



**People With
Disabilities**
ACT Inc

OUT & ABOUT WITH ABILITY

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- President's Report
- New PWD ACT website launched
- Request for Information for People With Disabilities ACT Disability Information Book
- Pat on the Back for a Person with a Disability
- 'Get Out There' project
- The Big Issue
- Introduction of Hearing Tests for All Newborns
- Free Tenant's Advice Service
- Dinner to Raise Money for Pegasus Riding for the Disabled
- PWD ACT Activities over the past month
- PWD ACT Social Group
- Upcoming Activities
- Free PWD ACT Membership Disability Definition
- Organisational Members
- PWD ACT Contact Information
- PWD ACT Newsletter



PRESIDENT'S REPORT FOR JUNE

By the time you have received this report there will have been the opportunity to attend a consultation about the 2009-2014 Strategic Plan of the Disability ACT Governance Committee. At a recent consultation, one of our members suggested there should be more funding given to Individual Support Packages. The following information has been made available:

• **In May 2008 Disability Ministers agreed to an assistance package of \$901m nationally to provide additional individual support packages, flexible respite care options, more supported accommodation and community access places.**

• **\$1.69m of capital funding was also provided for additional accommodation option**

The ACT will receive \$15.23m over four years.

• **The priorities for this funding have so far included:**

– **Supporting individuals;**

– **Support for young people transitioning from school.**

In the ACT Government Budget there was an announcement of the introduction of the Companion Card. The Companion Card will be part of a National Harmonisation of the rules and conditions for the Companion Card which then can be used throughout Australia. PWD ACT Inc will endeavour to ensure that the Companion Card is distributed as soon as possible in the ACT.

Under the Commonwealth Government Budget there have been changes to the Disability Support Pension (DSP) that mean in effect people who earn other money will lose more of their DSP. Please check with Centrelink about the new conditions.

With the National Harmonisation of the Disability Parking Permit Schemes in Australia, you can have your input at information sessions in June or send a submission to Australian Disability Parking Scheme submissions (East Wing), FaHCSIA, PO Box 7576, Canberra Business Centre ACT 2610 **by 5pm AEST Friday 31st July 2009**. Other\wise you can send any ideas to PWD ACT Inc and we will include your ideas in our submission.

The ACT Auditor General has done a study of respite services for people with disabilities in the ACT which should be available to the community. Please ask for information about the findings of the Auditor General.

On Tuesday 26th May 2009 I attended a talk about the new Occupational Health and Safety Laws in the ACT. The biggest change to the laws is that volunteers are now also covered by the legislation. If you see something that

is unsafe in the place where you volunteer, please talk to the organisation about the safety issue.

The planning day for the Board was most successful. More about the outcomes in the next newsletter!!

Margo Hodge OAM (President)

NEW PWD ACT WEBSITE LAUNCHED



We have had web designer Michael Meham completely re-design our website as the old website contained a lot of out of date information. In line with our policy of trying to hire people with disabilities first, Michael has a neuromuscular condition that requires him to use a wheelchair.

Please check it out and let us know what you think. You can register for the online discussion forum and let us know your thoughts on the new website and any other disability issue that is bothering you.

The website has been designed to be as accessible as possible to people with all kinds of disabilities. If you have trouble accessing any part of the site, please let us know and we will endeavour to fix any accessibility problems.

WWW.PWDACT.ORG.AU

**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.

PAT ON THE BACK

We'd like to give a pat on the back to our former Vice President Sean Fitzgerald who has been appearing on TV and in the newspaper recently. We have had a lot of feedback from people who have seen his recent appearances. Sean and his family were featured on the WIN television program 'You Saved My Life' and in the Sunday Canberra Times discussing the accident that caused his quadriplegia and the people who saved his life. Both segments were moving and showed off Sean's positive attitude. Well done Sean.

GET OUT THERE PROJECT

This project is for 14-18 year olds with a physical disability, attending mainstream schooling (without an intellectual disability).

The "Get Out There" project is designed to provide opportunities for young people to participate in social and recreational activities designed to challenge and inspire. Where young people can get together, hang out, meet some new people and try some activities they haven't done before in a safe and welcoming environment. During "get togethers" they can identify issues and challenges young people face and together set goals and plan activities to overcome and achieve them. The program will have a youth centred focus that will evolve to be directed by the participating youth.

Ultimately through this program they aim to:

- Enhance the status and wellbeing of young people in the region.
- Support young people as they explore issues relevant to them such as building self-esteem, bullying, making friends and "challenging yourself".

- Work with young people, community and service providers to develop and implement programs that engage and meet the needs of young people with disabilities.
- Encourage and build pathways into mainstream activities/ programs for youth with physical disabilities.

If you would like to know more or have any questions please call or email Alison Reardon at The Spastic Centre.

Ph: 02 6258 8723 or AREardon@tscnsw.org.au

THE BIG ISSUE

The Big Issue is a street newspaper that is aimed at assisting those who are marginalized in the community. It is published in eight countries and is written by professional journalists. The magazine, in the eyes of one subscriber is that “It is a good read”. The aim of the newspaper, which is in the form of a magazine, is to give people marginalized by homelessness, or at risk of homelessness, as well as **disability** and economic circumstances, a hand up rather than a handout. In giving people a hand up, the magazine provides them the opportunity to become included in society, and not excluded by their circumstances. The magazine is sold at designated spots on Canberra streets and helps vendors to become productive members of our community through magazine sales. When people buy the magazine they are helping our country to fight homelessness and the exclusion of those affected by unanticipated circumstances. There are a number of vacancies at the moment for vendors who may like to sell the magazine at a number of spots in the Canberra community. These spots are in Woden, Weston Creek, Tuggeranong, Manuka, Civic and Belconnen, with a view to providing spots at Lanyon and Gungahlin if there are vendors who wish to sell in those areas.

So if you fall within the parameters of being homeless, or at risk of homelessness, or **having a disability**, or your economic circumstances are such that you require support, The Big Issue can offer a vehicle that may assist you to become an active member of the community and at the same time earn some money through your own efforts as a vendor.

We are open at Woden Community Service, 26 Corrina Street Woden, 5 days a week between 8.30 am and 3.00 pm, to discuss becoming a vendor, or by calling the manager on 6234 6812 to make an appointment to discuss an opportunity with The Big Issue.

INTRODUCTION OF HEARING TESTS FOR ALL NEWBORNS



June 30, 2009

Political foes Kevin Rudd and Brendan Nelson have dropped their differences to press for the introduction of hearing tests for all newborns. The Prime Minister's announcement yesterday of the introduction of universal screening from 2011 flows from suggestions Dr Nelson first put to Mr Rudd in an informal chat the day after he lost the Liberal leadership last September.

Yesterday at the Shepherd Centre in Sydney, political rivalry took second place to bonhomie as the two thanked and acknowledged each other's contribution to the cause. "Well done, Brendan," Mr Rudd responded after Dr Nelson thanked Mr Rudd for the "significant initiative", which he said would transform the lives of 500 Australian children born each year with moderate to profound hearing impairment. Dr Nelson later told the *Herald* that when Mr Rudd had invited him for a cup of tea after his leadership loss he had urged the Prime Minister to act on the screening measure, which his predecessor, John Howard, had planned before his defeat.

The former opposition leader's drive to introduce universal screening resulted from his friendship with Bruce Shepherd, his political patron, who played a pivotal role in Dr Nelson's rise to president of the Australian Medical Association in the early 1990s. After his two children were born with profound hearing impairment, Dr Shepherd established the Shepherd Centre to teach deaf children to listen and to speak using their residual hearing and hearing aids. "Thousands of people were able to lead full lives because of this early intervention", Dr Nelson said.

Was he worried that Liberals might be irked at his friendly appearance with Mr Rudd? "As far as I am concerned I don't care what anybody thinks other than this is right. The ultimate beneficiaries will be children yet to be born who will be born profoundly deaf. "I won't be voting for Kevin Rudd, but some things transcend the partisan differences between parties."

Mr Rudd said that only 75 per cent of newborns were screened in NSW for hearing problems. In other states this varied from more than 95 per cent to less than 40 per cent. "Our children deserve better than this," he said.

Early detection and treatment of a hearing impairment were vitally important in developing a child's language skills and in their later education and employment prospects. Children whose hearing impairment is detected early can be fitted with a hearing device from as early as three months.

Written by Mark Metherell, Health Correspondent.

FREE TENANT'S ADVICE SERVICE

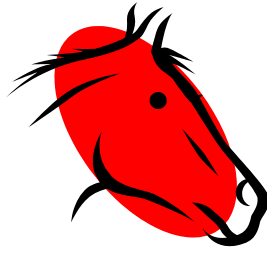
A reminder that free advice is available to all tenants and others renting in the ACT via the Tenants' Advice Service on 6247 2011.

9.30am - 1pm Mon - Fri and 4.30 - 8pm on Tuesdays.

The service is at full staff capacity, which means that their two phone lines are available. They do continue to alert people to the fact that they do only have two workers and advice can be quite complex and time consuming. Some people report difficulties in getting through. They ask that people persist with phoning and possibly try different times.

In the meantime they can check the Tenancy Tips or FAQs on the Advice pages on their website www.tenantsact.org.au

DINNER TO RAISE MONEY FOR PEGASUS RIDING FOR THE DISABLED



A major fund raising priority for 2009 is the purchase of additional ponies for Pegasus-Riding for the Disabled in the ACT. Following a similar successful event for the benefit of local children with disabilities last year, the Lake Tuggeranong Lions Club will be holding an Auction Dinner Dance to raise funds for this very worthwhile cause. Pegasus provides therapeutic, recreational and sporting equestrian activities for people with a disability in the ACT. About 100 people with a disability (mostly children) participate in their programs each week,

The Auction Dinner Dance will be held at **The Auditorium, Erindale Vikings Club**, on **29 August 2009**. The auction will feature celebrity memorabilia as well as many products and services from local businesses. The night promises to be a fun evening with buffet dinner, music and dance and tickets are available from the Auditorium. For bookings phone 02 6121 2131 **Get a group of friends or colleagues together, or just come along yourself** for a great night. Ticket costs are \$50 per head, covering a buffet or three-course meal, plenty of fun auction activities, and a great show by Canberra's Elvis, Garry Buckley.

More information on the Lake Tuggeranong Lions Club website at www.tuggeranonglions.org.au or you can contact **Heath Morrison on 0400 190 622**.

PWD ACT ACTIVITIES OVER THE PAST MONTH

- 9 June - Board Meeting
- 16 June – Employment Project Meeting with President Margo Hodge, Sue Salthouse and Executive Officer, Kylie Mahar
- 25 June – Employment Project Meeting with President Margo Hodge, Sue Salthouse and Executive Officer, Kylie Mahar
- 29 June – Meeting with President Margo Hodge, Treasurer Alison Chinn, Executive Officer, Kylie Mahar and member Nicole O'Callaghan to discuss International Day of Disability Activity

PWD ACT SOCIAL GROUP

Facilitator: Sarah Ferguson sarahf@shout.org.au

OUTING Mission Mexico Concert

A few of us attended the Mission Mexico Concert on the 13th of June 2009. The proceeds of the concert are going to a children's orphanage in Mexico. One of the youths from the orphanage was in attendance at the concert and he shared with us some insights into the lives of the children and the volunteers that work at the orphanage. The music was great.

The Ten Pin Bowling Outing planned for June had to be cancelled due to lack of interest.

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

Well, Able & Mobile Program for Women

10 Week exercise Program for Women with disabilities or mental health issues at the YMCA Chifley and Hackett Health Centres is continuing next term.

Contact the YMCA on 6281 0124 or email woden@ymca.org.au

Inclusive Drama Program

Express yourself through sound & movement.

This 9 week program is open to adults with and without disabilities. Sessions aim to develop your creative potential, build connection & collaboration with others in a supportive and playful environment & increase confidence in using your body as an expressive instrument. No specific skills, ability or experience required.

Wednesdays 3.30 - 5.30pm for 9 weeks
Term 2 starts Wednesday 29th July
Downer Community Centre, Frencham Pl, Downer

Come and Try \$5 for first session (completion of payment in full required if you choose to enrol after trial session) Total Contribution \$45 for 9 week term (Support workers free). Bookings Essential.

Facilitated by Morgan Jai-Morinome, a qualified & experienced community arts professional specializing in inclusive community based projects & programs & Bren Weatherstone, qualified & experienced performing arts teacher.

Contact: Morgan Tel: 6161 1192 or 0400 455 965

Email: enquiry@expressivearts.com.au Web: www.expressivearts.com.au

Street Soccer

FUN FREE EVENT FOR ALL

Community soccer every **Wednesday 2pm – 4pm**
Reid Sports oval Ellimatta Street, Reid opposite the Australian War Memorial

For more info contact Tim on 0466 386 249 or visit
canberrasoccer@bigissue.org.au

Disability Sports Expo

Fun filled day of a variety of sports for all to enjoy

9:00am to 12:30pm Wednesday 29th July 2009
At the mpowerdome, corner of Isabella Drive and Coyne Street, Fadden
Cost is \$10 per person which includes morning tea

For more information ph: 6205 7708 or email jthompson@lead.asn.au

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).

ORGANISATIONAL MEMBERS

| Organisational Name | Address | Email Address | Phone: |
|--|---|--|---------------|
| Om Physic | 8 Yabtree Pl, Isabella Plains ACT 2905 | info@omphysic.com.au | 6248 7716 |
| RSI & Overuse Injury Association of the ACT | Griffin Centre, 20 Genge St, Canberra ACT 2601 | rsi@cyberone.com.au | 6262 5011 |
| Stroke Association of ACT | PO Box 220 Deakin West ACT 2600 | jobeirne@velocitynet.com.au | 6269 2636 |
| ACT Deafness Resource Centre | PO Box 3239 Weston ACT 2611 | actdrc@iimetro.com.au | 6287 4395 |
| Sharing Places INC | PO Box 704 Mawson ACT 2607 | admin@sharingplaces.com.au | 6290 1964 |
| ACT Down Syndrome Ass.Inc | PO Box 717 Mawson ACT 2607 | admindsa@actdsa.asn.au | 6290 0656 |
| CHC Affordable Housing | PO Box 6239 O'Connor ACT 2602 | chc@communityhousingcanberra.com.au | 6248 7521 |
| YMCA Canberra | Crn Maclaurin & Eggleston Cres Chifley ACT 2606 | brett.bowden@ymca.org.au | 6281 0124 |
| Belconnen Community Service | 26 Chandler St Belconnen ACT 2617 | Karen.etheredge@bcsact.com.au | 62640200 |
| Nationsheart | 27 Rae St Belconnen | office@nationsheart.org.au | 62531 672 |
| Tandem | PO Box 3301 Weston ACT | admin@tandem.org.au | 6287 2870 |
| Nican | PO Box 110 Mitchell ACT 2911 | info@nican.com.au | 6241 1220 |

PWD Latest Organisational Member

Brocklebank's Woodcraft

8 Fitzgerbert Pl Bruce ACT 2617

hugh_brocklebank@hotmail.com <http://www.brocklebankswoodcraft.com/>

- Qualified Carpenter
- Practical Working Solutions for people with disabilities
- Remodelling kitchens and bathrooms
- Designing and constructing furniture

Please support the organisational members who support PWD ACT.

PWD ACT CONTACT DETAILS

POSTAL ADDRESS

PO Box 717
Mawson ACT 2607

OFFICE LOCATION

SHOUT
Building 1
Pearce Community Centre
Collett Place
Pearce

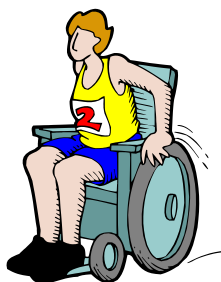
Phone: 02 6286 4223

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.



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department of
disability, housing &
community services