

The Bulletin

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Number 3**Monday 8th March 2010**

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

Professional Development Activities for Term 1 & 2, 2010

Professional Development Event 2010	Date
Educational Support for Students with Low Vision 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 Trevor Boyd & Danny Keogh, Quantum Technology (Duxbury, JAWS, PACMate, Mountbatten etc) 1.00pm to 3.00pm Ramona Mandy, Humanware (ScannaR, BrailleNote, WindowEyes)	Tuesday 16 March
Skill Power Workshops for Visiting Teachers, Teachers, Aides, Students etc (no lunch provided) 1. Mountbatten – 10.00am to 11.30am Trevor Boyd, Quantum Technology (BYO Mountbatten) 2. BrailleNote – 12.00 to 1.30pm Ramona Mandy, Humanware (BYO BrailleNote) 3. JAWS – 2.00pm to 3.30pm Lea Nagel, Senior Visiting Teacher (BYO laptop)	Wednesday 21 April
Educational Support for Vision Impaired Students with Additional Impairments This day is designed for teachers, aides, therapists, parents/care-givers and visiting teachers who support vision impaired students who have additional impairments (maximum participants: 60)	Monday 3 May
Skill Power Workshops for Visiting Teachers, Teachers, Aides, Students etc (no lunch provided) 1. Set Up the Computer for Low Vision Users – 10.00am to 11.30am Lyn Robinson, SVRC (BYO laptop) 2. ZoomText – 12.00 to 1.30pm Trevor Boyd, Quantum Technology (BYO laptop) 3. TBC – 2.00pm to 3.30pm	Tuesday 11 May
Term 2 Visiting Teacher Professional Development Day	Wednesday 19 May
Skill Power Workshops for Visiting Teachers, Teachers, Aides, Students etc (no lunch provided) 1. Computer without the Mouse – 10.00am to 11.30am Lea Nagel, Senior Visiting Teacher (BYO laptop) 2. WindowEyes – 12.00 to 1.30pm Ramona Mandy, Humanware (BYO laptop) 3. PACMate – 2.00pm to 3.30pm Trevor Boyd, Quantum Technology (BYO PACMate)	Tuesday 1 June

* Technology Workshop. Please bring own laptop and lunch.

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Mac Accessibility

Source: Adapted from <http://www.apple.com/accessibility/macosx/vision.html>

If you have a vision disability then the MacBook includes many features to assist you, including a built-in screen reader, voice commands, screen magnification, high-contrast settings, and other technologies and features described below.



VoiceOver

A full-featured screen reading technology for the visually impaired, VoiceOver provides full keyboard control of the computer along with spoken audio descriptions.

Application and Device Support

Built into Mac OS X, VoiceOver features compatibility with a wide range of applications and works so seamlessly with refreshable braille displays that you can start using them the moment you plug them in.

VoiceOver Downloads

You'll find a variety of learning materials — including a “VoiceOver Getting Started” manual, podcasts, and more — on the VoiceOver downloads page.

Talking Alerts

When an application needs your attention, Talking Alerts automatically speak the contents of dialogs and alerts for you.



Text to Speech

If you don't use a screen reader but have trouble reading text on your computer screen, you can have your Mac “speak” the text you select. To turn Text to Speech on, open System Preferences, click Speech, then open the Text to Speech pane. You can even set up a keyboard shortcut to initiate Speech. As an alternative, you can select text you want your Mac to speak, then choose Speech from the application's Services menu.

VoiceOver in depth <http://www.apple.com/accessibility/voiceover/>

Technology Workshops

The SVRC hosted a wonderful demonstration of some new technologies for people with vision impairments recently at our “Which Product for Me?” Low Vision Technology Day. Pictured below are some of the SVRC staff and visiting teachers taking a closer look at the new offerings from Humanware.



Our next technology day **Which Product for Me?: Braille/Speech** will be on Tuesday 16 March. Trevor Boyd & Danny Keogh, **Quantum Technology** will show case Duxbury, JAWS, PACMate, and the Mountbatten in the morning. Ramona Mandy from **Humanware** will demonstrate the ScannaR, BrailleNote, and WindowEyes in the afternoon. Please phone the SVRC to book a place for these workshops on 03 9841 0242.

Aspergers Resources

Book in Hand Australia's Asperger-Autism dedicated bookstore is RESTRUCTURING and are having a sale. They have over 600 titles ready to send with 15% discount on shipments of \$220 or more. For more information please go to their website www.bookinhand.com.au for the list of all books on offer, and to place an order, or Phone 1800 505 221

JAWS and gmail

By far the easiest way to accomplish the downloading of GoogleMail messages is by setting it up as a pop account, through outlook express or equivalent. The instructions can be found here:

<http://mail.google.com/support/bin/answer.py?answer=13276>

From Sam.

Round Table Confernece: Auckland, New Zealand

From Tammy Axelsen, Administrative Officer, Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities Inc

The Round Table Conference on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities will be held in Auckland, New Zealand. The Conference commences on Sunday the 23rd of May with pre-conference tours organised for Saturday the 22nd of May 2010.

The venue will be the Heritage Auckland,
35 Hobson Street, Central Auckland.

Phone: +64 9 379 8553

Enquiries and Conference Registrations to: Tammy Axelsen - Round Table on Information Access for People with Print Disabilities Inc

PO Box 229, Lindisfarne TAS 7015, Australia

Phone: Mobile +61 417 101 418

Email: roundtableadm@bigpond.com

For more information and program details visit Round Table at www.e-bility.com.au/roundtable/

The Lime Lighter: Low Vision Music Reading Device

Odette Budge, Visiting Teacher- Catholic Education Office, has found a low vision device for music reading, called the Lime Lighter and thought it might be of interest to others.

From the Dancing Dots website:

The Lime Lighter lets people with low vision read print music with ease, clarity and comfort.

If any of the following applies to you, take a look at The Lime Lighter:

- I used to love to play the piano but I can't any more since I can't comfortably see the music on the music rack.
- I want to play in our school band, but I have to enlarge the sheet music so much that it falls off the music stand.
- I enjoy singing in our church choir and community chorus, but I struggle to see the music.

How the Lime Lighter works?

The Lime Lighter displays the music on a 17 inch flat panel PC which sits on a bracket above the keyboard. Each time you press the right control on the pedal, the music on the screen advances to the next measure. In effect, the page of music slides from right to left so that the start of each measure appears roughly at the same position on the screen. A focus rectangle highlights the start of each measure as well. To move back one measure, you press the left side of the pedal. To move to the top of the piece or to the beginning of the currently repeated section, you press on the centre of the pedal.

Features

- A touch-sensitive 17-inch, flat-panel PC
- Adjustable, heavy-duty stand to support Lime Lighter screen
- USB foot pedal
- Lime software with custom music magnification features
- SharpEye Music Reader music OCR
- Dancing Dots will install and configure all software, including any third-party magnification programs, before shipping the unit to you.
- Displays magnified print music notation.
- Magnify music from 1.25 up to 10 times original size.
- Markup your music on the screen with special stylus and save for later.
- Listen to music playback in temp.

For more information: Go to www.dancingdots.com/limelighter.

Graduate Opportunities At DEEWR

Source: Max Bini, Tertiary Education Consultant, Vision Australia

The Department of Education, Employment and Workplace Relations is seeking graduates to fill various positions within the Department, and is proactively encouraging people with disability to apply. Opportunities are available in the Canberra National office as well as State and Regional offices. Opportunities for degree holders exist in the following areas:

- Accounting
- Information Technology
- Economics/Applied Statistics
- Social Policy Analysts
- Legal
- Generalist

The graduate program consists of up to three rotations within the 10 month program, which is aimed at developing and broadening the skill base of graduates to assist with career progression. This program is not a targeted program for people with disability but applications from graduates with disability are strongly encouraged.

For more information visit the DEEWR Graduate Program website.

<http://www.deewr.gov.au/Department/Graduate2011/Pages/default.aspx>

Olympus DM-4 And DM-2 Digital Audio Devices

Source: PressReleasePoint <http://www.pressreleasepoint.com/olympus-dm4-and-dm2-digital-audio-devices-are-your-command-deliver-super-highquality-recording-and-s>

Two new releases from Olympus feature DAISY and voice access - from the website:

Today Olympus unveils two new DM series digital audio devices with large color LCDs and easy-to-navigate menus for audio recording, editing and playback of podcasts, music, audio books and textbooks. The DM-4 and DM-2 deliver internal memory storage capacity of 8 gigabytes and 4 gigabytes, respectively, as well as external microSD compatibility. The DM-4 also offers voice recognition so users can verbally navigate menus with voice commands and set the time and date, as well as create a schedule using only their voice.

Voice Recognition with DAISY

The DM-4 features Voice Recognition so that users can command the device and add items to their lists and calendars. The DM-4 also is a DAISY Player certified by Daisy Consortium, which means that it can play digitally recorded material in the DAISY talking book format.

Voice Guidance

The DM-4 and DM-2 feature a voice confirmation function that can be turned on or off. When turned on, the function enables the devices to speak, helping users to navigate the folders and various set-up options. The pleasant automated voice guides users through the onscreen menus for setting date, time and other menu selecting modes. It also confirms by stating the folder name as the user moves from one folder to another. This enables visually challenged users to achieve equal accessibility while capturing recordings and easily moving through the device's menus, folders and set-up options.

Text to Speech

The Text to Speech function in the DM-4 enables users to hear file information, such as the time and date of the recording as well as keywords that users can set. This function also allows users to identify each file without listening to the recorded content. Text files (ending in .txt) also are compatible with the DM-4. Whether driving to work or exercising, users can now listen to their text files instead of reading them. Available from June 2010 – around US\$300.00

News from Children's Mobility Services

The CMS team continues to provide a range of tailored O&M group programs for children throughout Victoria. Each of the programs has a specific O&M focus.

Programs include:

- **Mobile Musketeers** for primary school children in the northern metro area
- **Spykids** for children in central Victoria, in and around Bendigo
- **Ballarat** program
- **Kelly Gang** for children in North East Victoria
- **My Mobility** for children in the Geelong area
- **Geocaching** program focusing on mapping and navigation skills based in Sherbrooke Forest in the Dandenongs

Upcoming events

March 29 – April 3 Junior program based at the Guide Dogs Victoria campus in Kew.

The theme of the program is “Mythbusters”. The closing date for the program has now closed but the next CMS newsletter will have an article about the program activities and events. A “Fun with Dogs event” will be incorporated into the program where children are given the opportunity to learn more about and become more confident around dogs.

June 28 – July 2

This year the Senior program will be in Hall's Gap in the Grampians. Rachel has organized new accommodation this year and she assures us it will be a great place to stay. The program offers students many opportunities to extend their O&M and daily living skills and activities include bushwalking. Students also have the opportunity to plan and organize activities of their own choice. For further information about the program please contact Rachel Morgan.

July 24 - 28

The CMS will be running a “RP Weekend” program based at the campus in Kew. There will be activities and events related to Retinitis Pigmentosa and families will be invited. For further information about this program please contact O&M's Belinda Lock or Laura Hunt.

November - December

The CMS team is planning to run a University program for senior secondary school students at the end of the year. The program will be aimed at providing students with a wide variety of information about transitioning to a tertiary educational setting. A major focus of the program will be on the O&M skills required to move around a university campus confidently. Other topics include sessions facilitated by university student services staff, Disability Liaison officers and Centrelink representatives.

The date for the program is to be finalized. For further information about this program contact Rachel Morgan.

Centre for Vision Independence

Orthoptists, Natahsa and Jane at the CVI are available to meet with visiting teachers, students and parents to discuss low vision issues and demonstrate low vision aids. Low vision aids such as magnifiers and monoculars are available for purchase at cost price. The Centre for Vision Independence at 100 Victoria Parade (next to the old fire station) is open every day between 11am and 5pm and no appointment is necessary. If you would like to visit before 11am just give Natasha or Jane a call to make the arrangements. The phone number is 9639 3345.

Tandem bikes

The CMS has recently purchased 2 tandem bikes. The bikes are manufactured in the US by Bike Friday and tandems from Bike Friday look a little different from other tandem bikes. The bikes have a lower centre of mass and will be more user friendly for the riders. The team will be using the bikes on individual and group programs so look out for us – we may turn up anywhere on the flash new bikes.

For further information about any aspect of the Children's Mobility Service or to provide feedback or ideas please contact any member of the team -

Rachel Morgan	9854 4469	Simon McDonald-Kerr	9854 4520
Sharon Taylor	9854 4496	Laura Hunt	9854 4547
Linden Woodruff	9854 4489	Dean Johnson	9854 4506
Alicia San Martin	9854 4493	Belinda Lock	9854 4521

What is optic nerve hypoplasia?

Extract from: It's Vision Time: Issue 14 2009

The optic nerve sends all vision messages to the brain. People who are born with underdeveloped optic nerve have optic nerve hypoplasia (ONH). If the optic nerve did not grow, vision messages do not get to the brain. Some people who have optic nerve hypoplasia also have septo-optic dysplasia.

What level of vision do people have who have optic nerve hypoplasia?

Some people who have optic nerve hypoplasia can see a lot. Some cannot see at all. The ones who can see may sometimes have a hard time understanding what they see (perceptual problems). Sometimes people who have optic nerve hypoplasia can see from part of their retina and not from other parts. Some of the vision messages get to the brain, but not all of them (field loss). People who have a field loss have to move to see things in the place where they have the field loss.

VISUAL AND BEHAVIORAL CHARACTERISTICS

A child's vision is characterized by a lack of detail (depressed field), but this lack of detail should not be compared to the blurred reduction in vision when a person removes their glasses. In certain cases of ONH a specific field defect occurs. Children may not be aware of people or objects in the periphery.

ONH is usually a stable condition. Visual function does not deteriorate with time. A mild improvement in visual function may occur as the result of maturation processes of the brain.

Some children with ONH have mild photophobia. These children may squint, lower their head, avoid light by turning away, or resist participating in outdoor activities.

A child with ONH often has other conditions that need to be considered when developing an individual education plan. A high percentage of children with ONH have associated nystagmus.

Visual acuity may vary from light perception to normal acuity.

When a specific field loss is identified, materials need to be presented within the child's visual field. The child should be encouraged to turn their head to look for people and objects outside their visual field.

A child with ONH needs the opportunity to develop learned aspects of depth perception through fine and gross motor activities, including container play, nesting and stacking, ball tossing and rolling, pouring activities, and lots of practice with stairs, slides, foam wedges for crawling, and cardboard box play.

VCE Tips - Did you know?

- Supervisors and reader/scribes may be used in practise examinations. The cost however will need to be covered by the school.
- The school can apply to the Victorian Curriculum Assessment Authority for reimbursement of the costs of supervisors and reader/scribes for mid year and end of year examinations. This includes subjects offered by TAFE and Language schools.

Visiting Teacher Needed

A visiting teacher is sought for work with a Year 10 braille student in an independent school starting Term 2.

Where: Lowther Hall Anglican Grammar School, 17 Leslie Rd Essendon, 3040

Time fraction: 0.1(1/2 day), day of week negotiable.

Employment conditions: based on Lowther certified agreement, VT will be a member of staff.

Contact: Nina DeGaris Phone 9325 5000

Staff and Student News

Leader Sports Star Awards

From Rod Pritchard

Recently we attended the Leader Sports Star Awards 2009 Eastern Division at the Medallion Club at Etihad Stadium as Daniel had received a nomination through our local leader, The Free Press. The evening was hosted by Stephen Quartermain. The awards structure is that each nominee goes into a pool for their local Leader newspaper. A junior and senior winner is then announced for each paper and those winners then go into a pool for the overall junior and senior winner for their Division.

Daniel won the award for our local Leader, The Free Press, for his exploits in Blind Cricket. For his trouble he received a \$500.00 gift voucher from the sponsors, Rebel Sport. Stephen interviewed Dan (as he did all the winners) and it was another great chance to put out the message about Blind Cricket.

An article about Daniel's award features in the March 1, 1010 edition of The Free Press Leader Newspaper.

More Sporting Accolades

From Lindsay's mother, Leigh

Lindsay recently competed in the Australian Blind Cricket Championships in Sydney, and earned himself three 'Man of the Match' awards from 6 games. In the grand final, which Victoria won easily, he got 6 out for 14 runs and won the 'Trevor Varyro Award' for the best player in the Grand Final. He also won the 'Best B2 Player' of the tournament. Against New Zealand in the Trans-Tasman tournament, the team played five games. Lindsay won 2 'Man of the Match' trophies and 'Player of the Series'. With a best score of 140 not out. Lindsay is off to Barbados in June to represent Australia against the West Indies. Of course, he would love to hear from anyone interested in playing Blind Cricket!!! His phone number is 0400 101074.

Finally

Thanks to everyone for their ideas for this Bulletin especially Odette Budge, Deb Lewis, Annette Godfrey-Magee and the fabulous proof readers at the SVRC.

If you have something you would like included in "The Bulletin" please forward it in a word document to Lyn Robinson lynrobin@svrc.vic.edu.au

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