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Committee News

1. Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held at the conclusion of the Literacies in a Diverse World conference on Friday 17 May, 2013. Sandra Wolfe spoke to the 2012 report and some of the highlights of the year including the Numeracy Resource Project with Beth Marr and The National Year of Reading theme to the conference, Fine Print and other activities. The proposed version of the new VALBEC constitution was approved by the meeting and will be submitted to Consumer Affairs.

The Committee elections resulted in the appointment of

Sandra Wolfe as co-president; Linno Rhodes as co-president; Lynne Matheson as secretary/public officer; Ann Haynes as treasurer.

General committee members:

(returning) Pauline O'Maley, John Radalj, Jan Hagston, Sandie Forbes, Shanta Nazareth, Digna Libera
(new) Barb Van Leest, Tracy Pearman, Rhonda Pelletier, Allison Pote, Lindee Conway.

Retiring committee members Ann Irving, Natasha McCormick and Paul Rawlinson were acknowledged and thanked for their role and contribution to the committee.

Next committee meeting: Wednesday 26 June

2. Building Strength with Numeracy - new free resources

These [resources](#) are now available on the VALBEC website. Please send any feedback to info@valbec.org.au

'**Building Strength with Numeracy**' revises and improves on the iconic numeracy resources 'Strength in Numbers' and 'Breaking the Maths Barrier', and other 'tried and true' numeracy teaching resources developed by Beth Marr and other experienced numeracy teachers.

The new resource 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of activities that builds on and updates elements of the previous resources, as well as including many new, previously unpublished ideas, activities and student practice exercises.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.](#)

3. 2013 International Year of Statistics

Road casualty statistics make headlines whenever there's been another of those horrific crashes – or when some new research is dramatic enough to hit the headlines. Using articles and editorials about road safety can raise awareness of some of the risks on our roads – and the stats help to bring the point home.

- **P plate drivers** are three times more likely to have a crash where someone is injured or killed than other drivers. They account for 14% of the Victorian licence holders but 28% of the fatality crashes
- **Distractions** - If you take your eyes off the road for more than 2 seconds you have double the risk of being involved in a crash
- **Speed** - 30% of all crashes involve speeding
- **Human factors** (as opposed to the car, road conditions, weather, etc) are the main cause of 93% of road crashes
- **Seat belts** - Approximately 1 in 5 people in vehicles who are killed aren't wearing a seatbelt. 26% of 18 – 21 year old and 31% of 22 – 25 year old drivers killed weren't wearing a seatbelt
- **Fatigue** - You have twice the risk of having a crash if you drive after being awake for 17 hours. It's the equivalent of having a Blood Alcohol Count (BAC) of .05. If you drive without sleeping for 24 hours you are 7 times more likely to have a crash – it's like having a BAC of 0.1.
- **Alcohol** - 21% of 18 – 20 year old and 50% of 22 – 25 year old drivers killed were affected by alcohol.

If you want to students look at crash stats in their area have a look at the unit '[Crash stats](#)' in the VicRoads VCAL Road Safety Units. Although aligned to VCAL, the units are relevant to students in CGEA classes.

Statistics provided by Jan Hagston

The Joy of Stats

[This YouTube clip](#) from the BBC takes viewers on a rollercoaster ride through the wonderful world of statistics to explore the remarkable power they have to change our understanding of the world, presented by superstar boffin Professor Hans Rosling, whose eye-opening, mind-expanding and funny online lectures have made him an international internet legend.

4. Reading

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.

Like many people I've made the move to a Kindle. I love my Kindle. I can store so many books on it, it's light and easy to read BUT I find when asked what I'm reading I describe it – 'the book by Jeanette Winterson – the one about the witch trial in England' (of course I mean *The Daylight Gate* by Jeanette Winterson). Another book I recently read was the book by an Australian guy – the one with the young boy as the narrator and one of the main characters (*Jasper Jones* by Craig Silvey).

I think this problem is due to not seeing the cover every time I pick up the 'book' (at least that's my excuse). Instead of having the title and author reinforced when I pick up the book, I need to make a conscious effort to remember them.

So what am I reading this month? A book about photographers in Spain during the Spanish War – one of them's called Cappa. And the book – *Waiting for Robert Cappa* by Susana Fortes (Adriana V. Lopez, Translator).
Jan Hagston

Professional Development

5. Literacies in a Diverse World conference

Thanks to all the presenters and those who attended the conference. It was a very successful day with some positive feedback in the evaluations.

Papers and resources will be added to the website for those who were not able to attend.

Cemile, our delightful singer has provided some information about her songs.

[See some pics](#)

5. 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 call for papers closed a few days ago and people who submitted proposals have now been notified.

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

Resources

7. End of financial year sale

TELLS Publications are having an end-of-financial year special!

They're offering a **15% discount** on the total cost of purchases ordered before 30 June 2013. (Discount does not apply to postage).

8. On and off

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This is the electronic newsletter of VALBEC, the Victorian Adult Literacy and Basic Education Council, and is sent to about 1000 practitioners on the first of each month (other than January). It is also available in the 'News' section of our [web site](#)

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