



BushChatter

Newsletter Volume 28, March 2011

Multicultural Disability Advocacy Association of NSW

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Welcome to 2011 with the Rural Disability Network!

It is with great pleasure that I bring you the first issue of BushChatter of the year; another issue that aims to provide you with lots of great articles that our members have sent in; many with very useful information that is hoped to be of assistance.



Earlier this year, we had the first teleconference of the Rural Disability Network Working Group, and I must say, that on a personal level, it has really reenergised me.

The abundance of experience, knowledge and information we have in our Network is amazing and I feel so privileged to be a part of it!

Remember, if you have something you would like to share, please feel free to contact me. Happy reading!

~Ace

Ace's Email: ace.boncato@mdaa.org.au

Mail to: Ace Boncato
C/- MDA
PO Box 9381
HARRIS PARK NSW 2150



Your feedback is important to us.

If you have any comments about this Newsletter or if you'd like to make your contribution, give us a call on:



Freecall: 1800 629 072

Or send us an email to:

ace.boncato@mdaa.org.au

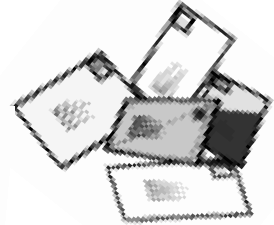
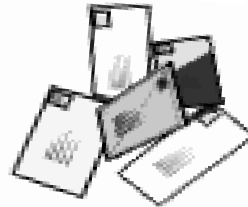


Or write to us at: Rural Disability Network

C/- MDAA

PO Box 9381

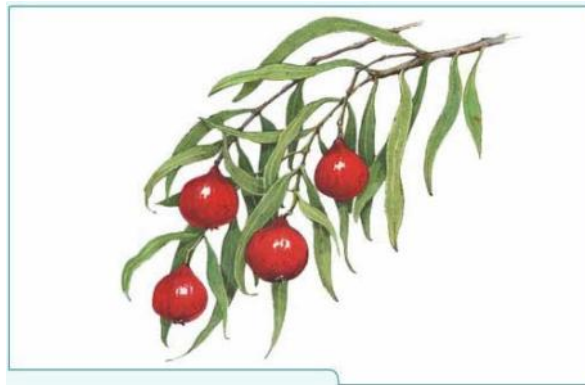
Harris Park NSW 2150



An Aussie Bush Tale

Quandong Joe

'Quandong Joe' was known all over the west of New South Wales. He had quandong seeds on his clothes for buttons, and quandong seeds suspended from his hat to keep the flies away from his face. From those seeds he made necklaces, rosary beads and all kinds of novelties. He also made jam from quandongs and invariably feted a visitor to his cam with one of his quandong pies, in which he specialized.



Sources: http://www.ourpacificocean.com/australia_bush_tales/index.htm

http://www2.mdbc.gov.au/subs/The_River/november2007/plant.html

Jamie's Story

Jamie was from a family of eight children to Peter Borough (from South Australia). He was the youngest of his siblings. Jamie's birth mum died when he was six months old. After she died he got fostered to a loving and caring family and was brought up in Broken Hill by his foster mum. Jamie also had disability; Noonan Syndrome and Cerebral Palsy.

Jamie was involved with the local football club for over twenty years. He married in 1998 to lady named Gloria with whom he had two children Kelsie and Makayla. Jamie also had another daughter from a previous relationship and her name is Courtney. Two of his daughters have disability. Jamie worked hard to advocate on issues of people with disability living in rural and regional NSW, serving on the Disability Council NSW for over three years. He was also on the Broken Hill Council for twelve months. Jamie passed away on Christmas day. He will be missed dearly, by family and friends.



Special thanks to Gloria Mitchell for sharing with us Jamie's story.

AIDER PROGRAMME

Assistance for Infirm, People with Disability and Elderly Residents

What is the AIDER Programme?

The NSW Rural Fire Service AIDER Programme (*Assist Infirm Disabled and Elderly Residents*) was started in 2009 with additional funds from the NSW Government.

AIDER is designed to reduce bush fire hazards on property that is bush fire prone.

AIDER is a one off **free** service, supporting vulnerable residents to live more safely and confidently in their home on bush fire prone land.

Who is eligible?

The AIDER service can only be provided on “Bush Fire Prone Land”. Bush Fire Prone Land is an area of land that can support a bush fire or is likely to be subject to bush fire attack. This area can extend 100 metres from bushland, or 30 metres from grass-land. AIDER services can be provided to vulnerable people who have limited domestic support available from family, relatives, friends or other services. This could include older people, people with disabling conditions and people who are already receiving community assistance and services.

What work can be done under AIDER?

AIDER does work to reduce bush fire risk such as clearing gutters, thinning vegetation, removing leaf and tree debris, trimming branches from around and overhanging the home, mowing or slashing long grass.

Who does the work?

The NSW Rural Fire Service has its own skilled, fully equipped and fully insured Work Teams to do this work.

How to get AIDER services

Contact **8741 4955** to request an assessment of your property. The assessment by RFS staff will be arranged at a time to suit you.

Bush fire safety

The AIDER Team will also discuss bush fire safety with clients and provide advice about completing a Bush Fire Survival Plan.



Contact details

For further information about the AIDER Programme, or to apply for AIDER services, contact the AIDER Programme Coordinator on:
(02) 8741 4955

Sent in to us by Raymond Munro

(Rural Disability Network Working Group Member)

Picture Source: <http://www.how-to-draw-cartoons-online.com/cartoon-fire.html>

Source: http://www.wscf.org.au/uploads/File/AIDER_flyer3.pdf

Energy Assistance Guide

Emergency assistance (EAPA)



The EAPA scheme helps financially disadvantaged people experiencing difficulty paying their energy bill because of a crisis or emergency. It is designed to keep people connected to essential energy services. EAPA operates through a voucher system.

Eligibility is subject to assessment by the CWO in accordance with the EAPA Guidelines for Community Welfare Organisations. Many charities and local community and neighbourhood centres across NSW are registered participants in the EAPA scheme. You can find a list online.

EAPA vouchers can be used to pay electricity and natural gas bills. To apply, you must first contact an EAPA-participating CWO to make an appointment.

Energy Rebate (formerly the Pensioner Energy Rebate)

The Energy Rebate is intended to assist eligible customers, including eligible pensioners and recipients of Health Care Cards issued by Centrelink as a result of receiving an income support payment from the Commonwealth, to meet the costs of electricity and gas. It is worth \$145 per year (as at July 2010) and is credited to the customer's electricity bill in quarterly amounts every three months. The rebate will increase to \$161 per year on 1 July 2011.

To be eligible the account holder must have any of the following: Pensioner Concession Card issued by Centrelink or by the Commonwealth Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card issued by the Department of Veterans' Affairs marked with: War Widow or War Widower Pension, or Totally and Permanently Incapacitated (TPI), or Disability Pension (EDA) Health Care Card issued by Centrelink as a result of receiving an income support payment from the Commonwealth.

To apply, eligible clients should contact their energy retailer. They need to provide the retailer with their concession card number.

Sent in to us by Raymond Munro
(Rural Disability Network Working Group Member)

Picture Source:
<http://www.clker.com/clipart-6937.html>

Give Us A Yell!

Sometimes people in country areas, especially farmers, should just give up, don't you think? I mean between the isolation, the lack of services and understanding from cities and governments we should just say “it's too hard”, right? Then there's also the weather – too much rain, too little rain. You can't win! There's nothing but struggle and hardship.



So if we know this is true....then why do we live where we live? Some have no choice, for others, this is definitely where we choose to live. In that case, how do we deal with the realities of our everyday lives in rural and remote areas of NSW? We know, for example, that we cannot control the weather and yet we continue to accept and understand that weather and its effect on our lives, it's something you have to work with and overcome. We keep coming back for more despite how tough this uncontrollable weather makes it for us.

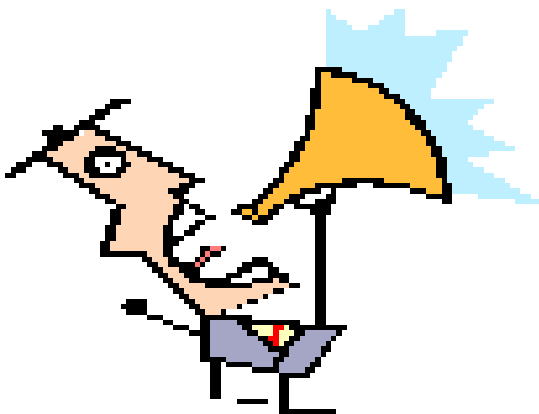
As country people we take pride in our resilience and strength, our independence and our fighting spirit. The drought affected our lives whether or not we were farming and now the floods have done the same. We will fight back though, we always have – we always will. We look after our mates and we are determined to see it through. That's how I see country people...if you think I'm wrong, please, correct me.

If we have such capacity for strength, determination and fighting back to overcome things like weather that we can't control, why then do we not apply that same capacity to fighting for ourselves? As people in rural and remote areas who also are people who have a disability, yes, we have it tough. Largely, politicians don't care unless their necks are on the chopping block. Let's be honest. As someone who has spent almost my entire life in rural towns or on farms I know how tough we have it. I also know that if you don't yell loud and long, you don't get heard.

So guys I'm here to ask you to start yelling – it doesn't matter how you yell...phone, mail, email; just start yelling. Let your local member know you exist, tell them your story...tell your local newspaper. Your story matters. Your personal struggles and triumphs matter. You matter. Tell your story – it's one of the most powerful ways of helping everyday people, and politicians, to understand a wide range of issues for people with a disability, your issues. Give us a yell!

By: Jo Lerner

(Rural Disability Network Working Group Member)



Picture Sources:

<http://insightadvertising.typepad.com/weblog/2008/08/marketing-to-la.html>

<http://www.co.sanmateo.ca.us/portal/site/cod/menuitem.af8f48f4c2e4ab0274452b31d17332a0/?vnextoid=f0efc052649e0210VgnVCM1000001d37230aRCRD&cpsextcurrchannel=1>

Life Support Rebate

This rebate is for people who use approved medical equipment in their home that is necessary to sustain their life, such as a kidney dialysis machine or respirator/ventilator.

The NSW Life Support Rebate is paid to eligible customers at different rates that are based on the amount of electricity used by different types of approved machines. A corresponding amount is credited to the customer's electricity bill every quarter.

The account holder or someone residing in the household: must require the use of approved life support equipment and must submit an application form signed by the treating doctor. The Life Support Rebate is additional to any rebate you may be entitled to. One of the following life support machines must be used at home:

- ♦ Positive airways pressure (PAP) device
- ♦ Enteral feeding pump
- ♦ Phototherapy equipment
- ♦ Home dialysis
- ♦ Ventilators
- ♦ Oxygen concentrators
- ♦ Total parenteral nutrition (TPN) pump
- ♦ External heart pump



To apply, the account holder and the person with the condition need to complete an application form, have it signed by their doctor or specialist, and return it to their energy retailer.

Medical Energy Rebate

This rebate is to assist people who are diagnosed with an inability to self-regulate body temperature. This means they have little capacity to control their body temperature in particularly hot or cold weather. This is associated with conditions such as Parkinson's disease, multiple sclerosis and spinal cord injury. The most effective way to keep the body temperature within a safe range during hot or cold weather, therefore, is to use air conditioning and heating.

Picture Source: <http://www.imageenvision.com/cliparts/love-heart>

The Medical Energy Rebate is worth \$145 per year (as at July 2010), and is credited to the customer's electricity bill in quarterly amounts every three months. The rebate will increase to \$161 per year on 1 July 2011.

To be eligible, the account holder or someone residing in the household: must have an inability to self-regulate body temperature (as evidence, a form signed by a medical practitioner who has been treating them for at least three months) and the account holder: must have one of the following concession cards: Pensioner Concession Card issued by Centrelink or the Commonwealth Department of Veterans' Affairs Department of Veterans' Affairs Gold Card Health Care Card issued by Centrelink as a result of receiving an income support payment from the Commonwealth.

To apply, eligible customers need to complete an application form, have it signed by their doctor, and return it to their energy retailer.

Free Financial Counselling

Some people may benefit from free, one-to-one assistance from an accredited financial counsellor. A financial counsellor can assist you in developing a personal budget, looking at your income and expenditure, and may assist in developing individual strategies for debt management. These strategies may include budgeting for household bills, such as electricity and gas, and negotiating plans for the repayment of debts.

Financial counsellors credited by the Financial Counsellors' Association of NSW (FCAN) provide free financial counselling.

Anyone experiencing financial difficulties can apply. To apply, contact FCAN on 1300 914 408 or visit their website at:

www.fcan.com.au Application forms are available from energy retailers or from: www.industry.nsw.gov.au/energy/customers/rebates

Sent in to us by Raymond Munro
(Rural Disability Network Working Group Member)



Source (pg. 7,8,9):
Energy Assistance Guide:
http://www.industry.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/368608/energy-assistance-guide.pdf

Picture Source (pg. 7,9):
<http://www.clker.com/clipart-6937.html>
<http://drboycepersonalfinance.blogspot.com/>

Bargains and Bartering



A new regular feature to our newsletter! If you have something you would like to give away, barter, buy or sell for cheap, let us know!

Item	Description
<i>Brother printer</i>	Inkjet colour printer
<i>HP printer</i>	Inkjet colour printer
<i>Wheelchair Cushion</i>	Hardly used Black cover Contoured Dimensions: Depth/length: 44.5cm Width: 44.5cm Thickness: (thickest part: 8cm thinnest part: 7cm)

All Items Listed Are
FREE!!

If you are interested on any of the above items, or have something to give away, barter, buy or sell for cheap, contact us at the office.

Phone: (02) 9891 6400 Freecall: 1800 629 072

Email: ace.boncato@mdaa.org.au

The Poll

Are you satisfied with the feedback processes that have been put in place, when monitoring the effectiveness of services/support available to you?

Tell us what you think!

Email:

ace.boncato@mdaa.org.au

or

Freecall: 1800 629 072



Let us know!

Results of the poll will be published in
the next issue of BushChatter



Results of last issue's poll:

Are you happy with the access you have to information on issues of disability and services/support available to you?

Out of those who emailed, called and wrote in:

60%

Yes

40%

No

What you said:

"There are many who don't know about support, subsidies and other things that can assist them."

"You need to be actively looking for something and ask the right questions to get the information you need."

"Many organisations and/or government departments don't proactively tell you about assistance they offer people with disability."

If you do not understand this document, please ring the Telephone Interpreter Service (131 450) and ask them to contact the MDAA on 1800 629 072.

ARABIC

إذا لم تستطع فهم هذه الوثيقة، الرجاء الاتصال بخدمة الترجمة الهاتفية على رقم ١٣١ ٤٥٠ وأسألهم أن يتصلوا بـ MDAA على رقم ١٨٠٠ ٦٢٩ ٠٧٢.

CHINESE

如您看不懂此文件，請打電話給「電話翻譯服務台」(131 450) 請他們聯絡 MDAA 電話 1800 629 072。

CROATIAN

Ako ne razumijete ovaj dokument, molimo nazovite Službu prevoditelja i tumača (Translating and Interpreting Service) na 131 450 i zamolite da nazovu MDAA na 1800 629 072.

GREEK

Αν δεν καταλαβαίνετε αυτό το έγγραφο, σας παρακαλούμε να τηλεφωνήσετε την Τηλεφωνική Υπηρεσία Διερμηνέων (131 450) και να τους ζητήσετε να επικοινωνήσουν με το MDAA στο 1800 629 072.

HINDI

अगर आप इस कागजात को पढ़कर समझ नहीं पा रहे हैं तो कृपया टेलीफोन संचालक-सहायक सेवा (१३१ ४५०) को फोन करें और उनसे एम डी ए ए (MDAA) को १८०० ६२९ ०७२ पर संपर्क करने को कहें।

ITALIAN

Se non comprendi questo documento, telefona al Servizio telefonico interpreti (131 450) chiedendo di essere messo in contatto con il MDAA al 1800 629 072.

KOREAN

만일 이 문서를 이해하지 못하시면, 전화 통역 서비스(131 450)에 전화하여 MDAA 1800 629 072에 연락해 달라고 부탁드립니다.

MALTESE

Jekk ma tifhimx dan id-dokument, jekk jog`bok jempel lis-Servizz ta' l-Interpretu (131 450) u itlobhom jikkuntattjaw lill-MDAA fuq 1800 629 072.

POLISH

Jeśli nie rozumiesz treści niniejszego dokumentu, zadzwoń do Telefonicznego Biura Tłumaczy (Telephone Interpreter Service) pod numer 131 450 i poproś o telefoniczne skontaktowanie się w Twoim imieniu z MDAA pod numerem 1800 629 072.

SPANISH

Si usted no entiende este documento, sírvase llamar al Servicio Telefónico de Intérpretes (131 450) y pedir que llamen a MDAA al 1800 629 072.

TURKISH

Bu belgeyi anlayamazsanız, lütfen Telefonla Tercüme Servisi'ne (131 450) telefon ederek, 1800 629 072'den MDAA ile ilifkiye geçmelerini isteyiniz.

VIETNAMESE

Nếu quý vị không hiểu tài liệu này, xin điện thoại đến Dịch vụ Thông ngôn qua Điện thoại (Telephone Interpreter Service) ở số 131 450 và nhờ họ liên lạc MDAA qua số 1800 629 072.