

The Bulletin

Number 3, Monday 6 March 2017

Inside This Issue

Here's what you'll find:

- **PD:** Music PD (term 2), Online Registration for PE, Art and Music PD, Low Vision Days Report, HumanWare Vice-Presidents Visiting SVRC
- **Technology:** Shakespeare in Alternative Format Q&A, TI-Nspire Q&A
- **From the Field:** FreePost Q&A, New Tactile \$10 Note, Blind Cricket, Touch of Genius Results, St Paul's Celebrate 60 Years
- **News:** Diary Dates, Support Skills Reminders, Student News, Staff News

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

Dates for Your Diary

Here's what's coming up:

- **PE for Students with Vision Impairments:** 8 March
- **Art for Students with Vision Impairments:** 15 March
- **VI Students with Additional Impairments Day:** 21 March
- **Goalball Half Day:** 9am to 2pm, Friday 31 March 2017 (last day of Term 1) – Flier attached
- **HumanWare Visit:** 7 April 10.00am
- **Including Children who are Blind in Mainstream Music Programs:** 2 May
- **VT Day:** 6 June 2017 (see below for more information)
- **Low Vision Days:** 15 August

See the SVRC website for more information and online registration.

Skill Power sessions are planned for terms 2 and 3. Contact Lea Nagel with your suggestions.

Including Children who are Blind in Mainstream Music Programs

When: 2 May 2017

Time: 9.30am to 1.00pm (Registration 9.15am)

This event is for Music Instrumental Teachers and Music Classroom Teachers who have a blind child in their class AND would like to ensure that the blind child can participate fully in the class music activities.

Online PD Registration Now Open for PE, Art and Music

The PE and Art PDs are open to registration on the SVRC website. Music will also be open soon. All three programs are excellent with specialist presenters for each. We encourage PE, Art and Music teachers along with interested others to attend. See the SVRC website for details and registration.

Educational Support for Students with Low Vision Days – Report

“Very insightful and helpful!” – one comment on SVRC's PD program this week – report by Marion Blazé

Other comments: “I would certainly recommend this PD session for anyone who has a vision impaired student in their classroom. The whole day was beneficial and presented in an interesting and engaging manner.”

and

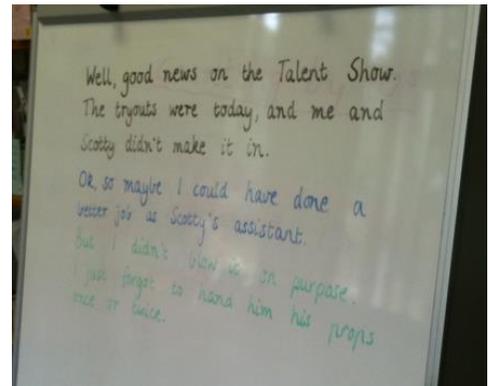
“Many thanks to everyone at SVRC for the varied presentations today. As a Year 7 teacher I feel empowered to face the challenges of supporting all my students to achieve success!”

and

“I liked that you mixed the sessions with workshops and many different presenters.”

And from an off-site participant:

“I can't thank you enough for having this PD available on Adobe Connect. Living in regional Victoria can be problematic in accessing PD. I only wish other parts of the Department would follow your example.”



On February 28 and March 2, this week, SVRC was host to teachers, parents and ES staff learning about how to include their students with low vision in their classrooms. We had 130 participants on-site and 37 off-site via Adobe Connect. 23 were in Footscray, 10 in Ballarat and others in various locations around Victoria. After experiencing classroom activities wearing “simulation goggles”, we talked about categories of vision impairment, strategies in the classroom and social and family perspectives. We also heard from two primary level students about how they access the curriculum.

Many many thanks to Lea Nagel and the teaching team at SVRC for all the planning and running of these two days, Robert and Gayle who gave up their busy schedules as VTs to present, the wonderful Alicia, Darren and Marnie from Guide Dogs Victoria, the fabulous Michael and Glen who managed all our audio visual technology, as well as the technology for the off-site participants, and a special thank you to the SVRC production staff who looked after registrations, printing, food, furniture arrangements and much much more!!

Because of the very high demand for this particular program, we ran a third day in 2016. We are thinking now we will need at least a fourth opportunity in 2017 and are currently exploring new ways to make the PD available online, to maximise access for participants and minimise disruption to our production team.

Photos (See above and right):

Teachers were encouraged to think about size, colour and contrast – for example, darker markers on a whiteboard are more easily seen.

Presenters encouraged all students with vision impairments to become confident, competent users of their technology – and particularly to be accurate and efficient touch-typists.



Free Post for the Blind Q&A

Question: I recently had a bit of difficulty getting a Post Office to accept a package containing braille materials to be sent to the SVRC. What can I do?

Answer: Try referring the Australia Post employee to the Australia Post website which includes the following information:

Special delivery for the vision-impaired

Sending a parcel or letter that helps the blind? In most cases, you can send it for free. Check what items are eligible on the list below.

Eligible items

- Correspondence, documents or literature written in completely in embossed characters as used by the blind, such as Braille or Moon
- Aids for the teaching of Braille
- Plates for embossing literature for the blind
- Special paper intended solely for the blind, on the condition that any communication on the paper is wholly in Braille or Moon
- Any form of speech recording for use by the blind.

In addition:

- The sender and/or the recipient must be a blind person, or
- The sender and/or the recipient must be an organisation we recognise as serving the needs of blind people

Send your items in 3 easy steps

1. Check the eligibility criteria of your parcel.
2. Make sure the delivery or return address is written on the outside of your package.
3. Attach an "Articles for the Blind" label (available at Post Offices), or write the words "Materials for the Use of the Blind" on the parcel

Note: The Statewide Vision Resource Centre is an organisation that is *recognised* by Australia Post as serving the needs of the blind.

Shakespeare in Alternative Format Q&A

Question: My student's Shakespeare text book has the old English on the right hand page and modern English on the left hand page. How will my student be able to access both the old and the new?

Answer: Here in Transcription, we pondered this question and came up with this: An etext version for the new English and a large print or braille copy for the old English.

Here's some feedback regarding one brailing student who has been studying Romeo and Juliet this way:

My student greatly appreciates having the Romeo and Juliet modern English as an etext. She said it works perfectly have the old English in braille and modern English in etext. She has them both open and is able to quickly refer to the modern English when required.

TI-Inspire Q&A

Question: I'm wondering if the iOS (iPad) app of the TI-Nspire Graphical Calculator would be a better option for my student with low vision than the Windows version. As apps from the App Store can't be trialled first, I want to be sure it is a better option before purchase.

Answer (with a particular student in mind):

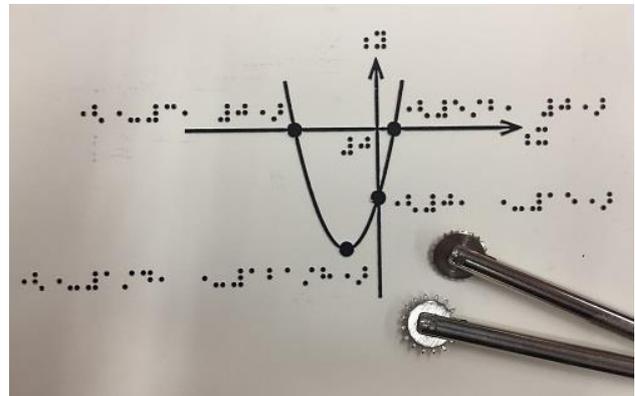
Key commands and touch typing, are recommended for students with vision impairments (low vision and blind) – particularly in terms of independence, access and speed – and for this reason, it may be better that the student uses their laptop.

If the student uses the text book as a PDF on their laptop and therefore has their laptop in their Maths class already, then it makes sense to have the TI-Nspire software on the computer as well. The student could potentially copy & paste some of the formulae from the text book into the calculator and use other time-saving strategies which will improve efficiency. Also, using the one piece of technology limits the number of items the student needs to bring to class.

Tactile Graph Paper Q&A

Question: I know we can get/make graph grid paper for use with a corkboard, pins, wikki stick etc for students to create their own graphs. However, is it possible to have pre-prepared grids available for the student to create graphs quickly and efficiently?

Answer: Create quick, cheap tactile graph paper with Duxbury and a standard braille embosser. The student can then braille labels using their Perkins and draw their graph with a spur wheel (two examples shown right).



HumanWare Vice-Presidents Visiting SVRC

Bruce Miles, the Global Executive VP of HumanWare Sales/Marketing/Customer Service (previously the VP Sales for Essilor Canada) and Richard Nadeau the Global VP of Operations for HumanWare will be coming to Melbourne for a couple of days in April. Both Bruce and Richard are keen to meet DET staff at SVRC to learn more about how the education system work for students with VI and of course learn more about SVRC and how HumanWare can assist the team and our students. Any Visiting Teachers (Vision) would be welcome to come to SVRC for this meeting at 10:00am on Friday 7 April, 2017 (first week of the school holidays). Our Victorian HumanWare rep, Tony Wu will be there, too.

New \$10 Note – It's Tactile Too!

The Reserve Bank has recently revealed images of the new \$10 banknote that will be issued into circulation from September 2017. The images show the design artwork of each side of the banknote, including the distinctive top-to-bottom window. The new banknote series has a "tactile" feature to help people with vision impairments distinguish between different denominations of banknotes. **The new \$10 will have two bumps on each of the long edges of the banknote.**

The new banknote features a different species of native Australian wattle and bird, the Bramble Wattle (*Acacia victoriae*) and Sulphur-crested Cockatoo (*Cacatua galerita*).

That's Cricket!

Information from Rod Pritchard, President, Victorian Blind Cricket Association

The cricket season is fast coming to an end, but there is still time to participate in Blind and Vision Impaired Cricket. The grand final for the club competition will be held over two days on Saturday 11 and Sunday 12 March with play commencing at 10:00am each day.

The Australian Squad competed in the Blind Cricket World Cup in India from 28 January to the 12 February. The Squad played 9 matches in 10 days against the best teams in the world winning 4 out of their 9 matches to finish 6th, behind India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, England, Bangladesh and ahead of West Indies, South Africa and New Zealand. Congratulations to our team!

To find out more about Blind Cricket, please visit www.vbca.org.au or see the video links below:

- **Christine Casey** was the sole female in the Australian Blind Cricket squad that played in India over summer:
<https://www.facebook.com/CricketAustralia/videos/1907546856142499/>
- **Daniel Pritchard**, opening bowler for the Australian team, bowls at more than 100 km/hour <https://www.facebook.com/CricketAustralia/videos/1906901119540406/>

2017 marks the beginning of a significant time for Blind Cricket. As part of the funding package announced last year by Cricket Australia and their sponsors, from July 1 2017, all Australian Blind Cricketers competing in international events will become fully funded making Blind Cricket the only blind sport where international athletes are fully funded. This represents a radical departure from previous international events where the athletes have had self-fund.

There has never been a better time to become involved in blind cricket especially as Victorian Blind Cricket, the world birthplace and home of Blind Cricket, approaches its centenary year in 2022. To celebrate this milestone, preparations are underway to host a Blind Cricket World Cup in Melbourne in 2022. This will present an amazing opportunity not only to showcase the best blind cricketers from around the world but for a special group of young Australians to be part of a landmark experience.

St Paul's College Celebrates 60 years!

Excerpt from: Catholic Education Melbourne: News and Events

St Paul's College, Kew, marks its 60th anniversary this weekend. It is a milestone close to the hearts of Peter Walsh and Bill Jolley, who both were there when St Paul's first opened its doors in 1957. When they talk about the school, the pair speak of wonderful teachers and the goodwill and generous community support that let the College become a reality, and its founding principal, Brother Patrick O'Neill.

When Brother O'Neill lost his sight in his forties, he found a calling to help others with vision impairment. He first provided religious education to Catholic children at the Royal Institute for the Blind before establishing St Paul's at the request of the then Archbishop of Melbourne, Dr Daniel Mannix. Peter, who was eight when he started at St Paul's, recalls Brother O'Neill's exhortation to students on its very first day. "He told us that we as blind people, we will be able to achieve what we want to, we should aim for the best in life and do the best we can," Peter says.

"It was amazing what those teachers and Brother O'Neill did. They always aimed for the highest and the best. How lucky we were." ...

Over the years St Paul's mission has expanded and it now teaches children with other disabilities.

Touch of Genius Prize Results

The Louis Braille touch of Genius Prize for Innovation winners for 2016 have been announced with Honorable mention going to Mandy Lau's "Reach and Match Learning Kit and Inclusive Learning Program". This kit and its accompanying curriculum are designed for children with vision impairments as well as those with multiple learning needs to develop braille literacy and communication and social skills through tactile strategies and play-based activities. Congratulations Mandy!

Student News

Lilly recently participated in her school swimming carnival. Her mum commented, "We are so proud of her. She swam two individual events and then put herself down for the 4 x 50 metre freestyle relay!!!"

Quote of the day from Lilly: "Why on earth would you go to a swim carnival if you're not going to compete!"

Lilly can't wait for the SVRC Support Skills Swim Carnival. She has mentioned it so many times and it's not until August!



Support Skills Reminders

From Garry Stinchcombe

If Support Skills students, parents or VTs would like to suggest a topic for a session, please contact Garry Stinchcombe no later than 8am on the Wednesday prior to their session.

If a SSP session clashes with a school excursion, special activity or the student will be away on school camp, please let Garry know – this helps very much with timetabling. A make-up session may be able to be negotiated if there is enough notice.

Please make sure that the school and VT are aware of the dates that the student will be attending Support Skills.

Staff News: Lyn Robinson's Retirement

You are invited to celebrate with us the retirement of **Lyn Robinson**, after her long-spanning career in vision impairment education. An afternoon tea will be held in Lyn's honour at SVRC at 3.30pm on Tuesday, March 28, 2017.

Please RSVP by March 21 if you wish to come. Contributions to a gift will be gladly accepted. Please let us know your intended contribution when you RSVP.

Finally

Thanks to all contributors and enjoy the beginning of Autumn!

Deb Lewis (Ed)