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MDAA Newsletter

April 2011

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Making MDAA's website more accessible

At MDAA we believe that it is important that the information on our website is accessible for our members, consumers and other people who are interested in the issues that affect people of non-English speaking background with disability.

To help make our website more accessible we have looked at technology that can make a difference. We have now added BrowseAloud to our website.

Browse aloud makes it much easier to read the information on our website as it can read out the words for you. It can read the words as you move the mouse over the words or it can read the whole page. It can change also text into MP3 so that you can listen to it later or it can mask a page so you can read one line at a time. BrowseAloud is free for you to download.

You can download BrowseAloud by clicking on the icon at the bottom of the MDAA homepage. (www.mdaa.org.au) There are then easy directions to follow to download the program.



There are other websites that use BrowseAloud including NSW CID, some local Councils and government departments. When you have downloaded BrowseAloud you can use it on any other website that has the BrowseAloud logo.

If you have any questions about using BrowseAloud please call MDAA on (09)9891 6400.

MDAA Election Forum 10 March 2011

MDAA members, consumers and the general public were invited to an information forum at Granville about the Australian political system and how to vote. Sarah Butler the Community Education Officer from the NSW Electoral Commission spoke.

Sarah explained the three tiers of government in Australia (federal, state and local), their roles and responsibilities and their terms of office.

She also clarified the different parts of each tier:

- House of Representatives and the Senate for Federal,
- The Legislative Assembly and the Legislative Council for State and
- Local Government.

This was followed by details about the election and voting process for each ballot paper.

The people who attended the forum were very interested to learn, about the preferential voting system for the federal House of Representative and the State Legislative Assembly and the proportional representation of the votes for the Senate and the Legislative Council. Sarah explained that voting is compulsory in Australia and gave us information about the facilities that are available for people with a disability. She also explained postal and absentee voting.

The question and answer session was followed by lunch.

An MDAA Election Forum was also held in Newcastle in March.

NSW Power Saving Program: Save Up to 20% off Your Power Use

Through the NSW Power Saving Program, you could save up to 20% a year on your power use. Every eligible household that joins the program will get a free:

- assessment by an energy expert to identify ways to save power in your home
- Power Savings Kit that includes stand-by saver power board, 4 energy efficient light bulbs low flow showerhead, shower timer, tap aerator, draught-proof strips for around the door, door snakes.
- Personal Power Savings Action Plan.

To be eligible for the program you must live in NSW and contribute to the power bills for the

home. At least one person in your household must have one of these cards: Centrelink Pensioner Concession Card, Centrelink Low Income Health Care Card, Department of Veterans' Affairs Pensioner Concession Card, Department of Veterans' Affairs (Gold) Repatriation Health Card, Department of Veterans' Affairs (White) Repatriation health Card OR be a recognised energy utility hardship customer. You'll need to confirm your eligibility when joining the program.

For information call 1300 662 416 or go to www.savepower.nsw.gov.au

Share with Us is your newsletter and we want to include stories from members. If you would like to share your story with other MDAA members please contact Luis on 9891 6400. You can write your own story or talk to Luis who will write the story for you.

To the Beautiful Bangalee Woman: By Jamil Shibli from Canberra

(Theme: I am privileged to know my Mum!)
Composer: Jamil Shibli. The Poem is adopted from an English poem to adjust with the Bangalee norm.

The Beauty of a Bangalee Woman

The inner beauty of a Bangalee Woman is not in the clothes She wears

The outer figure She has, or the way her Bangalee Cloudy hair is styled.

The Beauty of a Bangalee woman can be seen in her eyes, the Gateway to her Heart, The Bangalee place where her own abundant Affection and her Love resides.

The beauty of a Bangalee woman is not only on her face

It is duly reflected in her Bangalee soul

It is in the loving way She cares your tender hands,

The Compassionate passion that She shows

The beauty of a Bangalee woman

With her age and wisdom grows.

The Images of a Bangalee Mother

4 years of age – My Amma (Mommy) can do anything !

8 years of age – My Mom knows a lot ! A whole lot!

12 years of age – My mother does not really know quite everything.

14 years of age – Naturally, Mother does not know that, either



16 years of age – Mother? She's hopelessly Old-fashioned

18 years of age – Oh Allah ! She's way out of date!

25 years of age – Well, She might know a little bit about it.

35 years of age – Before we decide, Let's get Mom's opinion.

45 years of age – Wonder what Mom would have thought about it?

65 years of age – How I wish I could talk it over with Amma (Mom)!

Footnote: Bangalee means a Bangla Language Speaker.

(Picture—Jamil's daughter with her gramma)

Community Voices (CV) Training on 28.04.11

On 28 April 2011 a new group of MDAA members and consumers started our Public Speaking training to become Community Voices (CV).

The Community Voices are people with disability, carers and families who share their personal stories to raise awareness on disability and cultural issues.

Six training sessions, once a week will run weekly at Harris Park Community Centre.

In March the Community Voices shared their stories -

- We had an MDAA-Community Voices stall at Eastwood Plaza Information Day. The Information Day was organised by Ryde Council. George K and Luis talked to people who visited our stall.
- George K and Luis were also at our



Our Shiny New CV in Training

MDAA-Community Voices stall at a Multicultural Day organised by Care Connect (Randwick Council).

- Elvira and Luis gave a presentation at Northern Beaches TAFE to 42 Welfare students.

New Tenancy Laws Information in Community Languages

Did you know that on 31 January 2011, new residential tenancy laws began in NSW? These changes affected tenants and landlords.

Everyone who rents a place to live, is affected by these changes. Their main changes include:

- more protection for domestic violence victims
- tenants will have at least one fee-free way to pay their rent
- the time to evict a tenant who has stopped paying rent will be cut by up to 18 days
- red tape will be cut for landlords dealing with goods left behind
- tenants will be able to make reasonable requests to make minor changes to premises or to sub-lease a spare room
- landlords will be required to make premises 'water efficient' if they wish to charge tenants for water usage
- landlords will gain the right to show premises to prospective tenants or buyers at least twice a week
- landlords and their agents will be prohibited from knowingly concealing certain important information from tenants'
- tenants will no longer be forced to have carpets professionally steam-cleaned when vacating premises.

The Fair Trading website has information about the new laws:

- Audio information in 10 in Arabic, Burmese, Dari, Dinka, Kirundi, Korean, Mandarin, Somali, Swahili, or Tetum .(http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/About_us/Video_and_audio/Changes_to_tenancy_laws.html)
- Fact sheets in Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Indonesian, Korean, Samoan, Spanish, Tamil, Tongan and Vietnamese (http://www.fairtrading.nsw.gov.au/About_us/Publications/Download_publications.html)

News from CityRail—Boarding Assistance Changes

CityRail is changing the boarding location on trains in the Sydney metropolitan area. For people who need assistance to get on and off the train. City Rail has provided the following information about the changes.

Instead of boarding in the fourth and fifth carriage, CityRail is encouraging you to travel in the sixth carriage. This means that the boarding location on platforms has also changed.



The new 'boarding assistance zone' is marked on every wheelchair accessible platform at stations on all City Circle and suburban stations, near the back door to the sixth carriage.

The portable boarding ramps have also been moved. They are now on platforms near the new boarding areas. Station staff or the train guard will set up the ramp to access the sixth carriage on suburban trains.

If you need to travel in a different carriage, please let the CityRail staff member know.

The new train boarding procedures are only for suburban trains. The boarding locations on intercity trains have not been changed

Travelling from attended stations

Let the CityRail station staff know your travel plans and that you need assistance to board the train. Staff will still set up the boarding

ramp for you, advise the train guard that you are on board and where you will leave the train. They will also notify your interchange and destination stations to have the boarding ramp ready for you when you arrive.

Travelling from unattended stations

Wait near the sixth carriage of the train - this part of the platform is marked 'Boarding assistance' (shown above right).

When the train arrives, ask the guard for help to board (look for the blue light on the outside of the guard's compartment).

You may also use the new boarding assistance wallet. This is a large A on a pink sleeve. When the train approaches hold up the boarding assistance wallet to help the guard see that you need assistance.



Boarding assistance wallets are available free from staffed stations or by calling Transport Info on 131 500.

On the train

There are designated wheelchair spaces and priority seats provided in the vestibules of newer trains.

Need more information?

To check if the stations you want to use have the facilities that meet your needs visit the CityRail website www.cityrail.info, or call 131 500 or TTY 1800 637 500.

Contact us:

MDAA

Harris Park Phone: (02) 9891 6400
or 1800 629 072

Griffith (02) 6962 5399

Newcastle (02) 4927 0111

Wollongong (02) 4226 9971

MDAA also auspices these services

SESA Rockdale (02) 9597 9970

SEA Bega (02) 6492 0200

CIWDA Ultimo (02) 9281 8699

E-mail: mdaa@mdaa.org.au

Website: www.mdaa.org.au

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News from MDAA Committee

Dear Members,

It is with much regret that the Management Committee has to announce that Diana Qian will be finishing in her role Executive Director as of 13th May 2011, and that our Assistant Director Lyn Lormer, finished with us on the 8th April.

It is with great sorrow that we lose such valuable members of our team. The Management Committee is committed to the successful transition of our organisation to a new senior executive team, and to help us, has appointed an external consulting organisation, Corporate Synergies Australia Pty Ltd to assist us all during this time of organisational change.

The Management Committee is appointing an interim CEO to ensure that MDAA continues to achieve our organisational goals while we search for a permanent replacement. And we have full faith that our highly skilled staff remains dedicated to providing ongoing quality of our service delivery.

The Management Committee would like to recognise both Diana and Lyn's dedication, commitment and contributions to the growth of MDAA during their time with us, and we know that you will join us in wishing them all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely,
The Management Committee

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Personal Injury Compensation Forum

Carmine Santone, Director of Santone Lawyers spoke at MDAA's Information Forum at Granville on 28 April, 2011. Carmine talked about Personal Injury Compensation. 32 people braved the rain to attend.

Carmine explained

- what compensation is
- what to do if a person gets injured at work or in a public place
- your rights and time limitations for claims



After the session Carmine answered questions from the people who attended. We would like to thank Carmine for giving his time and expertise. Also a big thank you to Sheron and Jess for all their help.

People who attended the forum said "The speaker is very patient, approachable and he tried to answer all the questions..." "I have learnt what to do if I get injured and acknowledge my rights when injuries happen"

"The information provided was very clear, simple and he advises us to get help straight away, not to delay".

In March MDAA held forums across NSW

SEA—About SEA and MDAA

Newcastle—How to Vote

Griffith—Energy Efficiency in the Home

SESA will be presenting a forum on Disability and sexuality in June 2011

Parenting Seminar in Auburn in Arabic

The Triple P Positive Parenting Program is being run in Arabic by Aging, Disability and Home Care Department of Human Services NSW and Auburn Community Services.

There are three seminars aimed at families with children aged 3 to 12, who have challenging behaviours.

Seminar outline:

- Seminar 1: The power of positive parenting
- Seminar 2: Raising confident and competent children
- Seminar 3: Raising resilient children

Some of the issues covered by the seminars

- Understanding parenting issues. Why children behave in certain ways.
- Dealing effectively with aggression, non-cooperation and disobedience.
- Recognising and managing situations such as sadness, anxiety, difficulty with

separation and problems mixing with other children.

Each seminar is around 90 minutes. The series of three seminars will leave you feeling more confident and ready to deal with common behavioural and emotional issues.

Dates: 11 May, 18 May and 25 May 2011

Time: 10:00 A.M – 12:30 P.M

Location: Auburn Diversity Services Inc,
17 Macquarie Road,
Auburn NSW 2144

To find out more or to book into this Seminar please contact Aging, Disability and Home Care on (02) 9841 9555 and ask to speak to Samar Eltom or Emil Ghali

For more information about Triple P Parenting programs in your area visit

http://www.families.nsw.gov.au/your_family/children_3_to_8/triple_p.html