

The Bulletin

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Number 2**Monday 22nd February 2010**

This issue was edited by Lyn Robinson, Resource Teacher, Statewide Vision Resource Centre.

Professional Development Activities for Term 1, 2010

Professional Development Event 2010	Date
Visiting Teachers Day	Monday 22 Feb
Educational Support for Students with Low Vision – Prep to Year 5 This day is designed for class and subject teachers, integration teachers and aides, therapists, parents/care-givers and visiting teachers who support students who have low vision (maximum participants: 60)	Monday 2 March
Educational Support for Students with Low Vision – Secondary Students This day is designed for class and subject teachers, integration teachers and aides, therapists, parents/care-givers and visiting teachers who support secondary students who have low vision (maximum participants: 60)	Monday 15 March
*Which Product for Me: Braille/Speech – Software and hardware options described and discussed (BYO lunch) 10.00am to 12.00 Trevoy Boyd & Danny Keogh, Quantum Technology (Duxbury, JAWS, PACMate, Mountbatten etc) 1.00pm to 3.00pm Ramona Mandy, Humanware (ScannaR, BrailleNote, WindowEyes)	Tuesday 16 March

* Technology Workshop. Please bring own laptop and lunch.

'Educational support of blind students' PD day Report by Marion Blazé

After re-arranging the furniture yet again (!) we hosted 48 participants for a fun-filled day on Tuesday. Teachers and aides came from State, Catholic and Independent schools to hear about supporting their braille using students in their schools. Feedback from participants was ALL positive, in fact glowing! Annette began the day by blind folding everyone before they entered the SVRC. They had to find a seat at the tables and then complete some classroom type tasks whilst contending with whistle blasts, missing equipment and other distractions. On the feedback forms, one participant said 'starting the day under blindfold and being deliberately given ambiguous or confusing information, let us realise the importance of being concise with our verbal instructions'. Well done Annette!

Another real highlight of the day was a visit from an entire family, (continued next page)

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(Mum, Dad and two students starting out in a special school, losing vision, and now being a model student in a regular high school.) There were several audience members in tears, obviously moved by the session. Geoff helped chair this session, and then went on to talk about 'stepping back'. Comments and the audience's rapt attention attest to the value of these sessions.

Other more general comments included 'there's something about the disability area that allows a really practical and valuable interchange in such an inclusive professional style'. 'the tour was great to see how hard you all work' and 'exceeded our expectations'.

Thanks especially to the SVRC team of workers who kept us all fed and watered and made the furniture removal possible (several times). It was an especially big challenge this year, and all done with such good humour.

In the Driver's Seat 2010

The Warrandyte Lions Club Inc., in conjunction with the V.A.C.C. and Independent Driving Instructors are organising the 14th "In the Driver's Seat" event.

Organiser Peter Watts requires the following information for your registration:

- The time you would prefer for your drive. Available times: 9.00 am, 9.30 am, 10.00 am, 10.30 am, 11.30 am, 12 noon 12.30 pm, 1.00 pm, 2.00 pm, 2.30 pm, 3.00 pm
- Your Name
- Address, including post code
- Telephone number
- Email address

When: Sunday 11th April, 2010

Where: Sandown Motor Circuit

Contact: Peter Watts Phone/Fax: 9844 3903 - Mobile: 0419 136 943

Email: peterwatts1@bigpond.com

National Braille Music Camp

The National Braille Music Camp will be held from 26 July to 3 July 2010, at Frensham Mittagong, New South Wales. Music Camp welcomes any student who is a Braille user with free places for Aboriginal students. This year's Camp is also like to inviting adults to come and join classes in Braille Music. There will be an adult class to introduce you to how Braille Music works and how important it is to the musical child.

When: 26 July to 3 July 2010

Where: Frensham, Mittagong, New South Wales

Camp fees: \$190 for the week, full board and lodgings.

Contact: Roma Dix 11 Bourne Close Mittagong 2575 romad@westnet.com.au

ACTION ON CINEMA ACCESS

Source: Alisa Wills, Administrative Officer, Australian DeafBlind Council

Hearing and sighted Australians have the choice of going to ANY CINEMA, ANY MOVIE and ANY SESSION. But what about deaf and blind Australians? They have access to less than 1% of movies screened. Why? Because the cinema industry refuses to meet their needs for captioning and audio-description. If you want to see a truly inclusive Australia, where people with a disability are treated as equal and valued members of our community, show your support by attending our national PROTEST on Saturday 13 February at 11.00am.

For further information about our campaign, contact spokesperson Dean Barton-Smith at dbartonsmith@optusnet.com.au, or call Paul Madden on 0419 313 518.

Australian Braille Authority 2010 Annual Meeting and Workshop

The ABA Annual Meeting is a unique opportunity for direct communication and collaboration between members from all sectors of the braille community in Australia. The special highlight of the 2010 meeting will be the launch of the UEB Rulebook. Other Agenda items will include:

- Reports from the National Executive and State and Territory subcommittees
- Discussion of the results of the Strategic Review of the ABA conducted in 2009 and future directions
- International braille news, including work on the Unified English Braille code and its adoption in other countries, and braille in the South Pacific
- Election of the incoming Executive

Workshop: Guided Tour of the Unified English Braille Rulebook

The ABA workshop (Sunday 6th June) will follow on from the launch of the UEB Rulebook, a valuable resource providing a full set of rules for UEB as well as extensive examples to illustrate their use. Rulebook editor Christine Simpson and other experts will guide participants through key sections of the Rulebook.

Dates: Saturday 5th & Sunday 6th June 2010

Venue: Harbour View Hotel, Sydney

Full details will be available shortly on the ABA web site www.e-bility.com.au/roundtable/aba

Enquiries to: Tammy Axelsen, Administrative Officer - Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities Inc.

PO Box 229, Lindisfarne,
Tasmania 7015 Australia

‘Come and try’ Basketball

If you love Basketball, would like to make new friends and are looking for an exciting new challenge, then be sure to register for Basketball at the Keilor Basketball Stadium.

This program is suited for participants aged between 12 and 18 and there is the opportunity to represent Special Olympics Victoria. The program runs for 6 weeks.

When: Tuesday 23rd of February 2010 4:30pm – 5:30pm

Where: Keilor Basketball Stadium

Contact: Luke Casey on 03 9249 4854 or Robert Kassen on 03 9243 8808 or Special Olympics Victoria Community Development Coordinator Tanya Files on 03 9275 6922.

Blind & Low Vision Tennis

Blind Sports Victoria in conjunction with Tennis Victoria and Seniors Tennis Victoria will be conducting a 6 week Blind & Low Vision Tennis Program commencing Friday, 12 March 2010. The program runs until Friday, 23 April 2010.

This program is for people with low or no vision for all ages and abilities.

As per our previous tennis programs, we will be based at Melbourne Park Tennis Centre, Batman Avenue, Melbourne.

To register your interest in this program as a participant or volunteer or to obtain further information, please contact the Blind Sports Victoria office on 03 9822 8876.

Support Skills CAN YOU HELP - Swish Table or Guitar?

Support Skills is now officially up and running! We have had a fantastic first day with students learning their way around the new venue, and enjoying music, art, maths, technology, games and research skills sessions. We finished the day with a resounding BOOM in a percussion extravaganza led by talented musician, Ben van Poppel.

We have a request to make of our readers: does anyone have a swish table or a guitar tucked away that they would be able to donate or lend to the program?

Many thanks from Garry and Lea

Advocacy Training for Young People with Disabilities

This weekend workshop is hosted by the Youth Disability Advocacy Service in partnership with the Disability Discrimination Legal Service and Action for Community Living. It is designed to increase the capacity of young people to advocate for themselves about the issues that are important to them and their communities.

Here are some things that young people will get out of the course:

- Improved understanding of advocacy
- Increased awareness of advocacy strategies
- Increased understanding of disability rights, how to make complaints and the law
- Improved problem-solving, communication and assertiveness skills
- Ability to apply knowledge of advocacy to a specific advocacy issue that is important to you
- Free lunch!
- The opportunity to meet other young people

Young people with a disability living in Victoria who are aged between 12 and 25 can take this course for FREE and have their transport reimbursed up to the value of \$100.

Young people from rural and regional Victoria who require overnight accommodation in Melbourne will be reimbursed up to \$200 dollars with receipts.

Attendant support and AUSLAN interpreting will be provided during the training sessions upon request. Support that is needed outside of the training sessions will need to be arranged and funded by the participant.

When: 11.00 am – 4.00 pm on Saturday 20th March and
10.00 am – 3.00 pm on Sunday 21st March 2010.

Where: Youth Affairs Council of Victoria,
Level 2, 172 Flinders St Melbourne

Contact: Liz by Friday 5th March on 03 9267 3799

To request a registration form email info@yacvic.org.au or phone Liz on 03 9267 3799,
Toll-Free 1300 727 176 or SMS 0412 814 851

Source: Jessica Zammit – Blind Citizens Australia

The Belkin ipod recorder

Recently, at a meeting at Princes Hill SC, the music teacher asked if we had ever come across a Belkin ipod recorder also known as a “Go Studio”?

The school has a class set for music but the teacher also felt it would be useful for the student to record her classes. The ipod fits in the cradle and can then be used to create mp3 recordings.

Here is some more information from the CMI Music website:

Your GoStudio will help you make the most of the high-quality recording capabilities of the iPod. You can use the built-in microphones or connect up to two microphones to record your sources. The GoStudio also offers a headphone jack and built-in speaker to play back your recordings on the go.

Features:

- Record directly to your iPod in 16-bit, 44kHz digital audio quality
- Built-in speaker for instant playback
- 2 combo microphone inputs
- 3.5mm mini-jack microphone input
- 2 built-in microphones for stereo recording with independent gain control
- Headphone output
- Stereo or Mono recording capabilities

http://www.cmi.com.au/hi_tech/belkin/belkin.html



Retails from \$110.00 to \$169.99

Children and Participation Project

Dr Nora Shields and Annie Synnot from the School of Physiotherapy – La Trobe University are conducting a research project entitled, “What activities do children with a disability living in Victoria take part in?”

They write: "To answer this question, we are asking 320 children with a disability (intellectual, physical, vision or hearing impairment) aged between 6 to 18 years to complete a child-friendly survey about their participation in out-of-school activities. This is an area in which we have very little information. Children will be asked about the activities they do, how often they do them, where they do them, and if they enjoy them. This can be completed by post with supervision from parents/guardians or in person with the help of a research assistant."

The researchers are keen to include children with vision impairments in their study. They have Department of Education and Early Childhood Development approval for students to participate in this research, providing certain guidelines are met. These approvals and guidelines are available from the SVRC or directly from Ms Synnot.

For further information and to participate in the research, please contact Annie Synnot on (03) 9479 5789 or via email a.synnot@latrobe.edu.au.

Brain Teaser for Braille Readers

Can you think of two countries which, when written in braille, have only one dot difference between them?

Clue number 1: One country has twelve dots and the other has eleven dots.

Clue number 2: There are no contractions in these countries

New Software Programs

Di Bennet, Technology Specialist, Physical Access, Blindness & Educational Products, has sent an email about some great new products from Agroa:

eClipse Writer by IRTI www.irti.com is a DAISY conversion program. It can be used to transfer etext into a daisy format. It is very easy to use and very efficient.

The other program hot off the shelf is **Accessible Event** by Serotek www.serotek.com who also do the program **System Access** the competitor to JAWS

Finally the other braille note taker that I love at the moment is the **Braille Sense**, it has so many neat features like Bluetooth, daisy player, MP3, access to internet, word processing, email.

Di was once a visiting teacher with the Education Department but now resides in Canada. It's great to hear what people are using in other parts of the world. Thanks Di for the update.

Bush Caches!

The CMS (Children's Mobility Service) team will be running a fun day of bush exploration, navigation and Geocaching in Sherbrooke Forrest in the Dandenong Ranges National Park.

When: April 30, 2010

Where: Meet at Belgrave Train Station at 1pm

Who: Students of any age are invited to attend

Please contact Alicia San Martin if you are interested in attending on:

E-mail: alicia.s@guidedogsvictoria.com.au

What is Geocaching you may ask?

Geocaching is the free high-tech treasure hunt where you use a GPS receiver to find caches hidden by other players. It's a great way to be outdoors, enjoy the environment and the revel in the thrill of the hunt!

A geocache (sometimes known as a "cache") is what we are placing and hunting in Geocaching. It could be a box of stuff in the bush. Or perhaps a film canister in an urban environment. Or maybe a webcam on a beach! You'll only know if you try it!

Some types of geocache are as follows:

Traditional cache - a hidden stash comprising at minimum a log book

Virtual cache - a cache with no cache container

Moveable cache - find it, take it, hide it somewhere else

Webcam cache - take a picture, get a smiley

Each cache has a particular terrain and difficulty rating. For more information on Geocaching visit the website: <http://geocaching.com.au>

SKI CLUB FAMILY FUN DAY and General Meeting

The RVIB Ski Club Committee is running a family fun day. You are invited to join in the fun and games with the whole family!! There will be FREE face painting, and showbags for the kids!!! Try a game of blind cricket, bocce and more!

When: Sunday 14th March from 11.00 am to 3.00 pm

Where: Blind Cricket Sports Pavilion, rear of 454 Glenferrie Road, Kooyong Vic. 3144

Cost: \$5 adults and \$3 children (2-16) or \$15 for the family.

PLEASE RSVP by 7th March to Anita Deed at manitadeed@bigpond.com

BrailleNote Apex Offer

HumanWare has recently released the BrailleNote Apex, the thinnest and lightest notetaker especially for professionals and students who are blind.

BrailleNote Apex is available in a BT or QT keyboard model with 32 cells of braille display for \$8,890. Trade-in your existing BrailleNote mPower or Classic, BT or QT, 32 cell and receive \$2,800 discount from the full purchase price. Trade-in your existing BrailleNote PK, mPower or Classic, BT or QT, 18 cell and receive \$1,800 discount from the full purchase price.

Trade-in your existing VoiceNote mPower or Classic, BT or QT and receive \$800 discount from the full purchase price.

This trade-in offer, where you can trade-in your current BrailleNote or VoiceNote towards the purchase of the new BrailleNote Apex, closes at the end of March this year – so be quick!

For more information contact Ramona Mobile Phone: 0404 834 924

Email: <mailto:mramona.mandy@humanware.com>

The 2010 Victorian Premier's Reading Challenge is Open

Schools can now register for the 2010 Victorian Premier's Reading Challenge. The Challenge is open to all Prep to Year 10 students in Victorian government and non- government schools.

Students in Prep to Year 2 are challenged to read or experience 30 books, with at least 20 selected from the Challenge list; students in Years 3 to 9 are challenged to read 15 books, with at least 10 selected from the Challenge list; and students in Year 10 are challenged to read 15 books, with at least 5 selected from the Challenge list.

The Challenge closes 31 August 2010. Students who complete the Challenge will receive a certificate signed by the Premier. The SVRC has a number of alternative format books available from the Premier's Reading Challenge book lists. Please contact the SVRC for more information 03 98410242

February JVIB Online

This month's articles and features include:

- The Postural Responses to a Moving Environment of Adults Who Are Blind--Thomas A. Stoffregen, Kiyohide Ito, Philip Hove, Jane Redfield Yank, and Benoit G. Bardy
- Design and Evaluation of a Protocol to Assess Electronic Travel Aids for Persons Who Are Visually Impaired--Else M. Havik, Frank J. J. M. Steyvers, Hanneke van der Velde, J. Christiaan Pinkster, and Aart C. Kooijman
- A Best-Evidence Synthesis of Research on Orientation and Mobility Involving Tactile Maps and Models--Tessa Wright, Beth Harris, and Eric Sticken
- Conceptual Understandings of Seasonal Change by Middle School Students with Visual Impairments--Tiffany A. Wild and Kathy Cabe Trundle
- Practice Report: Six Sensational Dots: Braille Literacy for Sighted Classmates --Anna M. Swenson and Nancy Cozart

Children with Asperger's Syndrome Workshop March 10th

This workshop will give teachers an opportunity to gain clear and detailed insight into the nature of Asperger's Syndrome along with an array of practical strategies to effectively cater for these children at school.

Please note that places are filling quickly. Please book to secure your place.

Complete details on this and other PD programs available from Critical Agendas can be found at:

<http://www.criticalagendas.com.au/conferences.php?state=VIC>

Source: Heatherwood School, Critical Agendas <http://www.criticalagendas.com>

Staff and Student News

More VCE News: Christina from a Catholic Education School in Melbourne received a score of 41 for her Business Management examination. Well done Christina.

As promised a picture of Kate's babies: on the left is Auroa and on the right is Abbey



Finally

Thanks to everyone for their ideas for this Bulletin especially Deb Lewis, Marion Blazé, Leanne Nagel, Sally Fathers and all the fabulous proof readers at the SVRC.

If you have something you would like included in "The Bulletin" please contact me, Lyn Robinson lynrobin@svrc.vic.edu.au

To Read the Bulletin Online: <http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/bulletins2010.html>