Vicdeaf Gaslight Festival - a success!

The Vicdeaf Gaslight Festival was a huge hit. Nearly 400 people from most states in Australia travelled to Wodonga and enjoyed the weekend-long event, which ensured its popularity in the years to come.

Vicdeaf would like to thank all who held workshops, presentations, stalls, performances, sporting and recreational activities, as well as volunteers and interpreters for making the event a great success. Also many thanks to sponsors including Conexu Foundation, Deaf Children Australia, National Relay Service, Bradley Reporting and SLC VIC and special thanks to City of Wodonga and Deafness Foundation for making the event as enjoyable as it was.

Festival-goers enjoyed participating in various activities such as cooking classes, twilight outdoor captioned movie event, Auslan storytelling, volleyball clinics, acting classes and much more.

One of the highlights was the question and answer session by this year’s Young Australian of the Year recipient, Drisana Levitzke-Gray in front of a packed audience. The Festival ended with another highlight, a brilliant performance by the Australian Theatre of the Deaf.

“Seeing all the happy faces made it all worthwhile as the Vicdeaf Community Programs team worked hard over many months to prepare for the event”, said Vicdeaf Major Events Coordinator David Peters. We would like to thank Arts Access Victoria for organising an arts program delivered by Australian Theatre of the Deaf at the Gaslight Festival, funded by the Australia Council for the Arts.

Sophie Li
This year has moved along quickly already with so much happening at Vicdeaf. It was fantastic to see many familiar faces at the very successful Vicdeaf Gaslight Festival held in Wodonga over the Labour Day weekend.

We saw an increase in the number of people attending the Festival, including those from interstate compared to the first Festival. I would like to extend my sincere thanks to all the Vicdeaf staff who worked tirelessly planning the event and then working at the Festival. Thanks also to the many volunteers, stallholders, community members, families and friends who attended and helped out. I hope you enjoy the photos we’ve included in this edition of Communicate.

The Annual Vicdeaf Board Planning Retreat was held at Mt Eliza on the 13 and 14 March. The main focus of this year’s retreat was planning and positioning of our services under the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) and the framework for our new Strategic Plan which will be finalised and ready for implementation by 1 July this year. The new strategic plan framework will reflect Vicdeaf’s broad strategic intent over the next five years until 2020 which will be a period of significant change.

Each year we undertake a survey to identify the satisfaction levels of staff working at Vicdeaf. The survey assesses our staff responses to a range of questions such as communication, leadership and management, decision making, culture, working environment and quality. We are very pleased that this year’s result was an 88.6% satisfaction level. I have previously updated you on the significant changes and uncertainty for community service organisations under the NDIS, as a result Vicdeaf is experiencing a level of change not seen before. With this in mind our staff satisfaction rating is a great result and I thank all of our dedicated and committed staff for working together as we plan for our future service model.

As a member of the National Disability Services Victoria State Committee, I recently attended a meeting of the Committee with the Hon. Martin Foley Minister for Housing, Disability and Ageing; Minister for Mental Health; Minister for Equality and Minister for Creative Industries. The meeting was an excellent opportunity to discuss the key challenges and issues facing us over the next few years. The Minister’s broad range of portfolios are deliberately related to each other to achieve better coordination and outcomes for Victorians.

This week I will be travelling to regional Victoria with our Marketing and Development team to meet with some of Vicdeaf’s donors and bequestors. I very much look forward to these discussions and sharing the stories about our important work and the outcomes we are achieving.

Until next time.

CHRISTINE MATHIESON

Open Captions Australia

We from the Melbourne Deaf Cinema Club, the Perth Deaf Cinema Club, and the Sydney Deaf Cinema Club are proud to announce our incorporation and the launch of our brand new website.

Our new names will be Open Captions Melbourne, Open Captions Perth, Open Captions Sydney respectively. We all will be linked to the newly formed and incorporated organisation Open Captions Australia (OCA).

Our website is easy to navigate and have the following features:

- Check upcoming open captioned (OC) movies
- Check which confirmed movies to have OC (to our knowledge)
- Purchase tickets for OCA’s movies across Australia
- All OC movie events across Australia (to our knowledge)
- Frequently asked questions
- OC documentations, information for cinema, patrons including how OC works, and how to lobby for it at your local cinema.

www.opencaptions.com.au

Anthony Sammons
General Manager
Open Captions Australia
Editorial

Many people believe that 2015 may really be the Year of Auslan.

We have Drisana Levitkze-Gray being named as the 2015 Young Australian of the Year and Queensland interpreter Mark Cave’s huge rise in popularity on social media with the hashtag #signguy following emergency broadcasts on Tropical Cyclone Maria.

Over the past few months, I keep seeing fantastic accessible events popping up for everyone to enjoy – whether it is for skills development, community events, theatre or sports. Well done to all those involved in making sure that Auslan interpreting, live captioning and any other access requirements are provided. Let’s keep up with the amazing work.

In fact, we have lots of wonderful news, stories and events – I cannot fit them all into this newsletter! If you want more, you can check our website, www.vicdeaf.com.au. Our staff post regularly about what is happening at Vicdeaf, hear service, SLC VIC and SensWide Employment as well as what is happening within the Victorian deaf community and other organisations.

Now, make yourself comfortable and enjoy reading this Communicate issue!

• SOPHIE LI

Handy Life Tips

I will try to share great Handy Life Tips, please let me know if you enjoy this part of my editorial:

Netflix Australia is now available

All movies, TV shows and documentaries can be watched with captions. You can trial for one month at no cost to decide if you like it. Monthly plans start from $8.99 a month for one person. The website is www.netflix.com/au-en/.

Submission deadlines for 2015

Friday 29 May

Friday 31 July

Wed 30 September

Mon 16 November

SUBMISSIONS WELCOME

Email to info@vicdeaf.com.au

Employment Assistance Fund (EAF)

If you have a hearing loss (deaf, hard of hearing or deafblind) and work more than 14 hours per week, you may be eligible to apply for EAF.

If your work colleagues or boss are not communicating with you well, Vicdeaf provide Deaf Awareness Training (DAT). This training offers excellent information and great communication tips for people in your workplace.

What’s more, this training can be provided under EAF which means your work won’t have to pay.

To apply for EAF go to www.jobaccess.gov.au/content/employment-assistance-fund.

Once Jobaccess gives you approval to use EAF, you can contact our DAT Coordinator to organise training at your workplace. Email David Peters at dpeters@vicdeaf.com.au

• SOPHIE LI

Editorial Policy

Communicate is published six times a year. Reader contributions are greatly welcomed. 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.

www.facebook.com/VicdeafInfo

www.twitter.com/Vicdeaf

www.youtube.com/InfoVicdeaf

www.linkedin.com/company/vicdeaf

www.instagram.com/vicdeaf_goes_visual

Scan the QR code to view Caroline’s story. She uses Auslan at her work.

Photo source: Job Access.
TRANSITION WORKSHOPS
for deaf and hard of hearing school leavers

Thu 7 May  Self Advocacy & the Deaf community
Thu 14 May  Booking & working with Auslan interpreters
Thu 21 May  Working
Thu 28 May  Further Education
Thu 4 June  Living Independently
Thu 11 June  Exploring Opportunities for your GAP Year

Access: Auslan, spoken English and live captioning.
Videoconferencing available for regional students.

Time  1:30pm - 3:00pm for all workshops
Where  VDEI Learning Centre
       597 St Kilda Rd
       Melbourne

RSVP  Sophie Li at sli@vicdeaf.com.au

Ensure to book one week before the workshop(s).
You can pick all or any of the workshops!

The Vicdeaf Transitions program is made possible through funding from the Newsboys Foundation
Deaf Professionals Network VIC (DPN VIC) celebrated the International Year of Light at the Business Breakfast with the theme of Technology Innovations for Deaf and hard of hearing people on Friday 20 February 2015.

A number of guests travelled from around Melbourne and regional areas for the Business Breakfast. Sixty guests attended the event at the beautiful Supper Room at Melbourne Town Hall, where they were welcomed by Master of Ceremonies Sophie Li.

DPN VIC was lucky to have two exciting and very knowledgeable speakers, Chris Soukup who is the CEO of Communication Services for the Deaf (CSD), a Deaf-led interpreting services provider in the US. The other speaker was Dr. Phil Harper, the Community Liaison Manager at Conexu. Phil is also the International Commission President for Accessibility and Technology at World Federation of the Deaf.

Chris gave his presentation via Skype feed from the CSD headquarters in Austin, Texas. He spoke about the history of CSD and how it was established by his father with a desire to provide equal access for Deaf and hard of hearing people in the US. Chris spoke about how CSD ensures that Deaf people are involved in all steps of the development of new services, including Deaf staff such as coders who worked on the development of the Vineya online interpreter booking system.

Phil spoke about the history of communication technologies targeted at Deaf people and about how options have grown over the years, with a number of apps now available for Deaf and hard of hearing people, and more are continuing to be developed.

The guests enjoyed the presentations and had many questions for Chris and Phil. After the presentations, there was time for networking, allowing people to make new contacts and catch up with old friends and acquaintances.

This event was facilitated by the Community Programs team at Vicdeaf and sponsored by SLC VIC with interpreters and live captioning provided.

MIJA GWYN
Some photos of the Vicdeaf Gaslight Festival

All photo sources: Vicdeaf.

With thanks to our sponsors:

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With special thanks to:

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Interview with 2015 Young Australian of the Year, Drisana Levitkze-Gray

What are plans for this year 2015?

This year I am studying Diploma of Interpreting. I want to become a Deaf Interpreter. Hopefully this year will pass quickly so I can become a Deaf Interpreter. It will be good!

So far, which achievements are you most proud of?

My greatest achievement so far would porpably be this award. Finally, there is national recognition to accept and celebrate Auslan and the Deaf Community.

What are you up to at the Vicdeaf Gaslight Festival?

At Gaslight Festival, I am here with two hats. First hat as the Young Australian of the Year Q&A session – really lovely. Second hat, I work for the NRS. My role is Deaf Sector Community Network Officer. I look after deaf people who sign enuring access to information, know about new services as a lot of work has changed recently in NRS.

Want to watch the full interview? Scan this QR code or visit our website!
Hear For You

Hear For You VIC Oral Program – spots available

Now entering its fifth year in Melbourne, preparation is underway for the Victorian Oral Program to be better than ever before!

Funding has been secured to keep the program up and running and accessible to as many deaf, hard of hearing and hearing impaired teenagers.

With a newly structured program, mentors for this year are prepared to undertake mentor training under the experienced CEO David Brady and leadership trainer Muffy Churches before the workshops start on Sunday 24th May. There is still room for enrolments and we are open until 1st May so get in quick before positions fill up!

- SAM CARTLEDGE
  VICTORIAN PROGRAMS COORDINATOR

Waratah Reunion 2015 Announcement

The new committee has reached a decision to the dates for Waratah Reunion to be held at Santa Sabina, Strathfield on 21–23 August, 2015.

The reason for the reunion to be held at Strathfield is that there are many ex Waratah (older) students living in Sydney.

There will be lots of activities involved during the weekend. Photos, story telling, interviews, BBQ and catch up with old friends. We would like to have a copy or two of your Waratah photos – photocopy preferred, not the original, to be emailed to us.

There will be a survey with questions, we will need your contacts and the contacts of other Waratah friends.

Please click this link and complete the survey for our research.

The committee will use the results of the survey to post information on powerpoint to be shown on the night. The survey is not compulsory but we would like to know who was in your class and who your teachers were.

The survey link is:
https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/9CNJKDV

We would dearly love to have you all to join with us during the celebrations. The invites will be for Waratah ex students, their partners and the teachers only.

For more information, please email to:
defwaratah1875@gmail.com

The invitations will be sent next month along with the accommodation and registration forms. We will need your contact details as soon as possible.

Thank you,
The Waratah Reunion Committee

- PROVIDED BY ROBYN BEASLEY

Victoria Police has developed a National Terrorism Public Alert System video for deaf or hard of hearing people. The video explains the National Terrorism Alert Level in Auslan and contains captions.

If members of the deaf or hard of hearing community have information about something that might pose a threat to national security they should contact Victoria Police through the National Relay Service www.relayservice.gov.au.

National Security Hotline

- Phone 1800 123 400 via NRS
- SMS on 0429 771 822
- Email: hotline@nationalsecurity.gov.au

Scan this QR code to view Auslan version.
hearservice have devices to assist you every day, at home and work, including:

- Alarms
- Doorbells
- Clocks
- Pagers

Make a free appointment to see how technology can assist you, or shop the range online.

Contact us:
Email: info@hearservice.com.au
Web: www.hearservice.com.au
Phone: 1300 30 20 31
Marketing and Development update

Volunteers for Vicdeaf

During March, over 80 people showed their support for Vicdeaf by volunteering their time at the International Airshow held at Avalon.

This is a project that Vicdeaf has been involved in for the past two years. At the International Airshow Vicdeaf volunteers from organisations all over Melbourne handed out earplugs to Airshow visitors as part of our work to inform people about hearing protection and awareness. Some Vicdeaf volunteers also had fun driving VIPs around in golf carts.

As part of Vicdeaf’s involvement, Vicdeaf’s audiology service, hear service had a stall in the stallholders’ arena from which they gave out information about hearing protection, devices and aids in the home for deaf and hard of hearing people.

Hear service also gave out disposable earplugs and sold filtered earplugs and kiddie earmuffs to attendees of the Airshow.

Thank you to all of our wonderful volunteers for giving Vicdeaf their time.

GILL VICTOR

Baby Cry Alarm Loan Scheme now available

For new and expecting parents who are deaf or hard of hearing.

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.

When the borrowing period is finished, return the alarm system in good condition to Vicdeaf and we will provide a $50 refund.

Contact Vicdeaf for more information or ask for an application form to borrow a Bellman & Symfon Baby Cry Alarm System.

TTY 03 9473 1199 or call via the National Relay Service 133 677 and quote 03 9473 1111 or email: info@vicdeaf.com.au

Communicate and Under the Gaslight Subscription Form

Communicate is a bi-monthly print newsletter now available via email in PDF format. It is a source of news and information relating to Deaf and hard of hearing issues. Want to receive Communicate? Please fill in your details and post to us.

Name: ______________________ Postal Address: ______________________

Prefer to receive Communicate via email? Add Email Address here: ______________________

Under the Gaslight is a monthly newsletter sent by email. It is an excellent source of upcoming events and important information. Want to receive Under the Gaslight (via email only)? Please fill in your details and post to us.

Name: ______________________ Email Address: ______________________

Fill in and post this form to: Communicate Editor, Level 4, 340 Albert St, East Melbourne VIC 3002 or you can subscribe on www.vicdeaf.com.au
We are thrilled that we have eleven confirmed Vicdeaf Heroes registered for The Age Run Melbourne on 26 July, 2015. We have Board members, staff, Vicdeaf community members – all showing their support for Vicdeaf.

However, we need more! Help us to reach our target of 15 Vicdeaf Heroes!

Sign up to become a Vicdeaf Hero. Join our team as a Charity Champion ticket runner and be part of a special group of people who are passionate about Vicdeaf, want to raise funds for our work, have fun and get fit at the same time.

As a Vicdeaf Hero Champion Fundraiser you will benefit from many extras, both on the day and in the lead up to the event.

To view these benefits and to sign up go to www.vicdeaf.com.au.

We give you information, support and inspiration to keep going as a Vicdeaf Hero, so you’re supported along the way.

Don’t miss out! These limited highly sought after places are available for all distances - 5km run/walk, 10km run or the Brooks Half-Marathon.

So sign up today and become a Vicdeaf Hero!

Have fun and save!

Order your new Entertainment™ Book and save money while fundraising for Vicdeaf! The Entertainment™ Book contains hundreds of offers for many restaurants, arts, attractions, hotel accommodation, travel and much more!

Get your book or digital membership (on your smart device) now for only $65!

Order at www.vicdeaf.com.au or scan this QR code.

Thanks for supporting Vicdeaf.
Deaf Cricket puts on a good show

Deaf Cricket Australia (DCA) was proud to be a part of the Exhibition Match opening the All Abilities Cricket Championships on Monday 16 March. The Championships included a Blind cricket national competition and Ashes series for the Intellectual Disability cricket.

The day started off with a match between the Melbourne Deaf Cricket Club and Cricket Australia Invitational XI. Melbourne Deaf won the game chasing 121 runs with four balls to spare in a 16 over T20 Blast format.

It was a good opportunity for DCA to showcase their skills in front of partners and sponsors of Cricket Australia and hopefully this will generate further opportunities in the years to come for Australian Deaf cricket.

After the match, the players mixed with the students from Victorian College of the Deaf (VCD) who participated in a fun cricket tryout session.

The day ended with an amazing opening ceremony inside the Long Room at the MCG. MC was Australian cricketer Melanie Jones, and special guest was Max Walker AM, who kept us entertained with his wonderful stories.

DCA life member, John Webb was with us for the day and the evening. For more information about Deaf cricket, send an email to info@deafcricket.com.au

DEAF CRICKET AUSTRALIA COMMITTEE

VCD students enjoy their tryout session.

All Photo sources: Sherrie Beaver

DCA Life Member John Webb with the victorious Melbourne Deaf Cricket team.