

# The Bulletin

## Statewide Vision Resource Centre

**Number 10**

**Friday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2006**

This issue was edited by Marion Blazé, Education Officer, and Deb Lewis, Co-ordinator Statewide Vision Resource Centre. Actually, Deb is home after an operation on her shoulder. We all wish her a speedy recovery!!

### PD 2006

The SVRC PD program for the rest of 2006 below, and the **program for August 8<sup>th</sup>** is enclosed. 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](mailto:svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au).

| Term | Event  | Date                |
|------|--|---------------------|
| 3    | <b>ZoomText Workshop – BYO Laptop</b><br>Trevor Boyd, Quantum Technology – 2.00-3.30pm                   | Thursday 27 July    |
| 3    | <b>O&amp;M Morning - Experiencing Vision Loss in the Community</b><br>Phone Alicia Madden (03) 9854 4493 | Tuesday 1 August    |
| 3    | <b>Term 3 Visiting Teacher Professional Development Day</b>  | Tuesday 8 August    |
| 3    | <b>Magic Workshop – BYO Laptop</b><br>Trevor Boyd, Quantum Technology – 2.00-3.30pm                      | Wednesday 16 August |
| 3    | <b>Mountbatten for Users Workshop – BYO Mountbatten</b><br>Trevor Boyd, Quantum Technology – 2.00-3.30pm | Monday 21 August    |
| 3    | <b>Scanning Options Workshop – BYO Laptop</b><br>Trevor Boyd, Quantum Technology – 2.00-3.30pm           | Monday 4 September  |
| 4    | <b>SPEVI Combined Agencies PD Day</b><br>Vision Australia Kooyong  | Monday 2 October    |
| 4    | <b>O&amp;M Morning - Experiencing Vision Loss in the Community</b><br>Phone Alicia Madden (03) 9854 4493 | Thursday 26 October |
| 4    | <b>Educational EXPO – Assistive Technology Options</b><br>ALL WELCOME!!!                                 | Friday 24 November  |

### Inside This Issue

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 1  | PD 2006  |
| 2  | Program for VT PD day, August 8  |
| 3  | Opening of the VSSEC   |
| 4  | Teacher Followup: ClearNote  |
| 5  | Free E-Books, Tiny ‘digital camera’ could restore vision to the blind, Article in The Age about albinism, SPEVI Combined Agencies PD day |
| 6  | Warning to student Mimio users, Narrator, Encarta Encyclopaedia, Latest “Cheat Sheets” – ScannaR & WindowEyes Training                   |
| 7  | Journals received at SVRC, SVRC News   |
| 8  | Adaptive Technology Expo & Forum – Swinburne, Lilydale   |
| 9  | Forum program  |
| 10 | Forum Exhibitors   |
| 11 | Navigating the keyboard with Narrator  |

## Program for VT PD day – Tuesday, August 8, 2006

@ Statewide Vision Resource Centre  
370-380 Springvale Rd Donvale

- Please inform us of your attendance on 03 9841 0242 or Fax 03 9841 0870 by August 1<sup>st</sup>. We need to know numbers for catering and copying.
- The cost of the day is \$33.00.
- At our last termly PD day YOU requested some time for less formal discussions. We have scheduled some ‘sharing’ time just before lunch, so come along prepared to share!!

### **9.0 Arrival, registration, coffee and resource time**

**9.30 ‘EccView’ – eccentric viewing training  
Kerry Fitzmaurice, School of Orthoptics, La Trobe &  
Lee Clarke, VT Southern**

**10.30 Morning Tea**

**11.0 “I do like it” Braille reading program  
Tricia D’Apice, Vision Australia**

**11.30 Services for Vision Impaired in Northampton, UK  
Meredith Walsh, much-travelled VT Northern**

**12.00 VT sharing and discussion time**

**12.30 Lunch**

**1.30 Powerpoint for VI kids  
Julie Edward, CEO VT**

**1.50 Blue Print for Govt Schools  
Anne Spence, Acting AP, Clayton North PS**

**2.20 Professional Teacher Study Leave  
Jeni Blake, VT Southern**

**2.50 Developing early literacy skills  
Jo Parry, AP Ringwood Heights PS**

**3.30 Close**

## Opening of the VSSEC

Article by Jeni Blake, Visiting Teacher, Southern Metropolitan Region

On the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2006 the world class facility at Strathmore Secondary College will officially be opened in Melbourne's western suburbs.

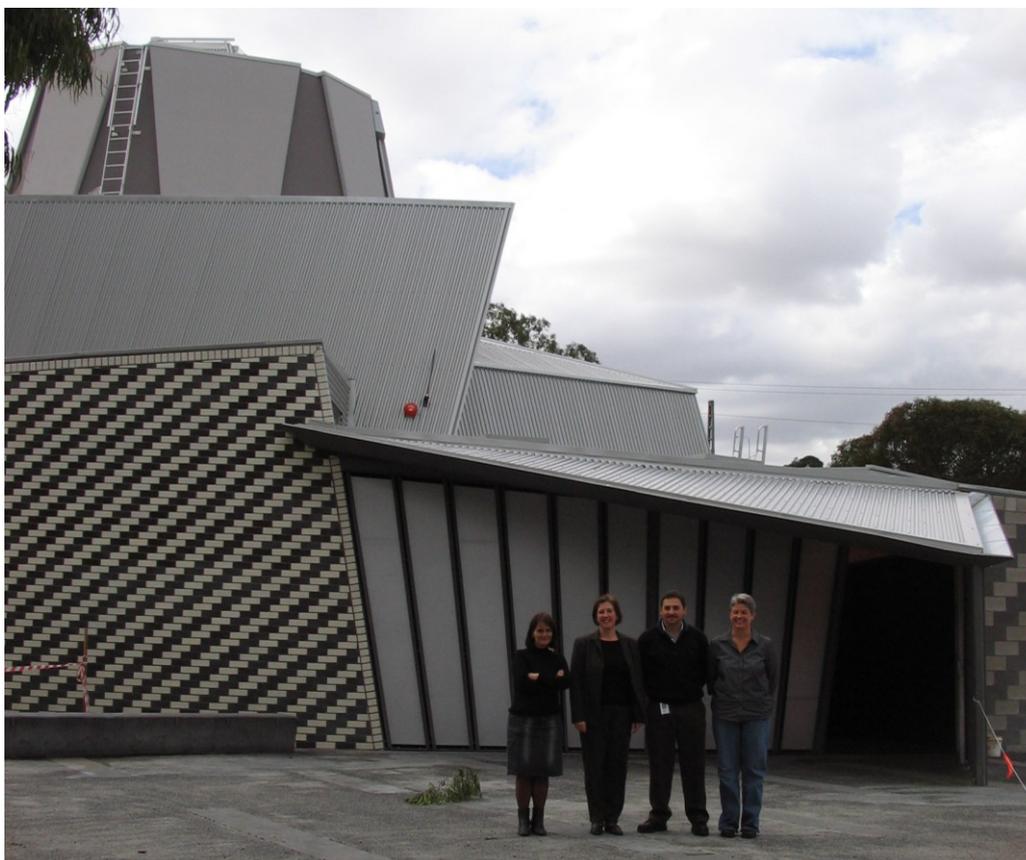
The Victorian Space Science Education Centre (VSSEC) promotes the learning of science by providing engaging, hands-on activities for students and their educators. VSSEC also provides a unique collaborative research and education centre, and as part of a global network of Space Science Centres and Institutions, also offering a link between local and international business and industry.

Deb Lewis (Co-ordinator of SVRC) and Jeni Blake (Visiting Teacher Service, Southern Region) were invited to visit the centre and engage in discussions with Naomi Mathers, Space Scientist and Michael Pakakis, Educator, about their program and how students who are blind and vision impaired can access it. Once they have finished writing their curriculum units we will be looking at providing these in accessible formats. The staff also expressed interest in our involvement in SCI-VIS, Space Camp for Interested Vision Impaired Students in Huntsville.

We are very fortunate to have been invited to take a small group of secondary students to undertake their program before the official bookings are open for schools. Our goal will be to include this year's Space Camp students Peter, Luke, Andrew and Michael. A small number of other students will also share in this opportunity to be part of this wonderful centre. We are hoping to make it an annual part of our program.

You can be part of the VSSEC mailing list to receive a monthly issue of CAPCOM which will keep you up to date with the latest activities at VSSEC. Please send an email to [information@vssec.vic.edu.au](mailto:information@vssec.vic.edu.au) with you name, email and affiliation (SCI-VIS Space Camp for Interested Vision Impaired Students).

Below: Deb (left) with staff of the VSSEC outside the new centre!



## Teacher Follow-up: ClearNote

I have a visually impaired student in my class. His name is Nigel and he has Coloboma and Nystagmus. He arrives at my class looking like Caravanserai on its way to Kurdistan. He has an ISA in tow, an array of paraphernalia to assist his vision and an attitude typical of any Year 9 student: obfuscating and totally intolerable. His mother loves him. The Education Advisor who visits him twice a week has informed me that he is trialling a new piece of equipment called The Clearnote. Apparently this is a highly technical piece of equipment designed to enhance Nigel's ability to access the written word. In Nigel's case, a brain would probably be of more help but was removed by Intergalactic Travellers two years ago when he became a teenager and will not be returned until he is twenty-seven. For Nigel's sake I am willing to give anything a try. It might distract him temporarily from his obsession with Judy Smith. Male hormones have a lot to answer for.

When he first set this device up in my class I was a bit concerned. He now spreads across his desk (which is directly under my nose) onto those either side of him. He removed this strange looking object from his bag and began to connect it to his laptop. There seemed to be a slight mishap with the procedure when Nigel let out a scream and the ISA threw herself under a piece of apparently expensive and fragile equipment as it succumbs to gravity. I pretended not to notice as I marked the roll and considered justifiable homicide on Kenny Jones as he threw his bag into the filing cabinet demanding justice for teenagers and marijuana for all.

Once the class was under some semblance of control I diverted my full attention to Nigel. The Clearnote was set up and functioning. The thing I noticed immediately was the absence of power cords strung across the floor. I made an effort to show interest in Nigel's new toy. Apparently this type of positive action encourages students to engage. Nigel hasn't engaged since he caught his penis in his fly zip. Nigel explained to me (in lay persons' terminology) that the Clearnote was a video camera, which attaches to his laptop, enabling him to focus and enlarge any object within range, both near and far. He was also able to capture the image to save to a file. Actually, what he really said was close to incomprehensible. The ISA translated for me. My mind ran to surveillance cameras and 1984 in reverse but Nigel assured me that the Clearnote was to help both of us. I will remain sceptical of Nigel's charitable attitude until I can judge for myself.

As the class progressed I was able to observe Nigel using this strange looking device. To me, it seemed more fitting for it to be occupying a place on the bench in the metalwork room, but what do I know. Nigel twisted and turned the 'head' of the Clearnote in all directions, occasionally towards the whiteboard but mostly towards Judy Smith. He would press a few keys on the laptop and also on the Clearnote in an effort, I assume, to make the images clearer and save them to his files. The rest of the class seemed fascinated by all the activity most likely because it's the most activity we have seen from Nigel all term. Nigel showed me the results of his efforts at the end of the lesson. He had saved all my notes from the whiteboard, enlarged and saved two pages out of Shakespeare's sonnets, cut and pasted a section from the map of England from the wall into his notes and taken a rather grotesque picture of someone's ear. It was only later I discovered that all of the class had copies of these notes and a picture of my expanding rear had been posted on the student notice board. God knows what else Nigel has committed to 'byte'.

At the end of two weeks Nigel has become quite the expert. He sets the Clearnote up quickly and hasn't dropped it again. He actually enjoys 'taking notes' off the whiteboard, the rest of the class want one. Other parts of my anatomy have ceased appearing on notice boards around the school. I have spoken to other teachers in the school and they have shared many stories of Nigel's efforts to record information: some academic, some bazaar. The Clearnote is now a part of the class environment, Nigel doesn't complain so much about my writing and the ISA now has time to help the other students in the class. My only concern is with Kenny.

Only my quick action prevented him from laying under the camera with his pants down in an effort to archive various parts of his anatomy no self-respecting girl would want to see.

Catherine Whitmore, Year 9 English teacher

## Free E-books

To mark Project Gutenberg's 35th anniversary, World eBook Fair is offering free access. You can download from the collections until 4<sup>th</sup> August. Thereafter, memberships are available for \$8.95 annually. There are more than 300,000 e-books available through the site. And they are yours to keep – forever!

Go to: [www.worldbookfair.com](http://www.worldbookfair.com)

## Tiny 'digital camera' could restore vision to the blind

From: <http://news.scotsman.com/health.cfm?id=1013292006>

LYNDSAY MOSS HEALTH CORRESPONDENT

(Thanks to Mike Steer for passing on this one.)

There is fresh hope for hundreds of thousands of blind people that they may soon have their sight restored as researchers in Scotland are developing a prosthetic retina.

Using technology similar to that found in digital cameras, the tiny device would be implanted into the eye to stimulate a retina that was no longer working.

It is designed to help people with age-related macular degeneration and retinitis pigmentosa, conditions that affect about a million people in the UK. These conditions are caused by failure in the retina - the part of the eye which converts light into signals that are sent to the brain.

The micro-electronic device could translate light into electrical impulses, stimulating the retina and fooling the brain into believing the eye is still in working order.

The scientists say they are still five to ten years away from fitting the artificial retina to humans. If successful, however, the invention could transform the lives of up to a million people who have gone blind.

For the full article, go to the website.

## Article in The Age about albinism

Leanne Nagel put us onto an interesting article in the Age about albinism and the Da Vinci Code. Take a look.

<http://www.theage.com.au/news/national/families-helped-as-light-shed-on-a-rare-condition/2006/07/16/1152988412455.html>

## SPEVI Combined agencies PD day – 1st day Term IV, 2006

The program is yet to be finalised for this day, but it will be on the first day of Term IV – Monday, October 2 at the Vision Australia site at 454 Glenferrie Rd Kooyong.

In the morning we will hear from eminent American educator of the vision impaired, Deborah Chen. Deborah is Professor in the Department of Special Education, California State University. Her work has included program development for children with multiple disabilities and vision impairment, early communication, and tactual skill development. In the afternoon we will break into four streams to hear about the new Unified English Braille code, pilot projects on new technologies including DAISY, early intervention topics and Deborah Chen's expertise on working with deaf and deaf-blind children. So put the date in you diaries now and we'll keep you posted.

## Warning to student Mimio users

From Denise Probert

I had the experience of a Trojan virus trying to enter my laptop at an inner city school, via the wireless dongle I was testing for a Mimio capture bar. My Education Department laptop has a strong firewall, I was warned & this was blocked. This sort of thing wasn't a problem years ago. **But** as wireless proliferates in the community & your students use Mimio on the boundaries of their school grounds, unscrupulous people can be probing nearby computers. If your student uses a Mimio wireless but doesn't go onto internet at school either by cable or wireless & hasn't had their laptop put in to the IT people to have their firewall upgraded in the last year, their virus software could be well out of date & they may be more at risk. So see your IT technician or network manager.

## Narrator

And Again, from Denise

Narrator is an alternative free program for students who can't afford JAWS or other talking software programs. It now comes free with Windows XP since at least last year's version. Not only does Narrator speak words in word files but it speaks all the menu items as well, within all programs except CDs so far as I've tried. You just have to use keystroke commands or arrow commands.

You will find it as a Program arrowing right across from Accessories --> Accessibility --> Narrator. Leeanne Moon has found a list of helpful keystrokes, see appendix.

## Encarta encyclopaedia

Also from Denise

The latest Encarta is a treasure trove of relevant information for our students who have laptops with sufficient memory to run it (6 CD's in size). Otherwise you can access it from a lot of school networks. DET Schools have the license to load it. The fee is \$10 from <http://www.ipex.com.au/school> if they don't already have it. It's bundled as MS Student and comes with a scientific graphic calculator. The graphic calculator has a choice of "skins" i.e. cosmetic colours that vary in contrast & would suit some students.

Encarta sits in the Task bar at the bottom of the screen; you type your key word in, which activates the dictionary. If you hit TAB 12 times, this launches full Encarta. F8 speaks the screen, F9 stops the reading. For those VTs with this year's laptops try it for yourself. Hours of entertainment including video clips, maps, useful web links, music & photographs are there.

## Latest "Cheat Sheet" – ScannaR & WindowEyes Training

HumanWare's Ramona Mandy kindly sent two new cheatsheet – "ScannaR" and "WindowEyes Training" – to add to our growing collection! Download the Word files:

ScannaR: <http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/CSScannaR.doc>

WindowEyes: <http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/CSWindowEyesTraining.doc>

For the complete list of "cheat sheets" go to:

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

## **Journals received at SVRC**

The latest issues of the Journal of Vision Impairment and Blindness and Insight magazines are at Resource. Let us know if you want copies of any articles.

**JVIB** (June 2006, Vol 100 No 6) articles include:

- O & M for children and youth a pilot study
- Life goals in vision rehab
- Listening comprehension of College students with VI
- Self concept of Spanish young adults with RP
- And a book review on Autism Spectrum Disorder and VI

**Insight** (Issue 4 July/August 2006) articles include:

- A step by step guide to transition – helping teenagers to plan ahead
- Children with visual processing disorders
- Tests and examinations
- Reading with low vision – contrast sensitivity and the visual field
- Inclusive education in the developing world
- Encouraging children to wear glasses

## **SVRC News**

- Lindsay from Balwyn High School has been selected for the Australian Men's Blind Cricket team to compete in the World cup in Islamabad in Pakistan later in the year. The team will play against seven other teams including England, the West Indies, New Zealand and Pakistan. He is the youngest Australian to ever have made the team!

## **Finally**

Thanks to Jeni Blake, Catherine Whitmore, Mike Steer, Leanne Nagel, Denise Probert and Ramona Mandy, for contributing to this edition of The Bulletin. Thanks also to our fabulous proof-readers, technology trouble-shooters, 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](mailto:deblewis@svrc.vic.edu.au)).

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# **Adaptive Technology EXPO & Forum**

**Friday 21 July, 2006  
LA Building  
Swinburne University - Lilydale**

**9am – 4pm**

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**Brought to you by the  
Regional Disability Liaison Officer/Disability  
Coordination Officer Project**

**This EXPO is proudly funded by OTTE**



*Enhancing post secondary education,  
training and employment opportunities  
for people with a disability*

**National Network of  
Regional Disability Liaison Officers  
& Disability Coordination Officers**

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*Funded by the Australian Government  
Department of Education, Science & Training*

**Forum Host: Joanne Webber**

Disability Coordination Officer (DCO)  
North & East Melbourne and surrounds

Hosted within the Region by:  
**RMIT University**

**Phone:** 03 9925 5269

**Fax:** 03 9925 9004

**Web:** [www.rmit.edu.au/ssg/dco](http://www.rmit.edu.au/ssg/dco)

**National web:** [www.adcet.edu.au/rdco](http://www.adcet.edu.au/rdco)

The Forum is a DCO activity and has been organised to provide educators, service providers and people with disabilities awareness in the types of assistive technology available to improve success in education, training and employment. The RDLO/DCO Network is funded by the Commonwealth Department of Education, Science and Training (DEST).

**Program**

|   |                    |  |
|---|--------------------|--|
| 9:00 – 9:15                                 | Foyer              | Registration & stall holder display  |
| 9:15 – 9:30                                 | LA lecture theatre | Welcome - Introduction of guests and forum overview – Joanne Webber.–  |
| 9:30 – 10:30                                | LA lecture theatre | An overview of the purpose of Adaptive Technology – What to choose and how to use it. Gerry Kennedy – Adaptive Technology Consultant   |
| Morning Tea and Adaptive Technology Display |                    |  |
| 11:30 – 12:15                               | LA lecture theatre | The Role of Adaptive Technology in Meeting the Disability Discrimination Act Education Standards<br>Alyena Mohummadally<br>Community Legal Education Officer<br>Disability Discrimination Legal Service Inc. |
| 12:15 – 1:00                                | LA lecture theatre | What is Learning Disability and how can students be supported<br>Dr Everarda Cunningham and Jason Skues<br>Swinburne University, LD Project  |
| LUNCH and Adaptive Technology Displays      |                    |  |
| 3:00 – 3:50                                 | LA lecture theatre | The benefits of adaptive technology with disengaged students<br>Julie Fry, Disability Liaison Officer – Wodonga TAFE   |
|   | CLOSE              |  |

**\* Free Hearing Tests by VicDeaf 10:30 – 5:00**  
**Book in at the Registration Desk (15 mins per test)**

## **Exhibitors**

The following exhibitors are listed in alphabetical order.

- **ComTEC**
- **Humanware**
- **Micro Marvellous**
- **Phonack**
- **Quantum Technology**
- **Vision Australia**
- **Voice Perfect Systems**

**ComTEC** [www.yooralla.com.au/comtec.php](http://www.yooralla.com.au/comtec.php)

ComTEC specialises in adaptive technologies that assist people with communication needs and physical disabilities.

**Humanware** [www.humanware.com](http://www.humanware.com)

Humanware offers a range of software and specialised hardware devices to assist people who are blind or who have a vision impairment.

**Phonak** [www.phonak.com.au](http://www.phonak.com.au)

Phonak provides a wide range of hearing technologies to assist people with hearing difficulties in various situations.

**Micro Marvellous** [www.micromarvellous.com.au](http://www.micromarvellous.com.au)

Micro Marvellous specialises in adaptive technology for people who are blind or vision impaired.

**Quantum Technology** [www.quantumtechnology.com.au](http://www.quantumtechnology.com.au)

Quantum offers a range of software and specialist hardware devices for people who are blind or who have a vision impairment. Quantum also offer a selection of innovative technology options for people with learning disabilities.

**VisTech** [www.visionaustralia.org.au](http://www.visionaustralia.org.au)

Vistech, part of Vision Australia, provide a range of both specialist software and hardware devices to assist people who are blind or who have a vision impairment. A select range of VisTech technology also benefits individuals with learning disabilities.

**Voice Perfect Systems** [www.voiceperfect.com.au](http://www.voiceperfect.com.au)

Voice Perfect is a dedicated organisation embracing large vocabulary dictation technologies, distributing the entire Dragon systems range.

For further information and registration form, contact:

Joanne Webber

Disability Co-ordination Officer

North & East Melbourne and surrounds

PH: 03 9925 5269

Email: [joanne.webber@rmit.edu.au](mailto:joanne.webber@rmit.edu.au)

# Navigating with the keyboard and Narrator

- Open Narrator

## Reading options

- To read an entire window, click the window and then press CTRL+SHIFT+SPACEBAR.
- To get information about the current item, press CTRL+SHIFT+ENTER.
- To get a more detailed description of an item, press CTRL+SHIFT+INSERT.
- To read the title bar of a window, press ALT+HOME.
- To read the status bar of a window, press ALT+END.
- To read the contents of an edit field, press CTRL+SHIFT+ENTER, or use the arrow keys.
- To silence the speech, press CTRL.

## Keyboard options

- To switch to another program, press ALT+TAB.
- To go to the next button or tool, press TAB. To go back, press SHIFT+TAB.
- To select an item from a drop-down list, use the arrow keys.
- To select a check box or option button, press SPACEBAR.
  
- To open Utility Manager, press +U.

## Notes

- To open Narrator, click **Start**, point to **All Programs**, point to **Accessories**, point to **Accessibility**, and then click **Narrator**.
- To open Narrator using the keyboard, press CTRL+ESC, press R, type **narrator**, and then press ENTER.
- Narrator is not available for all languages and is only supported on the English version of Windows XP.