

# AQA NEWS LINK

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

September 2003

## A fishy story

Read a Member's Experience



**Gone Fishing!**



## Phillip Island

See the world's smallest Penguins on parade and why not stay the night!

## PLUS...

- › 1800 number extended to country Victoria
- › Shooting for all
- › Just another water???

**... & More**



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Australian

Quadriplegic

Association

Victoria

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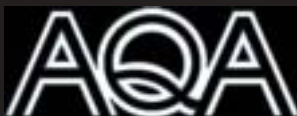
Tanya Clarke

A.Q.A. 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.

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# NEWS LINK

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

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## From the CEO

Earlier in the year I reported that AQA would be undertaking the Disability Services Quality Assurance Accreditation. The audit took place in late July and I am very happy to report that the organisation attained



Accreditation with a report from the auditors which was extremely positive. We are now commencing preparation for ISO-9001 and anticipate this audit will take place late this year or early next year. It has been an interesting process and there will be enormous benefits for the organisation in terms of streamlining systems and delivering an even better service to our members and clients.

I am also happy to report that we have recently supported a Skiing Camp conducted by the Victorian Spinal Cord Service at Falls Creek. We understand that the weekend was a great success and enjoyed by everyone who attended. It seems that all those who tried the sit-skiing were enthusiastic and only gave in when their bodies decided enough was enough!

**Ian Bennett**

Chief Executive Officer

[ianbennett@aqavic.org.au](mailto:ianbennett@aqavic.org.au)

## From the Editor

In this issue there is a great article, written by one of our members, about a trip away to Merrimbula on pages 8 & 9. Another article by a member highlighted the importance of monitoring



your fluid intake and the effects that it has on the body. Please note that our 1800 toll-free number has been extended to country Victorian members.

Please read pages 10 & 11 carefully for insight into care and support options to assist frail aged and those with a disability to remain as independent as possible in the community. Alternative accommodation options are also discussed for those of you who are unable to remain at home safely.

Finally, check out Phillip Island as it is wheelchair friendly and there are many things to see and experience such as getting up close and personal with the penguins and koalas via the accessible wheelchair tracks.

**Simon Damevski**

News Link Editor

[simondamevski@aqavic.org.au](mailto:simondamevski@aqavic.org.au)

## NO LIMITS TV

*Do people with disabilities have sex?*

*What happens to dancers who lose the use of their legs?*

*How does a person in a wheelchair get on and off a bus?*

To find out these and other awkward questions people are often too embarrassed to ask, tune into local Melbourne community television station "Channel 31" each Monday at 7:30 pm to see episodes of "No Limits", a half hour program of interviews, song, dance, controversy, sport and laughter.



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## 1800 Number Extends to Country Victoria Members

AQA Victoria is proud to announce the extension of our 1800 number. Previously our **1800 999 128** phone number was only available for our Tasmanian members. We have now made the number available for our country Victoria members as well.

We had noticed that many country members wouldn't call or would keep calls short because of costs involved to them.

Now both our country Victoria and Tasmanian members can give us a call without the worry of cost. So, get to the phone and dial 1800 999 128, we're waiting to hear from you!!!

## Progress on National Action Day September 2002 – Parking for people with disabilities

Following the National Action Day last year, PDCA has written to all local government councils to determine how each council operates (and whether they operate) specific parking for people with disabilities. The letters travelled to all parts of Australia and the response has been tremendous to date, with more rolling in each day.

The responses have been compiled and presented to a Working Group formed with the assistance of Stephen Penley of Disability Action in SA who did their own parking survey last year. Stephen has coordinated the working group to include people from as many states as possible and who will aid the research project and the resultant document.

The ultimate aim will hopefully produce a clear picture of how permit parking operates in Australia under Council guidance, where the shortfalls or problems appear to be and consist of recommendations that have been gathered from the council responses, the working group and members.

## Shooting For All

Of all the sports that have been offered to community and sporting groups recently, the various disciplines of shooting probably isn't one.

The Sporting Shooters Association of Australia are about to change all that.

Funds received from Sport and Recreation Victoria and VicHealth are assisting in the implementation of a fantastic new program.

'Shooting For All' is an 8-10 week program that introduces all participants to various disciplines of shooting sports. The sessions will be held once a week (probably Saturdays) and will involve a practical session as well as discussion time.

Shooting For All is a supervised, safe and fun project designed to introduce people with physical disabilities to the sport of shooting.

If you would like any further information about how to become involved in Shooting For All, please contact Julie Allan at the Sporting Shooters Association Australia (Vic) on:

Phone: 9590 0177 or

email: [iallan@ssaavic.com.au](mailto:iallan@ssaavic.com.au)



### **Austin & Repatriation Medical Centre**

#### **Do you have problems getting an erection?**

The Victorian Spinal Cord Service at the Austin and Repatriation Medical Centre is looking for volunteers to participate in a clinical trial examining the effect of a new oral treatment for erectile problems, in men who have had a spinal cord injury.

If you are interested in participating please contact Heather Amiconi on (03) 9496 5906.

*All information will be kept  
strictly confidential*

## Creating Personalised Lifestyles

*(A seminar by Michael Kendrick PhD together with Mobile Attendant Care)*

Nazim Erdem and myself attended this seminar on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> August, 2003. Michael Kendrick from Massachusetts USA spoke on the subject of personalised lifestyles for people with disabilities. He spoke about how bureaucracies in the disability field quite often forget the purpose for which they are formed – that is to assist people with disabilities. They are often in the business of “telling” people how they should run their lives, not working “with” people to run their lives. He gave many examples of small projects that are being undertaken all over the world that are able to break down these barriers to personalised lifestyles and why it is important that people with disabilities understand they can and do have a say in how their lives are lived. He also made it clear that bureaucracies will listen to individuals if given the opportunity.

Deb Rouget, co-ordinator of the Person by Person program gave an insight into this small program that assists seven people with disabilities and their families to participate in the community in ways that most people take for granted. It was an uplifting talk and demonstrated how people can really make a difference for other people when there is passion, commitment and perseverance.

Delia Fisher, who is a person with a physical disability, spoke to the audience about her personal experiences associated with not being in control of her life. She also spoke about the benefits that individualised funding has now given her, but that there are still many hurdles to overcome in her quest for a personalised lifestyle and true independence. Delia explained that she has received much support from Deb Rouget and Michael Kendrick in her personal journey and wants to encourage others to make this journey themselves.

The Mobile Attendant Care Service (MACS) is a night-time attendant care service that only operates between the hours of 6pm and 6am. This service has been operating for 10 years in a small region of Queensland and has a client base of 50 people who live within a short distance from each other. Carers are employed over 4 shifts during the operating hours to attend to people

with varying disabilities for whatever reason. For example a client might need assistance to get to bed at 3am after being out late. They can ring the service and a carer will respond within a reasonable time frame. Some clients have regular bookings with the service for several times each night. Sharon Hatch, the co-ordinator explained that flexibility by both the client and the service plays a big part in why the service is so successful. Darren Meyers a founding member and President of the Service (who has quadriplegia) explained that the service is an example of how a small group of people, with lots of vision and energy, have been able to provide some people with disabilities a life of real choice and freedom which many did not have before. This service is funded by Disability Services Queensland.

The overall message of the seminar conveyed to me the importance of people with disabilities and their families taking control of their own lives in as many ways as possible. The importance of people working with bureaucracies and bureaucracies working with people and the fact that much can be achieved by following your vision and encouraging people to join you.

If you would like any further information please contact AQA Information/Peer Support department.

### Article by Robyn Canning



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# What's new in PEER SUPPORT

By Peter V. Benthem  
petervanbenthem@aqavic.org.au

G'day AQA members,

**What's in a name – you might ask?** Well the Australian Quadriplegic Association NSW (sometimes known as AQA NSW), has recently changed their name to Spinal Cord Injuries Australia. **We would like all our members and associated organisations to know that A.Q.A. Victoria Ltd has not changed it's name.** It would appear that some organisations have assumed we are part of the NSW organisation and changed our name on their records automatically!

## **Toll free number for country Victoria**

Our Toll free number for Tasmania has now been extended to include country Victoria (1800 999 128), so there's no excuse not to call us for information or a chat.

## **City Accessibility**

Below is an article from Travellers Aid Disability Access Service (TADAS). This service is available in the city of Melbourne for people with disabilities. This service is great for wheelchair users.....

### **TADAS Makes the City Accessible for People with Disabilities**

Travellers Aid Disability Access Service (TADAS) is a drop-in centre in central Melbourne assisting people with any type of disability, including people with high support needs, to improve their independence and to access the city.

Many of our clients tell us that TADAS enables them to participate fully in the type of community activities and lifestyles that other people take for granted.

We provide a wide range of practical support that is free of charge. Support includes, amongst other things, personal care, information, communication assistance, community access and social contacts.

We provide support in our centre and throughout the CBD. So, if you want to join friends for a spontaneous lunch at a city café and don't want to go through the hassle and cost of trying to find a

carer at such short notice, TADAS can provide one to go with you. We can also help if your wheelchair has a flat tyre or has broken down anywhere in the city. We'll change the tyre and do minor repairs.

Our regular clients are adamant that without such assistance, being highly independent would prove difficult. Why don't you drop in and check out our facilities and friendly staff.

### **TADAS is open 7 days a week**

For further information about TADAS please contact Felicity.

Level 2, 169 Swanston Street MELBOURNE  
3000

**Phone:** (03) 9654 1938

**Email:** [tadas@travellers-aid.com.au](mailto:tadas@travellers-aid.com.au)

**Website:** [www.vicnet.net.au/~tadas](http://www.vicnet.net.au/~tadas)



## **Special Needs Accessible Housing**

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[www.accesshousing.com](http://www.accesshousing.com)

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**Name:** Frank Debooy

**Age:** I'm 44 years of age.

**Disability & Level:** C5-6 Complete (September 1988)

**Are you Married/Single?** Married.

**Do you have children?** 3 sons, 1 daughter, 1 granddaughter.

My children were with us on our long service trip when I had the accident; we all climbed Ayers Rock the day before. They were aged 9-18 and this was to be the last holiday as a family, as the oldest was starting work the following year.

**How did you acquire your disability?** Rolled our Mazda Traveller van, end for end backwards near Kings Canyon, in the N.T.

**What is your living situation?** I live with my wife, and have been married 33 years.

**Your Survival Tip for others?** Get past and over what's happened as soon as you can, and get on with your life. There's always something you can adapt to or do. If you were fortunate to get TAC cover, get

them to provide you with what you need – they promise a lot, but you have to fight for it at times. That's why you pay insurance. Initially, they mucked us around for 12 months with our renovation. Fortunately, in the mean time, we did it ourselves – so when they finally agreed to the changes we sent them the bill!! Myself, I never wasted a minute of the day, but after my accident I was frustrated out of my mind having to get 95% of the things I used to do by myself, done by someone else and also cutting into their time.

**What has been your most embarrassing moment since you have been using a wheelchair for mobility?** I had a leaking leg bag in public that soaked my Ug boot.

**Your greatest achievement?** Winning the Victorian Employability Entrepreneur Award in 1997 for running my own business. After my accident I couldn't make or construct things anymore so after doing night school at TAFE to learn using CAD, a Computer Aided Design package, I could draw plans for an environmental health group showing noise or chemical pollution contours. It's also useful for me to draw things rather than trying to explain what or how I want them made. A few years ago I designed and then had constructed a wheelchair accessible caravan, and also had a 45foot (13.5m) passenger bus converted to a wheelchair accessible mobile home (both projects are on video at AQA).

**What do you do with your time?** Most of my time is spent at my computer, it's a great time killer and I love surfing the net.

I swim twice a week in a heated pool, and I bring a set of goggles and snorkel so that I can float face

down and use my arms/hands to paddle. I've come off my baclofen (spasm relief medication) since starting 7 months ago.

My recent project was sitting for, and getting my Coxswains ticket (Restricted) through Marine Safety Victoria, including my Radio Operators Licence, which will allow me to operate a passenger (inc wheelchair) carrying Air Boat (not a hovercraft) on the bay.

**Why did you choose to live in Country/City? (Draw backs/Positives)** I love the open spaces and the bush, and only venture to the city if absolutely necessary. You might have to travel a bit further but in time, most trips are quicker and less stressed than city driving. If I were on my feet I'd drag my wife to an acreage, but for now the country town life will suffice.

**Your best holiday spot and why?** Broome - never been there but would love the climate.

**What food do you like best?** I eat most foods, but love my meat & vegies, all in moderation as I don't want to put on weight, or get an over distended stomach which only makes things harder for your carers to lug you around.

**If money was no object what would you buy/do?** I'd like to set up a respite facility, not run by uprights, and employ hand picked carers and staff.

**Do you have an internet site you would recommend?** [www.barnesandnoble.com](http://www.barnesandnoble.com) - for out of print and rare books.

## A Fishy Story



My companion and I decided we wanted to escape the Victorian winter blues for something a little more exciting and definitely a warmer climate. We visited our nearest travel centre, which assisted people with disabilities – ‘Barwon health centre’ in Newcombe on the Bellarine highway. The people there were very friendly and provided us with information about suitable accommodation, facilities and places we could visit in the area. They also informed us of financial assistance to help pay for our holiday accommodation.

Once I finished packing my car, I picked up my companion and we headed off for the long journey to Merrimbula on the south-east coast of N.S.W. After we had passed through the flatter regions of Victoria and Gippsland we began our climb through the winding mountainous ranges of N.S.W. All the hills and mountains really stretch one’s driving skills, therefore it’s always good to pull over to the side of the road for a rest and a chance to converse with

your co-pilot as to where you actually ‘think’ you are and how far to the next town. In our case a map was essential since neither of us knew exactly where we were.

When we arrived in Merrimbula we checked in to our accommodation and settled for the night. The following morning we took a brisk stroll through the town and checked out the tourist information centre; this was a good place to start. We were especially keen on the deep-sea fishing and whale-watching trips. We booked a fishing trip for the following morning and then spent the rest of the day checking out the various shops, drinking cappuccinos and smiling at the locals. This gave us the chance to orientate ourselves to the general layout of the area and ponder why people seem more relaxed and happier in the sunny climate.

The following morning we prepared ourselves for the trip. The captain of the boat met us at the top of the embankment and I talked to him about marine radio communication

(which was the work I used to do) and the prospects of independently boarding the ship. Once I knew that access wasn’t a problem, I boarded the boat with ten or so other people and we headed out to sea. As I had not been on a boat since my accident 16 years ago, I was a little anxious. While the captain of the boat guided the vessel into the deep blue ocean, one of the crew members was busy getting the tackle ready and baiting the lines. We were soon ready and very excited as the crew began dropping our baited lines into the deep blue water. Unfortunately, not many fish were caught by the group (approximately a dozen). My companion caught two medium sized flathead and a large snapper. Her catch seemed to raise a few half-hearted smiles from the rest, who unfortunately had to settle for a few smaller fish. Although I would have liked to catch a fish, I was more than happy with the misty coastal views, the roll of the sea and especially the company.

The following day was a trip to the shopping centre for essential holiday items such as money, food and postcards.

I should for practical reasons describe the general accessibility of the units. Firstly, there were four self-contained units on the block with enough room to back up and park the car a few feet away from the backdoor. The bathroom had ample room for a wheelchair or shower chair and so did the bedroom. The kitchen and the dining rooms were a bit cramped and the kitchen was not wheelchair friendly. The lounge

room had an accessible small coffee table, sofa, a television, and video player. The washing machine and dryer were in the dining room which I thought was a bit odd and I began to understand what the term self-contained units meant. In the evenings we'd sit outside the unit and listen to the small fish jumping in and out of the water of the river which ran parallel to the units. The coloured lights of Merrimbula reflected across the water and I suppose that is the reason they call them luxury apartments.

On day four we decided to check out some of the sights outside of Merrimbula and visited the nearby small town called Perimbula. After lunch we decided to move on since about the only riveting sight was the local market. It seems that the smaller towns don't cater for the tourist trade and probably like it that way.

After celebrating my companion's birthday and enjoying the local Thai cuisine we were beginning to feel bored. There was still the whale-watching trip that we had planned for our last day but never got around to it. Instead we decided to find our own fishing space for the little time we had left. Having a car that can negotiate a few rough bush tracks is useful while on holidays and some of the best views can be seen from the front seat of a car.

We followed the river near Pambula and being country folk we decided to ask a local oyster farmer about good fishing spots on his property. He pointed to a rickety old pier that

jutted out into the river and explained that the fishing was good for bream, tailor and mullet. He said that sandworms and pippies (shellfish) were the best bait and invited us to fish where we pleased. I looked over to the pier and noticed that there were several gaps where decaying boards had disappeared to the bottom of the river. Hence, I decided not to test my weight and a chair on this unstable surface. We thanked him before driving off in search of other accessible spots along the river.

We eventually found a spot beside a graffiti clad concrete bridge along the very same busy road bridge we'd recently passed over. It was getting late in the day and I wanted to get an idea of what small fish the bigger fish may be feeding on. I asked my companion to throw the net into the water while I got the lines ready. Unfortunately, I hadn't expected her to take me literally and throw the net and attached rope into the water. After berating her for disposing of the bait trap, she reluctantly pulled up her trouser legs, removed her boots and tested the depths of the murky water. With the aid of a tree branch she was able to retrieve the trap and with the next throw she managed to hold onto the rope before securing it to a rock. The river was about forty feet wide and appeared fairly deep. We sat there in the midst of the evening light, surrounded by beautiful tall gums and other smaller trees and bushy native fauna. We marvelled at the sounds and the sights of the many birds surrounding us.

The mocking laugh of the kookaburra broke our meditative silence and I decided to check our lines. To my dismay there was no bait left on our hooks. As any good fisherman knows, the trick to fishing is not to take your focus off your rods for too long. This time, we held our rods and before long we were pulling in fish, mainly tailor. We set up lights from the boot of my car so we could fish for as long as our patience permitted and by the end of the evening we caught over a dozen fish of edible size.

On our last night we invited an elderly lady whom we had met earlier in the week at the supermarket in Merimbula, to join us for dinner. We took this opportunity to cook the flathead, snapper, and tailor that we had caught and spent the remainder of the evening exchanging stories.

The following morning we headed for home but that's another story...

**Written by Michael Carbines.**



### You asked a question – Ageing

**“My health and mobility has been deteriorating over the last twelve months, which has started me thinking about the need for a carer. What I want to know is how do I go about finding a carer and what costs are involved? What sort of nursing home or similar is available to us wheelies when we are no longer able to be cared for at home and what costs are involved?”**

People’s needs will vary greatly, with some requiring a relatively low level of support such as help with housework, while others may require a more complex range of support services to remain living at home.

#### **Local Councils - Aged & Disability Services**

If your support needs aren’t that great and you need assistance with little things such as cooking, housework, personal care, maintenance, etc, your best option would be to contact your local council.

Many people are not aware of the services that are available to the aged or disabled through their local councils. Your local council can be contacted even if you are fairly independent but still require help with home maintenance, home help, meals on wheels etc.

For example, Yarra City Council offers:

**Handyman Service** – Residents are able to obtain help with the installation of ramps, rails and smoke detectors; general repairs; security related gardening; fixing water leaks; and cleaning gutters. Cost for pensioners is \$2.50 an hour and is means tested for non-pensioners.

**Home Help** – Services are offered for residents that need help with personal care, shopping and cleaning.

Cost for pensioners is \$2.50 an hour and is means tested for non-pensioners.

**Meals on Wheels** – Clients are able to receive a 3-course meal delivered to their door each day. Midday meals are also offered in the council’s dining rooms. The cost for each meal is \$4.

**Community Access** – A weekly door-to-door shopping trip is available to one of the local shopping centers using the council’s community bus.

#### **Aged Care Assessment Program (ACAP)**

For those of you with higher needs there are additional services available. The Commonwealth Government funds 17 different community care programs aimed at enabling the frail aged and people with a disability to live independently in their homes for as long as possible. At any one time, up to 400,000 older people and people with a disability rely on these support services to remain living in the community.

The main objectives of the program are to comprehensively assess the needs of each individual and assist them to access care services appropriate to their needs.

Assessment by the Aged Care Assessment Service (ACAS) is for free and is part of ACAP.

ACAS is able to assess and help many older people and some younger people with a disability to enter a ‘**High**’ needs facility such as a nursing home or a ‘**Low**’ needs facility such as a hostel (see below).

They also assist in identifying appropriate community support services to enable those with needs to continue living at home. This includes determining eligibility for some Commonwealth subsidised aged care services including residential aged care, Community Aged Care Packages, and some flexible care services, namely Extended Aged Care at Home (EACH). If accepted, fees for pensioners are capped at 17.5% of their pension; people on higher incomes may be asked to pay up to 50% of any additional income.

As people grow older and become frail, they need to make important choices about the way they. Some people may wish to stay at home with support services, while others may choose to move into a hostel or nursing home; eg. Home and Community Care (**HACC & Home First** – see below). The aim is to prevent premature admission of the frail aged and those with a disability into hostels or nursing homes.

People are usually assessed in their own home by one of the ACAS team members, made up by nurses, geriatricians, social workers, physiotherapists and occupational therapists. You can contact ACAS directly (1800 133 374) or have your doctor refer you.

### The Difference between Low Level and High Level residential facilities

#### Low Level Accommodation

Hostels are usually referred to as Low Level residential facilities. They are suitable for fairly mobile people who may require assistance with dressing, laundry, cooking, shopping or the supervision of their medication. Rooms are usually a bed-sitter room with private or shared bathrooms.

#### High Level Accommodation

Nursing homes are usually referred to as High Level residential facilities. As opposed to hostels, nursing homes provide 24 hour nursing care.

#### Costs

If you need to go into a hostel or nursing home, there are two types of payments you may be asked to make. These are:

**Daily care fees** – Daily fees are based on income, so both part pensioners and non-pensioners may be asked to pay an additional fee. Means tested pensioners can pay up to \$25.73 per day or and the average for non-pensioners is \$32.12. The maximum that anyone will be asked

to pay is \$77.19 per day (your annual income would have to be over \$68,742 to pay this amount).

**Accommodation payments** – This will depend on the level of care you will need. You may be asked to pay an **accommodation bond** as a hostel resident or an **accommodation charge** as a nursing home resident. (The amount you are to pay is dependent on your assets). The accommodation charge is capped at \$13.91 per day and is paid for a maximum of five years. These fees will go towards the cost of your accommodation in the hostel or nursing home. **You will not be asked to pay a bond or charge if you truly cannot afford it.** You'll be guaranteed quality residential care because a strict system of accreditation applies to all aged care homes that receive Government funding. Aged care homes are assessed and regularly monitored against a set of Accreditation Standards.

#### Home First & Home and Community Care (HACC)

Before applying for **Home First** (ACAS will help you with this), you can look for help from other community-based support services such as the HACC program, and from your family and friends.

HACC is funded by the Department of Human Services and provides home help, personal care services, home maintenance, visiting nursing services, social support services and the Linkages program.

If you are **under 65 years of age** (some exceptions can be made) and have a significant and permanent disability, the **Home First** program can help you to live as independently as possible. The program provides for an attendant, or attendants, to help you with daily attendant care and support for activities in your home that you can't do on your own. Any aids and equipment that are required may also be provided.

The Department of Human Services provides funds for an attendant through a disability service provider like AQA Qualcare. You choose the service provider, and the service provider will employ an attendant on your behalf. You also take an active role in recruiting and supervising your attendant, and deciding how and when they spend their time with you.

**Note:** Please be aware that even though many services are available, many are dependent on funding and demand. For example services from Councils can be accessed at short notice, while there is often over an 18-month wait for **Home First** funding.

#### For further information contact:

Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing 1800 133 374

Disability Information Victoria 1300 650 865,  
[www.disabilityinfo.org.au](http://www.disabilityinfo.org.au)

Aged and Community Care 1800 500 853,  
[www.ageing.health.gov.au](http://www.ageing.health.gov.au)

Your Local Council.

**Written by Nazim Erdem.**

## Phillip Island Written by Simon Damevski

**Phillip Island** is situated 140 kms south-east of Melbourne and is an easy 1 hour and 45 minute drive. The main attraction is the stunning Phillip Island Nature Park which spreads over 2,750 hectares and almost 20% of Phillip Island. Phillip Island also offers a variety of walking tracks and elevated boardwalks that are wheelchair friendly and these allow for close up wildlife viewing. These walks have been designed to maximise the stunning coastal views and at the same time immerse you in the island's flora and fauna. Highlights of a visit to Phillip Island Nature Park include:

**The nightly Penguin Parade & Fur Seals** – this is the home to the famous Fairy Penguin Parade where, every night at sunset on Summerland Beach, you can witness the teams of Penguins, weary after a hard day's fishing, as they waddle their way up the sand dunes from the sea, or you can go and encounter the world's largest fur seal colony. A Visitor Centre provides a theatre and informative, interactive displays about the penguin's world. Disabled parking and ramp access are available throughout the Centres and close by are many cafes.

**The Koala Conservation Centre** – this area of the Nature Park offers close koala viewing opportunities on a tree top boardwalk, woodland walking trails and a Visitor Centre. All boardwalks and trails are wheelchair friendly.

**Churchill Island** – just a short drive from Phillip Island, gives a glimpse into the pioneering history of our early settlers, with a historical homestead, gardens, agricultural museum and Visitor Centre. The island also has a wonderful walking track that is wheelchair friendly and offers scenic views across Western Port. You can stroll through the ancient Moonah trees, look at the farm animals or discover the diversity of birdlife.

There's plenty to do with most of the island being accessible so get out there and enjoy nature at its best. You can easily spend a day or two having a look around so why not spend a night or two at Alvina Holiday Cottages which is fully wheelchair accessible. For other accessible accommodation or any further information about Phillip Island please contact AQA.



**Address:**  
Lot 9, Ventor Road  
Ventor Victoria 3922

**Phone:** (03) 5956 8416  
**Email:** [info@alvina.com.au](mailto:info@alvina.com.au)  
**Website:** [www.alvina.com.au](http://www.alvina.com.au)

**See advertisement on page 3**

## Help when it's not wanted!

On a cold and wet Saturday morning I went through my normal routine of getting ready to attend an AFL football match between the Tigers and the Blues. I was hoping the Tigers would actually win, and their chances looked rather promising considering they were only playing the Carlton football club who were sitting below us on the ladder.

When I was ready I got into my car and drove to the Nunawading train station and jumped on the next city bound train to the MCG.

After sitting through an enthralling match of AFL footy, and supporting the side that lost by a kick, I angrily headed for the Richmond train station. While leaning forward I dug deep into my reserves of intestinal fortitude to get up the steep, but within my capabilities, ramp. Part way up a man, who obviously thought he could help, rushed in behind me and without asking, gave me a big shove in the middle of my back. This caused me to lose my balance

and I flew forward, crashing forcefully onto the bitumen. Even though he was trying to assist, to me it was like walking up to someone in the street and tripping them over. This man had no right to assume I needed help as I was quite comfortable pushing myself up the ramp.

After a barrage of abuse I was rather gratefully lifted back into the comfort of my chair by the man who initially got me into this situation and another bloke who witnessed the whole incident first hand and obviously felt the pain I was experiencing. When I caught my breath and regained my composure, I was ready for the next, even steeper ramp and looked forward to the safety of the Lilydale bound train to continue my journey home.

**Written by Wayne Bradshaw**

**Editors note:** I am very interested to hear from those of you who have had similar experiences and the way you handled them. Please send your story to:

Simon Damevski, Newslink Editor, PO Box 219, Fairfield  
Victoria 3078, Email: [simondamevski@aqavic.org.au](mailto:simondamevski@aqavic.org.au)

## Just another Water??? *by Mark Waterman*

I am a C4/5 Quad as a result of a motorcycle accident in 1972. Back in those days people such as doctors, nurses and peers used to say/think that if you kept your fluid intake well up, you would have no problems with UTI's, kidney's etc. That's just the way things were.

Over the last 6-10 months, both at work and home, I have been feeling flat, run-down and extremely lethargic. I have had more sick leave over the last 6-10 months than any other time (barring pressure problems) in my working career which has spanned 24 years. On average I would drink somewhere between 4-6 litres of fluid a day. If I felt I had an infection coming on, I would therefore drink more to flush it through.

In mid July I had a blood test and then a couple of days later I had a renal ultrasound with the usual accompanying x-rays. Imagine my surprise when my doctor told me I was suffering from a condition called Hyponatremia!

What is Hyponatremia? Well, I found the following information on the web:

**“Hyponatremia** is a condition known as **“water intoxication.”** It is **the opposite of dehydration**, and is often associated with long distance events like running and cycling. Moreover, **it's not an unusual problem, and it can develop in a few hours.**

As you consume large amounts of water over the course of a day, blood plasma (the liquid part of blood) increases thereby diluting the salt content of the blood. At the same time, your body also loses salt by sweating. **Consequently, the amount of electrolytes available to your body tissues decreases over time to a point where that loss interferes with brain, heart, and muscle function!** You have to replace these electrolytes as they are essential to the normal electro-chemical operation of your nervous system.

### Symptoms

Though the condition is opposite to dehydration, the symptoms generally mirror those of dehydration (apathy, confusion, nausea, and fatigue), although some individuals show no symptoms at all.

**“If untreated, hyponatremia can lead to coma and even death.”**

So, if like me your fluid intake is high, be aware of the consequences. I am now drinking around 2 litres a day, an amount I thought would be nowhere near enough to keep kidney's, bladder etc. healthy and am doing very well. For your peace of mind, if you are drinking large amounts of fluids, I would recommend that you speak to your doctor to have this issue investigated.

## Dynamic Wheelchairs

### Address:

Unit 17, 14-26 Audsley Street  
Clayton Victoria 3168

### Postal address:

PO Box 4081  
Mulgrave Victoria 3170

- à largest range of custom lightweight manual wheelchairs
- à imported - quickie, invacare
- à locally manufactured by – **A-1 mobility**
- à for quality, comfort, style and strength
- à folding, rigid and suspension frames (over 15 models to choose from)
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- à individually measured & highly adjustable
- à personalised service to home, hospital and rehabilitation

### Seating products

- à experienced suppliers of: jay, roho, invacare
- à a wide range of accessories and spare parts
- à sports wheelchairs & recreation equipment



Suspension Chair



Folding Chair

### For further information contact:

**Mike De Santo**

Tel: (03) 9548 8400

Fax: (03) 9548 8411

Email: [dynamicw@hotmail.net.au](mailto:dynamicw@hotmail.net.au)

## Bird Brain

A lady was walking down the street to work and she saw a parrot on a perch in front of a

pet store. The parrot said to her, "Hey lady, you are really ugly." The lady was furious!

She stormed past the store to her work. On the way home she saw the same parrot and it said to her, "Hey lady, you are really ugly." She was incredibly ticked now.

The next day the same parrot again said to her, "Hey lady, you are really ugly." The lady was so ticked that she went into the store and said that she would sue the store and to get and promised he would make sure the parrot didn't say it again.

When the lady walked past the store that day after work the parrot called to her, "Hey lady." She paused and said, "Yes?" And the bird replied, "You know."

## Been Drinking

Late one Friday night a policeman spotted a man driving very erratically through the streets of Dublin. They pulled the man over and asked him if he had been drinking that evening.

"Aye, so I have. 'Tis Friday, you know, so me and the lads stopped by the pub where I had six or seven pints. And then there was something called "Happy Hour" and they served these mar-gar-itos which are quite good. I had four or five O' those. Then I had to drive me friend Mike home and O' course I had to go in for a couple of Guinnessis — couldn't be rude, ye know. Then I stopped on the way home to get another bottle for later..." And the man fumbled around in his coat until he located his bottle of whiskey, which he held up for inspection.

The officer sighed, and said, "Sir, I'm afraid I'll need you to step out of the car and take a breathalyzer test."

Indignantly, the man said, "Why? Don't ye believe me?!?"

## Old and wise farmer

An old farmer in Georgia had owned a large farm for several years. He had a large pond in the back that he fixed up really nice that had picnic tables, horseshoe courts, basketball court, etc. The pond was properly shaped and fixed up for swimming when it was built.

One evening the old farmer decided to go down to the pond, as he hadn't been there for a while, and look it over. As he neared the pond, he heard voices shouting and laughing with glee. As he came closer he saw it was a bunch of young women skinny dipping in his pond.

He made the women aware of his presence and they all went to the deep end of the pond.

One of the women shouted to him, "We're not coming out until you leave!"

The old man replied, "I didn't come down here to watch you ladies swim or make you get out of the pond naked."

"I'm here to feed the alligator."

Moral: Old age and cunning will triumph over youth and enthusiasm every time.

## FOR SALE

### Motorised Wheelchair

Avion motorised wheelchair, it is in fairly good condition, it runs on two drycell batteries that charge up by plugging a lead into a 240v plug.

**Price:** \$700 negotiable

**Phone:** (02) 6024 2399 Colin McNeill

### Gazelle Motorised Wheelchair

4 yr. old, very good condition. Chair has been rarely used.

**Price:** \$1,500 negotiable

**Phone:** (03) 9878 2947 Sue

### 1999 Mercedes Vito Van & Wheelchair

automatic entry with electric lock down, drive without attendant assistance, 38,000 km's

**Price:** \$40,000 ono

**Phone:** (03) 9509 7414 or 0419 385 929

**Email:** johneddy@bigpond.com

## WANTED

**Wheelchair Accessible Van**, 86-90 model, auto or manual, fair condition. Please contact Colin on 9723 8386

## FREE TO GOOD HOME

### Glide Power chair

20 inch wide, running order but needs new battery – see picture

PHONE: Information Department at AQA (03)9489 0777





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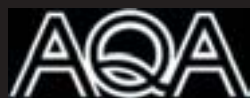


Phil Hooton who is a Chess Coach is planning on forming a CHESS CLUB if the interest is there. If you are interested in joining the club, please call Phil on 9534 1383 to register your interest or to find out more. Private Chess Coaching is also available, where they'll come to you!



Checkmate Chess Coaching, Phone: 9534 1383, Mob: 0421 901 530, [phooton@datafast.net.au](mailto:phooton@datafast.net.au)

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Post this form and the \$5 fee to : **AQA Victoria Ltd., PO Box 219, FAIRFIED 3078**

# CLASSIFIEDS

## FOR SALE

### Manual Glide 3 Wheelchair

restraining belt, reclining mechanism, back extension, padded arms, brakes, leg extension & support, Care Quip seat insert, Seat width 500mm.

**Price:** \$1000 negotiable

**Phone:** (03) 9787 6129 (Yaqirah) or 9531 8936 (Sol)

### Falcon EF series 2

Late 1995 station wagon 4 litre auto with aircon, ABS, central locking, towbar and cargo-barrier 178,000kms with full service history 10 mths rego &RWC

**Price:** \$9,800 ONO

**Phone:** Mark on 9399 5775 or 0408 536 921

### 1999 Toyota Hiace/Commuter

70,000 km's, Tieman hoist, dual air conditioning, 5 speed manual, 2.4 fuel injected motor, can take 2 wheelchairs + 5 adults inc. driver, excellent condition, RWC + Registration

**Price:** \$26,000

**Phone:** (03) 9484 6987 Peter

### 1999 Hyundai Excel Flash-cab

Air-con, Low km's, 2 door hatch, room for 2 people plus wheelchair, white colour, 8300 km's,

**Price:** \$32,000

**Phone:** 5828 8270 Wilma Graham (Shepparton)

### Flocon Auto Lifter

Hydraulic hoist to lift people from wheelchair into car. Sits on the roof. Very little use. Cost \$2,200,

**Price:** \$1,000

**Phone:** 5155 3009 Heather(Lakes Entrance)

### Voltswagon Transporter

1999 model, 63,000 km's, Braun L918 hoist (fitted October 2002) in rear, 2.5 ltr petrol engine, 5 speed, air conditioning, fittings for wheelchair and seat for carer, spare passenger seat, RWC.

**Price:** \$21,500 ono

**Phone:** (03) 5382 2138 (AH) Sue (Horsham)

## FOR SALE

### 1994 Ford Flash-cab

White stationwagon with 4 litre dual fuel engine, auto, P/steering, air-con. Ultimate vehicle for disabled comfort and has been fully retsoresd in last 3 months, RWC + Reg until Oct 2003.

**Price:** \$24,000

**Phone:** (03) 9409 4511 or 0409 007 123 Steve

### Peugot 306XT

1.8i 4 door with hatch, 1995 model, 74,000km, full service history, hand controls and wheelchair hoist on roof. Black with grey velour interior Air con, elec wins and mirrors. Power steering. Great handling. RWC and long reg.

**Price:** \$13,500

**Phone:** (03) 9418 0952 Janice Florence (BH)

### Electric Wheelchair

Jaguar model, fair-good condition, tilt back, 17 inch seat

**Price:** \$500

**Phone:** (03) 9723 8386 Chris

### Wheelchair

Lightweight wheelchair, good condition, rigid frame

**Price:** \$250 ONO

**Phone:** (03) 9723 8386 Chris

### Pressure Relieving Mattress

Huntleigh Pentaflex, Dimensions: 200cm long x 82cm wide x 17cm thick, blue plastic cover, only used for about 2 months.

**Price:** \$300 ONO

**Phone:** (03) 9307 2271 ask for Joan

### wheelchair hoist

wheelchair hoist (Tieman), heavy duty, suit Toyota Hiace, see working, excellent condition.

**Price:** \$1,500 ono

**Phone:** (02) 6059 3594 after 5pm Noel (Wodonga)

... More Classifieds on page 14