

# The Bulletin

## Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Number 1

Monday 4<sup>th</sup> February 2013

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

### Professional Development Activities for 2013

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Educational Support for Blind Students</b><br>This day is designed for class and subject teachers, integration teachers and aides, therapists, parents/care-givers and visiting teachers who support students who utilise braille                                    | Monday 11<br>February                      |
| <b>Set for Success! 9.30am to 3.30pm</b><br>Students in years 10 to 12 are invited to a one-day workshop conducted by Glen Bowen – flier at <a href="http://svrc.vic.edu.au/PLglenneday.pdf">http://svrc.vic.edu.au/PLglenneday.pdf</a>                                 | Saturday 16<br>February                    |
| <b>New Visiting Teacher Orientation Day 9.30am to 3.00pm</b>  | Monday 25<br>February                      |
| <b>Educational Support for Students with Low Vision – Offered twice</b><br>This day is designed for class and subject teachers, integration teachers and aides, therapists, parents/care-givers and VTs who support students who have low vision (max participants: 60) | Tuesday 26<br>February &<br>Monday 4 March |
| <b>Visiting Teacher Professional Learning Day – Term 1</b>  | Tuesday 12 March                           |
| <b>Dot Power</b><br>Literacy-based activities for braille readers from pre-school to grade 3  | Tuesday 19 March                           |

The program for 2013 is available from this link: <http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/PL.shtml>

### Welcome to the New School Year

Welcome back everyone to the new school year. We hope it's a good one for you and your students. We have lots of fabulous things to look forward too, including the continuation of the rollout of equipment funded by the "More Support for Students with Disabilities" National Partnerships. The iPads are ready to go out so if you have completed the paperwork that was sent out at the end of last year please contact the SVRC to make a time to pick-up your student's iPad. There will be lots of technology workshops and Professional Learning days this term too, so be sure to check out the program: <http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/PL.shtml>

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## Accessibility added to Kindle Fire as blind group plans protest

Extract from Media Access Australia, December 12, 2012

Amazon has announced it will add accessibility features to its Kindle Fire and Kindle Fire HD tablets, increasing access to content on the tablets for blind and vision impaired users. This comes after the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) in the US announced it would stage a protest against Amazon's plan to push the use of its Kindle devices and eBooks at schools.

Running on a version of Google's Android operating system, the Kindle Fire and Kindle Fire HD (both 7 and 8.9) tablets will include text-to-speech technology, a voice guide, and the ability to change text size and colour. These accessibility features will be available on the tablets in early 2013.

The tablets allow users to access content on Amazon such as music, games, apps, magazines and eBooks, as well as browse the web through a WiFi connection. Kindle Fire uses standard definition while Kindle Fire HD uses high definition.

The accessibility features that will be added to Kindle Fire and Kindle Fire HD 7 and 8.9 include:

- Text-to-speech: This feature allows text content to be read by a synthesised voice, allowing blind or vision impaired users to access this information.
- Voice Guide: The Voice Guide is a screen reader for Kindle devices which announces actions on the screen. For example, if an eBook is selected to be opened, this information is announced as "Hunger Games. Book opened."
- Adjust text size: Users can adjust the font and text size to suit the user's needs.
- Adjust text colour: Users can change the colour of the text so that it is easier to read, in case they have vision impairment or are colour blind.

These accessibility features are only available on Kindle Fire. Other Kindle models feature adjustable text colour and size, however no text-to-speech feature is included.

In Australia, the availability of Kindle Fire, Kindle Fire HD 7 and Kindle Fire HD 8.9 is limited to a few retailers and some Amazon content remains restricted. Publishers can also opt to 'block' some of their eBooks from being accessed by text-to-speech technology. This means that blind users aren't able access Kindle eBooks on another eReader or device such as the iPad, as the dedicated screen reader or text-to-voice technology is not supported by the eBook. Kindle eBooks are also unable to be displayed on Braille devices.

For the rest of the article please go to:

[http://m.mediaaccess.org.au/latest\\_news/general/accessibility-added-to-kindle-fire-as-blind-group-plans-protest](http://m.mediaaccess.org.au/latest_news/general/accessibility-added-to-kindle-fire-as-blind-group-plans-protest)

## VCE French Immersion Camp – March 2013

Do you have a VCE student studying French in 2013? *Alliance Française de Melbourne* is running a VCE French Immersion camp at Portsea from 15-17 March 2013. This is an excellent way for students to brush up on their French.

For more information about this camp and other courses for VCE students go to:

<http://www.afmelbourne.com.au/french-courses/high-school-students/course-guide-y11-and-y12/>

## All eyes on Dan Dalton after scoring an ATAR of 96.55

Source: Herald Sun, 18 December 2012

### DANIEL Dalton likes a challenge.

And with an ATAR of 96.55, there is no doubt he has risen to it.

The 19-year-old Glen Waverley Secondary College student is blind - and chose maths methods, a subject never before attempted by a blind student. So all the study material had to be specially converted to Braille for him. He also did physics.

"The subjects were definitely very challenging, just because they're so visual," Daniel said. "Throughout the year and exams, I tried to do as much as I could independently."

The inspirational student said he had been hoping for an ATAR in the 90s, and "it probably exceeded my expectations".

Daniel wants to do a bachelor's degree in computer science at Monash University.



Daniel Dalton, 19, is blind and received the amazing score of 96.55 on his VCE results. Picture: Andrew Tauber Herald Sun

## Blind Sports Victoria Activities

### ***SunSmart Workshop***

The presentation will cover:

- Skin cancer in Australia
- The importance of sun protection in sport
- Factors that affect UV radiation
- The difference between UV and heat
- How to protect your skin both on and off the field
- Checking your skin and early detection

When: Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> February from 10.00 am to 11.30 am

Where: Cancer Council Victoria, 100 Drummond Street Carlton.

Please advise the Blind Sports Victoria office on 9822 8876 if you would like to participate in this workshop.

### ***Come & Try Soccer Day***

When: Wednesday, 27<sup>th</sup> February 2013.

Where: Venue yet to be confirmed.

Contact: Blind Sports Victoria on 9822 8876 for further information

### ***Tennis***

The vision impaired tennis program will be held at Melbourne Park (indoor tennis courts) on the following dates:

- Friday, 1<sup>st</sup> March 2013
- Friday, 8<sup>th</sup> March 2013
- Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> March 2013
- Friday, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2013
- Friday, 5<sup>th</sup> April 2013
- Friday, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2013

We are always looking for new participants and volunteers to assist with the program. If you would like to give tennis a try, contact Blind Sports Victoria on 9822 8876 or email

[blindsports@netspace.net.au](mailto:blindsports@netspace.net.au)

### ***Swimming***

‘Vision Impaired Swim Victoria’ is a learn to swim program for juniors that aims to provide a supportive and inclusive setting with coaches who have experience in teaching children who are vision impaired water safety and how to swim. It is run in two block; February to April, and October to December. The program is designed for children aged 18 months to 18 years. Your child doesn't need to have had any prior exposure to a pool in order to participate in this swimming program.

If you are interested in your child participating in this program, please contact Blind Sports Victoria on 9822 8876 or email [blindsports@netspace.net.au](mailto:blindsports@netspace.net.au)

## New Victor Reader Stream

Adapted from: <http://www.humanware.ca/web/en/Newsletter/111459.htm>

The new Stream is smaller with rounded corners with a tactile keypad access and simple bookshelf navigation. The new Victor Reader Stream features an improved, louder speaker, improved text-to-speech from Acapela, improved recording capabilities, faster USB transfers, and 32-gigabyte capacity SD cards, plus it easily connects to flash drives. And it offers the Softpak features of full stereo recordings, EPUB2 unprotected books, DOCX support, MP4 and iTunes M4A files, plus a built-in clock.

It will hold a multimedia library in your pocket with novels, magazines, music, audio described films, texts, and voice recordings. The new Victor Reader Stream can deliver content from your favorite sources, including DAISY, NLS, Bookshare, Learning Ally, plus books and music from iTunes. It also features integrated Wi-Fi for automatic software updates and future online features such as book downloads! For more details about the new Victor Reader Stream go to <http://visit.humanware.com/e/3332/newStream/32dqv3/588415132>

## BrailleNote Apex:

### ***New Version of Keysoft is Free***

KeySoft 9.2.2 for BrailleNote Apex is now available for free download. This version fixed a few bugs including where the keyboard would not immediately respond upon boot up. Download from: [http://support.humanware.com/en-usa/support/brailnote\\_apex/software/keysoft\\_92](http://support.humanware.com/en-usa/support/brailnote_apex/software/keysoft_92)

### ***Accessibility***

With the KeySoft platform, a BrailleNote Apex user has the ability to perform daily tasks ranging from simple note taking to braille interaction with today's popular iOS devices – and all with context-sensitive Help.

### ***Pricing***

HumuanWare continues to offer a trade-in program and has also reduced the price for the Apex models this year.

Visit <http://www.humanware.com/brailnote> or email [au.sales@humanware.com](mailto:au.sales@humanware.com).

## New Computer Game: Ballyland

Sonokids launched the beta version of their new game, Ballyland at the recent SPEVI Conference in New Zealand. The beta version of Ballyland, with limited features, is still under development. Developers are seeking feedback for Ballyland which will be available in mid-2013 first as a Windows application and later as a Mac version.

Ballyland is designed to:

- enable very young children who are blind or have low vision to explore and play – safely and independently – on a computer keyboard
- support the development of early keyboarding and preliminary touch typing skills that are essential for their future access to computers, information technology, and the internet.

Download Ballyland Beta for free from <http://www.ballyland.com>

## Essential Mobility: Orientation and Mobility Services

Essential Mobility is a provider of Orientation and Mobility Services for children and adults. Services are provided in an educational context with learning goals and strategies tailored to meet individual needs. Program content is aimed at maximising personal skills and abilities, to enhance safe and independent travel.

Services include:

- training in the use of mobility aids where appropriate including: long cane, identification cane, mini-guide, monocular, audible aids such as talking compass, digital recorder
- specific route planning and travel in school and community settings
- training in public transport use
- development and generalisation of sustainable skills
- training in traffic awareness and road safety
- development of problem solving and self-advocacy skills

O&M can be funded by TAC, case management brokerage and it can also be funded privately. Contact Dean Johnson for further information: 0426 215 547 [deanj@essentialmobility.com.au](mailto:deanj@essentialmobility.com.au)

## Services from Vision Australia

- Braille Grade 1 correspondence training materials are now available for \$30. Call 1300 84 74 66 and ask to speak to a Braille Trainer in your state or visit: <http://www.visionaustralia.org/living-with-low-vision/learning-to-live-independently/about-braille>
- Students who are interested in receiving braille for their tertiary studies should have the disability unit of their education provider register them with Vision Australia (as the education provider will be charged for the costs of alternative format production). For more details on Vision Australia's student materials production and the Registration Form visit: <http://www.visionaustralia.org/living-with-low-vision/library/youth-library/support-for-students>

## January-February Issue of JVIB

This month's articles and features include:

- The Effectiveness of a Multidisciplinary Group Rehabilitation Program on the Psychosocial Functioning of Elderly People Who Are Visually Impaired – Manna A. Alma, Johan W. Groothoff, Bart J. M. Melis-Dankers, Theo P. B. M. Suurmeijer, and Sijrike F. van der Mei
- Training of Paraeducators for Physical Education for Children with Visual Impairments – Lauren J. Lieberman and Paula Conroy
- Evaluation Study of Short-term Programs at a Residential School for Students Who Are Blind and Visually Impaired – Rona L. Pogrund, Shannon Darst, and Teryl Boland
- The Relationship Between Perceived Computer Competence and the Employment Outcomes of Transition-Aged Youths with Visual Impairments – Li Zhou, Derrick W. Smith, Amy T. Parker, and Nora Griffin-Shirley
- Research Reports  
A National Video Library for Teacher Preparation in Visual Impairments – Ellen Trief, Jim Lengel, and Laura Baecher
- Teaching Object Permanence: An Action Research Study – Susan M. Bruce and Claudia Vargas



## Round Table Conference 2013

**When:** Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> May to Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> May 2013

**Where:** Citigate Sydney 169-179 Thomas Street Sydney, NSW

**Theme:** Digital Literacy: Making the World Accessible

The theme of the conference Digital Literacy: Making the World Accessible will explore the influence of digital technologies on information access through guest speakers, panel sessions with industry experts, suppliers and will encourage healthy debate and discussion from delegates.

Enjoy great food and company at the conference dinner on Sunday 26 May.

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

**Email:** [admin@printdisability.org](mailto:admin@printdisability.org)

**Web:** <http://www.printdisability.org>

**Blog:** <http://printdisability.wordpress.com>

## Albinism Fellowship of Australia Conference: Fair GO!

**When:** Friday 11 October to Sunday 13 October 2013

**Where:** Rydges World Square

**Web:** <http://www.albinismaustralia.org>

## Student News and VCE Results

- **Caroline** (CEO – SMR) achieved a score of 94.64 – awesome Caroline!!!
- **Daniel** (EMR), who studied English Language, IT Software Development, Legal Studies, Maths Methods and Physics, achieved an ATAR of 96.55 and has a scholarship position for next year at Monash University in an industry-based IT Engineering course.
- **Veronica** (EMR) has been elected the Vice School Captain for 2013. Hooray for Veronica!!!

## VT News

- Congratulations to Gippsland Visiting Teacher **Sharon Saunders** – she has completed her Master of Special Education in Vision Impairment!!! Well done!
- **Barbara Forehan** is taking leave from VT (Eastern Region) in Semester 1 this year.
- **Charlie Roberts** will be working an additional day in Eastern Region in Semester 1 this year.
- **Faye Squires** has retired from VT at the end of 2012 and we wish her all the very best.
- **Helen Young** will also be on leave during Semester 1 this year
- **Sophie Michael** is taking leave from VT (Eastern Region) in Semester 1 this year.
- **Tracey Lancaster** will be working in Eastern Region in Semester 1 this year.

## SVRC News

- **Marion Blazé** will be out of action from the SVRC following a ladder v gravity episode in which she came off second-best! Oh Marion!
- **Christine Casey** is volunteering in Fiji in 2013 and during her absence, **Jordie Howell** will be teaching music on Support Skills.

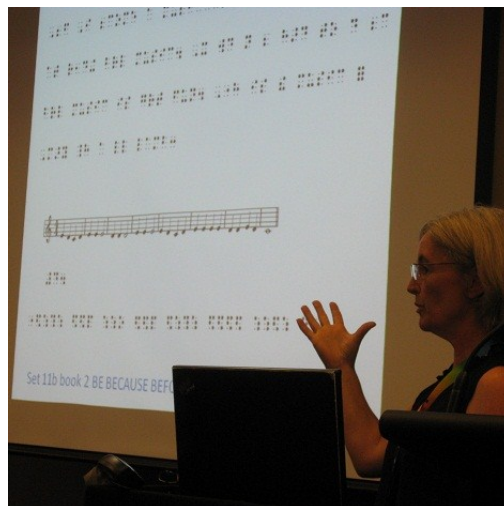
## News from the Field

- Thirteen Australian candidates sat the Trans-Tasman Certificates of Proficiency in Unified English Braille in term 4 year. Congratulations to **Kate Stephens** of Victoria who received a Credit for her work!

## SPEVI Conference

Sam Oxley, Leanne Nagel and Deb Lewis trekked across the ditch to Auckland, New Zealand for a Professional Development feast in January 2013.

Lea and Deb presented “Ozzie Dots”, a program designed to assist the teaching and learning of contracted braille and tactual graphicacy to beginning braille readers. There was a full house of interested participants and the presentation was well received. To the right, Lea discusses one of the stories which features braille music.



In the upcoming issues of The Bulletin, we hope to bring you snippets from the Conference; for example, you'll notice the entry in this issue for Ballyland, a new computer game for youngsters who are blind, have low vision or have additional learning needs.

## SPEVI Conference 2015

One of the upshots is that Victoria will host the next SPEVI Conference in January 2015. We were passed “the Conference baton” – SPEVI Bear – who will remain with us for the next two years!



Dressed in his Aussie gear – shorts, T-shirt and hat – SPEVI Bear enjoyed the sights and sounds of Auckland before heading back to Melbourne...



Photos show: Leanne and SPEVI Bear enjoying a hot chocolate; SPEVI Bear checking out the view from the Auckland Sky Tower; SPEVI Bear and Deb on a ferry and SPEVI Bear lending his hat to Frances Mary d'Andrea!

We know that SPEVI Bear will have an interesting time based in Melbourne for the next two years, so watch this space!

## Spare Mimeo?

Has anyone a Mimeo that is not being used? A student in the west would like to borrow it – please contact Deb.



## Finally

And finally thanks to everyone for their contributions to this Bulletin, especially Max Bini.

If you have something you would like included in “The Bulletin” please email Lyn Robinson [lynrobin@svrc.vic.edu.au](mailto:lynrobin@svrc.vic.edu.au)

To read The Bulletin online:

<http://www.svrc.vic.edu.au/Abulletin.shtml>





Statewide Vision Resource Centre

presents

# Educational Support for Blind Students

**When:** Monday 11 February 2013 from 9.00am to 3.30pm  
(Registration from 8.30am)

**Where:** Statewide Vision Resource Centre  
370 Springvale Rd Donvale

**Parking:** Lower carpark – next door at the Donvale Sports Complex

**For:** Class and subject teachers, integration teachers and aides, therapists, family members and visiting teachers

|       |   |
|-------|---|
| 8.45  | <b>Registration</b>   |
| 9.00  | <b>Seeing with our Fingers</b> – Annette Godfrey Magee, Education Officer, SVRC   |
| 10.00 | <b>Living Braille</b> – Garry Stinchcombe, Support Skills Co-ordinator, SVRC  |
| 10.30 | <b>Getting There: Mobility</b> – Lea Nagel, Educational Programs, SVRC  |
| 11.00 | <b>Morning Tea</b>  |
| 11.30 | <b>BrailleNote: Brilliance in your Classroom</b> – Lea Nagel, Educational Programs, SVRC  |
| 12.00 | <b>Success in the Primary and Secondary School</b> – Annette Godfrey-Magee & Lea Nagel, SVRC  |
| 12.45 | <b>Lunch (includes optional tour of the SVRC)</b> – please speak to a staff member  |
| 1.25  | <b>Braille Under the Microscope</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New to the braille code – Lea Nagel &amp; Maria Elford, SVRC</li> <li>• Not so new to the braille code – Garry Stinchcombe &amp; Lyn Robinson, SVRC</li> </ul> |
| 2.15  | <b>If I Do It Right They Won't Need Me Any More!</b> – Geoff Bowen, Psychologist, SVRC  |
| 3.30  | <b>Close</b>  |

**Cost:** \$55.00 including GST (Visiting Teachers \$22.00)

Payment includes a light lunch (maximum participants: 60)

**Registration is essential – by Wednesday 6 February**

**For further details or for an invoice:**

phone 9841 0242, fax 9841 0878 or email [svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au](mailto:svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au)



## Statewide Vision Resource Centre

presents

# Educational Support for Students with Low Vision

**When:** Tuesday 26 February 2013 from 9.00am to 3.30pm **OR**

Monday 4 March 2013 from 9.00am to 3.30pm

(Registration from 8.30am)

**Where:** Statewide Vision Resource Centre

370 Springvale Rd Donvale

**Parking:** Lower carpark – next door at the Donvale Sports Complex

**For:** Class and subject teachers, integration teachers and aides, therapists, family members and visiting teachers

|       |  |
|-------|--|
| 8.30  | <b>Registration</b>  |
| 9.00  | <b>Vision Impairment: What's it like?</b> – Staff of the SVRC & Robert Aaltonen, CEO   |
| 10.30 | <b>Morning Tea</b>   |
| 11.00 | <b>About Vision</b> – Annette Godfrey-Magee, SVRC  |
| 11.20 | <b>Strategies to Support the Student with Low Vision in the Classroom</b> – Sam Oxley, Visiting Teacher, Eastern Region                              |
| 12.20 | <b>Success in the Primary and Secondary Setting</b> – Annette Godfrey-Magee, Education Officer & Lea Nagel, Educational Programs, SVRC               |
| 1.10  | <b>Lunch (includes optional tour of the SVRC)</b>  |
| 1.50  | <b>Technology in the Classroom</b> – Lea Nagel, Educational Programs, SVRC<br><b>OR</b><br><b>Towards VCE</b> – Lyn Robinson, Resource Teacher, SVRC |
| 2.10  | <b>The Vision Impaired Student in Your Classroom</b> – Individual, Social and Family Perspectives – Geoff Bowen, Psychologist, SVRC                  |
| 3.10  | <b>Let's Hear it From the Students Themselves...</b> (Includes Q & A)  |
| 3.30  | <b>Close</b>   |

**Cost:** \$55.00 including GST (Visiting Teachers \$22.00)  
Payment includes a light lunch (maximum participants: 60)

**Registration is essential – by Friday 22 February**

**For further details or for an invoice:**

phone 9841 0242, fax 9841 0878 or email [svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au](mailto:svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au)



## Parking

There is no parking available at the Statewide Vision Resource Centre or Heatherwood School. Please park **in the lower carpark** behind the Donvale Sports Centre - the building beside (to the north) of the SVRC. You can then walk through the double gates and the Statewide Vision Resource Centre is to the left.

## Public Transport: Bus and train

The nearest and most accessible train station is Nunawading. Trains on the Belgrave and Lilydale lines run through this station. A bus also runs from Box Hill Central which also has good train access.

The Statewide Vision Resource Centre is serviced by **3 bus routes**.

- 902 Smart Bus, Chelsea to Airport West
- 271 Box Hill to Ringwood
- 273 Nunawading to The Pines

The 902 and 273 both leave from the Nunawading station. It is only an 8 minute trip to the SVRC.

