

# Groundwork

# E-Bits



June 20

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## **GREETINGS FROM THE PRESIDENT**

This E-Bits replaces the previous Fax Trax publications due to electronic mail now replacing faxing as a method of communication. E-Bits newsletters will be sent out periodically when we have some information for the membership that will not be published in the Groundwork magazine. A small newsletter has grown to twelve pages in a very short time. A copy will be added to the publication section of our website for future reference. I hope that someone will step forward soon to take on the Groundwork editing role for the board. For now, I have put together this newsletter in no particular order. The index above was added at the last minute to help you locate the articles of special interest to you.



Please excuse any formatting errors. This is a very busy time as you know, with graduation ceremonies, end of term activities, and goodbyes.

We had another wonderful conference in Prince George in May. Thank you again to the organizers, the keynote speakers, special guests and workshop presenters; and thank you of course to those members who joined us once again to celebrate our work in adult education. We greatly appreciate the contributions of the College of New Caledonia, and of August Horning and his conference committee.

I have returned to the position of president of the association. This will be my last term on the Board and I look forward to strengthening the new board so that some new people will be at the helm.

Nita Jacob is now the past president and received a special "thank you" for her many, many years of dedicated service to the association. The new board will be presented to you in the fall issue of Groundwork.

The website will be updated soon with the new board contact information. We are very pleased to welcome some new members, and thank those who finished their term of office.

In April 2010 we will be hosting our next annual conference. Leonne Beebe ([beebel@ucfu.bc.ca](mailto:beebel@ucfu.bc.ca)) is the coordinator of that event, and would be pleased to hear from anyone offering assistance or advice. See the website for further information.

*Yvonne Chard*

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## **KOOTENAY BOUNDARY REPORT FOR AGM MAY 2009**

ABE in the Kootenays is alive and well. At College of the Rockies enrollments in ABE were up slightly in the fall and we saw a dramatic rise in enrollment in ABE programs throughout the college region in the winter semester. The Directed Studies program enrollment in the winter term reached over 100 students for the first time in years. Enrollments at our smaller campuses are also increasing significantly. A limited spring/summer program was offered last year in Cranbrook, and Fernie. An expanded program is being offered in Cranbrook this summer with about 100 students currently registered. Fernie is also offering a summer program.

Our Directed Studies offerings from the Cranbrook campus have expanded to include online courses in English, Math, Biology, Chemistry, and Psychology. The science courses require students to attend some onsite labs, but the bulk of the course work is done online. These courses have proven quite popular with students and have allowed us to provide access to students who otherwise be unable to attend the College. They have also provided a number of students with a chance to complete pre-requisites for other COTR programs.

The College has entered partnerships with the Ktunaxa (Tu na ha) and Shuswap First Nations and we now have students studying ABE online courses in Learning Centres located at the band offices near Invermere and Cranbrook. Band-hired mentors provide technical and moral support to the students attending the Learning Centres and College of the Rockies instructors in Cranbrook teach the online courses. The first students started only recently so it is too soon to report on success rates. We are hopeful that the combination of close-to-home support and College ABE courses will allow many interested students to succeed.

At Selkirk College enrollments in ABE are also up. They too have had a noticeable surge in enrollment in the winter semester. Selkirk offers summer school program at their Nelson campus. It was a success last year and served a total of 102 students. At the point when I received my information from Selkirk, budget shortfalls were being dealt with and it was unclear as to whether a summer program was going to be offered this year.

Upper level courses were split into two sections this year. That seems to have improved completion rates of courses. Selkirk offers Adult Special Education programs at 5 of their 6 campuses including a 2 afternoon /week program which started this year in Nakusp. It has been a pleasure being the ABEABC regional rep and I wish you well at the conference this year.

*Velma McKay*

*ABE Instructor College of the Rockies, Kootenay Boundary Regional Rep*

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The following information was recently posted on the NALD website.

## **ONLINE TRAINING OPPORTUNITY FOR CANADIANS WITH DISABILITIES AND OTHERS FACING BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT**

- Do you have clients who self identify as having a disability or another barrier to employment?
- Would they be interested in Website Design as a way to start their own business; contract to existing companies or agencies to design and manage their sites; or using their skills to obtain employment as an entry level web designer or administrator?
- Do they have their own computer, basic computer skills and an Internet connection?

If you said yes to these questions, we have an opportunity for them...

The Canadian Society for Social Development (CSSD) has spaces left in their six-month, award-winning Internet Business Development for Entrepreneurs (IBDE), web design program for the October 2009 intake. This accredited course gives students marketable skills to use in the online marketing of their own business; starting their own web design venture working with other small businesses or agencies; or possibly embarking on a career with another web design firm that will provide telework for them as a web designer. Over the past five years the IBDE program has had over 70% of our students complete the course and we believe this is due to the one-on-one instruction that they receive from our IBDE team, through the use of email, instant messaging, phone and our virtual classroom.

Our tuition of \$3,995 includes all course supplies and software, and our staff will assist applicants in finding funding assistance, which is usually available in most areas. Those interested in this program should register now as space is limited (and the funding process does take a bit of time) at: <http://www.ibde.ca/?q=signup>.

For additional information go to [www.ibde.ca](http://www.ibde.ca). You can also access our brochure and poster in PDF format at: <http://www.cssd-web.org/?q=en/about/promo>

### **Hurry and have them enrol now!**

Thanks for your support,  
Kay Ryan, Marketing Director - Canadian Society for  
Social Development  
[kryan@cssd-web.org](mailto:kryan@cssd-web.org)

Check out:  
[www.cssd-web.org](http://www.cssd-web.org)  
[www.businessabilities.ca](http://www.businessabilities.ca)  
[www.ibde.ca](http://www.ibde.ca)  
[www.virtualmall.ca](http://www.virtualmall.ca)



## **FREE MOODLE INTRODUCTORY COURSES FOR ABE EDUCATORS**

Free Moodle introductory courses for ABE educators

AlphaPlus Centre is offering Introduction to Moodle training course this year

This eight-week training course will be offered three times during the 2009/10 funding year.

Training dates are:

June 8 - July 31, 2009 (7 seats remaining)

October 12 - December 4, 2009 (19 seats remaining)

January 18 - March 12, 2010 (23 seats remaining)

Details can be found at:

<http://www.alphaplus.ca/newsupdates.asp?eventID=215>

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## **BURNABY AND LITERACY FOUNDATIONS**

When summoned to a meeting led by then Ministry Representative for Literacy Foundations, Theresa Saunders, in the spring of 2008, Burnaby adult educators knew we were in for major changes. Literacy Foundations includes adult education courses in English, Social Studies, Computer Studies, Math and Science, that lead up to grade ten Level courses.

Prescribed Learning Outcomes for seven levels of Foundations in English and Math form the bulk of the new program, with level one corresponding to a primary grade level ability and level seven corresponding to grade nine. Each level includes one hundred hours of instruction. Curriculum development is left entirely to the districts developing the foundations courses, provided that their methods of instruction, assessment and learning materials are linked explicitly to the PLOs provided by the Ministry.

A Literacy Foundations Curriculum Committee (LFC) consisting of three teachers was created in May. That group's first task was to create assessment tests that could be used to place students in the appropriate levels of English instruction. Foundations classes began in the summer of 2008 on a small scale, and students were placed with the new assessment tests.

September saw a full-time roster of Literacy Foundations courses launched, day and night, at four daytime locations, and two night schools, with eighteen instructors. Courses in English, Social Studies, Math and Computer Studies were offered. While Burnaby's classes prior to 2008 were known for successfully preparing students in academic English, significant changes had to be made. A variety of literature was introduced from levels 4 through 7; reading and writing strategies were closely aligned with secondary school techniques and Ministry outcomes. LFC writers created social studies course outlines at two different levels (F345 and F67), selected textbooks, and designed resources that combined the teaching of literacy and social studies content.

Over the school year, teachers have been part of three Professional Development days, in which best practices for teaching reading and writing have been presented. The LFC does ongoing work in refining the courses, ensuring teachers have what they need, and creating and monitoring assessment for students moving through the Literacy Foundations curriculum.

Don Nordheimer, Principal of Adult Continuing Education, along with his administrative team, have taken a proactive approach to developing Foundations in an "open source" fashion, inviting other districts to share in the development process. All districts have an open invitation from Burnaby to share in resources and ideas developed for Literacy Foundations. Since the Ministry envisions that Foundations should be aligned across the province, it makes sense to share information and resource development among districts. A comprehensive report to the ministry has been compiled by Burnaby, which is available on disc to anyone who would like a window into our curriculum development thus far.

Burnaby is off to a good start, yet there are no doubt changes and challenges in the year ahead, as we work to refine and develop excellence in this new arena of academic preparation.



*Burnaby school district's Literacy Foundations Curriculum Committee  
Left to right: Carol Topalian, Monika Dhillon, Valerie Olteanu: teachers  
Not pictured: Franca Zumpano – Vice Principal*

*Carol Topalian, Teacher, Adult Continuing Education, Burnaby School District*

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## **VANCOUVER ISLAND REPRESENTATIVE TO THE BOARD.**

We are looking for a volunteer to fill this position.

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Photos from the conference have been posted in a Google photo album, and can be viewed at:

<http://picasaweb.google.ca/dalc2009/ABEABCConference#>



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## **CONFERENCE 2009 REFLECTIONS**

This year I attended my fourth ABEABC conference. I have found all ABEABC members to be friendly and welcoming to newcomers. I always return home feeling enriched and full of new perspectives and interesting ideas.

The Prince George conference was every bit as inspiring as those of the past. The smaller number of attendees made it more of an intimate affair, so we were able to get to know each other a bit better. The theme was "**Culturalizing the Curriculum**", and our Keynote speaker, Bill Chu, really set the scene for the conference with his discussion on perspective.

It seemed to me that many of the conversations, both within the workshops I attended as well as the hallway and meal-time discussions, centred on how important it is to recognize each person's unique point of view if we want to be better teachers. In Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, Atticus explains to his daughter, Scout, that we can't judge a man until we've walked a mile in his shoes. Toward the end of the book, Scout realizes that walking a mile may not be necessary if instead we can begin to understand his perspective. The upbringing and cultural traditions that you or I are raised with give us a particular perspective that can be quite different from others' upbringing and perspectives.

In Alice Stoddard's workshop, "**Accommodating Difference in the Classroom**" we were told the heartbreaking story of being 9 years old girl, failing in school, and being publicly humiliated by her teacher, who knew nothing of her traumatic home life. Thanks to the understanding and support of one caring adult in her life, she was able to overcome great obstacles and eventually begin to value herself.

Karen Simon, Shirley-Pat Gale and June Striegler from TRU-WL presented two ideas in their workshop "**Creating an ABE equivalent for Aboriginal English 12**", which again centred on the importance of keeping our students' perspectives in mind. Shirley-Pat

Gale and June Striegler introduced us to the Partner Assisted Learning (PAL) program through the personal story of Steve Mattice, a cowboy who had been severely gored in a bull riding accident. His injuries made him shake so uncontrollably that it was virtually impossible for him to learn to read, as he could not focus. June worked with him for several months, building rapport and gaining trust—understanding his perspective—before they even started working on his literacy skills. By building that trust, he was able to calm his shaking enough to see the words on the page.

Karen Simon discussed Engl 062, an Aboriginal equivalent to Engl 060 (Grade 12). She noted the importance of choosing writings that better reflected the students' perspectives as Aboriginal learners. She also discussed the teaching strategies that she developed that better matched the learning needs and values of her students. For example, one of her pre-writing activities is to have each student present a PowerPoint slide show. This could be a presentation of how to do something, an opinion on a particular topic, etc. Students are not instructed to actually compose their essay until after they have given their presentation. This gives them a chance to create an outline of their essay without the stress of not knowing where to start writing.

From the discussions taking place all around me, I know that the "perspective" theme was prevalent through the other workshops as well. At the end of the first day, many people gathered for the "**World Café**", where we discussed some of the issues we felt are currently facing ABE. Several ABE learners participated and offered their most important perspectives. One woman suggested that future ABEABC conferences could have workshops offered by students, so that practitioners could better understand their learners' needs.

When I left Prince George, I was full of a new recognition of my own assumptions about other people. I have always seen myself as "open-minded", but I feel like I became more so at our conference. Perhaps we can achieve greater success in both teaching and learning if we remember that how we see the world is not the only way to see it.

I hope to see you all at Conference 2010!

*Lyra Warkentin*

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## **THOMPSON/OKANAGAN REGIONAL REPORT**

Our 2009 conference in Prince George introduced some new faces with ABEABC from the Cariboo/Okanagan Region.

From the "buffet-table talk", I gather that TRU staff and faculty in Williams Lake are happy at their new, upgraded campus. Shirley-Pat Gale updated me on some of what's happening at TRU-Williams Lake:

The Williams Lake Campus of Thompson Rivers University has several projects either newly minted or in the works. TRU, in partnership with UNBC and SFU, has started

“Weekend U”. Although the program was designed for First Nations students, it is open to all. The classes are offered on alternate Saturdays so that First Nations students can come in to Williams Lake from the 18 outlying communities and students can continue working while taking classes at the university.

The Aboriginal Service Plan has started a Mural Art Project. The mural will depict a traditional Dip Net Scene, and is expected to be completed for graduation.

Rumour has it that the call is out to hopefully break ground for a Gathering Place this spring, and they continue to pursue their proposal for an Elders in Residence program...stay tuned on that!!

TRU-WL has also recently started an Open Learning Centre, which is also open to all, but is targeted to First Nations students. Right now they have 20 students, and hope to have an update on the Centre for our next edition of *Groundwork*.

Finally, the University Preparation department has a new grade 12 English course—English 062, Aboriginal Literature and Composition. Students who take Engl 062 will study Aboriginal writers and will approach the art of writing in a more holistic manner.

TRU-WL is also a partner in PAL (Partner Assisted Learning), which offers free literacy tutoring with volunteer tutors. In Williams Lake, there are 23 adults currently in PAL. 100 Mile House has 38 adults in two programs: Partner Assisted Learning (PAL), and ESLPAL.

In other news, I attended NVIT’s award ceremony in Merritt on May 14, and presented an ABEABC bursary to Fown Prairie Chicken. It seems she was also the valedictorian of the class of 2009—the first time a College Readiness student has had the honour!

I will have photos and a write-up on Fown in the next *Groundwork*, as well as some news from the regional literacy coordinators.

*Lyra Warkentin*  
*ABEABC Cariboo Okanagan Regional Representative*



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## **NEWS FROM LITERACY BC**

Literacy BC is an independent, non-partisan, membership-based, registered not-for-profit organisation. We have been promoting and supporting literacy and lifelong learning in British Columbia since 1990. To learn more about Literacy BC and to become a member, visit our Web site at <http://www.librarybc.ca> Be a part of a Great Canadian Tradition and join us on July 7th at the PGI Golf Tournament for Literacy BC. For more information visit: [http://www2.literacy.bc.ca/whatsnew/pgi\\_2009/2009\\_PGI.htm](http://www2.literacy.bc.ca/whatsnew/pgi_2009/2009_PGI.htm)

Meet Our New Executive Director, Judy Cavanagh

Read an interview with Judy Cavanagh, our new Executive Director, at [http://www.literacybc.ca/AboutUs/meet\\_judy\\_cavanagh.php](http://www.literacybc.ca/AboutUs/meet_judy_cavanagh.php) Judy became Executive Director of Literacy BC in May 2009. She has 20 years of senior management experience working with the public sector and NGOs in a variety of areas including policy development, strategic planning and budgeting, human resource development, community strategies, public consultations, and government relations.

Subscribe to the Literacy BC e-Bulletin

To receive the quarterly e-Bulletin with literacy news from around the province, send a message to [info@literacy.bc.ca](mailto:info@literacy.bc.ca)

New Guidebooks Available from Literacy BC

Download our new guidebooks about community-based adult literacy in BC:

Learning Without Borders: A Guidebook to Community-Based Adult Literacy in British Columbia -

[http://www.literacybc.ca/Research/research\\_and\\_publications.php](http://www.literacybc.ca/Research/research_and_publications.php)

Helping Communities Bloom: A Family Literacy Resource Guide for British Columbia -

[http://www.literacybc.ca/Research/research\\_and\\_publications.php](http://www.literacybc.ca/Research/research_and_publications.php)

Its Own Reward: A Guide to Community-Based Adult Literacy Volunteer Tutor Programs in British Columbia - <http://www.literacybc.ca/Research/ItsOwnReward.pdf>



Our Resource Centre & ELMO Reviews

Borrow literacy resources for the classroom, learners and your own professional education. Books are sent by mail throughout BC - and it's free. Search the online catalogue at <http://www.literacybc.ca/PLRC/ResourceCentre.php>

To find out about best resources and practices for teaching, read and write reviews at <http://www.ELMOreviews.ca> Don't forget to register to receive the ELMO e-News

BC Literacy Directory - List your literacy program in the BC Literacy Directory. View the directory at <http://directory.literacybc.ca/index2.htm> or contact us for more information.

Be a part of a Great Canadian Tradition and join us on July 7th at the PGI Golf Tournament for Literacy BC. For more information visit:

[http://www2.literacy.bc.ca/whatsnew/pgi\\_2009/2009\\_PGI.htm](http://www2.literacy.bc.ca/whatsnew/pgi_2009/2009_PGI.htm)

*Deb Monkman, MLS, BSc  
Librarian, Provincial Literacy Resource Centre  
Literacy BC*

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## **GROUNDWORK CHAIRPERSON.**

We are looking for a volunteer to fill this position.

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### **FREE PARENT-CHILD LITERACY ACTIVITY MATERIALS**

We are writing to let you know that our free parent-child literacy activity materials have a new location on our updated website. We are trying to make it a little easier for you to find the specific parent handouts you want.

***Supporting Literacy in Natural Environments: Activities for Caregivers and Young Children*** are at [www.wlearning.com](http://www.wlearning.com). On our home page, you will find a button on the right labeled "***Download Free Parent Tools***." You can select among materials for preschoolers, infants, and On-the-Go activities.

We currently have free parent handouts in ***English, Spanish, Somali, and Russian***

We have also added new resources on the website for educators, librarians, and other professionals serving young children:

- Research Updates
- Suggestions for books for dialogic reading
- Tips for Educators

We will be updating these resources regularly and invite your comments. Next month we will be posting more free materials. Please sign up for our mailing list to continue to receive notices about free materials when they are posted on our website.

For questions please contact:

*Mary Maddox*  
*Washington Learning Systems*  
*2212 Queen Anne Ave. No. STE 726*  
*Seattle, WA 98109*  
*206-310-7401 FAX 206-283-9243*  
*HYPERLINK "mailto:mmaddox@wlearning.com"mmaddox@wlearning.com\_\_*

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## **FROM CAMOSUN COLLEGE**

Their Honors Lt. Gov and Mrs. Point attended the Provincial ABE ABC conference at Camosun in Victoria on May 1-2/08 and his \$400 honorarium was put back into the ABE ABC award for our 2009 recipient(s). A further \$200 was added by our Vice-President.

We chose three recipients this year: Vicki Christianson, Christine La Vallee, and Tacita Lewis.

Tacita Lewis is an extremely hard-working student, who is also collegial and goal-oriented. Tacita began her academic upgrading at Camosun College in May of 2008. By the end of August 2008, she had completed both Fundamental and Intermediate Math levels, as well as Provincial English - all courses with excellent grades. She then entered the School of Business at Camosun in September of 2008, achieving excellent grades in her Business courses, while simultaneously completing her Advanced level math upgrading. Tacita's goal is to complete a degree in business. Congratulations Tacita!



*Alison Bowe, Instructor  
Camosun College, Victoria.*



Vicki Christianson has been a committed and determined student. Over the last year of studying at Camosun she has steadily improved her technology, writing and communication skills, completing English 033, 050, and 092, as well as Computer Studies 030 and 040. In addition to being attentive and engaged in class, Vicki also attended Help Centre Hours several times a week to get the support and encouragement that would help her succeed in her assignments. If she ever had to miss class, Vicki was diligent about coming to Office Hours to make up missed work. Most importantly, however, Vicki's interactions with students, staff,

and faculty at the college always demonstrated her kindness, her patience, and her cheerfulness. A student of this high calibre is a true joy to work with. We are very proud of Vicki's accomplishments this year, and we wish her the best of luck with her future studies.

*Janet Doherty, Instructor  
Camosun College, Victoria*

Christine La Vallee

Courage. This word could not be more true of First Nations Academic Upgrading student Christine La Vallee. Only months after finding stable housing and making a major lifestyle change, Christine enrolled in English 033 and Math 052 at the Victoria Native Friendship Centre. For Christine, there are considerable obstacles to overcome daily in the pursuit of her education. However, she continued to attend diligently, and achieved an astounding degree of academic progress completing English 033, 050 and 092 by the end of the Winter 2009 term. Christine also has a keen interest in Math, and has progressed from Math 052 to Math 053, and additionally completed Computer Studies 030."



"Whether she is writing about the origins of hopscotch, researching her cultural history, or investigating the politics of government, Christine applies the same determination to excellence. From making coffee each morning in the classroom, to encouraging and supporting her fellow students, Christine brings considerable involvement to the classroom and demonstrates an unwavering concern for her peers. Christine's goal is to enter a post secondary program such as the Indigenous Family Support or First Nations Community Studies programs that will further feed her hunger for knowledge and provide her with a career in which she can continue to work with people in a supporting role. Christine is exemplary in her dedication to the pursuit of her educational goals.

*Mark Kunen , Instructor, Community Learning Partnerships  
Camosun College, Victoria, BC*

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## **UPCOMING CONFERENCE FOR ADULT EDUCATORS.**

For more info, please see the invitation below and <http://www.wvu.edu/wrrcea/>.

It is our great pleasure to invite you to the second biennial Western Region Research Conference on the Education of Adults (WRRCEA) October 23-25, 2009 to be held at Western Washington University in Bellingham Washington. WWU and 13 universities from the western region of the US and Canada are co-sponsoring the conference with the theme of, "Together We Grow: Enriching Communities through Adult Education." This two-day event will provide you with opportunities to interact with educators and practitioners who are actively engaged in examining the teaching, training and learning of adults. Be sure to come and see what your local and international colleagues have been discovering about lifelong learning!

This conference is planned by the graduate students of the Continuing and College Education (CCE) master's program and supported by Woodring College of Education. Dawn Emerick, Academic Advisor, Direct line 425-640-1347, <http://advising.edcc.edu/>

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The ABEABC board members hope that you have a rejuvenating summer break.