



Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy

**CBAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS 2013-2014**

**ALLISON ALDER, PRESIDENT**

*Chair, School of Academic Upgrading and Development, Selkirk College*

**BARBARA MORRIS, TREASURER**

*Retired Assistant Superintendent, School District #6*

**LINDA CHELL**

*Executive Director, Revelstoke Child Care Society*

**CHRISTY LUKE**

*Instructor, Selkirk College, Grand Forks*

**JOANNE RICHARDS**

*Executive Director, Kootenay Library Federation*

**DAVID STANDING**

*Principal, Laurie Middle School, Cranbrook*

**RUSSELL WORKUN**

*Dean of Instruction, College of the Rockies*

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It's hard to go far around here without bumping into the positive benefits of literacy learning. Perhaps in an office you run into a learner flourishing in a new job after building a solid foundation through literacy, or you stumble upon a literacy tutor helping a learner to practice for their citizenship examination. Maybe you hear the lilting little voices of young children and their parents reciting rhymes together, or the clack-a-clack of keyboards overlain with lively chatter as seniors master the cyber world. The good work of Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy seeps over the ranges and into the recesses of the East and West Kootenay and Boundary regions, affecting lives, stimulating awareness, creating community. Literacy is a vital fibre of our collective fabric, and this warms my heart.

I am thankful for the immensely compassionate, sincere, and dedicated CBAL volunteers and staff, who work tirelessly to create comfortable spaces, engaging learning opportunities, and innovative ways to share our mission broadly. What a difference they make: last year, CBAL served over seven thousand children and adults in programs in 77 communities, distributed nearly twenty thousand different literacy resources, and logged multitudes of website, Facebook, and blog hits! Moreover, CBAL transformed regional settlement services for newcomers to Canada after successfully negotiating a contract with Citizenship and Immigration Canada. CBAL now offers a comprehensive suite of settlement services, including English language training, community information, and ten settlement workers located throughout the region supporting newcomers directly. And this barely begins to describe the monumental positive change agency the people of CBAL bring to our region.

A devoted Board backs the CBAL operations. It is a privilege to work with them in support of CBAL's work. Over the past year, Board members have sought to engage more deeply with the organization, getting to know the leaders and learners, delving deeper into programming, and reassessing their own processes and practices. They are thorough and wise; we are lucky to have them.

CBAL is an organization of collaboration. With a network of generous funders and supportive partners, CBAL can offer programming deep and wide in scope and can validate literacy work as indispensable. We are graced by their appetite for meaningful contribution and building community together.

When all is said and done, we stand unified in support as we watch our learners grow. Their courage inspires us; their commitment compels us; and their spirit awes us. I am humbled by the honour of serving you. Thank you.



**Allison Alder, President**

## THE COLUMBIA BASIN ALLIANCE FOR LITERACY

The Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy (CBAL) was formed in 2001 to increase community capacity to promote and develop literacy skills and life-long learning for all community members. The underlying philosophy of CBAL is that collaboration and cooperation are essential to solving community literacy issues.

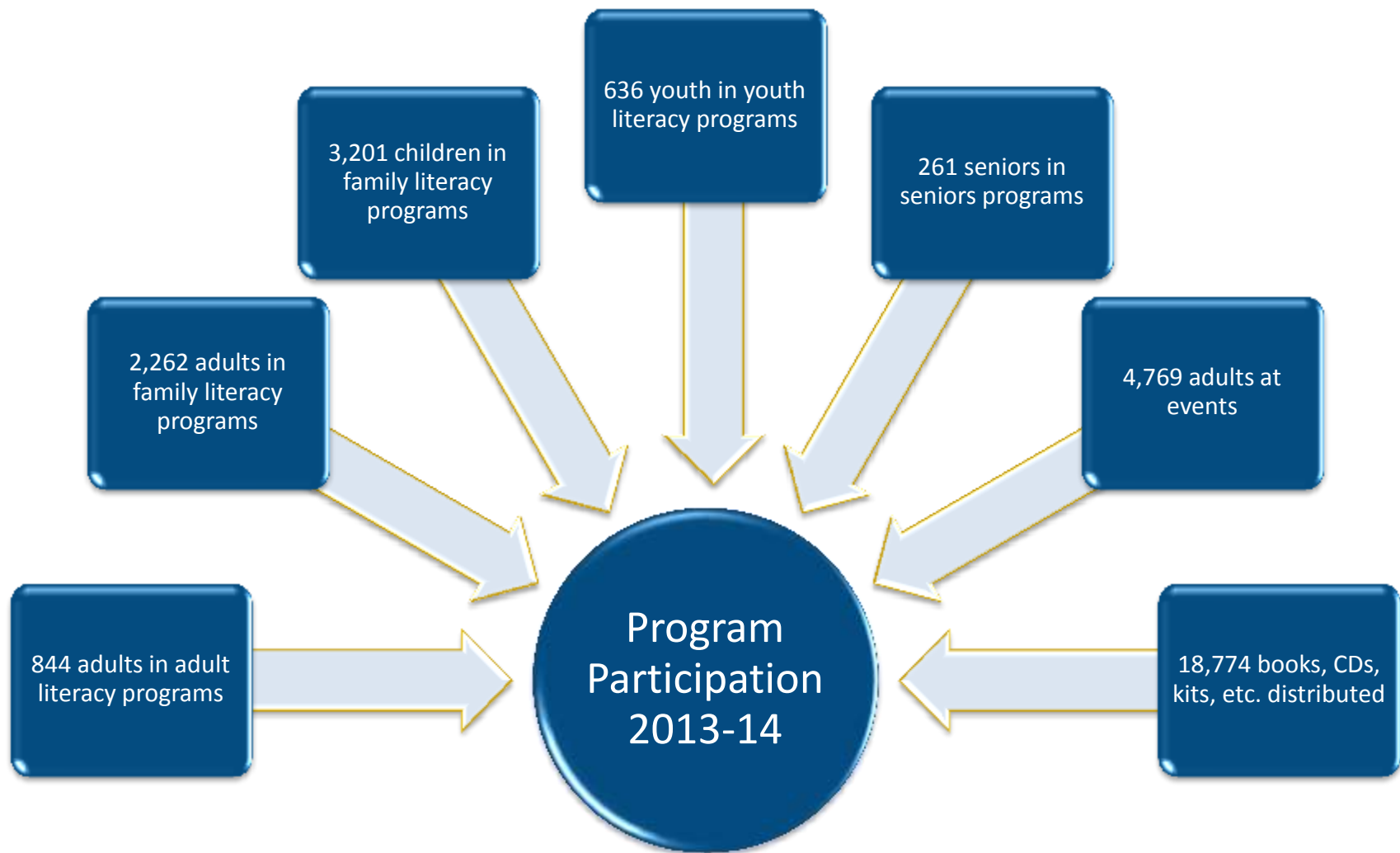
CBAL's 16 Community Literacy Coordinators have worked in collaboration with libraries, school districts, colleges and community groups to respond to community needs, to build important community and regional partnerships and to continue to develop the Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy as a leader in the field of literacy.

CBAL provides literacy programs, events and support for families, for children in school, and for adults - including seniors and those needing ESL (English as a Second Language) support.



**CBAL Staff**

## CBAL BY THE NUMBERS





## SUPPORTING PROGRAMS AND STAFF

The Columbia Basin Alliance for Literacy responds to community needs when it develops new programs and/or maintains ongoing programs. All Community Literacy Coordinators work with a Community Literacy Advisory Committee to develop priorities for action. CBAL works with school districts to develop District Literacy Plans, which are submitted to the Ministry of Education every July.

A variety of literacy programs take place throughout the Columbia Basin. Programs and activities vary from community to community depending on other services available and the amount of funding and support that can be accessed locally and regionally. Information about programs in communities across the Columbia Basin and Boundary can be found at [www.cbal.org](http://www.cbal.org).

CBAL manages six school district StrongStart Centres, which promote early childhood literacy in partnership with School Districts #5 (Southeast Kootenay), #6 (Rocky Mountain), and #20 (Columbia Kootenay).

CBAL staff members are very excited to have established learning hubs and storefront services in the communities of Nelson, Creston, Cranbrook, Fernie, Nakusp, Salmo, Valemount, Invermere, Golden, Kimberley, and Trail.



CBAL's Trail office

## CBAL STORIES: LOOKING BACK ON 2013-2014



Baby Goose program participant

A Baby Goose parent said "I need this program to stay sane! Thank you so much. The program makes me a much better mom and far more confident, relieving a lot of anxiety with the knowledge gained."

The Mother Goose program is incredibly successful in Golden – the attendance is high and feedback is positive. The children show progress with language and social development and parents have formed bonds with each other. The facilitator says "a number of ESL families have been attending and the parents thanked her for presenting songs that helped them learn simple English words to share with their children at home."



ESL family at Mother Goose



In Golden, “The attendance at the Guys Read program was so high at the beginning of the program we had to come up with a strategy to deal with the high numbers. Within a few days the Lion’s Club gave us \$300 so we could expand the program.”



**ESL field trip and pot luck Christmas party**

“In our ESL class we have a new mother from Korea, a businesswoman from Germany, a Polish housewife who has been in Canada for 16 years, a man from Rwanda who has been here for 12 years looking to obtain citizenship and a Chinese woman new to the country who has just purchased a restaurant with her husband. This makes for a wonderful and diverse class!”

“I am so shocked that there is such a wonderful program like this here in such a small place. I didn’t think there would be anything here. I feel like the classes here are better than in the big city. I just feel so comfortable. I never felt like this in Vancouver. It was just too big to get to know anybody. We always felt like outsiders. Here we feel like we are part of a community. We’ve met so many nice people already. Your Christmas Party invitation was the start. Thank you so much!”





**Young Parent Education Program (YPEP) participant**

“Learners took part in ‘Student for a Day’ (at College of the Rockies) and the responses were phenomenal with at least 3 deciding on career choices – awesome and wonderful were the words describing their experiences.”

One of the Seniors Autobiographical Writing program participants said, “Wonderful program but we want more!”

“Many seniors came saying that they couldn’t and didn’t want to write (strange because they were coming to a writing class). Our facilitator worked patiently with them and many have begun to take risks, to share and to write!”

“Seniors who attended Computer Workshops are now the editors of the local community paper!”

“I am writing to thank you for giving me the opportunity to re-educate myself on the computer. I have been a computer user for many years but like many seniors, I have gotten lost in all of the new technology. I feel that our village, Nakusp, is very fortunate to have this service and all of the volunteers who give their time and energy to make this program such a success.”



**Senior program participants**

## MORE QUOTES FROM PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS:

“I feel like I came at the right time. There are so many services here for new immigrants. You know exactly what we need.”

On financial literacy: “I feel like a real idiot here. Sometimes I’m surprised that I’ve made it through life without knowing this stuff. Glad to see I’m not the only one.”

“The library couldn’t believe how popular Book Club was. It has always been the age group 9-17 that the library has a hard time attracting. This program really works at connecting youth with the library on an on-going basis.”

On Making Connections: “This course was very valuable to my family. I discovered and re-discovered strategies to make learning and school more fun. I highly recommend any family to come to this course to learn and share.”



**Seniors' Computer Workshop**

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

In May, 2013 CBAL staff and Board members gathered in Creston to complete strategic planning for 2013-2016. We are well on our way to accomplishing the goals we have set for ourselves. The following goals were identified for the 2013-2016 timeframe.

- Sustain and further develop local programming across age groups.
- Strengthen regional support for local community work.
- Build resilience and support retention.

## PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

CBAL provided training and workshops in a number of areas including English as a Second Language training, volunteer management, and family literacy during 2013-14.

A highlight of the year was our Learning for Life conference, which was held in Cranbrook in April 2014.

CBAL staff members continue to be leaders in the literacy field, developing materials and programs others wish to use - across the country and around the world.



Monica De, Golden Community Literacy Coordinator

## LITERACY AWARENESS ACTIVITIES

CBAL honours those who have made a significant contribution to literacy in their communities through Champion for Literacy events. A champion for literacy can be an individual, a service group, an organization or a business. Champions for Literacy events are held at various times in communities across the Columbia Basin and Boundary.

CBAL's Reach a Reader campaign is held annually in October in partnership with Black Press. This fun and rewarding event is highly successful in raising funds and awareness of community-based literacy programs and services.



**Community Literacy Coordinator Alana Murdoch (right) presenting Interior health Authority public health nurses with Castlegar's 2014 Champion for Literacy award.**





Reach a Reader poster. Cranbrook's top fundraiser Jason Wheeldon with the Cranbrook Daily Townsman's publisher Karen Johnson, Nelson's Mayor John Dooley and his wife Pat on Baker Street, and the Columbia Valley Rockies ready to hit the streets.

## CBAL'S FINANCIAL REPORT 2013-2014

### Revenues

Grant Revenue \$1,815,154.00

Fees for Services \$169,153.00

Fundraising \$16,181.00

Interest \$11,237.00

Donations and Membership \$4,303.00

Recoveries \$20,151.00

**Total Revenues \$2,036,179.00**

### Expenses

Literacy Programs \$1,407,710.00

Coordination Costs \$201,634.00

Administration \$171,699.00

Capacity Building \$236,375.00

**Total Expenses \$2,017,418.00**

(Figures from latest audit, November 2014)

## CBAL STAFF

### COMMUNITY LITERACY COORDINATORS

Alana Murdoch - Castlegar

Alison Salo – Slocan Valley

Barb Szuta - Kaslo

Joan Exley - Nelson

Joan Hedstrom - Creston

Katherine Hough - Cranbrook

Katie Andruschuk - Windermere Valley

Kim Roberts - Kimberley

Kim Thorn - Valemount

Laurie Macdonald - Salmo

Lisa Bjarnason - Nakusp and Arrow Lakes

Meghan Morton - Elk Valley

Monica De - Golden

Sheila Dobie - Grand Forks

Sonia Tavares - Trail

Tracy Spannier - Revelstoke

**ALI WASSING**

*Executive Director*

**BETTY KNIGHT**

*Regional Manager*

**DESNEIGES PROFILI**

*Regional Manager*

**MARGARET SUTHERLAND**

*Program Manager*

**HEATHER HAYWARD**

*Administrator*

### CONTACT US

#2 - 1535 14th Street RR #4

Invermere, B.C. V0A 1K4

Phone: 250-342-3210

Fax: 250-342-9221

Email: [info@cbal.org](mailto:info@cbal.org)

## THANK YOU TO OUR REGIONAL FUNDERS

BC Gaming Commission

Citizenship and Immigration Canada

Columbia Basin Trust

College of the Rockies

Decoda Literacy Solutions

Ministry of Education

Ministry of Advanced Education

Selkirk College

We also thank the local funders and community partners who support literacy and learning throughout the Columbia Basin and Boundary!