

The Bulletin

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Number 1

Friday 6 February 2015

Professional development activities for 2015

Event (see attached or website for fliers)	Date
Braille Day (flier attached) Also available by Video Conference in Footscray	Monday 9 February
Low Vision Day (same program offered twice – flier attached) Also available by Video Conference in Footscray on 23 February	Monday 23 February OR Tuesday 24 February
Skill Power Workshops (adults only) 9.30 Victor Reader with Garry Stinchcombe, SVRC 11.15 BrailleNote with Ramona Mandy, Humanware 1.30 iPad accessibility with Lyn Robinson, SVRC 2.45 File transfer for iPad including DropBox with Lyn Robinson, SVRC	Wednesday 18 February
New and Newish VT Day	Monday 2 March
Maria Elford's Retirement afternoon tea – please see below or call Dianne for more information	Tuesday 3 March
All Abilities Cricket Try Day – information coming soon	Monday 16 March
No Dot Power Day this term	-
Family Futures Forum 9.30am-12.30pm	Saturday 21 March
Big Arts Picnic – information coming soon	Saturday 28 March

Maria Elford retirement farewell: A celebration of a career in **SPOTS AND DOTS**

Please join the staff of the SVRC in an afternoon tea celebration of the career and now retirement of Maria Elford, braille transcriber extraordinaire and head of braille production.

Tuesday 3 March 2015 from 3.00 to 5.30pm

At Statewide Vision Resource Centre 370 Springvale Road, Donvale

RSVP to Dianne Skillern on 9841 0242 or diannesk@svrc.vic.edu.au by 24 February 2015. You are also most welcome to make a contribution to a retirement gift for Maria – please contact Dianne to arrange this.



To celebrate Maria's career in dots, you are invited to wear or bring something spotty!

Inside this issue

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Family futures forum – Saturday 21 March 2015

The Statewide Vision Resource Centre is facilitating a 'Family Futures Forum' in 2015. Parents of pre-school (birth to school-aged) children will be invited to attend a morning where they can meet with representatives of all Victorian support services for school-aged children with vision impairments. This will provide an opportunity for information gathering and asking questions about the transition to schools and supports in Victoria.

It is anticipated that the Forum will involve representatives from Statewide Vision Resource Centre, DEECD Regional Visiting Teachers, parent groups, Vision Australia Children's Services, Insight Education Centre, Guide Dogs Victoria, Independent Schools Victoria, Catholic Education Office, Blind Citizens Association, National Disability Insurance Scheme and Better Start Funding.

When: Saturday 21 March from 9.30am to 12.30pm

Where: Vision Australia, Kooyong in the 'Community Centre'

Who: parents of birth to school-aged children with vision impairments

Flier: attached

Applying for VCE Special Provision

As you are probably aware applications for special examination arrangements for students sitting units 3 and 4 examinations are due in the first Friday of March 2015. As part of the services offered by the SVRC, Lyn is available to attend VCE Support Group meeting to assist with this application process. Please contact the SVRC if you would like to arrange a visit. Visits are available for students from Year 10 to Year 12.

English Online Interview 2015

Source: DET Mail S004-2015 English Online Interview 2015 Assessment Period sent 20 January 2015

The 2015 English Online Interview assessment period will take place from 28 January to 27 February 2015. The Interview will remain open until 6 March 2015 to enable schools to finalise assessments. It is mandatory for Prep students to be assessed during the 2015 assessment period. Schools can elect to use the English Online Interview for students in Years 1 and 2 during the assessment period. A wide range of resources to support implementation of the Interview can be accessed from the English Online Interview homepage at:

www.education.vic.gov.au/school/teachers/teachingresources/discipline/english/assessment/Pages/default.aspx

If materials are required in braille, please contact the SVRC.

No Dot Power Day in term 1

Dot Power Day won't be running in term 1 this year. We have notified families so that they can plan accordingly – and we wanted to make sure that VTs, aides, early childhood educators etc were informed as well.

We hope this doesn't cause too much disappointment and we'll let you know about Term 2 in due course.

SPEVI Conference 2015: Reflections

Annette Godfrey-Magee:

The South Pacific Educator of the Vision Impaired Conference (SPEVI) was held in Melbourne over the holidays. It was a wonderful four day event with teachers, orientation and mobility instructors, orthoptists, occupational therapists and parents all actively engaged in a variety of well researched and well documented papers.

The key note speaker, Karen Wolffe was her usual brilliant self; emphasising to parents the need to get their low vision and blind children out in the community “networking” and actively engaged in looking for any opportunity to fully participate in sport, social groups and volunteering; all of these activities are the pre-cursor to employment.

Shiralee Poed’s presentation on Reasonable Adjustments reinforced just how well the majority of Victorian children with vision impairments are supported. MSSD National Partnership funding, the expertise of Visiting Teachers, resources and professional learning opportunities from the Statewide Vision Resource Centre, supplementary grants of equipment and building modifications, integration funding and the extraordinary good will and talents of the class teachers all offer children with vision impairments an opportunity to excel. All very positive stuff to start the new year.

From a parent participant:

SPEVI 2015 Time Out

Process, progress, organise
Sift and strain and scrutinize
Think, reflect and ruminate
Pre-occupy and inundate

Withdraw, compose, concentrate
Stillness, quiet, separate
Settle, soothe, lull and quell
Listen, hear, perceive as well

Befit, apply, appropriate
Attend and differentiate
Select, determine, designate
Prefer, elect and allocate

Undertake!

SPEVI, 14 January 2015

Transition letter:

Amy Mochi, one of the parent participants of the SPEVI Conference, presented a session describing her approach to beginning school for her daughter who has albinism. In her presentation, Amy read the letter that she prepared for the families of her daughter’s new classmates.

Based on this letter, Jasper’s mum Lee has written a similar letter for the families in her son’s new preschool. See the article in the 29 January 2015 issue of the Daily Mail Australia:

www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2929503/Most-just-like-touching-letter-mother-wrote-behalf-albino-son-4-classmates-day-pre-school.html

SPEVI Conference: What will I do?

Towards the close of the SPEVI Conference, Convenor Rachel Morgan asked us to reflect on what we, as participants, had learned at the conference that we planned to take back and implement immediately. With over 200 participants and a lot of responses, here is a smattering:

- I am going to make sure information about services, resources and support is disseminated to parents, in a more coherent way across the country.
- Seek funding to create a national website for parents which will draw together all the links to our wonderful providers, relevant sites and association – where parents can blog, request info and contacts.
- I will make sure that we have regular SSG meetings.
- Network with professionals I have met here to improve practise with students with vision and additional needs.
- Increase my understanding of literacy for children with vision impairments and develop skills with braille. Try out some new activities during physical education and consider modifications for students with physical disabilities.
- To investigate the development of initiative, imagination and humour in children with disabilities. What encourages this development and what impedes it?
- Try to form bridges between people doing similar work eg work with other organisations exploring 3D printing and tactile graphic groups. Publish links to new UEB resources on ABA website.
- Value of professional networking both formal and informal, with other colleagues from other jurisdictions and other countries – seeing/hearing how others do things.
- With the learner in mind, have noted many things down to take away with me to share and adopt. Share what I have learnt with parents/whanau – also with my colleagues who were not able to attend. Collating parts of my notes, with another colleague who is here and so keep new ideas/learnings alive. Share ideas with classroom teachers.

Great new video: The experience of blind education

NSW vision specialist Shane Doepel has created a terrific video from interviews with professional blind citizens from Australia and New Zealand who share their experiences and thoughts on the essential skills blind students need to access the Australian National Curriculum.

“The Experience of Blind Education”, with introduction by Kerry O’Brien, highlights the four skills that emerged as themes from interviews with 22 blind adult professionals.

Visit: <https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=G7tkplrOKZ0>

Accessible book

Thanks from Thai Nguyen from Vision Australia for this information.

‘SNIZZLY SNOOTS’ is an inclusive book for 5 to 12s. It’s attractive in a visual, tactile and auditive way. The different senses are engaged through tactile pictures, vivid contrasting colours, clear lettering, braille and audio.

Children with and without reading impairment can share their experiences and discover each other’s way of ‘seeing’. The audio CD contains the poems and a verbal description of the whole book. But it also serves as a true GPS for the fingers, cleverly guiding listeners to explore the pictures. In this way, all children learn playfully to broaden their experience of life.

See www.youtube.com/watch?v=XjO7Q6c-fSI for a demo!

For more information, see www.snizzlysnouts.com.

Clicker 6

From Geoff Bowen

The following is in regard to Clicker 6 which could be very useful for students with low vision who also have literacy issues.

The site for Clicker 6 Australian:

www.spectronics.com.au/product/clicker-6-anz-australiannew-zealand-version-2

The site for the App for Clicker:

www.cricksoft.com/uk/products/clicker-apps/clicker-apps_home.aspx

Siri user guides

Siri allows you to use your voice to navigate iPhones and iPads and do a whole lot more. E.g. you can ask Siri to open apps, tell you the time, make phone calls, email, tweet, search Google, schedule meetings or reminders.

Siri is a standard feature for using voice input on the iPhone and iPads, however like a computer you may need to use specific voice commands sometimes to get the best results. The following websites may be helpful.

- How to use Siri for iPhone and iPad: The Ultimate Guide
www.imore.com/siri-ultimate-guide
- Siri User Guide: Dictation Guide www.siriuserguide.com/siri-dictation-guide/

KNFB Reader app

The KNFB reader app for iOS7 devices has dropped in price again and is now about \$65 Australian dollars for a limited time, which is half the price it was originally:

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/knfbreader/id849732663?mt=8&ign-mpt=uo%3D8>

For more information on this app and what it does visit: www.knfbreader.com/

Focus on Ability Short Film Festival

What: Focus on Ability Short Film Festival

Prizes: Over \$100,000 worth of prizes

When: Open Entrant & School Comp (Closes 10 July 2015)

Send entry form with your video to: NOVA Employment Video Competition to PO Box 795, St Mary's NSW 1790

Students! Have you got an idea for a short 5 minute film about the abilities of someone with a disability or impairment? If you answered yes then why not enter the Focus on Ability Short Film Festival. 2014 saw 180 films entered and the winners shared in over \$90,000 in prizes.



The theme for the competition asks film makers to Focus on the Ability of people with a disability.

For entry form and more information including films from schools in previous years go to:

www.focusonability.com.au/

SVRC website: Access technology updated

The following pages featuring access technology options for students have been recently been reviewed and updated. Visit www.svrc.vic.edu.au/AT.shtml and click on the links:

- Atlases and maps
- Audio players and recorders
- Braille input and output devices
- Braille embossers and tactual graphics – hard copy braille
- Calculators and mathematics
- Computer access for students with vision impairments
- Curriculum for students with vision impairments – core curriculum and expanded core curriculum (ECC)
- Dictionaries
- Educational support materials for students with vision impairments – for example PE, Music
- Electronic magnification – including CCTV
- Enlargement for computer – software options
- GPS – navigation
- iPad for students with vision impairments
- Keyboarding and computer skills – including touch typing
- Lighting
- Magnification – telescopes and magnifiers
- Materials in alternative formats – audio, braille, etext, large print
- Newspapers
- Scanning and text capture
- Slantboards and Reading/Writing/Typing Stands – bringing documents closer to the eye
- Voice – talking hardware and software

For contact details about suppliers, visit the Suppliers and distributors page.

Every effort has been made to ensure this information on this website is accurate. If there are errors, they are unintentional. Please feel free to alert staff of the SVRC to factual inaccuracies. Further, fluctuations in the exchange rate of the Australian dollar may cause prices to change.

Microscope access for students with low vision

Here are two options:

WiFi Digital Microscope Camera

Attach this microscope camera to your microscope.

Adapters are available or purchase a microscope from this supplier.

Image is transmitted wirelessly to Android and iOS tablet or computer

USB power supply

AU\$584.10 from Labfriend

www.labfriend.com.au/wifi-digital-microscopy-moticam-x-9422

Digital Inspection System

Choose from 7 USB microscope cameras (OCS series are PC/MAC compatible)

7x - 45x monocular zoom microscope

Includes platform stand, 80 LED ring light, software (monitor not included)

Available from \$441 from Omano Summit OCS-V3

www.microscope.com/omano-summit-ocs-v3-digital-inspection-system.html#description_tab

Braille in the digital world

Excerpt from: www.theage.com.au/national/-12xwaa.html (with thanks to Helen Caldwell)

“Why in an age of e-books and audio, is braille so important? Imagine learning how to spell or use correct grammar and punctuation if you could only hear the words. That’s what it is like for people who are blind. And for some people, due to additional disabilities or personal preferences, using screen reading software is not an option. Braille is key to bridging that gap because it is the most effective medium to convey the core elements of literacy.”

VA: Calling all artists

Vision Australia is calling for works from artists who are blind or have low vision to feature in their 2016 large print calendar and diary.

People of all ages and artistic abilities are invited to submit work including photos of drawings, paintings, craftwork, mosaics and sculptures – anything that demonstrates our community’s creativity.

To submit a work of art for consideration to be included in the 2016 calendar and diary, email Helen Lloyd, Vision Australia’s Lottery & Merchandise Co-ordinator, for a submission form or further information: helen.lloyd@visionaustralia.org Submissions close on 6 March 2015.

In the Driver’s Seat Melbourne 2015

Where: Sandown Park, Corner Corrigan Road and Princes Hwy, Noble Park

When: Sunday 15 March 2015, 9 am to 4 pm

For further information: Daniel Singh on (03) 9876 8092

Also more details and online application: www.lionsclubwarrandyte.org.au/itds_pdo.php

This is a great fun day for people with vision impairments to drive a dual controlled car (at speed) in a safe environment.

Q&A

Question: I am researching if there is an accessible music recording software that works with JAWS or is accessible for a student who is blind?

Answer: We use Audacity with students who attend Support Skills. JAWS can do everything except select tracks. All other actions are menu based. Even better, it’s freeware. Once Audacity is open, space plays and stops and r records. Easy!

VCE results

- Message from **Ashley**: I just wanted to let you know that I received 98.40 as my final ATAR score. I was extremely overwhelmed and happy with this result. I was also offered the Access Melbourne Scholarship by the University of Melbourne. I am hoping to enrol in their Bachelor of Science course next year.
- From a very proud dad: Just wanted to let you know that **Jacob** was awarded the Year 11 Dux prize at his school yesterday, as well as the award for the VCE Units Business Management. He actually outperformed the year 12 students. VT **Prue Gunner** is delighted and full of praise for this fine young man!
- **Emma-Mae** has been accepted into the Conservatorium to study Music – nice work Emma-Mae!
- **Soraya** – has accepted a place at university to study psychology

More News

- **Fiona Eaton** who is an ES at Melba College supporting two braille students has recently completed the UEB Course in Literary Braille by Correspondence.
- And **Carla Stefania** from St Margaret's Primary School has also completed the course.
Excellent work Fiona and Carla!!!
- Support Skills students, Mathew and Luke, have appeared in the 23 January 2015 edition of Herald Sun with the rest of the family – see right. The family participated in a 3-day camp run by Guide Dogs Victoria over the summer holidays.

HERALDSUN.COM.AU FRIDAY, JANUARY 23, 2015



Vale Natalie Barraga

Frances Gentle passed on the following information:

I have received the very sad news that Dr Natalie Barraga has passed away at the age of 99 years. Dr Barraga has made a substantial contribution to the field of education for children with vision impairment, including her research and publications in the area of low vision and visual efficiency. Information about Dr Barraga's life and career (and video footage) is available from the "Hall of Fame" website of the American Printing House for the Blind, www.aph.org/hall/bios/barraga.html

Dr Barraga's funeral service was held on January 2, 2015, in Austin, Texas.

Finally

Editors Deb Lewis and Lyn Robinson would like to thank everyone for their contribution to this issue of The Bulletin, and in particular Max Bini, Sandy George, Heidi Littleford and Lea Nagel.

WELCOME TO THE 2015 SCHOOL YEAR – AND LET'S STAY IN TOUCH!

If you would like to contribute to The Bulletin please email svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au

To read The Bulletin online visit: www.svrc.vic.edu.au/Abulletin.shtml

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

presents

Educational Support for Blind Students

When: Monday 9 February 2015 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	Registration
9.00	Seeing with our Fingers – staff of the SVRC
10.30	Living Braille – Garry Stinchcombe, Support Skills Co-ordinator, SVRC
11.00	Morning Tea
11.20	Getting Around: Orientation and Mobility – staff of Guide Dogs Victoria
11.50	Success at School – Lea Nagel, SVRC
12.30	Lunch (includes optional tour of the SVRC) – please speak to a staff member
1.15	Braille Under the Microscope – Staff of the SVRC <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The experience of blind education • Introduction to the braille code OR iPad with VoiceOver / Tactual graphicacy
2.15	If I Do It Right They Won't Need Me Any More! – Geoff Bowen, Psychologist, SVRC
3.30	Close

Cost: \$66.00 including GST (maximum onsite participants: 60)

Visiting Teachers or family members \$22.00

Payment includes a light lunch (please bring your own fruit)

\$55.00 for participation via video conference

Registration is essential: by Monday 2 February

For further details or for an invoice: phone 9841 0242 or email pd@svrc.vic.edu.au

Statewide Vision Resource Centre

presents

Educational Support for Students with Low Vision

When: Monday 23 February 2015 from 9.00am to 3.30pm

OR

Tuesday 24 February 2015 from 9.00am to 3.30pm

(Registration from 8.30am)

Where: Statewide Vision Resource Centre, 370 Springvale Rd Donvale

Parking: Lower car park – next door at the Donvale Sports Complex

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

8.30	Registration
9.00	Low Vision: What's it like? – Staff of the SVRC, Guide Dogs Victoria & CEO
10.30	Morning Tea
10.50	About Vision – Marion Blazé, SVRC
11.10	Strategies to Support the Student with Low Vision in the Classroom – Gayle Skinner, Visiting Teacher, North-Western Victoria Region
12.10	Success at School – Lea Nagel, SVRC
12.40	Lunch (a light lunch will be provided)
1.20	Access to Information: iPad for Low Vision Users – Lyn Robinson, SVRC Technology in the Classroom – Lea Nagel, SVRC
2.10	The Vision Impaired Student in Your Classroom – Individual, Social and Family Perspectives – Geoff Bowen, Psychologist, SVRC
3.10	Let's Hear It from the Students Themselves... (Includes Q & A)
3.30	Close

Cost: \$66.00 including GST (maximum onsite participants: 60)

Visiting Teachers or family members \$22.00

Payment includes a light lunch (please bring your own fruit)

\$55.00 for participation via video conference

Registration is essential: by Thursday 16 February

For further details or for an invoice: phone 9841 0242 or email pd@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.

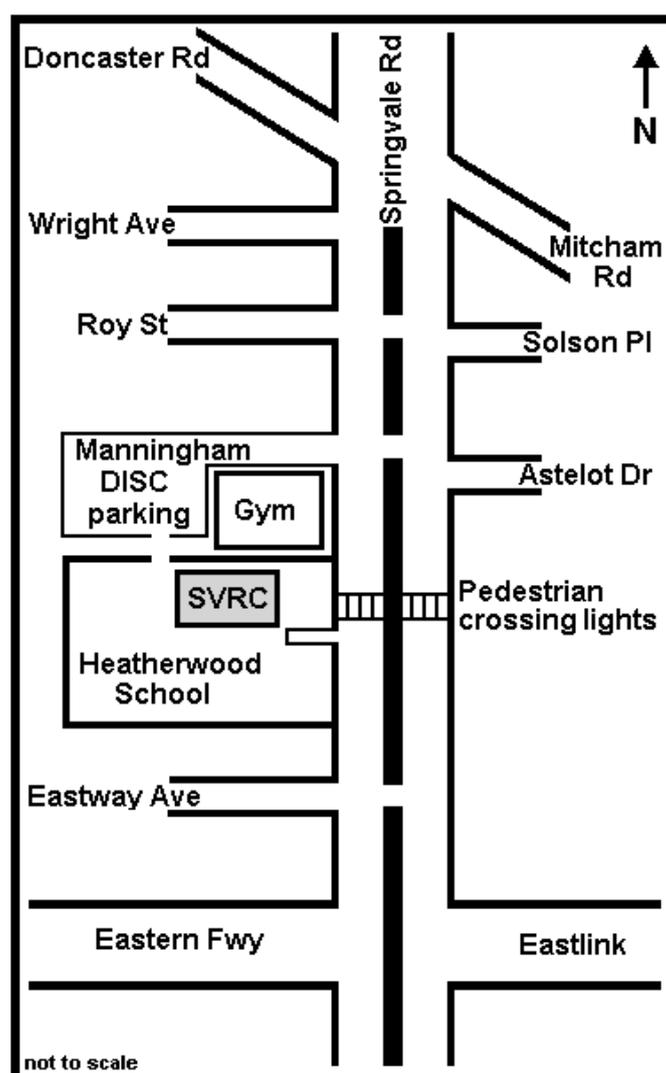
Public Transport: Bus and train

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.





What happens when my child starts school?

Family Futures Forum

March 21, 2015

For parents of children with vision impairments

The Statewide Vision Resource Centre is facilitating a '**Family Futures Forum**' in 2015. Parents of pre-school (birth to school-aged) children are invited to attend a morning where they can meet with representatives of all Victorian support services for school-aged children with vision impairments. This will be an opportunity for information gathering and asking questions about the transition to schools and the various supports in Victoria.

It is anticipated that the Forum will involve representatives from Statewide Vision Resource Centre, DEECD Regional Visiting Teachers, Parent groups, Vision Australia Children's Services, Insight Education Centre, Guide Dogs Victoria, Independent Schools Victoria, Catholic Education Office, Blind Citizens Association, National Disability Insurance Scheme and Better Start Funding.

Family Futures Forum

When: Saturday, March 21 from 9.30 to 12.30

Where: Vision Australia, 454 Glenferrie Road Kooyong in the 'Community Centre'.

Public transport: This venue is just North of Kooyong Station

Questions?

Please contact Deb Lewis or Marion Blazé
Statewide Vision Resource Centre (03) 9841 0242