

The Bulletin

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Number 2

Friday 16th February 2007

This issue was edited by Marion Blazé, Education Officer, Statewide Vision Resource Centre.

Professional Development Activities for Term I, 2007

- Educational Support for Blind Students – Friday, March 2
- O & M Morning – Experiencing Vision Loss in the Community – Tuesday, March 6

Programs for Term I PD days

Attached are programs for the PD days scheduled in Term I. Please distribute widely to your schools. Make sure you target the right teachers/aides for the right days. If you (or they) need more info, contact SVRC.

Full 2007 Program appended

The full list of PD activities for this year is again appended to be stuck into your diaries.

Student speakers wanted

We are looking for students with vision impairments with enough courage to speak to our attentive audience of class teachers on March 15. This sort of thing looks great on a CV and is wonderful experience. Plus it's the most listened to segment of the day. Please ring and speak to Deb or Marion if you think you have a willing student.

Other Activities

- Eccentric Viewing assessment day – Monday, March 26
Appointments available with Kerry Fitzmaurice from 10am onward, at SVRC.
Contact Annette or Marion with names of students.
- Athletics Carnival & Picnic Day – Friday, March 30 – Bill Stewart Reserve, Burwood East

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Our PD Programs gets off to a running start – Feb 12

February 12 and 13, 2007 were busy days at the SVRC. On Monday we welcomed all (well nearly!) our VTs to begin thinking and learning about preparing our students for the world of work. I think Annette conveyed her enthusiasm for this topic, closely followed by Geoff who gave us practical strategies to develop our students' self-determination. The afternoon kicked off with Nick Jones (orthoptist with Vision Australia) who explained visual fields and their testing and then Larry Abel, Senior Lecturer with the College of Optometry, fascinated us with his research and observations on nystagmus (including some intriguing video footage). We then took an entertaining look at the adventures of our 2006 Space campers. Annette's and Geoff's material will soon be available on our website and we will revisit these topics throughout the year. Meanwhile, take a look at the Monday group. We've decided to start a 'tradition' and take a happy snap at the first PD day each year.



And on Feb 13 ...

We welcome four new Visiting Teachers for Vision Impaired (isn't that exciting!) who spent an intensive day exploring the Resource Centre, finding out about eyes, vision and impairments, the expanded core curriculum and how we work. We look forward to lots of phone calls and questions to follow.

Your Contact Details, Please

SVRC is desperately trying to obtain accurate contact details for all of you. Please contact us with your new phone numbers and addresses, ASAP!

Large Print Edition of Melway

The Ausway company produce a large print edition each year of their Melway and Greater Melbourne Melway street directories. They might be just the thing for some of our low vision students, providing a little enlargement, but in full colour. They retail at \$79.95 but are available to schools for \$58.60.

Vision Impairment Studies at Deakin University

Employment opportunities will open in the area of Visiting Teacher – Vision Impairment in the coming years...How Exciting!!!

- Deakin University is now offering two practicum/case study subjects:
 - **EE1700**
http://www.deakin.edu.au/courses/search/course.php?customer_cd=D&unit_cd=EEI700&year_offered=2007&
 - **EE1716**
http://www.deakin.edu.au/courses/search/course.php?customer_cd=D&unit_cd=EEI716&year_offered=2007&

as part of their Master of Education (Special Educational Needs) - Deakin Course Code: E744SP. This course is mostly online allowing flexibility for teachers to study while continuing to teach
- Classroom teachers can apply for assistance through the Rural Retraining Scheme. Up to \$20,000 per teacher is provided to schools for course costs and relief teaching assistance, where necessary, to cover absences for study

For information about the Deakin Master of Education (Special Educational Needs) E744SP, see http://www.deakin.edu.au/courses/search/course.php?customer_cd=D&service_item=E744SP&version_number=1&year_offered=2007

For information about the Rural Retraining Scheme, see

<http://www.teaching.vic.gov.au/news/rurretrain/>

For further information contact: Deb Lewis Co-ordinator Statewide Vision Resource Centre deblewis@svrc.vic.edu.au 9841 0242 or Leanne Nagel, Senior Visiting Teacher (EMR) van.der.nagel.leanne.n@edumail.vic.gov.au 0403 237 306

Bicentennial of the birth of Louis Braille

In January 2009, it will be 200 years since Louis Braille was born. There has already been a celebration in Sydney, where a video artist set up a person reading Braille in a city gallery window for two weeks! (Have a look at the ‘What’s New’ section of our website for more info.) As part of our celebration of this event, we would like to collect Braille memorabilia. If you have any historic Braille-related pieces, bring them in to Resource. We will probably drum up a few other special activities next year in celebration of this event.

DVDs with Audio Description

Edited from: <http://www.mediaaccess.org.au/AudioDescription/> by Deb Lewis

There is a growing number of audio described DVDs available – you’ll be able to identify them by the wording “English for the vision impaired”, “Audio Described for the Visually Impaired”, “Descriptive Video”, “Audio Description” or “English descriptive audio” or by this symbol:



The audio description can be switched on from a sub-menu, usually “Language”, “Sound” or “Setup”. No special equipment is needed to access audio description.

AD Titles available in Australia (Dec 2006)

Title	Distributor	Released
Aladdin two-disc special edition	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2004
Are We There Yet?	Sony Pictures	2005
Bliss	Roadshow/Warner Bros	2005
Bride and Prejudice	Roadshow/Warner Bros	2005
Bright Young Things	Warner Home Video	2004
Brother Bear	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2004
Bringing Down the House	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2004
Casanova	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2006
Chicago	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2003
Chicken Little	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2006
Cinderella Man	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2005
Cold Creek Manor	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2004
Crimson Tide Special Edition 95	Fox Home Entertainment	1995
Daredevil two-disc special edition	Fox Home Entertainment	2003
Dark Water	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2005
Dead Poet's Society Special Edition	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2002
Derailed	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2006
Deuce Bigalow European Gigalo	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2005
Enemy of the State Special Edition 98	Warner Home Video	2002
Everything is Illuminated (not on cover)	Warner Home Video	2006
Finding Neverland	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2005
Five Children and It	Warner Home Video	2005
Flightplan	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2005
Frida: Collector's Edition	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2004
Garden State	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2005
Girl with a Pearl Earring	Roadshow	2004
Hero Ying Xiong	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2005

Hitch	Sony Pictures	2005
Home on the Range	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2005
Hotel Rwanda	Roadshow	2005
Kill Bill Volume 2	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2004
King Arthur Director's cut	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2004
Kinky Boots	AV Channel	2006
Kiss Kiss Bang Bang	Roadshow Entertainment	2005
Million Dollar Baby	Roadshow	2005
Moulin Rouge two-disc special edition	Fox Home Entertainment	2002
Munich (not on cover. Menu item is DVS.)	Universal	2006
National Treasure	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2005
North Country (not on cover)	Warner Home Video	2006
One Point 0	Magna Pacific	2005
Party Monster	Magna Pacific	2005
Peter Pan 1953	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2002
Piglet's Big Movie	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2003
Pirates of the Caribbean, Dead Man's Chest	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2006
Pooh's Heffalump Movie	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2005
Poseidon (not on cover)	Warner	2006
Pulp Fiction Special Edition	Roadshow	2005
Raising Helen	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2004
Ransom Special Edition 96	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2002
Resident Evil: Apocalypse	Colombia Tristar	2005
Road to Perdition	Fox Home Entertainment	2003
Santa Clause 2	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2003
Seabiscuit	Buena Vista	2004
Secret Garden Dreamcatcher: A night with Secret Garden	Universal	2002
Shanghai Knights	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2004
Sin City	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2005
Sleeping Beauty	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2004
Spanglish	Sony Pictures	2005

Stage Beauty	Magna Pacific	2005
Superman Returns (not on cover)	Warner Home Video	2006
Syriana (not on cover)	Warner Home Video	2006
The Alamo	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2004
The Extra	Sony Pictures	2005
The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy	Roadshow	2005
The Hours	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2004
The Incredibles	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2005
The Jungle Book 2	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2004
The Ladykillers	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2003
The Passion of the Christ	Warner Home Video	2004
The Producers	Sony Pictures	2006
The Rescuers	Buena Vista Home Entertainment	2001
The Village	Touchstone Pictures	2005
The Wedding Planner	Roadshow Home Entertainment	2001
Three Dollars	Dendy Films	TBA
We Don't Live Here Anymore	Becker Entertainment	TBA
XXX: The Next Level	Sony Pictures	2005
Young Adam (rental)	Madman Entertainment	2005

Audio described titles can be rented from most DVD outlets, including:

- VideoEzy
- Leading Edge Video
- Civic Video

Audio described titles can be purchased from:

- Dick Smith
- Kmart
- David Jones
- Myer
- Big W
- Sanity
- Virgin
- HMV
- Target

Tim Noonan recently reviewed the BBC's DVD box set of "Doctor Who" Series 2 and was fairly effusive in his obvious enjoyment of a fully accessible DVD, writing:

"...To the touch, this boxed set is pretty cool. The surface of the box feels a bit like the grooves on a vinyl record, with a matte finish. The box contains two three-fold DVD holders and some printed information... (Discs weren't individually labelled so) imagine my amazement and excitement when I selected one of the DVDs at random (well I thought it might be disc 1, but didn't know) only to hear the disc spin up and a clear voice announce: "Doctor Who, Series Two, Disc 4. If you would like audio menus, press the enter key now."

...Once you get the hang of it, navigating the audio menus is very easy and quite straight forward. Menu wrap, and each option is spoken in a clear, recorded female voice...

In conclusion this set is fabulous”.

GAP Activity Projects

Every year a growing number of young people embark on a GAP year. You might have read about some of our Peggy’s adventures this year in Bulletin 1. In our discussions on Monday we were remarking that an experience like Space Camp, Score Camp or a GAP year can be life-changing and build terrific independence in our students. The GAP project involves youth from 17 to 25 taking time-out from study for a year to volunteer overseas. You can teach Tibetan refugees in India or care for orphans in South Africa. For more information go to www.gapactivityprojects.org.au.

Arts Access

Have you heard of Arts Access? Your students might need to.

This Victorian service provides special access to the arts for disabled people. You can attend anything from Melbourne Theatre Company plays, the Australian Ballet or Musical concerts on certain dates and can be provided with assistive listening, live captioning, audio description or even a ‘tactile tour’. These facilities are only provided at certain performances and must be booked. For a full listing go to www.artsaccess.com.au.

Melbourne Symphony Orchestra Concerts – seating for VI

The MSO presents a number of free concerts at the Sidney Myer Music Bowl. Because they are free, Arts Access has arranged designated seating for patrons who are vision impaired. Concerts are on Feb 14, 17, 21 and 24. For more information contact Ruth Blakely at the Ease Ticketing office on 9699 8299.

PD for Integration Aides - Eastern

On Feb 27 and March 6, Eastern Region are running PD days for Integration Aides on ‘Managing Difficult Behaviour’. The two sessions cost \$22 and they are at Mullauna College in Mitcham. Contact Marilyn McKeown for more information.

Kids and posture

There is lots on the web about the importance of posture when using a computer or sitting at a desk. This is especially critical for our VI kids. According to Dr Alan Hedge and other ergonomics researchers at Cornell University, children need to adhere to the same rules as adults if they are to avoid fatigue and possible injury. The angle formed by the back and thighs should be greater than 90°, as should the angle formed by the shoulder, elbow, and wrist and the angle formed by the hips, knees and feet. Children also have some unique needs. These points are highlighted at ergo.human.cornell.edu:

- Children may not be aware of the position of their extremities, so an adult to notice and correct their posture
- Since children may respond more to images than to words, you may need to show them ‘before’ and ‘after’ postures or post a picture near their computer to remind them
- A smaller keyboard may be better for children, and some children prefer a trackball to a mouse.
- Parents should keep track of children’s time on computers and remind them to take breaks. Software called ‘ErgoPal’ monitors keyboard use and alerts users to take a break when it starts detecting more errors, a sign of fatigue.
- Children need to be taught how to adjust chairs, monitors and other equipment to be comfortable. Adjustability is essential when a family or group of students where a computer.

Guide Dogs Victoria Open Day

With a special appearance by Dr Harry Cooper and Wags the Dog, this is sure to be a fun-filled day. It happens at Guide Dogs in Chandler Highway, Kew from 11am to 4pm on Sunday, March 4. For more information, call 9854 4444 or visit www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au.

VCE (and other) books in audio format

Soundbooks have an extensive collection of audio books including many VCE titles. They are at 1292 Malvern Rd Malvern or go to www.soundbooks.com.au/audiovce.

Vision Australia Braille Course

Vision Australia will be running a Braille course for people who are sighted, for which information and an application form is attached. If you could circulate this information to relevant people within your organisations/institutions or schools, it would be greatly appreciated.

For further information contact Kathryn Mackay, Course Coordinator, Vision Australia – College (Mon, Tues, Thurs). E: Kathryn.Mackay@visionaustralia.org W: www.visionaustralia.org.au

Vision Australia Education Seminars 2007

Term 1 – ‘Students who are blind or vision impaired in the early years’ – March 1

‘Students who are blind or vision impaired in the middle years’ – Feb 28

Term 3 – ‘Including students with vision impairment in physical education programs’ July 30

‘Students who are vision impaired with additional disabilities’ – Aug 1

‘Towards the VCE or VCAL – Educational options in the senior years for students with vision impairment’ – Aug 6

All seminars are from 8.45am to 4.30pm and cost \$80.

For more information or registration forms, contact Arlene Pachero on 9808 6422.

Vision Australia Residential Training Programs 2007

These residential programs are especially for students who cannot attend the Support Skills Program which runs during term on Fridays. There is a Junior program for Years 4 to 8 running May 22 to 25 and August 28 to 31 and a senior program for Years 7 to 12, April 2 to 5 and September 25 to 28. Cost of a program is \$100. For more information, contact Garry Stinchcombe on 9808 6422.

Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness – December 2006

This issue of the journal takes a look back at its own 100-year history. It also explores the factors which affect successful work experience for VI people. The latter topic is especially relevant to our discussions on Monday, Feb 12.

Finally

Thanks to Deb Lewis, Diana Hayward, Kathryn Mackay, Arlene Pachero, Lyn Robinson & Liz Chapman for contributing to this edition of The Bulletin. Thanks also to our fabulous proof-readers, stuffers and mailers.

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

Marion Blazé (who can be emailed at marionblaze@svrc.vic.edu.au).