

The Bulletin

Number 14, Friday 26th August 2016

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Check [The Bulletin archive](#) for back issues!

Dot Power – Paralympics!!!

Our next Dot Power Day will be 6 September and we are having a Paralympics theme with a focus on sporting skills and equipment, measurement and, as always, lots of braille reading and writing! Always a highlight of the term – we are all really looking forward to this one!

Resources for Accessing Your Computer Without Vision

From Marion Blazé

As mentioned in a previous issue of The Bulletin, SVRC ran a day on August 2 for several teenagers who had experienced recent and dramatic vision loss. The day was all about accessing text (books, handouts, computer screens) in alternative ways to using vision.

The resources generated by the SVRC team for this particular “Skill Power” day, are well worth sharing. Included with this Bulletin are two more – JAWS Keystrokes Checklist and NVDA Getting Started. JAWS (Job Access With Speech) and NVDA (Non Visual Desktop Access) are both screen readers, NVDA being the free version with not quite so many functions. (Thank you to Lea Nagel for these handouts.)

We believe that a “power user” of JAWS can know hundreds (maybe thousands) of key commands! How many do your students know?

Ed: Download your copies of these resources from the SVRC website – the quickie link AKA “download fast track” is on the home page and titled “Downloadable Cheat Sheets A-Z).

Focus on Ability 2016: Short Film Festival

All the record breaking 194 entries from 18 countries are now up on the [Focus on Ability](#) website.

Voting has now closed but the videos are worth a look!

Global Usher Syndrome Awareness Day

Global Usher Syndrome Awareness Day will be held this year on 17 September 2016. Mark Dunning, the Founder of Usher Syndrome Coalition USA, will be speaking in Melbourne at an event organised by [Usher Kids Australia](#). Please visit their website for further information.

Why, When and How Do We Teach Braille Music Notation? Including Braille Reading Students in the Classroom Music Program

A successful introductory session on braille music, focussing particularly on how to include braille reading students in the classroom music program was held by Lea this week at SVRC. The following, by Lea Nagel, offers insight into this important area of the curriculum – and expanded core curriculum.

Why?

This question could be answered by asking another question: Why do we teach print notation to sighted primary school students? Why not just let them listen and copy?

Music notation:

- Allows the communication of music that has not been seen or heard by the reader
- Communicates style, shape, timbre, melody from the writer to the reader
- Is a way of acquiring or learning a piece of music
- Allows access to musical compositions from hundreds of years ago, where there are few recordings
- May support brain development
- Includes details intended by the composer: accents, dynamics, style
- Permits the advanced music student to study music in detail including unusual time signatures
- Is necessary for many careers in music

Some of our past Dot Power students (3 – 8 year old potential braille readers) have learned the basics of braille music. In one introduction session, the children learned to read simple rhythms on note c: quavers, crotchets and minims and crotchet rests.

When?

As soon as sighted children are offered print notation.

How?

For teachers hoping to include their student who reads braille in the music program, please request a braille copy of any notation that is being presented to the sighted children in the class. Check the SVRC website for our Braille Music Cheat Sheet, and book a session to come in and see Lea for an introduction to the braille music code. You won't need to learn the whole code – just how it relates to the print.



Photo: Dot Power students reading from braille music, play a tune together on angel chimes.

Support Skills 2016 Come and Try Day

When: Friday November 18th

We are once again offering a Come and Try Day for prospective students wishing to attend the Support Skills program in 2017.

It is a condition of enrollment that a student must attend a Try Day whether it be with one of the current groups or on the scheduled Try Day in Term 4 (Friday November 18th).

Who can apply?

- Students who will be between Grades 4 and Year 10 in 2017.
- Students from any educational sector and enrolled in a Victorian School.
- Students who have been deemed eligible for additional support by EVAC.

The Try Day which is run on November 18th suits the younger primary school age students. The secondary aged students we find are better catered for by attending one of the already scheduled Support Skills sessions. This session functions as a Try Day and works well as it is generally with age appropriate peers.

The purpose of the Try Day is to allow prospective students and their families an opportunity to travel to the program and see where the program is conducted, participate in a range of sessions, meet the staff and partner organisations and generally assess the programs suitability.

We have 14 students exiting the program at the end of 2016. We therefore will have plenty of positions available for new students.

If you have questions as to the suitability of the program for a particular student please ring and discuss this with either Gary Stinchcombe the Coordinator or Marion Blaze the (Acting Manager) here at SVRC.

We have created an online enrollment form which can be located on the SVRC website. A paper copy is also available which can be printed off and given to families.

There is lots of information about the Support Skills Program on the SVRC website under Educational Programs. Go to: [Support Skills](#)

The closing date for the Support Skills Try Day enrollments is Friday November 4th.

Please direct any enquiries to Garry Stinchcombe.

SVRC Website: What's in a Number?

Glen is using Google Analytics to monitor the usage of the SVRC website:

- 129.6 folk opened their email copy of The Bulletin last fortnight – it is also available via the website
- The Bulletin was opened via the following browsers: Google Chrome 33%; Internet Explorer 28%; Safari 21%; Firefox 9%; Blackberry 0.01% (1 person!)
- Highest “open rate” for the website overall was Melbourne: 55%
- Highest non-Australia country accessing the SVRC website: USA
- Mobile devices: about 50%
- Favourite pages: Home page, About Vision, Bold Line Masters, SSP, Technology, Contact US, For VTs
- 140 subscribers to our YouTube channel

Glen will continue to monitor usage and we'll use this information to plan for our web-future!

VA's Further Education Bursary – Now Open

In 2017, Vision Australia will award [Further Education Bursaries](#) to a select number of students who are blind or have low vision. The bursaries provide adaptive technology to help the students fully participate and succeed in their chosen studies. Assistive technology can eliminate barriers to education and enhance access to information. It enables students to read course material, conduct research and improve their student life

Last year was the 20th anniversary of the bursary program. Since 1996 Vision Australia have supported over 330 students on their tertiary education journey.

Applications are now open and close on 28 October 2016

For more information, please visit the VA website or contact Vocational Consultant Belinda Wilson on (03) 8378 1223.

Pronunciation ... Coming to an iPad or iPhone Near You

From Glen Morrow

VoiceOver - the inbuilt screen reader in iOS and Mac OS X is a very advanced screen reader and used by people all over the world. To make this screen reader even better, Apple are rolling out a new feature in iOS 10 (which will be released in September of this year) which will let you edit how VoiceOver pronounces a particular word or phrase.

So whether it is the name of a town or perhaps it doesn't say your surname quite right - you will be able to use the new Pronunciation feature to tell VoiceOver to pronounce a word or phrase differently.

The way it works is that you put the word or phrase into an edit box and you then can put the substitution into another box - you will need to play around with phonetics to get the pronunciation correct - and there's a Play button so you can listen to how the word will be said and tweak it until you get it the way you want.

You can also apply the new pronunciation to a specific app or have it applied system wide.

The feature is still being beta tested at the moment but it looks very promising and is certainly a long awaited addition to VoiceOver on your iPad or iPhone.

Trans-Tasman Certificate of Proficiency in UEB

The Australian Braille Authority is pleased to invite candidates for the 2016 Trans-Tasman Certificate of Proficiency in Unified English Braille. Candidates may choose to sit the examination in one of two weeks: from 1 to 7 October or from 8 to 14 October. The braille portions of the test must be completed using either a manual braille or the free Perky Duck braille entry software.

In order to be successful in obtaining a Trans-Tasman Certificate of Proficiency, a candidate must have extensive experience in the production of a variety of braille materials and a thorough working knowledge of the UEB code. Such skills are usually, but not exclusively, those of braille transcribers, proofreaders, teachers, teacher's aides and parents.

The Proficiency test is an open book examination. Essential references for those wishing to sit the examination in Australia are:

- [The Rules of Unified English Braille \(2013\)](#)
- [Unified English Braille: Australian Training Manual \(2014\)](#)
- [Australian Braille Authority Rules and Guidelines for Formatting Braille \(2016\)](#)

Full details can be found on [Australian Braille Authority website](#).

The Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital's Temporary Home

From Monday 29 August 2016, the Royal Victorian Eye and Ear Hospital's (the Eye and Ear) outpatient clinics and day surgery – including the **EDUCATIONAL VISION ASSESSMENT CLINIC (EVAC)** – will be provided at a second site,

Eye and Ear on the Park. Eye and Ear on the Park is located on St Andrews Place, East Melbourne at the previous Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre site.

The Eye and Ear's Emergency Department will remain at the Main Hospital site at 32 Gisborne Street, East Melbourne, as will other services including, Main Theatres, Inpatient Ward, Cochlear Implant Clinic and Acute Ophthalmology Clinic.

Redevelopment of the old site is reportedly well underway, with the new Emergency Department the first stage of the project to be completed. All services will move back to the main site when the redevelopment is completed in late 2018.

Eye and Ear on the Park is located just 500 metres from the main hospital, accessible via public transport and will have an underground car park available to patients.

SPEVI Conference 2017

A reminder from SPEVI to Educators in Vision Impairment that the SPEVI Conference will be in Brisbane this coming January. This is a great opportunity to gather with other like-minded professionals, parents and others involved in the world of vision impairment.

Planned highlights so far include:

- Guest Keynote speaker, Cathy Williams from Bristol, will be talking about Visual Functioning in Children with Neurodevelopmental difficulties
- Also, Guest Keynote speaker, Greg Downey from Macquarie University will be talking about Neuroplasticity and his research in the field of blindness.
- The program includes 40 sessions across strands of Multiple Impairment; Technology; O&M and Academic Adjustments.
- Tuesday will feature a strand of sessions dedicated to parents.

Early bird registrations close on 1 September – register via the [SPEVI Conference website](#).

Q&A

Q&A #1

Question: The shortcut keys for Windows don't appear to work on my student's Google Chromebook laptop.

Answer: Try [Chromebook keyboard shortcuts](#).

Q&A #2

Question: What paper should we order for the Duxbury Romeo 50?

Answer: The Romeo embosser has an adjustable paper space, but does need tractor feed paper. It can use A4 or Perkins sized paper. The paper you choose should match what the school likes or wants to use.

Braille in the Community

Intrepid traveller, Toni, who is currently enjoying some R&R whilst gallivanting around the world, has challenged herself to find a tactile map in the cities that she visits.

Here's her latest; it's from Cardiff in Wales.

My Cane

Here's a poem by Heidi Lyons that I lifted from the internet. I don't know Heidi, but I like her poem...



My Cane is more than a stick to me, just like your eyes it helps me see.
I want to travel, find my own way, join in with you all when you play.

I wish to do just the same as you, but sometimes I need extra clues,
I keep my cane tip on the ground and it helps me find my way around.

It feels for changes on the floor and helps me find things like gaps and doors.
It helps me know when there are steps and stairs and tells me when to take more care.
My Cane's a detector, a bumper a guide and I feel much safer with it by my side.
It tells me what's coming up ahead, so bumps and trips I no longer dread.

We'd love to read your thoughts on your cane, your technology, your world, so please send them in!

News

- Our new Transcribers – **Emma** and **Lauren** – who are both very well-skilled in all things computer – have been making themselves extremely useful in the production of materials in alternative format, administration and even furniture-moving! Emma and Lauren have been busy using Word, Duxbury, Picture Braille, Corel Draw etc to produce materials – and have come up with excellent text, tactile diagrams, and even Braille Music!!! Last heard they were composing some changes to the Paralympics song with Lea (to be used for our upcoming Dot Power day). Is there anything these two can't do???
- **Feedback from a VT:** A class teacher and teacher aide who attended the PD day you folk at SVRC ran this week. They were full of compliments and positive energy when they returned! Well done! I always feel it makes our jobs out in the schools easier when they return from SVRC with such a positive attitude to teaching our kids with VI! So thanks to all who contributed.

Finally

Editor Deb Lewis would like to thank everyone for their contribution to this issue of The Bulletin!