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## Committee News

### 1. Enquiries

Each month we receive a number of enquiries via our website. These are circulated to the committee and committee members provide responses in a timely manner. Items are included on the agenda for discussion so that we can best provide up to date information or advice to members and the public. Over time, responses have been collated and expanded on the FAQ link on the website (currently under review).

Two questions we are often asked are 'Where can I do a volunteer tutor course?' and 'What qualifications do I need to work in LLN and where can I study?' People are usually interested in moving into vocational or adult community education or considering a career change or wanting to contribute through volunteer work.

We respond to these enquiries with details of courses that we know about, however we are conscious that this can change and new courses have become available.

We will be asking providers for course information so that we can update pages on our website and provide up to date information.

Next Committee meeting - Wednesday 20 March.

### 2. 2013 International Year of Statistics

Numbers, Numbers, Everywhere – VALBEC has adopted the International Year of Statistics as our theme for 2013. Each month a VALBEC committee member will be digging up some fascinating numbers that you may find interesting and potentially useful in classroom activities. This month committee member Natasha McCormick encourages you to think about the numbers related to weather.

Did you know that during the month of January 2013 the searing temperatures led to records being set across Australia.

Australia experienced seven consecutive days with area-average maximum temperatures above 39°C between January 2-8, breaking the previous record of four days in 1973.

**NSW:** On January 5, the town of Hay reached 47.7°C, breaking its record by 1.7°C.

**Northern Territory:** Curtin Springs broke its maximum temperature record on January 4, only for it to be broken again on January 8 when the temperature hit 45.7°C.

**South Australia:** Between January 4-6, temperature records were broken at four weather stations.

**Tasmania:** On January 4, Hobart reached 41.8°C, breaking the record by 1°C.

**Victoria:** On January 4, the temperature in the southwestern town of Portland reached a record 42.1°C.

**Western Australia:** On January 3, the state's eastern-most town of Eucla broke its record, reaching 48.2°C.

<http://www.theglobalmail.org/feature/this-heatwave-officially-brought-to-you-by-climate-change/541/>

And if you would like to do some more analysis check out the great resources and tools at:

The Bureau of Meteorology website for some great statistics and information - get the data for your area.

<http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/current/month/aus/summary.shtml>

Weatherzone <http://www.weatherzone.com.au>

So what's happening with the weather in the last few weeks? What a great opportunity for your students to explore more....

### 3. 2013 National Year of Reading continues.....

VALBEC has continued its partnership with the NYR initiative into 2013.

**We will provide information about NYR activities through links to the NYR website.**

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 am reading this month

Natasha McCormick says

'I absolutely love the Christmas break because I get to catch up on all my holiday reading- it's not so great for my family and the cleanliness of our home as I tend to get totally absorbed in the lives of those I'm reading about.'

A colleague of mine a few years ago told me about the goals they set each year- to read 25 books, and for the past 4 years I have set this as one of my goals and have achieved this quite easily, but I become quite obsessive as I like to read books from the one author and in sequence! And then love to fill my book case- just like a library; don't get me started on the smell of books and the search in second hand bookshops for the book that fills the gap in the sequence.

I have just finished reading a couple of Tara Moss' novels and fortunately her latest book 'Assassin' was wrapped beautifully under our Christmas tree but I couldn't start until I had read the previous books, so I found 'Hit', in a great community bookshop in Beechworth, Quercus (all the books are donated, volunteers look after the customers and the monies are returned to the community).

Then the search began for the fifth book in the series 'Siren'. I couldn't find it in all of the well-known bookshops, but had a lovely time in Queenscliff searching and finally found it in Torquay. After reading this I could then read 'Assassin'. While I wasn't caught up in the life of Mak Vanderwall, Canadian graduate of Psychology, model and private investigator who had moved to Australia- I was reading one of my daughter's VCE texts 'Rugmaker of Mazar-e-Sharif', co-written by Najaf Mazari and Robert Hillman - what an incredible story and insight into Najaf's life journey.

## Professional Development

### 4. 2013 VALBEC conference 'Literacies in a diverse world'

Friday 17 May at William Angliss conference centre.

VALBEC is delighted to announce the two keynote speakers:

#### 'Literacy and social practice matters'

**Inge Kral, Centre for Aboriginal Economic Policy Research (CAEPR), Australian National University, Canberra.**

In her presentation, Inge Kral will address the question of literacy acquisition in the remote Indigenous context, from an anthropological perspective. By focusing on literacy as social practice, she will discuss how literacy processes cannot be understood simply in terms of schooling and pedagogy, they must be part of more embracing social institutions and cultural processes.

[More](#)

#### Mass literacy campaigns: A 'Pedagogy of hope'?

**Bob Boughton, University of New England, Armidale, NSW**

In 2012, the remote Aboriginal community of Wilcannia in western NSW hosted the first successful Australian pilot of the Cuban-designed *Yes I Can* mass adult literacy campaign model. Building on an intensive community development process of 'socialisation and mobilisation', sixteen community members with very low literacy graduated from the basic literacy course and the majority continued into post-literacy activities, further training and/or employment.

[More](#)

### 5. ACAL conference 'Local practices, global contexts'

Sydney Sep 30-Oct 2, 2013

#### Keynote speakers

Dr Jeff Evans, Emeritus Reader at Middlesex University, UK, has recently served on the Numeracy Expert Group of the OECD sponsored Programme of International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC).

Professor Mary Hamilton, Lancaster University, UK, is one of founding figures of New Literacy Studies that introduced a social practices perspective on understanding and researching literacy.

Pre-conference 'Adult literacy and numeracy: Research informing practice; practice informing research'.

[More](#)

### 6. PIAAC preliminary results released

The Australian Bureau of Statistics released the [preliminary findings of the OECD Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies \(PIAAC\)](#). An iteration of the 2006/7 Adult Literacy and Lifeskills Survey (ALLS), PIAAC assesses adults' proficiency in literacy and numeracy and problem-solving in a technology rich environment. The Australian Council of Education Research (ACER), in its [media release](#) 'International study reveals serious adult literacy and numeracy problems', says 'Australia still has much to do in the area of workplace and vocational education and training (VET)'.

It is easy to feel alarmed by the PIAAC statistics (44% in the lowest two bands for literacy, 55% in the lowest two bands for numeracy) and as practitioners, to distrust what we know about our learners and/ or our own skills and practices of working with our learners.

[What ACAL says ...](#)

### 7. Harmony Day 21 March

The [2013 Harmony Day](#) theme: Many Stories - One Australia celebrates our cultural diversity as one of our greatest strengths and at the heart of who we are. This year you are encouraged and invited to tell your story with each other - in workplaces, on social network sites, at schools or within communities. You may also choose to share your story with all Australians by taking a photo, filming a video, or writing an article.

#### What is your centre or workplace doing to celebrate this international event?

VALBEC committee member, Paul Rawlinson tells us [Glenroy Neighbourhood Learning Centre](#) has commissioned Catherine Simmonds (Director of Brunswick Women's Theatre) to film students talking about their life in Australia, and about how Australia has changed over the years. The DVD will be shown to students on Harmony Day (21 March), along with a workshop about student interaction.

Send us information about your Harmony Day celebrations or send a short article and photos for inclusion in Fine Print.

## Fine Print

### 8. April issue

Literacy near and far is the theme of our next issue of *Fine Print*, due out in April. Satoru Nakagawa examines what happens when we start to write down oral language, Sue Hartigan writes about third space theory and practice, Anita Roberts explains the new Foundation Skills Training Package, Christina and Melanie Fattore describe how they integrate volunteer work with a CSWE programme, and Maggie Power shares her secrets of writing resources for adult learners. Then there are our regular sections and make sure you read all the bits in Open Forum.

## Other information

### 9. Volunteer Tutor Training Course

Carlton Neighbourhood Learning Centre

Are you interested in tutoring an adult who would like to improve their reading and writing skills? Two hours per week, 5 week training course and upon completion, 1 - 2 hours per week working with students.

Course content includes adult literacy/numeracy theory and practice, adult learning principles, computers, and working with migrant learners.

Information session 5th March

Please ring Toni or Sarah on 9347 2739 to register or for more information

### 10. On and off

#### Subscribe to eVALBEC?

Just send an e-mail to [info@valbec.org.au](mailto:info@valbec.org.au) with your name and email address (organisation if you wish) and we'll put you on the list to receive this monthly e-newsletter.

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### 11. Contact VALBEC

eVALBEC is the monthly electronic newsletter of (VALBEC) the Victorian Adult Literacy and Basic Education Council.

E-mail: [info@valbec.org.au](mailto:info@valbec.org.au)

Web: <http://www.valbec.org.au>

Postal: Box 861 Springvale South VIC 3172

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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](#)

Disclaimer: The activities, goods and services mentioned in eVALBEC are not endorsed by VALBEC in any way. People should make their own judgment about the suitability of each item.

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