

# The Bulletin

## Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Number 16

Monday 18th October 2010

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

### Professional Development Activities for Term 4, 2010

Professional Development Event 2010	Date
<b>Dot Power</b> – for early braille readers	Tues 23 Nov
<b>Educational Expo – Access Technology Options</b> This day is suitable for teachers, aides, parents/care-givers, visiting teachers, STUDENTS and members of the wider community	Fri 26 Nov
<b>SVRC Christmas Morning Tea – all welcome! Please RSVP</b>	Wed 1 Dec

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

### *iPad for Students with Vision Impairments by Deb Lewis* **Off the shelf features**

- Large crisp and clear screen which can also be viewed at a slight angle - research indicates that better contrast and readability is offered by the iPad with 135 megapixels per square inch compared to approximately 96 megapixels per square inch on a typical PC screen
- Surf the net and send emails
- Store and view photos, music and videos; download podcasts and vodcasts
- Calendar and planner
- Record messages
- Portable
- Ability to optimise the size, color, layout and background of the text e.g. have text in black on white or white on black
- To get around the problem regarding word processing, connect an Apple **Bluetooth keyboard**
- Easy to use – I have seen an 18-month-old successfully locate and play his game and a student in an SDS make purchases via eBay using her mother's credit card



### Inside This Issue

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## **Built-in integrated accessibility features**

- iPad “comes **standard with accessibility features** that help people with disabilities experience all that it has to offer” – eg **Voice Over** allows blind users to flick the fingers over the screen to jump from app to app – Voice Over reads out each app – to select the voiced app, the user double clicks anywhere on the screen.
- **Spoken Menus** allow the user to touch anywhere on the screen to hear a description of the item under the finger. This feature includes all metadata, making it easy to search and select a specific track, artist or playlist without having to view the screen. Other messages like low battery are also verbalized.
- **Pinch and zoom** – allows quick enlargement of what is on the screen up to 5 times the size of the original – images, text etc
- **Brightness** – can be more or less bright to suit the user (eg people with albinism may prefer less brightness)
- **Inbuilt text-to-speech** which can be used to read out loud text such as emails, internet, ebooks
- **No camera but apparently "most people with an iPad have an iPhone"<sup>1</sup> – an app is available to allow the image taken by the iPhone to be sent via Bluetooth immediately to the iPad eg providing the user access to the white board to view and store the image; edit, annotate, zoom in for detailed observation**
- **Spellcheck** as you type
- **Download apps** etc easily and simply via the App Store or via the internet

## **Downloads**

- Store and access **text books as pdf files** which offer full colour versions of the same texts as the rest of the class – and more portable than large print
- Download **literature** from the internet to **iBooks** to be read in the user's choice of font size, style, colour (eBooks, etext etc) or as an audio file – read "on the fly"
- Download **calculators** scientific calculators (eg **GraphicsCal**), talking calculators etc – use in conjunction with voice output and enlargement
- There are plenty of other curriculum materials out there eg **Periodic Table** which enlarges beautifully (\$1), **BuzzAldrin** for space and science information and there are loads of apps for literacy, numeracy, art, fun etc
- **Read2Me** is available for purchase and allows users to listen to etext files using text-to-speech technology, changing .txt files into spoken text.
- Dictionary and thesaurus can be downloaded for free or purchase eg **WordWeb** costs \$1 and works well with voice output
- **Pages** can be used to make fully accessible **ePub files<sup>2</sup>**
- **AroundMe** and **Navigon** uses GPS to establish where you are and what the local features are eg how to get to the nearest bank, coffee shop etc – and how to get somewhere when you are lost (very handy for a blind person)
- **ListRecorder** allows you to make an audio list – which could be the user's homework – then record answers to be delivered to the teacher via USB flash drive, email etc
- **TramTracker** can assist by letting the user know when the next tram is due and then notifying them of their stop in time to get off

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<sup>1</sup> Jim Pipczak – Technology Consultant, Vision Australia and low vision user of the iPad

<sup>2</sup> <http://support.apple.com/kb/HT4168>

- Nifty apps such as **Noogle Noggles** – take a photo and this application will search the internet for similar images and tell the user what the item is – no longer will opening a can out of the pantry be a surprise!
- Another app captures **barcodes** to identify the item for the user – so you can tell what flavour your Lite n' Easy meal is tonight
- **OCR software is available** – use the iPhone camera to take a photograph of text then run the OCR software over it and the document is then read out loud
- Extensive range of apps for those with communication impairments eg people with autism, intellectual disability, hearing impairment etc. **Expressionist** helps people communicate through 120 commonly used expressions and 1000 nouns. The application uses pictures to illustrate a concept. **Proloquo2Go** provides a full-featured communication solution for those that have a problem with speaking. It uses text to speech voices and symbols and contains a default vocabulary of over 7,000 items.
- Teach yourself a musical instrument, shop online, order a pizza, read a newspaper – there are even apps to teach you to write apps!
- There are over 400,000 apps – a list which is growing daily

### ***As a teaching tool***

- The teacher can dump **homework and assignments** on the student's iPad via the **DropBox** - setup a free account at **DropBox** which allows the user 2Gb of free storage space. Install on PC or Mac and files "dropped" into this drive will automatically appear in the Droptext app on the iPad. Further, changes made to the file on the PC or Mac will automatically update to the iPad.
- Fully accessible learning materials can be produced using **ePub** and Apple's **Pages**
- Actually as a teaching tool, the iPad is **only limited by the imagination** – one O&M instructor is using the voice output to access MetLink's train timetable, clicking on the link to Google Maps, coupling this with a drawing program and having her intellectually disabled low vision student draw onto the iPad screen a travel route plan!

### **In the future**

- Monash University are in the process of developing a solution which may turn the iPad into a **talking graphics calculator**
- The camera will probably be included as an off-the-shelf feature, as will an improved word processing package

Not only this, **the iPad is** a socially-valued device<sup>3</sup> – which will assist low vision or no vision user to appear cool to his peers – and has already given one secondary student the motivation to use access technology when he was previously a computer-refuser!

### ***Educational resources***

<http://ipodtouchclassroom.ning.com/>  
<http://ieducationappsreview.ning.com/>  
<http://atmac.org/>  
<http://support.apple.com/kb/HT4168>  
<http://www.dropbox.com/>

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<sup>3</sup> ie fun and groovy

## **Expo of Access Technology 2010 - just around the corner!**

This year's Expo is on Friday, November 26 from 10am to 2.30 pm at SVRC and promises to be a fabulous display of all the equipment our students might want to use. We already have reps from the following companies attending on the day: Blind Sports, Borders, European Eyewear, Guide Dogs, Humanware, Pacific Vision, Vision Australia and we'll even have a Support Skills stand. Over the coming weeks we are bound to have more companies to add to this list, so come along and get the latest on the latest.

There is a flier appended at the end of this edition of the Bulletin, for you to distribute.

## **Future Options (Our new 'column' following SPEVI day)**

From Marion Blazé:

Bevan Burkin was unable to present at our SPEVI day, but he provided the following information about WISE:

WISE Employment is a not-for-profit organization that specializes in finding rewarding employment for our participants. We have placed people with vision impairment into many employers, including Crown and the ANZ bank. At WISE, we can help you develop a resume, practice job interviews, purchase adaptive equipment and aids as well as get on the phone and promote your skills, abilities and qualifications to the market place. We can help with the additional costs that come with starting work: uniforms, public transport and taxi fares, training, licensing, software, hardware, qualifications ... you name it, we can probably help you financially. Our support continues for at least six months after you have found work – this is naturally tailored to your needs and desires.

Contact: Bevan Burkin (03) 9428 1788

## **Goal Ball Championships**

Source: QUT News - Queensland University of Technology News

The Commonwealth Games in Delhi may be stealing most of the sporting spotlight but there are athletes starring in our own back yard. The 2010 Australian Goalball National Championships has begun in Brisbane, one of the only team sports for the vision-impaired.

Follow the link below to find out more:

<http://www.qutnews.com/2010/10/08/goalball-championships-in-brisbane/>

Thanks to Rod Pritchard for passing on the link.

## **Space Song Contest**

The wakeup song has been a part of the space program since the days of the Apollo missions, and now NASA is giving you two chances to be a part of this history! Listen to and vote on your favourite song from a list of 40 previously played wakeup songs. The two songs with the most votes will be played during the Space Shuttle Mission STS-133.

You can also submit your own original song by January 10, 2011. The two songs with the most votes will be announced and played during the Space Shuttle Mission STS-134, scheduled to launch on February 26, 2011.

Vote or submit your own song by visiting the following NASA link

<http://support.perkins.org/site/R?i=W6K5x-sKCZKa0f8D3kDqyw>

Source: PerKids September 2010

## New Australian Paralympic Website

The Australian Paralympic Committee has recently launched a new corporate website at [www.paralympic.org.au](http://www.paralympic.org.au)

In the Sports and Classification section of the website you will find the following subsections:

- Summer and Winter Sports - these sections contain a profile of each of the Paralympic Summer and Winter sports, including a summary of the sport, disciplines or events, rules and equipment and the classification system for that sport (including a downloadable Classification fact sheet)
- Select-A-Sport - this tool is designed to help potential athletes identify which Paralympic sports they are eligible for, by guiding them through a series of steps answering questions about their disability/impairment.
- Understanding Classification - this section is designed to assist people in understanding the purpose of classification in Paralympic Sport, the athlete classification process, sports specific systems and minimal disability criteria.
- Athlete Classification pathway - describes the levels of classification as they apply to athletes at all levels of their competition pathway from provisional classification at entry into competition to elite international level.
- Get into sport - this tool is designed for those interested in the APC Toyota Paralympic Talent Search or wanting to register to be classified for a particular sport.
- Athlete classification masterlists - this section lists athletes in their respective sport whose class information is on file with the Australian Paralympic Committee.
- Classifier Portal - this section outlines the roles and types of classifiers, and responsibilities in Australia, as well a soon to be launched password protected portal that has access to copies of past athlete classification data, assessment forms, processes and procedures for the Paralympic sport in Australia.
- Classification Policies and Procedures - highlight the roles and responsibilities of sports organisations in Australia, and include policies as they refer to areas of classification within Australia.

Thanks to Jacob Hardiman, Development Coordinator VIC/TAS, Australian Paralympic Committee for this information.

## Job Vacancy

Education Queensland urgently needs to expand staffing for Vision Impairment in the Cairns region of Far North Queensland. A part time advisory teacher vision impairment position is available from Term 1, 2011. Carol Graham - 07 4046 5244 is the HR contact person for further information.

## iPod Touch

Jacob reports that he is having great fun with his iPod Touch ever since he found out how to activate the voice. He said it's easy to do. Just go to Settings, General, then down to Accessibility then VoiceOver and select on. There is also an option to make the print bigger in the same section. Thanks Jacob for those tips!

## Beyond Books Beyond Barriers

Thanks to Ramona for this information:

Yet another source for DAISY books to download and read in KeyBook is based in Western Australia, and it is there for all Aussies with a print disability.

The Association for the Blind of Western Australia is pleased to announce that its Beyond Books Beyond Barriers digital talking book library is now available to all Australians who are blind, vision impaired or have a print disability recognised under the Copyright Act in Australia. The library offers a catalogue of over 60,000 titles that are produced on demand in the DAISY digital talking book standard as users request them, and made available for download over the Internet. There is no fee for this service.

Application forms to access this service may be downloaded from:

<http://www.guidedogswa.org/signup/>

Return the forms to the Association by post, fax or email. There is also an online application available. The main library web site can be accessed at

[www.guidedogswa.org](http://www.guidedogswa.org)

## BrailleNote Training Videos

Heidi Littleford found this website which has great training information about the BrailleNote. You may already know about it but I thought the text files on each module were really easy to follow. <http://cat.buffalo.edu/refreshablebraille/training.php>

## Useful Tip for Student Support Group Meetings

Leanne Chaplin (Integration coordinator – Elisabeth Murdoch College) asks teachers who cannot attend SSG meetings to fill out a brief form. The form allows teachers to have input to the meeting and the SSG to have the benefit of the teacher's report. Apart from the usual student information, the headings are:

Planner use	Punctuality	Prepared For Class	Behaviour	Submission of Work	Works Independently	Current Achievement Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• Low</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• Low</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• Low</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• Low</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• Low</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High</li> <li>• Medium</li> <li>• Low</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Excellent</li> <li>• Very Good</li> <li>• Good</li> <li>• Satisfactory</li> <li>• Not Shown</li> </ul>

The form was adapted originally from a NSW Education Department document. If you would like a copy of the form please contact me at the SVRC [lynrobin@svrc.vic.edu.au](mailto:lynrobin@svrc.vic.edu.au)

## Support Skills News

We hadn't seen Group A since about the middle of term 3 so there was plenty of news from students:

- Kate has continued her sticky tape creation which was begun in an art class in term 1 and it is now larger than her hand – it's a disco ball. She also enjoyed a bonfire with friends, telling us how her dad tried to pull out a tree with his car ... but the rope broke.
- Naomi has also continued her sticky tape creation – it's a planet! Naomi has had a BrailleNote on loan from the Statewide Vision Resource Centre and brought it along to have about 20 files of her school work embossed before she returns it on Monday. But her big news is that she is moving to New Zealand to live in just four weeks – farewell to Naomi!



- Mohamed has also had the opportunity to use a BrailleNote on loan from the Statewide Vision Resource Centre during term 3 which he very much enjoyed. He's also learning JAWS and reports that at first he didn't understand the voice but now it is easy.
- Danijella attended her third Guide Dogs Victoria camp during the holidays and it has been her most favourite yet. She particularly enjoyed the dancing, fitness, running and theatre sports.
- Mish went to the Melbourne Show with her family and loved the water wheel.
- Sam also attended the Melbourne Show and took the opportunity to sit in the back of the police car.
- Mark bought 13 showbags at the Melbourne Show and loved the big slide.
- Husna is looking forward to high school and is doing well with her O&M training there.
- Sana had a sleep-over for a week with her cousins during the holidays

Another big piece of news was the Michael Donnelly, our Art teacher, has recently spent three weeks in the Cataract Gorge in Launceston (Tasmania) as an "Artist in Residence". He brought in some of his work – lino cuts, prints and a clay relief that he pressed into his lino cut. He is a very talented artist!!! If you'd like to enjoy some of his photos from Launceston, visit:

[http://picasaweb.google.com/donnart5/MichaelAtCataractGorge?feat=content\\_notification](http://picasaweb.google.com/donnart5/MichaelAtCataractGorge?feat=content_notification)

Group B were blown in the door on Friday 15 October a very wet and windy day! There wasn't much time for news from the group but here are some snippets:

- Tomorrow Josh is going to a specialist audio bookshop to buy up big on audio books. Bolinda, Louis Braille Productions, Borders and the ABC shop are great sources of audio books if you are looking! One of Josh's favourite authors at the moment is Alistair MacLean.
- Alistair has been attending his local pool to learn diving. He is able to do a full somersault from the 1 metre board – go Alistair!!
- We celebrated Cameron's birthday with some yummy cakes made by his mum – thanks mum!

In **Art** this month, students are making plastered fruit – true! Students wrap wet sticking plaster over fresh fruit (see photo right). If done correctly, the fruit gradually rots inside leaving an interesting fruit shape that will be painted next visit. Can't wait to see the plastered fruit bowl!



## Finally

And finally Peter, Southern Region student 2009, passed all his VCE examinations last year! Well done Peter! Also we have a free prize of two tickets to see "Legend of the Guardians" to give away just for reading this Bulletin! Just ring Deb or Lyn and mention the tickets – First to call wins! Call 03 9841 0242. Thanks to everyone for their contributions to this Bulletin, especially Deb Lewis, Annette Godfrey-Magee and Marion Blazé.

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

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

# **Statewide Vision Resource Centre**

## Expo of Access Technology for People with Vision Impairments

**When: Friday, 26<sup>th</sup> November 2010  
10.00am - 2.30pm**

***Where: Statewide Vision Resource Centre***

***370 Springvale Road, Donvale***

**in the grounds of Heatherwood School  
(please park in the lower carpark at the Sports Centre next door)**

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

**Come and see computer technology which enlarges or talks,  
electronic magnifier units, calculators, games, 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 access  
technology for people who are vision impaired.**

**Plan to spend the time to try out something new!**

**Cost: Free (and no need to register)**

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

or email [svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au](mailto:svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au)