancy or childbirth each year, 90 per cent live in Africa and Asia, the majority from causes for which we have highly effective interventions.
- Nearly two in three, or 63.2 per cent, of Australian adults were considered either overweight or obese, with more men than women falling into that category.
- The top long-term health conditions experienced in Australia in 2011-12 were:
 - arthritis - 3.3 million people (14.8%)
 - mental and behavioural conditions - 3.0 million people (13.6%)
 - asthma - 2.3 million people (10.2%)
 - heart disease - 1.0 million people (4.7%)
- In 2011-12, the average Australian man was 175.6 cm tall and weighed 85.9 kg. The average Australian woman was 161.8 cm tall and weighed 71.1 kg.
- Half of parents driving their children to UK primary schools live under a mile (1.6 km) away, walk-to-school campaigners say. In Victoria, 70% of Victorian children are driven to school even though 80% live within 3km of their school.

Statistics provided by Don MacDowall

3. What about your own statistics?

Humans have their own statistics. We can measure so much of ourselves:

- How tall are you?
- How many digits do you have?
- How wide are your shoulders?
- How long is your arm span?
- How long are your legs?

And then ...

- Is the length of your arm span equal to your height?
- Are you 8 heads tall?
- Is your foot 1/7th of your height?
- Is the length of your hand 1/10th of your height?
- Is your navel your central point?

Do you fit into Leonardo da Vinci's [Vitruvian Man concept](#)? (a figure in two superimposed positions with his arms and legs apart and simultaneously inscribed in a circle and square.)

- Have your students take photos of each other – on their mobile phones – just like the two positions of the Vitruvian Man. (Look this up on the internet - Wikipedia will do!)
- Email the photos to themselves.
- Print the photos or use Printshop – superimpose them over each other

- Estimate the position of the navel and using a compass or the drawing tools, draw in the circle and the square, a la da Vinci.
- How do they measure up?

Based on an idea from the teachers at Birchip P – 12 School, 2012

Prepared by Rhonda Raisbeck, Program Co-ordinator, Literacy & Numeracy Program, Holmesglen Language Centre

4. What I'm reading now ...

We have asked the VALBEC committee to share what they are reading each month as a way of keeping the theme of reading every day as an integral part of our lives.

What I'm reading – something out of the box

We recently pulled some boxes out of 'storage' – the roof space - and discovered treasures. Well 'Treasure Island' given to me on my thirteenth birthday among others. Others included 'Cloudstreet' by Tim Winton. It evokes memories of a long ago Australia. He captured a sense of my early childhood in the rambling tale and my first view of Perth was in the sixties as he describes it. Another was the 'The Man' (1967) a fanciful tale of a man who becomes America's first black president. Who would have thought? I've just re-read 'Oscar and Lucinda' – with that image from the film of the glass cathedral coming up the river strong in my mind.

But there's also new books, not from the roof – working my way through recent Booker prize winners (Bring Up the Bodies, Wolf Hall, etc.). Then gritty novels like Ian Rankin's with the dark side of Edinburgh, which I visited many times long ago (Edinburgh, not the dark side). And the latest John le Carre, 'A Delicate Truth', which I'm holding off starting, waiting for the right time! Superficially his books were about spies. But I always thought they were about betrayal - betrayal of one's country, one's friends and sometimes, oneself. All to be read, re-read and re-read.

Don MacDowall

Fine Print

5. Next issue

Literacy as social practice—what does it actually mean? Our next edition of *Fine Print* explores what we mean by literacy as social practice, shows how it works in the real world and describes what the future could look like if we allow it to inform policy and practice. That's a big claim, so read it and see for yourself! Bob Boughton, Inge Kral, Lynda Achren, Dave Tout, Audrey McAlindon, Jan Hagston and more. *Fine Print* coming to your letterbox soon!

[Fine Print archive](#)

Employment

6. ESL teacher required with a medical/health professional background

Yarraville Community Centre is looking for an ESL teacher with a medical/health professional background to teach overseas doctors, nurses and other health professionals the Certificate IV in ESL (Employment/Professional)- for Health Professionals.

10 weeks full time contract. Starting in term 3

Must have: Teaching qualification (B Ed or Post-grad) with TESOL methods and supervised teaching practicum, TAE40110 - Cert IV, Permission to work in Australia

Preferred: Degree or experience working in the health sector, ESL teaching experience

Only successful applicants for an interview will be contacted. Please email your resume and cover letter to yarracc@ycc.net.au Applications close 5th July

Professional Development

7. ACAL conference 'Local practices, global contexts'

Sydney Sep 30-Oct 2, 2013

[Registrations have now opened](#) and you can take advantage of the early bird offer.

The program details are likely to be announced in the next couple of weeks.

Resources

8. Free numeracy resources

'Building Strength with Numeracy' is a collection of activities that builds on and updates elements of the previous resources, as well as including many new, previously unpublished ideas, activities and student practice exercises. [Available for free download.](#)

9. On and off

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