



NEWSLETTER – June 2018

“Our Voice, Our Choice”



GdA is funded by the Australian Government Department of Social Services under the National Disability Advocacy Program and the Victorian Government Department of Health and Human Services

Grampians disAbility Advocacy

KURT FEARNLEY ENDS HIS CAREER ON A HIGH



Kurt Fearnley wins Gold at 2018 Commonwealth Games

Kurt Fearnley’s career can be defined by numbers, by medals, by victories. By what he has overcome and what he has achieved. It can also be defined by what he said when he won gold in the marathon at the Commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast in his last appearance for Australia: “If I can say anything to the next people coming up wearing the green and gold, when you get near a microphone, when you speak, err on the side of kindness, how about that? And if you can get here, bring your family with you, bring people with you because it makes it so much more worthwhile. I have loved every minute of these games.” (Sydney Morning Herald 15/4/18)

DAN TEHAN VISITS ARARAT FOR NDIS ROUNDTABLE

Federal Minister for the Department of Social Services and the Minister responsible for the National Disability Insurance Scheme met with service providers and participants of the NDIS in Ararat on May 28 to hear firsthand about the issues people are confronting in relation to the scheme. Mr Tehan listened intently for an hour and a half to the 15 people attending the service provider session, which included, physiotherapists, an architect, advocates, disability program providers and a taxi driver. Many issues were raised regarding transport, home modifications and how the NDIS interacts with people living in group homes. Mr Tehan talked about the latest quarterly report from the NDIA which stated 162,000 Australians are now benefitting from the NDIS.



LEFT: The Hon Dan Tehan, Member for Wannon & Federal Minister responsible for the NDIS

BALLARAT & DISTRICT ABORIGINAL CO-OP

**YOU ARE INVITED TO ATTEND THE
BADAC NAIDOC OPEN DAY AT
BALLARAT SHOWGROUNDS
Wednesday July 11, 10am to 2pm**

NAIDOC Week celebrations are held across Australia each July to celebrate history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples. BADAC & NAIDOC week celebrations are open to everyone who would like join in the celebrations. There will be art & craft stalls, free carnival rides, an Australian Zoo, the NAIDOC Awards, free live entertainment & Aboriginal promotional materials. For more information email lgafa@badac.net.au



8-15 July



BALLARAT RESIDENTS GET ACTIVE TO “SAVE OUR STATION”

Save Our Station (SOS) Ballarat was established mid 2016 by concerned citizens troubled by the level of public consultation on the Ballarat Station Redevelopment Project being undertaken by the State Government.

SOS believes the project plans provide no improvement to the transport needs of the community, especially those with a disability. The group is also opposed to the effect of the project on the nationally significant railway and Lydiard St heritage aspects. The objectives of SOS are to encourage investment in the rail precinct which ensures its future effectiveness as a transport hub, whilst avoiding development that limits other future transport opportunities.

Why is SOS trying to save the Ballarat Railway Station?

Since **1859**, the Ballarat Railway Station has adequately served the Ballarat community; being able to adapt as the key aspects of the Victorian Railways changed. Now in 2018, this ability to adapt will be curtailed as the State Government proposes a non-transport plan of property development that will see limits placed on the future utility of the overall Ballarat Railway Station precinct. Many Ballarat residents are concerned that the planned development is inappropriate and will prove to be a major impediment to the future of Public Transport.

In addition, there are concerns about the risk to Ballarat's unique heritage.

GdA lobbies for Disability Access

GdA has joined with SOS Ballarat in lobbying the State Government about the lack of disability access in and around the station itself.

In a letter to Minister for Disability Martin Foley GdA pointed out the inaccessibility of the train station to people with mobility challenges. Passengers are regularly required to move from one platform to another via a footbridge which is completely unusable for this group. The bridge issue is the most obvious shortcoming of the Station facilities for people with disabilities, but it is not the only one. There are also issues with the inaccessible toilet facilities, lighting and other features which fail to meet the access requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act.

Go to GdA's Facebook page for more info.

WRITERS

Own Voices Forum: Why Writing Matters (Horsham) Date: 18 July 2018 - 9:45 to 3:00 PM

The forum is for people with disability in Horsham and the Wimmera South West NDIS region, as well as arts & community development workers, disability & health service providers, teachers, local councils & libraries. Write-ability is a program for people with disability - it's for anyone who experiences barriers as a result of their particular impairment or condition (such as the lack of physical access, communication barriers, discrimination or other people's attitudes). This includes (but isn't limited to) people with sensory or physical impairments, hidden impairments, ongoing medical conditions, intellectual impairments, learning difficulties or mental health conditions. "Write-ability Goes Regional and Online" is a program for aspiring writers with disability living in regional Victoria. Anyone needing more information can email access@writersvictoria.org.au or phone Alex Fairhill at Writers Victoria on **9094 7844**.

GdA's 2018 Consumer Feedback Survey Results

Each year GdA's Federal and State Government funding bodies ask us to take a look at whether our clients think we are doing a good job.

This year 71 surveys were sent out to eligible clients across the Grampians region, serviced by our six offices.

The survey consists of 20 questions and is reviewed by the Board of Governance to identify opportunities for quality improvement.

Twenty-four responses were received. Overall the results were pleasing.

The majority of the response show that our clients are highly satisfied with all aspects of our advocacy service.

Many comments highlight the belief that GdA needs more staff to provide a level of service that matches the population in the region, particularly Ballarat.

The Board and management of GdA agree there is unmet need in the region, and continues to lobby all levels of Government for improved resourcing of advocacy.



This organization aims to solve equipment related problems faced by people with disabilities, of all ages, through the design, construction or modification of equipment where the need cannot be met commercially. It achieves its mission through the provision of specialised technical advice to clients and their carers, and referral to other organisations able to assist where they cannot. It exists to design and construct equipment otherwise commercially unavailable, and to modify commercially available equipment to suit clients' special needs. Solve started with a modest 55 metropolitan projects in its first year, and the number of people benefiting from **Solve Disability Solutions'** services has grown significantly. As well as its original metropolitan base, **Solve Disability Solutions** now has 10 regional branches and more than 160 active volunteers. **Solve Disability Solutions** completes over 650 projects in metropolitan and regional areas of Victoria each year. Throughout its history **Solve Disability Solutions'** aim has remained the same; to give practical assistance to people with disabilities, by building or modifying equipment that meets their specific needs, when no commercial solution exists.

**Phone 1300 663 243 or
go to the website www.solve.org.au**

DO YOU DISAGREE WITH AN NDIA DECISION?

NDIS participants or those wishing to become participants may not always agree with a decision made about them by the National Disability Insurance Agency. If this is the case for you, there are things you can do to make matters better. Grampians Advocacy has been funded by the Commonwealth Department of Social Services to help people with a disability have their voice heard when a disagreement arises. Contact GdA to find out how our NDIS Appeals Support Officers can help you to apply for an internal review or to take your matter to the Administrative Appeals Tribunal.

**Call Grampians Advocacy on
1800 552 272 for more information or
to get help with the process.**



ABOVE: Regular bus user Colin Machin
Picture: Peter Pickering

EASY ACCESS BUS AT HALLS GAP

(article from Stawell Times News March 13, 2018)

Halls Gap area residents and visitors with a disability or mobility issues will now have better access to public transport. From Saturday 17 March 2018, Sandlant Bus Company has started running a low floor bus between Stawell and Halls Gap. It is the normal Saturday Service but using a low floor that allows people in wheelchairs or with disabilities, elderly people and passengers with prams to have easier access on and off the bus. Every Saturday and Sunday between 12pm and 2.35pm the V/Line bus runs up and down the Halls Gap valley floor three times each way between the Ararat Road and Brambuk Cultural Centre. Tim's place accommodation proprietor Tim Wise said it was a welcome move towards more accessible transport in the area. "This service will be a big step towards the ultimate goal of three services each and every day of the year between Stawell and Halls Gap," he said. "If the community could utilise this service then it would send a strong message to local and State Government on improved transport."

**THIS SERVICE RUNS 7 DAYS A WEEK
BOOKINGS CAN BE MADE ONLINE OR BY
PHONING VLINE 1800 800 007**

VALE



RHONDA CLARKE

Staff, management and members of GdA were saddened to learn of the passing of Rhonda late in May. Rhonda was an active member of GdA's advisory group and took part in many systemic campaigns. We extend our deepest sympathies to her family.

DO YOU HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS?

In order to reduce our postage costs, and to minimize our environmental footprint, GdA would prefer to email future newsletters.

If you have an email address please let us know by writing to us at admin@grampiansadvocacy.org.au with "member email" in the subject line.
Thanks from GdA!

If you would like to include an item of interest in our newsletter, contact the Ararat Office.

SOME WAYS YOU CAN GET INVOLVED AT GRAMPIANS ADVOCACY

At GdA we value your opinion

Tell us what you think:

Please write in and let us know what you think of the newsletter and its content.

News articles:

Do you have any community news or an article you might like us to include in our newsletter?

Please note - all news, articles, stories need to be of benefit to people with a disability.

Policies:

Let us know if you would like to attend a forum to review our policies.

Nominate for the Board of Governance at the AGM in October.

Don't forget - the GdA newsletter can come to you in large print, audio format or via email.

If this is your preference please contact us on:

Free Call: 1800 552 272

Fax: 5352 2733

We would appreciate any comments on the service we provide.

Post your comments to: GdA, PO Box 112, Ararat 3377, or email them to us at admin@grampiansadvocacy.org.au



www.grampiansadvocacy.org.au



PO Box 112
ARARAT 3377

POSTAGE
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