



NEWSLETTER – March 2017

“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

EXCELLENCE AWARD FOR INCLUSIVE PLAY SPACE IN BALLARAT

The City of Ballarat and the community it serves is celebrating its success in winning a Local Government Award for Excellence for the “Livvi’s Place” Victoria Park All Abilities Playspace. The LGPro Awards for excellence promote and celebrate the outstanding work undertaken and delivered by Local Governments in Victoria. Since opening in March 2016, it is one of the busiest and most popular facilities in Ballarat; around 2000 people visit each week to explore and enjoy the multiple play zones and accessible equipment, designed for people of all abilities. The Playspace has been a long-term dream of Bec Paton, who along with other passionate volunteers worked tirelessly to make the dream a reality.



Ballarat resident Bec Paton (above) was instrumental in fundraising for the Victoria Park All Abilities Playspace (pictured right).



Grampians disAbility Advocacy

STAWELL WOMAN STELLA YOUNG POSTUMOUSLY INDUCTED INTO THE 2017 VICTORIAN HONOUR ROLL OF WOMEN

Growing up in the rural Victorian town of Stawell, Stella Young was born with the genetic condition Osteogenesis Imperfecta, which she described simply as ‘dodgy bones’. She began studying journalism at Deakin University at the age of 17 and soon became an outspoken voice within the disability community. In addition to her writing and comedy, in 2010 Stella joined the ABC as the editor of Ramp Up, an online portal and discussion platform for disabled people. Stella was a member of the Victorian Disability Advisory Council.



Stella Young (pictured above) died suddenly in 2014, aged 32, after a brilliant career in media and a life spent defending the rights of people with a disability.



SIGN UP NOW FOR THE BSWAT PAYMENT SCHEME



Thousands of people with intellectual impairment are now entitled to a one-off payment through the Australian Government's Business Services Wage Assessment Tool Payment Scheme.

Between 2004 and 2014, the BSWAT was used to assess the wages of many supported employees of Australian Disability Enterprises (ADEs).

In 2012, the Federal Court determined that the BSWAT indirectly discriminated against two ADE employees with an intellectual disability. As a result the Australian Government has set up the BSWAT Payment Scheme to compensate workers who were underpaid for years.

The scheme will provide a one-off payment of \$100 or more to an eligible supported employee with an intellectual impairment.

To receive a payment, a person must **register with the scheme before 30 April 2017**.

For more information, call the BSWAT Payment Scheme hotline on **1800 799 515** or send an email to bswatpayments@dss.gov.au



NDIS Appeals Support Program
now available in
Central Highlands & Loddon regions

**DO YOU DISAGREE WITH A NATIONAL
DISABILITY INSURANCE AGENCY
(NDIA) DECISION?**

**Grampians disAbility Advocacy is
funded by the Department of Social
Services to assist people with a disability
to appeal a decision made by the
National Disability Insurance Agency**

Support is available in these places:

Ballarat	Bendigo
Bacchus Marsh	Shepparton
Ararat	Maryborough
Beaufort	Castlemaine
Daylesford	Gisborne
Bannockburn	Echuca

**GdA can provide an NDIS Appeals
support person to assist with
understanding the review process,
applying to the Administrative Appeals
Tribunal, preparing documents, and
applying for special legal assistance.
There is no charge for this service.**

Phone: 1800 552 272 for more information

WIMMERA MOBILITY GROUP PERFORMING VITAL COMMUNITY ROLE



Wimmera Mobility Group meets on the fourth Tuesday of the month at the Horsham RSL. Phone Geoff on 5382 4918.

Wimmera Mobility Group is the only group of its kind in Western Victoria. With a growing membership, it is clearly meeting a need in Horsham and surrounding districts.

Group chairman Geoff Baker said the group meetings provide information, support and activities for users of mobility scooters.

"It is all about getting involved to make the most of the information available, through sharing and guest speakers," Mr Baker said.

"We try to get as many people as possible involved, active and mobile, regardless of their disability.

"We are also there to provide advocacy services," he said.

Mr Baker said the group keeps members informed about the many rules that apply to 'gopher' users.

Mr Baker was guest speaker at GdA's Wimmera Regional Advisory Group meeting on March 23.

The 2017 syllabus includes eight guest speakers and two trips out of town.

For more information contact Geoff Baker on 5382 4918 or 0428 824 918.

Elder abuse: What is it?

(from Seniors Card Magazine 2016)

“Elder Abuse is any act which causes harm to an older person and is carried out by someone they know and trust, such as family and friends. It is a form of family violence, in that most perpetrators are family members. Elder abuse reflects the ageism that is rife in our society today as well as the gender inequality.”

The different forms of elder abuse are:

Financial abuse/ Emotional or psychological abuse/ Physical abuse /Sexual abuse /Social abuse /Neglect

Research from Australia and overseas shows that around 5% of older people may be experiencing elder abuse. The real number may be higher because many people feel they cannot speak up.

Never feel ashamed to ask for help. If you feel you are being physically abused, bullied or pressured to do things by someone you know; or if someone you rely on is neglecting you, threatening or failing to look after you as they promised...speak up! **Your safety and wellbeing is important.**

If you are experiencing elder abuse and would like information and advice, call [Seniors Rights Victoria](#) on **1300 368 821** - a Victorian Government funded free helpline, legal, advocacy and referral service. [Seniors Rights Victoria](#) is a confidential service staffed by qualified and experienced people who can provide advice, information and support to older people experiencing elder abuse.

If you or someone you know is in an unsafe or life threatening situation you should **ring Victoria Police on 000.**



STOP THOSE ANNOYING PHONE CALLS



People across Victoria are continuing to report receiving high numbers of unwanted phone calls. To minimise the nuisance factor, there are things you can do to avoid the pain and still stay connected with family and friends.

The Do Not Call Register is a secure database where you can register your Australian telephone, mobile and fax numbers to make it clear to marketers that you do not want to receive unsolicited telemarketing calls and faxes.

Registration is free and you only need to do it once. When registered, your number will stay on the register indefinitely unless you decide to remove it. The register doesn't actually 'block' numbers. It doesn't have any technological impact on your telephone or fax line, and it does not block or physically stop other parties from contacting you. It works by giving telemarketers and fax marketers 30 days to recognise the registration of a number and to stop contacting that number.

What about those calls from charities? Many calls to solicit donations are made by, or on behalf of, charities. These organisations are permitted to call numbers listed on the register. Telemarketing calls that seek donations but are made by organisations other than registered charities or registered charitable institutions are not permitted. A call made to carry out opinion polling or market research is not a telemarketing call, but some calls have more than one purpose. If breaches of these rule happen to you and you are on the register, you can lodge a complaint with the Australian Communications and Media Authority, donotcall.gov.au or call **1300 792 958**

To register with the Do Not Call Register, call the Australian Communications and Media Authority on 1300 792 958 from Monday to Friday, between 8.30 am and 5.00 pm. You can also complete an online enquiry or complaint form at www.donotcall.gov.au

DO YOU HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS?

In order to reduce postage costs, and 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 asas@netconnect.com.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 on 1800 552 272

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

asas@netconnect.com.au



www.grampiansadvocacy.org.au

Writers Victoria "Own Voices Forum: Why Writing Matters"

This forum is for people with disability in Ballarat and the Central Highlands region, as well as arts and community development workers, disability and health service providers, teachers, local councils and 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. By bridging the gap between mainstream arts and disability communities, the Own Voices Forum will use writing to break down barriers to social inclusion and give people with disability the skills and opportunity to tell their stories their way.

The Own Voices Forum is part of **Write-ability Goes Regional and Online**, one of the only fully-accessible and disability-led writing and literary initiatives in Australia. Following the forum, the program will include workshops, author talks and webinars for people with disability interested in writing and build writing skills for creativity and employment. **Special Offer:** People with disability in the Central Highlands can also get 30% off a Writers Victoria membership by signing up before end of June 2017. Find out more at www.writersvictoria.org.au

FORUM VENUE: Museum of Australian Democracy at Eureka, 102 Stawell St South, Ballarat, VIC 3350

Bookings required by April 21st for catering purposes. Phone: 9094 7855 or 0466 544 880