

The Bulletin

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Number 8**2nd June 2006**

This largely Round Table and SPEVI issue of The Bulletin was edited by Deb Lewis, Co-ordinator, Statewide Vision Resource Centre.

PD 2006

The SVRC PD program for the rest of 2006 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 offered by the SVRC are open to class and subject teachers, integration teachers and aides, careers teachers, therapists, parents VTs, students etc. Please register: tel (03) 9841 0242, fax (03) 9841 0878 or email svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au.

Term	Event	Date
2	Educational Support for VI Students with Additional Impairments (max 60)	Monday 5 June
2	Mountbatten for Beginners Workshop – BYO Mountbatten Trevor Boyd, Quantum Technology – 2.00-3.30pm	Wednesday 14 June
3	Window Eyes Workshop – BYO Laptop Ramona Mandy, HumanWare – 2.00-3.30pm	Wednesday 5 July
3	JAWS Workshop – BYO Laptop Trevor Boyd, Quantum Technology – 2.00-3.30pm	Monday 17 July
3	ZoomText Workshop – BYO Laptop Trevor Boyd, Quantum Technology – 2.00-3.30pm	Thursday 27 July
3	O&M Morning - Experiencing Vision Loss in the Community Phone Alicia Madden (03) 9854 4493	Tuesday 1 August
3	Term 3 Visiting Teacher Professional Development Day	Tuesday 8 August
3	Magic Workshop – BYO Laptop Trevor Boyd, Quantum Technology – 2.00-3.30pm	Wednesday 16 August
3	Mountbatten for Users Workshop – BYO Mountbatten Trevor Boyd, Quantum Technology – 2.00-3.30pm	Monday 21 August
3	Scanning Options Workshop – BYO Laptop Trevor Boyd, Quantum Technology – 2.00-3.30pm	Monday 4 September
4	O&M Morning - Experiencing Vision Loss in the Community Phone Alicia Madden (03) 9854 4493	Thursday 26 October
4	Educational EXPO – Assistive Technology Options ALL WELCOME!!!	Friday 24 November

SVRC in the News

Our Education Week activity, “Fur, claw, scales and more!” made it into the local paper and also into the Education Department’s newsletter, Education Times, 25th May 2006 (page 8).

Inside This Issue

1	SVRC PD, SVRC in the News
2	Visitors from the UK
3-5	Round Table News – Interesting Facts, Braille Music, Book Port, News on the Go, DAISY & XML
6	Changes to the Australian Copyright Laws, SPEVI Website/Conference/ListServ
7	Guide Dogs News
8	Want to Work in the Music Industry, More from Blindosity, Win Jot A Dot
9	SVRC Cheat Sheets, News

Visitors from the UK!

Ramona Mandy from HumanWare got a little more than she bargained for at a recent workshop held at the Statewide Vision Resource Centre.

Along with the two SVRC staff, two visiting teachers, two integration aides, one parent and one student (not related), Ramona also workshopped our nine visitors from Northamptonshire LEA, UK!!!

Jeff Myring from the International Division of the Department of Education (yes, apparently we have one) arranged an interesting and varied program, mainly based in Eastern Region where visitors had the opportunity to take in:

- a briefing at Eastern Metropolitan Region
- a briefing at the Statewide Vision Resource Centre
- a visit to the Educational Vision Assessment Clinic with Marion Blazé, Geoff Bowen, Annette Godfrey-Magee and Dr Susan Carden
- Visiting Teachers in action: Helen Caldwell, Prue Kilpatrick, Lea Nagel and Meredith Walsh
- visits to the following primary schools
 - Boronia Heights
 - Mt Evelyn
 - Mount View
 - Orchard Grove
 - Donvale
 - Heathmont East
- visits to the following secondary colleges
 - Diamond Valley
 - Bundoora
- visits to the following specialist settings
 - Aurora
 - Heatherwood
- a BrailleNote and ScannaR workshop with Ramona Mandy from HumanWare
- an excursion to Guide Dogs Victoria's Children's Mobility Services
- an excursion to Vision Australia's school at Burwood

We understand that they also visited the Immigration Museum, the penguins, Healesville Sanctuary, Ackland Street, Rialto Towers and they even managed to paddle in the sea at St Kilda!

Here for only a week, they are back in their school in the UK on Tuesday!!! That's what I call a whirlwind tour!!!



Left: Ramona demonstrates ScannaR at the workshop on Tuesday.

Round Table News

Each year the Round Table runs a conference to facilitate and influence the production and use of quality alternative formats for people with print disabilities. Conferences showcase examples of best practice in the provision of accessible information to people with a print disability in the workplace and the community centre, including businesses, agencies, tertiary institutions, libraries, Commonwealth, State and local government.

I recently attended the Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities – always an exciting event packed with information and networking opportunities.

Interesting Facts and Figures from the Round Table

- there are 300,000 people with vision impairments (blind or low vision) in Australia and ½ of these have a “profound core activity limitation”
- less than 30% of people with low vision make contact with relevant service agency
- household income for people with a disability is approximately 40% of other families
- it costs Family and Community Services and Indigenous Affairs \$8.5 million for postal concessions (the so called “Free Post for the Blind” – which is clearly not actually FREE) – this is currently under review
- sound recordings in one form or another have been available since 1943 (LP records available from the National Library of Congress in the USA)

Braille Music

Lea Nagel’s Braille Music Cheat Sheet (Issue 6, 2006 of The Bulletin which you can download from the link here: <http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/06%2706.html>) offered us a window into the mysterious world of the Braille Music code ... but there is now a fabulous new resource available for teaching braille music.

At the recent 2006 National Conference for the Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities in Brisbane, Denise Pellow introduced us to the “Survivor’s Guide to Braille Music Notation”.

There are precious few teachers in the specialised field of braille music so the materials were written to support those trying to provide braille students (children and adults) with the skills they need to succeed in the music arena. Denise and her colleagues come from the school of “whatever can be written in print music can be represented in braille music notation”.

The program, designed as a basic introduction course, assumes a sound knowledge of contracted braille and a basic knowledge of music. It is:

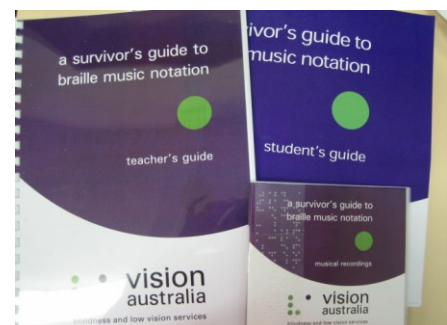
- self explanatory – students can work through this program independently or with the assistance of a sighted person
- self corrective – students complete exercises and the answers are available at the back in braille
- designed to teach braille music reading and writing
- comprehensive and includes a dictionary of braille music signs
- suitable for string, piano and vocal musicians

The program includes a print version, a braille version and also a music CD.

Download your order form for this free resource from the Vision Australia website:

<http://www.visionaustralia.org.au/info.aspx?page=1062>

and for more information call Vision Australia:
1300 847 466.



BookPort

Talking books for the blind were first produced for the National Library of Congress in the USA in 1934 – that is over 75 years ago. Early incarnations for people with vision impairments included long play records, reel to reel tape and audio tapes (currently on their way out, too!). Today we are expanding the range of options from physical items (eg tapes and CDs) reliant on physical collection or postage to downloadable files.

BookPort is one of the new range of audio options.



This exciting little device can be used to read DAISY, rich text and braille files via an inbuilt synthetic voice. BookPort has a long battery life – up to 50 hours from two AA batteries. Users can download books and newspapers (eg “News on the Go” see below) via a USB connection.

“News on the Go”

Vision Australia’s Andrew Furlong reported on a new program allowing access to newspapers. “News on the Go”, a Vision Australia project described in issue 1, 2006 of The Bulletin (<http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/01%2706.html>) provided a free BookPort to 100 people with print disabilities to trial this new system for accessing daily newspapers.

“News on the Go” provides access to 24 daily Australian newspapers in DAISY format!!! “News on the Go” is amazing!

Every day, before the paper newspaper hits the streets, the DAISY equivalent is available for download. Download can take place via broad band or dialup internet service and takes less than a minute. As it has full text capability, “News on the Go” is fully searchable and can be read via on-screen print or high quality digital voice. It can be read via the laptop (with DAISY software) or other DAISY devices such as BookPort.

In the future, “News on the Go” will offer:

- news updates throughout the day
- access anywhere in the world
- user configurable download ie you can choose exactly what you would like to read
- a wide range of other downloadable content eg books

DAISY and XML

DAISY is the alternative format to print that most closely resembles print in its structure and accessibility. For example, DAISY generally has a table of contents, page numbers, chapters etc.

Amongst the wide range of other benefits, DAISY is a space-efficient alternative format – eg a print book of 450 pages would appear as 20 audio tapes in 5 audio tape cases OR one CD.

Like all digital formats, DAISY can be stored on a CD, flash card, internal memory, and it can be emailed and downloaded from the internet.

A DAISY book can be produced as:

- text only
- text and audio
- audio only

A DAISY book will often have the following structure:

- About this DAISY BOOK
- Chapter 1
- Chapter 2 ... to Chapter end
- Glossary
- Index
- Copyright information

There is an ever-increasing variety of ways to access a DAISY file – though currently DAISY files cannot generally be accessed via MP3 or audio CD players (that’s probably, however, just a matter of time...). DAISY files can be played on:

- Victor Reader – stand alone unit
- PlexTalk – stand alone unit – some of which also have a record and CD writer capabilities
- Diskman-style units
- BookPort (via flashcard or download from the internet)
- Maestro
- Specialised software on your PC

The basis of production of materials in DAISY will be the XML file. This is known as “XML centricism”, where XML is at the centre of the process of production of materials in alternative format. XML offers the structure and the content of the document. Structural markup indicates the structure of the document and is not intended to be read by a reader eg

`<h1>DAISY</h1>` this indicates that the word DAISY will be written as a heading
`<p>text</p>` this indicates that the text appears as a paragraph
`text` this text will be emphasised

Files which have markup such as this can more easily be converted into a variety of formats that better suit the needs of the individual reader

As DAISY becomes the standard in digital format for people with print disabilities:

- XML files can then be used to provide readers in their preferred format – braille, large print, text for human narration (this is known as polymorphic storage – one common or single source file for multiple kinds of production)
- Digital voice is constantly improving and becoming more like real voice so XML will be able to offer audio format, even if human voice is added later for particular materials such as poetry
- DAISY Consortium will provide the software support to mean that files complying with the DAISY standard will be useful for ever – as technology changes, the software to support these changes will be supplied
- Currently XML files are difficult to produce

In the future, files will be received from publishers in XML

Changes to the Australian Copyright Laws – eg “Format Shifting”

Source: ACROD News Update, 23 May 2006

Extension of the ‘fair dealing’ provisions in the Copyright Act will allow greater print access for people with print disabilities. The changes, announced by the Federal Government on 14 May, will reduce a major disadvantage according to the Federal Human Rights Commissioner, Graeme Innes. Copyright restrictions, and related waiting times, prevent people with print disabilities from gaining access to much print material, and force them to wait unduly long times for the material which they do access. People with print disabilities have access to only 3% of the information available to the general population. The changes to the Act will mean that this miniscule percentage can be increased.

The proposed changes will allow a person with a print disability to scan print material and then – using computer technology – read it in braille or audio. They may also decrease the time necessary for libraries for people with print disabilities to make such material available.

The changes still won’t mean equal access, but they will certainly make a difference.

More information: Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission

http://www.hreoc.gov.au/media_releases/2006/27_06.htm and The Attorney-General

<http://www.ag.gov.au/agd/www/ministerruddockhome.nsf> media release of 14 May 2006.

SPEVI Website

Source: Go to: <http://www.e-bility.com/spevi/>

South Pacific Educators in Vision Impairment - SPEVI - acts as the professional body in matters pertaining to the education of people with a vision impairment within the South Pacific region.

The SPEVI web site provides information about SPEVI and membership services, such as the SPEVI List. It is also being developed as a resource for anyone interested in vision impairment or who has a friend or relative with vision impairment. There you’ll find a growing collection of links to information and support in areas such as: recreation, Australian and international blindness organisations, equipment and software developers, career information and vocational education resources.

2007 SPEVI Conference

Planning for the 2007 Conference is underway and regular updates will appear on the events page of this web site (<http://www.e-bility.com/spevi/conf07.php>).

When: 7th -12th January 2007

Where: Esplanade Hotel, Fremantle, Western Australia

Theme: Connecting the Pathways: Sharing our Knowledge to reflect the collaborative involvement of children, families, therapists, community groups, specialists, educators and professionals in working together for enhanced outcomes for children/youth who are blind or who have a vision impairment.

SPEVI ListServ

Members are also encouraged to join the SPEVI Mailing List. This initiative is seen as an exciting way of facilitating communication and sharing expertise. Subscriptions are now open, so if you are a SPEVI member and would like to be part of the discussions you are welcome to join in:

<http://www.e-bility.com/spevi/maillinglist.php>

Guide Dogs Victoria – Children’s Mobility Service News

Zoo Day – May 12

Following the Education Week activity on May 12 at the SVRC, the Children’s Mobility Service accompanied a group of students to the Zoo for some Orientation and Mobility activities. The students worked in small groups and chose an area of the zoo they wanted to visit and then had the task of finding their way to the selected destination using large print maps and talking compasses. The students were also able to participate in a Zoo Education Centre activity where they were able to hold different animals including a frog and they were able to touch a variety of animal skins. Thanks to the Visiting Teachers who were able to support the activity by attending the afternoon. Jeni Blake took the opportunity to reinforce some public transport use skills by travelling back to Springvale station.

Barham Program – June 14-15

To meet the Orientation and Mobility needs of a group of students in Northern Victoria the Children’s Mobility Service will be running a short program in a small town not far from Swan Hill. This will be an excellent opportunity to provide O&M in the student’s local area and in the company of other students. Three O&M Instructors will be staffing the program and students and O&M’s will be staying in motel accommodation.

Girl’s Big Night Out – July

A Big Night Out for girls is being organised for July. The program features activities we have not done before and we have enlisted the support of Myer Stores to help facilitate the program. Further details about the night will be advertised once the arrangements have been confirmed.

Echuca Program

Organisation for the Echuca program is now well underway. The program is for Senior students and will provide a range of Orientation and Mobility challenges as well as the chance to have some fun. Applications for the program closed on May 30.

CMS Newsletter

The next CMS newsletter is due for distribution in July. We welcome articles from students and Visiting Teachers. Please contact Janet Murray 9854 4467 janet.m@guidedogsvictoria.com.au for further information.

CMS O&M Service in Regional Victoria

The Children’s Mobility Service is currently providing O&M services to children, their families and teachers throughout much of Victoria. Staff visit many regional centres regularly including Mildura, Wodonga, Rutherglen, Warrnambool, Shepparton, Swan Hill, Sale and Bendigo.

CMS Staff Details

The service currently has 6 staff all based at the Guide Dogs Victoria campus in Kew. Dean Johnson is the Manager/Orientation and Mobility Instructor.

Rachel Morgan is the Team Leader/ Orientation and Mobility Instructor. Rachel receives referrals from Visiting Teachers, Ophthalmologists etc and allocates referrals to staff.

Lil Deverell, Darlene McIntosh, Sharon Taylor & Alicia Madden are O&M Instructors.

Janet Murray provides administrative support to the Instructor team.

For further information about the Children’s Mobility Service please contact dean.j@guidedogsvictoria.com.au or rachel.m@guidedogsvictoria.com.au

Want to Work in the Music Industry?

FReeZACentral is hosting free, accredited training days around Victoria for young people aged 15 to 25 who are interested in a music industry.

career. The all-day workshops will be held in Footscray (June 17), Ballarat (June 20), Brunswick (June 23), Morwell (June 28), Frankston (July 1), Mildura (July 5), Geelong (July 8), Shepparton (July 11) and Melbourne city (July 15).

FReeZACentral workshops provide young people with information on planning their careers in the music business, plus the unique opportunity to meet industry pros and learn first hand about their day-to-day jobs.

Young people attending the training days can choose a workshop stream from performance, technical, event management, marketing and music business operations.

Qualified presenters from Victoria University plus long-established music industry professionals will share their expert tips on how to get a better knowledge of the music business, and how young people can get a foot in the door of their chosen field. The workshops help demystify an industry which is notoriously hard to break into.

Registration is free and includes a free lunch. Register online at

<http://www.freezacentral.vic.gov.au> or contact The Push on (03) 9380 1277

More from Blindosity...

Source: Winter 2005/2006 issue of Blindosity

Future Inventions for the Blind and Visually Impaired by Hannah Jones

In my scanning of MaxiAids and other catalogues, there are things that we don't have but I think would be pretty nice. (Some of these are somewhat farfetched.)

1. Cars that drive themselves - all you need to do is pass the voice recognition test and tell the computer the starting and ending address.
2. Shoes that have lasers in the front and the beam would have a 5 foot radius and use an earphone to tell you how close an object is
3. A printer that prints documents in ink that rises so that if you can't see it, you can feel it
4. Canes with a flashlight at the tip, so that those people who are night blind can at least see the surface they are on.
5. Measuring devices that you tell how much of something you want, and it tells you when you reach that point. That liquid level indicator just doesn't do too well.
6. Note takers that take notes for you, the device listens to everything going on and writes or brailles it all.
7. A spatula that tells you when food is about to burn.
8. Filing cabinets on wheels so we can put all of our large print/Braille stuff in and keep organized!
9. Finder keyboard - a keyboard that if you type in a special code will tell you where your lost item is
10. Braille post-it notes – post-it notes that you can braille and stick places to remind you of things.

Win a JOT A DOT– The Pocket Brailer!

If you'd like a Jot a Dot demo unit email Quantum Technology: info@quantumtechnology.com.au

And you can enter to win yourself a Jot a Dot by going to the link below and nominating how many separate parts make up a Jot a Dot. The exact, or closest to the number of parts, will win a Jot a Dot Pocket Brailer. Go to: <http://www.jotadot.com/index.php?x=entercomp>

Competition will close on 31 July 2006 and the winner will be notified by e-mail.

SVRC Cheat Sheet Webpage

Key commands and other tips can make your experience of your Windows environment a quicker and more efficient experience. Here are some resources which may improve your access to your PC:

- **Adobe Acrobat Key Commands** by Helen Caldwell, April 2006 (Word file) - <http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/CSAdobeAcrobat.doc>
- **Acrobat Reader** adapted from Beazer Publishing, 2005 - <http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/CSAcrobat.htm>
- **Braille Maths - Basic Signs and Layout (Australian Maths Code)** by Lea Nagel, May 2006 (Word file - braille font required - enlarge to A3 if you'd like correctly sized braille) - <http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/CSBrailleMaths.doc>
- **BrailleNote mPower BT32 or PACMate 40? - A Comparison** (October 2005) by Lea Nagel, October 2005 - <http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/CSBmPm.doc>
- **Braille Music Basics** by Lea Nagel, April 2006 (Word file - braille font required) - <http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/CSBrailleMusic.doc>
- **Computer Setup for Students with Vision Impairments** by Lea Nagel, April 2006 (Word file) - <http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/CSComputerSetup.doc>
- **Exam Preparation Checklist** by Lea Nagel, November 2005 - <http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/exampreparation.htm>
- **Improved Access to Windows** by Deb Lewis, 2005 - <http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/windowsaccess.htm>
- **Installing Large Cursors** by Lyn Robinson, May 2006 (Word file) - <http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/CSLargeCursor.doc>
- **Windows without the Mouse** by Lea Nagel, May 2006 (Word file) - <http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/CSWindowsWithoutMouse.doc>

If you have a cheat sheet you'd like to share, please contact Deb Lewis.

For the complete list of Cheat Sheets (which will be updated as new offerings come to hand, go to: <http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/cheatsheets.htm>

News

- Northern Metropolitan Region Visiting Teachers Janie McLeod, Lea Philp and Meredith Walsh are currently on Long Service Leave – Elizabeth Chapman is therefore back on deck!

Finally

Thanks to Dean Johnson, Stephen Wagner, Mike Steer and Rene Williamson for contributing to this edition of The Bulletin. Thanks also to my fabulous proof-readers, stuffers and mailers.

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).