

Number 13, Friday 1 September, 2023

Inside this issue

Here's what you'll find:

- **From SVRC:** [Message from the Manager](#), [Return of Tactile Globes](#), [Want to find out about Support Skills?](#), [Additions to the Illustrated ePub List](#), [Q&A The tick or check mark](#), [Monash Sensory Science comes to SVRC](#)
- **From the field:** [Evangelos' Sporting Success!](#), [Special Christmas Concert with Jordie Howell](#), [Explorers United group mobility programs](#), [The Real XPerience Expo](#), [University of Sydney research into accessible playgrounds](#), [Collingwood Children's Farm visit over holidays](#)

PD events

The [2023 Professional Learning Calendar](#) is now available for download on our website. See below for links to the events in Term 4 2023.

October 10, 2023 [Preparing for a student who reads Braille](#)

Providing practical support for school staff preparing to welcome and include a new student who will be learning to read using braille.

On Demand PL

All of our professional learning workshops are now available on demand where participants can access all the videos and resources at a time that suits them. You can find links through the [On Demand](#) page, under Professional Learning, on our website.

Message from the Manager

Source: SVRC

Sadly for Heatherwood School, a significant amount of damage occurred in one of the buildings as a result of the fire on Saturday August 26th. Heatherwood Principal Paul Hills emailed all staff on the Sunday and expressed these sentiments.

Our focus for the upcoming days will be on supporting each other and members of our school community and establishing as soon as possible a sense of stability and routine. Everyone needs to feel safe and have the confidence to express any concerns they are feeling.

I am confident that there is a strength within our staff that will allow support to be offered and encouragement given as the school comes to terms with the challenges and the opportunities that are presented during the next few weeks.

Thank you for your commitment to your colleagues and your willingness to make that extra effort to ensure our students continue to grow and learn.

SVRC would like to acknowledge the recent tumultuous time for the Visiting Teacher Service and congratulate all VTS on receiving such affirming support from stakeholders, families, and students. SVRC staff look forward to a continued positive and supportive partnership with the VTS-Vision.

Last Friday, SVRC staff and students celebrated Book Week by dressing up as their favourite book characters. During lunchtime, staff and students played a bingo game of authors names, and quotes from books trivia. Lots of fun was had by all.

Jane would like to thank Kim for covering for her while she was away on the Variety Club Bash. The 2023 Bash raised \$1.5 million.

Return of Tactile Globes

Source: SVRC

Do you have a Tactile Globe in your school? We have a number of students who would like to borrow one, but all of ours are out on loan. Can you please return? Many thanks in advance!

Evangelos' Sporting Success!

Source: Sophie Michael, NEVR Visiting Teacher

Evangelos Panagiotou is a Year 7 student from South Oakleigh Secondary College, who is legally blind and supported by SVRC and NEVR's Visiting Teacher Service (Vision). After finishing first in the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Cross Country Under 12/13 Multi Class Running 3 km event earlier this term, Evangelos secured a place in the Victorian team.

The Australian Cross Country Tournament was held at Stromlo Park, Canberra on August 26th. Evangelos finished 6th in Australia in the U15 Para Men Multiclass 3km event and was the highest placed Victorian in his age group! His solid performance assisted Team Victoria to finish 3rd, taking home the bronze medal behind NSW and QLD, which Evangelos has been wearing proudly ever since. He is now looking for his next challenge!



Want to find out about Support Skills?

Source: SVRC

Our Support Skills Program is a specialised educational program for groups of eligible students, who are blind or have low vision, from year 4 until they enrol in any VCE subjects. Students attend once or twice per term for a full day of timetabled individualised or small-group instruction focused around the [Expanded Core Curriculum](#) for students with vision impairments.

The Support Skills Program provides a positive learning environment, which promotes inclusion while acknowledging the unique needs and learning styles of students who are blind or have low vision.

There is also one online group who meet with teachers on Zoom.

We were to have a Try Day in September, but because so many were unable to attend on-site, we are now offering a **Zoom information session for parents and carers. Friday September 8, 9.30 to 10.30am**. You will hear from teachers about the program and have the opportunity to ask questions.

If you would like to participate, please email marion.blaze@education.vic.gov.au and we will send you the Zoom link.

Additions to the Illustrated ePub List

Source: SVRC

We have recently added the following titles to our small-but-growing collection of illustrated ePubs. For more information about the titles and formats we have on file, please take a look at the [SVRC Alternative Format Catalogues](#).

- All Right Vegemite – June Factor
- Animal Capers by Kerry Argent
- Beastly Tales – Six Crazy Creature Capers by Richard Tulloch
- Beauty and the Beast and Other Fairy Tales edited by Richard Widdows
- Best Nest, The by PD Eastman
- Beware the Killer Coat by Susan Gates
- Born to Run by Kathy Freeman
- Brave Mama Puss by Joy Cowley
- Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Can You See? by Bill Martin
- Extra Weird (Weirdo #3) by Anh Do
- Dolphins and Porpoises by Janelle Hatherly
- Louis Braille by Madeline Donaldson
- One-Shoe's Wishes (Squeak Street) by Emily Rodda
- Paper Bag Princess, The by Robert N Munsch

Enjoy!

Q&A The tick [✓] or check mark

Source: SVRC

Question: Is there a way to indicate a tick in braille?

Answer: (with thanks to John and Christine Simpson). The tick [✓] has been included in "[The Rules of Unified English Braille Updates to Second Edition 2013 as of August 2019](#)" which can be found in the ICEB website.

Check mark, tick  (dot 4 dots 1,4,6)

Follow print for use of the check mark.

Examples:

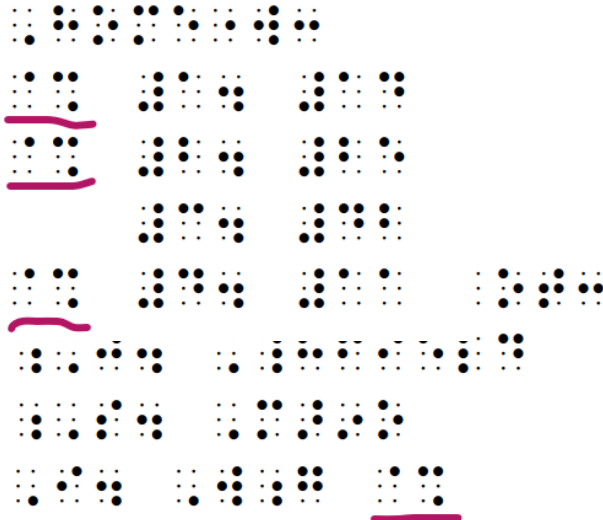
Homework:

✓ 1. 14

✓ 2. 25

3. 42

✓ 4. 11



Sample ballot:

J. Hadfield

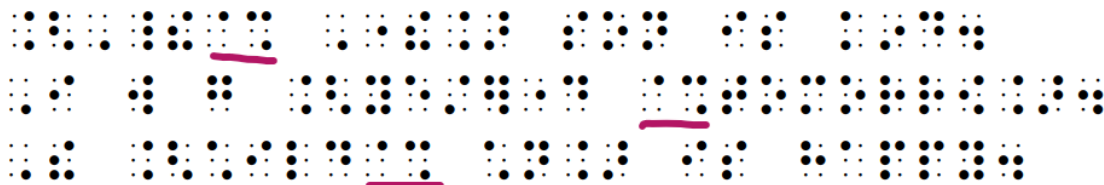
S. Marino

I. Wong ✓

[Their ✓ There] son is kind.

I will go [yesterday ✓ tomorrow].

The [child ✓ children] is happy.



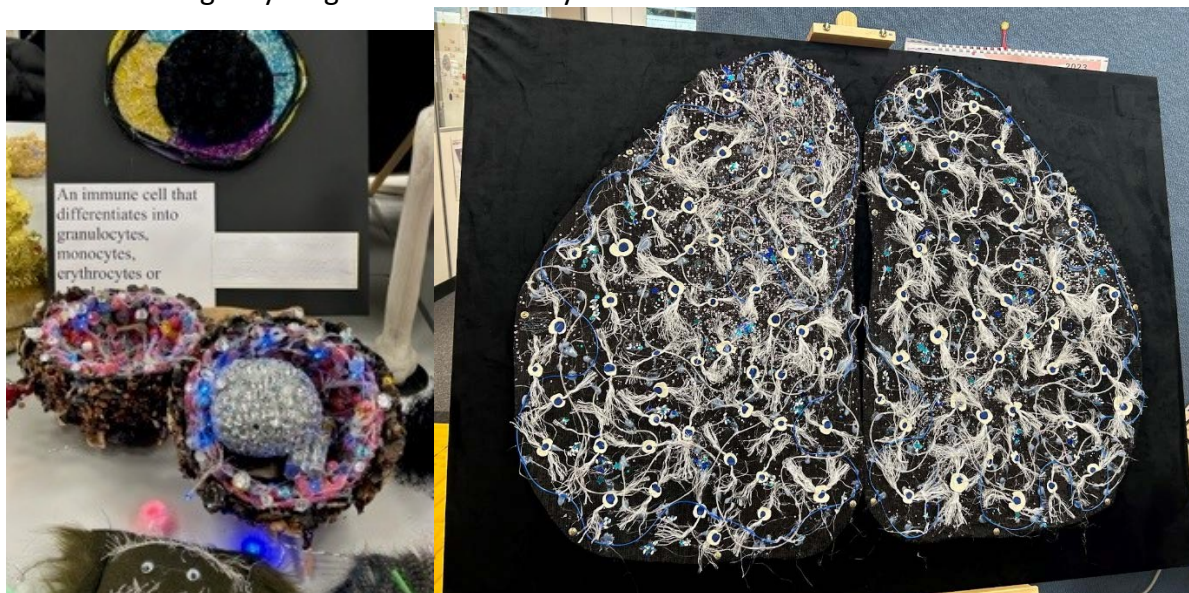
Monash Sensory Science comes to SVRC

Source: SVRC

As part of National Science Week, the Monash Sensory Science team set up a huge display of tactile and multi-sensory science books, diagrams, and concepts. This display was opened up to teachers, VTs family and friends of SVRC on Thursday, August 17 and left in place for the students of Group A on Friday August 18, 2023.

Students were led by Erica Tandori (Monash) and Stu Favilla (Swinburne) through all the items which included a chess board depicting cells involved in immunity, several books with audio description, music and tactile representations of all graphics, a sonification device that captures brain-waves and plays them as music and 3D models of cells such as the Coronavirus. All students had the opportunity to make their own tactile cell which might form part of a display later in the year.

All students seemed fascinated with the displays and information presented. Later in the day, students did science-themed sessions with their teachers, including experimenting with friction and researching recycling and sustainability.



Special Christmas Concert with Jordie Howell

Source: Jordie Howell

Come and join us on Thursday 14 December for festive fun around the theme of Christmas. We invite children who love to sing to perform at a sparkly Christmas concert in a gallery space featuring an exhibition of drawings and paintings made by children. We will have a very special Christmas tree with origami decorations made by the hands of blind and vision impaired adults. We will bring an awareness of braille music and the work of Louis Braille through song and festivity. A rehearsal will take place at SVRC several days prior to the concert.

Where: Victorian Artists Society, 430 Albert Street, East Melbourne.

When: Thursday 14 December, 10 am for rehearsal followed by our concert. Lunch will be provided.

Please contact Jordie Howell for rehearsal and concert details and to register your child's interest via phone: 0402 308 484 or email at jordina.howell@gmail.com

Explorers United group mobility programs

Source: Confident Steps

Confident Steps are excited to introduce you to a collaboration that brings together three passionate and experienced independent Orientation and Mobility Specialists. We have joined forces to create an experience that opens up new horizons for those seeking to enhance their mobility skills. Come and join us over the holidays to learn something new, have some fun and meet new friends.

Youth 14-24 years

Showtime. September 26 & 27, 2023

Practice planning social events with peers, use technology to meet up in person with mates, ride public transport to get to your destination and hangout over a movie and lunch.

Going Loopy. January 24 & 25, 2024

Solve a loopy mystery while exploring the Melbourne Metro city loop, gather the clues at City loop stations while working as a team and decipher how the Melbourne city loop connects you to Melbourne CBD.

Travel Tech. April 9 & 10, 2024

Explore different technology useful for travel, use GPS and augmented reality to travel to a mystery destination and use technology to be safe when travelling independently.

On the fly. July 9 & 10, 2024

Explore strategies for planning air travel, experience the process from checking in to boarding and strategies for finding your baggage and getting through the airport.

Job Skills. October 1 & 2, 2024

Explore relevant skills for getting part time work, explore the variety of work available within separate businesses and hear from people living with blindness/low vision in the workforce.

Kids 7-14 years

Shop til you drop. September 19 & 20, 2023

Learn about different types of shopping environments, learn how to safely talk to shopkeepers, work in a team environment to complete a shopping challenge.

Get on it – Bus. January 22 & 23, 2024

Explore the layout of a stationary bus, use a variety of different bus stops, build confidence getting on and off a bus and bus travel to a mystery destination.

Get on it – Train. April 2 & 3, 2024

Explore the layout of Melbourne trains, tour Flinders St station, experience a variety of metropolitan train stations and train travel to a mystery destination.

Get on it – Tram. July 2 & 3, 2024

Explore the layout of a stationary tram, experience a variety of trams and tram stops and tram travel to a mystery destination.

Map it out. September 24 & 25, 2024

Scavenger hunt in teams using tactile and audio maps, learn to make and use different types of maps and explore landmarks and clues in different environments.

To register your interest or get more information email explorersunitedgroups@gmail.com or call Marnie 0423 783 760, Paula 0417 366 843 or Darren 0414 083 652. Cost is \$980 per program. NDIS plans can be billed from Core or Capacity Building funding.

The Real XPerience Expo

Source: Fortress Melbourne

The free Real XPerience school holidays gaming event on Friday 22 September 2023 will give years 9 and 10 students hands-on gaming time and information about how they can turn their passion for gaming into a career pathway through the Victorian Certificate of Education Vocational Major curriculum.

Please share details about this opportunity with students you think may be interested in attending.

About the event

The department and games and culture experience company Fortress Melbourne will deliver the one-day event, which will feature panel discussions, hands-on workshops and presentations.

The event will give students key information about careers in a number of vocational education and training-linked industries, including:

- film and content production
- construction
- catering and hospitality
- audio and light engineering.

After the one-day event, years 9 to 10 students can access a week of free gameplay at Fortress Melbourne, from Saturday 23 September to Friday 29 September 2023.

Event details

Dates:

- main event: Friday 22 September 2023, from 10.30 am to 3 pm
- free gameplay: Friday 22 September to Friday 29 September 2023.

Location: Fortress Melbourne, Shop 25/23 Caledonian Lane, Melbourne.

Cost: free.

Registration is essential, through [Eventbrite](#). Limited tickets are available.

Find out more

For further enquiries about Real XPerience, contact Fiona Bell, assistant director, Portfolio Communications, Communications Division via phone: 03 7022 1559 or email:

fiona.bell@education.vic.gov.au.

University of Sydney research into accessible playgrounds

Source: University of Sydney

The University of Sydney is conducting a research project titled "Enabling Accessible and Inclusive Playgrounds". Parents and guardians are invited to take part in a research study that investigates the experience of playgrounds for children with vision impairment and their carers/guardian or teachers.

To participate or for more information contact Dagmar Reinhardt (email: dagmar.reinhardt@sydney.edu.au or via phone +61 407346473)

Collingwood Children's Farm visit over Holidays

Source: Blind Sports and Recreation Victoria, Guide Dogs, City of Yarra

If you are blind or vision impaired and love animals, then it's time for you to put your farmer hat on and make your way to Melbourne's beloved working community farm this September school holidays! After an optional BYO picnic lunch, a knowledgeable guide will take you on a sensory tour of the gardens and a hands-on meet-the-animals (guinea pigs, goats & sheep) session, then get involved and pick up the tools for a surprise farm job.

Age range: 6 to 17 years. Siblings welcome to attend.

When: Monday 25th September

12pm: Optional BYO picnic lunch (meet at farm reception entry area)

1pm-4pm: Guided farm experience

Places are strictly limited. To join in please contact our Program Manager Miriam on 98228876 or email miriam@blindsports.org.au.

And Finally ...

Thank you to Christine and John Simpson from Information Alternatives for their response to the braille mystery in the previous issue of The Bulletin. See below for their response and the corresponding image.

"We believe this is a poorly informed attempt at Ground for the Ground Floor of a building. If you replicate the dots as shown in ink on light weight paper, turn the paper upside down and reverse it left to right, when you look through from the back of the paper you see Cap sign, G, d – or Good.

Our thinking is that someone without braille knowledge has commissioned the sign to indicate Ground and that the dots have been reversed in production."

