

The Bulletin

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Number 1**3rd February 2006**

The following issue of The Bulletin was prepared by Deb Lewis, Co-ordinator, Statewide Vision Resource Centre.

**WELCOME BACK READERS AND WE, AT THE
STATEWIDE VISION RESOURCE CENTRE, WISH YOU A
MOST EXCELLENT 2006!**

PD Program for Term 1, 2006

The beginnings of the SVRC PD program for 2006 appears below. For the complete list of activities for 2006 and where available downloadable programs, go to:

<http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/pd2006.htm>

All activities are open to subject teachers, integration teachers and aides, careers teachers, therapists, parents VTs, students etc. Please remember to register: tel (03) 9841 0242, fax (03) 9841 0878 or email svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au

For the term 1-4 Professional Development Program so far, please see page 2! But keep your eyes on The Bulletin for assistive technology workshops and other exciting events which will be offered throughout the year!

SVRC Event	Date (2006)
Term 1 Visiting Teacher Professional Development Day PROGRAM IS ATTACHED!!! ☺	Mon 13 Feb
New Visiting Teacher Orientation Day	Tues 14 Feb
O&M Morning – Experiencing Vision Loss in the Community Alicia Madden	Wed 22 Feb
Educational Support for Blind Students This day is designed for class and subject teachers, integration teachers and aides, therapists, parents/care-givers and visiting teachers who support students who utilize braille	Fri 3 March

VCE Students 2006

Have you let us know about your VCE student – their subjects, their contact details!!! Information about students' Special Examination Arrangements for the June Exam period must be in to VCAA by the beginning of March – rather earlier than in previous years. So...

- Call us! (9841 0242) and book a VCE visit with Lyn or Deb if required!
- Do it SOON!

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PD Program for 2006

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1	Term 1 Visiting Teacher Professional Development Day PROGRAM IS ATTACHED!!! ☺	Monday 13 February
1	New Visiting Teacher Orientation Day	Tuesday 14 February
1	O&M Morning – Experiencing Vision Loss in the Community Alicia Madden	Wed 22 February
1	Educational Support for Blind Students This day is designed for class and subject teachers, integration teachers and aides, therapists, parents/care-givers and visiting teachers who support students who utilize braille	Friday 3 March
2	Educational Support for Students with Low Vision – Prep to Year 8 This day is designed for class and subject teachers, integration teachers and aides, therapists, parents/care-givers and visiting teachers who support students who have low vision (maximum participants: 80)	Wednesday 5 April
2	Educational Support for Students with Low Vision – Secondary Students This day is designed for class and subject teachers, integration teachers and aides, therapists, parents/care-givers and visiting teachers who support secondary students who have low vision (maximum participants: 60)	Friday 21 April
2	O&M Morning – Experiencing Vision Loss in the Community Alicia Madden	Thursday 4 May
2	Term 2 Visiting Teacher Professional Development Day	Tuesday 9 May
2	Educational Support for Vision Impaired Students with Additional Impairments This day is designed for teachers, aides, therapists, parents/care-givers and visiting teachers who support vision impaired students who have additional impairments (maximum participants: 60)	Monday 5 June
3	O&M Morning – Experiencing Vision Loss in the Community Alicia Madden	Tuesday 1 August
3	Term 3 Visiting Teacher Professional Development Day	Tuesday 8 August
4	O&M Morning – Experiencing Vision Loss in the Community Alicia Madden	Thursday 26 October
4	Educational EXPO – Assistive Technology Options This day is suitable for teachers, aides, therapists, parents/care-givers, visiting teachers, STUDENTS and members of the wider community	Friday in late Nov or early December
4	SVRC Christmas Morning Tea	Wednesday 6 December

We will also be arranging activities for Education Week (May), Literacy Week (August) and possibly some camps and other exciting events!

Access to Newspaper Articles for Students with Vision Impairments

Some research done by Marion Blazé, Education Officer, Statewide Vision Resource Centre

ABC Podcasts:

The place to go to find ALL podcasts on ABC Online is <http://www.abc.net.au/services/podcasting/>. There is information about how to download podcasts (which you can listen to via computer or mp3 player), together with an alphabetical and subject listing. It's constantly updated so archival and contemporary programs are available including programs from Radio National and Triple J.

TNN (from Vision Australia):

The old 'Newsline' is no longer, but Vision Australia has a service called TNN – 'Today's News Now'. This is like the old Newsline but better. When you telephone the special number it is an automated service which 'reads' the newspaper to you in digital speech. You can choose the Vision Australia Library catalogue or TNN. TNN has 24 newspapers to choose from. You can search by date or title and you can 'skim' through articles. You can set it up to always go to your favourite newspapers and you can save articles (but they'll only be kept for six weeks). Students can listen to any newspaper article and at least make some choices of what they might need scanned or sourced elsewhere if they need to keep them for research. Call the Vision Australia Library on 1300 654 656 to join up for TNN.

Also, Vision Australia are currently conducting two trials which may interest and benefit (we'll try to find out more about these and let you know):

1. **DAISY trial** - they lend you a DAISY player and I presume you give them feedback
2. **Online devices trial** - they lend you a 'book port' (similar to an iPod) onto which you can download TNN articles, or any info from the web and it has text-to-speech output. This one especially might be just what our senior students need to access and store newspaper articles either from TNN or the web.

Online newspaper services:

There are many more, but the local ones are:

- <http://www.theage.com.au>
- <http://www.heraldsun.news.com.au>
- <http://www.theaustralian.news.com.au>

These are free through the internet, but if you want better access to search for topics, download articles or go back into the archives (the online papers are only current), you can PAY for the following services.

- The Age – become a 'Fairfax Digital Member'
- The Herald Sun – has educational products such as eBooks, Issues kits and article searches
- The Australian - can provide 'online archives' or 'digital delivery'

Warning – check your internet plan

Any students who are going to be dependent on downloading material for their studies, should check their download limits with their internet provider. When you run out of download privileges the provider may either charge you (a lot, and you won't know until you get the bill), or block further downloads, which may prevent you from completing tomorrow's assignment.

Mobility Centre at Federation Square

What is the Melbourne Mobility Centre?

The Melbourne Mobility Centre is an initiative of Melbourne City Council through a partnership with and funding from the Department of Victorian Communities (Community Support Fund), the Office of Commonwealth Games Co-ordination and with the support of Federation Square.

The centre was officially launched on January 11, 2006.

The centre is located on the first floor of the Federation Square Car Park (ground level adjacent to the ArtPlay playground).

The Melbourne Mobility Centre is operated by the Travellers' Aid Society of Victoria on behalf of the City of Melbourne.

What is a mobility centre?

This customer service centre has been designed to support and enable easier access to central Melbourne. It is an integral part of the transport network, providing easier and improved access to Commonwealth Games venues for people with disabilities, older persons, and those with temporary disabilities.

What services will be available?

Features of the new service at the Melbourne Mobility Centre include:

- equipment for hire including motorised wheelchairs, manual wheelchairs, scooters, walking frames, crutches and canes for the vision impaired;
- two fully accessible toilets;
- proximity to available accessible car parking and/or a drop-off point;
- information for people with mobility and sensory disabilities;
- information about city attractions, events, facilities;
- TTY telephone and accessible web access;
- scooter battery re-charge facilities;
- accessible tea, coffee and refreshment facilities; and
- volunteer-driven commissionaire services including companion services, transfer services and 'meet and greet' services.

Find out about:

- equipment for hire;
- costs and bookings;
- contact details

Hours of operation

Monday to Thursday - 9am to 6pm

Friday to Sunday - 9am to 10pm

Public holidays - 9am to 10pm.

Who will be able to use this service?

People with disabilities, older persons, those with temporary disabilities or any person of any age who requires the equipment or information available. This includes citizens of Melbourne, Victoria, Australia and international visitors.

You can book using the methods listed below:

- online: <http://www.melbourne.vic.gov.au/info.cfm?top=268&pa=2688&pg=2694>;
- telephone: 9650 6499 or freecall 1800 735 266; fax: 9650 9491; or TTY: 9650 9316

2005 VCE Results

Visiting Teachers should be suitably proud of the support they are providing to students with vision impairments across Victoria – and of course, the students themselves.

We have had the usual array of fantastic results as follows:

- **Aymen** (VT Meredith Walsh) – TER of 70
- **Georgia** (VT Faye Squires) – TER of 79.8
- **Natasha** (VT Lea Nagel) – TER of 99.3 (and she has been offered scholarships to universities in Melbourne and Sydney – though she is hoping to study in the USA in 2006)
- **Nicole** (VT Faye Squires) – 48/50 for PE (continuing VCE studies in 2006)
- **Penny** (Eastern Region) – TER of 72.9
- **Shahan** (VT Meredith Walsh) – TER of 78
- **Tianna** (VT Faye Squires) – TER of 56.5

If you know of other results, please let us know!!! Also where will the students be studying this year? All news and gossip cheerfully received!

Lea's Latest Computer Tip!!!

Who else is bored/annoyed/sick of/(or similar) the **Startup Task Pane** (Pain?) appearing whenever you open Word, or open a new Word document? If you are like me, and wish it would go away, then do this:

Go to Tools, Options and select the View tab. Uncheck "Startup Task Pane"!!

While you're there, you may wish to uncheck other (un)helpful options such as Screen Tips and Smart Tags. Click OK and you're away!!

Scholarship Opportunities

Graduate Scholarship for Rehabilitation Research in Canada

The Toronto Rehabilitation Institute has announced scholarship in rehabilitation-related research for graduate students with disabilities. The scholarship is supported by TD Bank Financial Group. The funding will provide scholarships of CAD \$20,000, plus an individual supplement to help meet special disability-related costs of attending graduate school. The first scholarships will cover the period of September 2006 to April 2007, renewable for an additional year. The application deadline is 1 May 2006.

Candidates must plan to be enrolled in a graduate program leading to a master's or doctoral degree at the University of Toronto.

Fields of study must relate to rehabilitation but are not limited to any particular discipline. For an application form and more information, please contact Lois Ward at ward.lois@torontorehab.on.ca

Ed Roberts Postdoctoral Fellowship in Disability Studies

Applications are invited for a postdoctoral program funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research for the University of California, Berkeley. The goal of this program is to train postdoctoral and professional scholars, in any discipline, to be leaders in disability studies and rehabilitation research and mentorship. The institute will fund three full-time, nine-month, residential Ed Roberts Postdoctoral Fellowships a year. The Stipend is \$30,000, paid monthly. Fellows must have health insurance or purchase it from the university.

Applications are due by 15 February 2006

Fellowship Period: September 2006 - May 2007

Contact the Academic Co-ordinator for more information or assistance: Devva@earthlink.net

GDV News

Thanks to the SVRC staff and the Visiting Teachers who supported and contributed to the Children's Mobility Service in 2005. Without the support and encouragement of the SVRC staff and many Visiting Teachers we would not have been in a position to offer the range of programs to students and their families.

One of the highlights of the 2005 program was the joint SVRC CMS Skill Power program in November 2005. The program provided CMS staff with an excellent opportunity to demonstrate to Visiting Teachers and Teacher Aides first hand how CMS Orientation and Mobility programs are provided.

Another highlight of the year was the Sydney program held December 5 to 9 2005. Despite the very hot weather the students did a fantastic job navigating their way around Sydney taking in some of the famous sights as well as some of the less well known including the Watson's Bay baths.

The CMS was able to offer students a number of group programs in 2005 and we plan to offer a range of interesting and stimulating programs in 2006.

The CMS Newsletter will continue to be published and distributed quarterly at the beginning of each term to students, families, Visiting Teachers and other professionals.

Programs for 2006

- **Senior program: January 9 – 13**

GDV Goes CBD

This program was located at Arnold Cook House. The students participated in a range of Orientation and Mobility activities and challenges in and around the Melbourne CBD.

- **Junior program: March 14 – 17**

This program will be held at Arnold Cook House (located on the Guide Dogs Victoria campus). The theme of the program is "Mobility Games".

- **Senior program: June 19 – 23**

This program will held in Echuca

- **Junior program: September 18 –21**

This program will be held at Arnold Cook House. The theme is yet to be decided

- **Sydney program: December 5 – 9**

Throughout the year there will be a range of additional programs offered. These include the "Big Night Out" programs and Mini camp programs. The dates and other details for these programs are advertised well in advance in the CMS Newsletter and also the SVRC newsletter.

All programs are provided free of charge.

The CMS staff will also be involved in some of the SVRC Professional Development days facilitated by SVRC staff.

The GDV Education Kit is available to Visiting Teachers free of charge and we also have pamphlets and other resource material including the CMS DVD available.

The Children's Mobility Service Team in 2006:

Dean Johnson	O&M /Manager	9584 4506
Rachel Morgan	O&M/Team Leader	9854 4469
Dani Bennett	O&M Instructor	9854 4529
Lil Deverell	O&M Instructor	9854 4542
Darlene McIntosh	O&M Instructor	9854 4520
Alicia Madden	O&M Instructor	9854 4493

Please contact Rachel Morgan on 9854 4469 rachel.m@guidedogsvictoria.com.au to make a referral to the service or for further information about the Children's Mobility Service.

The Program

VT PD Day - Term I Monday, February 13, 2006

- | | |
|--------------------|--|
| 9.00 | Welcome |
| 9.30-10.30 | Retinopathy of Prematurity
Hector Maclean |
| 10.30 | Morning Tea and display (see below) |
| 11.00-11.30 | Disabilities in Middle Eastern cultures
Laurice Demian (Co-ordinator - Multicultural carer and
disability support program) and Bernarda Radovanovich
(Individual advocate)
Action on Disabilities in Ethnic Communities |
| 11.45-12.15 | Clicker
Julie Edward
Visiting Teacher CEO |
| 12.15 | Goal ball info., Lunch & display (see below) |
| 1.15-3.30 | Understanding the Disability Standards for Education
Alyena Mohummadally
Community Legal Education & Volunteer Coordinator
Disability Discrimination Legal Service |

Display at morning tea and lunch time, in our foyer:

'Fun Stuff' –

Nina will display educational resources including materials to help develop skills in visual, auditory areas, reading and spelling, social skills, and more.

Equipment Grants for Students in State Schools

Source: DE&T S007/2006 – Program for Students with Disabilities – Equipment Grants for 2006 from John Allman, General Manager, School System Reform Division

Applications are now invited for the Program for Students with Disabilities – Equipment Grants for 2006.

Grants are available to assist schools to purchase major items of specialised equipment through the Program for Students with Disabilities for the students in the following categories:

Students funded prior to 1995, through the previous Regional Integration Committees (Phase 1)

Students with a mild visual impairment who do not meet the eligibility requirements of the Program for Students with Disabilities, but for whom specialised items of equipment are essential to enable access to the curriculum.

For those students funded since 1995, an equipment component is incorporated in the six levels of funding.

In considering the specialised equipment requirements of a student with a disability, schools are requested to contact their regional office to ensure that suitable equipment is not in excess at another school. Schools are also requested to notify the regional office of any specialised equipment that is no longer in use.

For those students funded prior to 1995, (Phase 1) supplementary funds will be considered for positioning equipment required to maintain the student within the school, for example, standing frames, specialised seating or modified tables.

Applications will need to:

- demonstrate that the item of equipment is essential to enable the student concerned to access the school's curriculum;
- be supported by a recommendation from the visiting teacher indicating the student's visual impairment and ability to use the equipment; and
- be supported by written documentation from a physiotherapist where appropriate.

Applications must be forwarded to the relevant regional officer by Friday 24 February '06.

Eastern Metropolitan Region	Marilyn McKeown	Ph: 9881 0200
Western Metropolitan Region	Judy Baker	Ph: 9292 6500
Southern Metropolitan Region	Joanne Flight	Ph: 9794 3555
Northern Metropolitan Region	Alison Jones	Ph: 9488 9488
Barwon South Western Region	Andrew Taylor	Ph: 5272 8300
Hume Region	Wendy Fletcher	Ph: 5761 2111
Loddon Mallee Region	Elaine Tingay	Ph: 5440 3111
Grampians Region	Laura Carrington	Ph: 5337 8444
Gippsland Region	Ann Fearnley	Ph: 5127 0400

ATTACHMENT 1

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION & TRAINING

2006 APPLICATION FORM
EQUIPMENT GRANT TO SUPPORT STUDENT WITH A DISABILITY

<u>SCHOOL DETAILS:</u>			
Principal's Family Name:		First Name:	
School Name:		Telephone:	
Suburb/Town:		Post Code:	
Principal's Signature:		Date:	

<u>STUDENT DETAILS:</u>			
Family Name:		First Name:	
Program for Students with Disabilities ID No. (if known)			
Date of Birth:		Male <input type="checkbox"/>	Female <input type="checkbox"/>

<u>DETAILS OF EQUIPMENT REQUEST:</u>	
Name or description of equipment required:	
Reason for request:	
Reports supplied by:	
Written quotes (3 required) supplied by:	

VAVPI News – Meeting Dates for 2006

Message from Gayle Skinner, President, VAPVI Victoria

Dear Parents,

Please add these dates to your calendar;

Feb 13 Our initial meeting for the year. Come along to The Avenue Neighbourhood Centre, Cnr Blackburn Rd and The Avenue in Blackburn at 8.00pm, to meet committee members, to talk about your child or just for a little time out and a cuppa.

Further meetings this year will be **May 8th, August 14th, and November 13th.**

We look forward to meeting you.

Gayle Skinner VAPVI.

Telephone 9431 2678.

Tandem Cycling – Try Day

Vision Australia, Blind Sports Victoria and the Boroondara City Council invite you to participate in an exciting ‘Try Day’ event:

Peddaling Towards the Commonwealth Games

What: TANDEM BIKE RIDING DAY

When: Wednesday 15th February

Where: Vision Australia, 454 Glenferrie Rd, Kooyong

Time: 10-30am Until 1-00pm

BYO: Lunch or purchase at Tillys’ own cost

Registration fee: \$5.00

For further details: contact Di Hayward (Rec Support Worker)

Tel: 8872 7000

Celebrating Louis Braille

In recognition of his extraordinary contribution to world literacy, National Braille Press announces the upcoming release of a new biography of his life, *Louis Braille: A Touch of Genius* by C. Michael Mellor.

This new biography includes 31 never-before-translated letters, some written by Louis’s own hand. An extraordinary collection of documents, photographs, and artistic works – some unearthed from a curator’s private archives in France – document Louis’s life as a child, student, teacher, musician and genius inventor.

The book will be available on or before March 6, 2006, in both braille and print. All of the images in the visually-elegant hardcover print edition have been described by experts in descriptive media for the braille edition. Order the book in advance – before March 6, 2006 – and take 30% off the price of either the print or braille editions.

Print: US\$35.00 (US\$25.00 before March 6th!), plus US\$4.50 S&H

Order online at: <http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/publications/index.html> .

Finally

Thanks to Lil Deverell, Maria Elford and Dr Jill Keeffe for contributing to this edition of The Bulletin. Thanks also to my fabulous proof-readers, stuffers, mailers – it’s a veritable cast of folk!

If you have something you would like included in ‘The Bulletin’, please contact:

Deb Lewis (who can be emailed at deblewis@svrc.vic.edu.au).