

# The Bulletin

## Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Number 12

Friday 3rd August 2007

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

### Professional Development Activities for Term III, 2007

- **Term III PD Day for VTs:** SVRC, Wednesday, August 8, 9.00 to 3.30  
Followed by **SPEVI gathering** at 4.30 – see below.
- **MAGic Workshop:** SVRC, Thursday, August 16, 9.30 to 12.30
- **O & M Morning – Experiencing Vision Loss in the Community:** Thursday, August 30
- **Mountbatten for Users Workshop:** SVRC, Wednesday, September 5, 9.30 to 12.30

To see the annual program and to download programs for professional development activities, go to: <http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/pd2007.htm>

### Other activities

- **Term III SPEVI Gathering at SVRC, 4.30pm August 8**  
Straight after our next Visiting Teacher PD Day there will be a meeting of the South Pacific Educators of the Vision Impaired – your professional organisation. The guest speaker will be Catherine Wong talking about brain development and vision loss.
- **National Literacy & Numeracy Week Activity at SVRC:** Friday, September 9

## Dictionary Detective Day!!!

Watch this space for more information about this exciting day at SVRC.

- **AASE Conference: Crowne Plaza, Coogee Beach, NSW, Sept. 28-30, 2007**  
Early bird rates for this conference close 30th July. See flier attached to print copies of this Bulletin, or go to [www.gemspl.com.au/aase/](http://www.gemspl.com.au/aase/).

### Inside This Issue

1	PD Activities for Term III – 2007, Other Activities
2	GDV Morning Tea, Guide Dogs Victoria News
3	Guide Dogs Victoria News, continued
4	Report on Support Group Meeting with James Elder, It's University Open Day Time, Scholarships for Tertiary Studies in 2008, Ordering Reading Stands, Leisure Expo for Disabled
5	Book Downloads, Sports Carnival in Adelaide, Aide with Braille Skills Needed, Staff & Student News
6	Reading stands flier
7	Leisure Expo flier
8	Adelaide Sports Carnival 2007 flier
9	Adelaide Sports Carnival 2007 program

## GDV Morning Tea

What a treat! The wonderful folk of the Children's Services Team of Guide Dogs Victoria, invited themselves to our place and brought morning tea! This was so they could introduce all their new team members to us and us to them. Twelve members of the team, together with Danny's baby and Dean's dog, and most of the SVRC staff, enjoyed cookies and muffins over a cuppa. Their newsletter follows.



## Guide Dogs Victoria News

### New GDV Ballarat Office

Guide Dogs Victoria has opened a brand new office in Ballarat, located centrally at Office 3, 15 Dawson Street South. Ballarat. Phone 5364 2943.

The office is now home to 2 Guide Dogs Victoria staff – Paula Foote and Jo Boyko. Paula is a Guide Dog Trainer, and is currently training four potential Guide Dogs. Jo is an O&M Instructor and is responsible for servicing clients from both the Children's Mobility Service and Adult's Mobility Service. By running a regional office in Ballarat, Guide Dogs Victoria plans to provide additional services to country Victoria and to increase public awareness of blindness and low vision through public interaction and education. The convenience of a central location means that staff are able to access other regional towns and areas more efficiently and in return, they can be a more accessible to clients. The new office is also a point of call for other Instructors and staff who take part in working visits within the area.

Reception is open from 9am –5pm to assist with any messages or queries that may come through when the office is unattended. All visitors are welcome.

### New CMS team member

Jo Boyko has recently joined GDV as an Orientation and Mobility Instructor based in the Children's Mobility Service team. As well as working with children, Jo will also be providing O&M services to adults. She will be working with clients living in the Western and South Western regions of the state. Jo grew up in Ballarat and is familiar with the regions she is working in and is even used to the Ballarat weather.

Jo will be visiting Melbourne to participate in team meetings and professional development activities.

### **Grampians Program July 2 - 6**

Thirteen secondary school students attended the GDV 'Grampians 2007' Senior Mobility Program with most students meeting at GDV in Kew. The program was based at the Halls Gap Caravan Park but involved orientation and mobility activities within surrounding towns as well. The Instructors planned some of the activities for the week with the remaining time put aside for student-selected activities.

The students were required to use communication, planning, organisational and money handling skills from the first day when they were set the task to obtain breakfast groceries for their cabins. After unpacking and settling into their cabins, planning for the week's activities commenced.

Students used teamwork and self-advocacy skills at the Halls Gap Information Centre to research activities of interest within the area. The students listed and voted on the activities that they most wanted to do which included town explorations, bush walking, visiting tourist attractions in various towns and activities such as ten-pin bowling and mini-golf.

Though the weather was 'wild and woolly' we managed to do all the activities we had hoped to do. Despite some fears overnight (mostly from the Instructors), the cabins remained grounded and dry, unlike the unlucky campers in tents nearby.

Several challenging bush walks were performed throughout the week including a walk to the Pinnacles and two night walks. The group walked to Splitters Falls (Halls Gap) and despite the terrain (steep and rocky sections) all students managed extremely well by utilizing visual cues and verbal prompts from those ahead.

To test the Instructors' and students' sense of direction, a car rally was conducted between Halls Gap and Stawell. Four groups, each with different instructions, set out following maps and directions with the assistance of talking and standard compasses. Though the 'green' team were given suspect directions (down a closed road) the activity was somewhat similar to 'the amazing race' as students were required to take photos and obtain evidence that they had reached their required destinations. Once in Stawell (with the green team coming in last, thanks Rachel) the teams swapped maps and set off again. Congratulations to the green team who despite the unfortunate start, finished a clear winner!

The following day the students were given the challenge to divide into two groups and research one town each that they would then swap with the other group. The towns selected were Stawell and Horsham. During this activity, students were required to research activities of interest in the town and provide all relevant information to the following group, including accurate directions to each destination, cost and what the venue offered. The suggested activities included Mini-World, look outs, Botanic gardens, ten-pin bowling and mini-golf.

The students were also keen to check out the infamous 'J Ward' in Ararat for the 'criminally insane' and then later used as a psychiatric hospital. Andrew and Jesse experienced what it would be like to be in a straight jacket.

Overall the week was full of entertaining activities, sharing of knowledge, development of independent travel skills and daily living skills with the students making some delicious meals. Thanks to all the students and GDV Instructors for a wonderful and memorable camp! Special mention to Erin Galloway (O&M Instructor) and Rachel Hanson (OT) as this was their first CMS regional camp – you survived!!!

#### Upcoming events

September 24 - 27 Junior program based at the Guide Dogs campus in Kew

October 24 –27 3<sup>rd</sup> Australasian O&M conference in Perth. (Several Instructors in the CMS team will be presenting papers)

December 3 – 7 Sydney program

For further information about CMS O&M programs, group programs or events please contact:

Dean Johnson (Manager) 9854 4506

Rachel Morgan (Team Leader) 9854 4469

Janelle O'Loughlin 9854 4520

Alicia Madden 9854 4493

Lil Deverell 9854 4542

Sharon Taylor 9854 4496

Erin Galloway 9854 4521

Jo Boyko 0437 843 200

Rachel Hansen (Occupational Therapist) 9854 4456

## **Report on Support Group Meeting with Dr James Elder**

Many families (about 50 people all up) turned up on the afternoon of Saturday July 21 to hear Dr James Elder explain the latest in treatments and 'novel therapies' for retinal conditions. Whilst smaller children were ably baby-sat by CEO student Cristina and friends, Dr Elder took us patiently through some anatomy and genetics before talking about the therapy ideas such as gene and stem cell replacement, bypass implants and 'neuroprotective factors'. He also cautioned us about the limitations and complexity of such ideas and the fact that they are several years away from being of assistance. Scott Freeman, from Humanware, then demonstrated the three pieces of technology now housed at Statewide.

## **It's University Open Day Time**

The Open Days at Universities and other tertiary institutions are beginning at this time of year, with some as soon as this weekend. To find out dates and details go to the VTAC website at

[www.vtac.edu.au](http://www.vtac.edu.au).

## **Scholarships for Tertiary Studies in 2008**

It's not too late to consider applying for a scholarship to assist in tertiary studies in 2008. The 'My Future' website lists thousands of scholarships available across Australia. Go to

[www.myfuture.edu.au](http://www.myfuture.edu.au).

## **Ordering Reading Stands**

Our most reliable source these days for the very strong, large wooden reading stands or tilt boards used by our students is 'Itswood Furniture and Restoration'. The wooden boards are \$65 and wire frames \$30 (these are the wooden, framed fly wire-covered boards on which a child can place a piece of paper, draw with crayon, and get a somewhat tactile image). Itswood have also negotiated that these items can be posted 'Freepost' if they are for students with vision impairments. Details are attached to the print copy of this bulletin or contact Darren Seiter on 03 5862 1896, 0417 05 0011 or [seiter@mcmedia.com.au](mailto:seiter@mcmedia.com.au).

## **Leisure Expo for Disabled**

The Leisure and Disability Network is holding this Expo on September 9 in Hawthorn and October 18 in Ringwood. The expos will include information stalls, come and try activities, exhibitions, presenters, performances and more. See flier attached to print copy of this Bulletin or call Di Hayward on 03 9761 0011 for more information.



## Book downloads

Thank you Tim Connell (via Mike Steer) for the following information.

"These are sources for electronic books which can be translated into braille. Some of these services are free, some require a fee. There is no endorsement of any of these services from Duxbury Systems:

<http://www.bookshare.org> Bookshare - A text resource for the blind and visually impaired that has licensed the Duxbury Braille Translator for on-line use.

<http://www.infomotions.com/alex/> Alex Catalogue of Electronic Texts.

<http://www-tech.mit.edu/Shakespeare/works.html> The Complete Works of Shakespeare.

[http://www.braille.org/braille\\_books/](http://www.braille.org/braille_books/) The Electronic Braille Book Library.

<http://etext.lib.virginia.edu/> The Electronic Text Center at the University of Virginia Library.

<http://www.gutenberg.net/> The Gutenberg Project.

<http://www.manybooks.net/> Manybooks.

<http://digital.library.upenn.edu/books> The Online Books Page.

<http://www.samizdat.com/> The B&R Samizdat Express. (CD-ROMs and DVD-ROMs for sale)"

## Sports Carnival in Adelaide

The South Australian Blind Athletes Club are conducting a sports carnival in Adelaide in November. The flier is attached to the print copy of this bulletin or contact the SABAC President, Matt Hueppauff, on 08 8322 8174.

## Aide with Braille Skills Needed

A primary school in the Kilsyth area is looking for a braille aide to work 7 hours a week for term 4 with a possibility of the work continuing in 2008. Please contact Principal Allan Thatcher on (03) 9725 4320 or [thatcher.allan.a@edumail.vic.gov.au](mailto:thatcher.allan.a@edumail.vic.gov.au).

## Staff and Student News

- Whilst putting together a booklet on CCTV use for next week's PD day, I contacted an expert at the American Foundation for the Blind for information. He kindly sent the information and expressed interest in our work. He has asked permission to distribute our booklet to participants of a workshop, which AFB are conducting on use of low vision aids in October at their National Literacy Centre in Atlanta.

## Finally

Thanks to Deb Lewis, Annette Godfrey-Magee, Mike Steer, Tim Connel, Di Skillern, Darren Seiter, Dean Johnson and Di Hayward 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](mailto:marionblaze@svrc.vic.edu.au)).

# **ITSWOOD FURNITURE & RESTORATION**

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Fax: 03-5862 1896*

*Workshop: Corner Tyack & Swallow St  
Numurkah 3636 Vic*

*Postal address: P.O. Box 231  
Numurkah 3636 Vic*

*Email: [seiter@mcmedia.com.au](mailto:seiter@mcmedia.com.au)*

## 2007 SA BVI CHAMPIONSHIPS AND SPORTSCARNIVAL

Adelaide South Australia  
Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> to Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> of November 2007  
Commitment of Numbers RSVP 12/7/07

The South Australian Blind Athletes Club, supported and endorsed by Blind Sports SA, are keen and proud to stage the games for all blind or vision impaired (BVI) athletes, swimmers and powerlifters throughout Australia. Detailed entry forms, programmes and events will be produced to suit the number of entrants noted in your returns as explained below.

In an endeavour to encourage participation and camaraderie in blind sports, participants can nominate for one of two classes of competition in athletics or swimming **ONLY**. *Championship* class is for the trained athlete while the *carnival* class is for the novices. All events will be officially timed or measured by Athletics SA Officials.

**Could you please provide to your best ability the likely number of participants noting their gender, class (championship or carnival), events, age group and sight classification (B1, B2, B3, B4) that would make up your Team.**

### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Sports:** Athletics (track and field), Swimming (short course) and Powerlifting

**Where:** Athletics — Santos Stadium  
Swimming — Thebarton Aquatic Centre  
Powerlifting — RSB Main Hall Blacks Rd Gilles Plains.

**Events:** A maximum number of seven events may be entered across the three sports offered. Events will be cancelled if insufficient numbers. Male and Female events will be run separately if sufficient numbers. Powerlifting is one event. When selecting events in different sports, it is the competitors own responsibility to avoid a clash in time. Refer to programme outline. Events marked \* are for athletes who are 12 or under at the time of competition.

### Programme Outline:

Friday	Arrivals, registrations & Welcome at Santos Stadium
Saturday	Powerlifting 10am to 4pm Athletics 1:00pm to 6:00pm Swimming 3:00pm to 6:00pm
Sunday	Athletics 9:00am to 3:30pm Closure and Departure.

**Medal or Awards:** – Will be presented during the course of the events.

**Lunches:** – Can be organised for each day only with prior notice.

**Costs:** – Entry Fee \$10 payable by October 2. Late Entry Fee of \$30 will apply there after.

**Accommodation:** – A suggested list of suitable accommodation will be provided on request.

**Transport:** – Arrangements will be made if prior notification is given to get from airport to accommodation and accommodation to event.

**Travel:** - Participating teams are responsible for their own travel arrangements.

**Contact:** - Please forward your returns and enquiries to:

SABAC President Matt Hueppauff  
Phone (08) 8322 8174, Mob 0438 285 836, Email: -hippo@adam.com.au  
**Or** Coordinator Sam Richard  
Phone (08) 8377 2952, Email sams2slow@hotmail.com