The Bulletin
Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Number 13
Monday 23rd August 2010

This issue was edited by Marion Blazé and Deb Lewis, Statewide Vision Resource Centre.

Professional Development Activities for Term 3 & 4, 2010

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**Sorry – wrong date!!!**

Please note that in the last issue of the Bulletin there was a wrong date given for our next Dot Power day. It will in fact be on **September 14** which is a **Tuesday**. Apologies if we mucked up anyone’s diary.

Dot Power days are for young (pre-school and early primary school-aged) braille reading students. We run a day of fun activities related to braille, introducing ‘short cut words’, engaging in activities to read and re-read braille, writing braille, exploring tactual graphics and generally having fun together.

**Additional PD opportunity**

Freedom Scientific, the makers of such products as JAWS, MAGic, OpenBook, Braille Focus 40 Blue and PACMate, are coming to the SVRC on Monday August 30 (10 to 12).

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Statewide Vision Resource Centre PO Box 201 Nunawading 3131 (03) 9841 0242 svrc@svrc.vic.edu.au www.svrc.vic.edu.au
The Ultranet
Last Monday all DEECD schools were involved in Professional Development about the Ultranet, a powerful tool that will connect school staff with students, parents and each other throughout the state to support quality teaching and learning. SVRC staff took this opportunity to learn about the Ultranet by sending staff out to find out how schools were engaging with this technology. We would very much like to thank Heatherwood School, Ringwood Heights Primary School, Koonung Secondary College and Bulleen Heights School for their warm welcomes and generous sharing of information. We were able to reflect on how SVRC will use the Ultranet to support quality teaching and learning. Some ideas include:

- Our PD program could be shared with the calendar feature
- PD notes and content could be shared with PD participants
- Feedback from PD participants could be logged
- Support Skills Program and Dot Power could post subject outlines, a calendar, promotion of special activity days for specific families, feedback on student activities during the day
- Our Bulletin could be shared in an open page.

Leanne Nagel
Educational Programs Officer
Statewide Vision Resource Centre

Report on PD day – A Blind Child at my School – August 11
SVRC hosted representatives from three lucky schools who look like having blind preppies next year. Integration aides, teachers, VTs and one AP joined us for the day to learn about being blind, reading braille, funding, requesting materials and the expanded core curriculum. A comment from two participants at the end of the day was ‘This is going to be so exciting’ and ‘this was the best PD I’ve ever been to’. We look forward to our future relationship with these three schools.

Marion Blazé

SPEVI News – Don’t forget to register for October 4th AND Call for Posters for January 2011 Conference, Sydney
from Marion Blazé
I am currently putting together a document to share on October 4th, gathering information about all the agencies and resources we know of to assist you and your students with career paths, tertiary pathways and futures. If you have ideas to put into this document, please email them to Marion. **AND do remember to REGISTER by September, nominate a new Victorian SPEVI counsellor and put your name down for a 'SOAP BOX TOPIC' so that you can share your wisdom, creativity or experience with your colleagues. All the forms were in Bulletin Number 11 or you can obtain them by emailing Marion at marionblaze@svrc.vic.edu.au**

There is also a **CALL FOR POSTERS** attached to this issue of The Bulletin.

**Come and Try Tandem Bike Ride**
Vision Australia in Partnership with Blind Sports Victoria will be having a come and try tandem bike riding day at Kooyong on Wednesday 8th September. See attached flier.

For more detailed information and to register please contact Di Hayward on 9760 0006.
Vision Australia’s Further Education Bursaries

The Vision Australia Further Education Bursary 2011 for tertiary students with a vision impairment is now open for applications. The closing date is 29 October 2010. Please consider passing this information onto current and future domestic students who may not be aware of what a great opportunity it is for them to receive adaptive technology.

Visit [http://www.visionaustralia.org/bursary](http://www.visionaustralia.org/bursary) for the application form and more information.

Each year Vision Australia awards financial bursaries to tertiary students who are blind or have low vision for the purchase of adaptive technology such as CCTVs, laptops, screen reading and magnification software.

Vision Australia’s Further Education Bursaries aims to assist clients who would not otherwise be able to afford adaptive technology, thus increasing their ability to participate in further education. Since 1996, 191 bursaries have been awarded by Vision Australia to students studying a broad range of disciplines – from Arts and Music to IT and Business.

**Who is eligible?**

To be eligible, applicants need to:

- Be an Australian citizen or permanent resident of Victoria, New South Wales, the Australian Capital Territory, Queensland, the Northern Territory or Tasmania.
- Be (or become) a client of Vision Australia
- Demonstrate the need for financial assistance to purchase adaptive technology
- Be applying for, or enrolled in, a tertiary course graded Certificate IV or above
- Be available to attend a presentation ceremony in May.

**How to apply?**

To apply for a bursary, applicants need to:

- Complete an application form – download available from August at [www.visionaustralia.org/bursary](http://www.visionaustralia.org/bursary)
- Have an adaptive technology assessment specifically for the Bursary with a Vision Australia consultant
- Provide some documentary evidence (outlined on the application form).

Important dates: Applications open in August and close at the end of October. Recipients are selected in December, equipment is purchased and delivered after proof of enrolment has been provided (around March) and the Bursaries are presented at ceremonies in May.

For more information contact Max Bini, Tertiary Education Consultant, Vision Australia Freecall: 1300 84 74 66, Direct Line: 03 8378 1223, [http://www.visionaustralia.org](http://www.visionaustralia.org)

**August issue of Journal of Visual Impairment and Blindness**

The August 2010 issue of *JVIB* is available online! You may view the Table of Contents of the issue by going to: [http://www.jvib.org](http://www.jvib.org).

This month's articles and features include:

Interaction Effects of the Amount of Practice, Preferred Cane Technique, and Type of Cane Technique Used on Drop-off Detection Performance

--Dae Shik Kim, Robert Wall Emerson, and Amy Curtis

The Competencies, Roles, Supervision, and Training Needs of Paraeducators Working with
Students with Visual Impairments in Local and Residential Schools -- Sandra Lewis and Amy R. McKenzie

The Role of Sound in Encouraging Infants with Congenital Blindness to Reach for Objects -- Elfriede Ihsen, Heinrich Troester, and Michael Brambring

U.S. National Certification in Literary Braille: History and Current Administration -- Edward Bell

Practice Report
The Selection of Tangible Symbols by Educators of Students with Visual Impairments and Additional Disabilities -- Ellen Trief, Susan M. Bruce, and Paul W. Cascella

Research Report
Adapting Advanced Information Technology Network Training for Adults with Visual Impairments -- Helen L. Armstrong and Iain D. Murray

Plus Editor's Page; From the Field; News; and Calendar.

**A world first - a zooming magnifier!**

European Eyewear will soon have a magnifier which can zoom to increase magnification. With ‘MENAS ZOOM’ Eschenbach have combined two quite different lens forms to produce a stand magnifier with unique properties.

A brightfield magnifier (visolette) is combined with an aspheric lens to produce a magnifier that combines the qualities of both lenses:

- High magnification
- Superb image quality.
- Long eye-to-lens distance, giving comfortable reading distance
- Big field of view
- Compact design
- Variable magnification
- By twisting the aspheric lens, magnification can change from 2.2X to 3.4X

Compare what MENAS ZOOM offers to a conventional brightfield magnifier. These have a magnification of just 1.8X – yet with MENAS ZOOM the image is still in the same plane as the object, unlike conventional stand magnifiers, where the image is below the object.

MENAS ZOOM should be on European Eyewear’s shelves by the last week of August. Price $110 G.S.T. exempt.
Some fun with Themes in Windows 7

From Lea Nagel

A selection of standard themes is available in Windows 7, found by typing theme into the Search Programs and Files box at the Start Menu, or by going to Control Panel and Personalisation, or even by right-clicking on the desktop and choosing Personalization! Change your desktop background, window colour, set of sounds and screen saver. Through the Ease of Access Center, you can find Windows High Contrast Themes.

But what if standard themes do not meet your needs? Try this:

- Select a Windows 7 Basic Theme
- Go to Personalization
- Window Color and Appearance
- Advanced appearance settings

There, you will see a drop down menu entitled Item. Drop it down and you will find a list of elements for which you can choose colour and font. I currently have my Selected Items pink. Eww!

Once you have made changes in this menu:

- Select OK
- In the Window Colour page, select Save Changes
- Now back at the Personalization page, select Save Theme

You have now added a custom theme which you can pick when you like. If you share your computer, each user can open their theme quickly and easily.

There's more! Bring your theme with you! If you select your theme and press the applications button or right-click, you can choose Save Theme for Sharing. Here you can decide where to save the theme. Perhaps you might choose to save to the school server, or a USB memory stick and then apply it to any Win7 computer you use.

Enjoy!

4th Australasian Orientation & Mobility Conference – Sydney, November 24-26, 2010

Registrations are now open!


There are now also links to:

- details on registration costs
- a draft conference program
- a draft pre-conference workshop program and topic outlines
- accommodation options

The 4th Australasian Orientation and Mobility Conference (AMC2010) will take place between 24-26 November 2010, and will be hosted by Guide Dogs NSW/ACT at The Women's College within the University of Sydney, NSW, Australia. This is a conference for the professional development of Orientation and Mobility specialists, including Guide Dog specialists and those with a professional interest in vision impairment. We envisage AMC2010 will be a platform for the sharing of new ideas and offer delegates the opportunity to “think outside the square”.

For more information please email: amc2010@guidedogs.com.au
You can also follow us on Facebook and Twitter @AMC2010Sydney
Scholarships for Children of Veterans intending Tertiary Studies in 2011

In 2011 the Australian Veterans’ Children Assistance Trust (AVCAT) is expecting to give financial assistance for up to 65 students under many different scholarship schemes. All schemes help the selected children in need of the Australian veteran community with the costs of tertiary education. Applicants are considered for all schemes for which they are eligible.

Applications open on August 18 2010. To apply you must be:

a. Within the means test. That is eligible on assets and income grounds for Youth Allowance benefits for full-time education.

b. Enrolled, or planning to enroll in a full-time course of tertiary education in Australia by attendance at a university, TAFE or college. The course must be of one or more academic years length and at undergraduate level.

c. The child or grandchild of a person who has operational service with the Australian Navy, Army or Air Force, or if not has three or more year’s continuous full-time service as a member of the Australian Defense Force.

d. Under the age of 25 years when applying, unless exceptional circumstances related to veteran’s service exist.

The largest scheme is the Long Tan Bursary funded by the Australian Government. There are 50 new bursaries each year. They are valued at $9,000 each which is paid at $3,000 per year for three years. There are selection quotas for each State and Territory. To apply you must be the child of an Australian Vietnam Veteran, be resident in Australia, be entering any year of tertiary study, having not previously received a Long Tan Bursary.

The other national schemes are the AVCAT Bursary, the two RSL Scholarships, three Vietnam Veterans’ Peacekeepers and Peacemakers Scholarship and the Defence Force Welfare Association Scholarship. George Quinsey Scholarships directly pay tuition fees for economics, commerce and accountancy studies. There are also regional scholarships. In NSW, there are three from Brisbane Water Legacy covering Gosford/Wyong NSW and one from the NSW TPI Association. Some private donors offer two scholarships to resident NSW applicants. In SA, the VVAA also offers a scholarship.

Schemes vary between $3,000 and $5,000 per year each. Some are restricted to location of residence or studies. Most require veteran service in Vietnam but others are broader in eligibility criteria. Most schemes continue payments for later years of study. All scholarship schemes but one pays monthly instalments. That scheme helps with tuition costs for courses in commerce, economics and accountancy. In addition to the above there is one grant per year to assist a handicapped eligible veteran’s child or grandchild with special extra costs of transition to tertiary studies or employment

Applications open on 18 August 2010 and close on the 31 October each year.

To receive an application form, register interest on 1800 620 361 or by FAX: 02 9213 7307, or Email: avcat@dva.gov.au

Postal Address: AVCAT PO Box K978, Haymarket, NSW 1240

VA Camps and activities

See attached for holiday activities being offered by Vision Australia during September this year.
The Canadian Braille Authority adopted the UEB as their braille code on 24th April 2010, stating:

- Whereas UEB has been adopted as a code for international use by the International Council on English Braille, and
- Whereas UEB has been adopted and implemented in other English-speaking countries thereby increasing the braille materials available in the same English braille code to people who are blind in the developed and developing world, and
- Whereas UEB is one code for literary and technical material which encourages a seamless approach to the instruction of technical subjects, and
- Whereas training materials are available,
- Therefore be it resolved that the Canadian Braille Authority adopt UEB as the preferred code to be implemented in Canada.
- To this end, CBA will provide the necessary leadership to bring provincial ministries on side with implementation and will help develop strategies to achieve successful outcomes for all stakeholders.

The status of other English-speaking countries is as follows:

- Australia – UEB adoption May 2005
- New Zealand – UEB adoption November 2005
- Nigeria – UEB adoption February 2005
- South Africa – UEB adoption May 2004

- The Braille Authority of the United Kingdom (BAUK) will consider the adoption of UEB in 2013.
- The Braille Authority of North America (BANA) has not formally considered the adoption of UEB in the US but it is monitoring the results of the introduction of UEB in other countries.
Like to become a piano tuner?

On Friday August 6th we had a special visitor at Support Skills. Graeme McGowan the piano tuner came to tune our piano, but not only that, he talked to the SSP students about his career. Graeme is passionate about his work and he’s only been doing it for forty years!! He trained at the old RVIB and then did a course in America. He picked up contracts with Allen’s and Billy Hyde and also chased a lot of work for himself. He manages his business on his BrailleNote. There is nowhere in Australia to train for this profession, but if enough young people were interested, Graeme would love to start up a school and workshop. He says you don’t really need an ear for music to do it, because it all depends on the frequency of vibration of the strings, and counting the vibrations (or something?!). But the most musical of the students in Friday’s SSP group was certainly the most easily able to hear what Graham was talking about. If you’ve never explored inside a piano, I can tell you, this was quite an experience!

Support Skills News

Group A, with students from year 3 to year 7, attended on Friday 13th August under cloudy skies. During the "Welcome" session, students described their involvement in a variety of interesting activities including:

- Naomi and Kate have continued with their sticky-tape art which was begun in term 1. Both girls have made quite an effort - and we thank their parents for allowing them the sticky-tape necessary for their creative expression.
- Sam will be visiting the Werribee Sewage Plant later this term to investigate sustainability.
- Danijela will be attending a camp in Anglesea where she will be sharing a cabin with three of her class mates. There is a flying fox at the camp which Kate described as taller than the building but not as high as a plane flies.
- Mohamed and Naomi have BrailleNotes on load at present and are enjoying reading books from electronic files.
- Justin will be participating in an overnight camp at Werribee Zoo where he will be sleeping in a tent - sounds like a lot of fun!!!
- Naomi sang at her local school and Kate performed at the music festival at the Geelong Performing Arts Centre where she wore a blond wig - sounds like a lot of fun too!
Staff and Student News

Marion takes Fred to Healesville Sanctuary

Many of you will be aware that last term we had a student teacher from Kenya working at SVRC. His name is Fred and he is blind. From chatting with Fred, we realised that having grown up blind in Kenya, he did not know much about our Australian animals. Marion (and her son, Jeremy) arranged to take Fred to Healesville Sanctuary over the last school holidays, and shared quite an experience with him. We went to the feeding of the kangaroos, so that we could pat them, and then the Education staff at Healesville opened up their Learning Experience Centre for some close encounters with other animals. Fred was not very happy about touching some of the reptiles (he reluctantly got as close as touching the skin which had been shed by a snake), but he loved the ringtail possum which crawled around his broad shoulders and licked at his ears. Here is a photo of Fred proudly sporting his Socceroos scarf, a parting gift from the SVRC staff.

Natalie Barraga turns 95!

From Sherry Cunningham (who we hear is returning a day a week to VT in Gippsland – excellent!)

Her party invitation reads: Very soon a very special lady is going to complete her 95th revolution around the sun. She has been a star to countless people in the US and around the world. She has been a very special friend to her colleagues, students, community friends, and especially to children who have low vision and blindness and to their parents. This lady has traveled the planet, communicated through verbal presentations, written word, and through her presence in countless cultures where her star shines. Staff of the SVRC wish her well!

Finally

This Bulletin was put together by Marion Blazé and Deb Lewis while Lyn was on a bit of LSL. Thanks to everyone for their contributions to this Bulletin especially Lyn Robinson (in absentia), Di Hayward and Lea Nagel.

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

"Unlocking Student's Potential: What's working for you?"

Call for Posters

All SPEVI members and conference participants are welcome to contribute posters. This is an opportunity to showcase your research or your organisation's services.

What is a poster?

A poster is between one and three large pieces of paper (or a flight of smaller sheets pieced together). A poster is an opportunity to produce a very short article and discuss it with your peers. It may be an overview of a technical topic, problem, question, product, or case study. It may include drawings, text, or whatever you need to make your point.

The typical poster is not just a shortened version of a conference talk (although those are acceptable!); posters are less formal, more interactive, and may provoke argument. Your poster will be on view throughout the conference, so the main ideas should be clear without explanation.

Why posters?

- Increase the variety of points of view aired at the conference
- Encourage two-way communication
- Allow detailed and esoteric presentations
- Provide a forum for “small” presentations (ideas shorter than a conference paper, of interest to only a few people, or which are best communicated graphically)

Technical specifications

From one to three poster-pages, with text large enough to read easily from 1 metre away. MINIMUM FONT SIZE FOR ALL TEXT: 18 pt. No need to be fancy; hand-written with markers is fine! Use paper (or card stock) not Foam-Core (it is very difficult to attach thick material to the bulletin board).

No more than the equivalent of 3 poster-pages per presentation, with each poster-page 22" x 28" maximum (56 by 71 cm).

Poster presenters must print their own posters and bring the posters to the conference, or send them in advance, or create hand-written posters on-site using paper and markers. Use Velcro tabs to attach your poster to the board. Please supply your own Velcro. Provide an envelope where people can leave their cards for more information. You are responsible for setup and take-down of your poster during the dedicated times.

To reserve space for a poster presentation, or with any questions on posters, send email to michele.cutrupi@ceosyd.catholic.edu.au.

(Poster presenters should send Michele Cutrupi your title and a few words describing the topic). Posters need to be submitted by Friday 12 November 2010.

Conference Flyer is at the SPEVI Homepage http://www.e-ility.com/spevi/conf2011.php
Tandem Bike Riding
At Kooyong

Vision Australia and Blind Sports Victoria

 Invite you to a

“Come N Try”

TANDEM BIKE RIDING DAY

Wednesday 8th September 2010

At Vision Australia
Cricket Pavilion
454 Glenferrie Rd
Kooyong

10-30am Until 2-00pm

Registration $8-00 Includes Sausage sizzle
RSVP By Friday 2nd September

For further details contact
Di Hayward (Rec Development Worker) Ph 9760 0006
School Holiday Fun
For children aged 9-12

Activities will include:

- Orientation to the Kooyong site with an orientation and mobility instructor
- Visit to Vision Australia Radio to find out how the station operates
- Fitness session in the gym with a physiotherapist
- Food preparation for lunch with an occupational therapist
- Technology session with an adaptive technology consultant
- Time to relax and socialise over games

Thursday 30th September 2010
10:00am-3:00pm

Vision Australia Kooyong
454 Glenferrie Rd, Kooyong
(Melway Reference: Map 59 D3)

Cost: $10 to cover lunch

RSVP by Friday 10th September, to:
Lyn Howard, physiotherapist: 9864 9532
Karen Williams, occupational therapist: 9864 9503
School Holiday Fun
For teens 13-18

Activities will include:

- Orientation to the Kooyong site with an orientation and mobility instructor
- Visit to Vision Australia Radio to find out how the station operates
- Fitness session in the gym with a physiotherapist
- Food preparation for lunch with an occupational therapist
- Technology session with an adaptive technology consultant
- Time to relax and socialise over games

Thursday 23rd September 2010
10:00am-3:00pm

Vision Australia Kooyong
454 Glenferrie Rd, Kooyong
(Melway Reference: Map 59 D3)

Cost: $10 to cover lunch

RSVP by Friday 10th September, to:
Lyn Howard, physiotherapist: 9864 9532
Karen Williams, occupational therapist: 9864 9503
"Stop, Look, Listen & Think"

An introduction to road & traffic safety

How to be safe around traffic, in the car & while playing.

A program for school children, aged 5 - 8 years old

When: Wednesday September 29

Where: Vision Australia (Children's Services), Kooyong
454 Glenferrie Road, Kooyong (enter via blue door)

Time: 10.00am—3.30pm
What to bring: Lunch & drink
Cost: $5.00

RSVP: Tuesday September 10th
Gail Stinchcombe Orientation & Mobility Specialist
9864 9534