

EYE CONTACT

BWA serving its Members for 75 years

**Newsletter for Members of B W A proudly
Sponsored by Tenants and Friends**

August 2013

CONTACT DETAILS:

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Welcome to the 3rd edition of the Eye Contact for the year. It's hard to believe that three quarters of 2013 has transpired already, the footy season is coming to an end and we will be thinking about the warmer months and dare I say it, the Festive Season! You will read further down comments from our regular contributors and updates on activities for the last quarter of this year. There is also information on how to vote in the upcoming Election. As you are aware the date has changed, but still waiting to hear when, so when it is announced the information will be relevant for the new date.

Board Report

The Board is very pleased that they have the 2012/13 financial year within operational budget. This is pleasing to note considering the pressures of funding compliance and at the same time increasing services to members. During the next 1 to 2 years the BWA will need to position itself to fit into the new funding programs with Disability under 65 years and Aged Care funding for those 65 years and over. Whilst individuals are promised increased support under the Disability Care Australia program those within the Aged Care sector are potentially worse off as they will need to co-contribute. Based on the above programs members need to ask themselves the following questions-

Under 65 years.

Would you, as part of your funding package, select to pay BWA as a provider for Social and Leisure Activities?

Would you pay for Transport?

Would you pay for the Welfare Officer to assist you with advocacy etc.?

For those over 65 the same questions apply and based on a Centrelink assessment would you contribute money from your own resources?

This will be the environment that the BWA will need to work within, competing for funding from individuals as well as other non-for profit Organisations and a number of for profit Organisations from within Australia and from overseas.

Therefore the Board will need to ensure that we can be sustainable in the new environment but this will only come from member support. Regulations on Governance under the Australian Charities Commission will also add greater pressure on directors to be responsible and understand their obligations as a Director of a Charity and also as a Director of a Business/Company. The amount of experience or training that future Directors require is far beyond what was traditionally expected, BWA members who have been in business or management should consider volunteering to participate in the Organisations growth and sustainability. I would encourage those BWA Members currently employed in middle and senior management positions to stand at the next election. Board Members must remember that they are the responsible body when it comes to compliance and financial decision making, employees do not have this responsibility.

Manager's Report

Greetings to one and all! Don't want to sound repetitive but, as per usual, lots happening here at Blind Welfare. We have lots of information to share with Members

in this Eye Contact; I trust you will find this useful and informative. Please let us know, we always welcome your feedback and compliments or complaints are a way of addressing and meeting Member needs and expectations so don't hold back! While on the subject of feedback, please have a look at our website www.blindwelfare.org.au. We have been working on making it more user friendly and we hope you find it that way?

Marney Pearce Technology Lounge is up and running. Not as many bookings as anticipated. Do you need more information? Do you need to know what assistance is available and what programs you can use and learn about? Once again we need your feedback. Volunteers are currently attending training in adaptive technology which is due to complete late September. Christine, Member Services Officer, will be scheduling some structured sessions with volunteer support as part of the weekly activity program here at Blind Welfare Activity Centre. Bookings can then be made knowing when support is available. If you need transport assistance you will need to book at least 1 week in advance and we will do our best to accommodate all requests.

Reminder, do you know about Blind Welfare Special Purpose Welfare Fund (SPWF)? We can provide no interest Personal Loans, Equipment Subsidies, including Youth Equipment Subsidy for youth 12 to 17 years of age, Home Maintenance Subsidy, Power and Phone subsidy. If you have been a Member of Blind Welfare for 6 months you are more than likely eligible, just ask and any Staff Member will be able to assist you and answer any questions.

Even though it has been very wet and cold we have managed to make good use of the new BBQ located in the courtyard at Cameron Avenue. This BBQ is a permanent fixture, not just for use by residents. Christine has managed to schedule BBQ lunches to work in with some activities and these have been received well. We will have many more as the weather improves!

I know it's a bit early but thought it a good idea to give plenty of notice for Blind Welfare AGM scheduled this year for Saturday 19th October 1 pm to 2:30 pm at The Pilgrim Centre, 12 Flinders Street, Adelaide. I would like to encourage you to think about your ability to represent BWA Members as a Board Member. Nomination forms will arrive by post no later than Friday 6th September and you will have 2 weeks to submit your nomination to BWA by Friday 20th September. If you're thinking about nominating, please give this some serious consideration. I am happy to answer any questions or provide any information to assist you in your decision.

In regards to talking with me about Board Membership or any other topic, you will need to start thinking about that sooner than later. I am taking almost 6 weeks leave for a long planned overseas holiday. Sorry but all baggage carrier positions have been taken! (Smile) My last day at work will be the 6th August returning Monday 23rd September. All other Staff will be on deck and will be able to answer any of your questions. I will look forward to sharing some of my adventures with you on my

return.

Kind regards to all! Rosemary Murdock

Volunteer Officer

Well I have almost forgotten about my holiday through Canada and Alaska but let it suffice that it was fantastic. Just to give you an update regarding my ears, some of you will remember that I had grommets put in my ears to help me to equalise my ears while flying and they had an adverse effect on me. Well I am pleased to say that my hearing has improved dramatically although I don't think it's 100%.

As usual I have had a busy time interviewing people who wish to become volunteers and the good news is that we do have some more drivers. We also have more volunteers that can help in the Social Centre when necessary, especially since we need more volunteers to go out in the buses when picking up members. Twenty of our drivers undertook the Defensive Driving Course which now completes the funding that was approved for this purpose. Seven courses took place encompassing one class of three for the country region and the remaining classes for the metro area. All the drivers that attended gave excellent feedback on how the course was run and found it very worthwhile. Some of our volunteers have started the training on adaptive software which is being facilitated by RSB trainers. The training has been split into three groups of three and will be spread over approximately eight weeks. Once this training has been completed these volunteers will be able to assist members in the Marney Pearce Lounge with using this software.

The commercial, which I have mentioned before, was launched on 9 July 2013 and the Hon. Tony Piccolo, Minister for Volunteers, gave a short speech before the viewing began. Rosemary, Wendy Carter (the volunteer in the commercial) and I attended this at Flinders University. Apart from viewing our commercial we had the opportunity of viewing all those involved in this program. Other organisations that opted for the commercials were, Leveda (they provide disability support for high needs people with a disability in Adelaide, Northern Adelaide and South Australia) DOME, (this Association has special approval from the Equal Opportunities Commission to assist only people over the age of 40); Rotary and SIDS and all were of a high quality. Just as a reminder this was another grant approved for in-kind services from the media students at Flinders University. Look out for this commercial towards the summer months.

I am very pleased to inform you that 34 volunteers attended the Volunteers' Meeting held on 26 May and this was an excellent meeting and I received positive feedback that the meeting was well structured and informative.

Some of the items that were covered included:

- Emergency Procedures
- No Response Procedures
- Work Ethics
- Kitchen Hygiene
- Associate Membership
- Bus Travel – Additional volunteer in bus to wear high vision vests

- Training
 - ❖ Computer Training
 - ❖ Defensive Training Course
 - ❖ Any training required?
 - ❖ Sight guide – refresher?
- Badges
- Biscuits
- Community Voices
- V-Cards
- Handbooks and Kits

Thank you to all those who attended and the minutes have been circulated to all volunteers.

Back in May when we opened the Marney Pearce Lounge a very important presentation was made to one of our volunteers. I nominated Gunter Bottcher to receive a Premier's Certificate of Recognition for Outstanding Volunteer Service. When presented with this Gunter's comments were "I'm very humble". A lot of Members and Volunteers will know Gunter and he is always doing something and a lot of his work is behind the scenes. Thank you Gunter!

As always a big THANK YOU to all our Volunteers as without your help we couldn't do what we do for our Members so THANK YOU AGAIN!

Jackie McEwen, Volunteer Officer

Member Services

It has been another extremely busy quarter in Member Services.

I hope those of you that have attended the Social Centre have enjoyed the experience. Over the quarter our groups have enjoyed trips to Haigh's Chocolates, The Lavender Farm, a trip to Glenelg, lunches, guest speakers and BBQ's to name just a few. It is my aim to try and continue to grow the Activity Centre and I would love for you to join us for outings and activities during the following quarter. Our calendar for this quarter includes a trip to the Maritime Museum, a Dolphin River Cruise, a trip to Maggie Beers Farm Shop, guest speakers, Café and Hotel Lunches. These events happen on Thursdays and transport can be arranged to the centre if you are within a 10km radius of Gilles Plains. Of course we have lots of other fun things to do, such as: Tai Chi, Craft, Bingo, social groups, singing lessons and a writers group. We will be serving lunches on Mondays this term, hopefully making it easier for Members when they are staying for more than one activity and would like a quick bite to eat. We are also looking for people who might be interested in attending a meditation group. This group would be an informal get-together run by one of our Members and held in the Social Centre. Please contact Chris if you would like to join us or you have ideas for outings, guest speakers or new activities. There is an amenities fee of \$3.00 for activities + \$3.00 for lunch.



Since our last Eye Contact a group of our Members attended a Personal Safety workshop, facilitated by Sharon Stewart and held at Guide Dogs. Feedback from those who attended was so positive that we have decided to run a Personal Safety program. This consists of three workshops for 10 female Members in our Gilles Plains Social Centre. These 2-hour sessions “Yin Personal Safety Solutions for Women” will also be facilitated by Sharon and sponsored by BWA and Port Adelaide Enfield Council as a result of a successful grant application. They will be held on Monday 30th September and Friday 4th & 11th October (during School Holidays). If you are interested in attending please contact Chris on 8367 6088 or 8367 9732.

During a recent planning day it was decided that we would also offer a personal shopping service. This service will replace our regular fortnightly shopping to Ingle Farm Shopping Centre. The service would require a week’s notice, and is not guaranteed as it will depend on the availability of Volunteers, however we believe that it is a service that will be welcomed by Members, so please call Chris on 8367 6088 or 83679732.

Over the past few months we have had two occasions where our Volunteers have had to call an ambulance for Members. Volunteers on both occasions followed correct procedures ensuring that members received Ambulance attendance very quickly. Just a reminder to all members that should it be necessary for staff or volunteers to call an Ambulance on their behalf, all costs encountered will be the member’s responsibility. If an Ambulance is called, a BWA staff member will attempt to contact the person named as the Member’s emergency contact person. It is important that Blind Welfare have the emergency contact details of all Members that attend the Social Centre or have volunteer assistance with shopping, medical appointments and home visits. If you are unsure whether your details are up-to-date, please contact Chris on 8367 6088 or 83679732. A form will be posted to you or details will be taken over the phone to update your records.

Would you like to go sailing; feel the wind in your hair, the sun on your face and hear the seals on the rocks at the mouth of the Port River? **Freedom**, a 7.4 metre yacht is owned and operated by Dis-Able Sailing Inc, a not-for-profit organisation run by volunteers. **Freedom** is moored at the Royal South Australian Yacht Squadron at Outer Harbor a short walk from Outer Harbor train station. Dis-Able Sailing’s aspirations are to create opportunities for people with a disability to achieve goals in sailing that were deemed to be unreachable. Yachting takes many forms; from a sociable, relaxing leisure pastime to high adrenalin, high performance sport at the frontier of innovation and technology. Sailing has something to offer all ages and abilities. Dis-Able Sailing offers the opportunity for blind or vision impaired people to enjoy sailing and especially the social aspect of it with the yacht **Freedom**.

Freedom competes in the Wednesday twilight race series held during daylight saving months. The main sheet hand, Craig, is blind and the fore deck hand, Peter, is vision impaired. **Freedom** was designed specifically to be sensitive to the needs of disabled sailors, with a large, open clear cockpit with sufficient seating for at

least eight people and all the ropes lead over the cabin for ease of use. **Freedom** is available, by arrangement, to take groups out for a two hour sail on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from September to May.

Freedom in conjunction with Dis-Able Sailing offers

- Leisure sailing
- Competitive racing
- Sailing instruction
- Social activity
- Challenging experiences

Come, as part of a group or independently; you will certainly enjoy the experience. Please contact Chris on 8367 6088 or 8367 9732 should you be interested. Until next quarter keep warm & safe.

Regards, Chris, Member Services

PROGRAM – THURSDAY GROUP

THURSDAY 8th August

Maggie Beers Farm Shop

Nuriootpa

Visit Maggie's produce shop, taste some wonderful food.

\$3.00 amenities – cost to be advised

THURSDAY 15th August

Rosewater Hotel

Grand Junction Rd, Rosewater

\$3.00 amenities Lunch \$10.00 + Drinks

THURSDAY 22nd August

Maritime Museum

126 Lipson Street, Port Adelaide

Followed by Lunch - TBA

\$3.00 amenities \$8.00 entry fee to Museum + Lunch

THURSDAY 29th August

CD's & BBQ lunch

\$3.00 amenities

THURSDAY 5th September

COTA: Beyond Maturity Blues

Cost \$3.00 amenities

THURSDAY 12th September

Port River Dolphin Cruise & Lunch

\$20.00 + \$3.00 amenities

Cruise departs @ 12.00

THURSDAY 19th September

Cancer Council guest speaker

Cost \$3.00 amenities

THURSDAY 26th September

Mystery bus tour – Relax and enjoy the route that your wonderful volunteer chose for you. The day will include a stop off for lunch.

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Cost \$3.00 amenities + Lunch

THURSDAY 3RD October

Blue Gums Hotel

345 Hancock Rd – Fairview Park

Cost \$3.00 amenities + Lunch \$13.90 for a 3 course meal + Drinks

Tax Help

Need help with your tax return?

This year the Australian Taxation Office; or ATO, is proud to celebrate 25 years of **Tax Help** - a free service that helps people complete and lodge their tax returns.

If you earn around \$50,000 or less and have simple tax affairs, an ATO trained volunteer may be able to help you at a community Centre near you.

Tax Help is available by appointment between 1 July and 31 October each year. For more information, or to find your nearest Tax Help Centre, visit the ATO website at ato.gov.au/taxhelp or call **13 28 61**.

Information to help you at tax time

Tax time is here! The Australian Taxation Office; or ATO, is encouraging people to think about whether they need to lodge a tax return. Generally, you pay tax on money you get from working, running a business, from Centrelink payments, or any income from investments you have here or overseas. The ATO has produced a **downloadable audio guide** with tax time information. The guide covers different topics, including: how to lodge your return, claiming tax deductions and offsets and timeframes. To access this audio product visit the ATO website at ato.gov.au/disability

Taxpayers who want to lodge online can use **e-tax**. This is the ATO's free, fast and secure system, which is also **compatible with screen-reader software**. Download **e-tax** at ato.gov.au/etax and select the 'vision impaired' option during installation.

Kind Regards, Thai Nguyen

Victorian Advocacy and Policy Officer, Blind Citizens Australia

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David Lee / Pianist

My name is David Lee, I am from Malaysia and came to Adelaide in 2007 to study piano at the University of Adelaide. In 2010 I completed my formal studies and gained a Bachelor of Piano Performance and Pedagogy (tutoring/teaching). Being totally blind, the move and study has taught me to be very independent, skilful and determined to succeed as a person with a disability. I am looking to hold introduction to piano sessions at the BWA Social Centre, Gilles Plains. I am offering individuals 6 lessons. Each lesson will be taught one to one and 30 minutes in duration. Sessions are available to BWA members, volunteer, family and friends. Please contact BWA staff to register your interest. Ph 8367 6088.

If further lessons are desired, the session time and cost can be discussed and arranged.

Tenants and Friends

Well here it is, nearly the end of winter and the days are starting to get longer, but hasn't it been wet? Good for the garden, but some sunshine will be nice.

Our concert in July was very enjoyable with Helena and her band performing for 2 hours and giving it a flavor of Christmas.

The entertainers for the coming months are:

August 2nd: Ron and Jo Johnson

September 6th: John Kampis

October 4th; ShowTime Singers

Heather and Carla will be supervising the September concert, so please give them some assistance. We remind everyone that annual subs of \$2 are now due. Please pay either Leonore or myself. Tenants and Friends Annual General Meeting, due to be held in August, has been postponed. Members will be informed when the date is set.

Maureen Clothier

President, Tenants and Friends Social Club

BWA Travel Club Program for 2013

2nd Saturday of each Month. Please keep in mind Bookings close at 8pm on the Tuesday prior to the trip and buses leave Cameron Ave, Gilles Plains at 9am and for those interested in joining in the Travel Club outings, it may be possible to arrange to be picked up from a specific location. Charges for trips \$32 includes - meals and admissions, charges to parks, museums and entertainment that is listed on the program. Discount of \$4 for meeting at pick up points. Annual Travel Club Subscription is \$10, payable at the February AGM or as soon as possible if joining later. All Travellers must be a Member, Volunteer or an Associate Member (\$10 per year) of the Blind Welfare Association. Members are encouraged to pay in advance and in the event of you being unable to attend that trip the amount will be credited to your next trip. For information or wanting to attend a trip or cancel please contact Catherine Bottcher (Treasurer and Transport) on **8395 1005**, Chris Mountstephen (Secretary) on **8371 2928**, mobile **0438 292 837** or Blind Welfare during office hours, 9am to 4pm on **8367 6088**. This information is subject to change but correct as of November 2012

Saturday 10 Aug	Movie – Blyth Picture Theatre Lunch at Blyth Hotel
Saturday 14 Sept	Tastings and lunch at Verdale Olive Estate Afternoon tea t Virginia Nursery
Saturday 12 Oct	Hahndorf Farm Barn and BBQ lunch Milk a cow or hold baby animals etc
Saturday 9 Nov	Aviation Museum at Port Adelaide Lunch at the Anchor Hotel
Saturday 14 Dec	to be advised

NOTE: In the event of the temperature being forecast at 35°C or more on the Friday night's 6pm News Bulletin, the trip will be cancelled. There will be no

further notification. If interested, please contact Chris Brown in the BWA Office on 83676088.

How to vote – Voters who are blind or have low vision factsheet

The Australian Electoral Commission (AEC) has a range of information and services to support voters who are blind or have low vision for the 2013 federal election. For the 2013 federal election, voters who are blind or have low vision will have the option to:

- cast a vote over the telephone from any location, or
- cast a vote with assistance at any polling place or by post.

Telephone voting

Voters who are blind or have low vision can vote in secret, by telephone, from any location, without the need to attend an AEC office.

Register

Voters must register to cast their vote by telephone. Registration for telephone voting starts on Monday 26 August and ends at 12 noon AEST on Election Day, Saturday 14 September 2013.

To register, voters need to call 1800 913 993. When a voter calls to register, they will be asked to select a PIN. Once registered, they will receive an acknowledgment letter at their enrolled address. The registration number can also be received by post, email, SMS or by a phone call.

Call to vote

Telephone voting starts on Tuesday 27 August and ends on Election Day, Saturday 14 September 2013.

To vote, registered voters will call 1800 913 993. They will not need to give their name. Their registration number and PIN will be used to mark their name off the electoral roll while protecting their privacy. It is important that voters do not forget their registration details.

Vote

A call centre voting assistant will record the voter's preferences on the ballot papers. The vote will be secret and a second voting assistant will ensure that the vote is recorded according to the voter's intention.

The vote remains secret because the call centre voting assistants will not know the voter's name and address. They will only know which electorate and state or territory they live in. Once the vote is complete, the voting assistant will place the ballot papers into a secure ballot box.

For more information on telephone voting visit www.aec.gov.au or call 13 23 26.

Assisted voting options

Voters who are blind or have low vision may choose to cast a vote with assistance at a polling place or by post. The voter may choose an assistant to help cast their vote. The assistant reads the contents of the ballot paper then completes the ballot paper according to the voter's preferences.

In the case of a postal vote, the assistant may complete the ballot papers and envelope, but the voter must sign the envelope or make a mark as a signature.

For more information about assisted voting or to apply for a postal vote visit www.aec.gov.au or call 13 23 26.

Official guide

The official guide to the election provides information on when and where to vote, polling place assistance available and how to vote correctly.

The guide will be available in the following accessible formats:

- audio CD
- braille
- large print
- e-text
- MP3 file

The audio MP3, e-text and large print PDF versions will be available for download at www.aec.gov.au. Braille, large print, and audio CDs will be available in hard copy on request from the AEC on 13 23 26. For more information on the services available to support voters who are blind or have low vision, including telephone voting, visit www.aec.gov.au or call 13 23 26. Authorised by the Electoral Commissioner, West Block Offices, Queen Victoria Terrace, Parkes, ACT.

BWA/RSB RECREATION AND LEISURE UPDATE JULY 2013 **RECREATION AND LEISURE EAST & WEST UPDATE**

Hi Everyone,

I hope you all staying warm and dry this winter! If you would like to get out of the house, here are some groups that may be of interest to you:

Adelaide Men's Group – is seeking new members. If you are an independent man who would like to socialise with other men over a pub lunch, then this is a group for you! The group meets once a month on a Monday. If you would like to join the group or require information, please contact Emily on (08) 8417 5555.

Aqua Aerobics – is seeking new members. If you are an active client who would like to get fit and socialise with other like-minded people, then this is a group for you! The class takes place once a week, on a Tuesday and Wednesday, for ten week blocks at RSB Gilles Plains. If you would like to join the group or require information, please contact Emily on (08) 8417 5555.

East Coffee Group – is a new group-seeking Members. If you are an independent female who would like to socialise with other ladies over coffee in the beautiful Botanical Gardens, then this is a group for you! The group meets once a month on a Monday. If you would like to join the group or require information, please contact Emily on (08) 8417 5555.

Want to know more? Talk to Christine BWA Member Services Officer on 8367 6088

Recreation and Leisure Update – South

Firstly, I hope you are keeping warm with the recent bout of cold temperatures – winter is upon us! A new mainstream Heart moves class is commencing in August and is occurring at the Aberfoyle Park Community Centre. Heart moves is coordinated by the Heart Foundation and is a low-to-moderate intensity exercise designed for people are living with health conditions – meets Monday at 12.30pm



on a fortnightly basis, please contact Recreation and Leisure officer (South) on (08) 8326 1188 for further details.

Indoor Boccia – A session is planned for early August coming off the successful City of Onkaparinga Community Grant application. An Indoor Boccia set will be purchased with this funding, and sessions are planned to be on a weekly basis during the school term. For further information please contact Recreation and Leisure Officer (South) on (08) 8326 1188 for information.

Tandem Cycling is set to get a boost in the Victor Harbor area with another successful grant providing a new tandem bike for the clients in that community. A Tandem Cycling group is up and running in the Victor Harbor area – for further information please contact Recreation and Leisure Officer (South) on (08) 8326 1188.

Organ Donation!

Blind Welfare would like to extend sincere thanks to Eileen Hopkins who very generously donated a beautiful organ to us as a result of one of our Members, Gerard who heard that the organ was in need of a good home and Eileen chose BWA. Eileen was previously the Organist at the Capri Cinema and if anyone is interested in playing or instruction, please let the BWA Staff know.

Editor's Comment

If there is anything you'd like put into the next copy due out in November 2013 please forward on to info@blindwelfare.org.au alternatively contact the Office and talk to one of the Staff.