



BRITISH  
COLUMBIA

Ministry of  
Children and  
Family  
Development  
Vancouver Island  
Region

BACKGROUNDER

March 2009

Vancouver Island Regional Council

## Member Biographies

### Carol Ann Dwyer

Carol-Ann Dwyer, resident of Campbell River since 1992, retired from MCFD in 2002. Married to Marcus, she has a son and three grandchildren in Ottawa, Ontario. She is the eldest of 10 children and a descendant of French, Welsh, Irish, Swiss German ancestors some of whom were first generation Canadians. Carol's community involvement includes Habitat for Humanity, North Island Alcohol and Drug Information Society and other community organizations. She is interested in the latest developments within MCFD, especially as it evolves to support families in distress, while ensuring that children grow up safe and strong. Carol Ann expresses her thanks for the opportunity to serve the families on Vancouver Island.

### Eric Jones

Eric has been married for 31 years, has two children in their early twenties and has worked for more than 40 years in child-welfare related fields. He has a B.A., B.S.W. and M.S.W. (UBC) and started work as a residential youth care and child protection worker. Later, he became Executive Director of a Vancouver Neighbourhood House and a director at the Maples Adolescent Treatment Centre. He then moved into the child-welfare monitoring system which included work with the Ombudsman's child and youth team and the Gove Inquiry into Child Protection and the Children's Commission. After a stroke he retired. On a volunteer level Eric has worked with the Provincial Youth in Care Network, was a member of the Society for Children and Youth in B.C. and more recently served on the Queen Alexandra Foundation's Child Welfare Committee.

### Kenn Joubert

Kenn is a retired government psychologist who is now an active writer of historic fiction. Kenn was born in South Africa, has traveled extensively in the world and now lives at Cedar-by-the-Sea, south of Nanaimo on Vancouver Island. Before university, he volunteered in a variety of youth groups: ice hockey coach; director of a 200 member Sing-Out youth group; Junior Achievement in Alberta, and; with various church and community group. Kenn graduated from the University of Calgary with a Masters in Clinical Psychology and became a registered psychologist in Alberta, and is still registered with the College of Alberta Psychologists. He worked as a community psychologist in Banff and Lake Louise, Alberta, and later with Nanaimo Mental Health Services. In B.C., Kenn has spent many years working with Young Offenders and their families and, for the last eight years before retirement, worked exclusively with suicidal teens and young children.

**Drew VanBrunt:**

Drew has worked with at-risk and high risk youth and families since 1971, in various settings, ranging from assessment and treatment centers, out-reach programs to family mediation and family group conferences. He is the author of a book (release date in January 2009) entitled, "Bouncing Back from Separation and Divorce: Assisting Families to Untie the Knot." Happily married, Drew helped raise two children and spends his free-time designing their garden, or coaching ice hockey goalies.

**Sandra Waarne:**

Sandra Waarne is a public health nurse with extensive experience in Aboriginal and rural health. Presently, she is a health facilitator operating in the Mt. Waddington Area of northern Vancouver Island. She has a bachelor's degree in nursing and a master's degree in public health. She has a passion for working in partnerships to improve services for families and children.

**Jennifer Mullet:**

Dr. Jennifer Mullett is a community psychologist and the Director of the Community Based Research Institute at Vancouver Island University. She works collaboratively with government and non-governmental agencies to implement and evaluate interventions at the community level. In her former positions she was the Research Scholar in Community Based Research supported by the British Columbia Health Research Foundation and the Director of Research and Evaluation for the Ministry of Health. Her current research projects include: the reorganization of mental health services for children; an ecological approach to creating healthy, literate communities, and; the implementation of a multi-disciplinary program to build community competence in parenting skills. The Community Based Research Institute was created to address questions posed by the community and to facilitate the researching of those questions by a team of multi-disciplinary researchers and students. Building capacity for conducting research that is collaborative, action oriented and that contributes to social change is the main purpose of the Institute.

**Ghislaine Caron**

Ghislaine Caron holds a master's degree in clinical psychology with an emphasis in child psychology and psychotherapy. She also holds a bachelor's degree in science from McGill University. She has had a varied career as a psychologist in Holland working in a rehabilitation centre for children for four years and in the human resources division at a prominent bank for four years, finally settling into a private child psychotherapy practice for ten years. In 2000, she moved with her family to Vancouver Island, started a private practice and has been working as a parenting coach and trainer. She runs a grandparents-raising-grandchildren group in Duncan for Parent Support Services and works with the military family resource center in Victoria in the Rainbows program. She is also a volunteer with B.C.'s disaster child care program.

**Dot Neary**

Dot Neary lives in Nanaimo and as the mother of two boys aged 17 and 21 years, has been actively engaged in the public education system sixteen years, advocating on behalf of students and parents at the school, district and ministry level. She is presently serving her first

term as school trustee on the Nanaimo-Ladysmith Board of Education. Dot's career history includes retail management and training supervision and administration, and she was the owner-operator of a small business in Nanaimo for nine years. Dot cherishes family and friends, good health, common sense and the constancy, diversity and challenges of life. She is a Toastmaster, an avid reader and loves good red wine and walking her dog, in rain or shine. She regards her life on the West Coast as a blessing and a privilege.

### **Marilynn Sims**

In 2000, after spending 25 years working for School District #43 (Coquitlam) Marilynn moved to Qualicum Beach, where she proceeded to work with non-profit organizations in Nanaimo, Parksville and Qualicum while continuing her lifelong dedication to volunteering. In 2008, she retired from a position managing a multi-service, non-profit, family agency. Marilynn has spent years in every facet of non-profit work, from volunteer to board member, counselor and program and executive director. She currently sits on boards and volunteers at numerous local organizations generally concerned with children, youth and families. Marilynn looks forward to volunteering with the MCFD Vancouver Island Regional Advisory Council as she is continually inspired by the ideas and work groups with a shared vision to accomplish together.

### **Julie Smith**

Julie is a teacher in the Cowichan Valley. She has taught kindergarten to Grade 6 and she is currently an Aboriginal Support Teacher. After working for many years in two schools that have a significant number of high-risk children, Julie pursued a master's degree which involved an action-research project related to building the resiliency in those children. The importance of building the capacity of the community to support children and their families in a proactive way has motivated her to serve on this committee. Julie is happily married with a 15-year-old son and 9-year-old daughter who joined the family two-and-a-half years ago through adoption.

### **Marge Storey-Abrahamson**

Marge recently retired as the Treatment Program Supervisor at Tsow Tun Le Lum Treatment Centre on Vancouver Island, a progressive Treatment Centre addressing the complex issues of Addiction and Trauma. The Residential School Healing Program is an integral part of the work at the centre. Marge continues to work (in semi-retirement) as a facilitator and trainer and resident Elder for Tsow Tun Le Lum. She is a board member for the First Nations Wellness and Addictions Workers Certification Board. Marge possesses a diverse set of counselling training and facilitation skills. She has designed and implemented many programs in urban and remote areas during the past 30 years - both Outpatient and Residential – in the Northwest Territories, British Columbia and Saskatchewan. Her employers have included the Canadian Military, Salvation Army, provincial governments and the Regina City Police. Marge is a Manitoba Métis and has worked with many Aboriginal organizations. She is creative, energetic, and brings a sincere approach to consumers and their families, believing that all deserve to be treated with respect and dignity (even when non-compliant, de-compensated or intoxicated).

For more information about the Vancouver Island Regional Council, please visit the ministry's web site: [www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/regions/vi/council.htm](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/regions/vi/council.htm)