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Dates for Your Diary

Here's what's coming up:

- SSP Try Day 18 November
- Dot Power 22 November
- Expo 28 November
- Christmas morning tea 7 December – all welcome!
- SPEVI Conference 8-12 January 2017 in Brisbane – **several staff from SVRC will be presenting!**

School finishes this year on a Tuesday – December 20!

SVRC Expo 2016

When: Monday 28 November 2016 from 10am until 2.00pm

Where: SVRC, 370 Springvale Road Donvale

Theme: Promoting inclusion and access in education

Attendance Certificate: available on request

The SVRC Technology Expo features best practise in access technology options for students with vision impairments. Displays and demonstrations of the latest in technology including magnification and screen reading software, audio books, braille technology and more! We will announce the winners of this year's writing competition (see below) and hear back from the 2016 Space Campers. Open to all, there is no need to register and there is no cost to attend.

SVRC Writing Competition – “Travel and Opportunity”

The SVRC writing competition aims to encourage the creative and literary skills of our students in their own alternative medium. **The 2016 theme is “Travel and Opportunity”.**

“The where, why and what of travel” – Where I would like to travel, why I would like to travel there and what “vision” technology I would take to assist me.

Please submit entries by November 14, in any alternative medium, to SVRC, PO Box 201, Nunawading 3131 or electronically to svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au with the subject “SVRC Writing Comp”.

There will be prizes and certificates awarded in various age categories at the SVRC Expo.

Landmark Survey Sets National Eye Health Benchmark for Australia

Source: Vision2020 website: <http://www.vision2020australia.org.au/media/2016-10-13/landmark-survey-sets-national-eye-health-benchmark-for-australia> 13 October 2016

Blindness and vision impairment appear to be on the decline in Australia according to the findings of the first ever National Eye Health Survey, released on World Sight Day 2016. Rates of vision impairment were also found to be lower in Australia when compared to other high income countries.

However, the importance of regular eye tests was underlined with more than 50 per cent of the 4,836 participants found to have an eye condition being unaware they had that condition prior to taking part in the survey, and over 30 per cent of all participants being onward referred to an eye health professional.

The National Eye Health Survey, led by Vision 2020 Australia and the Centre for Eye Research Australia, is the first comprehensive national survey of the prevalence of vision loss in both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians and provides a benchmark against which to measure national progression in eye health and vision care.

National Eye Health Survey Key Findings

The good news:

- The NEHS is the first comprehensive national survey of the prevalence of vision impairment and blindness in Australia.
- The results of the NEHS show that vision impairment and blindness appear to be on the decline in Australia when referenced against earlier select population group studies.
- The prevalence of vision impairment is lower in Australia when compared to other high income countries.

While there are signs of progress in reducing the prevalence of major eye conditions, the survey found that:

- The prevalence of vision impairment and blindness among Indigenous Australians is three times that of non-Indigenous Australians.
- The prevalence of vision impairment and blindness doubles with each decade over 60 years for non-Indigenous Australians.
- Uncorrected refractive error causes almost two thirds of vision impairment among both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. This could be corrected immediately with the right pair of glasses.
- Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD) is the leading cause of blindness among non-Indigenous Australians.
- Cataract is the leading cause of blindness among Indigenous Australians.

Special PD Day for CRT Networks

The SVRC ran a special PD day for members of the Doncaster CRT network on Monday October 31 just before Cup Day. It proved to be a day that CRTs were not needed in their schools and so we had 42 teachers in attendance. No doubt they were keen to add some hours to their VIT "Special Needs" requirements, but many the group might also be interested in gaining further knowledge and qualifications in this field of education and maybe one day working as a VT for Vision. It was also a wonderful exercise in promoting the centre, our work and the needs and abilities of our students. Thank you to Lea Nagel for getting us in touch with this network, Jacinta, the network leader who passed around the emails (despite being in Alice Springs when I first contacted her!) Thank you also to our ever-dedicated SVRC staff who managed registrations, morning teas, technology, and some excellent presentations, written especially for this group. Feedback on the day demonstrated that we sparked tons of interest.

Openbook: Scanning Text from a Saved PDF

Openbook is a great OCR (Optical Character Recognition) software for scanning and recognising text. It combines with Pearl Camera which acts as a scanner but can also be used to recognise text in PDF files that contain text that is not editable. Here's how:

Open the PDF. Print it, but instead of sending to your printer, select Freedom Import Printer.

Openbook will open and display the text from your PDF!

Sending the text to Word using Launchables:

To use familiar tools to read edit and save the scanned text, you will probably want to send the text to Word.

In menus, go to Launch. The first time you do this, you select: Setup Standard Launchables. Openbook will search through your computer programs to find programs to which it can send text. This may take some minutes. Be patient!!

Here are some key commands for doing this:

- Alt: Open menus
- C: Launch
- S: Setup launchables

The next time you go to Launch, you will be able to select from some programs. These are numbered, so that if you are doing this often, you'll learn to quickly touch type a series of key commands for example: Alt, C, 3, Enter.

Using a Braille Display with an iOS Device

Apple has a new page on navigating an iOS device (iPhone, iPad, iPod Touch) using a braille display. It features commands for navigation, scrolling and more.

Visit: <https://support.apple.com/en-au/HT202132>

Usher Awareness Day Video

UsherKids Australia hosted Usher Syndrome Awareness Day at the Royal Children's Hospital on 17 September this year. The video of a series of presentations is available on YouTube:

<https://youtu.be/SglvqSE0rYk>

Cricket: Come and Try Day

Cricket season is here again and thanks to the generosity of the MCC, the MCG Trust and Cricket Victoria, the Victorian Blind Cricket Association is pleased to advise that Blind Cricket once again returns to the hallowed turf of the MCG. Positions are limited so be quick to register for this fabulous opportunity to play blind cricket on the MCG.

What: 2016 Blind Cricket MCG Experience

Who: Students with vision impairments aged 6 to 16

Where: Melbourne Cricket Ground

When: Sunday 27 November 2016 from 11.00am to 1.30pm



Places limited & bookings essential: RSVP to Rod Pritchard 0401 718 926

Summer Reading for Students from SVRC

The SVRC has a large and ever-growing collection of etext books for students' reading pleasure! There are also a number of book series which can be requested to keep students busy over the holidays.

Conspiracy 365 (Upper primary)

Callum Ormond, a 15 year old, is the main character. Before his dad died of an unknown virus, he sent a letter to Callum describing something that will change their family for the better. This is a fast-moving thriller which is written in diary format. There are 12 books in the series (January to December) and they are available from SVRC as Word files.

(Ellie Chronicles) Tomorrow When the War Began (Junior secondary)

The story of seven teenagers who go camping for the weekend and while they are away, their world is turned upside-down. Written before the days of efficient internet and mobile phones, the series is a bit dated, but exciting, never-the-less. The adventures are narrated by Ellie as she and her friends fight for justice. SVRC holds the 7 books from this series as Word files.

Please use the request form on the SVRC website to place orders for these and other books from the SVRC. And if you would like a book produced in alternative format for your summer reading, please send a copy of the book with your request form! 😊

SVRC Returns for 2016 & Requests for 2017

Please review your students' use of their **access technology** which is on loan from the SVRC. If the student is no longer using equipment, please return along with **braille, LP and audio** resources during the last few months of the year.

As booklists become available, please send in your requests for materials in alternative format for 2017 – that way we can get on to production and ensure that students have their learning materials in a timely manner!

Support Skills News

Please see the SVRC website for:

- Try Day Enrolment Application form – closing date is fast approaching
- SSP Evaluation – it's online this year!
- Expression of Interest form for new and returning students

For further information, please contact Garry Stinchcombe on 9841 0242.

Finally

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