

# AQA NEWS LINK

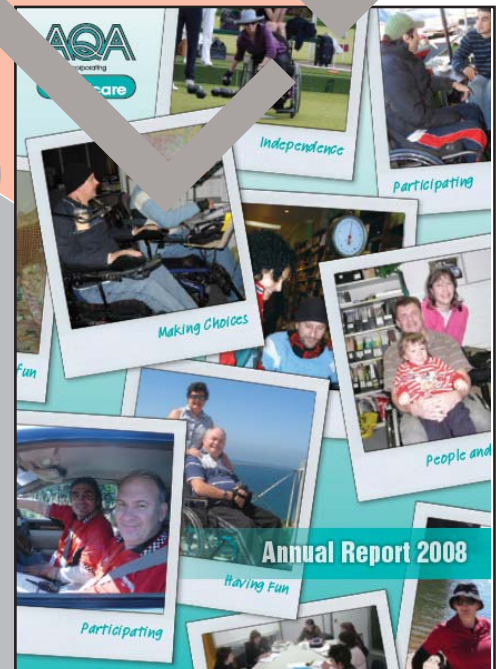
The Official Newsletter of AQA Victoria Ltd., & AQA Tasmania

DECEMBER 2008



**FROM A WOMAN'S POINT  
OF VIEW  
Sky High**

**AQA's ANNUAL  
GENERAL MEETING  
Annual Report  
Available Online**



**WHEELCHAIR ACCESSIBLE  
TAXIS  
More Taxis on the Road**

*Plus much more...*



**A.Q.A. Victoria Ltd**  
 ABN 90 006 691 185

**Address**

440 Heidelberg Road  
 Fairfield Victoria 3078

**Tel:** (03) 9489 0777

**Fax:** (03) 9482 4371

**Email:** [admin@aqavic.org.au](mailto:admin@aqavic.org.au)

**Website:** [www.aqavic.org.au](http://www.aqavic.org.au)

**Postal address**

PO Box 219  
 Fairfield Victoria 3078

**Toll Free Number for Tasmanian and country Victoria members**

Tel: 1800 999 128

**Board of directors**

Wendy Lundgaard - Chairperson

Jaqueline Wilson - Deputy Chairperson

Kerry Durrand - Treasurer

Jane Polglase - Company Secretary

Kevin Bailey - Director

Tanya Clarke - Director

Rosie Maddick - Director

Stephen Huybens - Director

Bill Robinson - Director

**A.Q.A. NEWS LINK** is the official newsletter of A.Q.A. Victoria Limited, and is published bimonthly. *NEWS LINK* seeks to publish material of interest to people with physical disabilities and their families, professional workers and other individuals and organisations concerned with the welfare of those who are physically disabled.

A.Q.A. Victoria Limited always welcomes articles for News Link. Please feel free to send in your contribution. Articles will be published at the discretion of the Editor who also has the right to edit all submissions as it sees fit.

The opinions expressed in *News Link* are not necessarily those of A.Q.A. Victoria Limited or the Editor. Original material in *News Link* can be reproduced only with permission from the editor. Donations towards production costs are greatly appreciated.

Information in *News Link* is furnished solely as a guide to the existence and availability of goods or services. News Link has neither the staff nor the facilities for testing and evaluating any of the services or items and therefore can assume no responsibility for the effectiveness, safety or quality of any such items or services.

© All rights reserved. May be reproduced with written permission from AQA Victoria Ltd

# AQA NEWS LINK

The Official Newsletter of AQA Victoria Ltd., & AQA Tasmania

## In this issue...

**Page 3**

- From the CEO ..... page 3
- From the Editor ..... page 3

**Members Column**

- Conveen Easi-cleanse Wipes ..... page 4
- Poem – Courage ..... page 4
- Fraudulent Emails ..... page 4

**Disability News**

- The Real Cost of Disability ..... page 5
- Summer Saving Tips ..... page 6
- Centrelink Update ..... page 6
- Disability Employment Falls Further in the Public Service ..... page 7
- Computer Gaming for Higher Quads ..... page 7
- WSV - Annual Awards ..... page 8

**Information**

- Victorian Medical Cooling Concession ..... page 9
- Annual General Meeting ..... page 9

**Transport**

- Major Changes to Revamp Taxi Services for Victorians ..... page 10
- Multi Purpose Taxi Program: Do you have the correct type of card? ..... page 11

**Me and my Town**

- Taylors Lake and Oliver ..... page 12

**Travel**

- Changes to AAA Tourism Publications ..... page 14
- Rolling holidays ..... page 14
- Tourism for People with Disabilities ..... page 15

## Regular features

**Board Focus**

- Enhancing an Organisation's Reputation - Responsibilities of Directors ..... page 13

**Bailey's Bit**

- Nimbus Diaries ..... page 16

**From a Woman's Point of View**

- Sky High ..... page 17

**Jokes Page**

- Jokes ..... page 18

**Classifieds**

- Various items for sale ..... page 19-20

**Volume 22, Number 6**

## From the CEO



Welcome to our final News Link for 2008. I'd like to take this opportunity to acknowledge those who have made a significant contribution to our newsletter during the year.

Firstly I'd like to thank all those members and subscribers who contributed to the content of News Link. It's been great to see regular articles in 'Me and My Town' where members have introduced us to their neighbourhood. Contributions made by members, subscribers and friends of AQA to other columns like 'Member's Column', 'Travel', 'Disability News' has also been appreciated. It is a pleasure to see them all want to share information with others.

We've had lots of positive feedback to all these features and look forward to continuing them into 2009.

We also remain committed to presenting a variety of voices in the pages of News Link and this year we commenced 'From a Woman's Point of View'. Thank you to those members who have shared information and their own stories under this banner. We will continue to explore ways of ensuring the diversity of interests and issues impacting on members and subscribers find a place in our Newsletter.

I'd like to thank all our Board members for their contribution to News Link in 2008 via 'Board Focus'. The Board are always on the look out for ways to keep our membership aware and engaged with the roles and responsibilities AQA's Board has in our current environment.

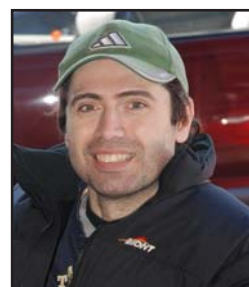
We now distribute News Link to many of our Qualcare clients. We are currently conducting a survey among these clients and I'd like to thank those who have already responded and encourage those who are yet to feedback to us to send us your comments. Like the survey of members earlier this year, this feedback plays an important part in our service planning and development.

Members will be aware we held our Annual General Meeting in November and I'd like to thank those members who attended. We had an opportunity to meet with Shane Brand, Bryce Alman and Naz Erdem and hear about their Beijing Paralympics experience and the wheelchair rugby final.

On behalf of all those at AQA, I'd like to wish you a happy and safe festive season and a productive new year. We look forward to continuing our contact with you in 2009.

**Peter Trethewey**  
Chief Executive Officer  
[petertrethewey@aqavic.org.au](mailto:petertrethewey@aqavic.org.au)

## From the Editor



First of all, I'd like to thank all of our readers who have helped us throughout the year in providing content for News Link. Your articles and information has provided great reading for all. In addition to this, you have helped encourage and motivate those dealing with a disability to open their horizons.

In this final issue of News Link for 2008, you can read articles by members who review products that have improved their quality of life.

Chris Holden, who is completing his rehabilitation at the Royal Talbot after receiving a spinal cord injury, made us aware of a poem he had written during his spare time there. We enjoyed reading the poem and thought others would enjoy reading it too. We thank Chris for allowing us to publish it.

Angela wrote to us to warn readers about opening suspicious emails, especially from people or organizations they aren't familiar with. She warns the importance of being extra "careful" as these criminals are ingenious in their ways of "stooging" people for profit.

We welcome the news of more wheelchair accessible taxis for the state of Victoria. This has been a long time coming and AQA hopes that it will alleviate many of the problems experienced by members. We have also included an article regarding the 'Taxi Cards' as some readers may have the wrong type. Although all the cards may look the same, they provide different benefits for the taxi drivers.

Oliver introduces himself and the suburb of Taylors Lake in "Me and My Town". He says "...it's a great suburb close to the city with lots of transport and shopping".

We meet Joanne Van Den Eynden who admits she is a bit of an adventurer. She writes to us to share her experiences of Melbourne's "The Edge" on the Eureka Tower, as well as her helicopter sightseeing tour.

Finally, on behalf of all the staff at AQA, I'd like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. And please don't keep your holiday experiences to yourself, let us know so we can share them with others!

**Simon Damevski**  
News Link Editor  
[simondamevski@aqavic.org.au](mailto:simondamevski@aqavic.org.au)



## Taylors Lakes and Oliver

*In this edition of “Me and My Town”, Oliver tells us about his suburb of Taylors Lakes. Taylors Lakes is in the Western Suburbs of Melbourne and is only a 20 minute drive into the city. As you will read it is well situated with close to shopping, transport, and clinics.*

*We are appealing to readers to send through their own articles similar to the one below by Oliver. You don’t have to be a good writer as we can help you write it. We will be offering some great prizes to those readers who participate. We need your assistance to ensure this column continues to be a success.*



Hi everyone, I just wanted to introduce myself and my town to other members out there. . . . . My name is Oliver and I had a mountain bike accident back in August 1999, and as a result, I sustained a T4 complete spinal lesion. I live with my family in a 4 bedroom house which is modified well to suit my disability. I have a master size bedroom with an ensuite that allows me to have room to fit an exercise bench inside. It also has enough room for my commode to maneuver around my room without much interference.

I have an accessible kitchen and my garage is linked to a pergola that is linked to my house which allows access to my garage and saves me from battling bad weather.

I live in the Western suburb of Taylors Lakes which is conveniently located 20 minutes drive from Melbourne’s C.B.D.along the Calder Freeway. Wheelchair access in Taylors Lakes is good. I have 2 shopping centres located nearby. One is Taylors Lakes Shopping Centre which is a half hour marathon with my Jazzy electric wheelchair.

**Note: To read the rest of this article you need to be a current member. Please contact AQA Victoria or download a membership form.**



## “Sky High”

*As she admits herself, Joanne Van Den Eynden is a bit of an adventurer. She has a busy life and when she has time, she starts thinking about what her next adventure is going to be. Joanne likes to ‘test’ what is accessible and what isn’t. As you will see, her limitations with Cerebral Palsy don’t get in the way. Here are a couple of her adventures from last year.*

Do you think that going up the Eureka Tower and going in the slide-out cube, called “The Edge”, is an exhilarating experience?

Well, not for me. I am not saying that it isn’t exciting because it is! I experienced “The Edge” one day in May and thought that it was OK. However, two days later I experienced something even more exhilarating.

How about a helicopter trip over Melbourne suburbs and the City area, topping over Eureka Tower, flying along the coast line, over King Island, and around Phillip Island. This would do it for me! Now that’s what I would call adrenalin rush. WOW!

I wouldn’t hesitate to do it again on any sunny day. The views were fantastic!

Have you ever seen the MCG, Rod Laver arena or Federation Square and beyond from approximately one thousand or so feet high, and then turning on an angle (“banking” in flight lingo) on your side, as if you’re coming down, another WOW!



**Note: To read the rest of this article you need to be a current member. Please contact AQA Victoria or download a membership form.**



## Multi Purpose Taxi Program: Do you have the correct type of card?

*It has come to the attention of AQA that many holders of the Multi Purpose Taxi Program (MPTP) card may be holding the wrong one.*

*Although all the cards may look the same, they provide different benefits for the taxi drivers.*

Taxi drivers of wheelchair accessible taxis are entitled to a “lifting fee” for loading and unloading passengers who are in wheelchairs if they have the correct MPTP card.

It is unfair to the driver if the card holder has the incorrect card. This means the driver will miss out on the \$14 fee (from 13/12/08) or add it to the passenger’s total fare. This has been a major problem in the past.

To obtain this lifting fee, which is paid to the driver by the Victorian Government, MPTP card holders are required to have “wheelchair taxi card”. The wheelchair card for a member will start with 9036003231XXXXXXXX (Notice the number “1” in the middle of the sequence). The card also usually has the word “Wheelchair” written on it.

If a card holder is permanently confined to a wheelchair and does not have one of the mentioned cards, they will need to be issued with a new card free of charge.

We urge readers to have a quick look at the number on their card and check to see the number fits the above description.

If you would like more information or a copy of the form, please contact AQA on (03) 9489 0777 or the Victorian Taxi Directorate on (03) 9655 6060.



## Nimbus Diaries

*Over a period of several months, Kevin Bailey, Board Director at AQA and our country Peer Support worker found himself without his motor vehicle. It seems not once but twice Kevin was in the wrong place at the wrong time resulting in damage to his car. Having lived successfully with his spinal injury for upwards of 17 years, what happened next surprised Kevin and he shares his story in News Link as we suspect the challenges he faced are common to others.*

Kevin’s plight began on 27/2/07 while stationary at lights when as “an innocent by-sitter in the main street of Bendigo, a somewhat impatient motorist thought that it would be a good idea to use a compaction process on the queue in front of him” causing severe damage to Kevin’s vehicle. After assessment of the damage and confirmation that the vehicle could be repaired, a fortnight of waiting turned into a month. By early April Kevin

proudly announced that “he is in heaven over the safe, if somewhat delayed, re-birth of Mitsi Bishi Nimbus Bailey!”

However, mid April brought further news from Kevin. . . . “it is with a feeling of sadness that I inform you that Mitsi is broken again. It would appear a trailer, behind a very large truck was rather taken by my voluptuous miss – enough to give her a somewhat less than gentle caress as it passed by”. This resulted in Kevin’s vehicle once again being off the road!

Early May and after another period of adjustment without his vehicle and “once again very well served by friends in an hour of need” to attend a function in Melbourne during this time, he picked up his now twice repaired vehicle with the parting words “I trust that this is the last episode of the Mitsi Chronicle and that we will now live happily ever after”.

**Note: To read the rest of this article you need to be a current member. Please contact AQA Victoria or download a membership form.**



## Enhancing an Organisation's Reputation - Responsibilities of Directors

**BILL ROBINSON – AQA BOARD MEMBER.**

*Bill Robinson joined the Board of AQA in May, 2007 and was formally elected a director at the AGM in November, 2007. He has a background in legal and financial management at senior levels and was most recently Internal Ombudsman for the ANZ Banking Group. He is a member of the Board's Finance and Audit Sub-Committee and its Risk Sub-Committee and he chairs a Facilities group that is looking to assess AQA's ongoing physical facilities requirements. This issue Bill focuses on the Board's role in enhancing an organisation's reputation.*

What is a reputation? The Macquarie Dictionary defines reputation as "the estimation in which a person or thing is held especially by the community or the public generally". When applied to a not-for-profit organisation such as AQA, reputation clearly relates to how it is perceived by its members, its directors, its staff, and most importantly, its clients.

US investor Warren Buffet said "It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it." Many of us will recall recent examples of public companies where reputations can be lost through bad management, poor decision making, or failure to respond adequately to a particular crisis.

How does an organisation build reputation? This involves a joint responsibility for the board and the CEO and staff, but the responsibility of addressing those issues that may lead to a loss of reputation starts with the board. The board needs to have in place policies that address the following aspects of its operations:-

- The nature of the company's operations – what industry or field is it involved in?
- Ensuring that the right strategic choices are made;

- The culture and operations of the organisation;
- The actions and behaviours of company staff;
- The effective management of stakeholder relationships;
- An ability to effectively respond to a crisis.

What generally harms a reputation? Fraud by a company's directors, officers or staff (or even sub-contractors) is a common cause of loss of reputation. There can be strong connections between fraud and other unethical behaviour and this includes the perception of poor leadership both by board and management. The result can be negative publicity, reduced government funding, fundraising grants, litigation and a downgraded credit rating and the inability to recruit and retain good staff.

How does the Board support a positive reputation? Firstly, and most importantly, each director must be aware of their common law and statutory duties and they must act honestly and in good faith at all times. At AQA, the board has a very clear responsibilities charter which outlines the expectations of Directors. Secondly, AQA has established a Risk Management Sub-Committee, with a number of directors as members. This committee works closely with CEO Peter Trethewey to analyse the risks that should be addressed and to ensure that there are policies in place to address each of the risks that have been identified.

AQA's Risk Sub-Committee uses a Risk Management Framework in which the various risks are identified, analysed, evaluated and treated.

**Note: To read the rest of this article you need to be a current member. Please contact AQA Victoria or download a membership form.**

### Please Note:

This copy of News Link is only a sample. The full version is 20 pages of great articles and other information. Current issues are available only to current members. Please contact AQA Victoria regarding membership or download a membership form.