

The Bulletin

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Number 13

Friday 29 August 2008

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

Professional Development Activities Term 3 & 4, 2008

For workshop sessions, please BYO laptop.

| Professional Development Event and Activities 2008 | Date |
|---|--|
| Chatter Books for Braille Readers – student activity @ SVRC | Monday 1st September |
| SPEVI Day on Prematurity - @ Vision Australia, Kooyong | Monday 6th October |
| Expo 2008 - @ SVRC – flier appended | Friday 28th November |

For annual program & to download programs, go to

<http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/pd2008.htm>

SPEVI Day – October 6, 2008

Please remember to register for this day at Vision Australia, Kooyong, as the Plaza can only accommodate 80 people. Being on the first day of Term 4, we must have registrations in before the end of this term (by September 12, to be exact!). The cost is \$44 for SPEVI members and \$55 for non-members. The program and registration form is again attached to this Bulletin.

Also, the 2009 SPEVI Conference Registration brochure is now available for download from the SPEVI website: www.e-bility.com/spevi/. Remember, the conference is in Adelaide, January, 2009.

Expo 2008

Please start promoting this event with your students, families and schools. It's a great opportunity to see what's new and might be useful and actually try and compare. The flier is with this Bulletin.

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Nominations of SPEVI Victorian Counsellors

If you are a SPEVI member, you will have received notification that nominations are open for the three SPEVI counsellor positions for Victoria. Your current SPEVI counsellors are Garry Stinchcombe (Vision Australia), Lil Deverell (Guide Dogs) and Marion Blazé (DEECD & SVRC). Garry and Marion are happy to retain their positions (but equally happy to step down if there are other nominations), but Lil is definitely stepping down. The positions are for two years and will involve you in keeping membership informed of SPEVI activities, organising termly get-togethers and the annual PD days in Term 4. Nominations need to be received before the PD day on October 6th and we will vote for or announce the lucky three on that day. Any questions, email Marion at marionblaze@svrc.vic.edu.au.

New form for ordering alternative format materials from SVRC

We have developed a new form for ordering materials in (any) alternative format - available online so you can fill in and print or email to us. Any old forms you still have will still get results - but we think you'll like our new one!

You can find (and bookmark) it here: <http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/AltFormatRequest.doc>

Martin Seligman Workshop

Martin Seligman, author of several fabulous books on the optimistic child and positive thinking, is conducting a five-day, live-in course for teachers on the secrets of happiness and well-being. The course will be at Geelong College's Corio campus in January of 2009. Here are Martin Seligman's ten tips for helping children (from The Age August 18, 2008):

1. Every night for a week, write down three things that went well that day and why. These can be relatively unimportant (I had a cup of tea in the sun) or significant (my sister gave birth to a healthy baby). Teach your child to do this.
2. Work out your greatest strengths and use your highest strength each day (sit a signature strength test on the website authentic happiness.org).
3. Help your child to find out something that gives them "flow", the sense of being so engaged that time flies.
4. Doing things for others gives a longer lasting sense of well-being than personal gratification and possessions. Demonstrate this to your children.
5. Give thanks. Make a gratitude visit and thank someone who has helped you. Depressed people look inwards. Teach your children to focus outwards.
6. Parents pass on their own explanatory style to their children. How do you respond to adversity? Do you catastrophise (imagine the worst) and ruminate (play the same negative tape over in your mind)? Practice arguing back forcefully to that negative tape.
7. Examine your own relationships. Seligman says it is whether couples can celebrate each others' success, rather than how much they fight, that predicts divorce.
8. At work, Seligman's research demonstrates that social intelligence matters more than IQ. Optimism and self-confidence are crucial.
9. Point out positive stories about life as an antidote to the negative information students are bombarded with.
10. Foster a sense of curiosity about life. This can be lost as we age.

For more information go to www.authentic happiness.org

On-Line Colour Vision Test

http://www.visionchannel.net/HealthProfiler/healthpro_cb.shtml

This site has an online color vision test. Based on the Ishihara type plates, this test will give you an on-line result.

From Carol Evans and the AERNet list.

New Shortcut Keys in Windows

Whilst slrrching the net to find out what shortcut keys have changed in Windows Vista, Lea Nagel has discovered some New Favourite Shortcut Keys!!

Win+U Open the ease of access centre

Win+F Open the search window

Win+E Open Explorer

Win+B Move focus to notification tray (the right-most portion of the taskbar). That's how to get the volume and time etc without your mouse!!

These are ones that work in both Vista and XP. Give them a shot! You'll love them.

While you're at it, in Excel to change the font without your mouse, press control + 1 then right arrow twice to open the font dialogue box.

Enjoy!!

New Braille Proficiency Test (in UEB)

Bruce Maguire of the Australian Braille Authority has much pleasure in announcing that the first Braille Proficiency Certificate in UEB is being offered. The Trans-Tasman Braille Proficiency Certificate has been developed jointly by the Australian Braille Authority and the New Zealand Braille Authority, and is being offered simultaneously to candidates in both countries.

The main features of the new certificate include:

- * test for transcription from print to braille;
- * test for transcription from braille to print;
- * test for proofreading a passage containing braille errors;
- * 7 days in which to complete the examination;
- * flexibility that allows use of the Perkins, Perky Duck, or DBT (with translated line disabled).

Candidates may select one of two 7-day periods in which to complete the examination: Monday September 22-Sunday September 28, or Monday September 29-Sunday October 5. I strongly recommend that anyone thinking of undertaking the Trans-Tasman Braille Proficiency Certificate carefully study the practice papers with specimen solutions that are now available in the What's New section on the ABA's webpage: www.e-bility.com/roundtable/aba

You will need Winzip or a similar utility to uncompress the 16 files that are bundled in the zip archive. Please note also that the archive does not include the files that will be needed by touch-readers wishing to undertake the examination. These files include special markup codes and will be provided on request.

Applications for this year's examination close on September 5. If you have any questions about the examination after reading the instructions and background material contained in the Practice papers, please contact: Josie Howse, 02 9886 7313, Josie.howse@det.nw.edu.au.

On-Line Games for VI

I thought you would be interested to know about some simple free online games that we've come across here at VisionEd. They have been made available by the BBC and have been designed for children who are blind and have a vision impairment. They can be played either with the mouse or the keyboard. To try them out visit

http://www.bbc.co.uk/cbeebies/grownups/about/specialneeds/blind_visually_impaired_cbeebies.shtml

This site also contains games developed for children with a range of other disabilities.

Thanks to Mike Corrigan, Access Technology Consultant, RIDBC VisionEd, North Rocks NSW for this information.

Support Skills Program/Residential Training Program Try Day

Vision Australia's Education Services are conducting a try day for the above programs on Friday, November 21, 2008 at the Education Centre in Burwood. See the attached flier for details or contact Garry Stinchcombe on 03 9808 6422.

Tandem Bike Riding Come and Try Day

The flier is appended for this opportunity to try tandem bike riding on Wednesday, September 24th.

Braille Business Cards

Information from Mike Steer and Renée Williamson

I (Renée) have been receiving queries from a few of you asking whether Vision Australia is able to emboss your business cards with Braille. Vision Australia offers this service and clients use the following specifications to supply the cards for embossing. Cards are delivered to us from the printer, uncut, usually 8 up on A4 uncoated stock of less than 300gsm. The name and telephone number are usually what is embossed on the cards. Any more information is unlikely to fit in Braille and be too cluttered. Cards are returned to the printer for cutting. The cost is \$40 for mastering the A4 sheet and then \$1.30 for embossing each A4 sheet of cards. There may be costs involved with the printer delivering the cards to us and for us to deliver the cards back to the printer, but these should be minimal. We can emboss cards in our Sydney office at Enfield or our Melbourne office at Kooyong.

If you are interested in making your business cards accessible, please contact:

Lynne Kells, Customer Service Representative, Vision Australia

454 Glenferrie Road

Kooyong Vic 3144

Direct dial 03 9864 9659

Email lynne.kells@visionaustralia.org

www.visionaustralia.org

Congratulations to Maryanne Diamond on Appointment as World Blind Union President

The World Blind Union General Assembly in Geneva today announced the nominations for its 7th Presidency. As the only nominee, Australian and BCA member Maryanne Diamond quickly accepted the title, promising to do her best in the role for its four year term. Maryanne has had a long and varied career within the Australian blindness community, including a strong association with Blind Citizens Australia.

Invitation to launch of new Guide Dogs DVD

Attached is an invitation to the Launch party for this new DVD. Guide Dogs have been working really hard on this educational DVD which is aimed at parents, teachers and other referral sources to give them an understanding of Orientation and Mobility and the services the Children's Mobility Team provides. The launch is going to be held at CVI (Centre for Vision Independence) and it will be a great chance for VT's and others to see the huge range of monoculars, magnifiers and adaptive equipment available for sale.

Quantum seek input for Training and Development Program

Because of the high number of new products on the market, Quantum is developing a Training and Development program to help consumers keep up to date and would like our input into its development. See the information attached to this Bulletin or email

rdrummond@quantumtechnology.com.au.

Vision Loss Support Group

At 2pm on Saturday, September 13, there will again be a gathering of the Support Group, this time to hear from Veronica Reid from CentreLink who will explain all the pensions and allowances for which families might be eligible. This Support Group is for families of children with vision loss. It meets once per Term to hear about a topic of interest and catch up with other families who are experiencing similar challenges. A lot more value comes out of these meetings than just the guest speaker! All VTs are welcome to attend and PLEASE encourage your families to come along. We do a mail out to many families, but please feel free to distribute the flier attached to this Bulletin.

SVRC Staff and Student News

- Wangaratta student Kyle, who completed year 12 in 2007 is currently studying Certificate II in Business at TAFE. He writes: "I love working on the computer and working in an office environment and it makes me feel good. I enjoy going to TAFE because it keeps me motivated and increases my social network. I've just turned 21. Other than that not much happening."
- Astrid, in Year 10 at Princes Hill SC, has won the prestigious Swannie Award for having the highest average score in C-grade debating in the Coburg section. Astrid is currently overseas visiting her sister, Marina, who is starting at Harvard. Well done, Astrid!
- Kylie, student at Rosebud Secondary College, was in the local Leader Newspaper recently in an article about how happy she is at school and enthusiastic about her learning. The article describes how she confidently negotiates the very crowded corridors between classes using her white cane. "It's this no-fuss and confident attitude that has endeared Kylie to her classmates since she started at the school this year."
- Rita Farrelly, VT in Southern has been on Long Service Leave this term and we received a postcard. It sounds like she is having a terrific time OS. She's been camel riding in the Gobi Desert, horse riding on the grasslands, relaxing in hot spas, watching a Sharman Ceremony during the solar eclipse, and sleeping in yurts. At the time of this card, she was on her way to Beijing for the opening of the Olympics! Tough life, hey?

Finally

Thanks to Deb Lewis, Marion Blazé, Bruce Maguire, Lee Clark, Garry Stinchcombe, Mike Steer, Renée Williamson, Annette Godfrey-Magee, Mike Corrigan, Diana Hayward, Dean Johnson and Carol Evans and all those who contributed to this edition of The Bulletin. Thanks also to the fabulous team of proof-readers, stuffers and mailers. If you have something you would like included in 'The Bulletin', or you would like to receive the bulletin by email please contact:

Lyn Robinson (who can be emailed at lynrobin@svrc.vic.edu.au).



SPEVI Victoria

Combined Agencies PD Day

October 6, 2008

The Plaza, Vision Australia, Kooyong

Theme: PREMATUREITY: Implications for vision impairment, development and learning

8:30 Registration, Networking and Coffee; Equipment Solutions and Library tour (for the early birds)

9:30 House-keeping and welcome

9:40 Peter Anderson, PhD, University of Melbourne – Prematurity: implications for learning and development

10:30 Geoff Bowen, psychologist – “Do kids who arrive early, end up running late?”

11:10 Morning tea and networking

11:30 Ian Stuart, Neuropsychologist - Learning difficulties in the congenitally blind, with particular reference to braille dyslexia

12:20 Agency Reports and News from the field. SPEVI, Guide Dogs Victoria, Statewide Vision Resource Centre (Dept), Vision Australia, Australian Association of Parents of Vision Impaired

Lunch **1:10 to 2:00**

2:00 Client / Parent Panel - the journey, challenges and outcomes of prematurity

3:00 Dr Susan Carden MBBS, FRANZCO, FRACS, Paediatric Ophthalmologist – Retinopathy of prematurity – history repeats itself

4:00 Summing up the program

4:30 Close of program

Tandem Bike Riding At Kooyong



Vision Australia and Blind Sports Victoria

Invite you to a

“Come N Try”

TANDEM BIKE RIDING DAY

Wednesday September 24TH

**At Vision Australia
Cricket Pavilion
454 Glenferrie Rd
Kooyong**

10-30am Until 2-00pm

**Registration \$7-00 Includes Sausage sizzle
RSVP By Friday 8th September**

For further details contact

Di Hayward (Rec Development Worker) Ph 9760 0006

Nick Jones (Rec Liaison) Ph 8770 6800

**Support Skills Program / Residential Training Program
Try Day 2008**

For prospective students wishing to attend the Vision Australia Support Skills Program or Residential Training Program in 2009

TRY DAY DETAILS

Date: Friday 21 November 2008
Time: 9am to 1pm
Venue: Vision Australia Education Centre
333 Burwood Hwy, Burwood 3125

- The Program is available to students (Grade 3 - Year 10) who are blind or have low vision and who are integrated and attend their local schools.
- The Program focuses on the unique curriculum needs of these students, and provides a positive learning environment, which encourages peer networking and social development.
- The Program complements the invaluable support of the classroom teacher and visiting teacher by providing additional support to the student.
- Residential Training Programs are available for country students unable to attend the regular Friday Support Skills Program.
- On the Try Day, prospective students can experience the Program first hand while their families and any interested support staff can meet the Support Skills team, visit the various teaching areas and generally get a feel for the program.
- If you feel this program might be suitable for your child or student, please contact the Vision Australia Education Centre on 9808 6422 for an application form.
- If you have any queries please ring and speak to Garry Stinchcombe, the co-ordinator of the Program.

Completed applications are due in no later than Wednesday 12 November 2008

Please note: attendance at Try Day does not guarantee a student a place in the Program for 2009.

Vision Australia's Further Education Bursaries

Each year Vision Australia awards financial bursaries to tertiary students who are blind or have low vision for the purchase of adaptive technology such as CCTVs, laptops and screen reading software. Such technology enables easier access to course materials.

Vision Australia's Further Education Bursary aims to assist clients who would not otherwise be able to afford adaptive technology, thus increasing their ability to participate in further education.

Since 1996, almost 150 bursaries have been awarded by Vision Australia to students studying a broad range of disciplines – from Natural Medicine to Music and Business.

Who is eligible?

To be eligible, applicants need to:

- Be a resident of Victoria, New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory, Queensland, the Northern Territory or Tasmania.
- Be (or become) a client of Vision Australia
- Demonstrate the need for financial assistance to purchase adaptive technology
- Be applying for, or enrolled in, a tertiary course graded Certificate IV or above.
- Be available to attend a presentation ceremony during their first semester.

How to apply?

To apply for a bursary, applicants need to:

- Complete an application form – download at www.visionaustralia.org.au/bursary
- Have an adaptive technology assessment with a Vision Australia consultant
- Provide some documentary evidence (outlined on the application form).
(Applications are treated in the strictest confidence.)

When are they awarded?

Applications must be submitted by 10 November 2008. Recipients are selected early 2009 and the bursaries are presented at ceremonies during the first semester.

For more information contact:

Max Bini, Tertiary Education Consultant,

Phone: **(03) 9520 5555** or **1300 84 74 66**

Email: max.bini@visionaustralia.org

Vision Australia

www.visionaustralia.org

ABN: 67 108 391 831

ACN: 108 391 831

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Expo of **Access Technology for** **Vision Impaired**

When: Friday, 28th November 2008
10.00am - 3.30pm

Where: Statewide Vision Resource Centre

370-380 Springvale Road, Donvale

on the grounds of Heatherwood School

Displays and demonstrations of the latest in technology for people who are vision impaired.

Come and see computer technology which enlarges or talks, closed-circuit television systems, calculators, games, low vision aids, talking book technology, optical equipment, white-board transmitters to your computer, braille technology, sports equipment and more.

The day is open to teachers, teacher aides, parents, students, mobility instructors, rehabilitation workers or anyone with an interest in technology for people who are vision impaired.

Plan to spend the time to try out something new.

Cost: Free

For further details: contact Deb Lewis (03) 9841 0242

Or email deblewis@svrc.vic.edu.au

**Vision Loss Support Group
Term 3 meeting
September 13, 2008**

This Support Group provides opportunities for parents and siblings of children with vision impairments, to come together, share experiences and information and develop friendships. The group generally meets once per school term on a Saturday afternoon to hear from a guest speaker and then to socialise over afternoon tea.

Child minding is provided so that families can bring little ones.

Term 3 Meeting: Saturday, September 13, 2008

Where: Statewide Vision Resource Centre
370-380 Springvale Road, Donvale

Time: 2pm until stumps

Guest speaker: Veronica Reid, CentreLink

Topic: Concessions, allowances and pensions
for people with vision impairments

***** Please RSVP so that we can cater for numbers and especially if you require child minding facilities *****

For further information or to RSVP, contact:
John or Judy Bowen on 03 9842 5103 Leigh Heaven on 9857 0152 or
Annette Godfrey-Magee 9841 0807