

EYE CONTACT

BWA serving its Members for over 77 years

Newsletter for Members of B W A

November/December 2015

Contact Details: Blind Welfare
Association of SA

Administration & Member Services:
1 Cameron Avenue, Gilles Plains

Postal Address: PO Box 163, Greenacres SA 5086

Telephone: 83676088

Fax: 83690063

E-mail: info@blindwelfare.org.au

Web site: www.blindwelfare.org.au



Salutations everyone. Not sure if it is appropriate yet to wish everyone season's greetings, but we are getting closer and no doubt you are preparing for the busy time ahead and making plans for the summer months too. It has been unseasonably warm at times, and then a little cool at others. The Footy Season is well behind us now, and cricket lovers, it's time to find the sun hat and sun block if you are going to attend matches, no matter where they are being played.

In this issue you will be able to keep track of the news and what BWA has planned for those of you who attend the Centre and externally too. You will also meet two of our newest staff members; I'll let them tell you a little bit about themselves. Catch up early in 2016.

From the Manager

It's been a good year for BWA and as we rapidly approach Christmas and look back this year has been a year of change for the Aged care and Disability sector, with the build up to the introduction of the new My Aged Care system and the ongoing introduction of National Disability Insurance scheme. At BWA we have been working hard to position ourselves to meet these new challenges, while maintaining our commitment to services to our members. Early in the year we successfully improved on our Disability Service standards outcomes to achieve an outcome of 17 out of 18 by improving our governance, systems and procedures. In July we began to participate in the new My Aged Care system which replaces the HACC programs for our over 65's and we have just signed a new funding agreement with the Commonwealth for ongoing funding for the next three years.

This year has seen the introduction of a range of new systems to make the running of BWA more efficient, including: building maintenance tracking, volunteer and member interest matching, paperless client records, new staff monthly reporting and we have set in place a three year plan to improve services to members across the metropolitan area. The improvement of services and growth in volunteers in the southern suburbs over the last 12 months will be the model we will use to roll out better services more broadly to members in other areas. Our social centre activities at Gilles Plains have been more responsive to members needs and is now complimented by activities for members in the south.

BWA completed the year in a strong financial position enabling the Board to further commit to our three year plan, ongoing funding of joint BWA and RSB recreational programs and the establishment of our own fund to support members wanting to independently undertake recreational or leisure interest programs. Our achievements this year would not have happened without the enthusiasm of staff and the commitment of our many volunteers how have tirelessly worked to enhance the lives of our members.

I wish all our Members, Staff, Volunteers and their families a very happy Christmas and look forward to their ongoing commitment to achieving more in the coming year.

JIM COLLIGAN

The Board

Firstly I would like to thank all those Members who attended the AGM on Saturday the 24th of October 2015. As I reported the Board elections were not contested and Sarah Savage and Maureen Montes were re-elected. The Board elected its Executive after the meeting with myself (Tony Starkey) being elected President, Maureen Montes Vice President and Leonore Scott Secretary, as well as Pat Fryer, Jed Alexander and Sarah Savage the other sitting Board Members.

The Board and BWA Members congratulate Maureen Clothier and Herb Buttery being added to the BWA Honour Board for their commitment and work for the Association. Herb having been a founding Member and dedicating many years to the benefit of BWA, assisting in raising funds for BWA and its Members. Herb now lives in Western Australia with his family. Maureen moved down from the Riverland in the late 1990's and became involved with BWA and she too has contributed to the benefit of the organisation, serving on the Board of Management from October 2002 and was nominated to fill a casual vacancy on the Executive Committee in September 2003 until the 2003 AGM where she was elected as the Secretary and in 2007 became the President of BWA until 2009 when Maureen took up the position of Member Services Assistant, resigning in April of 2011.

The Board also reviewed Jim Colligan's employment contract and I am pleased to advise that we have now made Jim a permanent employee. As this is the last Eye Contact prior to Christmas I and the Board of Management wish you all a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year and look forward to another exciting year for BWA and your participation in our activities.

TONY STARKEY

President

Member Services (North)

Hi everyone, if you haven't met me yet my name is Debra and I am the new Member Services Officer at the Gilles Plains Centre. I have already had the opportunity to speak with some of you on the phone and many in person. I am very excited about my role even though I am still working hard to get my head around how things work here, having come from eight and half years as a Case Manager at Guide Dogs SA/NT. While I was with Guide Dogs I was a member of the Sensory Services Team and had the opportunity to work with some of the Blind Welfare Members during that time, and so being here feels familiar in some ways.

My education background was originally in the Arts including a previous life as a dancer and an undergraduate degree in Drama, Cinema and Philosophy. Later on, after being a partner in a business or two, I decided while raising my family to study Social Science, specialising in Disability Studies and I am now undertaking a Master's Degree in Business through the University of SA. Apart from my time at Guide Dogs I have been a support worker while studying and went on to be a Disability Services Coordinator with Uniting Care Wesley (now Uniting Communities) a Community Mediator with the Southern Community Justice Centre and a Vocational Consultant at Port Adelaide.

My favourite things in the world (apart from my children of course) are my two dogs Violet and Maybel. I spend most of my spare time tending to their requests for exercise and food and other kinds of attention. I also enjoy Pilates classes, really good cinema and all kinds of music. Well that's enough about me except to say that I am really enjoying being at Blind Welfare and look forward to participating in activities and to growing along with all of you. Don't forget you can catch me with Peter Greco on RPH every month and please don't hesitate to give me call at Gilles Plains if you think I may be able to assist you in some way.

I wish you all a joyous (fast approaching) holiday season and a fruitful New Year.

All the best

DEBRA BEEBY

(Members Services Officer)

South East Services Officer

Hello Everyone. Welcome to the warmer weather, perhaps an opportunity to enjoy more outings and activities in the sunshine. I am pleased to announce that recent combined efforts of Southern BWA and RSB resulted in BWA holding their first Tech Talk group meeting in the suburbs on 2nd September. The first meeting was well received by members who subsequently decided upon continuing on with future monthly meetings. Tech Talk meetings offer members an opportunity to share technology tips and learn new skills from others in a friendly, social environment. The Tech Talk group meets monthly on the first Wednesday of each month from 10am until 12pm in the southern suburbs and new members are always welcome to join. On another note, please don't forget that BWA also holds a South East Social Group get-together on the first Tuesday of each month from 11am until 1pm at Woodcroft Christian Centre 442 States Rd, Morphett Vale. The cost is \$3, which covers hot and cold beverages as well as light refreshments of sweets and savoury foods. The Social Group welcomes guest speakers to present at the meeting. Entertainers who have skills in singing and/or playing a musical instrument are also invited to perform to members. On a final exciting note, I would also like to mention that a Christmas lunch for BWA members and volunteers residing in the southern/eastern suburbs has been planned to take place on Tuesday 1st December at the Emu Hotel in Morphett Vale. Last year's Christmas lunch at the Emu Hotel was a great success and I am looking forward to yet another opportunity to celebrate the commencement of the festive season with both members and volunteers. If you are interested in hearing more about any of these activities, please R S V P to Danijela Turner on 8 3 2 5 1 6 6 8 or 0 4 3 8 0 5 1 2 2 3 or via email address dturner@blindwelfare.org.au RSVP to group activities in the South is required for purposes of transport and catering arrangements.

Enjoy the coming months.

DANIJELA TURNER

South East Services Officer

Administration & Centre Assistant

Hi all, it's wonderful to be working at the Blind Welfare Association. I would like to share a little bit about myself! I am from India and made Australia my home 5 years ago. It's been more than a month since I started working here and I would say I am enjoying thoroughly it as I am learning lots of new things, listening to the stories of the members and sharing a laugh with them. I am looking forward to getting more involved with you all. Finally, as Christmas is around the corner, I wish you all a merry Christmas and a fabulous New Year!!

VISA NEELAM

Blind Welfare Travel Club 2015 Program

Dear Members and Friends

- **BOOKINGS** – Close at 8pm on the Tuesday prior to the trip.
- **BUS DEPARTURES**- three vehicles are used and each member is contacted individually by their allocated driver and given their departure or pick up times.
- **CHARGE** - for the trip is \$32, each which includes meals and admission charges to venues. There will be an extra charge of \$5 each for the long trips in July, September and October because of the extra venue costs.
- **DISCOUNT** - \$4 is given for meeting at specific pick up points. Please advise treasurer if you drive to a pickup point.
- **ANNUAL TRAVEL CLUB SUBSCRIPTION** - \$10 per person is payable at the February A.G.M. or as soon as possible afterwards.
- **ALL TRAVELLERS MUST BE** – a client, an associate member or a volunteer of the Blind Welfare Association.

For information, OR wanting to attend, OR to cancel attendance on a trip please contact

- **Catherine Bottcher** (bookings and transport) phone 8 3 9 5 1 0 0 5
- **Chris Mountstephen** (Secretary) 8 3 7 1 2 9 2 8 or 0 4 3 8 2 9 2 8 3 7
- **Blind Welfare Association** phone 8 3 6 7 6 0 8 8 during business hours 9 am – 4 pm

Note: The Blind Welfare Association's hot weather policy is strictly adhered to, e.g. in the event of the temperature forecast being 35° or more on the Friday 6pm news, the trip will be cancelled. There will be no further notification.

The Committee reserves the right to make changes to this program if the availability of the venues alters, but is correct at the time of printing January 2015.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| November 14th | visit to Yummy Snacks at Allenby Gardens (shop for Christmas nibbles!!) then a beach walk (or sit as desired) – fish and chip lunch at the beach |
| December 12th | Morning tea at Valley View and Christmas lunch at a venue to be advised |

Tenants and Friends

I would like to apologise to everyone, but due to circumstances, there is no concert in November. Now for the bad news: as all those who continue to support the Friday night concerts know, attendances have fallen drastically over the past few years, until it has become impractical to continue holding them. As a result, at the recent Annual General Meeting, it was decided to discontinue the Club. The Christmas function on Saturday 5th December, starting at 7pm will be the last, and we intend to make it a good night. The night will be free to Tenants and Friend's members, with free soft drinks and a nice supper (don't eat too much tea). We also intend to have some nice door prizes to thank all the people who have supported the Club over many years. There will be some funds left in our bank account and it is intended that we will meet with Blind Welfare Management in the New Year to discuss ways to use this money to benefit Members of BWA.



MAUREEN CLOTHIER

President

Tenants and Friends Social Club



Apple Watch

Sarah Savage says "I love my apple watch. It is a novelty to be able to try the latest technology out and it actually works for vision impaired people! With voice over it is completely accessible. Although the apps page is very small you can use Siri to open them. Siri works in the same way as on your iPhone and iPad so you can ask 'where are you or what is the time in WA?' On the face you can chose a few 'pillars', these are informations. I have mine set so I can see the temperature outside, the date, my activity and the sunset and sunrise times. You can chose from many faces including a simple one that some Vision Impaired users maybe able to see without the voice to very fancy ones and fun ones like Mickey Mouse which has his arms and legs as the time and his foot taps. The watch monitors your activity and can tell you how much of your daily goal you have done, if you have sat too long it will tell you to get up and move around. It also tells you how many steps you have walked and the distance too! Although it does cost a lot of money and you do need an iPhone for it to connect to I do love it. I love it 'tapping' me when I get a text so I don't miss any important messages, it will also tap when you have an email too. So you never miss anything when your phone is lost in the bottom of your handbag!"

Dates to Remember

- Thursday 10th December - Members' Christmas lunch at Gilles Plains
- Friday 11th December - last day of Activities at Gilles Plains
- Tuesday 15th December - last day for medical and shopping
- Wednesday 16th December - Volunteers' Christmas lunch
- Friday 18th December - BWA office closes
- Monday 4th January 2016 – BWA office opens
- Monday 11th January 2016 - shopping and medical appointments recommence
- Wednesday 27th January 2016 – Activities recommence at Gilles Plains

Social Centre

BWA would like to hear Members' ideas on what activities they would like to be held in the Gilles Plains Social Centre as well as suggestions for outings for 2016. Please come along to the Planning Discussion on Thursday November 26th 2016 10.30 -12.00 which will be followed by lunch. Please contact Trudy 8 3 6 7 6 0 8 8 by 19th November as transport is limited and numbers for catering are required.

If you would like to attend the Members' Christmas Lunch on Thursday 10th December please also RSVP by 25th November 2015 for catering and transport.

WANTED: Blind or vision impaired ten-pin bowlers to join Team SA and represent your state in national competition against other states and possibly represent Australia at the World Games. Please contact John Beacham Secretary on 0 4 1 4 8 1 4 8 9 2

Editors Comment

I hope you enjoyed this edition of your Eye Contact and if you would like to make a contribution to our next copy, which is due out in early February 2016, please forward it on to the BWA office or speak to one of the staff and they will do the rest. Contact details are as follows:

Telephone: 8 3 6 7 6 0 8 8 **Fax:** 8 3 6 9 0 0 6 3

E-mail: info@blindwelfare.org.au

Web site: www.blindwelfare.org.au