

Access News

AAA



Access Audits Australia

disability access  advice  training

Living A Life.....Sport



I have two great loves..... my family and sport. Many times I have been asked if there is anything I regret about having a disability? My response has always been, not being able to play a decent game of golf or football, something I have discovered that is not uncommon among those who play often anyway.

Many people with disabilities spend a lot of time watching sport; thankfully those participating, either social or competitive, is increasing. As a youngster growing up I had my own sporting heroes - Rod Marsh - Australian Wicket Keeper, Tony Roach - Tennis Champion and George Young - St.Kilda Full Forward. All left sided players, like me, but I did not have any athletes with disabilities as heroes or role models, as I did not even know there were such things.

The closest thing to a role model in sport for me was golfer Jack Newton, who as a result of an accident became an amputee and became a great commentator – but by then I was in my twenties. Thankfully young people with disabilities looking for sporting role models today have plenty of examples to choose from, such as our Paralympian athletes, those participating in the Deaflympics, or the many people with disabilities who play sport with their able bodied team mates every week.

Access to many sporting venues has improved in recent years with an increased awareness by venue operators that spectators with disabilities have a range of needs and most often will naturally want to sit with family or friends to enjoy the on field action, rather than being isolated in an area designated for people with disabilities only.

The recent introduction in Victoria of a Companion Card scheme that allows carers to attend sporting and recreational events with their companion, free of charge, is a great initiative that will increase the access to these events for many people.

My love of sport has been rewarded many times over but it is not until my AFL football team, the Saints, wins a Grand Final that I will be completely satisfied, but until then I will continue *Living a Life*.....and hoping.

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Access Audits Australia

provides the following range of services to support improved access to the built environment and to the provision of goods and services:

- ◆ Disability access training
- ◆ Community consultation
- ◆ Access presentations, publications and inspirations
- ◆ Development and Review of Disability Action Plans, Development Access Plans, policies and procedures
- ◆ Access Audits, Evaluations and Design Advice

Access Audits Australia is pleased to advise or assist you with any access issue.

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New York Maps Services for People with Disabilities

This geographic information system lets users map the location of support services for people with disabilities anywhere in New York State. It details the location of state-sponsored services as well as those provided by 850 private agencies and is available at www.omr.state.ny.us

Check Windows Accessibility Features

Microsoft has created a comparison table to assist anyone to assess what accessibility features Windows offers. Detailed information with step-by-step instructions are included to cover different Windows versions. See: <http://www.microsoft.com/enable/products/chartwindows.aspx>.

Is that Web Site Inaccessible?

There is now an easy and aesthetic way to let someone know that their website is not user-friendly or accessible, especially for a person with vision impairment who uses screen reader technology. You can direct the site owner to relevant information via a postcard. See: <http://www.lazycat.org/postcards/index.html>.

Audio Books

A wide variety of audio books is available at: <http://www.audiobooks.com/>

Improve web page access

Some users can find the information displayed on some web pages to be too complex. This particularly applies to people with learning difficulties, or who may have difficulty reading text. By using the following link, it is usually possible to choose options to convert the content and layout of a web page so that it is presented in more accessible text or symbol styles. See: <http://www.widgit.com/products/webwise/browser.htm>.

Information in this section is prepared with the assistance of Purple Top Pty. Ltd., which specializes in the design and testing of web sites for W3C accessibility compliance. Contact gian@purpletop.com.au

Legislation on CD

In an Australian first, Victorians with vision impairment will have greater access to the law than ever before, with all published Victorian legislation now being available on a specially designed CD. Any piece of Victorian legislation can now be ordered with a phone call to Information Victoria on 1300 366 356. Acts can be ordered at a cost of \$11.00, including GST, plus postage and be delivered within two working days.



XII Paralympics

September 17th-28th, 2004

Two weeks after the completion of the Olympic Games, the best Paralympic athletes will go to Athens for the Paralympic Games.

4,000 Paralympic athletes from 130 countries, as well as over 2,000 team officials will attend.

The general philosophy of the Paralympic Games is to follow the rules of the Olympic sports as much as possible.

Athens 2004 is the first Organising Committee for the Olympic Games which, operating under a unified management structure, is responsible for organising both the Olympics and the Paralympics.

20th Deaflympics

January 5th-16th 2005 Melbourne

Over 3,500 athletes and team officials, from over 90 countries, are expected to attend and participate in 15 individual and team sporting events at the the 20th Summer Deaflympic Games to be held in and around Melbourne and Ballarat. This 12 day sport and cultural festival will be attended by people with hearing impairments from around the world.

One Person's View

Many children and adults dream of one day being able to ride a horse. Some achieve that wish and go on to ride competitively, even developing their skill level so that they are able to represent Australia at the Olympic Games, or in other international competitions. Others may never achieve their desires.

For children with a disability it can be even more of a challenge to be able to actually experience riding a horse. That is unless they are able to connect up with a group such as Riding for the Disabled Association (RDA), which is a voluntary, non-profit organisation dedicated to providing horse riding and associated activities for people with disabilities.

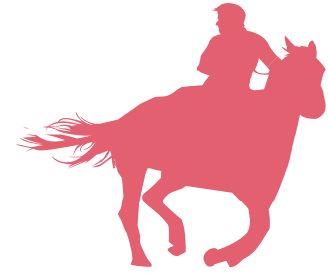
RDA has affiliates in all states and territories of Australia and operates 44 centres throughout Victoria, catering for over 900 riders. People from all disability groups are included into RDA programs, with each participant being assessed prior to commencing, so that a suitable program may be developed.

Jane Edwards is one of almost 800 volunteers throughout Australia who provide support and skills to assist RDA. She has been actively involved for over 15 years with establishing facilities and organising activities at the RDA centre at Moorabbin, in the southeastern suburbs of Melbourne.

Jane originally became involved with horses through her daughter's interests when young and has continued her connection through RDA.

Jane has observed participants gain various skills from horse riding, especially improved balance and muscle coordination, horse control, extended exercise and the ability to ride independently.

Increased self-esteem and personal pride often result from achieving these new skills, which can also encourage speech and communication development for some people with intellectual or psychiatric disabilities.



RDA operates due to the ongoing active contribution of volunteers of all ages, some of who have subsequently obtained employment working with people with disabilities, as a result of their RDA experiences. Volunteers can also develop friendships and enjoy the various social activities.

Through the assistance of various community organisations and the ongoing support of the Kingston City Council, which owns the land they use, this RDA centre has grown from a small beginning and now regularly provides a range of equestrian experiences for many people through the use of games, coordination exercises and rides.

Information about RDA Victoria activities can be obtained from (03) 9532 0411 or email admin@rdav.asn.au

getting down to business

This is the theme of the Mainstreet Conference to be held in Melbourne between 26 September and 29 September 2004.

It is advertised as a conference that is committed to Mainstreet issues, ideologies, practices and structures. It gets back to local Mainstreet issues across regional centres, small communities, towns and major suburban strips without focusing on one more than the others. This is intended to be a conference for everyone who is concerned for, loves and works in their Mainstreets, whatever the size, place or location. Joe Manton from AAA will be presenting a session on why "Good Access is Good Business". For further conference information contact Morag Lark on 03 9696 5085 or log onto www.mainstreetconference.com



Did you know ?

- That seven restaurant chains in Ontario, Canada, including Starbucks, McDonalds, Subway and Pizza Hut, have agreed to commit to a process that will actively improve accessibility for people with disabilities.
- That recent tests on some Guide Dogs have indicated up to 1 in 10 are short sighted, which if they were human would require use of prescription glasses.
- That using larger and more legible print, when advertising or communicating information, will enable many more people to understand the message being conveyed.
- That every 7 seconds someone in the United States turns 50 years old. If this figure is applied to the Australian population it indicates the importance of responding to the range of access needs for baby boomers.
- That a judge in a German court case paid for a battery for a defendant's hearing aid to enable the man to follow his manslaughter trial.
- That customers will develop ongoing loyalty to organisations or businesses who understand and respond to their access requirements.
- That there are over 100 Guide Dog users in Victoria and 500 Australia wide.

How good is your hearing?

Hearing Awareness Week is held each year to highlight the issues experienced by people with hearing impairment.



22 - 28 August 2004

It also provides an opportunity for the 22 percent of Australians aged 15 years and over who have a hearing impairment to share their experience and knowledge and help to create a greater understanding of their needs and aspirations.

Many people may have some form of hearing loss without even realising it.

The following questions can help you determine if you have hearing loss. If you answer yes to one or more, you may want to have your hearing tested.

- Do others accuse you of having the television too loud?
- Do others accuse you of not paying attention?
- Do you misunderstand 50 for 15 or 60 for 16?
- Can you hear better with one ear than the other on the phone?
- Have you stopped attending plays and lectures because of the strain exerted to hear what is being said?
- Do you have trouble understanding someone speaking to you from another room?
- Do you have difficulty understanding speech when there is background noise?
- Do you miss the punch line of jokes?
- Do you seem to hear the words but not understand them?
- Do you have a history of ear infections, earaches or running ears?

AAA Web site

Details about services provided by Access Audits Australia can be found on our web site at www.accessauditsaustralia.com.au

Our site is designed to be accessible for all users. It has AAA W3C level compliance and is AAA Bobby approved. Earlier Access News editions can be downloaded and there are also links to other relevant access related web sites.

Information contained in **Access News** is intended to highlight the importance of improving access for every person

Disclaimer: Whilst every reasonable effort has been made to ensure the accuracy of the information contained in this publication, Access Audits Australia does not accept any responsibility for inaccuracies, omissions, incorrect information or action taken as a result of any advice given or information conveyed in this publication.