Welcome


Been busy fact finding across the region attending network meetings and linking with individual groups and programs. To all those new people I have met, thanks for your hospitality and warmth.

At a program level happy to say that the interim report for this year has been completed and submitted. Planned activities appear to be tracking as expected. We are also about to conduct our second Advisory Committee meeting where I will be raising the topic of strategic funding. Every so often the Government finds extra funds for special projects. Whilst submission have not yet been called for, discussion behind the scenes has commenced. It will be interesting to see what type of ideas are likely to be raised at a regional level about what strategic funding might be prioritized in relation to this region.

NB: that I am currently working on a new State based website which will better tie in with this newsletter and information dissemination in general. Fingers crossed for the month of March.

Yours Sincerely, Mark Cottee
RAASN - Regional Australia Autism Support Network: Albury Wodonga

On the 10th—12th of February RAASN held its inaugural forum in Albury. Regional Australia Autism Support Network is a not for profit organisation working with regional families to support, educate, advocate and raise awareness of Autism Spectrum Disorders. Based in Albury / Wodonga their primary aim is to provide a safe place for families to discuss their loved ones fears, dreams, wishes and desires.

Run over three days the forum was of utmost value and by all accounts a success on every level. I would like to take this opportunity to thank the organisers (special mention to Belinda Martin and Steve Bowen) for their involvement in commitment in running this event.

As part of my recent travels there is an indication that Autism is increasing across the general community as an area of need, especially with regards transition pathways for students moving from school into further education or employment. If you feel you need help don’t hesitate to make contact with RAASN or myself for support, advice or assistance.

“Autism is a neurological disorder. It’s not caused by bad parenting. It’s caused by, you know, abnormal development in the brain. The emotional circuits in the brain are abnormal. And there also are differences in the white matter, which is the brain’s computer cables that hook up the different brain departments.”

Temple Grandin

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING LINKS:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRVfyVL8qzw (Win News Segment)

RAASN www.raasn.com.au

Little Black Duck (Local Autism communication business)

Therapy Connect - Amaze
www.therapyconnect.amaze.org.au

CHAIRTY EVENING—
As part of World Autism Day 2 April 2014.

Hume Building Society invites you to a very special evening to view the powerful multi-award winning film, Temple Grandin.

Guest speaker, Jen Tait of the Autism Employment Advocacy Group will discuss the importance of teaching employment concepts to children with autism, and the benefits of employing workers with autism.


Looking for more

RAASN invitation

Please join us on April 2nd 2014 to show your support to individuals living with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. In celebration of World Autism Awareness Day we are raising community awareness. Contact RAASN for further details.
www.adipef.org.au
Education Grants Open - **Australian Disability and Indigenous Peoples' Education Fund** - closes 31 Mar 2014. This education fund is about helping people complete or undertake courses and programs through providing small grants.

**Australian Training Awards** categories are open - Training providers, schools, businesses and individuals with outstanding achievements in vocational education and training (VET) are encouraged to apply for the 2014 Australian Training Awards

**My Skills** is a federal government initiative which provides consumer information on VET for employers and other VET training-seekers. This includes course-related labour market information and whether the course is offered as part of an Australian Apprenticeship.

http://www.ndcovictoria.net.au/getdoc/5a5b22c0-36bd-4f02-8d30-fdb05e1dc988/Region-14-Southern-Melbourne.aspx
**NDCO Program’s Inclusive Learning Conference**
Suitable for professionals with experience or an interest in learning and education for people aged 14 years and over.

Becoming a **disability confident organisation** means **embracing inclusion**, writes Disability Employment Australia CEO Lynette May.

**How To Get A Good Life seminar 11th 12th March Albury.** This event will provide assistance to those involved in supporting people with a disability to make plans and actions towards enabling individuals to realize their aspirations and goals. **Who is the Seminar for:** Planners, managers, professionals, human service workers, people with a disability, family members, advocates and others interested in authentic and meaningful lifestyle development for people with a disability and other marginalized people. For further information contact Barb Palmer, Wodonga TAFE (02) 6055 6929 or bpalmer@wodongatafe.edu.au
ACE DisAbility Network Training Video Launch

The ACE DisAbility Network is pleased to be able to announce that their short training videos are now available for viewing.

Also note from ACE DisAbility Emory employ people with disability training.

Inclusion Melbourne and the ACE DisAbility Network offer an interactive course which introduces trainers of people with disability, work place support people and managers to techniques and strategies which can lead to positive employment outcomes for students with cognitive disability.

Mar 13th 2014, June 18th 2014, Nov 13th 2014 (Melbourne)
For more details contact—Please contact Judy Buckingham on
E: judy.buckingham@yooralla.com.au T: 9916 5829

Mind Blank is a not-for-profit organisation that generates awareness and innovative education of mental health topics in youth across Australia. Highly recommended.

Partnership Delivers Solution to Disability Employment People with a disability will soon be helping sort and deliver mail in regional and remote locations across Australia, under a new national partnership between Australia Post and disability services provider Lifestyle Solutions.

Wodonga Council has prepared a Draft Wodonga City Heart Revitalisation Plan and is seeking feedback from Disability Service providers; people with disability, their families and carers regarding the proposed changes to Wodonga’s central business area.

INDIGENOUS PEOPLE WITH A DISABILITY AND EMPLOYMENT

The First Peoples Disability Network (FDPN) has engaged Vale Consultancy to undertake an evaluation of the issues impacting on the engagement and successful employment and retention of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with a disability.

Forums are being held across various locations and community people and service providers are welcome. Stayed tuned for details: indications that a forum will be held in Shepparton early April.

Further details contact - carol@valeconsultancy.com.au
“GUIDE TO GETTING AROUND” Alpine, Indigo, Towong, Wangaratta and Wodonga. The Guide to getting AROUND incorporates information about V/Line services and local transport information including timetables and maps, as well as active transport options like cycling and walking. In the Travel Assistance section of the guide there is specific information in regards, “Multi Purpose taxi Program”, “Centrelink Mobility Allowance”, and “Vision Impaired Travel Pass”. The guide is produced by the North East Transport Connection Project and for further information contact them on (02) 60492100 or contact your local council.

**Going further afield - Out and About App (Melbourne)**, produced by the Villa Maria Society: An application to assist carers and individuals with disability or mobility issues to better access their community and plan a great day out through information about accessible venues and events across metropolitan Melbourne.

**Speaking of Apps -**
I had the wonderful opportunity of attending the Spectronics IPAD masterclass last week in Wagga Wagga. The workshop centred around using Ipads to support students struggling with literacy in secondary/post-secondary settings. Many thanks to Greg O’Conner from Spectronics for his thorough and informative hands on approach. Over the course of the day we covered topics such as, Supporting reading and access to learning content, Supporting writing and the new literacies, Planning and exploring my plans post workshop and, (my favourite) - Supporting organization and other executive functions.
I have now challenged myself to the Apps centred approach to my own work scheduling to better understand the value of embracing the new wave of this technology on our doorstep. I will also be working closely with TAFE and other educational facilitators as we cross over to universal learning design principles.

*Have an interest in App assistive technology check out* [https://www.spectronicsinoz.com/](https://www.spectronicsinoz.com/)

NB: Spectronics will be running The Inclusive Learning Technologies Conference May 2014 in Qld. Available for the first time will be the Virtual registration— As the NDCO I will be registering and will then be able to bring the best bits of the conference for video viewing to you locally. More information to follow.

*Also coming... I will run a feature article on the SAMR model.* The Substitution Augmentation Modification Re-definition Model offers a method of seeing how computer technology might impact teaching and learning.

In the interim, feel free to check SAMR out - [https://sites.google.com/a/msad60.org/technology-is-learning/samr-model](https://sites.google.com/a/msad60.org/technology-is-learning/samr-model)  

NB—Apps are merely tools. Which tool is the best fit for the job required?

**Do you access the following services?** Medicare, eHealth, centralink, child support, NDIS; Now you can do so much at one place with my gov (one login, one password, one destination) [https://my.gov.au/mygov/content/html/about.html](https://my.gov.au/mygov/content/html/about.html)

Having trouble accessing services from the Australian Government Department of Human Services—maybe check out the new range of Apps now also available -

**What is Speakers Bank?**

Speakers bank is a group of people with a personal experience of disability, all of whom are trained in public speaking and are available to share with the community the story of their lives, their challenges and triumphs. Speakers bank is an initiative of disability connections (Victoria).

**Why book a speaker with a disability?**

Speakers volunteer their time to present a positive image of disability to the broader public and to provide information about challenges that people with disabilities face in the community.

Whilst located in Melbourne Speakers Bank is looking at regional expansion. Please don’t hesitate to contact a representative from speakers bank for further information:

T: 03 96877066  
E: speakersbank@annecto.org.au  
www. Speakersbank.org.au

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**River 2 Recovery THE MOVIE!**

The movie of the River2 Recovery project is now available. A massive thank you to all the participants for such an inspirational tale. Please view the link and spread the word. If you like what you see please leave a comment where available on the link.


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**For our New South Wales partners**

**NDCO for region 10 Riverina /ACT.**

**Tracy Hetherton**  
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Phone: 02 6055 6924 / Mobile 0402 955 508  
Email: thetherton@wodongatafe.edu.au  
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**For Subscription details or any other information please contact me directly via your preferred method as per details below:**

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