



**ADULT BASIC  
EDUCATION**  
ASSOCIATION OF  
BRITISH COLUMBIA

In this issue:

<b>Bursary Recipient : Karri Andriashyk</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Changing Face of Adult Basic Education in BC</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Conference 2009</b>	<b>2- 5</b>
<b>Editorial 16</b>	
<b>Government liaison report</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>In Memorium: Linda Vanderbyl</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Lyra's Mad Edventures</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Meet Lindy Liu</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>President's report</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Regional Reports</b>	<b>8 - 13</b>

Save the date!

ABEABC Conference 2009

Prince George, BC

May 6 - 8, 2009

# Groundwork

VOLUME 21 NUMBER 2

WINTER 2009



Alan DeLong photo

## Winter Sun

Douglas Florian

The winter sun's a grumpy guy.  
He scarcely gets to see the sky.  
He doesn't speak. His rays are weak.  
His disposition's grim and bleak.  
He hovers near the naked trees,  
His blanket from the sky's big freeze,  
And barely dares to lift his head  
Before he's ordered back to bed.

**ADULT BASIC EDUCATION  
ASSOCIATION OF BC  
Teacher and Student Conference  
May 6-8, 2009**

**Culturalizing the Curriculum:  
*How To, Why To, What To Adjust For  
In a Diverse Classroom***

**The College of New Caledonia &  
the Prince George Native  
Friendship Centre  
Prince George, BC, Canada**



*This year's conference theme –  
“Culturalizing The Curriculum: How To, Why To,  
What To Adjust To In A Diverse Classroom”*

- \* recognizes the many different cultures in an adult classroom:  
gender, language, age, technological ability, and background  
being only a few.*

*Please email Sharon Taylor at [smtaylor.4@gmail.com](mailto:smtaylor.4@gmail.com)  
Or Nita Jacob at [hog.hollow@hotmail.com](mailto:hog.hollow@hotmail.com)  
for further information.*

# **Culturalizing the Curriculum: How to, Why to, What to Adjust to In a Diverse Classroom**

**Adult Basic Education Association of British Columbia  
Teacher and Student Conference 2009**

**In Partnership with College of New Caledonia &  
the Prince George Native Friendship Centre  
Prince George BC, Canada**

**Thursday May 7th - Friday May 8th**

- \* The Adult Basic Education Association of British Columbia is a professional association, which fosters and promotes excellence in Adult Basic Education instruction and programming.
- \* Its vision focuses on excellence in professional development and recognition of the unique perspective of the practitioner in the design and implementation of policy and programming.
- \* Practitioners, students, researchers, and others involved in the field of Adult Basic Education are invited to attend the annual ABEABC conference for professional or personal development by participating in the Conference's program of keynote speakers and presentations by practitioners and researchers.
- \* Topics applicable to working with ABE and/or ESL learners are selected, and these practical and interactive smaller group presentations have been very popular with past conference participants.

***Registration form on next page***



## **Culturalizing the Curriculum: How to, Why to, What to Adjust for In a Diverse Classroom**

**ABEABC - Teacher and Student Conference 2009**

In Partnership with College of New Caledonia,  
& Prince George Friendship Centre,  
Prince George, BC Canada

**Thursday May 7th - Friday May 8th**

### **CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS**

**DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: FEBRUARY 15th**

Practitioners, researchers, and others involved in the field of Adult Basic Education are invited to submit proposals for 90-MINUTE PRESENTATIONS reflecting the 2009 Conference theme of CULTURALIZATION AND A DIVERSE CLASSROOM.

Topics applicable to working with ABE and/or ESL learners are invited. Practical and interactive workshops are very popular with participants.

- \* Please include the following in your proposal outline:
- \* Name of Presenter
- \* Contact information
- \* Short biography
- \* Title of Workshop
- \* Short description of workshop
- \* Target audience: (subject, instructors, students, etc)
- \* Equipment (or special) requirements

An honorarium of \$50 will be given for each 90 minute workshop.

Presenters are encouraged to register for the conference and attend other conference presentations and activities. There are one day rates and meal rates available.

- Please forward proposals before February 15 to Sharon Taylor:  
[smtaylor.4@gmail.com](mailto:smtaylor.4@gmail.com)

## *The Changing Face of Adult Basic Education in BC* by Janet Webster Dec. 15, 2008.



**Literacy** has been identified as one of the so-called 2010 Winter Games legacies. According to the politicians, B.C. will be the most 'literate' jurisdiction in North America by 2015. This aim stands in contrast with projections cited in, "Reading the Future", a study released in the summer of 2008 by the Canadian Council on Learning. The report predicts that the proportion of adults in B.C. with low literacy levels will not change by 2031. Projections are similar across the country, largely due to demographic factors such as an aging population and the need for a vibrant Canadian workforce critically dependent on new immigration. The term "literacy" has replaced the term "adult basic education" as a catch-all label for adult education since the province began focusing on evaluating BC's literacy needs in order to figure out where money would best be used. Millions of dollars are now being poured into coordinating literacy programs within school districts, hiring regional literacy coordinators, and creating community adult literacy programs that offer free tutoring across the province. Accountability measures accompany all program funding in a government effort to quantify BC's literacy needs and outcomes in the long standing field of ABE.



The field of adult basic education was pioneered by volunteers from all walks of life; retired teachers, business persons, and interested parties volunteered or worked on a part time basis to serve the community needs. The focus of this group was to help adults

complete their high school education for a better quality of life and for greater citizenship participation. In the past thirty years, the basic education and literacy needs of BC's population have often been underground issues. Volunteers and part time instructors were hired by the school districts' continuing education departments, post secondary access departments, Native Friendship Centers, community libraries, YMCA's and other non profit societies and organizations throughout the province.



The students in these programs faced multiple barriers including poverty, unemployment, housing issues, mental and physical health issues, lack of support systems, and substance abuse to name a few. According to Nita Jacob, current President of the ABE Association of BC, "One of the largest barriers in the Lower Mainland and in small isolated communities of BC has been that of language. Immigrant students come to programs with a variety of educational backgrounds in languages other than English – university degrees, technical certification, high school completion, limited education and no education – but all are focused on improving their English." \*

As of Sept. 2007, the coordinated efforts of the MOE and AVED are addressing the adult basic education needs of British Columbians through a robust three stage Adult Opportunities Action Plan which includes free courses through the Province's virtual school called Learn Now BC, the reinstatement of tuition free adult basic education courses at 18 public post secondary institutions, and, effective Sept. 2008, students can access the newly formed Foundations' courses, and

they can target High School Completion courses in most subjects through school district continuing education centers- all for free and without a graduation plan. The newly formed special regional universities, such as Fraser Valley University and Kwantlen Polytechnic University are mandated by charter to provide Adult Basic Education as core programming for the transitioning to post secondary studies. The change to university status for many of these institutions has impacted the delivery mode of adult education courses. Each institution may define ‘adult basic education’ to fit with its own special regional programming; although, its definition must be approved by the AVED. On average, a trend has emerged of fewer free ABE semester based courses available to students; ABE is delivered predominantly in self paced and continuous intake learning environments in the three primary subject areas of English, Math and Science. However, specialized ABE programs targeting specific community needs have been implemented; an example is Kwantlen’s “Spark Program” for Indo Canadian youth transitioning to post secondary; this program is funded for students and has been highly successful. Also, post secondary departments which have traditionally offered ABE programming to their catchment areas have undergone name changes; these new department titles reflect the university status of each institution and place more emphasis on profiling post secondary preparedness. Many of the post secondary preparedness courses are not free to students seeking upgrading for their university transfer status.

One of the most significant provincial initiatives in the quest for a



‘literate’ society has been the hiring of full time Regional Literacy Coordinators. Literacy BC works with 13 Regional Literacy Coordinators to implement literacy initiatives in

every region of the province. According to Literacy BC’s website, the role of a Regional Literacy Coordinator is to strengthen and support regional literacy networks, to coordinate regional professional development training for literacy and ABE practitioners, to provide consultation, information and support to literacy and ABE practitioners, volunteers, students and community members, and to build awareness about literacy within community agencies and organizations. These coordinators serve as liaisons between the MOE, AVED and the communities; this type of coordination has long been called for by adult education professionals. Also, all provincial school districts have filed public literacy plans, each with four pillars addressing the literacy needs of adult, aboriginal, preschool and K-12. Base-line literacy levels are being documented in all BC communities by the provincial government. In addition, there have been significant increases to the funding for ESL programming in BC. This year, the provincial and federal governments are more than tripling funding of English-language services such as ELSA for adult newcomers. The Burnaby School District in the Lower Mainland was one of the largest recipients of ELSA contracts for 2008-2009 programming.



Murray Coell, Minister of Advanced Education says, “Doing what it takes to become the most literate place in North America is one of the smartest moves we can make to assure British Columbia continues to prosper in the future. We’ve more than tripled the funding for community adult literacy programs to help people around the province gain skills that will allow them to take part in our knowledge economy.”  
\* Whether the government’s increased spend-

*Continued on page 16*



## Regional Reports

### **Kootenay Boundary Submitted by Velma McKay**

**Oct 4, 2008**

While my contacts at Selkirk College inform me that they saw a number of retirements of long term ABE instructors over the summer, and are thus going through a bit of transition period, I have no other news from Selkirk. I've sent out emails to many former members from Selkirk and have heard back from one who is hoping to attend the ABEABC conference in 2009. Apparently last year's conference conflicted with a multi-campus departmental meeting for Selkirk ABE instructors.

At COTR, we also saw a number of retirements of long serving ABE faculty members. With the shifting of personnel between campuses and between programs, as well as some new hires into the department to fill in the gaps, many of us are still finding our sense of equilibrium. We are seeing enrollments at about the same or slightly above the levels of last year.

Thanks to Aboriginal Special Project (AHHRI Support Program for Health), a number of ABE courses have been put online and are being piloted this semester through the Cranbrook Directed Studies and semestered ABE programs. Online versions of our Intermediate and Advanced level English courses and Intermediate level Math course are also under development through additional funding. It is an-

anticipated that we will soon be working in partnership with First Nations Communities within our region to allow students working online with mentorship in their own aboriginal communities to fulfill the pre-requisite requirements for entry into many of our health programs.

At the Cranbrook campus, a new Provincial level Fine Arts course has been developed and is being piloted this year. The course follows the same outcomes as Grade 12 Art so allows students wishing to pursue an Adult Graduation Diploma another option to use towards graduation. It is anticipated that community members wishing to explore their artistic side may wish to take the course as well.

Two successful programs, the Spar-Del Trailer Court Literacy Program in the Elk Valley and the ESL/ Literacy for Immigrants



Program in Golden are continuing in partnership with the Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy. The ABE department and the Regional Literacy Coordinator are working with CBAL to explore additional ways in which the College can assist with meeting the adult literacy education needs within region.

Velma McKay

## Thompson Okanagan Submitted by Lyra Warkentin



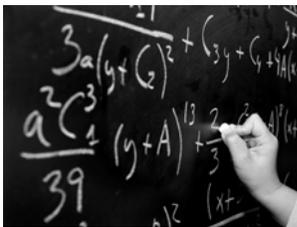
This Winter's features:

### **Secwepemc Cultural Education Society—Adult Education Programs, and Central Interior Trades and Apprenticeship Centre (CITAC)**

Grace Howse at the **Native Adult Education Program** (NAEP) is clearly passionate about her job. She told me about the two programs for First Nations adults who wish to upgrade their schooling. The school is run out of a few classrooms at the Kamloops Christian school.

Students enter the program after writing a Canadian Achievement Test (CAT). The results of this evaluation help to determine whether the students enter SAGE II or FNAUTT.

The **Secwepemc Adult General Education** (SAGE II) program helps students to achieve their Adult Dogwood Diploma. It is a two-year program with courses accredited by the South Central Interior Distance Education School. Year One courses include grade 11 core courses, Shuswap Language training, and electives if required. Year Two courses include grade 12 level matriculation and Shuswap language courses as well as grade 12 electives.



Grace explained that students often come to the program meeting the requirements, but may be weak in one of the core subjects. In that case, they are offered a tutor to help bring them up to speed in their weak area (often math). In this way, the standardized, two-year program is highly individualized to meet the specific needs of each student.

The **First Nations Access to University, Trades & Technology** (FNAUTT) program helps students achieve the entrance requirements for university

and trades and technology career programs. FNAUTT is an 8-month program accredited by Thompson Rivers University.

There are several unique features of the NAEP programs that set them apart from mainstream upgrading and university preparation courses. One is the strong focus on Native cultural curriculum. Course content is presented using First Nations topics and issues. The holistic, integrated approach to learning focuses on the emotional, social and spiritual aspects of the self. As well, the subjects are not strictly segregated, so that aspects of a topic discussed in one course may also be applied and discussed in another course.

Another feature of the NAEP programs is the volunteer requirement. Each student is required to volunteer 30 hours/week outside of school hours. Volunteering can include activities such as helping to set up for Friday breakfasts, and other duties around the school.

In addition to Grace, who is counselor and facilitator of the Career and Personal Planning course, NAEP has three teachers with a combined teaching experience of over 45 years. Janice, the coordinator, Linda, and Brian are dedicated to their students and provide them with much more than a diploma.

Because of the cultural, holistic, and volunteer aspects of the programs, NAEP offers more than just upgrading. Students also gain confidence and a stronger sense of self from the experience of learning and succeeding in these programs.

**Central Interior Trades and Apprenticeship Centre** opened its doors in North Kamloops in the summer of '08, with two programs geared

*Continued on page 11*

## Fraser Valley Submitted by Andrea Eaton, January 10, 2009



Of course, the biggest recent news around the region has been the weather, which has played havoc with the ability of students and teachers to get to classes. Let's hope the rest of winter is less harsh.

Reporting from University of the Fraser Valley, Ruth Vandendor mentions that the Upgrading and University Prep classes are filling very well, with enrolment definitely up over last year. There has been a slight improvement in fundamental English registration, but the advanced and provincial level English classes are bursting at the seams. Fundamental and intermediate math courses are also very full. UFV is also seeing an increased demand for fundamental computer classes. The Hope campus of UFV has changed locations over the Christmas break. They are now partnering with the Fraser Cascade School District, which is providing space for their Hope UUP courses.

Kwantlen has become Kwantlen Polytechnic University as of September 1, 2008. As well, they now have a new regional Literacy Coordinator, Judith McLean, who started on November 17, 2008. Judith's role in her new position will be to collaboratively reflect the community's needs and to create an action plan based on community-identified priorities for literacy and essential skills. She brings twenty years of community development experience to the position and has spent fifteen years in the post-secondary system working with adult learners as a coordinator, instruc-



tor and curriculum designer. To reach her, call 604-599-2324.

According to Yvonne Chard, Delta Continuing Education has seen big increases in numbers in their ABE classes, with a particularly large growth in Latin American refugees. New classes have been added to accommodate the increase in learners: Communication in English and Foundation Level 1. The computer courses are full and wait-listed. The next High School Completion



semester starts in February, with Biology, English and Math Principles most popular. It is becoming more difficult to find BC certified teachers who want to teach part-time adult education, particularly in the day-time. Delta is already planning their summer school, and the Language Challenges exam program continues to grow in popularity. Delta provides the opportunity to immigrants from around the province to challenge language classes, with exams given at the Board office. 3600 students have written these tests in courses such as Mandarin and Punjabi 12, which gives them credit toward graduation. They come from all over the province to Delta over a three day period to challenge these language courses. Delta also runs classes in workplace, business training and technology. An additional service they provide is online oral English testing for grade 10 ESL students in China. As well, Delview has a longstanding ELSA program with levels 1 to 3 providing settlement-oriented English language training. Students can immediately be placed in an English class if eligible.

ciety continues to be an important part of the settlement experience for hundreds of refugees and new immigrants. People from diverse areas of the world receive language training in ELSA classes from Literacy through Level 5, as well as specialized language programs for parents, seniors and job-seekers. Other programs include settlement programs, career programs, and family counselling. DIVERSEcity's annual lion dance takes place this year on January 28 front of the offices in Newton on 137 Street close to 72 Avenue.

Langley Continuing Education Centre has been going strong this year. They have just put out their new winter-spring catalogue and have been experiencing very good registration with a large variety of programming to choose from. One interesting new option is their certification program for clerical and computer. The majority of registrants are moms who held previous office jobs and wish to re-enter the workforce, and modernize their skills. This is a complete but flexible package of classes, with core courses and additional courses as well. At a cost of \$995, Jim Verkerk feels it is a reasonably-priced option for those learners who want to update their training. Also a big draw is the new computer centre, which is immensely popular, with courses in mornings, afternoons, evenings, Saturdays and even Sundays.

To conclude my report, I have not been able to get in touch with all programs in the Fraser Valley region but hope to include news from more of you in the next edition of Groundwork.



Please don't hesitate to let me know of any additional items you wish to publicize.

*Thompson Okanagan:* **continued from page 9**

specifically for First Nations people, as well as a program for EI-eligible people looking for access to trades training.

Under the umbrella of Central Interior Partners Aboriginal Human Resource Department (CIPAHRD), CITAC offers the **Older Worker Trades Initiative** with a focus on workers between 50 and 64 years. For workers of all ages CITAC has the **Trades Initiative**.



I spoke to Wes Francois, a trades counselor at CITAC. He explained that CITAC covers three different First Nations in the Cariboo-Okanagan areas: the Secwepemc, Nlaka'pamux, and St'at'imc nations. For workers who are not of First Nations Ancestry, CITAC offers Trades programs for those who have been referred from an employment centre.

Wes helps applicants to make individualized plans for their career. CITAC offers computer training and courses to help workers with resume writing. Applicants can have their skills assessed and get help with conducting labour market research to help in choosing a trade.

In addition to its relationship with BCIT, CITAC has educational partners in Thompson Rivers University and SD #73 (Kamloops), as well as Okanagan College and SD #83 (Salmon Arm).

Although it is focused primarily on Aboriginal people, the mission of CITAC "includes working with people to empower them to reach their full potential and become highly skilled in the workforce in trades and technology".

I wish all the best in 2009 to Wes and the other counselors at CITAC, as well as to Grace and the teachers at NAEP.

Stay tuned for other features in the coming months!

## Vancouver Island Submitted by Jill Auchinachie



### North Island College

At North Island College, instructors are working hard to prepare for the new Fundamental English levels. We are fortunate to have a very dedicated instructor developing the curriculum for us, and this will help us do a good job of both assessment and instruction. Change is always a challenge for busy teachers!

At our last department meeting, we had a chance to share some methods for exploring intermediate novels. Liz Gerard led us in an exciting literature circles lesson based on short stories. Working in small groups, we had the chance to be readers together, excited about new literature. It was a

great reminder that what is part of one teacher's daily repertoire may be new and innovative for another. This is why it's so important that we make the time to share our classroom ideas with each other, no matter how heavy our departmental agendas might be.

Submitted by Sandy Faust

### Camosun College

The fall 2008 term presented steady enrollments in fundamental and intermediate courses. The newly structured Fundamental English classes were launched, and student feedback was positive about the organization of the new levels. Consistent in-class instructional assistant support certainly facilitated the smooth implementation of those courses as did help and encouragement from Carole May, the Assessment Centre English Placement Counsellor.

With the introduction of Office 2007, the Fun-

damental and Intermediate Computer curriculum was carefully updated by Janet Gamache. A Preparatory Nursing Math course was scheduled again at the Lansdowne Campus, and a new math for nautical students will be piloted winter 2009.

The selection committee for the Regional Literacy Coordinator position was pleased to announce that Susan Chandler will begin her position January 5, 2009.

### Introducing Wendy McDonald – Instructional Assistant



Wendy McDonald has supported First Nations adult learners at the Saanich Adult Education Centre (SAEC) for eighteen years. After her two children started school, Wendy completed the First Nations Teaching Assistant Program and was then hired by Camosun College to support all levels of upgrading students in Camosun's community-based upgrading class working with learners from the four Saanich bands: Pauquachin, Tsartlip, Tsawout, and Tseycum. Another aspect of Wendy's career is her strong support of FN students in Health and Human Services Programs. Wendy is a consistent advocate and compassionate leader who helps students navigate between community and campus settings.

Submitted by Jill Auchinachie

**Metro Vancouver  
Submitted by Janet Webster**



**Dec. 15, 2008**

The websites of all the Metro Vancouver school districts and post secondary institutions profile an increase in online offerings for Adult Basic Education in all subject areas. The school districts have also made the transition in Sept. 2008 to offering the newly formed Foundations' courses which take students to the Grade 10 level in subject areas before they embark on high school completion courses Gr.10-12. The Burnaby School District received the largest ELSA contract in the province as it has one of the highest demographics of new Canadian residents in the Lower Mainland. Douglas College continues to offer developmental studies designed to help adults upgrade their education and skills in preparation for college-level courses. Douglas College has recently hired a Regional Literacy Coordinator as has Kwantlen Polytechnic University.

## **ABEABC Bursary Recipient**

Congratulations to Karri Andriashyk (right), and best wishes to her and her studies in 2009.

*Submitted by Lyra Warkentin*



On November 17, Thompson Rivers University (TRU) hosted its annual Foundations Awards Ceremony in which hundreds of donors meet with their scholarship recipients to personally present them with their awards.

I was honoured to present the ABEABC Bursary to Karri Andriashyk, who was selected by TRU's University Preparation Department to receive the ABEABC Bursary. According to Lee Emery of the UPrep Department, when the faculty met to choose a recipient, Karri was the unanimous choice.

When she's finished her University Preparation courses, Karri wants to go into the sciences. She's interested in both nursing and physiotherapy, and hasn't yet decided which one to focus on. She's hoping there's a way that following one path will not necessarily rule out studying for the other one later.

Karri's life is very full outside of studying. The love of her life, her two-year-old son, Donnie, keeps her very busy. She manages to fit in her homework after Donnie goes to bed.



## ABEABC Government Liaison Report

January 2009

By Linda Ohashi

### Adult Literacy Initiatives in British Columbia

As part of the province's commitment to be the most literate jurisdiction in North America, several literacy initiatives have been launched since September 2008 that will directly benefit adult learners in British Columbia. In September, the Ministries of Education and Advanced Education and Labour Market development announced that the province was investing \$2.4 million in 70 community adult literacy programs. These programs, which are delivered through post secondary institutions throughout BC, offer free tutoring for adults who want to upgrade their literacy skills. In addition, a further commitment of \$1.2 million was made to



support Aboriginal family literacy programs throughout the province, and a further \$2 million was pledged to support literacy planning and delivery in BC's 60

school districts. The third phase of the Education Guarantee was also completed in September 2008, ensuring that both graduated and non-graduated adult students have tuition-free access to a wide variety of courses offered at both post secondary institutions and school districts.

Beginning September 2008, a number of school districts also began piloting the new Literacy Foundations curriculum, which has been designed to develop adult literacy skills in five key areas (English, science, mathematics, social studies and information technology) from a beginning literacy up to and including grade 10 level. The Literacy Foundations curriculum is targeted towards both graduated and non-graduated adults and school-age students who need to upgrade their skills in order to successfully complete grade 11 and 12 courses. Currently, 12 school districts are piloting the

Foundations curriculum, and they will forward feedback to the Ministry of Education throughout the year. Beginning September 2009, the Literacy Foundations program will be fully implemented by all districts throughout the province in an effort to provide a comprehensive literacy program for all adult learners.

### New Appointments

There have been several new appointments at the Ministry of Education that are of particular importance to adult education. Ms. Charito Elderfield has been appointed as Manager of the Graduations Standards Unit at the ministry. In this position, Ms. Elderfield has several areas of responsibility including developing policies, guidelines and delivery services for adult education. Ms. Paula Pothier has been appointed as Education Officer in the Graduations Standard Unit, and Ms. Pothier will be responsible for adult education, corrections education, board authorized courses and external credentials.

Many of these initiatives are part of the **Adult Opportunities Action Plan**, a joint project between the Ministry of Advanced Education and other ministries to ensure that BC adults attain and maintain the skills necessary to fully participate in society.

This plan can be found at [http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/adulteducation/adult\\_opportunities\\_plan07.pdf](http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/adulteducation/adult_opportunities_plan07.pdf)

**Information for this article has been supplied by:**

**Ms. Charito Elderfield**  
**Manager, Graduation Standards Unit**  
**Ministry of Education**

**Don't forget:**  
**ELMO Reviews**  
**e-News**



<https://www.elmoreviews.ca/newsletters/ELMONewsNov2008.pdf>



## Lyra's MAd Edventures Episode 4

By Lyra Warkentin

Newton's Law of Intertia states that a body in motion tends to stay in motion, and a body at rest tends to stay at rest. When the body is in motion, it requires very little energy to keep it that way. The same goes for bodies at rest. On the other hand, it takes a great deal of energy to change from rest to motion.

I believe that this can apply to our own bodies and psyche as well. I have noticed that if my schedule gets interrupted, it seems to take an inordinate amount of energy to get me back on track.

For those of you who have been following my MAd Edventures through the past few issues of Groundwork, you know that I struggled with defining my goals and choosing a focus for my Master's degree. Now that I know exactly where I'm going and what I need to do to get there, bouts of inaction are especially frustrating to me.

Having a day interrupted by unexpected visitors does not seem to have much impact on my momentum, but having *two days* interrupted, or needing to deal with sudden emergencies often causes me to fall off the "motivation wagon".

Throughout the fall I was extremely motivated, and every day was a little closer to my goal. I was working on my research project—compiling my data and organizing my research report. I felt great, and I was on track for meeting my end-of-year deadlines.

Then I hit the ditch. It was minor, as car accidents go, but I managed to total my car. I then had to spend (waste?) time dealing with ICBC, buying another car, and getting appointments to fix my aching back and neck. On top of that, I caught a whopper of a cold.



I know that these are all lame excuses for falling off the wagon, but they really did cause me to become a body at rest. My back and neck are now recovered enough that sitting for longer periods is not a problem. I think it's easy to begin wallowing in self-pity, and much harder to give the tough love to yourself and get back to action.

After I splashed cold water on my face and finished berating myself for inaction, I made a schedule. I have found that the best way to stay focused is to set realistic goals and stick to them. After a day of work-

ing on my research, I need to make a list of what I want to focus on tomorrow. If I have a list of things to do the next day, I won't feel at sea about where to start when I get up.



My daily schedule includes a break for lunch and a walk along the river. When first getting back to my studies, I need to adhere fairly strictly to this schedule. Once my motivation is back and the laws of inertia are keeping me on track with minimal expended energy, I can be a little more flexible about when I need to stretch or eat, so I don't have to interrupt the flow of a great idea.

For those who are considering taking any distance courses, I think it is important not to put your studies in your "spare" time. As we all know, spare time is filled up with all sorts of errands and meetings and activities, and our studies will always be a "tomorrow" activity. I have learned that I need to work errands and other activities around my studies, not the other way around. By giving my studies the prominence they deserve, I hope to catch up from my latest batch of inaction and make up for some of that lost time.

I hope this does not discourage people from considering distance programs. Although I have had a setback, I still feel motivated, and am proud of my achievements so far. If you want more information about the Master of Adult Education (M.Ad. Ed.) program at St FX, please visit <http://www.stfx.ca/academic/adulted/>. Or, if you have questions for me you can e-mail [lyrastar@ocis.net](mailto:lyrastar@ocis.net).

### Meet Lindy Liu New ABEABC membership chair

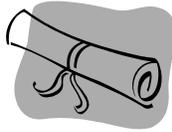
Working with the Vancouver School Board Continuing and Adult Education was not a part of my original plan, but I am thrilled to be a member of this community as soon as I was in the door. This year is my fifth year as a Program Advisor and a Work Experience Program Coordinator, and I am thoroughly enjoying the challenges and rewards this position brings me every day. I believe in life-long learning, and I admire those who have the courage and determination to come back and finish their high school with us. I am honoured to be working with them.

I love the sport of badminton. Outside of work, I spend a lot of time playing this sport, competing, and helping out with the tournaments. I also love to travel and experience different cultures. I am hoping to visit Greece next summer after I finish my Master's program!



ing and lofty goals for a literate BC are achievable, remains to be seen; only 20 per cent of B.C. adults with low literacy participate in education or training in a given year. The professional language, the mechanics of delivery and the accountability measures in adult education have changed in the past three years.

Adult education in BC has been given a much needed face lift by virtue of increased government spending and the coordination of initiatives; it has thus gained a higher profile in our communities. At the same time, perhaps the dedication of knowledgeable and professional adult educators in BC, some who have been at the front lines for 20 years or more, has been overlooked. The adult educator certification issue last year is an example of the lack of government, institutional and public recognition given to adult education professionals. The need for highly qualified adult educators in BC will not diminish by 2015. The field itself, be it called adult literacy or adult basic education, will probably advance towards research based practices in the future as the new regional universities in BC expand and evolve research-in-action initiatives, and the coordinated efforts of the MOE and AVED give a new face to a legitimate and critical field of inquiry in Canada.



References:

- \* Honourable Murray Coell  
Minister of Advanced Education and  
Minister Responsible for Research  
and Technology
- \* Nita Jacob: Letter to Premier Campbell "Adult  
Education Certification"  
Dec. 4, 2007



**From the Groundwork Chair**  
**Ruth Vandendor**

The last few days I have sat in the sun for a few minutes during my lunch break. What a relief after seeming months of freezing winds, heavy snow, intense rain, and devastating floods! Much of the lower mainland has been soaked in with dense fog for more than a week. Along with the slumping economy and incredible cost overruns for the Olympic village, we've had a tough and depressing winter this year in British Columbia!

As I think about the difficulties many British Columbians are facing, I am reminded of our students. Too many of them face overwhelming problems, not just this winter, but for much of their lives. We are seeing an influx of newly unemployed students coming to classes, having been laid off from the numerous low-paying jobs that were available during the economic boom. Now they must cope with the same old problems of low income, lack of employment skills, and the need for upgrading and training, all the while raising families, trying to pay bills, and focus on their education.

Despite the anxiety caused by changes in adult basic education policies and funding in BC, I must remind myself that we are privileged to be here to work with our students. I tend to becoming discouraged, even resentful, by workload issues and bureaucracy. My pity party is interrupted when I see students engaged in learning, interacting with each other and instructors, overcoming math anxiety, comprehending printed text, and encouraging their fellow students. This morning a student, upon sending out her first email, shouted "I did it, I did it!" Last semester, one of our neediest students, upon completion of her first fundamental computer course, told her instructor, "This course has been transformational!" Another student, whose math anxiety blocked his learning for more than twenty years, is now surprised to find he loves math. Yes, we are honoured to work with our students and to play a part in their success. They bring sunshine to our lives, even in winter.





**In Memorium**  
**Linda Vanderbyl**  
 Submitted by Yvonne Chard



Linda Vanderbyl of Delta School District Continuing Education recently lost her life to breast cancer. She is sadly missed by her colleagues and students at the Delview and Ladner

Adult Centres. Linda was a supporter of the ABE association for many years, and taught in adult education programs in Delta for more than 25 years.



Linda attended a lot of ABE conferences over the years. She was not someone who wanted to be on a board, but was rather a worker and a supporter in the background. Linda loved to shop, and that included many resource books from publishers' displays.

Two of our staff, Edna and Lynda noted that Linda V. was a very kind and gracious person...who showed amazing courage and strength.

Delta Continuing Education has had many homes, and Linda moved about in various programs. Her past eighteen years of teaching were mainly at the Delview Adult Learning Centre in North Delta.

John (*instructor*) said: "The memory that stands out for me is my first impression of Linda - when I started teaching at Delview Adult Learning Centre proper (I had strictly been a Delta Secondary School night teacher to that point). The only people I knew there were Donna and Geri (*coordinator and secretary*), and the latter only by phone. I could see that both were momentarily harried by work dilemmas, so I went down the hall to ask someone else where my room was etc. I didn't have say a syllable: Linda popped out of room 3, saw me and exclaimed "Oh, hi! You must be John! I'm Linda - welcome to Del-

view!" Although obviously busy herself, she took time to show me around, taught me the vagaries of the photocopier, introduced me to her fellow exuberant Margaret, all the while fielding inquiries from students in the hall. For me, that was Linda: an inclusive, positive person who rarely said negative things, and who made me feel that I belonged there even before entering the classroom."

Linda taught English 1 most years, with a few other classes along the way. She had a great deal of patience with students who suffered learning disabilities, and was very popular with the beginning literacy level students in her classes. She was always very positive and upbeat, and had an incredible memory of students.

For a number of years she was also one of the educational advisors, assisting Surrey and Delta students to be placed in the appropriate programs, or referred to other agencies who would meet their needs.

Throughout the two year battle with cancer, Linda remained upbeat, and cheerful. She is remembered most for her optimistic attitude, outgoing personality, interest in everyone, kindness and generosity to others and her friendliness.

Linda's husband, Wolfgang Hennig, is currently instructing at Delview Adult Centre.





## President's report January 2009 By Nita Jacob

Greetings to all our Members! I hope everyone had a wonderful holiday and that 2009 will bring all the best for you and yours! I apologize for having minimal contact with the Membership this past year. Don and I have had a busy year dealing with elderly parents (85, 86, 87 and 93) and, unfortunately, I lost my Dad on September 11, 2008 to a massive stroke! Yvonne has, thankfully, brought me up to date on what is going on in the field and deserves all our thanks, especially mine!

For me there are two huge issues facing the Association. The first is finding someone to step up to the position of PRESIDENT, as I truly cannot continue at this time! The second is to find someone to come on board in the crucial supporting position as VICE-PRESIDENT! The Board NEEDS to challenge the whole MEMBERSHIP to assist in filling these two positions! PLEASE HELP US!

Included in this mail out you will find information about our upcoming 2009 Conference which is being co-hosted by the College of New Caledonia and the Prince George Native Friendship Centre. We are looking for presenters and keynote speakers and if you have any suggestions or would like to present please go to the NALD website [www.nald.ca](http://www.nald.ca) for information. Registration information is also available at this site.

Please note that this is the **first time** in the history of the Association that we have partnered with a Native Friendship Centre. To me, this is as awesome as the election of the new President of the United States! I think Abraham Lincoln would have been truly impressed if he could see Barack Obama take office! After over thirty years in the field of Adult Basic Education, I am truly impressed that our Association has forged such an awesome partnership!

All of you in the field are facing the issue of adjusting your curriculum to parallel the Foundation Levels recently established, even though content is and has been in place in all our programs for some time. Although there are not yet testing materials aligned with these levels, these will hope-

fully be in place in the near future.

Of current interest and possible concern, is that one of the major Provincial/Federal English as a Second Language Programs, ELSA (English Language Services for Adults) has moved, yet again, to another Ministry! This time, ELSA is under the umbrella of the Ministry of Advanced Education. Is this a good thing or a bad thing?? Historically, having programs move to the Ministry of Advanced Education has led to the exclusion of the participation of School District Programs. This time there should not be that threat of exclusion. Neither the College system nor the School District system can accommodate all the needs of our Literacy students, and it was made clear in the government's original statements and the conclusions from the Standing Committee on Education that ESL is clearly a Literacy issue in this Province and in this Country!

**My thanks to all of you for being part of this extremely important Association and I look forward to seeing you at Conference 2009 May 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> in Prince George, British Columbia!**

### **Organizations: remember to renew your ABEABC Memberships NOW!**

Organizational memberships are due February 28.

- Organizations \$175 (includes \$100 bursary)
- Organizations \$275 (includes \$200 bursary)
- Organizations without bursary \$75.

See back cover for membership form.

# ABEABC Board of Directors 2008—2009

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<b>Regional Representatives</b>			
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>GROUNDWORK</b></p> <p>Groundwork is published three times each year by the Adult Basic Education Association of British Columbia. Opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the policies of the ABEABC, except where explicitly stated. We encourage participation from members and others. <b>Submissions are welcome.</b> Send manuscripts and accompanying photographs to Ruth Vandendor at University of the Fraser Valley 45635 Yale Road, Chilliwack, BC V2P 6T4 or by email to: <a href="mailto:ruth.vandendor@ucfv.ca">ruth.vandendor@ucfv.ca</a> Any part of Groundwork may be copied or used by others, but we request that any use of Groundwork materials be attributed to the author and Groundwork. <b>Many thanks to our contributors to this issue.</b> Editing, design and layout for this issue by Ruth Vandendor. For subscription information, see back cover. The ABEABC homepage can be found at: <a href="http://www.abeabc.ca/">http://www.abeabc.ca/</a> This is part of the National Adult Literacy (NALD) Database's home page at <a href="http://www.nald.ca">http://www.nald.ca</a></p>		<b>Cariboo-Okanagan Regional Representative</b>	 <b>Lyra Warkentin</b> <a href="mailto:lyrastar@ocis.net">lyrastar@ocis.net</a> 250-679-3262
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		<b>Kootenay/Boundary Regional Representative</b>	 <b>Velma McKay</b> <a href="mailto:mckay@cotr.bc.ca">mckay@cotr.bc.ca</a> 250-489-2751 ext 423
		<b>Metro Vancouver Regional Representative</b>	 <b>Janet Webster</b> <a href="mailto:janet.webster@kwantlen.ca">janet.webster@kwantlen.ca</a> 604-599-2549
		<b>North Central Regional Representative</b>	 <b>August Horning</b> <a href="mailto:literacy@pgnfc.com">literacy@pgnfc.com</a> 250-564-3568 ext 228
		<b>Vancouver Island Regional Representative</b>	 <b>Jill Auchinachie</b> <a href="mailto:Auchinac@camosun.bc.ca">Auchinac@camosun.bc.ca</a> 250-370-4489

## What is ABEABC?

The Adult Basic Education Association of BC is:

- an association of people concerned about the provision of high quality learning opportunities for undereducated adults.
- the only association specially for adult basic educators in B.C.
- the first such provincial organization in Canada.
- connected with other groups involved in adult education such as:
  - \* the Movement for Canadian Literacy BC
  - \* the Pacific Association for Continuing Education
  - \* the Teachers of English as an Additional Language, etc.



## How do I join?

Fill out the membership application form and return it along with a cheque made out to the Association for your annual dues. Memberships expire 12 months following our receipt of your fee.

Membership in the ABEABC is open to you if you are involved in:

- \* basic literacy programs
- \* **ABE**
- \* native adult education programs
- \* literacy in libraries
- \* **ESL programs for adults**
- \* workplace literacy programs
- \* correctional institution programs
- \* **GED and college-prep programs**
- \* community-based programs

## ADULT BASIC EDUCATION ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH COLUMBIA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Employer: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Fax: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate which fee fits your category:

- Individual and Groundwork subscription \$40
- Individual outside Canada \$50
- Organizations \$175 (includes \$100 bursary)
- Organizations \$275 (includes \$200 bursary)
- Organizations without bursary \$75. Institutional memberships are due February 28 annually.
- Business and union \$50
- Non-profit community groups \$40

Membership fee includes a subscription to Groundwork.  
Membership fees and donations are tax deductible.

Invoices are available from our website.  
Website: <http://www.abeabc.ca/>

**Total amount enclosed \$** \_\_\_\_\_

Mail to: Membership Chair

The Adult Basic Education Association of British Columbia  
5476- 45 Ave, Delta, BC V4K 1 L4