

The Bulletin

Number 9, Friday 6th June 2014

SPEVI Conference – Melbourne

12 to 15 January 2015

SPEVI Membership Offer: <http://spevi.net/spevi/join-spevi.php>

Professional Development & Activities for Term 2 and 3, 2014

Fliers for the SVRC Professional Learning programs are available on the SVRC website:

www.svrc.vic.edu.au/PL.shtml.

Please note: the SVRC encourages attendance in person or via video link – please be in touch if you'd like to “virtually” attend any of these sessions.

Event	Date
Dot Power	Tuesday 17 June
National Braille Music Camp email romad@westnet.com.au	21-28 June
Skill Power Workshops – Please request a session	Wed 23 July
Skill Power Workshops – Please request a session	Wed 6 August
Including Students with a Vision Impairments in Physical Education, Recreation and Sport – see flier: www.svrc.vic.edu.au/PLPpe2014.pdf	Tuesday 11 August
Skill Power Workshops - Please request a session	Wed 20 August
Dot Power – for braille readers from pre-school to grade 3	Tuesday 9 September
Space Camp – Huntsville, Alabama	20-25 September

Upcoming SPEVI Conference – 12 to 15 January 2015

Come and spend time with 200 others with a thirst for knowledge about educating students with vision impairments!

We'll be talking about:

- Vision impairment
- Family and professional partnerships
- Access technologies
- Transitions
- Innovation / creative ways to meet challenges
- Additional impairments
- Joining the workforce and becoming work ready

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Braille Day in the West

Braille Day, a program offered by the Vision VTs of South-Western Victoria Region, is a great program that is conducted eight times per year.

Last week, brailleing students from primary and secondary schools in the area gathered for another fun-filled day of learning, skill development and peer networking.

Jane Jensen, Manager Visiting Teacher Service, SWVR writes:

Younger students were involved with basic skills with the BrailleNote while older students practiced block commands and other advanced skills.

All brailleing students got to practice their handwriting skills in preparation for learning how to use a signature and signature plate, firstly tracing 2 D shapes onto a geo board using a pen. One of the photos shows Danijela holding a pen for the first time and forming an N with assistance from a tactile stencil.



Our new selection of knives were tried and pizzas were prepared for lunch. The grand finale was the unveiling of the Swish table (see photo), transformed from storage to play in 5 minutes. What design engineering!

The favourite part of the day? Definitely BrailleNote and Swish of course.

Thanks Vision team for another great one and for the yummy food.

NDIS: How Does it Actually Work?

The latest edition of Blind Citizens News (June 2014) has a great article by Lauren Henley about the NDIS. Sections address:

- eligibility
- the planning process
- developing your Statement of Goals and Aspirations
- developing your Statement of Supports
- managing your funds
- having your plan reviewed
- how the NDIS affects other supports

You'll find a link to the article soon on the BCA website: <http://wordpress.bca.org.au/pulications/>

SPEVI Membership Offer

From SPEVI President, Frances Gentle

The SPEVI Committee of Management has launched its first membership drive. All new and renewing members who subscribe between May 2014 and the first day of the SPEVI Biennial Conference in Melbourne will automatically receive an extended membership to January 2017. The aim of this special offer is to promote subscriptions prior to the Jan '15 SPEVI Biennial Conference (as members received a discount conference rate). We would greatly appreciate your assistance in promoting the membership drive across your networks. The membership form will soon be available in “printer friendly” and “accessible” formats on the SPEVI website.

Mountbatten Can Now Connect to the iPad!

Source: LiveWire4Education, May 2014

The Mountbatten LS has a new feature, Bluetooth – allowing it to talk with a variety of iOS devices. New Mountbattens purchased in 2014 will have this capability built in, and any existing Mountbattens (LS models) can have this feature installed as an up-grade. The cost for the up-grade is \$565 plus installation.

TapTapSee for Android

Source: SPEVI ListServ

TapTapSee provides spoken identification of objects, based on photos taken with the camera of the iPhone. This App is now also available for Android, where it makes use of the Android text-to-speech facility Talkback for spoken identification. Whereas it was originally a free App, you are now asked to subscribe to packages such as 50 pictures for \$4.99 or one month of unlimited pictures for \$9.99. New users can still take 20 pictures for free to try it out. Visit: www.taptapseeapp.com

Online Fashion and Lifestyle Blog

From Phia Damsma via the SPEVI ListServ

“Fashioneyesta” is an online Fashion and Lifestyle resource for blind and partially sighted people. Fashioneyesta looks like a fun, well-written blog, created by eighteen year old Emily Davison who studies English Literature at Goldsmiths University in London.

Emily explains: “Fashion has always been a huge element of my life. Growing up, I was inspired by old Hollywood films and their captivating style icons such as *Audrey Hepburn* and *Grace Kelly*. The fashion houses, vintage stores and many delightful chic-lits inspired me to become more involved into the history and the beauty of fashion. By the time I was fourteen, my mother had bought me my first designer bag and then the rest is History... Of course, you may be wondering why I set up the blog for Visually Impaired people. For one, I myself am Visually Impaired, I have a condition known as Septo-Optic Dysplasia... However, in the course of my life as I never allowed my disability to hinder my love for fashion. Now, with my beautiful Guide Dog, Unity, in toe, I am out exploring the wide world and expanding my blog. A blog that I hope will inspire other visually impaired people to explore fashion, old and new, to find their own unique style.”

Visit: <http://fashioneyesta.com/>

Affordable Eyecare for Victorian Pensioners and Health Care Card Holders

The Victorian Government, through the Victorian Eyecare Service (VES), provides funding to help people who are disadvantaged or on low incomes to access high quality optometry services and eye wear. These services are available through the Clinic at the Australian College of Optometry in Carlton. There are also a number of Clinics in the metropolitan area – Braybrook, Broadmeadows, Doveton, East Preston and Frankston.

You are eligible to access the service if you are a permanent resident of rural Victoria and

- hold a Pensioner Concession Card in your own name, or
- hold a Health Care Card in your own name, or are listed on a Health Care Card as a dependant, or
- hold a Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card in your own name

Students and children under 18, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and refugees may also be eligible for some services.

For further information about eligibility and to obtain information about which practitioners are able to offer this service, visit: www.aco.org.au.

And for Rural Victorians

You are able to access this service if you are a permanent resident of rural Victoria and

- hold a Pensioner Concession Card in your own name, or
- hold a Health Care Card in your own name, or are listed on a Health Care Card as a dependant, or
- are a ward of the State

For further information about eligibility and to obtain information about which practitioners are able to offer this service, visit the Australian College of Optometry website: www.aco.org.au or phone the rural services number: 1300 303 125.

Cause and Effect Sensory Light Box

This is a great app for a vision stimulation program but it also has something that might be of interest to people working with blind students on the iPad. The app has an audio option for finding the edge of the iPad! While working with a student the other day Lyn noticed a bell rang every time the student reached the border on the iPad. That's the black, or white, margin around the iPad which for sighted users is quite obvious, but is difficult concept for some blind students. Interestingly, this game in the Cause and Effect Sensory Light Box is called "Dots".

<https://itunes.apple.com/au/app/cause-effect-sensory-light/id533976433?mt=8>

Accessing Audio Described DVDs on a Mac Computer

Phillip Chalker has written a great reflection about his first experience watching an audio described video on his MacBook Pro. The article appears in the June 2014 edition of Blind Citizens News.

He notes that his film loaded via DVD Viewer which came already installed on his computer. Once the movie had started to play, he pushed the space bar and used VoiceOver to locate the menu and set the "English for the vision Impaired" feature. Hey presto – he could enjoy the movie with audio descriptions!

Braille Therapy Dog

Marg Moloney, Visiting Teacher North Eastern Victoria Region, has recently started teaching braille to a student whose vision has deteriorated recently. As part of her program Marg takes her trained Therapy Dog to schools to “work” with the children.

Matthew, her student, is allowed to have some special time with Tawny at the end of the lesson. Here is an email recently sent by Marg to thank the SVRC for the loan of a braille purchased through the *More Support for Students with Disabilities National Partnership* programme.

Marg writes:

I thought I'd send through a few photos taken today, of Matthew working with the Braille supplied by SVRC earlier this year after his sight deteriorated significantly (into the "legally blind" range). He works keenly with me, knowing, as usual, when he is finished he can cuddle Tawny, my Pets-as-Therapy dog.



News

- **Kyle** from Wangaratta emailed recently – he is doing a work placement in a local office and recently participated in the “In the Driver’s Seat” at Sandown Raceway. He rides 15 to 20 km each week on a tandem and has joined the local Junior Lions Club. Kyle is a regular reader of The Bulletin – thanks for your newsy email, Kyle!

Would You Like to Work as a Visiting Teacher in Darwin?

Marion Blazé received this email recently with a request for it to be distributed amongst our VI networks. If you are looking for a sea/tree change maybe you could get in touch with our friends in the Northern Territory. The email was as follows:

Senior Education Advisor position based in Darwin. Available in the Northern Territory in 2014.

Please contact inge.carter@nt.gov.au for more information.

Finally

Editors Deb Lewis and Lyn Robinson would like to thank everyone for their contribution to this issue of The Bulletin, and in particular Emily White.