The World Federation of the Deaf – Youth Section visits Melbourne

In October the Deaf community in Melbourne hosted two young international Deaf visitors, Ana Navas Serna from Spain and Jannicke Kvitvaer from Norway. Ana and Jannicke are board members of the World Federation of the Deaf – Youth Section (WFDYS). They are very experienced in advocacy for Deaf youth and have travelled across the world to support Deaf young people and Deaf youth groups.

In Melbourne Ana and Jannicke spent two days attending events and meeting people from the Victorian Deaf community before they flew to Sydney to attend the 2nd International Conference of the World Federation of the Deaf.

Ana and Jannicke started their visit on Friday 11 October by talking about their work with WFDYS at the Deaf Professionals Network Business Breakfast. Their talk was thoroughly enjoyed by the guests. To read more about the Business Breakfast see Page 2.

Ana and Jannicke then visited the Victorian Deaf Education Institute (VDEI) to co-facilitate a workshop with Vanessa Ravlich and Stephen Nicholson. The facilitators spoke about the importance of advocacy and leadership opportunities at the workshop, which was attended by about 70 Deaf and hard of hearing students. Students who were not able to attend in person used video conferencing facilities at their schools to watch the presentation and ask questions. The workshop was enjoyed by the students who learned more about how WFDYS, WFD (World Federation of the Deaf), Deaf Australia and Deaf Victoria represent Deaf people and advocate for their rights. They also learned about the activities run by WFDYS, such as Youth Camps, that allow Deaf and hard of hearing students to network and develop confidence and advocacy skills.

During the workshop at VDEI Ana and Jannicke had time to attend a BBQ hosted by Deaf Children Australia (DCA), where they enjoyed the Melbourne spring sunshine in the DCA gardens. They were given a guided tour of the Victorian College for the Deaf and the bluestone building. Ana and Jannicke in particular enjoyed visiting the history room at DCA, looking at the photographs of former students and learning more about the history of the Victorian Deaf community.

On Friday evening Ana and Jannicke visited Tradeblock Café for a welcome function with the Deaf community. Ann Darwin and Daniel Shanahan spoke on behalf of Deaf Australia about the importance of having a Deaf youth association. Members of the Deaf community asked Ana and Jannicke questions about how they could begin establishing a Deaf youth association in Victoria. The day ended with Ana and Jannicke having time to relax and mingle with Deaf people at Prahran Hotel.

The next day on Saturday 12 October Ana and Jannicke visited the Matthew Veale Social Rooms at Hays Paddock in East Kew. There Ana and Jannicke co-facilitated a workshop with Ramas Rentelis about establishing a Deaf youth association in Victoria. Shirley Liu and Annabelle Beasley who were visiting from Sydney spoke about their time at the WFDYS camp in Rome. The participants had a brainstorming session and discussed what activities they would like to be organised by a Deaf youth association. The workshop was a success, with the participants going on to form a working group that is now aiming to create a Deaf youth association in Victoria.

Ana and Jannicke ended their very busy visit by attending the launch of the Matthew Veale Social Rooms that was hosted by the Melbourne Deaf Cricket Club and Melbourne Deaf Football Club, and meeting more people from the Victorian Deaf community. Vicdeaf would like to take this opportunity to thank the organisations and volunteers who made Ana and Jannicke’s visit possible, including SLC VIC, VDEI, DCA, Deaf Australia, Deaf Victoria, Vanessa Ravlich, Stephen Nicholson, Ida Rogers, Joshua Levitzke-Gray, Daniel Shanahan and Ramas Rentelis.
**Use Skype to contact Vicdeaf**

You can now contact Vicdeaf via Skype, just type in the search field ‘Vicdeaf Reception’ and connect with the receptionist at Vicdeaf.

It’s a great way to contact Vicdeaf directly and converses in Auslan. Our friendly receptionist is fluent in Auslan and will be able to take your Skype calls. Keep in mind that Skype calls are not transferable, but reception will be able to pass on your message.

If you have any problems with this service, please let us know.

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**Notes from Vicdeaf’s Annual General Meeting**

Vicdeaf held its 129th Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 29 October at John Michael Lovett Community Centre in East Melbourne.

Vicdeaf President Marc Adam opened the meeting and gave thanks to retired Board members, Rebecca Adam and Dean Matthews. He also gave thanks to the Board members, Vicdeaf CEO Chris Mathieson and the Senior Management team and staff for their hard work in 2013.

Vicdeaf Treasurer Garry Fowler gave a report and advised that while it was a challenging year, Vicdeaf completed a successful year, with a small financial loss. Garry noted that SensiWorld Employment has maintained its service levels and hearService experienced a growth of 12%.

Deaf Professionals Network Business Breakfast

Vanessa Ravlitch was the MC, welcoming guests. After the guests were seated they were greeted with a surprise welcome message via Skype from Colin Allen, the President of the World Federation of the Deaf. Guests then had time to enjoy a tasty hot breakfast before Ana and Jannicke began to speak.

Ana and Jannicke held the full attention of the audience when they spoke about their work with the WFDYS, explaining what WFDYS does to increase opportunities for Deaf youths worldwide. Philip Waters then spoke about his job with CBM, giving a powerful account of his work with Deaf and people with disabilities who live in developing countries. Philip spoke about how Deaf people can make a positive difference and develop their career by becoming involved in aid work.

As the Business Breakfast drew to an end ASLIA Vic stepped up for a surprise announcement, presenting Ana and Jannicke with a donation of $959 for WFDYS. The Business Breakfast was much enjoyed by the guests, who also were very interested in observing the excellent work of the International Sign interpreters, who worked alongside Auslan interpreters to translate what Ana and Jannicke were saying into Auslan and spoken English.

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**Report from the CEO**

Hello again and welcome to this edition of Communicate. So much has been happening since the last edition so there’s plenty to update you on.

Firstly, as you know following the Federal Election in September the Coalition government was sworn in and there have been some changes in September the Coalition government was

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Baby Cry Alarm Borrowing Scheme now available in Victoria

Vicdeaf is pleased to announce that the Baby Cry Alarm Borrowing Scheme is open to new and expecting parents who are Deaf or hard of hearing.

All you need to do is contact Vicdeaf for an application form to borrow a Bellman & Symfon Baby Cry Alarm System from Vicdeaf.

For only $150 you will be able to borrow a baby monitor, and your choice of the flashing strobe light, or the pager (with charger) for up to two years. To buy these items it would cost between $600 and $800, so you will be saving a lot of money by borrowing the system from Vicdeaf. When the borrowing period is finished, the alarm system must be returned to Vicdeaf. You will receive a $50 refund if the kit is returned in good condition.

Please email us at info@vicdeaf.com.au if you have any questions or wish to apply.

This is a partnership between Vicdeaf and the Victorian Government Department of Human Services.

Scan the QR Code with your smartphone to view the website including an Auslan version of the Baby Cry Alarm Borrowing Scheme.

LIDIA RIBICATO

Introducing Financial Ombudsman Service to deaf consumers – Auslan video launch

On Monday 21 October, the Financial Ombudsman Service (FOS) launched its first Auslan video, Sarah’s Story, in conjunction with Vicdeaf as part of the National Week of Deaf People. The launch was streamed live to over 50 community service organisations across the country. The video was produced by Sign Language Video Productions, a division of Vicdeaf.

FOS recognises that the needs of Australians using its services can differ. Providing information in different formats and languages, and adapting the way we communicate is very important. Already accessible via the National Relay Service and TTY, FOS is further addressing the communication needs of people who are deaf and hard of hearing by providing information in Auslan.

Sarah’s Story uses a realistic case study to deliver key information about FOS, when FOS can get involved in a dispute, and how we use negotiation and conciliation to reach a resolution.

In his opening speech, Chief Ombudsman Shane Tregillis said “We hope that everybody who needs to access our service can do so in the context of their own language”.

In the last financial year we received 106 disputes from hard of hearing people. During the same period we received 506 requests for translators, but only four of those were for Auslan.

Brent Phillips, Manager of Communication and Community Relations at Vicdeaf said, “We’re really pleased to partner with FOS. To have this information accessible to deaf and hard of hearing people is important, as this raises awareness of how to resolve financial services disputes.”

Shane Tregillis said, “We’d like to see this number grow – not because we want to see an increase in financial disputes in the deaf community, but because through initiatives like Sarah’s Story, FOS is more accessible for deaf and hard of hearing people in Australia.”

Sarah’s Story is available on YouTube at www.youtube.com/user/losaustralia

Scan the QR Code with your smartphone to view the Auslan video of the Financial Ombudsman Service.

MICHAE L PARREMORE

Editorial Policy

Communicate is published six times a year. Reader contributions are welcome. Articles must relate to Deaf and hard of hearing issues.

All contribution, once submitted, becomes the property of Communicate.

The editor reserves the right not to publish, or to edit, any article submitted for publication. All editing shall strive to remain true to the spirit of the original article.

Opinions expressed (except in articles that are signed in an official capacity) are those of the author/s and not necessarily endorsed by the editor or by Vicdeaf.

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• www.twitter.com/Vicdeaf
• www.youtube.com/InfoVicdeaf
• www.linkedin.com/company/vicdeaf

Submission deadlines for 2014

Submission deadlines for 2014

• Wednesday 29 January
• Wednesday 19 March
• Wednesday 21 May
• Wednesday 23 July
• Wednesday 24 September
• Wednesday 19 November

SUBMISSIONS WELCOME

Email to info@vicdeaf.com.au

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Vicdeaf Christmas Rally 2013

Stef Linder enjoys the Christmas Rally. Photo Source: Edan Chapman

Santa Claus says “Ho ho ho, what would you like for Christmas?” Photo Source: Edan Chapman

Deaf Victoria’s Ramas Rentelis gives a Christmas Hamper to a lucky door prize winner. Photo Source: Edan Chapman

Deaf Victoria’s Ramas Rentelis gives a Christmas Hamper to a lucky door prize winner. Photo Source: Vicdeaf

The best thing about the Christmas Rally, meeting old friends. Photo Source: Vicdeaf

Vicdeaf President Mac Adam wishes everyone a happy and safe Christmas. Photo Source: Edan Chapman

Two old friends enjoying a day at the Rally. Photo Source: Edan Chapman

Enjoying the sunshine at the Vicdeaf Christmas Rally. Photo Source: Vicdeaf

Stef Linder enjoys the Christmas Rally. Photo Source: Edan Chapman

Vicdeaf President Mac Adam wishes everyone a happy and safe Christmas. Photo Source: Edan Chapman
On Sunday 1 December, Vicdeaf hosted the annual Christmas Rally in beautiful surrounds at the Old Cheese Factory in Berwick. The weather was sunny and very warm with many people taking shelter from the sun. Over 600 people attended the Rally to make it one of the largest Christmas Rally ever held.

Children participated in sack races, sock puppet making and enjoyed the chance to meet Santa Claus. Facepainters were kept very busy painting children’s faces. Volunteers were kept busy cooking sausage sizzles. At the Information stall, volunteers also provided information about a range of services offered by Vicdeaf.

The best part of the day was seeing so many people enjoying themselves catching up with old friends and meeting new faces.

Vicdeaf President Mac Adam came on stage and thanked everyone for supporting Vicdeaf. He also introduced Vicdeaf’s newest Board Member, Hilary Fisher. Vicdeaf CEO Chris Mathieson also appeared and wished everyone a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

By late afternoon, the Rally came to a close and many people went home with a little sunburn and some fond memories of the day.

Many thanks to the volunteers who helped on the day, we appreciate your efforts.

Michael Parremore

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Book Live Captioning with SLC VIC

If you’re someone who prefers captioning over Auslan or previously used lip speakers and notetakers this may be the service for you. Live captioning can be onsite or remote, accessed through your iPad, iPhone, laptop or data projectors for multiple users.

Sign Language Communications Victoria (SLC VIC) and Bradley Reporting are partnering to provide live captioning services for deaf and hard of hearing individuals and organisations that work with deaf and hard of hearing people.

For more information, scan the QR code to view the Live Captioning page on Vicdeaf’s website or email SLC VIC on slcvic@vicdeaf.com.au
Victorian Deafblind Champion Wins BrainLink Women of Achievement Award

Trudy Ryall, who has overcome a lifetime of adversity has won the 2013 BrainLink Women of Achievement Award.

Trudy was born deaf, is legally blind, and suffered meningitis as an infant, but has met these challenges head on to become a champion for the deafblind community and has dedicated her life to numerous advocacy and support groups.

She was an adviser to the Federal Government on the development of its National Disability Insurance Scheme and also worked with Brimbank Council on the Leaders of Tomorrow Program.

Trudy completed high school, became a library technician, undertook several other courses and also became a puppy trainer for Australian Customs.

Her own assistance dog, six-year-old Tyson, was one who failed to graduate.

On receiving the award Trudy said she was greatly honoured, and that the award meant a lot not only for her, but for everyone who had battled against the odds at some stage of life.

“This award is for everyone with a disability, be they deaf or blind, or people with any other disabilities, such as acquired brain injuries,” Trudy said. “I’ve worked with a lot of people and we’ve fought for equality.”

“While we have made some great strides, there is still a lot of work to do. This award is a nice recognition of what we have achieved so far.”

BrainLink chief executive officer Sharon Strugnell said that Trudy is a worthy recipient of the Women of Achievement Award as she personified the nature of the award, in going above and beyond expectations to help others.

“Trudy demonstrates strength, courage and persistence that is simply amazing in the face of challenges most people never experience,” Sharon said. “Her work with, and for, other people in the community is admirable and she takes every opportunity with both hands. As such, Trudy is very worthwhile winner of the Women of Achievement Award.”

Provided by Trudy Ryall

Information update about the Video Relay Interpreting Service

The Video Relay Interpreting (VRI) Service now is undergoing a trial using the public Internet and is now accessible via computers, laptops, smart tablets and smart phones.

This is an exciting development now made possible because of computers, laptops, smart tablets and smart phones.

The hall was set up with fabulous rock ‘n’ roll decorations. One of the most popular decorations was the group photo corner – a wallpaper of jukebox and guitars with black and white square lino for patrons to pose for group or individual photos.

The Ballarat Rockers Club gave us a surprise demonstration of rock ‘n’ roll dance which was awesome with ladies’ skirts swirling and men’s shining black and white dancing shoes.

Most of the people danced to the 1950’s theme jukebox. There was a long queue for another popular free photo booth and they were able to keep their photo slips as a souvenir. Eleven lucky winners had a choice to select one of 11 rock ‘n’ roll themed door prizes.

Everyone enjoyed the night and most took their vinyl record placemats home. We hope that many people will return in 2015 for a different themed Starlight Ball. Thanks to all the committee members for their hard work to ensure the night ran smoothly.

Marg Van Leeuwen

- Ballarat Deaf Social Club Inc.
Deaf Street Day was one of the many events held during National Week of Deaf People where Deaf people in Australia get together to celebrate.

Leadership course for Deaf people

Last September, eleven participants attended a Leadership workshop facilitated by Marnie Kerridge.

Marnie shared her extensive knowledge and experience in leadership, gained from the many leadership roles she has held in the Deaf community, to her participation in the “Leadership Ballarat and Western Region Program” in 2012. Marnie is a teacher of the deaf who is well known for her work in the Deaf community, including Deaf Netball Australia, Victorian Council of Deaf People (now Deaf Victoria), Deaf Netball Victoria, Deaf Sports Recreation Victoria and Action on Cinema Access. Marnie completed the “Leadership Ballarat and Western Region Program” in 2012. It was a year long program with 24 people of different ages and working background. Vicdeaf supported Marnie in participating in the program.

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First Season of Victorian Deaf Mens Basketball League finishes with a bang!

Following the success of the Melbourne City Basketball Club at the 1st Asia Pacific Cup for Clubs in December 2012, it was determined by a group of motivated deaf men involved with Melbourne City Basketball Club to try and start their own deaf men’s league in partnership with Deaf Basketball Victoria.

After a meeting and some promotion via Facebook and YouTube, the first Victorian Deaf Mens Basketball League Victorian Deaf Mens Basketball League was formed and started its first season in July 2013, based at Wesley College (next door to Deaf Children Australia) and the Victorian College for the Deaf and held games every second Sunday for four months.

The competition recently finished in late October which saw “White Mambas” take out the inaugural championship. We are planning another season after we have evaluated all feedback from players, officials and parents.

This idea was attempted previously in 2010, but it did not gain enough support from the deaf community, however it was able to be supported this time on the back of Melbourne City’s status as the best deaf basketball club in the Asia Pacific region.

This initiative has been applauded by Deaf Basketball Australia and Deaf Sports Australia (one of their Board members even played) and promises to usher in an exciting new wave of deaf male players in the future, hopefully on the path to represent their country at future World Championships and Deaflympic Games.

Rockin’ Rowlands Reigns Supreme!

Against all odds and a record-shattering field, Michelle Rowlands has achieved the impossible and improved on her runner-up finish in last year’s Deaf Poker Australia (DPA) Championship Main Event in Brisbane to win it all in Sydney!

The 2013 DPA Championship Main Event took place on Saturday, October 26 at the Star Casino, five years after the very first edition of this tournament was held at the Bunwood RSL.

Even before the cards were in the air, records had already begun to fall. At the time the order was given to shuffle up and deal by defending champion Con Eglezos, 118 entries had been confirmed, generating a total prize pool of $10,300 - the largest tournament in DPA history.

There was no shortage of star power in this year’s “Big Dance”, with all four previous Australian champions in the field. 2009 winner Ashley Thornton put in a solid run, but fell short with three tables remaining. Daniel Bach (2010) and Stacey Reilly (2011) were also in the mix, but were both sent to the rail in the early stages. Incredibly, Rowlands eliminated Eglezos en route to the final table and in an even bigger twist, Queenslander Nicolas Schlie, who finished third in the DPAC 2012 Main Event in Brisbane, was the first player out of the tournament!

This year’s DPA Championship Main Event featured participants from all around the country - Victoria, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Western Australia, plus one Tasmanian in the form of Ross Jones, the first-ever deaf player from the Apple Isle to participate in the DPA Championship.

New Zealand also sent over another crack of Ross Jones, the first-ever deaf player in the field, plus one Tasmanian in the form of Ross Jones, the first-ever deaf player from the Apple Isle to participate in the DPA Championship.

The final table was a fast, furious and often times intense battle, but the host state’s dreams of keeping the title on home soil were dashed as Kevin Smith, Matthew Kennedy and Bradley Trudgell were all sent to the rail in quick succession.

After Evren Magsi busted in seventh place and Cairns’ elimination in sixth, Victoria’s Khari Sou bowed out in fifth place, adding to his final table success.

By this time, the Adelaide Jokers were buzzing at the prospect of another victory, but Rowlands, along with Deaf Poker Queensland’s Founder and former President Gavin Rose-Mundy, put on a stunning display to take out Tim Tuffy and Daryl Rankine in fourth and third place respectively.

Going into the final “heads-up” phase, the stage was set for another epic showdown between Queensland and Victoria. Rose-Mundy, who held 1,116 million in chips, was in great shape to make it two-in-a-row for the Sunshine State, against Rowlands who started with 656,000.

This didn’t deter the “Pocket Rocket”, who had been in a similar position just 12 months before and her experience showed.

Despite being almost 20 years his junior, the 23-year-old grinded away at Rose-Mundy’s stack, clawing back the chip lead before the final hand of the tournament played out just before midnight. The money was all in the middle pre-flop - Rose-Mundy held Ac-8d but Rowlands had him dominated with Ad-9s. The board was spread Ah-Kh-9d-6c-3c-

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