

# AQA NEWS LINK

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

NOVEMBER 2009



## Ladies Day Out

Read about our first peer support function for the female Members

## Travellers Aid

Read about our visit to Travellers Aid in the City



## Step Ahead Australia Race Day

We attend the annual fundraiser as part of Melbourne's Racing Carnival



*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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**Volume 23, Number 5**

## From the CEO



This month saw AQA hold its Annual General Meeting of members. Thank you to all those members who attended and to those who acknowledged the event with apologies or proxies. This year we were fortunate to have as guest speaker Dr David Berlowitz who

is a research physiotherapist at the Institute for Breathing and Sleep, Austin Hospital and the lead researcher in a project into Sleep Health in Quadriplegia (SHiQ)

As many of you will know, most people with quadriplegia have poor sleep quality which impacts on their daily functioning and quality of life. David's research has the potential to impact on quality of life after spinal cord injury by addressing how the sleep of people with quadriplegia can be assessed, managed and improved.

The AGM also saw three new Directors elected to the Board. **Steve Mollison** has experience in marketing, funds administration, web design and application development in the corporate sector. Steve also has first hand experience as a person living with SCI.

**Robyn Hunter** has a clinical background in physiotherapy, working in the hospital and home based rehabilitation settings for ten years before moving into rehabilitation services management in private hospitals, and health services management in private health insurance.

**Nick Walker** is a Certified Practising Accountant (CPA), a Registered Company Auditor (RCA) and currently a senior audit manager. He has extensive experience in audit, financial reporting and due diligence reviews spanning corporate and not-for-profit sectors.

Finally, I'd like to acknowledge the commitment of Director Kevin Bailey who stepped down from the Board this year after nine years as Director. Kevin has made a significant contribution to AQA over this time and as CEO I have appreciated Kevin's tireless support of the interests of our members, clients and staff. Kevin has agreed to continue as a non Director on the Board's Risk & Compliance Sub Committee.

We look forward to working with our Directors to position the organisation to pursue our vision.

**Peter Trethewey**  
Chief Executive Officer  
[peter@aqavic.org.au](mailto:peter@aqavic.org.au)

## From the Editor



Welcome to the November issue of News Link. Pressure sores for people with a spinal cord injury can be a serious issue. On page 5, you can read how to avoid them and how nutrition can help in the treatment of repair.

On page 7, Wayne Bradshaw talks about the great day he and other AQA Victoria staff had at "Step Ahead's" Annual fundraiser as part of Melbourne's Racing Carnival. The event aims to raise funds each year towards spinal cord injury research.

Peter Van Benthem and Matt Lennox took a tour of Travellers Aid at both Flinders Street and Southern Cross train stations. Travellers Aid has recently upgraded their facilities to offer better services for people travelling in the CBD. You can read their thoughts on pages 8 and 9.

On pages 10 and 11, you can read about 'Ladies Day Out' which AQA Victoria promoted last September. Debbie G and Chrissie R both write about the huge success of the day aimed at peer support and networking for our female readers. It was so successful that we will be seeing many more days like this in the future.

On pages 12 and 13, AQA's Chairperson of the Board of Directors, Wendy Lundgaard, talks about Organisational Performance in the Board Focus column, which aims to provide members and readers with some information about AQA board and governance related items.

Finally, on page 14, you have an opportunity to win an autographed copy (by the Australian Wheelchair Rugby Team) of the recently released book called Murderball. All you need to do to be in the running is to provide some content for our newsletter.

**Simon Damevski**  
News Link Editor  
[simondamevski@aqavic.org.au](mailto:simondamevski@aqavic.org.au)

**Deadlines for contributions  
are:  
December Issue 11/12/09**



## WOT Day

*“What’s Out There” Day is held at the Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre every three months. It is mainly aimed at spinal cord injured patients going through the spinal unit, however it is also open to those who are further down the track.*



The WOT Day held last September was a huge success with many new and old faces.

It’s a great opportunity for people with SCI and their family and friends to see what other people with SCI are doing or have done, post injury.

If you are interested in attending the next WOT Day on the 16th of December, please contact AQA Victoria on (03) 9489 0777 or email [info@aqavic.org.au](mailto:info@aqavic.org.au) no later than the 11th of December.

## Barossa Trip Made Easy With Equipment Hire

*The following notice, taken from Disabled Motorists Association (DMA) newsletter, writes about how Frieda and Lena enjoyed a trouble-free stay in the Barossa Valley, South Australia recently, with the help of a convenient and economical equipment hire service organised through ‘Health Link’.*

They were able to hire a range of equipment locally, selected to suit their needs, such as a floor hoist, shower chair and bed pole.

The procedure for hiring through ‘Health Link’ is as follows:

- Contact ‘Health Link’ 1800 003 307
- Have your concession, health care card etc handy
- The Health Link Call Centre will refer the enquiry to an occupational therapist (OT), who will organise delivery etc.
- Account generated - can be paid at Post Office.
- Cost of equipment: with concession cards = \$2.50 each item per week; without concession cards = \$4.00 per item per week

## New Website to Support Jobs for Disabled

*The new Australian Disability Enterprises website will help boost employment opportunities for people with disability by linking disability enterprises with businesses wanting to purchase their products or services.*

Australian Disability Enterprises are commercial businesses that provide employment for people with disability and operate across a wide range of industries, from design, printing and packaging to manufacturing, laundry and landscaping, delivering training, skills development and employment support to workers with disability.

Launching the website, Parliamentary Secretary for Disabilities and Children’s Services Bill Shorten said: “To ensure the ongoing success of Australian Disability Enterprises, this new website will help potential customers in accessing up-to-date information about products and services available.

“Purchasing from these Enterprises will support the ongoing employment of people with disability by building a stronger services sector,” Mr Shorten said.

“We can all play a part in building a more socially inclusive Australia by purchasing from an Australian Disability Enterprise - it’s more than just good business.”

Visit the Australian Disability Enterprises website at [www.australiandisabilityenterprises.com.au](http://www.australiandisabilityenterprises.com.au).

## Wheelchair Specific Clothing

*Wheelie Wear [wheeliewear.com.au](http://wheeliewear.com.au) is based in Perth, Western Australia and proudly offers jeans, board shorts, shirts and jackets designed for wheelchair users. This type of clothing is sometimes referred to as “adaptive wear”, but this is not a term they feel reflects their clothes as their garments have been designed specifically to flatter the seated figure.*

Wheelie Wear garments are crafted with both functionality and fashion in mind; they incorporate features that make them easy to put on, look stylish when worn and easy to remove. They are designed to avoid that baggy, crumpled look which is so common when a seated person wears most off-the-rack garments. Wheelie Wear customers look lean, sleek and smooth. These garments have been designed and manufactured in Australia.

For further enquiries contact:

Kim Turner 0403 174 506 [info@wheeliewear.com.au](mailto:info@wheeliewear.com.au)



## Fast Healing Foods

*The article below deals with the serious issue of pressure sores. It's best to be cautious and avoid them all together, however if you do have one, nutrition can be a key to recovery. The Royal Auto explains...*

Because wheelchair users often have difficulty changing position, pressure ulcers (sometimes called bed sores) are an ever present danger. Obviously it is best to avoid them altogether through regular pressure relief and by monitoring areas of skin close to the bone such as elbows and heels. However, if an ulcer does develop, or if the skin appears at risk, nutrition is an important factor in a timely recovery.

Fluid intake is important in the prevention of ulcers as well as their treatment. Optimal hydration should be maintained by consuming at least 1.5 litres per day. Water and juice are the best options, as caffeinated drinks, like alcohol, contribute to dehydration.

### Survey Assistance Requested

*We would like to invite you to be a part of a study called "Validation of Self-efficacy for Activities of Daily Living Scale".*

One lucky participant will receive a JB Hi-Fi voucher valued at \$50. If you choose to participate, you will be assisting one of our members with his PhD studies in Sports and Exercise Psychology.

The aim of this study is to reconstruct and validate a measure of how confident people with SCI are that they can do various tasks.

Your participation involves filling in a very simple questionnaire (anonymously) and submitting it via email. As the research involves validating, you will be asked to complete the same questionnaire again, a few weeks after the first one.

If you are interested in participating, please contact the AQA Information Department on (03) 9489 0777 or [info@aqavic.org.au](mailto:info@aqavic.org.au).

Protein is a requirement for tissue growth and repair. The Recommended Daily Intake (RDI) is 0.8 grams per kilogram of body weight, but 1.5-3 grams is advisable during recovery from a pressure ulcer. The best protein sources are meat, fish, dairy products and eggs. Alternatives include rice, tofu, corn and legumes.

Vitamin A is helpful in the early, inflammatory stages of healing, assisting in scar tissue formation. The RDI is 5000 IU and intake should not exceed 10,000 IU as high levels can be toxic. Vitamin A is in foods such as liver, sweet potatoes, carrots and spinach.

Vitamin C speeds up recovery by strengthening the wound. The RDI is 60mg. Excessive amounts can alter the digestive process. Citrus fruits, tomatoes, potatoes and dark green vegetables contain vitamin C.

Zinc is a mineral that helps white blood cell function thereby contributing to healing. Too much zinc can, however, slow healing down, so it's best to stick to the RDI of 15mg. Zinc comes from foods including beef, lamb, offal, peanuts and legumes.

Pressure ulcers are a serious health issue and require medical attention. While attention to nutrition can help aid the healing process, it should be in conjunction with professional treatment.

### Staying Active All Abilities Gym Program

The City of Darebin reports in their newsletter that a new gym program designed for people with a Disability Support Pension card is at hand. A Fitness Consultant is available to assist with, assess and to setup individual gym programs. Sessions are supervised and clients are encouraged to work towards their individual goals. This is your opportunity to improve your flexibility, strength and well being.

**When:** Tuesdays 1pm - 3pm

**Where:** Reservoir Leisure Centre

**Cost:** \$5 per session

**Enquiries:** Contact Wendy on (03) 9496 1050



## Here's a Few Dollars Sunshine, Don't Spend it All at Once!

*Australian pensioners have been doing it tough for some time: 'Link Magazine' reports the stories told at the pension review last year, revealed that for individuals and families living on fixed, low incomes for any length of time, the current rates were barely enough to meet basic needs.*

Another frequently mentioned complaint was that the system is far too complicated and many potential pensioners have difficulty working out whether or not they are eligible.

Following pressure from pensioner advocacy groups, in May 2008 the government commissioned Dr Jeff Harmer to review payments and explore ways of reducing the complexity of the system through research, analysis and national consultations. He established a Reference Committee to advise on areas of need and possible reforms.

Briefly, the key reforms announced by the Federal Government include:

- The existing single pension rate is not adequate and does not take full account of costs for those wholly reliant on the pension.
- Compared to pensions for couples, the single pension rate is too low and should be about 64% to 67% of the couples' rate.
- Existing supplements and allowances could be integrated into either a pension supplement or the base rate.
- Pension payments should be tied to changes in pensioners' cost of living.
- Pension increases need to target those with little or no private means.

The changes provide increased weekly payments to singles and couples on aged and disability pensions and those receiving Carers Benefit (Pensioners will receive further info from Centrelink.)

Various supplementary payments such as the utilities allowance will be rolled into a single, increased payment and will be delivered in a more flexible way so people can meet quarterly bills more easily. Instead of the Carers

Bonus being a discretionary payment that the Government works out each Budget, from this year on the Bonus will be a permanent part of the Carers - Benefit.

A Pensioner and Beneficiary Living Cost Index was applied from 20 September 2009 to gauge when base pension rates are higher than the Consumer Price Index. The CPI however, will still be used to decide eligibility thresholds. New private income tests will be applied to people receiving part pensions.

To make sure of your entitlements, contact your Federal Member of Parliament or go to:

[www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/seniors/payments/Pages/pension\\_changes.aspx](http://www.fahcsia.gov.au/sa/seniors/payments/Pages/pension_changes.aspx)

### What did the Government leave out?

No progress was made into looking at the extra costs involved in living with a disability, although the subject has been researched for years. Medicines, treatments (including alternative care), dietary needs, equipment, transport etc are non-negotiable additional expenses and low incomes have a major impact on people with disability participating in the community. Pressure will need to be kept on the government to recognise that everyone benefits when people with disability are truly part of community life.

A disability insurance scheme was mooted by disability advocates to secure the financial future of people either born with or with an acquired disability. The scheme is gathering momentum as diverse advocacy groups across the country become more informed. But for now we will have to wait while the government goes through the usual lengthy process of working out its feasibility.

The work of a disability advocate is never done!

## Advertise in News Link!

Got anything to sell?

Advertise here and get rid  
of things that are lying  
around!



## Step Ahead Australia Race Day

*Wayne Bradshaw talks about the great day he and other AQA Victoria staff had at “Step Ahead’s” Annual fundraiser as part of Melbourne’s Racing Carnival. He mentions that it was a “huge” event that raises much needed funding towards spinal injury research.*

I would like to pass on to you what a fantastic day I had at Flemington on Saturday. Alan and Jeni Franklin organized the day through Alan’s father who has had a long association with the Flemington Racing Committee.

The Event was well attended with approximately 500 guests present. The MC for the day was race track ‘Ralphie’ who was very witty and ran the show like clock work. As well as punting for his Punters Club, he also helped auction sporting memorabilia.

I enjoy supporting spinal research events and was joined by fellow employees Carol and Michelle who made up the AQA contingent.

Barbara Owen who is the Secretary of Step Ahead Australia opened proceedings with a talk about her involvement with spinal cord injury research and thanked everyone for coming and supporting the day.

‘Ralphie’ is well known in racing circles, and we had first hand access to a couple of top jockeys in Craig Williams and Claire Lindropp. They were quite happy to talk to the patrons about their rides for the day. Unfortunately for us mug punters, Claire had already rode a winner, so we were too late for that tip.

The food was plentiful and rather delicious and after washing it down with a few beers, it was time to get down to some serious punting.

Ralphie also ran the Punters Club and gave us all a lead into a few winners. I mingled with many people in wheelchairs who also thought it was a great day.

Unfortunately the Bookies beat me on the day but Spinal Research and Spinal Awareness was the winner.

## Researchers Closer to Fully Repairing Spinal Cord Injuries

*A team of scientists from the University of California San Diego (UCSD), UCLA and the San Diego Veterans Affairs Medical Center reported in the journal “Nature Neuroscience” that they had partial success in restoring damaged nerve connections in lab rats. This was based on earlier research in which scientists discovered a method to regenerate axons. Axons are the fibers that connect neurons and carry signals between them, allowing communication between the brain and the nervous system. Axons are damaged or destroyed in spinal cord injuries, causing communication between neurons to be interrupted, which can mean sensory loss and paralysis.*

Scientists used a three-part therapy in their study. First, they injected a harmless virus with a chemical growth hormone into the injury site. The growth hormone draws growing axons to the site. Next, they placed a cell graft across the injury site to encourage the young axons to grow. Finally, they stimulated genes in the injured neurons to amplify axon growth. While the therapy practiced by the team is far from perfect, and will require much more study before being tested on humans, it offers hope to the millions of people suffering some form of paralysis.

The team’s success was only partial because, although the axons found their way to the precise spinal injury site and formed connections with other nerve cells, the new neural connections did not have a myelin sheath. The myelin sheath is a fatty sheath that acts as a sort of electrical insulator to assist in the passing of electrical signals between the brain and the body’s nervous system. Since the new connections lacked a myelin sheath, they proved effectively inactive.

Further research is being planned by the same team of scientists to add another step to the already complex therapeutic process in which they hope to encourage the formation of myelin sheaths at the injury site. Although the translation from rats to humans may prove difficult, the creation of the myelin sheath will bring scientists one step closer to fully repairing nerve damage and potentially reversing paralysis.

In Menlo Park, California, the biotech company Geron, has plans underway to conduct clinical studies on humans with spinal cord injuries. They will inject embryonic stem cells into spinal cord injury patients in the hopes that the cells will form oligodendrocytes, which in turn assist in the formation of myelin sheaths. This combination of research inches ever closer to the possibility of full spinal regeneration after a severe injury. While it is nowhere near perfect yet, the promising research continues.



## Travellers Aid

*Peter Van Benthem and Matt Lennox took a tour of Travellers Aid at Flinders Street and Southern Cross stations. Here they offer their thoughts on the recent upgrades to the facilities offered by this useful service.*

We arranged to meet at Travellers Aid, forgetting that there is one at Flinders Street and another at Southern Cross stations. Peter waited for Matt at Flinders Street station, while at the same time, Matt waited for Peter at Southern Cross station. We found each other after a simple phone call. After Peter negotiated his way through the city lunch crowd to Southern Cross, our visit proceeded smoothly.

Although Travellers Aid Southern Cross is tucked away in a little nook, easy to read maps and signs point the way clearly. We were welcomed by the manager, Charles, who gave us a brief history of Travellers Aid (which was established in 1916), and clarified that the service provided to disabled people is no longer correctly referred to as TADAS (Travellers Aid Disability Access Service). Apparently the word “disability” has become unfashionable or offensive or regressive or something like that; clearly another story. With that Charles handed us over to Jodie to explain how TAAS operates.



While Travellers Aid offers all kinds of help such as luggage storage and tourist information to all travellers, the TAAS element of the organisation is specifically focussed on people with special needs.

The most noteworthy part of TAAS is the fact that there are qualified disability support workers available to assist those with special needs. These people can provide regular assistance to those that require help eating their lunch or going to the toilet, or they can help out with a one off incident or emergency.



Travellers Aid Southern Cross has accessible toilets, a number of showers, a hoist and an adult change table. There is internet access and you can hire all kinds of mobility aids, ranging from a walking stick for \$5 a day, to an electric scooter for \$28 a day.

At Southern Cross you can arrange to be picked up from the platform by the travel buggy and driven back to Travellers Aid, the taxi rank or some other more suitable location. This is a terrific help for people travelling from the country.

We were told that Travellers Aid Southern Cross is about to undergo further changes which will basically entail knocking out a wall to make some extra space. We all know how quickly space becomes an issue when a few wheelchair users get together, so this will be a welcome development – when we visited there was barely room to move.

Having seen all that Travellers Aid Southern Cross had to offer, we headed down to Flinders Street. As an exercise, we resisted asking anyone for directions. Unlike Southern Cross, there are absolutely no signs pointing the way to Travellers Aid Flinders Street. Also unlike Southern Cross, you have to go through the turnstiles to get to it. Of course the easiest way to find it is to just ask someone.

Travellers Aid Flinders Street is brand spanking new with a tremendous view looking out over the tracks and the

*Continued on next page...*

...from previous page

city skyline. Again, there is a spacious disabled toilet with a hoist and adult change table, internet access and plenty of helpful staff on hand.

One of the more interesting differences between the Southern Cross and Flinders Street Travellers Aid locations arises from a demarcation issue. As Flinders Street Station is operated by Connex, Travellers Aid staff are not allowed to venture out on to the concourse or platforms. Rather, if someone needs to be escorted outside the office, Travellers Aid staff will call for one of the station's many Connex Customer Service Officers, known as "gold tops" for their distinctive yellow vests. Travellers Aid assured us that there is a high degree of cooperation between the two staffing areas.

Overall we found our visit to Travellers Aid to be very pleasant. The staff are very friendly and welcoming, and the facilities – particularly at Flinders Street – are up to date and comfortable. Unfortunately, as is often the case with such worthwhile initiatives, Travellers Aid is in the paradoxical and difficult position of sometimes having to turn people away due to overcrowding at peak times on the one hand, and needing as many people as possible to come through the doors in order to justify their continued funding on the other.

In short, Travellers Aid is one of those places, when you find out about it, you can't believe you didn't know about it all along. It's great to know that there is a place to retreat to with people who are happy to help.

Travellers Aid Flinders Street is open 8:00am – 8:00pm Monday to Thursday, and 8:00am – 10:00pm Friday and Saturday.

Travellers Aid Southern Cross is open 7:00am – 11:00pm seven days a week.

Drop in and familiarise yourself with Travellers Aid, because one day it could really come in handy.

## News Link Delivery

Did you know that many of our members now receive News Link via email? Emailing News Link in PDF format to members cuts our costs considerably and you can view the publication in colour. If you have email facilities and are happy to receive the newsletter via email rather than mail, please let us know. If you have any queries or would like to change your mailing arrangements, please contact us on (03) 9489 0777 or [info@aqavic.org.au](mailto:info@aqavic.org.au).

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Email: [bookings@happywanderer.info](mailto:bookings@happywanderer.info)  
Web: [www.happywanderer.info](http://www.happywanderer.info)



## Ladies Day Out

*Last September AQA Victoria helped promote "Ladies Day Out" as an extension of our Peer Support Program. Below, Debbie Galavodas writes of the success of the day and the benefits of peer support and networking. Member Chrissie, who also attended the day all the way from Moe, also talks about the wonderful day she had. The day was such a huge success that we will be organizing days like this on a regular basis – look out for notices in future issues of News Link.*

Ladies Day Out was a huge success. Around 30 ladies arrived from 11am onwards. One lady (Robyn) even came all the way from Tatura, just out of Shepparton. Sheree Palmer welcomed everyone and explained the day's events.

We were very lucky to have Tracey and Alice from the Body Shop to spend 3 hours doing hand massage and exfoliation.

Sheree's lovely friends; Lucy, an experienced make-up artist; Mel, a professional hairdresser; and Liz, a nail technician, all pampered us and gave us great advice. Jill D, Jill P, Rina, and Jacinta looked after all of us with tea, coffee, cold drinks and lovely hot/cold snacks throughout the day.

I showed the ladies what colours suited them by draping various warm and cool colours over them.

We had 2 large tables of buy, swap and sell goods, which raised over \$100 towards our next ladies day. Items

included food, quality clothing, shoes jewellery, and bric a brac, which were all selling mainly for 50c \$1.00, \$2.00 up to \$5.00. We eventually ended up giving away half of the goods and donating the rest to the Royal Talbot Hospital Shop.

Many door prizes were given away and by the end of the day, around 3.30pm, we had some very glamorous looking ladies with their hair, make-up, colours, hand scrubs and nails all done.

The ladies that had traveled quite a distance to be there and meet each other developed friendships and phone numbers were exchanged.

This would not have been possible if it wasn't for Lynne Panayiotis, Sheree Palmer, and Jashu Patel, who came up with the idea a few months ago.

Congratulations on a wonderful idea and a successful day. A big thank you to Royal Talbot and Campbell Message from the Leisure Department for their support and AQA Peer Support for assisting with promoting and advertising our successful day out.

Thank you to all the ladies that gave their time and especially our Members/Subscribers that traveled the distance and made the effort to come along.

Thank you to all involved.

P.S. Ladies day is for everyone. Please send us or call us with your ideas for our next day out.

**Debbie Galavodas - Information Officer**

**Phone:** (03) 9489 0777

**Email:** [debbiegavodas@aqavic.org.au](mailto:debbiegavodas@aqavic.org.au)





## Ladies Day Out

Firstly a big round of applause to Debbie, Sheree, Lynne and Jashu for organising the Ladies Day.

Some ladies traveled from as far as Shepparton, Neerim South and Moe as well as plenty from around the Melbourne area.

Ladies had their hair cut and styled by Mel, who did an amazing job.

Lucy described and demonstrated the difference between Day and Evening make-up; she also did a fantastic job.

We all enjoyed a hand massage by Alice and Tracey from the Body Shop. Liz looked after our nails with manicures and nail polish.

These ladies worked in minimum space and occasionally there was a touch of "Wheelchair Rugby" as ladies changed positions to take their turn.

Unfortunately the "scarf tying" lady did not make it but Sheree filled the position extremely well, with not much scarf tying but plenty of adlibbing which included lots of fun and laughter for everyone.

Debbie moved around the room describing Cool and Warm Colours and how they suited each lady in turn. She draped the colours across each lady and there were plenty of sounds from the ladies watching, some good and approving sounds, and some not so approving - occasionally even a "Yuck" could be heard, again this was a fun thing to do.

Campbell was our only male attending the day. He was taking photos of the day's activities as he mingled among us ladies. I think he enjoyed the day as well as the hand massage I saw him getting from the Body Shop girls.

There was so much talking and laughter during the day, and I believe it was a tremendous success and I for one hope another day can be organised.

A big thank-you to all the ladies who organised the day, the snacks and drinks provided and the all round fun.

A huge thank you to the ladies who gave their time to provide demonstrations of hair, make-up, nails and hand massages.

Thank you to Campbell for being our photographer for the day and I hope he got some great shots.

On a personal note, I had the best day, putting faces to names only heard on the phone before.

Meeting other ladies in wheelchairs was a new experience for me, one that made me feel like I fit in. (A big Hi to Robyn; by the end of the afternoon I felt as if I had known her for years).

I look forward to the next Ladies Day and thanks again to all involved.

Chrissie (Rowe)



## Wendy Lundgaard on Organisational Performance

*Welcome again to the column that introduces you to AQA board members. We hope to provide members and readers with some information about AQA board and governance related items.*



**Wendy Lundgaard – B. Bus, Prof Dip in HR, Cert. Workplace Training & Assess't, GAICD, Fellow WCLP.**

*Wendy has served as board director at AQA since 2004 and as Chairperson for the past three years. She has experience in senior management spanning strategic human resources, operations, marketing and public relations, quality assurance and governance in public sector entities. Wendy is Director of Win-Win Workplace Strategies Pty Ltd (since 2006), a boutique consulting business. Her board and committee leadership spans community sector Board/committee management within sport and recreation, disadvantaged and rural youth, child care; and currently also serving on construction industry training and development with the Housing /Industry Association. Wendy lives in Doncaster with partner Vince, daughters Hannah and Grace and Oscar the cat.*

### **Organisational Performance – It starts with the board!**

#### **Why measure performance?**

Most organisations, to their credit, give considerable thought to their performance. In a retail environment performance measurement may be around customer service feedback and sales volume, in a service environment customer feedback and repeat business may form some level of performance. A not-for-profit organisation is also wise to review its performance. Ensuring any assessment is as objective as possible can only strengthen the confidence that the organisation is meeting its goals and identify ways to improve.

Working with the CEO, Peter Trethewey and team, the Board of AQA regularly takes time to review what its purpose is and over time, examines whether it is delivering on this promise. In 2008 we established a five year strategic plan and have established broad goals that are developed into annual operational targets with performance outcomes. This operational plan guides the business direction and new initiatives. Progress reports are submitted to the Board by the CEO which enable a regular check that our longer term goals are tracking to plan.

### **Measuring Board Performance**

One of the more significant initiatives adopted by the Board in 2004/5 was the Board Effectiveness Survey developed and conducted on a pro-bono basis by Insync Surveys. Board Directors rated performance on a range of indicators from assessing the effectiveness of the Chairperson, to Board composition and skills breadth, behaviours and dynamics of Directors, meeting management, internal reporting, strategy and planning and risk assurance. The conduct of this self assessment identified areas for improvement in board governance and enhancements have been systematically implemented over several years to address areas where improvement was required. The Board reviewed its performance against a similar set of indicators in early 2009 and, although this time considerably minor in nature, areas for improvement were again identified for action and are being implemented. By strengthening the governance practices of the Board, improvements should in turn flow through to impact positively on strengthening AQA's performance in delivering on its mission and vision.

The effectiveness of a Board is only as good as the individual Directors who comprise the Board. So, in addition to the governance improvements that came from examining the Board's performance as a whole, we also embarked on a peer review process of feedback in the form of 360 degree feedback between Board Directors. This involved giving and receiving feedback, via anonymous survey, on 15 competencies considered necessary for effective Director performance. These competencies were independent of specialist skills and were aimed at proficiency/execution, adaptiveness/

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flexibility and pro-activeness – all leadership behaviours that have an important place in any governance model. Armed with this feedback each Director was then able to compare their own perceptions with that of others and identify areas of strength and areas where further development may be required. We plan to undertake peer to peer feedback on a regular basis to maintain the momentum of self-reflection and personal growth.

### How to help AQA achieve our goals?

Just as any mature organisation recognises that it can't always get everything 100% right all the time, it should never become complacent. AQA has a number of ways in which it welcomes feedback opportunities for improvement. One of these mechanisms is the recording and analysing of customer / member concerns and issues in surveys. Feedback from our surveys is taken very seriously across all areas of AQA services. We analyse the information and use ideas in shaping the way programs and services are conducted. The Board also takes a very active interest in performance data of this kind.

When we say “your feedback is important to us” you can be sure that, at AQA, we really do mean it. Next time you have an idea or a suggestion for improvement we are more than open to hear from you. Please send us an email at [admin@aqavic.org.au](mailto:admin@aqavic.org.au), pick up the phone – (03) 9489 0777, or drop us a line (P.O. Box 219, Fairfield, 3078). We are very thankful to those who take the time to help us make an even better organisation.



A Division of A.Q.A Victoria Ltd  
ABN 90 006 691 185

Service Provider for Attendant Care throughout the State of Victoria Attendant care provider to people with a disability who need assistance with personal care and/or day to day activities.

**Phone:** (03) 9482 4373

**Email:** [qualcare@aqavic.org.au](mailto:qualcare@aqavic.org.au)

## Dynamic Wheelchairs

### Address:

Unit 17, 14-26 Audsley Street  
Clayton Victoria 3168

### Postal address:

PO Box 4081  
Mulgrave Victoria 3170



Suspension Chair



Folding Chair

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

### Seating products

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

### 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)



## Win an Autographed Copy of "Murderball" the Book

Here's your chance to win an autographed copy (by the Australian Wheelchair Rugby Team) of the recently released book called Murderball.

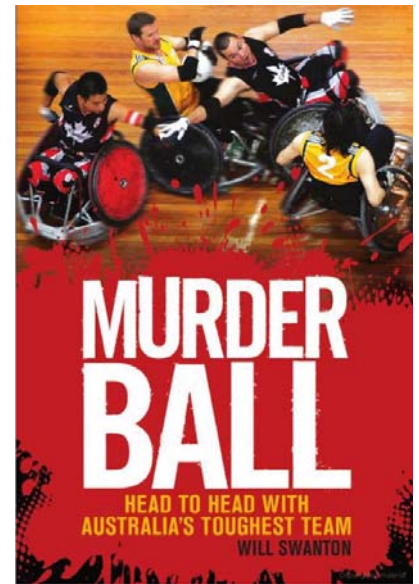
Sydney Herald Sun writer Will Swanton followed the Australian Wheelchair Rugby team (including AQA's Naz Erdem) for over a year in their preparation to the Beijing Paralympic Games.

The book writes about everything from team culture, expectations, hopes, dreams, the athletes, competitions, and much much more.

This is sports writing at its absolute best!

All you have to do to be in the running is to provide content for our newsletter. This could be in the form of:

- Equipment you use
- Your travel experiences
- Access in your area
- Lifestyle
- Leisure
- Artistic abilities
- Etc., etc.



You have plenty of time to think about what you could provide. Until mid January in fact.

If you have any questions, please contact us on (03) 9489 0777 or [info@aqavic.org.au](mailto:info@aqavic.org.au).



## Supporting Services to People with Spinal Cord Injury

### Making a donation...

With community support AQA continues to make a difference in the lives of people who sustain spinal cord injury and for the family that support them. You can provide support with a donation.

By Phone – please ring AQA on (03) 9489 0777 and have your credit card details available. (Mastercard, Visa, American Express)

By Mail (cheque or credit card) – fill in the slip below and send with your cheque to:

AQA Victoria Ltd  
P.O. Box 219  
Fairfield VICTORIA 3078

Name: (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Suburb: \_\_\_\_\_ P/Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I'd like to donate:\$ \_\_\_\_\_

Card Type:  Visa  Mastercard  Amex

Card Number:

Expiry Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name on Card: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

# CLASSIFIEDS

## For Sale

### Powered Wheelchair Q6000

Top of the line with tilt and high speed motors. Done 125km since new. Purchased from L&R for \$11,400 in 2007. Great ride and very fast. Wide is 18 inch. Seat depth 22 inch. Speedo and Odometer. Roho Jet Stream Pro backrest. 14kmp. Not for the inexperienced.

**Phone:** (03) 9326 0335 (Peter)

**Email:** [pom22@bigpond.net.au](mailto:pom22@bigpond.net.au)

**Price:** \$7,000

### Manual Wheelchair, BRODA Model 587

As new used only a few times, Color grey, Footrests swing-away/adjustable length, arms detachable, adjustable head rest, 45 Degrees of tilt. Seat depth 17", seat height 19", seat width 16"/18", back height 24". Have full owner manual book., Cost \$3,000new.

**Phone:** (03) 5447 0705 (Rosalee)

**Mobile:** 0422 545 725

**Price:** \$1,250 ono

### Exercise Machine

MOTomed Viva1 - Passive Active Leg, Only 18 months old, very little use. MOTomed are passive/active leg exercise machines, used extensively in SCI rehab/therapy in Europe and the UK. Assist maintaining muscle mass and aid circulation in the legs. Computer readouts track user progress and outcomes. Cost new \$5,250.

**Phone:** (03) 5561 7376 (Georgia)

**Price:** \$2,500 ono

### Waterford Recliner - Chair

Sheep cover (new), Good Condition, Easy stand-up features

**Phone:** 0422 667 767 (Connie)

**Price:** \$400

### House for sale

Architecturally designed, Brick veneer, Wheelchair accessible home, 10 old, Approx 30 squares, 4 bedrooms, Games room, 2 bathrooms, one large spacious main with ensuite, Electric double garage + double carport, Solar panel, Set on 2.5 acres, approx 7kms from Bendigo CBD.

**Phone:** 0421 550 062 (Ben)

**Price:** \$470,000

## For Sale

### EasyStand 5000 Standing Frame

Can be maneuvered while standing/sitting, Too many options to mention, Suitable for para/quad, As new, cost \$8500.

**Phone:** 0407230041 (Scott)

**Price:** \$3000

### Prosthetic Parts for Amputee

left arm

**Phone:** (03) 9386 9818 (Colin)

**Price:** \$150.00

### Eclipse Portable Ceiling Hoist

Easy to use patient transfer system, can be operated by single carer, 2 tracks and slings included in price, installation of tracks required, pictures available, **excellent condition.**

**Phone:** 0413 089 598 (Faye)

**Email:** [fparker@optusnet.com.au](mailto:fparker@optusnet.com.au)

**Price:** \$1,900 ono

### Wheelchair Accessible Caravan

No expense spared, luxuriously appointed, Excellent condition, Custom built, Year 2005, SIZE 23' x 8', Accessible for: Wheelchair user - Quad - Para or limited mobility, slide out ramp, wheel-in shower. This caravan is featured on AQA website by video link, Please call for further details as too many to list here.

**Phone:** (03) 59419218 or 0417 348 134 (Harry)

**Price:** \$55,000

## Freebies

### Hand Controls

They were only used a few times and fitted by Aussie Adaptions. Whoever wants them would have to make arrangements to get the hand-controls taken off a 1999 AU Falcon.

**Phone:** 0408 346 538.

### Other Freebies

- 50 boxes Speedicath catheters.
- 2000 Sterile water wipes.
- 2 Boxes Small Blueys.

**Phone:** (03) 9489 0777 (AQA)

# CLASSIFIEDS

## For Sale

### Roho Cushions X 8

8 x Roho cushions, 9 x 9 cells, very good condition, no cover.

**Phone:** (03) 9386 9818 (Colin)

**Price:** \$200 ono (for 1 Cushion only)

### CLOUDE CUSHION

18in x 18in, 9 Cell Gel Cushion, 3 spare Gel Cells, cost new \$699 plus \$99 extra cells. VGC.

**Phone:** (03) 9756 0114 (Marion or Peter)

**Price:** \$200

### 2 Bedroom Unit - Brisbane

2 bedrooms, large tiled bathroom and laundry area, recently refurbished, airconditioned, cathedral ceilings, security shutters, courtyard, carport, photos available on request.

**Phone:** (03) 5275 5445 (Jim)

**Mobile:** 0421 633 805

**Price:** \$215,000

### Commode Shower Chair

Front opening, self propelled, anti-tip wheels, as new.

**Phone:** (03) 9386 9818

**Price:** \$800 (Colin)

### Wheelchair MobilityPlus Glide

17 inch, rigid frame, excellent condition, red and yellow in colour, fold down back.

**Phone:** (03) 9386 9818

**Price:** \$600 (Colin)

### Monaro CV8 series 111

Fitted with hand controls, 5.7ltr, 71,000kms, 4 speed auto, holden assist sat/nav, tinted windows, alarm, tow bar – only used as safety feature – no towing, reverse sensors, boot and bonnet protector, factory fitted hand controls, stretchmarks on take off are free.

**Phone:** 0419 871 576 (Emilio)

**Price:** \$28,000 ono

## WANTED

'EasyStand' Standing Frame, height 5Ft 6" Please call Jasu: 0410 563 941

**Transcender stair** climbing wheelchair

Email: [bicego@inet.net.au](mailto:bicego@inet.net.au)

## For Sale

### Pool Hoist

Hydro-workx Aqua Lift, Water Wheelchair provided, (hoist lifts aqua chair into water/pool), Rescue board & floatation aids. Used only once.

**Phone:** (03) 9813 5313 (Geoff)

**Price:** \$4,500 ono

### Electric Wheelchair

Trailblazer Invacare Rollerchair, Tilt in space with head rest and 2 electric leg rests, electric rear wheel drive with 2 gel 40 amp batteries, battery charger. Very good condition.

**Phone:** 0407 733 443 Karina

**Price:** \$1250 (neg)

### Power Wheelchair

Aspire 10 Captain Seat, Very manoeuvrable, comfortable chair. Joystick control for user, or hand control for carer. External battery charger. Grey upholstery. Excellent condition.

**Phone:** 0413 089 598 Faye

**Price:** \$2800 ono

### Quickie LX Manual Folding Wheelchair

Quickie LX Manual Folding Wheelchair Wheels easily removed. Lightweight, fit into car boot. Purple frame, black upholstery. Left leg support customized and adjustable. Excellent condition.

**Phone :** 0413 089 598

**Price:** \$600 ono

### Eclipse Portable Ceiling Hoist System

Easy to use patient transfer system. Can be operated by single carer. 2 tracks and slings included in price. Installation of tracks required. Excellent Condition.

**Phone:** 0413 089 598

**Price:** \$1,900 ono Faye

### 1995 Nissan Pulsar

Hand controls, roof hoist, excellent condition, electric roof mounted hoist. The colour is grey, automatic gear box, Supplied with RWC, 12 months reg, regularly service and maintained.

**Phone:** 0408 806 841 (Grant)

**Price:** \$6,750 ono