

My Trip To Noosa



"...I found it a relatively easy place to holiday in a wheelchair and it was a holiday destination I would recommend..." - Andrea Holliday

See Page 6...

Inside

- Women's Issues
- Qualcare News
- Plus More...
- Classifieds
- Travel
- Health



AQA VICTORIA LTD.

Australian

Quadriplegic

Association

Victoria

A.Q.A. VICTORIA LTD

ABN 90 006 691 185

VICTORIAN BRANCH

440 Heidelberg Road

FAIRFIELD Vic. 3078

Ph: (03) 9489 0777

Fax: (03) 9482 4371

E-mail: admin@aqavic.org.au

POSTAL ADDRESS:

PO Box 219

FAIRFIELD Vic. 3078

TASMANIAN BRANCH

Ph: (03) 6428 4300

Fax: (03) 6428 4301

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Peter Trethewey

Zac Carr

Bernie Bartels

Dr. Meredith Wallace

Kevin Bailey

AQA NEWS LINK is the official newsletter of A.Q.A. Victoria Limited, Australian Quadriplegic Association - Victoria, and is published bimonthly. NEWS LINK seeks to publish material of interest to people with physical disabilities and their families, professional workers and other individuals and organisations concerned with the welfare of those who are physically disabled.

ARTICLES and items of interest are welcome from any individual or organisation.

NEWS LINK reserves the right to edit all submissions as it sees fit. Published articles do not necessarily reflect the policies or opinions of A.Q.A. or its members.

NEWS LINK may be quoted without permission provided that acknowledgement is made.

AQA NEWS LINK

The Official Newsletter of AQA Victoria Ltd., & AQA Tasmania

In this issue . . .

COVER STORY

• My Trip To Noosa - *by Andrea Holliday*

Page 6

HEALTH

• Living Well: The Art of Breathing

Page 4-5

MARK WATERMAN

• 20 Years At AQA

Page 5

TRANSPORT

• Wheelchair Safety at Level Crossings Taskforce

Page 10

• What's New - Transport & Taxis - *by Peter V. Bentham*

Page 11

ZOO TWILIGHTS EVENING

• A Night Out With Animals - *by Rees Houston*

Page 11

SURVIVAL TIPS

• Spasm - *by Rees Houston*

Page 14

REGULAR features

TRAVEL/ACCOMMODATION

• Larkrise B & B - FOSTER - *by Rees Houston*

Page 7

YOU ASKED A QUESTION???

• Sports For The Disabled - *by Nazim Erdem*

Page 8

AQA VICTORIA MEMBER PROFILE

• Mark Waterman

Page 9

LAUGH OUT LOUD!

• Jokes

Page 9

WHAT'S NEW IN PEER SUPPORT

• What's New in Information & Peer Support

Page 12

WOMEN'S ISSUES with Raelene West

• Women's Issues

Page 13

• Some Light Comedy

Page 13

• Victorian Women With Disability Network

Page 13

QUALCARE NEWS

• Qualcare News

Page 14

WHEELCHAIR RUGBY *by Nazim Erdem*

• Local, State & International Competition, Demonstration Games

Page 15

CLASSIFIEDS

Page 16

Volume 16, Number 1

From the CEO

Late last year I asked for members to offer their suggestions in regard to enhancing, changing, improving etc "Day in the Park". I have only had a couple of responses. What can you suggest we do to attract more people? Do people want a "Day in the Park"? It would be good to get some feedback.



Further inside this issue is an article about Mark Waterman, who has recently celebrated 20 years service at AQA. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mark and thank him for his loyalty and hard work. It is rare these days for anyone to reach this goal, but for a person who is also a quadriplegic working full time for 20 years in one company is an outstanding achievement and an inspiration to us all. Congratulations Mark!

Ian Bennett
 Chief Executive Officer
 ianbennett@aqavic.org.au

Sexuality & Women With Spinal Cord Injury

There are many changes that can affect your quality of life following a spinal cord injury. The changes to sexuality, as a result of changes to sexual function, can have a major impact on quality of life. The Victorian Spinal Cord Service is currently involved in a drug trial to look at sexual function in spinal cord injured women. If you are more than twelve months post injury, over 18 years old and interested in participating in the trial, please contact any of the following people.

- Dr. Doug Brown – Principal Investigator – 9496 4220
- Dr. Steve Hill – Co-Investigator – 9496 4220
- Annie Norrish – Study Co-ordinator – 9496 4732, Mobile 0408 035 849

Are You Interested In Fishing?

ParaQuad's annual 'Bay Challenge' is on again on the 17th of March 2002. The Bay Challenge is an opportunity to spend a morning fishing on a boat out on Port Phillip Bay, followed by a morning lunch. Fishing gear can be supplied and the boats are wheelchair accessible. Carers can also be accommodated. For further information contact Beth Hogan at ParaQuad on (03)9415 1200 or mobile 0403 046 801.

From the Editor

WARNING!

A lot of our members have not re-subscribed yet. If you are one of them (see the renewal date on the address label of the envelope), please fill in the form on page 15 and send it in! Otherwise this will be the last News Link you will be receiving!

Welcome back to another year of News Link. I hope that you all had a Merry X-mas and a Happy New Year. If you went away for the holidays or done anything exciting, please let us know so that other members can also share your experiences (they may be thinking about doing something similar). You may also have a solution to a problem that you have worked out that may be beneficial to other members.



In this issue (on page 6), you will find a very good, informative article from Andrea Holliday about her trip to Noosa.

Summer is just about gone – what we had of it anyway – but hopefully autumn will make up for the disappointment. I am one person who does anyway.

You will also find in this issue (on page 13) a new section called "Women's Issues". This section will be regular for our female members and others who may be interested.

I hope you enjoy this issue of News Link.

Nazim Erdem
 News Link Editor
 nazimerdem@aqavic.org.au

CHEERIO to Randy Gibbons who is nursing a broken leg. Hope you're on the mend.

AQA NEWS LINK Copy deadlines 2002

NEWS LINK is issued bi-monthly. The deadlines for AQA NEWS LINK 2002 are:

Issue	Deadline
April	March 31st
June	31st May
August	31st July
October	30th September
December	30th November

Living Well: The Art of Breathing

by David A. Weitzenkamp, M.S., and Kenneth A. Gerhart, M.S.

Believe it or not, your lungs are not affected by spinal-cord injury (SCI). However, the muscles of your chest, abdomen, and maybe even your diaphragm can be affected—and every person with SCI needs to understand how these muscles affect breathing.

In normal breathing, inhaling is work, requiring muscle strength, but exhaling is passive—it just happens as those inhalation muscles relax. In order to blow or cough, you actually use your muscle strength in active or forced exhalations.

So, if any or all of your breathing muscles are weakened or paralyzed, how much and how deeply you can breathe in and your ability to cough will be affected. Anything that makes breathing difficult or shallow can lead to problems. Perhaps more important, moving the air through the entire lungs reduces the collection of natural secretions in your lungs by breaking them up and moving them. Otherwise, these secretions can act as glue, causing the sides of your airways to stick together and not inflate properly. This is called atelectasis or a collapse of part of the lung.

Many people with SCI may be at risk for this. First, because of muscle weakness, they may breathe more shallowly, "neglecting" the lower areas of their lungs. Second, they are less mobile and don't have the advantage of frequent position changes to break up any secretions that are there. And third, many can't get the same strong cough they had before injury and are further unable to clear secretions. They may have a more difficult time getting rid of any colds or respiratory infections, leaving what feels like a constant chest cold.

Even worse, those secretions can become the breeding ground for nasty organisms that cause pneumonia.

Another problem, postural changes, can impair breathing ability even for people able to use all the breathing muscles. These changes can squeeze the lungs, making it harder to expand them and get air. SCI survivors who experience severe scoliosis—a sideways spinal deformity—or severe kyphosis, which causes a person to slump forward, can find their breathing significantly compromised. While not always avoidable, these spinal deformities can be at least partially treated with wheelchair modifications, postural supports, or corsets. Treating or avoiding scoliosis and kyphosis can improve endurance and fatigue by helping you breathe easier and deeper.

Stack Those Odds

What can you do to stack the respiratory odds more in your favor?

- The assisted-cough technique involves an assistant firmly pushing against the outside of the stomach and upward, substituting for the abdominal muscle action that usually allows for a strong cough. Use it when you feel you need to cough but just can't drum up enough force to feel like you've "done the job." But be careful: Although this looks a lot like the Heimlich maneuver, it is not the same. It is much gentler, and it's important that your helper coordinates his or her pushes with your natural breathing rhythm. You should breathe in deeply, expanding your stomach out or up as you inhale. Just as you are

about to relax your stomach and breathe out, your helper should use his or her clenched hands (palms down) to push in on your stomach. Also, don't do the assisted cough over and over. You'll get lightheaded, nauseated, and maybe even sore. Take several normal breaths in between each cough, and don't do more than a couple each time.

- Percussion is basically a light drumming on the ribcage to help loosen up those clods of gunk in your lungs. Use it when you're congested or have a cold and your chest feels "gunky" or "crackly." Lie on your side, with the "gunky" side facing up. If you can't tell, do both sides. (Believe it or not, the left lung gets "gunky" and congested more often than the right one!) Have your helper cup his or her hands and essentially pretend he or she is playing the bongo drums on your rib cage. "Cupping" is important—that's what helps shake the secretions loose. The sound should be hollow, almost like a "galloping."
- If the helper's hands are too flat, you'll hear a slapping noise and you'll end up hurt, red, and sore. Helpers can practice by clapping their own cupped hands until they can produce a low, dull, hollow sound. That's what percussing the chest should sound like.
- For less vigorous clearing of the gunk, postural drainage may help. Postural drainage uses gravity to drain those secretions from the bottoms of your lungs, up higher

Continued on next page...

MARK WATERMAN – 20 YEARS AT AQA!!

Well done Mark, what an effort. From humble beginnings at High Street, Northcote, to 70 Station Street, and now 440 Heidelberg Road, Fairfield, Mark has seen a lot of changes over his 20 years at AQA.



Lots of staff have come and gone, some have even come back, but Mark has always remained. His easy going, laid back personality has endeared him to his colleagues and clients, and his wit and humor are always enjoyable to be around.

Although generally resistant to change (still barracks for Hawthorn and the Liz Hayes photos on his desk haven't aged in 10 years!), Mark has conquered new technology over the years. In the



early years battling away on the Telex machine, many times after 5pm to get a customers telex sent overseas, getting the gist of the fax machine when the telex became redundant, fighting with photocopiers (when they wouldn't be co-operative) constantly training new staff on computers (with great patience), and generally becoming known as the "computer guru" within AQA, Mark has done it all! He couldn't be accused of being a great telephonist as the phone usually ends up on the floor when he answers it, and chairs around the office have seen better days because of "abuse" by Mark (sorry that's an in-joke) but Mark's loyalty and friendship

to his work colleagues and clients alike are just a couple of the reasons why Mark is well liked and greatly valued.



Congratulations Mark, it's a pleasure working with you and hopefully it will be for many years to come.

Turn to page 9 to see the "Member Profile" on Mark Waterman.



... from previous page.

into your chest where you can either cough them up and out or even swallow them. Lie with your gunky side up and, if possible, prop the foot of your bed or sofa up so your head is lower than your feet. If you lie this way for 15 or 20 minutes, you'll probably feel things start to move.

Breathing is important. Most respiratory problems are easily treatable. None of these problems should be taken casually, because

all of them, if not properly treated, can cause serious permanent damage. A doctor, nurse, or physical or respiratory therapist can help you with more information.

Kenneth Gerhart and David Weitzenkamp work in the Research Department at Craig Hospital, near Denver. The above is excerpted from an article prepared with funding from the U.S. Department of Education's National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR). The opinions here are those of the grantee and do not necessarily reflect those of the U.S. Department of

Education. For more information about the federally funded project "Marketing Health Promotion, Wellness, and Risk Information for Spinal Cord Injury Survivors," contact:

Research Department / Craig Hospital, 3425 South Clarkson Street, Englewood, CO 80110 (303) 789-8308 / www.craighospital.org
Copyright 2001, Paralyzed Veterans of America, by permission of PN/Paraplegia News.
<http://pnnewscom.tgnt.net/pn/>

My trip to Noosa- by Andrea Holliday

A recent holiday to Noosa and the Sunshine Coast was a pleasant and relaxing experience. I am pleased to report that in terms of accessibility, there is some good news!

I stayed on Hastings St – the main street of Noosa – and it is a dream to get around. The footpaths are paved and perfectly level – and most shops and restaurants do not have any sort of step or ramp to get into. There was even a beachfront restaurant (Seasons), which had great food, wheelchair access AND an accessible toilet.



Behind Hastings St, there is a decked path that runs along the length of the main beach, which although bumpy, was great to get so close to the beach. It even has a couple of ramps directly to the sand. Unfortunately while I was there, there was a pipe running between the decking and the beach which prevented easy access – although I'm told that this is a temporary measure to deal with sand erosion.

If you enjoy getting into the outdoors, there is a path into the National Park, and the first 500m or so is easily accessible in a manual chair. It takes you through



some bushland (we saw a koala) and comes out at a lookout which lets you see Noosa, a secluded beach, and

across the inlet on which Noosa is built – quite spectacular.

A trip to Eumundi Market (around a 20 minute drive from Noosa) was a highlight – easily accessible with ramps between the tiers of stalls – the market sells everything from socks to tie-dyed clothes to local music and produce. There is an accessible public toilet and a couple of disabled parking spots here too.

Underwater world at Mooloolaba was also worth a trip. Although it is much smaller than Sea World on the Gold Coast, the underwater viewing chamber is fantastic. I was able to get my wheelchair onto the moving footpath, put my brakes on and put my head back as stingrays and great white sharks swam overhead – for once I was the envy of those standing around me!



One night the rain got the better of us, so we ventured to the local cinema. The accessible entrance is difficult to find at first – it is at the rear of the cinema, via a car park. Once in the cinema, there was a lift to take you to the cinemas, and an accessible toilet.



I stayed at the Sheraton in Noosa – it was a bit of a splurge for my first holiday since my accident! The quality of the accessible room was great. There was plenty of wheeling space in the room and the bathroom, all the light switches and the phone was accessible from the bed (great for those sleep-ins!), and even a fold down clothes rail to hang clothes at wheelchair height. The only irritating thing was a small lip in the doorway to the bathroom. The hotel had a restaurant and bar that had an accessible toilet, and even an accessible day spa for those of us that enjoy a pampering!

Although at first it seemed an expensive place to eat, once we found the bakery and a little noodle shop we were in business. All in all, I found it a relatively easy place to holiday in a wheelchair and it was a holiday destination I would recommend.

Editors Note:

Andrea was involved in a motor accident in August 2000 - she was standing on the footpath and was hit by a small truck.

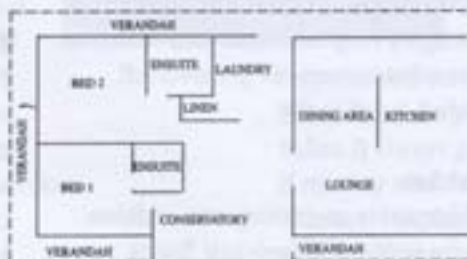
Her spinal injury is at level L2 - but this hasn't stopped her, she has returned to work and loves travelling and going out. She also does rehab 3 times a week and does some walking.

Larkrise B&B - FOSTER

G'day travellers, this issue's little journey is down the South Gippsland Highway to Foster, a beautiful little grazing and dairy town 169 km from Melbourne and only 20 km north of the coast. Set in the beautiful Gippsland countryside and within easy reach of some of the best sightseeing and fishing areas Victoria has to offer.

The reason for this article is the "Larkrise Bed and Breakfast", just south of Foster on the road to Fish Creek. This farm and pottery with accessible in-house accommodation (see plan with article) has two guest's bedrooms, with ensuites (bedroom 2 is accessible), a guest's conservatory/lounge with stunning views, flat undercover access from carport, with meals made from fresh local produce available. An ideal spot to stay while checking out the national parks, fishing villages, stunning beaches and magnificent wine and food for which this neck of the woods is known.

The spectacular Wilson's Promontory, located 35-40km from Foster, the 'Prom' as it is known, is one of our largest and most popular national parks. The park contains 49,000 hectares of some of our most beautiful and diverse flora and fauna, not to mention 130 km of the most spectacular coastal scenery Victoria has to offer. Wheelchair access in the park is quite good considering the terrain and there are environmentally and disabled friendly cabins for hire at Tidal River. A few of the tracks in the 'Prom' are suitable for those with limited mobility and 4WD chairs are available for hire from the visitors centre at Tidal River and are suitable for use on sand, though we have been advised by Parks Victoria those who have very limited movement would need a pusher to assist. Fishing is allowed in certain areas of the park but as with all the spots mentioned in this article, it might be wise to check with Parks Victoria on 131963 before you throw in a line and remember a licence is required for both salt and freshwater fishing in Victoria - you are



exempt if you are under 18 or over 70, the holder of a seniors card or pension concession card. To check whether you need a licence, give the Department of Natural Resources a ring on 13 61 86.

Next on the agenda is the Cape Liptrap Coastal Park, stretching from Point Smyth to Waratah Bay on the Melbourne side of the 'Prom'. Rich in plants and wildlife, this is an excellent place for sightseeing and relaxing or if fishing is your go, the beaches at Walkerville offer snapper, sweep, leatherjackets, salmon and kingfish, while the waters of Andersons Inlet have bass, flathead, whiting, mullet and garfish. The beach at Venus Bay is a good spot to have a dash at surf fishing and is accessible with a bit of help over the sand, or if you'd rather get out amongst em, boats can be launched from the beach at Walkerville.

Other points of interest nearby, particularly for those interested in fishing are an intricate network of waterways at Nooramunga, Corner Inlet Marine and Coastal Parks. The towns of Port Albert, Welshpool and Toora and further inland Strzelecki Ranges with Tarra Bulga National Park and the Agnes Falls Scenic Reserve are also worth a look. The Corrigan Suspension Bridge at Tarra Bulga, which is wheelchair accessible, allows magnificent views of the area.

One last thing before I sign off, please try and make use of the accommodation we mention in this and other articles, or the owners will fail to see the value in making their establishments chair accessible, then we'd all be stuck at home - BORING!! Till next time, happy travelling.

Rees

Echuca-Moama On The Murray River



- Fish and Cruise the Mighty Murray River aboard the 21 foot 'Sun Tracker'
- Full & Half Day Charters
- Fully equipped, tackle & bait
- Wheelchair Access
- Toilet On Board
- Special Charters Welcome
- Great Packages Available

Fox's Fishing & River Adventures
All information & Bookings Call (03) 5480 7181 or 0418 144 197

METUNG on THE GIPPSLAND LAKES

Take a break - Spend a few days at beautiful Metung in our two bedroom apartment beside the lake.

- Fully self contained with facilities for disabled persons
 - Fishing
 - Boating
- Glorious scenery



For bookings or brochure
phone (03) 5156 2761



YOU ASKED A QUESTION???



A recent member of AQA Victoria was interested in getting involved in sports and this was their question; "I've recently been interested in getting involved in some sort of sport but I don't know what's out there for me, can you help....".

Well, there are so many sports that you could get involved in. There are so many that we aren't going to be able to cover them all in just one issue. This is "Part One" of our answer, "Part Two" is going to cover Rugby, Sailing, Snow Skiing, Soccer, Swimming, Table Tennis, Tennis, Ten Pin Bowling, and Water Skiing in the next issue.

Air Weapons

The Physically Challenged Shooters Club (PCSC) caters for members with an interest in rifle shooting. The PCSC offers the use of three air rifles and the support of a Club for those new to the sport and who want to come along and have a go.

For those wishing to take up the sport competitively, there are many quality competitions both in Australia and Worldwide.

Archery

Archery leads the way when it comes to the inclusion of athletes in wheelchairs competing at the highest level.

Archers in wheelchairs can compete on a completely equal level with a standing archer. Most local archery clubs are able to cater for wheelchair archers and WSV can put you in touch with a club in your local area.

Basketball

Wheelchair Basketball is a spectator team sport and one of the most popular and exciting of all wheelchair sports. This sport caters for all levels of ability, from beginners who participate in domestic competition through to the elite who compete in the National Wheelchair Basketball League and go on to represent Victoria and Australia.

Boccia

Boccia Victoria conducting Boccia "Come and Try Day's" occasionally. Boccia is an indoor game, similar to the European game of Bocce, but it has been adapted to suit people with a disability. It is a new and exciting recreational sport. For more info phone Tennille Bradley on 9249 4900.

Blow Darts

Blow darts is an amazing game that anyone can compete or play in. Instead of throwing darts at a target, "blow darts" is played by blowing a mini dart through a long thin tube. This is a game that anyone can get involved with.

Cricket

This sport is an exciting new addition to the stable of Wheelchair Sports Victoria and is being developed in conjunction with both the Victorian Cricket association and the Australian Cricket Board.

Wheelchair Cricket is played on an indoor basketball court (using softer balls and lighter bats) and uses a shorter pitch to allow for adequate speed and bounce from the bowler.

Field

Field sports consist of a variety of events including shot-put, discus and javelin. Participants can compete in a range of disciplines while sitting on a holding frame secured to the ground.

Handcycling

Riders are using their handcycles in a range of settings, to ride alongside friends and family, to use for cross-training and a growing number are now keen to race. For recreational riders, they can ride on bike paths, roadways etc. just like cyclists.

Lawn Bowls

Wheelchair lawn bowls is a sport in which competitors in wheelchairs can compete equally with able-bodied competitors, however regular wheelchair only bowls events are also conducted. There are no rule changes

and competitors can compete on a normal green surface, as well as synthetic surfaces that are ideal for Wheelchair Lawn Bowls.

Powerlifting

Participants lie on a bench and lift as much weight as possible. Powerlifters train at a range of weightlifting gyms across Victoria. Competitions are conducted Australia wide and Internationally for those at the elite level of the sport.

Racing

Wheelchair racing is one of the most dynamic and spectacular of all wheelchair sports, and with athletes reaching speeds of up to 35kph on the athletics track and up to 90kph on the downhill section of a road race, it is a sport that if you blink, you may just miss the action.

For further information, contact us here at AQA Victoria on (03)9489 0777 or Wheelchair Sports Victoria on (03) 9473 0133

Playing sport or being involved in any activity increases overall health and fitness. You will notice your strength, flexibility and endurance improve for the better. It also gets you "out and about" and creates many opportunities to meet and make new friends.

Special thanks must be made to Wheelchair Sports Victoria for helping put this article together.

AQA Victoria Member Profile

Mark Waterman – who has just had his twentieth anniversary working for AQA Victoria – is this issues “Member Profile”. I’ve been trying to convince him for about two years to answer these questions (Mark hates getting his picture taken and doesn’t like being in the spotlight) and finally he agreed, but insisted that I only use the photo below.

Name:

Mark Waterman, AKA Waterbub – Colin Rose made it stick

Age:

48

Disability & Level:

C4/5 Quad

Are you Married/Single?

Married

Do you have children?

Two boys who are twins – Shaun and David

How did you acquire your disability?

Year?

A motorbike accident in 1972

What is your living situation?

I am! Just kidding. Glenferrie Oval in Hawthorn

Your Survival Tip for others?

Keep busy!!!

What has been your most embarrassing moment since you have been using a wheelchair for mobility?



Too numerous to mention

Your greatest achievement?

My kids. Also meeting “The Kid” – Dermott Brereton

What do you do with your time?

Work like a workaholic and I enjoy playing computer games

Why did you choose to live in Country/City? (Draw backs/Positives)

I live in the city because of work and the footy – go Hawks!

Your best holiday spot and why?

Anywhere on the Murray – or anywhere with Liz Hayes

What food do you like best?

Indian is always good

If money was no object what would you buy/do?

Take my wife, kids & Tash to Disneyland. Cruise the Murray with Liz Hayes and check out the Caribbean

Do you have an internet site you would recommend?

hawthornfc.com.au

Laugh Out LOUD!!!



Australian Immigration Criteria

A Kiwi was hoping to immigrate to Australia. Upon arriving in Australia, he was questioned by a customs officer, “What is your business in Australia?”. “I wish to immigrate,” was the Kiwi’s reply.

The customs officer then asked, “Do you have a conviction record?”. Confused, the Kiwi then replied, “I didn’t think you still needed one.”

A Moving Story Of Inspiration For Us All

A man is in bed with his wife when there is a rat-a-tat-tat on the door.

He rolls over and looks at his clock, and it’s half past three in the morning. “I’m not getting out of bed at this time,” he thinks, and rolls over. Then, a louder knock follows. “Aren’t you going to answer that?” says his wife.

So he drags himself out of bed and goes downstairs. He opens the door and there is man standing at the door. It didn’t take the homeowner long to realize the man was drunk.

“Hi there,” slurs the stranger. “Can you give me a push?”

“No, get lost. It’s half past three. I was in bed,” says the man and slams the door.

He goes back up to bed and tells his wife what happened and she says, “Dave, that wasn’t very nice of you. Remember that night we broke down in the pouring rain on the way to pick the kids up from the baby sitter and you had to knock on that

man’s house to get us started again? What would have happened if he’d told us to get lost?”. “But the guy was drunk,” says the husband.

“It doesn’t matter,” says the wife. “He needs our help and it would be the Christian thing to help him.” So the husband gets out of bed again, gets dressed, and goes downstairs.

He opens the door, and not being able to see the stranger anywhere he shouts, “Hey, do you still want a push?”. And he hears a voice cry out, “Yeah please.”

So, still being unable to see the stranger he shouts, “Where are you?”

And the stranger replies, “I’m over here, on your swing.”

Daddy, What Is Sex?

An 8-year-old girl went to her dad, who was working in the yard. She asked him, “Daddy, what is sex?”

The father was surprised that she would ask such a question, but decides that if she is old enough to ask the question, then she is old enough to get a straight answer.

He proceeded to tell her all about the ‘birds and the bees’. When he finished explaining, the little girl was looking at him with her mouth hanging open. The father asked her, “Why did you ask this question?”

The little girl replied, “Mom told me to tell you that dinner would be ready in just a couple of secs.”

Wheelchair Safety at Level Crossings Taskforce

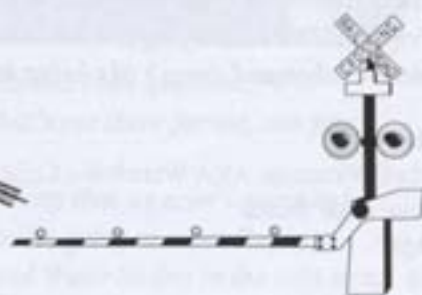
Late last year, the Minister for Transport, Peter Batchelor, established a taskforce to urgently address safety concerns surrounding wheelchair users and level crossings in Victoria. Mr Batchelor met with wheelchair users of public transport and disability advocates to discuss the safety concerns of wheelchair users at level crossings. Representatives of the Taskforce include private transport operators, wheelchair users of public transport and disability advocacy groups.

The Taskforce will be required to provide the Minister with recommendations that can be presented to the Australian Transport Council, which comprises of Federal, State and Territory Transport Ministers. Mr Batchelor will also require ongoing advice from the manufacturers of wheelchairs to purchasers of the suitability of wheelchairs for level crossings.

The Taskforce is chaired by Mr John Sutton - the General Manager of Safety and Technical Services within the Office of the Director of Public Transport. The Taskforce membership includes people with disabilities as well as representatives from:

- Department of Human Services
- Office of the Equal Opportunity Commissioner
- Victorian Rail Track Corporation (VicTrack)
- VicRoads
- Transport operators
- Monash University Accident Research Centre
- Disability support groups

The Taskforce was established following two fatal accidents (three in nearly two years) at level crossings involving people in wheelchairs in Melbourne during 2001. As a result, the Taskforce will examine



wheelchair safety at level crossings and make recommendations to the Minister on the following issues:

- The adequacy of Australian Standards for level crossing design, development of engineering and design standards for surfaces at crossings - in particular the smoothness of surface, width of crossing, barrier gates and gaps between the pavement surface
- The level of protection and design of rail level crossings for people in wheelchairs, including minimum warning times for activating protection equipment at crossings and refuges for people inadvertently caught on the crossing or for other emergency situations
- The adequacy of wheelchair design standards, particularly the suitability of the wheel type and wheelchair control mechanisms (joy stick design) including the ability of the wheelchair user to maintain suitable control on level crossings
- The responsibility of manufacturers and distributors of wheelchairs to inform purchasers of appropriate consumer information about the suitability of wheelchairs over various terrains, particularly for rail level crossings and at stand-alone rail pedestrian crossings

The Taskforce is expected to have final recommendations prepared by June 2002.

Contact details

Nauru House
80 Collins St
Melbourne 3000
Ph: 9655 8683
Fax: 9655 8617
peter.batchelor@parliament.vic.gov.au

UPDATE:

We are pleased to report that all level crossings in Banyule have now been checked. At Ivanhoe work is under way for a complete rebuilding, funded by the State Government. All other crossings have been improved in the continuation of the surface, but these are regarded as temporary until funding for proper reconstruction is obtained. An important aspect is that amendments must be suitable for both vision impaired and wheelchair users.

This work in Banyule commenced before the latest wheelchair death at the instigation of the Banyule Disability Reference Group. So if things are not happening fast enough in your district, contact your council's DRG!

For the contact person, ring the Information section of AQA.

WHAT'S NEW - TRANSPORT & TAXIS

On the 24th of October, the SCOPE organisation (formally the Spastic Society), in conjunction with the public and private sector with trains, trams, buses and the minister of transport, met with the public to discuss their future plans for access on public transport for the aged and the disabled.

The information was about the new low level trams (that we featured in the October issue of News Link last year) and the new superstops for trams and how long they plan to phase in these new changes.

The new trams increase access for the elderly and the disabled, with more room and easier access in and out.

The transport sector has started to build "superstops" for trams. The superstops are raised platforms that meet (about the same height) the first step of these new trams. When the tram pulls up at a superstop, an electric ramp bridges across the gap.

They plan to build these new superstops on the Box Hill tramline, this is route 109. The route will run from Whitehorse Rd in Box Hill down to Collins St, then Clarendon St and onto the Port Melbourne light rail system. In total there will be 19 superstops.

Low floor tram delivery program

- October 2001 – 4 low floor trams – has been completed.
- January 2002 – 16 low floor trams – in the process of being completed.
- April 2002 – 24 low floor trams.
- July 2002 – 31 low floor trams.
- September 2002 – 36 low floor trams.



Superstop delivery program (indicative only)

- October 2001 – Collins and Swanston St – has been completed.
- December 2001 – Collins and Spring St – in the process of being completed.
- December 2001 – Beacon Cove – Station Pier – in the process of being completed.
- February 2002 – Victoria Pde interchange – in the process of being completed.
- April 2002 – Clarendon St / Casino.
- September 2002 – Box Hill Terminus.

Taxi Bookings

Changes to Wheelchair accessible taxi bookings will operate in the near future in Melbourne. The Central Booking Service has closed down and bookings are to be made through Silver Top Taxis or Black Cabs.

These companies use a Global Positioning Service, which locates the nearest available cab to the person who is ordering the cab. There is also a connection between the 2 companies so that one can relay the message to the other if the request cannot be met. **Silver Top phone number is 8413 7202 and Black Cabs is 9277 3877.**

A NIGHT OUT WITH ANIMALS

If you're looking for a great night out with family or friends this summer, how about the zoo for one of their Zoo Twilights evenings? Meet with the zoo keepers and ask as many questions as you like about the various animals on display then enjoy a picnic and some wine sampling on the lawns near the bandstand while you're being entertained with some great live music. The "meet the keepers" program starts at 4.30 and the entertainment at the bandstand

commences at 6.30. Food is available from the kiosk near the bandstand from 5.30, picnic hampers are also available as long as you give 24 hours notice or if you decide on your own tucker volunteers will mind your supplies so you're free to have a look around. The zoo is a pretty accessible place with a few disabled toilets but you might need a bit of a hand up some of the steeper parts.

For further info contact the zoo on 9285 9300, internet at www.zoo.org.au or email on twilights@zoo.org.au

What's new in PEER SUPPORT

By the team from AQA Victoria's
Information & Peer Support
Department

Whats New in Information & Peer Support

Well, here we all are. Another new year is upon us with a few new changes in the Information/Peer Support Department.

Baden has left us and is now pursuing a new venture. As you all know by now, Baden and his wife Jill, have purchased some beautiful country land by the ocean with a house and an established fernery business. The team at AQA Victoria wish Baden the very best of luck for the future and hope he enjoys a relaxed lifestyle.

With Baden leaving, the job of information and peer support falls into the hands of Rees, Raelene, Phil, Peter, Nigel and Naz. Hopefully we will continue to do the job Baden was doing so well, together. I believe that with this team we will continue to provide the service that you all expect.

We will continue to visit the members homes, the Austin hospital and Royal Talbot to see how the patients are doing and to give them information that they need.

If you are after any sort of information, the team is only a phone call away. With our diverse knowledge and our information database, I'm sure we will be able to find the information you need, be it accessible places to stay, places to visit or equipment to use. If we can't help, we will put you in contact with someone that can.

Another part of our department is the

organising and running of the successful and very necessary "Life Skills Day" at the Royal Talbot. We have got a shared workload organising this event and hopefully the future ones will come-off without a hitch. Even though the Life Skills Days are held every few months, they are a big project.

So, if you or anyone you know is looking for information or is in need of peer support, please contact one of our team members at AQA Victoria's Information and Peer Support Department on (03) 9489 0777. You'll be glad you did. You can also email us at:



PHIL:
philbutterworth@aqavic.org.au



PETER:
petervanbenthem@aqavic.org.au



REES:
reeshouston@aqavic.org.au



NIGEL:
nigelsteele@aqavic.org.au



RAELENE:
raelenewest@aqavic.org.au



NAZ:
nazimerdem@aqavic.org.au

Women's Issues

with Raelene West

Hi everyone and welcome to 2002. I hope everyone is settling into the new year and getting into whatever interests, work or study they enjoy.

Firstly, I'd like to briefly introduce myself. My name is Raelene West and I have taken up the role of women's issues in AQA'S Peer Support/Information department. I am 29, a C5 quadriplegic, I work and study, and I live in my own home with the help of attendant carers. My interests are pretty varied. They range from interior design, history, environmental studies and playing the stockmarket to going to the movies and theatre, listening to music, travel and eating out with good friends. (usually it requires me being good at the stockmarket bit to enjoy the travel bit!)

In starting this women's section of News Link, I'd like to hear about what other women are doing out there and promote some discussion and awareness of the issues that women with quadriplegia face. For my part, I am doing the single chick thing, but I would like to get input from both single and married women, mothers who have had children before and after their SCI and just general relationship experiences of women with SCI (and survival tips for those of us still single lol - lots of laughs). By sharing our experiences and knowledge, I hope that we can build up a pool of information that provides support and some useful advice for us women living with SCI's.

So if you have any experiences you'd like to share or any questions you'd like to ask, write away, and if I don't know the answer, I'll find someone that does.

I look forward to hearing from you...

Raelene West

SOME LIGHT COMEDY

Tips for women from a 1950's Women's Weekly column:

1. When your husband arrives home from work, have a cushion ready for his feet and the newspaper waiting for him to read.
2. Put a ribbon in your hair and tidy your skirt so you look attractive for when he arrives home.
3. Put all the children's toys away and if possible, keep the children occupied so the house is tidy and quiet when your husband arrives home.
4. Have a nice warm dinner waiting for him.
5. Remain quiet until he is ready to talk over dinner about the day.
6. After you have cleared the table and done the dishes, ask him if he would like a nice cup of tea.
7. Don't pester him about things that need to be done, remember he has had a long day at work.
8. Do remind him of the neighbourhood BBQ on that weekend so he can cut the grass early and get some gas for the BBQ.
9. Remember to give him lots of compliments about how fit and well he is looking and how hard he works.
10. And remember to always smile, even when things are difficult. This promotes good harmony and a peaceful environment around the house.

Tips for women with a SCI in 2002:

1. When 'you' arrive home from work, attempt to finally make the bed, help do the dishes, pay the bills, tidy the house, water the garden, do the washing and think about what to get started for dinner.
2. If you actually find some clothes that fit and look good, hope that you are able to get dressed into them without too much difficulty and that once you do, that they don't get caught in the wheels.
3. Attempt not to jam your wheelchair repeatedly on the toys, piles of reading and clothes strewn over the floor. And if you can keep the kids quiet for 5 minutes in front of the Nintendo, you're doing well.
4. Remember to thank your carer for being patient and providing hourly coffee when you've had to stay up all night finishing an overdue assignment/work.
5. Carers are there to help, can be useful for information and can even be friends, even if in your eyes it appears that they are doing everything wrong. (my carers reply-carers are human too and rarely have e.s.p.!)
6. Remind your partner that he can only play in the wheelchair if you're in it.
7. While shopping, you do actually double as a trolley and a person.
8. Remember at a nightclub, if you can even get near the inaccessible toilet, that re-applying makeup in the too-high mirror usually ends in disaster (tip-better to go natural)
9. Don't throw up in the maxi-cab after a big night.
10. Remember to smile sometimes....even after a SCI, people may stare, but they're really looking at the bad makeup effort from the nightclub, not the wheelchair.

*Do something for our environment today
love Raels*

Victorian Women with Disability Network

The Victorian Women with Disability Network is a self advocacy and social group made up of women with various types of disabilities. They are the Victorian Branch of a national body with an interest in a range of issues important to women with a disability, such as access to services, community living, health, legal rights, and housing. Workshops on various topics and social outings occur regularly.

For further information, contact:
Maree Ireland,
CI-Action for Community Living
179 High Street
Northcote 3070
Phone: (03) 9489 2999
Email: mareeireland@hotmail.com

QUALCARE NEWS!

By 'The Staff of AQA Qualcare'
qualcare@aqavic.org.au

Qualcare News

After a busy holiday period & many changes in the Qualcare office, it seems that we are back on track with a happy team of dedicated and helpful staff.

Late November saw the departure of Sophie Hart our Senior Co-ordinator who will be greatly missed for her energy & hard work over the past 18 months. This was closely followed by Nicholas Ross (Business Manager), who has also moved on. Any queries previously directed to the Business Manager should now be directed to Ian Bennett (CEO).

We are very pleased to welcome the newest edition to the Qualcare team, 'Lisa Mollard'. Lisa commenced at the end of January and is taking over the roll of 'Service Co-ordinator', formerly held by Sophie Hart. She will work in conjunction with Christy Mazaris in handling client support & coordination.

A NOTE FROM LISA:

Hello Everyone,

I am now going into my third week at AQA Qualcare & have really enjoyed my time here so far. I am 27 years of age & my hobbies include tennis, theatre, reading, socialising & shopping.

My background includes 2 years of my Bachelor of Nursing, however I switched courses & completed a degree in Bachelor of Applied Science (Disability Studies/ Psychology stream) at Deakin University.

Since completing my studies I have traveled Europe & lived in London for two years where I worked in a Medical Services Outsourcing Division of an IT company.

On my return to Australia I worked at Epworth Hospital in the Corporate Affairs Division as well as a consultancy company in the city.



"The Qualcare Team" - from left to right:
Lisa, Christy, Janine, Kate, Amanda

I left my last job as I was very keen to get back into the disability sector where my qualifications lie, hence here I am at AQA which I am thrilled about.

I am very much looking forward to meeting you all soon. I hope you have had a great 2002 so far.

Lisa Mollard.

The 'In Home Accommodation Support' Program (IHAS) has recently undergone a name change, the program is now known as 'HOMEFIRST' and will come into affect as of July 2002. The Homefirst program will continue to provide the same level of support, as well as offer Community Access and Support Coordination.

A Reminder to Clients of Qualcare:

It is important to keep a list of your carers current phone numbers with you at all times, in case of emergencies after hours.

Kate, Amanda, Janine, Christy & Lisa (The Qualcare Team) look forward to speaking to you in the near future. We can be contacted on 9482 4373.

SURVIVAL TIPS

Spasm, it is probably one of the most annoying and restricting things about being disabled, we know how much it can effect our independence and lifestyle, but what can we do about it? Apart from medication, which in most cases is a very necessary part

of managing your spasm, there are a few things we can do to help us manage and live with the problem. Exercise (if able) is an important part of any healthy lifestyle but becomes even more important if you are disabled and suffer from excessive muscle spasm. Just a little push each day usually makes a world of difference and the more active we

become, the less spasm we get (as a rule). The other factor in managing our spasm is our stretching routine, just half an hours stretching each morning can be enough to reduce spasm to a manageable level. If you find that neither increased exercise or stretching helps don't hesitate to get down to your doctor about the problem.

Wheelchair Rugby

Nazim Erdem
nazimerdem@aqavic.org.au



Local Competition:

Not much has been happening in the off season (locally) of wheelchair rugby (other than a few training nights). But I know that the players can't wait to get back into it (I just hope the players didn't get too carried away over the Xmas/New year period). Not to worry, the season will be back in full swing very shortly. So, if you've ever had an interest, come on down.

State Competition:

The annual border clash in Hamilton will be played late in March. The tournament pits the "South Australian Sharks" against the "Coloplast Melbourne Thunder". Although the South Australians beat us Vic's convincingly last year, we are expecting a different scenario this time. The Vic's are becoming more and more competitive as the new and old players get fitter and more experienced.

Demonstration Games:

Albury - on the Victorian / New South Wales border - is going to experience a few, no holes bared, rough and tumble rugby games. It will be the first time that teams from Melbourne will be playing games in Albury. The demonstration game all came about when we found out that there were a few quadriplegics living in the area interested in the game. We believe that the demonstration will attract people in their droves - to watch and play the game. We may even find some new players for our local and state teams.

International Competitions:

A few weeks ago the Australian rugby team flew over to the United States to compete in three tournaments. Being winter in the US, I was expecting to see ice and snow, but to my surprise the states that we were touring, Georgia and Alabama, which are in the south, was surprisingly warm. Every day, bar a few, were nice and sunny and in the late teens/early twenties. Perfect for a quad - like most other quads - that doesn't enjoy the cold at all.

The first tournament was held at the Roosevelt Rehabilitation Centre in the state of Georgia. This tournament

included eight of the worlds best teams. It was a ten team competition (the US and Canada had two teams competing). Every game was very tough with Australia finishing forth overall.

The next two tournaments were held in Birmingham and Montgomery in Alabama. These two tournaments went well for us, which is good because the other teams were very good - some of the teams we played were Americas top teams. The third tournament also included a composite UK team.

The reason for the US tour was to gain more experience and to try different tactics in preparation for the World Games in Sweden in late May/early June. Although Australia is one of the top teams in the world, we found a few deficiencies. We now can work on those deficiencies and hopefully be ready by the time the World Games commence.

CLASSIFIEDS CONTINUED

• Electric Wheelchair (Roller)

Brand new, never used

PRICE: \$1,800

PHONE: Barbara (03) 9436 9664

• Manual Wheelchair

14 wide, mobility plus wheelchair, lightweight folding, 16 inch back but can be adjusted higher or lower. Burgandy with gold alloy wheels, push handles. Very good condition

PRICE: \$500 ono

PHONE: Rees (03) 9489 0777

• 86 2 It Star Wagon Mitsubishi van

5 speed, Bruan hydraulic hoist, front and rear air conditioning, 105,000 km, full service history, as new condition, gas shockers, updated suspension, bull bar, mags, RWC & registered until 8/2002, accommodated 4 passengers and wheelchair, dark blue

PRICE: \$14,000 ono

PHONE: Terry 5978 6062

• Explorer Electric Wheelchair

rebuilt left and right handed joystick, 4 years old, new battery, very good condition, cost \$7000 new

PRICE: \$4000 PHONE: Bernie Dwyer 5822 1642 (Shepparton)

If you like what you are reading and you are not a subscriber to News Link, why not subscribe now? It only costs \$5 per year. You will receive an issue of News Link bi-monthly.

AQA NEWS LINK SUBSCRIPTION FORM

NAME (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms/Company):

ADDRESS:

SUBURB: STATE: POSTCODE:

PHONE NO.: (.....) Email:.....

DATE OF BIRTH:/...../..... OCCUPATION:

DISABILITY (IF ANY): LESION:

INTERESTS:

SIGNATURE: DATE:

Post this form & the \$5 fee to : AQA Victoria Ltd., P.O. Box 219, FAIRFIED 3078

CLASSIFIEDS

For Sale

• 98 VW Caravelle Van

Nordan conversion, side hydraulic Hoist, hand controls, RWC & registered (NSW rego.), 8 seater, can take 2 wheelchairs, auto, climatic air, tinted power windows, 37,000 kms, white, new condition

PRICE: \$50,000 ono

• Adventurer Electric Wheelchair

Reclining back, Good condition, Height adjustable

PRICE: \$2,000 ono

• Hil-Rom Electric Bed

good condition, a few years old

PRICE: Any offers considered

• Low Profile Roho Cushion

very good condition

PRICE: \$400

PHONE: Joan Morrison (03) 5881 2769 Deniliquin

• Honda Odyssey - 1995 (with hoist)

Auto. Air-cond. Power steering, 3 year Honda Warranty, 92,000 kms, RWC. Fitted with new IBIS hoist - lifts disabled person from wheelchair into front passenger seat. All excellent condition. Dark red.

PRICE: \$31,000

• Wheelchair - Country Care

Air cushion back and seat. Use for bed or chair including footrest. Hydraulic adjustment for whole chair or back only. Suit adult. Light to use. 3 months old. Excellent condition. Blue/Green.

PRICE: \$1,800

• Sling for lifting hoist.

"Kerry Equipment" brand. Full size with head and neck support. Lifts up to 150kg. Mesh material suitable for bathing. Soft for permanent sitting. Machine washable. Blue. 3 months old. Excellent condition.

PRICE: \$180

• Wheelchair - Water filled

Adult size. Use for chair or bed - very comfortable. Side supports for head, shoulders, arms etc. Each folds down separately for easy transfers. Hydraulic adjustment for back or whole chair. Recently serviced. Suit large gentleman. Very good condition. Dark green/blue.

PRICE: \$200

PHONE: Sandra Gough (03) 9876 2072

• Hydraulic Hoist

Manually operated with jack, hydraulic, very good condition, slings supplied

PRICE: \$50

• Car Hydraulic Hoist

Sits on top of car. Manually operated with jack. Comes with slings. Very good condition

PRICE: \$350

PHONE: Mavis or Robert Stevens 5598 3139

Timboon

For Sale

• Custom built Waterski

For beginner or quad. Laminated timber ski and 17" wide seat frame. Has easy-up starting slot and two ski rope handles to suit. One handle especially useful for C5-6 quads like me. Have to sell due to health reasons. Will really miss skiing. See details at <http://members.optusnet.com.au/~gizbytes/waterski.htm>

PRICE: \$900 neg

• SAAB 900i 1993, 2.1 litre auto with everything, air pwr

steer, cruise control, tinted windows, best car for easy chair to car transfers and tons of boot room. Very solid and safe car

PRICE: \$11,900 ono PHONE: Colin on (03) 9399 8000

E-mail: gizbytes@optusnet.com.au

• RICON Automatic Wheelchair Lift, Will suit van.

PRICE: \$1,500

PHONE: Andrew Stevenson (03) 5023 2718

• Mobility Seat (swivel seat):

German built seat (was installed in VL Commodore by Freedom Access, Melbourne. Seat rotates & extends out of car for easy transfer in and out of cars. Has head-rest with Velcro for head support attachments. New condition - only used twice

PRICE: \$1200 ono

PHONE: Annette Barkley 5823-2086 (020110)

• "Reliant" (London Cab) 92 model van

Suitable for Wheelchair. Power steering, air conditioning, gas. Electric windows, 6 cylinder 4 speed auto. Central locking, 5 passengers, RWC & Reg, maroon in colour. PRICE: \$6,000 PHONE: Jerry 9776 0522 or Mobile: 0411 142 386

• "Mobility Plus" titanium folding wheelchair

Black in colour. 15 inch width. Very light weight titanium wheelchair. PRICE: \$800 neg.

• "Quickie" lightweight rigid wheelchair.

Dark green/black in colour. 15 inch width. PRICE: \$800 neg.

• Portable lightweight aluminium ramp.

2 pieces. 2 metres in length and folds in half for storage.

PRICE: \$400 neg.

PHONE: Gudana (03) 5348 1480 Mobile: 0414 977 284

• STANNAH Chair Lift - seat - to fit side of stair case

2.6 metre lift. As new condition. Cost \$10,000, Sell \$995 ONO. PRICE: \$895 ONO

PHONE: Malcolm (03) 5974 8125,

business (03) 5984 2247

• Apartments for sale

Off the plan, 6 all accessible, ocean or garden views, luxury apartments, to be finished this year.

Angourie North, NSW - via Yamba

PHONE: (02) 6645 8190

or visit the web www.accessiblehousing.com.au

...more ads on page 15...