



**People With
Disabilities**
ACT Inc

'OUT & ABOUT WITH ABILITY'

Volume 2 * Issue 4 * April 2009

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- President's Report
- Ten things people with Down syndrome would like you to know...
- ACT Disability Advisory Council (ACT DAC)
- Free PWD ACT Membership Disability Definition
- Request for information for PWD ACT Disability Information Booklet
- Media Release – Bionic Eye research funding
- Pat on the back for our Organisational Members
- PWD ACT Activities over the past month
- PWD ACT Social Group
- Upcoming Activities
- PWD ACT Contact Information
- PWD ACT Newsletter



PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR APRIL

I attended a meeting with Disability ACT, Women with Disabilities, Carers ACT and National Disability Services about the development of Quality Standards for Disability Services throughout Australia on 24th March. The meeting was conducted by the Victorian Disability Department because they will lead this development. The issue of monitoring of quality standards in disability standards was raised and some form of accreditation for disability services was discussed.

At the WATS meeting on 31st March the petition that was presented to the Legislative Assembly by Amanda Bresnan from the Greens was discussed. It was noted that she had suggested a solution to the issues about WATS that is not entirely acceptable to PWD ACT Inc. However there will be the opportunity to meet with the politicians before the next Legislative Assembly discussion on 31st May 2009.

It is hoped that anyone that you know who owns a wheelchair transporting van has been able to adjust their registration fees from a commercial rate to that of a passenger carrying vehicle rate.

I have attended 2 meetings in the last month for the Australian Federation of Disability Organisations (AFDO) about Airline and Rail Travel within Australia. Hopefully I can announce some positive results from the Aviation Access Working Group after the meeting on 7th April 2009.

ACTCOSS will be conducting a meeting on 7th April about the transport situation for all people in the ACT. The meeting will be attended by Kylie Mahar who will present the situation for people with disabilities.

I was a guest at the 1 RPH annual dinner on 3rd April 2009 and was pleased to hear that the services of the radio station have been extended to Wagga Wagga and will be available from June this year. The President of 1 RPH, Robert Altamore, reported that the radio station is still growing in these difficult economic times and it was because of the volunteer readers. 1 RPH is a wonderful source of information as well as entertainment.

On 14th April 2009 Kylie Mahar and myself will meet with Lois Ford from Disability ACT to discuss the next stage of the Information document that will be specially for people with disabilities in the ACT. It is long overdue because people find it very difficult to access the information about disability issues in one concise area.

Margo Hodge OAM
ACT Volunteer of the Year 2008

TEN THINGS PEOPLE WITH DOWN SYNDROME WOULD LIKE YOU TO KNOW...

- 1) Most people with Down syndrome were born before their mothers were 35.
- 2) People with Down syndrome enjoy their lives when they are well supported – like all of us.
- 3) Down syndrome causes disability, it is not an illness. Some people with Down syndrome do have health problems and are entitled to the same quality health care as everyone else.
- 4) Learning starts at birth for children with Down syndrome, just like everyone else, and doesn't stop. Most people with Down syndrome now learn to read, for example, and learn much more than we ever thought possible.
- 5) Children, teenagers, adults with Down syndrome all have feelings, thoughts, ideas, interests and dreams. They know what they want from life - friends, relationships, work, leisure and a measure of independence for a start. Most people with Down syndrome live interesting, fulfilling independent adult lives with support.
- 6) You may have difficulty understanding the speech of some people with Down syndrome, though they are usually excellent communicators. Their understanding is usually better than their speech. Some have a lot to say!
- 7) Every one with Down syndrome has a different personality with different likes and dislikes, just like the rest of us.
- 8) You'll find people with Down syndrome working successfully, with varying degrees of support, in retail, offices, child care, hospitality and gardening to name but a few occupations.
- 9) In 1960 the life expectancy of an Australian with Down syndrome was ten years of age. Today people with Down syndrome live longer lives than ever before – most will live into their 50s and 60s. The oldest person with Down syndrome on record was 85 when she died in 1998.

10) People with Down syndrome have an extra chromosome (no. 21) but the regular 46 are there too. This means they are as alike and as different from each other as the rest of us. Although people with DS may share some common facial features they look more like their families than others with DS.

(Thanks to the ACT Down Syndrome Association for this list)

ACT DISABILITY ADVISORY COUNCIL (ACT DAC)

Established in 2003, the ACT Government's Disability Advisory Council (DAC) independently advise the Minister for Disability and other Ministers across a range of issues related to people with a disability.

WHO ARE THEY?

DAC members come from a cross section of the ACT disability community, including people with a disability, their family members and carers, care and service providers, and other advisory councils (e.g. Youth Advisory Council). Also attending their meetings are representatives from Disability ACT and Commonwealth Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA).

- Trevor Robinson (Chair)
- David Zilber
- Liz Blakey (Deputy Chair)
- Annette Crotty
- Ian Trehwella
- Sharon Sobey
- Justin Ray
- Dee McGrath
- Dwayne Cranfield
- John Dalton



WHAT DO THEY DO?

DAC has broad terms of reference and is tasked with: advising the Minister on disability issues, policies and practices as they impact on people with a disability, their families and carers and service providers; working in partnership with Disability ACT on key activities that impact on the lives of people with a disability and their families; and communicating the needs of people with a disability and their families.

If you would like to know more or have an issue regarding disability, contact the Chair through the ACT Disability Advisory Council Secretariat at dacsecretariat@ozemail.com.au or PO Box 129 Woden ACT 2606.

PWD ACT Memberships are now **FREE for people with disabilities!**

Please contact us if you would like to be a member.

FREE PWD ACT MEMBERSHIP

DEFINITION

OF DISABILITY

PWD ACT uses the definition of disability that is in the Disability Discrimination Act, this broad definition includes:

- Physical
- Intellectual
- Psychiatric
- Sensory
- Neurological, and
- Learning disabilities, as well as
- Physical disfigurement, and
- The presence in the body of disease-causing organisms.

This covers a disability which people:

- Have now,
- Had in the past (for example: a past episode of mental illness),
- May have in the future (eg: a family history of a disability which a person may also develop).

**REQUEST FOR INFORMATION FOR
PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES ACT
DISABILITY INFORMATION BOOK**

PWD ACT are putting together an information booklet for people with disabilities in the ACT. We would like it to contain useful, practical information that helps make the lives of people with disabilities easier.

Are there any tips you want to share with others that you wish you had been told earlier? Are there any services that you would recommend to others? Is there an activity that you have found to be fully inclusive? Do you know of businesses that go out of their way to be accessible?

We want to know about this information so we can share it with all people with disabilities living in or visiting the ACT in a compact, easy to read booklet.

Please send us your suggestions by email, post or phone.

**MEDIA RELEASE FROM SENATOR KIM CARR,
MINISTER FOR INNOVATION, INDUSTRY, SCIENCE
AND RESEARCH AND THE HON NICOLA ROXON MP,
MINISTER FOR HEALTH AND AGEING**



2020 GIVES RESEARCH BOOST FOR BIONIC EYE

The Rudd Government today announced funding of \$50.7 million over four years for the development of the bionic eye in Australia.

Funding will be administered by the Australian Research Council (ARC), which will establish a grants program to support research in bionic vision science and technology aimed at developing a retinal prosthesis – commonly known as the bionic eye.

The Prime Minister's 2020 Summit identified the bionic eye as a significant opportunity to improve the quality of life for the vision-impaired.

This investment will help Australia stay at the forefront of bionic research and commercialisation.

Other significant benefits will flow from further research into medical devices and the mechanical and software systems used to control them.

The ARC will involve national and international experts in the selection of grants to be awarded to the team or teams best placed to develop a functional bionic eye in Australia in the long term.

We expect the teams will include quality researchers and experts in development and commercialisation of medical devices.

The experience and success the ARC has in developing, implementing and evaluating competitive grants processes is extensive and puts it in a good position to deliver on this important Australian Government commitment.

Wednesday, 22 April 2009

**Media contact: Patrick Pantano, Minister Carr's Office, 0417 181 936
Sheena Ireland, ARC, 0412 623 056**

PAT ON THE BACK

PWD ACT Organisational Members

We would like to give a pat on the back to those organisations who support PWD ACT. If your organisation is not on this list and you would like it to be, please contact the PWD ACT office to join.

- Om Physic
- RSI & Overuse Injury Association of the ACT
- Stroke Association of ACT
- ACT Deafness Resource Centre
- Sharing Places Inc
- ACT Down Syndrome Association Inc
- CHC Affordable Housing
- YMCA Canberra
- Nican

PWD ACT ACTIVITIES OVER THE PAST MONTH

- 3/4 President, Margo Hodge and Executive Officer, Kylie Mahar met with consultant Sue Salthouse to discuss People with Disabilities ACT Public Service Employment Project
 - 7/4 Executive Officer, Kylie Mahar, attended the ACTCOSS Transport and Social Inclusion in the ACT Consultation
 - 14/4 President, Margo Hodge and Executive Officer, Kylie Mahar met with Disability ACT
 - 14/4 PWD ACT April Board Meeting. ACT Opposition spokesperson on Disability, Steve Doszpot MLA attended to discuss disability issues
 - 23/4 Vice President, Justin Le Couteur, attended information session on changes to work safety laws
 - 30/4 Administration Assistant, Maida Kajkic, attending Braddon Centrelink Public Information Day
 - 30/4 Treasurer, Alison Chinn and Executive Officer, Kylie Mahar, attending Disability Service Provider Forum at Disability ACT
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PWD ACT SOCIAL GROUP

Facilitator: Sarah Ferguson sarahf@shout.org.au

UPCOMING OUTING

Film - "Mary & Max"

Time to be announced
Sunday May 17th
Dendy Cinema City
Level 2 148 Bunda St
City
\$10 concession

Mary & Max is a claymated feature film from the creators of the Academy Award winning short animation *Harvie Krumpet*.

"This is a masterpiece that is rich in character, deft humour and emotional complexity...sublime."

Please contact Sarah if you are interested in attending.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

DISCO FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITY

TO BE HELD ON

SATURDAY – 23RD MAY 2009

at Holy Trinity School Hall
Theodore Street, Curtin

From
4pm – 8pm

To assist with catering, would you please ring the L'Arche Office on 6282 9066 no later than Wednesday, 20th May 2009.

SUPPORTED BY RADFORD COLLEGE

BRIDGES & COMMUNITY ACCESS AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

**BRIDGES IS AN ACT-WIDE PROGRAM SUPPORTING PEOPLE WITH A
DISABILITY, TO PARTICIPATE WITHIN THEIR COMMUNITY TO REDUCE
SOCIAL ISOLATION**

**COMMUNITY ACCESS AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IS A PROGRAM
WHICH COMBINES SOCIAL INTERACTION WITH A RANGE OF
RECREATIONAL AND LIVING SKILLS ACTIVITIES
TERM 2 PROGRAMS 2009**

CASTAWAYS

**9 Week Programme. Tuesdays, from 1:30pm to 3:30pm. Group Lunch 12:30 to 1:30,
buy from the café or byo **\$50 PER**
TERM**

For people with disabilities who want to enjoy a range of social & recreational activities. Participants meet for lunch first at the Belconnen Community Centre café, then begin our activities such as ball games; craft activities or creative movement.



BE ACTIVE

**9 Week Programme. Wednesdays, from 1:30pm to 3:30pm. Group Lunch from 12:30
to 1:30, buy from the café or byo **\$50 PER**
TERM**

A program designed to act as a bridge to community activities and interests. Participants meet for lunch first at the BCC café then begin our activities such as outings to various places of interest and organised activities at the Belconnen Community Centre.

LIVIN' SKILZ 4 U

9 Week Programme. Thursday mornings, from 10.00am to 12:30pm **\$60 PER TERM**

For people with disabilities who would like to enhance their domestic skills. The first half of the session will focus on time management, budgeting, smart shopping and nutrition. The second half of session will involve cooking a meal to share. ****NOTE: DIFFERENT VENUE**



CLEVER CRAFT

9 Week Programme. Thursday afternoons, from 1:30pm to 3:30pm.

Note: no supervised group lunch

\$50 PER

TERM

Join us for a new program which will meet on Thursday afternoons with talented tutor Tony Steel to work with all manner of materials creating interesting sculptures and shapes through weaving.



CLAY CREATURES

9 Week Programme. Friday mornings, from 10 to 12:00

\$50 PER TERM

Come and join us for a term full of fun making mythical creatures like dragons. Use your

imagination and dive into another realm full of small mysterious creatures to shape out of clay with our fantastic tutor Tony Steel.

PHONE: 6264 0232

FAX: 6251 9952

EMAIL sybilla.kovacs@bcsact.com.au

WEBSITE: www.bcsact.com.au

VENUE: Belconnen Community Centre at Swanson Court, Belconnen

ENROLMENT ESSENTIAL FOR ALL PROGRAMS AS PLACES LIMITED!

PLEASE COMPLETE EXPRESSION OF INTEREST FORM

SPEAKING UP IN THE ACT

A WORKSHOP FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Friday 22 May 2009

9.30am – 1pm

Hellenic Club, Aegean Room

Matilda Street, Woden

Speaking up in the ACT is a self advocacy workshop designed to assist people who live with disabilities to learn how to effectively *Speak Up* for themselves when they access ACT Health services.

When problems do arise they can often be resolved more quickly where the person who has a complaint has the confidence and skills to raise the issue in a non confrontational way.

Participants will learn negotiation skills and have an opportunity to practise them in a supportive and understanding environment. Information on human rights and discrimination will be discussed.

The workshops will be co-facilitated by Women with Disabilities and ACT Health Consumer Engagement Team and will be conducted to reflect the Vision and Values outlined in the ACT Future Directions 2004-2008, and in an atmosphere of mutual respect.

RSVP by 30 April 2009 to:

Dawn Nusa
Patient Safety & Quality Unit
ACT Health
Email: dawn.nusa@act.gov.au
Phone: (02) 6244 3344

NATIONAL GALLERY OF AUSTRALIA

ASSISTED TOURS

SOFT SCULPTURE – 24 April – 12 July 2009

An exhibition that looks at the ways artists use unconventional materials to challenge conventional sculpture.

Saturday 16 May 10:30am

Assisted Tour

Tour and viewing for people with a disability and their carers, led by voluntary guides.

Saturday 30 May 10:30am

Private viewing for carers

Tour and viewing for carers, led by voluntary guides in collaboration with Carers ACT.

Bookings essential (02) 6296 9900

Saturday 6 June 2:30pm

Descriptive Tour

Descriptive and touch tour for blind and sight impaired visitors with trained voluntary guides

National Gallery of Australia, Parkes Place, Canberra

Bookings (02)6240 6519 or education@nga.gov.au

PWD ACT CONTACT DETAILS

POSTAL ADDRESS

PO Box 717
Mawson ACT 2607

OFFICE LOCATION

SHOUT
Building 1
Pearce Community Centre
Collett Place
Pearce

Phone: 02 6286 4223

Fax: 02 6286 4223

Email: pwdact@shout.org.au

Website: www.pwdact.org.au

“For people with disabilities,



by people with disabilities.”

PWD ACT NEWSLETTER

PWD ACT’s newsletter is an easily read, compact and timely way of keeping members and supporters informed about our advocacy work, issues and coming events. We strongly encourage people with disabilities to send feedback on systemic advocacy issues directly to us on the above contacts. Please send us an email if you would like to receive your PWD ACT newsletter ‘Out & About With Ability’ electronically, as this will save our environment. This newsletter is provided with the assistance of the ACT Government through Disability ACT.

