

Number 5, Friday 3 May 2024

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PD events

On demand Professional Learning

- Inclusion of students who are blind
- Inclusion of students who have low vision
- Inclusion of students who have vision impairments and additional disabilities
- Preparing your school for a student who reads braille

Register via the [SVRC website](#).

SVRC Professional Learning days in Term 2, 2024

SVRC has two fabulous PL days coming up. They are hands-on and on-site at SVRC.

May 7 – Teaching and learning with braille music – facilitated by Jordina Howell and Sarah Kelly. [Register here](#).

June 18 – Inclusion for VI students in Maths facilitated by Charlie Roberts. [Register here](#).

Please visit the [SVRC website](#) to register and for the links to the program outlines.

Message from the Managers

Source: Kim Foley and Jane Barker, SVRC

How glorious the Autumn colours are in Victoria at the moment! As our deciduous plants begin their dormancy, SVRC is bustling with life. Recent success with a grant application means we are to look forward to a refurbishment of our toilet facilities and with the back door access being upgraded with a ramp in the very near future, we are excited to see our old 1970s building becoming more inclusive of all.

SVRC is very excited to be selected to trial the new assistive technology the Monarch, an innovation dynamic tactile device with a multi-line braille technology. The Monarch enables students who are blind to access and engage in STEM subjects with spatial and tactile graphics at the same time as their peers. Students who attend our Support Skills Program this term will have the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the new technology. Humanware, Vision Australia and Quantum RLV are organising a free interactive workshop on Wednesday 5 June at Vision Australia, Kooyong Melbourne. More details are available in the Bulletin.

On Tuesday afternoon at the Community of Practice, Monash University Occupational Therapists students who have been on placement at the SVRC over the past year gave a presentation of their project. They presented their Daily Living Skills handbook, "Building Mealtime skills" to the visiting teachers. The handbook will eventually be available on our website. Thank you to Marion and Di for their regular support and guidance in supervising the university students over the past year.

Useful Links for JAWS Screen Reading Software

Source: Di Bennet

Here are some useful links to support students learning JAWS screen reading Software:

- [Teachers Resources](#)
- [Getting Started With JAWS](#)
- [JAWS Training](#)
- [JAWS Training Videos](#)
- [JAWS Hotkeys](#)

SPEVI and SVRC host symposium presented by Royal Dutch Visio

Source: SVRC

You are invited to our SPEVI Symposium. This FREE online event is brought to you through a unique partnership: organised by SPEVI Inc, hosted by Statewide Vision Resource Centre Victoria, and presented by Royal Dutch Visio.

SPEVI members and non-members welcome. The session will be recorded and made available to registered participants.

When: Tuesday 14 May, 3:00 – 4:00 pm AEST.

Topics: "Me and Rick", a program teaching spatial concepts to young children who are blind and the "Braille Box" project for pre- and early braille learners.

Keynote speakers: Ans Withagen, Evert Rasing, and Ruben Brandsma, Visio.

More information and the link to register (required) can be found on the [SPEVI website](#).

Stay tuned for more details.

Our Vision Works Art Exhibition

Source: Guide Dogs

My Vision Works is a group of legally blind artists who exhibit regularly and offer support to artists with low vision.

The artists share their skills such as finger painting, focused lighting, imagination and strong colours and contrast.

During 10-17 May, Our Vision Works will be hosting art from Claire Hogan, Madeleine Popper, Jack Fitz-Walter and Sarah Hocking at the Guide Dogs Victoria Campus: 2-6 Chandler Highway, Kew, 3101.

Guide Dogs would love to invite you to a special opening night on Friday 10th May from 6 – 8pm.

Enjoy light refreshments whilst viewing the wonderful artworks of Claire Hogan, Jack Fitz-Walter, Sarah Hocking and Madeleine Popper, as well as the shimmering rich overtones of Harpist Annette Leishman during this immersive experience.

Please ensure you register your interest below to avoid missing out! Register via the [Humanitix website](#).

If you are unable to attend our special opening night, please feel free to attend one of our daily sessions running from Saturday 11 May to Friday 17 May. No need to register your interest, simply come along and enjoy the art. For more information visit the [Guide Dogs website](#).

Online information session for parents of students with vision impairments

Source: Melissa Fanshaw

You are invited to the SPEVI Community of Practice, specifically for Parents and Carers of children/young people with blindness and low vision.

When: Monday 13 May, 2024, 7pm-8pm AEST.

Location: Online via Zoom

Topic: Ideas for Leisure and Recreation for children/young people with blindness and low vision

This session will be facilitated by Melissa Fanshawe, co-president, SPEVI and Melinda Whipp, parent volunteer facilitator on the Vision Australia Parent Community (both parents of young people with blindness and low vision). [Register here](#).

APH Training Modules

Source: Di Bennet, SVRC

The American Printing House for the Blind (APH) have a series of very useful [YouTube](#) training modules, check out their wide range of topics.

Participate in a FREE professional learning workshop day on the [Monarch](#) and the NEW ebraille file format

Source: Humanware

Humanware and partners Vision Australia and Quantum RLV invite Vision Teachers, Braille Transcribers, and Alternative Format Producers to participate in a one-day hands on professional learning workshop on the new Monarch, an innovative dynamic tactile device that is a first in multi-line braille technology.

Spaces are limited, so act quickly to secure your spot!

Workshops will be held at the following locations:

- Monday 3 June 2024 Vision Australia Coorparoo, Brisbane
- Wednesday 5 June 2024 Vision Australia Kooyong, Melbourne
- Friday 7 June 2024 Vision Australia Parramatta, Sydney

Andrew Flatres, Monarch Project Manager, and his team of Monarch trainers will facilitate this interactive workshop. The session will highlight the Monarch's transformative impact in classrooms, enabling blind students to engage spontaneously in STEM subjects and access spatial content and tactile graphics – which are often absent from textbooks due to cost and time constraints.

[Register here](#) for the Monarch professional learning workshop and join us on this exciting journey!

Workshop Learning Objectives

Attendees will gain practical, hands-on experience and learn all about Monarch using realistic classroom workflows. Listed below is an outline of the knowledge attendees will gain from participating in this training:

- What is the Monarch?
- Why, when and how would you introduce it to your students?
- What is this new Braille file standard "ebraille" that I keep hearing about?
- Monarch physical layout
- Navigating the interface and menus
- Creating documents
- File manager exploration
- Working with Math content using the integrated Desmos equation editor
- Exploring tactile graphics
- Creating Tactile Graphics

At the end of the workshop, all participants will receive handouts to maintain their knowledge and will receive a Monarch Master award certificate.

We look forward to seeing you there!

Panel discussion with artists who have a vision impairment

Source: Arts Centre Melbourne

Featuring Micaela Schmidt, Olivia Muscat and Lauren Hayes "The working artist redefining access" on Tuesday 25 June 3pm to 5pm, free, at The Channel, St. Kilda Road Terrace, Southbank. For more information and to register here visit the [Arts Centre Melbourne website](#).

Year 6 Student Successfully Makes it to State Swimming

Source: Olivia Chan, 22 April 2024

Year 6 student Olivia made it to State swimming trials on Friday the 19 April at MSAC (Melbourne Sports and Aquatic Centre).

In early February 2024, Olivia participated in her schools swimming trials event. She finished first place, due to her disability classification, meaning she verses people at her level.

A couple of weeks later, Olivia was chosen for the school district team, competing with other schools. Olivia won a first place ribbon for both freestyle and backstroke and was glad to find out that she was going to be going to division.

During the week of division, Olivia practiced hard, hoping to be good enough to get into regionals.

"Even if I don't get into regionals, I'll still try my best," she said.

Olivia again won first place in backstroke, moving on to regionals.

The pressure was on for Olivia, as she swam for her school in regionals. Olivia was extra nervous this time because she was competing in the multi class event, and also knowing that if she won, she would be going to state. Olivia won a first place medal again and beat her time by 4 seconds.



Education Support Staff Wanted

Source: Kilberry Valley Primary School

Kilberry Valley Primary School in Hampton Park are looking for an ES who has experience working with students who have Low Vision. Please contact the school if you are such a person.

An idea for a padlock for your locker

Sometimes students with vision impairments can struggle with combination locks on their lockers in secondary school. Did you know, you can get padlocks that open with touch ID? Several models are available online. You can even purchase from [Bunnings](#) such as the Orion 45mm Grid Connect Smart Fingerprint Padlock, costing \$50.97.



Guide Dogs Victoria Mobility Olympics Camp July 1 to 3 2024

Source: Guide Dogs

On this three-day camp for primary school students living with low vision or blindness, participants will travel to a range of Olympic-themed activities around Melbourne, where they will try new experiences, navigate public transport and learn about problem-solving, self-advocacy and decision-making.

Where: City CYC, 538 Collins Street, Melbourne

The cost per participant is \$2,880. All meals and activities organised.

Programs can be funded through a child's NDIS plan. NDIS funding covers the service delivery of Orientation and Mobility and Occupational Therapy skills, but does not cover meals, activities, accommodation or overnight costs.

To register for Mobility Olympics Camp, please contact Thomas Edwards via email: thomas@guidedogsvictoria.com.au

Braille Challenge Comes to Australia

Source: Round Table list

Guess what? Australia's is having its FIRST-EVER Braille Challenge this May!

The Braille Challenge, created by the [Braille Institute of America](#), is not just a competition. It's an educational experience that celebrates the braille brilliance of children aged 6-19 with low vision or blindness!

Children will engage in challenges including reading comprehension, spelling, and more! Plus, there are some seriously awesome prizes to be won!

The big braille challenge is happening Wednesday, May 22nd, at the See Differently Gilles Plains campus in South Australia.

Do you know a child aged 6-19 who has braille skills and can take on the competition? Call 1300 944 306 to register or visit the [See Differently website](#) for more information.

National Braille Music Camp

Source: Ashleigh Malone, Secretary on behalf NBMC committee

The 37th National Braille Music Camp will take place as usual at Frensham School in Mittagong, NSW.

The National Braille Music Camp is a fantastic opportunity for braille readers to learn, improve, share, transcribe and teach braille music.

Each evening, a mini concert is held. It's a wonderful opportunity for children to connect musically with friends and perform individually or in groups. The final concert for the week is a performance for the public. Families can travel up to Mittagong and enjoy the performance. Local music lovers look forward to coming each year and hearing beautiful harmonies made by our senior and junior choirs, and individual and small group performances that we have been rehearsing all week. Musical children enjoy the excellent accommodation and delicious meals provided at the Frensham Girls Boarding School, and make friends for life!

Date: Saturday June 29 to Saturday July 6, 2024.

Camp provides blind students from Australia and New Zealand who read Braille an opportunity to develop their music skills. Our camp caters to school students who are 8-18 years of age, or who are in their final year at high school. Students can be involved in small and large choirs, bands, as well as performing in small groups or solo at our nightly concerts if they wish. Each student also has access to daily Braille music tuition.

The week also provides a wonderful opportunity for social connection, to make friends and meet other young blind students, as well as learning from adult blind mentors.

Friday, May 3, 2024: deadline for forms for interstate campers to be returned if you wish Music Camp to cover the cost of your child's return airfares from Sydney.

NB: depending on numbers Music Camp may accept forms for interstate campers after this date, however, may not be able to cover the cost of your child's airfares to and from Sydney.

Friday, May, 31 2024: final deadline for return of forms for NSW-based campers and any self-funded interstate students.

Contact: For more information, including registration details, please contact Roma Dix at romad@westnet.com.au, Ben Clare or Ashleigh Malone.

Register via the [student application form](#) or email nebmc.aus@gmail.com to find out more information.

Braille Sense Users

Source: Di Bennet, SVRC

For decimal numbers to be read as digits rather than numbers a change in the Global Options Menu is required.

In the Global Options Menu (Space + O) go to numbers and turn off by pressing space, this is a toggle command either being on or off. Once turned off press Enter to save. When turned off the number 34.52 will be read out as "three four point five two". When turned on, the same number would read "three four point fifty-two". Unfortunately, there needs to be a software bug fix to have the numbers spoken correctly, i.e. thirty-four point five two.

When in the Word Processor and Math Mode is required (Backspace + M) the cursor needs to be on a new line to activate Math Mode. You can move in and out of Math Mode at any point in the document by giving the Backspace + M command.

When using the calculator, you can go into the history of previous calculations by pressing Enter + H, select the calculations by pressing space and then copy using Enter + C, tab to the Word Processor document that is open by pressing F2 + F3 (this cycles through open applications) when you come to the word processor paste the calculator history by pressing Enter + V.

Monster High Audio Described Performance

Source: Nilgun Guven, Vitaeveritas

Step into the extraordinary world of Monster High and join an epic interactive adventure!

Duration: 2 hours

Where: St. Kilda Road Terrace, Southbank

More information available on the [Arts Centre Melbourne website](#).

Immerse yourself in a one-of-a-kind interactive theatre experience where you, the incredible audience/player, collectively shape the life of a supernatural high school. Discover your supernatural powers as you journey through alongside Teen Queens, Werewolves, Jocks, Vampires and whatever else the supernatural world conjures.

Picture yourself in the midst of it all – from running for student council to choosing sides in thrilling friendship dramas. Look in the mirror and ask yourself, what do you see? The power is in your hands to craft an unforgettable high school experience filled with twists, turns and monstrous surprises!

You are invited to play *Monster High* multiple times, providing valuable feedback to Infinity Ensemble as they refine and develop this thrilling experience for future presentations.

Monster High is delivered by Infinity Ensemble, a dynamic group of young artists from diverse backgrounds collaborating with their visionary director, Jackson Castiglione. Together they are dedicated to creating cutting-edge performances that delve into the interests of today's youth and the evolving world of immersive and live action role playing games.

Notes: Content/Sensory Warning: *Monster High* contains some coarse language, romance themes, bullying themes, and references to family separation and divorce. There will be bright lighting and loud sounds.

Monster High is for participants aged 11-17. Parental/guardian accompaniment for the event is not required. This is a free event but registrations are essential.

Tandem Bike For Sale

Gayle Skinner has a blue tandem for sale. The seating height 34 inches and would suit secondary school/young adult sized people.

Price is \$800 but negotiable.

If you are interested contact Gayle on 0477719392.

MyTime Warrandyte

Source: MyTime

MyTime is a support group for parents and carers of a child with a disability, chronic medical condition or other additional needs including developmental delay.

Where: Warrandyte Community Church, 57 Yarra Street, Warrandyte (Park & Enter at back of building)

When: Fridays Fortnightly 9.30am – 11.30am

Contact: Sue Batcheler via email: Suzanneb@mytimevic.com.au or phone: 0413 655 659

Upcoming dates:

3 May: Coffee and Chat (Kids activity: Blowing and Catching bubbles)

17 May: Make: Decorate and plant herb pots (all materials supplied by Bunnings) (Kids activity: Treasure hunt around the Play Space)

31 May: Guest speaker: Kate Dawson, Carer Gateway. Discussing service providers for carers (Kids activity: Songs and Stories)

14 July: Coffee and Chat (Kids activity: Build a Toy Village)

28 June: Make kid's edible fancy treats (all materials supplied) (Kids activity: Make wombat masks)

And Finally ...

Did you know that box jelly fish have no brain but 24 eyes!