

The Bulletin

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Number 14**Monday 6th September 2010**

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

Professional Development Activities for Term 3 & 4, 2010

Professional Development Event 2010	Date
Support Skills Come and Try Day – for students wishing to try Support Skills	Fri 10 Sep
Dot Power – for early braille readers	Tues 14 Sep
Blind Cricket Day – students from year 4 to year 12 all welcome	Fri 17 Sep
SPEVI Day	Mon 4 Oct
Vision Loss Support Group: My Story – for details contact Annette Godfrey-Magee	Sat 11 Sep
Dot Power – for early braille readers	Tues 23 Nov
Educational Expo – Access Technology Options This day is suitable for teachers, aides, parents/care-givers, visiting teachers, STUDENTS and members of the wider community	Fri 26 Nov
SVRC Christmas Morning Tea	Wed 1 Dec

The yearly program is available at: <http://www.visiontech.svrc.vic.edu.au/PDannual.htm>

Report on VT PD day, August 24

Report from Marion Blazé

Approximately forty people attended our Term 3 Professional Development day for Visiting Teachers on Tuesday, August 24 with quite a large contingent coming from the Barwon South Western Region. The day kicked off looking at technology, especially Apple-related technology. By the time we'd seen the iPad and iPhone, the Victor Stream and a very nifty scanner and enlarger, there were plenty of 'wows' all round. It was also fabulous to hear from one of our newest Visiting Teachers on albinism, a nearly-finished PhD study and an advisory teacher from Queensland talking about the life of a VT in Far North Queensland. Comments were very positive including "Brilliant day, I'm inspired and dying to test it on some of my students".

Suggestions for future days included an offer to demonstrate a typing program, tricks on preparing kids for camps, more on the iPad and iPhone and more on specific impairments.

Inside This Issue

1	Professional Development Terms 3 & 4, Report on VT PD Day, August 24
2	News from the Children's Mobility Service at Guide Dogs Victoria
3	SPEVI Conference 2011, Autism Victoria, Funding Opportunities, Charge Syndrome Conference
4	Melbourne Events with Audio Description
5	Student News
6	Student News continued, Thanks for Assistance, BG Scrabble – accessible computer game, BrailleNote for sale
7	Dot Power Programme: 14 th September 2010, PowerTalk: automatic speech for PowerPoint presentations, JVIB Online – September Issue
8	New Free Travel Pass, Finally, SPEVI Conference Programme

Children's Mobility Service at Guide Dogs Victoria News

From Dean Johnson

Senior programs

- Uni Program 6 December 2010. Participants in this program will learn more about how to successfully transition from a secondary school setting to a tertiary education setting. Included in the program are activities centred on O&M, Activities of Daily Living as well as ideas on how to access all the educational and recreational opportunities available at tertiary education settings.
- GDV Goes CBD 11 - 15 January 2011. This program provides opportunities for students to learn more about moving in the Melbourne CBD safely and confidently. The program is based the Guide Dogs campus in Kew.

Junior programs

- "So You Think You Can Move" 20 - 23 September 2010. The team are organizing fun and interesting activities and events around this theme. The program is based at the Guide Dogs campus in Kew.
- Mini Camp 20 - 21 October 2010. This program is designed for students who would benefit from learning about O&M in a group program environment but require more support than is provided in other junior program events. Students participate in a range of O&M, daily living and recreational activities and the program involves an overnight stay. The program is based the Guide Dogs campus in Kew.
- "Syd the Serpent who wanted to sing" - an event by Oz Opera for primary school students. This is an Australian story about a serpent who was tired of doing acrobatics for a performance group and wants to sing instead. The opera is aimed at primary school age students. The opera will be audio described by Jean Hedges and Marjoire West who are experienced audio describers.

When: Monday 6 September 2010 at 1 pm for a 1.30 start and the show is 1 hour long

Where: Fintona Girls School - Balwyn

Cost: Free of charge

Please contact Dean Johnson at the Children's Mobility Service for further information on 9854 4506 or dean.j@guidedogsvictoria.com.au

Low Vision Equipment for Students

The Centre for Vision Independence (CVI) - 100 Victoria Parade East Melbourne Ph 9963 3345 (Near the RVEEH and next to the old Fire Station) At the centre there is a large range of low vision and Activities of Daily Living aids equipment such as magnifiers and liquid level indicators and staff can demonstrate the equipment. The CVI has plenty of space where students can trial a range of equipment to see what suits their needs. The CVI is open every day between 11am and 5pm and is staffed by two orthoptists and no appointment is necessary. All equipment is sold at cost price. For further information about any of the above events or activities please contact any member of the CMS team:

Rachel Morgan 9854 4469,

Alicia Madden 9854 4493,

Linden Woodruff 9854 448,

Laura Hunt 9854 4547,

Simon McDonald-Kerr 9854 4520,

Angela Reynolds – (based in Wangaratta) 0417 356 029 and Dean Johnson 9854 4506

Please have a look at the Guide Dogs Victoria website for more news and information

<http://www.guidedogsvictoria.com.au>

SPEVI Conference Sydney 2011

The Conference Organising Committee invites you to Sydney to participate as a delegate at the 2011 Biennial Conference of the South Pacific Educators in Vision Impairment. Building on an extremely successful Conference in 2009, up to 200 delegates are expected to attend in 2011.

The destination Sydney is the most exciting city in the southern hemisphere - and the best city to host a conference in Australia. Once you experience our state-of-the-art conference facilities and venues, vibrant, multicultural population, excellent transport and infrastructure and plenty of character-filled local precincts, you'll never want to leave.

2011 Conference Theme

"UNLOCKING STUDENT'S POTENTIAL: What's working for you?"

Who will attend the Conference

National and International delegates will include: Educators Service Providers Parents Caregivers Medical Professionals Adaptive Specialists Clients and Students

The Venue

Marriott Sydney Harbour 30 Pitt Street, Circular Quay Sydney, NSW Phone: 02 9259 7000
We look forward to welcoming you to Sydney in 2011!

The registration booklet for the SPEVI bi-annual conference in Sydney in January 2011 is now available from: <http://www.ebility.com/spevi/conf2011.php>

Online registrations available at:

https://webserver.aomevents.com/ei/getdemo.ei?id=144&s=_48W0UA8BU

Autism Victoria

Autism Victoria and its members have prepared a position paper for the 2010 Victorian State Election. 'Whole of Life' A More Effective Service has System was launched at the 2010 Autism Conference on the 5th and 6th of August. If you would like hard copies of the position paper or any other information please call Anne Taylor at Autism Victoria on 9657 1600.

Funding Opportunities

Vision Australia Bursary: provides adaptive technology to tertiary students with vision impairments. Applications close 29 October and all information and forms are available from the Vision Australia website <http://www.visionaustralia.org/bursary/>

Quantum Technology / Freedom Scientific scholarships: provide scholarships in the form of software such as JAWS or MAGic. Application open soon and close in January. More information <http://www.quantumtechnology.com.au/scholarshipprogram>

Also students can apply for education and learning assistance from the Australian Disability and Indigenous Peoples' Education Fund which is open until 30 September 2010 and runs quarterly. More information and application forms are available from: <http://www.adipef.org.au>
Thanks to Max Bini for this information.

Charge Syndrome Conference

The next conference of the CHARGE Syndrome Association of Australasia will be held in West Oz at the fabulous Esplanade Hotel on the waterfront in Fremantle, Western Australia, 8 - 10 October 2010. For more information go to: <http://www.chargesyndrome.org.au/events.html>

Melbourne Events with Audio Description

September:

- **West Side Story, Regent Theatre**
Saturday 11 September 2.00pm
Thursday 30 September 8.00pm
A tactile tour may be available but this has not been confirmed as yet.
- **All About My Mother, MTC Sumner Theatre**
Tuesday 14 September 6.30pm
Saturday 18 September 4.00pm, tactile tour 3.00pm
- **The Nutcracker, Australian Ballet, State Theatre at The Arts Centre**
25 September 1.30pm
Vision Australia Audio Describers can bring ballet to life for you.

October:

- **The Dream Factory, St Martins Theatre, Randall Theatre South Yarra.**
Saturday 2 October 7.30pm
This play will have special appeal to a teenage audience
- **Titanic Exhibition, Melbourne Museum**
Monday 4 October 9.00am
A time out of business hours is not able to be organised for a group however if you are wanting to go to this exhibition with audio description please contact Janene on (03) 9864 9384 and we will see if something can be arranged.
- **Hairspray, Princess Theatre**
Runs 2 – 31 October
Dates with audio description are not confirmed as yet.
- **MELBOURNE INTERNATIONAL ARTS FESTIVAL**
8 - 23 OCTOBER
Dates for audio described performances will be available from 27 September.

November:

- **Life Without Me, MTC Sumner Theatre**
Tuesday 2 November 6.30pm
Saturday 6 November 4.00pm, tactile tour 3.00pm
- **The Marriage of Figaro, Opera Australia, State Theatre at The Arts Centre**
Saturday 27 November 1.00pm

December:

- **Mary Poppins: Her Majesty's Theatre**
Wednesday 1 December 8.00pm
Saturday 4 December 2.00pm
- **Songs For Nobodies, MTC Fairfax Theatre at The Arts Centre**
Tuesday 7 December 6.30pm
Saturday 11 December 4.00pm, tactile tour 3.00pm
- **A Midsummer Night's Dream, Opera Australia, State Theatre**
Saturday 11 December 1.00pm
- **Rigoletto, Opera Australia, State Theatre**
Saturday 18 December 1.00pm

To book for most of these shows, phone EASE Ticketing Service (03) 9699 8497 Monday to Friday 10.00 am

For further information about any of these events please phone Janene Sadhu, (03) 9864 9384 Tuesday – Thursday or email janene.sadhu@visionaustralia.org

Student News

Support Skills Group B

Support Skills Group B, our all-boys group, attended Support Skills on Friday 20th August. During the "Welcome" session, students described their involvement in a variety of interesting activities including:

- James received Bop-It, playstation games and an electric toothbrush for his recent birthday.
- Cameron is participating in "Jump Rope for Heart" at his school
- Geordie is entering a "Peace Poster Competition" through his school and plans to win the trip to New York
- Riley is having a sleep-over at James' house
- Justin had a recent birthday with a "lock-down" party
- Declan is now 12 years old and celebrated at Casey Race, a pool with a waterslide
- Josh has new equipment and is enjoying Melbourne writer John Marsden on audio CD

Archery

Support Skills student Declan from Southern Region, who is enjoying being a member of the Phoenix Archery Club in Cranbourne writes:

"On the 10th till the 11th of July I went to Morwell for an archery competition and shot 60 arrows a day. On Sunday I won a bronze medal." Declan now has a national archery ranking!

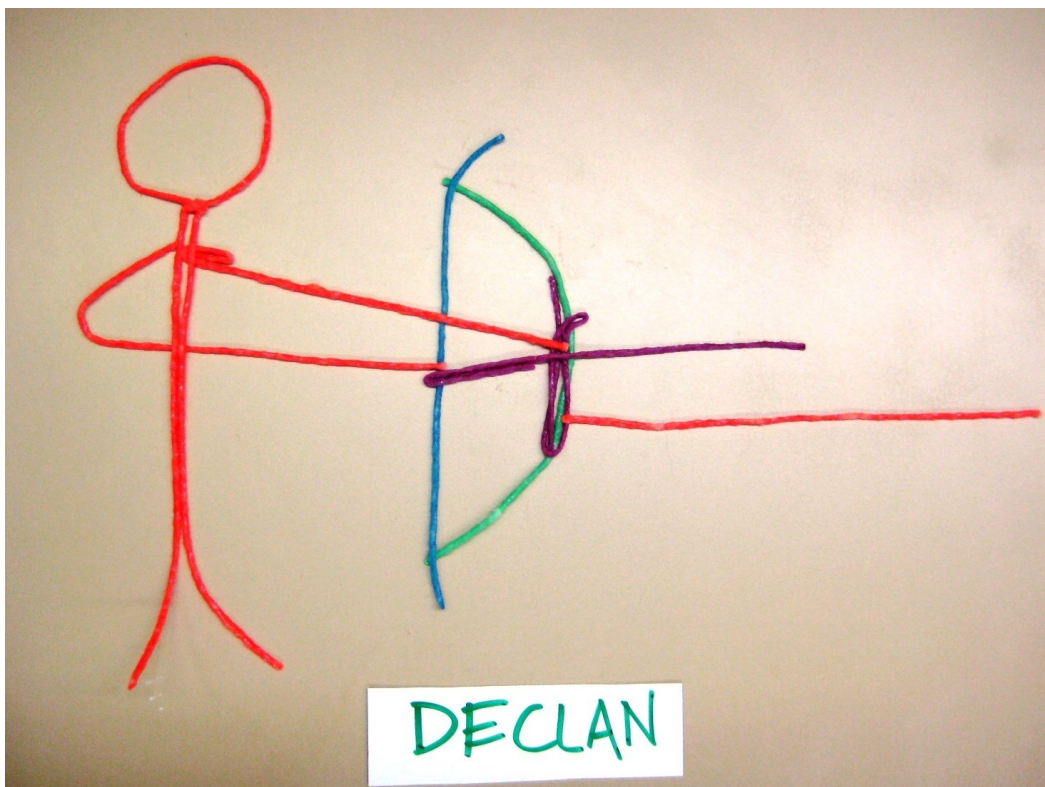
From the club website:

Archery is safe, fun and very addictive. It improves concentration, confidence and general well-being. Our current venue is at Casey Indoor Sports Centre, New Holland Drive, Cranbourne.

We shoot indoor each Sunday between 10am and 12.30pm. Enquiries:

admin@phoenixarcheryclub.org.au

Below is Declan's Wiki-art creation from his last session at Support Skills.



Support Skills Group C

- Geordie has returned from the USA where his highlight was the Oshkosh air show in Michigan. Along with plenty of explosions causing mushroom clouds, he was able to take a tour of a B17 fighter plane. Later he visited Oregon and Las Vegas.
- Nathaniel has had two recent work experience opportunities – one at Vision Australia in Albury where he personned the switchboard and worked on the sound board for the radio station. He also spent a day at Rural Energy where he used spreadsheets to determine the best trading price for gas and electricity.
- Annalyse recently went skiing with her church group and had a wonderful time.
- Zac has also been to Mt Buller recently with the school and enjoyed tobogganing.
- Alex will be singing in two upcoming school events – once as a soloist and once with a backing choir.
- Charlie (Support Skills Teacher) mentioned the up-coming Disabled Winter Sports weekend of skiing fun at Falls Creek. Anyone wanting to find out more can speak to Charlie or go to <http://www.disabledwintersport.com.au/>

More Student News

Jake, a year 10 student at Lilydale Heights College has been to Brisbane recently to compete in an athletics competition for Athletes with a Disability. He ran in a 3 km cross country event with a time of 14 mins 31 seconds. His time for the 1 km event was 4 mins 6 secs. Jake was placed 6th overall. Congratulations to Jake for his results but also for his positive attitude to life in general.
From Helen Caldow

Thanks for assistance

We recently put out a call for plays and also for games for the Support Skills Program. Many thanks to Heidi Littleford, Gayle Skinner, Kim Foley and Sam Oxley for their contributions!!! And if I have neglected to mention your name in my thanks, please jog my memory!

Another thanks goes to Kim Foley who helped out with information and support regarding reading comprehension tests.

Yet another thanks goes to Marion who spotted some games on a "free to a good home" table – so now we have Backgammon, Ludo and Hexihop in our tactual game collection!

It is terrific to be part of a great community which responds quickly and cheerfully to requests for help!!!

- Deb

BG Scrabble – accessible computer game

BG Scrabble is a blind accessible version of the popular crossword board game. The first release does not include a computer player, but only allows up to four human players to play Scrabble on a single PC. If you opt to play a single player game, you play against yourself, trying to beat your previous highest score. The game also has a graphical interface for use by partially sighted and sighted players who want to play along with one or more blind players.

If you would like to try the new game, just email Ian Humphreys at games@spoonbillsoftware.com.au stating your full name, and country of residence and Ian will gladly send you a copy. As with all Spoonbill games, it is absolutely free.

BrailleNote for sale

A relatively unused BrailleNote with braille input and 18 cell output is available for sale for \$3,000 or near offer. Please contact Jan Johnston on 0438 524596.

Dot Power Program: 14th September 2010

Our second Dot Power day for 2010 will be held on Tuesday 14th September. This program is for pre-school to grade two students who are developing their braille skills.

The program will continue to focus on concept development, functional aspects of braille literacy and tactual graphicacy (the ability to interpret diagrams and pictures with your fingers. Students will enjoy music and practical, interactive activities – around the theme of PIRATES. Another important outcome of this special program will be socialisation with a small group of students of similar ages who are also blind.

PowerTalk: automatic speech for PowerPoint presentations:

PowerTalk 1.2.14 is a free program that automatically speaks any presentation or slide show running in Microsoft PowerPoint for Windows.

You just download and install PowerTalk and while you open and run the presentation as usual it speaks the text on your slides. The advantage over other generic 'Text To Speech' programs is that PowerTalk is able to speak text as it appears and can also speak hidden text attached to images. Speech is provided by the synthesised computer voices that are provided with Windows 7, Vista and XP, and other voices are available. PowerTalk uses PowerPoint supplied with Microsoft Office to show the presentation.

Download from: <http://fullmeasure.co.uk/powertalk/>

Thanks Geoff for this offering!

JVIB Online – September Issue

This month's articles and features include:

Current Practices in Instruction in the Literary Braille Code in University Personnel Preparation Programs

--L. Penny Rosenblum, Sandra Lewis, and Frances Mary D'Andrea

The Unified English Braille Code: Examination by Science, Mathematics, and Computer Science Technical Expert Braille Readers

--M. Cay Holbrook and P. Ann MacCuspie

Temperament and Young Children with Visual Impairments: Perceptions of Anglo and Latino Parents

--Jamie Dote-Kwan and Deborah Chen

Alcohol Use in German Adolescents with Visual Impairments and Sighted Adolescents

--Martin Pinquart and Jens P. Pfeiffer

Research Reports

The Inclusive Educational Process of Students with Visual Impairments in Spain: An Analysis from the Perspective of Organizations

--Cecilia Simon, Gerardo Echeita, Marta Sandoval, and Mauricio Lopez

Mental Rotation Ability of Individuals with Visual Impairments

--Eleni Koustriava and Konstantinos Papadopoulos

Plus Editor's Page; Comment, Ready or Not, Here I Come! Fulfilling My Dream to Drive--Joyce Carrico; Practice Perspectives, The Sound of a Job Well Done--Jane N. Erin; Mainstream Employment in Music Production for Individuals Who Are Visually Impaired: Development of a Model Training Program--Virginia A. Jacko, Harold Cobo, Antonio Cobo, Rachelle Fleming, and J. Elton Moore.

New Free Travel Pass

A new free travel pass is now available for users of a scooter or wheelchair. The Scooter and Wheelchair Travel Pass entitles the pass holder to free travel on:

- Melbourne metropolitan trains, trams and buses
- V/Line services
- Regional town buses
- Regional services that have a contract or service agreement with the Department of Transport.

The new free travel pass is administered by the Metlink Central Pass Office. For more information go to the Metlink website: <http://www.metlinkmelbourne.com.au/fares-tickets/free-travel-passes/scooter-and-wheelchair-travel-pass/>

Partially sighted students who use a wheelchair or scooter may be eligible for free travel under this scheme. Students who are legally blind are able to apply for the Vision Impaired Travel Pass. For more information about how to apply for the Vision Impaired Travel Pass please go to: <http://www.metlinkmelbourne.com.au/fares-tickets/free-travel-passes/vision-impaired-travel-pass/>

Finally

Well that's the end of another Bulletin. Be sure to check out the details of the SPEVI conference in Sydney in January. Thanks to everyone for their contributions to this Bulletin, especially Deb Lewis, Marion Blazé, Tricia d'Apice and Dean Johnson.

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

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