

AQA

NEWS LINK

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

April 2004



Australian F1 Grand Prix

A day out for the AQA info team

Summertime Pleasures

Latest movie reviews from Hilary Ash



Games console controllers

Making computer games possible!

Plus much more...



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A.Q.A. NEWS LINK is the official newsletter of A.Q.A. Victoria Limited, 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.

A.Q.A. Victoria Limited always welcomes articles for News Link. Please feel free to send in your contribution. Articles will be published at the discretion of the Editor who also has the right to edit all submissions as it sees fit.

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From the CEO

Those members who receive attendant care via the Home First or Respite Care programs conducted by the Department of Human Services, may be interested to know that the Quality Systems



Unit of the Department will be conducting some workshop forums for agencies, clients, family members, carers etc. These workshops will be looking at the revision of the Victorian Standards for Disability Services and the Department is seeking input from all interested parties.

The workshops will be conducted in April in various locations throughout Victoria and anyone interested can contact AQA to obtain information, registration details, dates and locations. We have been advised by the Department they will be happy to assist people with disabilities at the forum if required and this should be advised at the time of registration.

Ian Bennett

Chief Executive Officer

ianbennett@aqavic.org.au

From the Editor

G'day members,

AQA would like to thank the members that have sent in articles for News Link, please keep them coming. Hilary Ash has been kind enough to send in



a detailed review of the movies she has seen over the summer. For a taste of some other stuff Hilary's been writing you can visit her website which is listed at the end of her article on pages 8 & 9.

The AQA info team made their way to the Australian Grand Prix on the Saturday and had a wonderful time. Make sure that you get out there next year as plenty of thought has gone into providing appropriate facilities for us wheelies. You can read about their adventure on pages 10 and 11 to get a better idea.

Simon Damevski

News Link Editor

simondamevski@aqavic.org.au



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Sexual Health Counsellor and Family Therapist

Following a spinal cord injury, sexuality is a major concern for many people and their partners, no matter what their age. People often struggle with the changes they have experienced and the effect this can have on their relationships, both current and future. It can be really difficult to meet people, when you don't feel as attractive as before. Talking about these concerns can help.

Families often feel disconnected at a time of crisis and need to be listened to in a way that they are heard, accepted, understood, able to express their feelings safely and feel more connected.

Annie Norrish (formerly Stokell) is a Registered Nurse, with many years experience in the Victorian Spinal Cord Service. She has done further studies in counselling, because of her interest in sexual health and spinal cord injury and is currently in private practice, working as a Sexual Health Counsellor and Family Therapist.

Annie has her own practice, but does home visits for people with disabilities. She has a TAC and Workcover provider no. and her fees are flexible, if finances are a concern.

Annie can be contacted on her mobile number on 0408 035 849.

Federation Square

Ivan Peterson (AQA Director) and Nadia from Blind Citizens Australia met with Fed Square Management to advise them of their concerns on barriers to access at Federation Square. Management have made a commitment to address surfaces and handrails on ramps and there are other issues to be followed up and addressed such as lifts. This is great news as it is a very important first step to bring Federation Square up to a worldwide standards.

The following is a statement from a spokesperson for the management of Federation Square, Mr Geoff Pascoe:

“Federation Square Management is in the process of addressing many access and movement issues across the site, in particular the installation of tactile ground surface indicators, additional handrails on stairs and the modification to handrails through the provision of turn-downs. Further, a review is currently being undertaken on the provision of way finding signage across the site which quite clearly doesn't work at present. Funds have also been allocated to address this matter.

Much has been learned in the short time that Federation Square has been open and we are confident that our program of works will address many of the negative aspects raised by the community to date.”

We will keep you informed on how this progresses.

Survey Results

Midway through last year, AQA's Information / Peer Support Department sent out a Member Survey to all members to fill out. The purpose of the survey was to get an understanding from the members to find out what exactly they knew about the services we offer, secondly we wanted to let our members know what services we do offer and finally to see if we were offering the services that our members expected from us.

A lot of time and thought went into the design of the survey so as to not make it inconvenient. We all know that surveys can be time consuming and a chore at the best of times so with this in mind we designed each question of the survey in such a way, trying to make it simple and straight forward as possible, with the use of multi-choice questions and tables, realizing the fact that many didn't like writing and spending much time with it. Responses to parts of the survey were poor which

indicated to us that these sections of the survey may have been poorly designed. We were pleased that many of our members knew about what services we provide. One interesting result of the survey was that country members feel isolated and we are going to try to improve the current situation.

At first, we were a little disappointed because the number of surveys returned to us seemed low at 33 %. But after doing some research, we were quite pleased to find out anything over 25% of returned surveys are considered good.

Over the next few issues we will publish some of the results of the eleven questions asked in the survey. If you can't wait for the results to be published in News Link, pick up the phone or jump on your computer and contact us on (03) 9489 0777, FreeCall for Country and Tasmania members 1800 999 128, or email info@aqavic.org.au.

Invitation from ARATA – Technology: everyone, everywhere, every day

On behalf of the conference organising committee, it is my pleasure to invite you to participate in the Australian Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Association (ARATA) 2004 National Conference Technology: everyone, everywhere, every day, to be held in Melbourne from Wednesday 2 until Friday 4 June, 2004.

The purpose of the Australian Rehabilitation and Assistive Technology Association is to serve as a national forum for issues in rehabilitation and assistive technology. The association fosters interaction between all people with an interest in the field of rehabilitation and assistive technology and encourages research and development in this area. ARATA participates in the development of standards and guidelines for quality assurance, service delivery, safety and ethics.

A national conference is conducted at regular intervals and is designed to meet the needs of people who are new to technology, use technology but want to increase their skills and knowledge, or who use technology confidently and are interested in new developments. The ARATA 2004 conference aims to enable participants to understand how the application of technology can allow inclusion of all people into everyday activities, home, school, work and leisure.

Robert Bingham
President
Conference Profile

The conference is designed to meet the needs of people who:

- Are new to using technology
- Use technology but want to increase their skills and knowledge.
- Use technology confidently and are interested in new developments.

The ARATA 2004 conference aims to enable participants to understand how the application of technology can allow inclusion of all people into everyday activities, home, school work and leisure.

Contact Name: Aghi Maisano - Conference Manager

Website: www.arata.org.au

Phone: (03) 9372 7182

Email: arata@ammp.com.au

Solutions 2004 Expo

The forthcoming **Solutions 2004 Expo** is to be held at the Caulfield Racecourse, Melbourne on May 20 & 21 2004.

This **FREE** expo is “dedicated to the needs & opportunities for people with disabilities” and will showcase a diverse range of products, services & information from over 60 organisations.

Who is Solutions 2004 for?

Who is Solutions 2004 for?

- People with disabilities
- Carers / families / friends of people with disabilities
- Service providers
- Health professionals
- People with a business interest in the area

Key benefits of attending Solutions 2004

- Become better informed
- Explore new products / services
- Free Expo Information Sessions
- Take advantage of Expo ‘specials’
- Research / Network
- Compare prices

For any further information on this event please contact:

Wayne Woff (Manager - Total Aged Services)

Phone: (03) 9571 5606

Mobile: 0422 484 209

Fax: (03) 9571 9708

Email: office@totalagedservices.com.au

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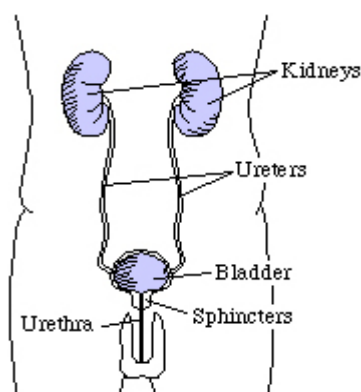
What's new in PEER SUPPORT

By Peter Van Benthem
petervanbenthem@aqavic.org.au

SCI Bladder Problems Fixed with Botox

The medication commonly called Botox is a purified toxin made from the botulinum bacillus. It has become standard therapy in the management of a variety of muscle spasm disorders and has found new uses in certain Urological conditions, as well.

Injection with Botox has been successful in treating a variety of bladder and urinary sphincter disorders. These include overactive bladder, multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injury, stroke, interstitial cystitis, urinary retention, and certain forms of prostatism. In each of these conditions, it is felt that spasm or spasticity of affected muscles causes the symptoms patients experience. Botox produces a temporary paralysis of the injected muscles, improving and sometimes resolving symptoms altogether.



The Sphincter muscles form a ring around the urethra and clamp the urethra tube to keep urine in the bladder. When you are ready to urinate, these muscles relax to allow urine to flow out of the bladder. After a SCI you will normally get a condition,

either a Sphincter Spasm Disorder or an Over Active Bladder. In the management of Sphincter Spasm Disorders, Botox is injected directly into the urinary sphincter muscles. In the management of an Overactive Bladder, small doses of Botox are injected into several specific locations in the bladder wall muscle. The Botox will then weaken these muscles and allow normal bladder emptying, or emptying with only compressive effort usually with the means of tapping. As a result, some patients can go without the use of catheters.

In a study, 50 patients were injected with botox into the bladder wall or sphincter. The patients suffered from a variety of conditions, including multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injury and stroke. However, in each case they were suffering from involuntary contractions of the bladder

muscle. This either caused incontinence, or an inability to completely empty the bladder.

Forty-one of the 50 patients reported a decrease or absence of incontinence after the injections. The improvement was seen within seven days of the injection and symptoms were alleviated for approximately six months. None of the patients experienced long-term complications from the treatment.

Published reports indicate great success, with minimal or no side effects. Urgency and incontinence have been resolved, or greatly improved. According to currently available published medical studies, the maximal Urological effect of Botox is usually seen at 7 days after injection and lasts for six to ten months.

Botox is an FDA approved medication, with specific indications for use in cervical dystonia (also called spasmodic torticollis) and other similar muscles spasm disorders. It is also indicated as cosmetic therapy for temporary improvement in the appearance of moderate to severe glabellar (frown) lines associated with excessive facial muscle activity in adult patients aged 65 years or less. Urologic uses of Botox are legal, when administered by a licensed physician.

Note: Source has been taken from various internet sites. For further information, please visit www.intelihealth.com

Written by Peter Van Benthem

Job Advertisement

AQA Peer/Support department is looking for a SCI female to help with Peer support work and around the office. Also, she will need to write a regular column in News Link so that we can get a female perspective on things. All terms are negotiable. If you are interested please send in your application with a CV to Nazim at info@aqavic.org.au or call Nazim on (03) 9489 0777 to make an appointment for an interview.



Name: Bruce Charsley.

Age: I'm 63 years of age.

Disability & Level:

T12/L4 Incomplete

Are you Married/Single?

Married.

Do you have children?

Two daughters. One of my daughters is a missionary in the Philippines with her family. The other lives in NSW with her family.

How did you acquire your disability?

I fell 6 meters out of a tree that I had almost finished cutting down. I was way out in the country south of Morwell and was evacuated by Helicopter to the Austin.

What is your living situation?

I live in my own home in Mooroolbark, which has been altered to be wheelchair friendly. I live with my wife of 38 years.

Your Survival Tip for others?

Tomorrow will always get better. Look for the bright side of life. It only SEEMS like the world has come to an end. It has not, and you can find a blessing somewhere if you only look for it. In hospital I saw lots of discouraged people and

encouraged them to look around...there was always someone who was not as well off as you.

The most embarrassing moment since you have been using a wheelchair for mobility?

Can't think of anything so bad.

Your greatest achievement?

Travelling to South Africa in 2002 to be the celebrant to marry my nephew and his wife.....what a blessing. I promised Pete van. B an article on this so now I will have to write it, won't I?

What do you do with your time?

I have been doing some preaching and counselling as well as woodwork, and quite a lot of reading too. I like to get out and about. Even a visit to a shopping centre just to watch the people or have a coffee is fun. I enjoy helping other people who have problems (physical or emotional) and love to help at the "Life skills" days where I can put a little bit back in to a place that helped me so much.

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

I live in the Eastern suburbs of Melbourne because most of my oldest friends are nearby. I will be moving soon though to live near my daughter on the NSW mid North Coast where I can be closer to my family, especially my grandchildren.

Your best holiday spot and why?

Diana and I have stayed in a lot of places but I think that Metung is really great. The beauty of the lake and the peace and tranquillity of the area are a real blessing.

What food do you like best?

Pretty much anything. I enjoy a BBQ with South African type sausage. My

favourite dessert is Lemon Meringue pie...YUM.

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

I would like to build some sort of entertainment centre at the spinal and rehab units to help patients to get their eyes off themselves and their situation. Or maybe build a great retreat for spinal patients down at Metung where they could have all of the top facilities.

Do you have an internet site you would recommend?

Not really but I do use the internet to keep in touch with our many friends around the world.

SPORRT - Spinal Outreach Risk Reduction Team

This is a community outreach team, assisting people with spinal cord injury maintain wellness and reduce the risk of developing complications and of hospitalisation.

SPORRT works with clients of the VSCS, their families & care networks to generate local solutions to health issues arising from spinal cord injury.

Referrals can be made for care & advice regarding issues such as skin, bladder & bowel management, functional assessment, equipment and environmental issues.

For more information, contact us:

SPORRT

Austin & Repatriation Medical Centre

3KZ Building, Level B

Phone: (03) 9496 5351

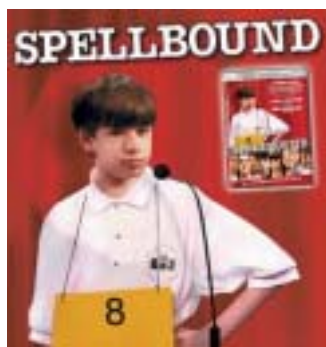
Fax: (03) 9496 3626

Email: sporrt@armc.org.au

Summertime Pleasures

This summer I have immersed myself in books and movies. At the time of writing I'd be hard pressed to find a current movie I haven't seen. (Wouldn't you buy shares in Village Roadshow?) Although there was none I really hated, some had greater appeal. For thumbnail reviews, you can read Friday's EG, or ask Google for a range. This is a purely personal response to my movie treats from late 2003.

Let me start by saying that to my mind, 90 minutes is usually the right length for a movie. I feel sorry for film editors who seem to be Movieland's most underworked professionals. There needs to be a very good reason for a film to go for much longer, and many of those I saw offended the time limit, while offering no visible benefit.



My first December film was the excellent **Spellbound**, a charming 97-minute documentary with plenty of humour, style and 3D characters. Families, especially parents, of youngsters competing in an annual US

national spelling competition, responded to the pressure in a variety of ways, the film-makers also revealing how the competitors themselves were products of their upbringing.

Next, from France, was **The Spanish Apartment** - ranging from amusing to some very funny moments - definitely a 90-minute idea stretched to 2 hours. Among the many characters far from home, we saw a pretty young wife, neglected by her doctor husband, having an affair with a student. No surprise since their shallow marriage was based on a moment's realisation that the other was 'the one'.

Love Actually was another time offender, at about 130 minutes. Yes, the idea, of love in many forms, was cute, and yes, the cast was delicious, but I ended up wondering if the aim was to amuse the audience or to ensure each one of the big names wasn't offended because another one had more screen time. I found myself playing "where have I seen that face before?" and "can I remember his/her name?" sure signs the movie

itself was losing me. My favourite scene was early in the film: a rendition at a wedding of the Beatles' "All you need is love". In the many tenuously linked sub-plots, characters lost love and found it, not quite every desired mating achieving fulfilment. The key relationships grew in simplified snatches so that their resolutions felt awkward. How rarely does the cinema explore relationship dynamics in depth!

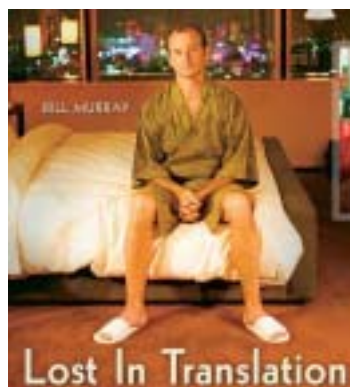


Next was **Peter Pan**. Personal reasons enhanced my enjoyment: I know the book and the play very

well indeed, a performance as Nana the dog in a school production being the highlight of my stage career. The film was a tiny bit long, but I forgave it. I agree with one website which said it was "visually sumptuous, psychologically complex, and faithful to its original source." One actor, Jason Isaacs, played both Mr Darling - the children's father - and Captain Hook, enriching the subtext. As a tale about the pre-adolescent pain of growing up, Peter Pan is hard to beat.

Between 28th December and 1st January I managed no less than 4 films:

Bright Young Things, Stephen Fry's directorial debut, is a 106 minute British treat, whose exploration of the manic defense in action in the months prior to WWII I found deeply satisfying. London in 1939 includes, at the centre of the film, some exceedingly wealthy folk, whose lifestyle, or an inflated version of it, evidently sells papers to an otherwise realistically despairing public. Although the rich spend up on flirting with drugs and danger, they are stalked by madness and death. In the end no-one can isolate him or herself from the gods of war.



Lost in Translation, didn't disappoint me either. Running for 102 minutes, it depicts a relationship between two Americans in Japan - a middle-aged man and a young woman - who share an experience of dislocation. The lightness

of Sophie Coppola's touch I found surprising, and refreshing. As a viewer I felt respected when there were conclusions left for me to draw myself. Deft use of the two central characters' marriages added to my understanding of their internal state, while the unusual context of their need of one another was elegantly handled, and showed a surprisingly mature understanding of boundaries.

Goodbye Lenin, at 2 hours was too long, although I found provocative its treatment of the complex workings of truth in a family. How much do children really know about their parents? And what circumstances open their minds to discovering that things were very different from what they needed to believe? Political exigencies, created by the division in Germany and its conclusion, were used to justify people's behaviour and choices. But essentially it was about the lengths we will go to, to protect the people we love.



I celebrated 2004 with the long-awaited **Return of the King**, the archetypal fantasy tale, which ran for 210 breathtaking minutes - either you

love it or avoid it - I am firmly in the former camp.

Things slowed down a touch after that lot, mainly because I'd seen everything!

Fortunately **Cold Mountain** opened the next week. Although it ran for 146 minutes (that's nearly 2 and a half hours), I was not bored. I confess to closing my eyes for some of the early Civil War battle scenes, but after that I was fully engaged by what amounted to an American take on Ulysses' Odyssey. By cutting between the lives of the two central, and separated, lovers, the film created the sense of a couple: each holding the other so faithfully and hopefully in mind, over years of struggle and growth, was of greater significance than their brief time together. The film also looked at issues of family loyalties, and at the reparative power of friendship.

At just on 2 hours, I found **Some Things Gotta Give** too long, though it was amusing and very lightweight indeed. If a man in his 60s can have affairs with women in their 20s, why can't a man in his 30s attract a woman

in her 50s? Perhaps age-matching between couples owes more to convention than to what may work. If a father-daughter aged couple is becoming increasingly acceptable, why not a mother-son aged pair? Perhaps we are too frightened by the oedipal myth and its more recent bad press at Freud's hands? Do not see this film looking for an exploration of these issues: the ending is far too predictable. But there are some fine laughs along the way.



Most recently was my first visit to the Astor. For wheelchair access reasons, we had the entire stalls to ourselves, to see **Legally Blonde** and **Legally Blonde 2** (I have called the 2nd one "Politically Blonde"). My daughter is a great fan of these, and I can see why. Each is a 90 minute

piece of high comedy, often using wit and humour to challenge many stereotypes. Consider these for a future video night!

And finally, while on the subject of video nights, I highly recommend **Broken Wings**, a barely noticed Israeli film, seen in October. It runs for just under 90 minutes of punchy cinema, with excellent performances throughout. A recently widowed mother is forced to juggle the conflicting demands of her job and her four dependant children. Inevitably her act proves impossible to maintain, and balls begin to drop. Issues, for example, of grief and loss, of emptiness, fear, alienation, compassion, and of adolescent uncertainties are explored intelligently and without pretension. While terrorism has no overt presence, I sensed it in the subtext, where death and anxiety were always present.

I had plans to report on my summer reading, too, but this is quite long enough. You'll have to wait till next time for that!

Written by Hilary Ash

Hilary30@excite.com

For a taste of some other stuff Hilary's been writing, please visit: <http://www.hugen.no/hilary>

Australian Grand Prix

A month leading up to the Australian Grand Prix, AQA's Information Department started getting interest from our members and interstate wheelchair users about the upcoming F1 race. Questions varied a lot e.g. Accessible accommodation while staying in Melbourne, the accessibility of the Grand Prix track and other events while in Melbourne at Grand Prix time.



Some of us wheelies here at AQA have previously been to the Grand Prix and we know that it is fairly accessible. Also, over the years there has been very good

feedback from our members regarding the accessibility at the F1 event.

To find out more information about wheelchair access we rang the Melbourne Grand Prix Hotline. They told us the event was wheelchair accessible, and like previous years, when you purchase a general admission ticket there's three special viewing platforms set aside for the disabled.

One major concern from members was that they had not received their "Companion Card" yet and needed their carer to attend the event with them. We told the person on the hotline about our members concern and we were told that they were aware of the Companion Card and that it was a fairly new scheme and that not everyone would have received their cards yet and all they needed to see was a concession card when the ticket was purchased. That was great news because the situation at the MCG and Telstra Dome for instance is not the same, you MUST have a Companion Card if you want a carer admitted free of charge with you.

A thought popped into our heads by making all these inquiries regarding the F1 Grand Prix, that a lot of us people here at AQA enjoy motor sports so why not go and enjoy the Great F1 race and the other motor race's in our own city at a great time of the year when the weather is great.

We decided that we would meet at the track on the Saturday morning and find a good viewing position

where we could all sit together. We were all going to make our own way there either by train, taxi or the free wheelchair accessible bus. The free accessible buses ran from Olympic Park and Spencer Street Station to the Albert Park race track. The new accessible trams serviced the Grand Prix as well, running from Route 109 Boxhill through the city and then onto Port Melbourne which in turn goes past the Grand Prix track.

Saturday the 6th of March came around pretty quickly and we all made our way there. First one there was Simon. He was originally going to park in the city and catch an accessible bus to the track but thought he'd try his luck and find parking next to the track somewhere, even though there were very tight parking restrictions in the area while the Grand Prix was on. Sometimes it does pay to try your luck because he managed to get past two police road blocks and park right outside one of the track entrances. Well you know what to do then, call all your wheelie friends and tell them where to park. First person to call was Naz as he was going to park his



car at Olympic Park and catch an accessible bus to the track. Simon guided Naz into this very special parking just for us wheelies.

Next Peter, Ronin and Aliza caught a cab to the same gate where Simon parked his car. Not far away was Jody who caught a tram from the city. The whole AQA team arrived within 20 min of each other without previous organization, good stuff.

We headed to the ticket booth to purchase our tickets. They gave Peter a hard time trying to get Aliza in as a carer as they told him that he needed a Companion Card. After some discussion, Peter convinced them that he had rang their office earlier and they told him he would be able to have a carer with him even if he didn't have his Companion Card. However, the situation was different for Naz. They asked him if he had a Companion Card and when Naz told them he didn't they were very understanding and even offered to give him an application form for the Companion Card – no worries at all.

Once inside the gates, we headed towards one of the three accessible viewing platforms. Getting to the platform wasn't easy for the manual chairs as we had to

push over grass and patches of sand but we eventually got there thanks to Jody and Aliza.

Pushing up onto the viewing platform was not a struggle at all because the gradient of the ramp was fine. The platform sat at about two metres off the ground and the view of the track was fantastic – thought was put into the location of the viewing platforms and there was plenty of room. We could definitely see a lot more from the



platforms than able-bodied people could see from the ground. The atmosphere on the platforms was great, I found everyone to be very friendly and helpful. Only wheelies, their families, friends and carers were allowed on the platforms. There were also track attendants on the platforms to help.

The Australian Grand Prix Association contracted “Wheel About Wheelchair Accessible Van Rentals” to take wheelies around the track to different locations, free of charge. Peter, Naz and Ronin took the opportunity to take a ride in one of their vans and saw some sights that they wouldn’t have been able to before. Their forty minute van adventure gave them the chance



to see the track and grandstands from the inner side (lake side) of the track by way of a tunnel that went under the track.

Seeing all the V8 super-cars racing teams pits and the logistics side of things was an eye-opener.

It was also great for us guys to see other members of AQA enjoying a great day and getting out and about.


Overall, we all enjoyed ourselves very much. It was great to see that the Grand Prix Association really thought about good access for wheelchair user’s by providing appropriate facilities like the accessible platforms, accessible toilets, accessible trams and buses, and contracting “Wheel About” to take people with mobility problems to where they wanted to go around the track. The Melbourne F1 Grand Prix is definitely a fantastic event especially when it comes to access in a wheelchair. Make sure that you pick an entrance gate close to the wheelchair platform you prefer and then just skip about the track in one of the wheelchair accessible vehicles that circulate around the track. Check this event out members as we had a fantastic day.

Information / Peer Support Department

Dynamic Wheelchairs

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Clayton Victoria 3168

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For further information contact:
Mike De Santo
 Tel: (03) 9548 8400
 Fax: (03) 9548 8411
 Email: dynamicw@hotmail.com

BBQ by The Lake



Yes, this is about to happen again. On Sunday, April 18, at Bendigo's Lake Weeroona, all wheelchairs south of the creek (Murray River) are invited to come along, have a feed and listen to whoever we can con into

saying a word or two about something of vital, maybe even national, importance.

This will be a great opportunity to come along and meet someone else who may be already doing some of the things that you are striving for. Conversely you could probably meet someone else who would appreciate what you can show them.

The Kangaroo Flat Lions Club were that pleased with what they saw on our trial run that they are just busting to show what they can really do as far as cooking up a storm for us.

The plan is to muster at the BBQ area of the lake from about 11 a.m., swap a few stories with friends, some of whom we may not have even met yet, get outside some tucker and then listen to what a speaker or two have to talk about.

Just remember that any time a group of wheelies and their supporters get together it forms the best knowledge base that can help us at that given time. Come along, be part of it and see what we can develop from this.

We have had a real win in that the Lions would like to be major contributors to the Barbie, therefore it would make things a whole lot easier to manage if we had some idea of numbers.

NOTE: Could you please call Robyn at AQA on freecall 1800 999 128 or (03) 9489 0777 to confirm your intentions for the big day? You will also need to speak to her to confirm the meeting point. This is a free day and open to anyone interested in spinal cord injury or life in a wheelchair. If you don't manage to find us on the day please call Naz on 0418 535 188.

**Cheers till next time,
Kevin Bailey.**

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Committed to quality

- Fully flat floor
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You asked a question?

Hello could you assist me with this problem. Before my injury I really enjoyed playing arcade games at home on the TV (Play Station & X-Box). I'm a C4 Quad with no movement in arms or finger. I was wondering if there are any active gamers out there who have either a modified X-box, Playstation 1 or 2, came cube and/or pc. If so, what is the level of your injury, which console do you use, how do you work your controls, and what type of games do you play?

G'day members, this is a very good question as I'm sure lots of us Quads would love to have our way with the new PlayStation 2 or X-Box. However, the 64 million dollar question is how would us higher Quads wrap our fingers, that don't work, into a gaming console?

I researched this subject and came up with a few options but as usual the Australian market is not as fruitful as the USA market. I had to turn my effort into finding an answer from the USA and there have been some good results that have come through from fellow USA Quads.

Reply 1

Hi, this link (www.quadcontrol.com/gamecontroller.htm) is to a site that offers PlayStation 2 controls that are hands free. It incorporates a joystick with sip & puff switches, and works great. I am very competitive and kick most able-body people's ass.

The guy who builds them, Ken, can probably help you out with other switch options too. C4/15 years



Reply 2

I'm a C-5 and I play Playstation 2 and PC games. For Playstation I use the analog controllers. I mostly play racing and sports games. I place the controller on my right right thigh and I steer with my left palm on the left analog and use my right thumb to push down for the action buttons. I find racing games the easiest as you only have to worry about pushing one action button at a time like the acceleration or brake. For PC games I use the Microsoft Sidewinder Precision Pro Joystick. I steer the joystick with my right arm and use the action buttons with my left thumb. I'm unable to move my fingers and it had taken me quite a while before I became competitive. I would encourage everyone to experiment with different games and controllers to find what suits you best.

Good luck and have fun,
Morris

Reply 3

My name is Jeff Price. I'm an electronics technician here at

Regency Rehabilitation Engineering and handle most of the switch adaptations. While I haven't actually ever done a Playstation or X-Box controller, I would expect the basic principles to be the same. All we do when we switch adapt equipment, such as a mouse or a joystick, is wire 3.5mm mono sockets directly to various pushbuttons on the circuit board. This allows them to be activated via sip puff and big buttons etc. Probably one of the most difficult areas to adapt is direction control. This is not always possible with standard joysticks and I would imagine that the same would apply to game console controllers. Over the next few weeks I'll have a look at a few controllers and get a better idea if it is feasible.

Well these responses are great, reply 1 and 2 are from the USA and Reply 3 is from an Australian Organisation in SA called "Regency Park". Website www.regencypark.org.au

If you're interested in a converted gaming controller please contact us here at AQA and we can point you in the right direction. Also, if you know of anyone who has converted a gaming controller please let us know, thanks.

Written by Peter Van Benthem

Terrible Phenomenon

In a hospital's Intensive Care Unit, patients always died in the same bed, on Sunday morning, at about 11:00 a.m., regardless of their medical condition.

This puzzled the doctors and some even thought it had something to do with the supernatural. No one could solve the mystery as to why the deaths occurred around 11:00 a.m. on Sunday, so a worldwide team of experts was assembled to investigate the cause of the incidents.

The next Sunday morning, a few minutes before 11:00 a.m., all of the doctors and nurses nervously waited outside the ward to see for themselves what the terrible phenomenon was all about. Some were holding wooden crosses, prayer books, and other holy objects to ward off the evil spirits.

Just when the clock struck 11:00, Pookie Johnson, the part-time Sunday sweeper, entered the ward and unplugged the life support system so he could use the vacuum cleaner.

Deadly Current

A woman came home to find her husband in the kitchen shaking frantically, almost in a dancing frenzy, with some kind of wire running from his waist towards the electric kettle. Intending to jolt him away from the deadly current, she whacked him with a handy plank of wood, breaking his arm in two places. Up to that moment, he had been happily listening to his Walkman.

What do you want out of life?

A teacher asked her class "What do you want out of life"?

A little girl in the back raised her hand and said

"All I want out of life is four animals".

The teacher asked "Really and what four animals would that be?"

The little girl said "A mink on my back, a jaguar in the garage, a tiger in bed & a jackass to pay for all of it"



If you have heard any good jokes lately, why don't you send them in and share them with others

A Dog Called Sex

Everybody that has a dog calls him Rover or Boy I call mine Sex he's great pal, but he has caused me a great deal of embarrassment.

When I went to the City Hall to renew his licence, I told the clerk I would like a licence for Sex.

He said, "I'd like one, too!"

Then, I said, "But this is a dog."

He said that he didn't care what she looked like.

Then I said, "You don't understand, I've had Sex since I was nine years old."

He winked and said, "You must have been quite a kid."

When I got married and went on my honeymoon, I took the dog with me. I told the motel clerk that I wanted a room for my wife and me and separate room for Sex.

He said, "You don't need a separate room. As long as you pay your bill, we don't care what you do."

I said, "Look, you don't understand. Sex keeps me awake at night."

The clerk said, "Funny - I have that same problem."

One day I entered Sex in a contest, but before the competition began, the dog ran away. Another contestant asked me why I was just standing there, looking disappointed. I told him I had planned to have Sex in the contest.

He told me I should have sold my own tickets.

"But you don't understand," I said. "I had hoped to have Sex on TV."

He said, "Now that cable is all over the place, it's no big deal anymore."

When my wife and I separated we went to court for custody of the dog. I said, "Your honour, I had Sex before I was married."

The judge said, "The courtroom isn't a confessional. Stick to the case, please."

Then I told him after I was married, Sex left me.

He said, "Me, too!"

Last night, Sex ran off again. I spent hours searching for him. A cop came over to me and asked, "What are you doing in this alley at 4 o'clock in the morning?"

I told him I was looking for Sex. My case comes up on Friday.

FOR SALE

House For Sale

House For Sale in Hallam, wheelchair accessible, 24 squares, 4 bedrooms, lower kitchen, vanities etc., large kitchen and lounge, garage, close to shops, schools and public transport.

Price: \$280,000
Phone: Michelle from LJ Hooker; 9707 2155
Mobile: 0414 774 816

House For Sale - Mooroolbark Victoria

Wheelchair accessible home in excellent condition on a flat site in prime position close to Chirnside Park, Mooroolbark and Lilydale shopping centres; schools and medical practice in the same street. Open plan living in family/dining/kitchen area with separate lounge and office, 4 bedrooms with built in robes and master bedroom has en-suite, Ducted heating and reverse cycle air-conditioning, Recently painted internally, Large single car garage with remote control tilt door, Low maintenance secluded garden with entertainment area and built in BBQ, Spa set on a low level back deck, Fully self-contained bungalow, Telebus goes right past the front door. Available from the end of June, early July this year...ready to just walk in and enjoy.

Price: \$319,000 will negotiate with the right person!
Phone: 9726 4481 Bruce or Diana Charsley

FREEBIES

Gopher Scooter



Three wheel rear drive gopher scooter with large swivelling armchair and detachable front carry basket. It has 10" x 3" non-marking tyres, two large carry bags, twin walking stick holders,

removable rear carry basket, twin removable battery boxes with batteries and charger, front bumper and twin door buffers. In very good condition.

Free to good home. Please call AQA Info Department on (03) 9489 0777 if you are interested.

Commode-Shower Chair



Sturdy free standing combined commode-shower chair. 450 mm wide (between arms) with adjustable height to fit over standard toilet. The padded vinyl seat can easily be lifted to turn the shower

chair into a commode.

Free to good home. Please call AQA Info Department on (03) 9489 0777 if you are interested.

Free Scuba Diving and Snorkelling

Just a reminder about the next Aquability "DAY AT THE BEACH" event.

The event will be held on Sunday the 18th April between 10:00am – 2:00pm at the Sandridge Life saving Club, Sandridge Beach (Mel Ref: Page 56 G3).

There will be Snorkelling and Sailing for people to try on the day and we strongly encourage for your friends and families to attend. Anyone who is interested in seeing what Aquability do or get up to are most welcome to attend. Aquability will also have kites available for people who do not wish to get in the water.

Don't worry about lunch as Aquability will provide a free BBQ and drinks on the day for people who are attending the event.



So go along, have some fun, try something new and see real independent access!!!

For further information please contact:

Adrian Kellett (Aquability)
Phone: (03) 9580 1067
Mobile: 0419 106 853
Email: adrian@aquability.com.au

CLASSIFIEDS

FOR SALE

1994 Ford Flash-cab

White stationwagon with 4 litre dual fuel engine, auto, P/steering, air-con. Ultimate vehicle for disabled comfort. Car has been fully retsored and has only done 120,00 kms. , RWC + Reg.

Price: \$20,000

Phone: (03) 9471 4511 or 0409 007 123 Steve

1996 EL Ford Falcon Flash-cab

maritius metallic blue color, completely reupholstered including all seats, new brakes all round, new suspension, tinted windows, transmission is under warranty. All tests are welcome. This car will suit the most fastidious buyer. RWC.

Price: \$20,000 ono

Phone: (03) 9579 1899 Chris

Phone: (03) 9579 5644 Mark

Fischer & Paykel Scooter

Excellent condition with both arm rests able to tilt. Lambs wool seat & arm rest covers and a carry basket in the front.

Price: \$2,800

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Electric Chair

Sibings Esprit Floater electric chair, custom built for 5' 10", fully upholstered chair with Tilt 'n' Space recline. Soft touch control pad and over \$3,000 worth of options & accessories - excellent condition.

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Manual Glide 3 Wheelchair

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

Price: \$750 ono

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

FOR SALE

Altinating Pressure Mattress System

KCI Airworks - Super, Fits on single bed perfect condition, 6 months old prevents pressure sores cost \$2600 new

Price: \$1,000 ono

Phone: (03) 9509 3923 or 0438 563 951 Glynn

Two Self-Contained Houses in One

This unusual property has been designed to suit family with special needs family member. Downstais is home one and upstairs is home two and are seperated by locked/open door policy. Both houses have own entrance. Downstairs has 3 bedrooms including main with en-suite and extra bathroom, toilet and laundry. and upstairs has 2 bedrooms.

Mobile: 0418 306 588 Geoff Buck (Agent)

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Tilt 'N' Space wheelchair

Tilt 'N' Space wheelchair with power tilt seat, Jay Deep Contour cushion (16" X 18"), new adjustable posturpedic seat, new front wheels, 2 x new h/duty batteries with quick charger and adjustable joystick control. All maintenance and improvemnts made in the last 9 months by L & R Health Care Centre. This chair would normally cost around \$10,000

Price: \$6,100 negotiable

Mobile: 0412 476 388 Tony Palmieri

Wheelchair Hoist

Ricon 8100 Electric/Hydraulic hoist, 1m lift, 300kg, Underbody type to suit large van or mobile home. Good condition

Price: \$1,000

Phone: 08 97348767 or a/h 08 97971184 Graham

Pride Scooter

4 wheeled Scooter, Pride - Zoom 4, red and grey, new - used for only 500 metres, very light 13 kg, 12 months guarantee, cost \$3,000 new

Price: \$2,300 ono

Phone: 9369 7660 Margaret

... More Classifieds on page 15