



# NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

OCTOBER 2011

## A Publication from RDA Australia Ltd

For news, updates and chat to other RDA folk, check out RDA on Facebook!

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Riding-for-the-Disabled-Association-of-Australia-RDAA/135449168732>

### CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

A lot has been written of late about philanthropy and volunteering in Australia. Some prominent members of the community have been critical of wealthy Australians as being less than generous with their money. I don't know all the facts of the matter but I do know of many Australians who are extremely generous in giving support to worthy causes, whether they be charities providing services to the underprivileged, victims of natural disasters, or research projects aimed at improving the treatments of cancer and such like.

Giving support to our fellows is one of the truly admired qualities of human beings. Be it finance, friendship, emotional support, education or therapy, helping others can be hugely rewarding. The sense of satisfaction in seeing people respond to a helping hand when in need is obvious. The sharing of knowledge through education is priceless.

There are hundreds of organisations worthy of support and RDA Australia is one of them. An organisation which believes in providing opportunities for people with disabilities, to fit themselves to better cope with life, to teach skills and lift the confidence necessary to feel like valued members of society. The changes one sees in clients is astounding. It takes an involvement in the everyday activity of an RDA Centre to appreciate the development which takes place over a period of six months or a year.

For those who may hesitate to seek opportunities for volunteering or philanthropy, your interest will be rewarded through a commitment to offer and contribute, and your business or trade skills, life experience, advice or wisdom, will make our community a better place.

*Ross Goulden - Chairman*

### NEWS FROM FRDI

The annual face to face meeting of the HETI executive took place in Athens in July this year. Whilst there we had half a day off from our meetings to meet with the committee organising the HETI Congress in Athens in April 2012. We had a tour of the congress venue which is absolutely fantastic and discussed the program arrangements at length. The hotel is superb, the most beautiful venue.

There has been a vast amount of high quality abstracts received and the Scientific Committee will be kept very busy with the selection process.

We are so impressed with all aspects of the congress and look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible. All full members will have received a call for Agenda Items for the meeting at the congress and if you have any items you would like to discuss please return them by the required date.

Although we have been told that our new name (HETI) is approved, due to circumstances beyond our control we unfortunately are still waiting for the formalised sign off. For quite some time Belgium did not have a government in place to constitutionally sign off on any business. We should have it finalised any day now!

I encourage you to spread the word to any organisations or businesses who may like to take the opportunity to advertise in the HETI newsletter. As we have worldwide coverage this is a great opportunity particularly for saddlery and special equipment etc. If you need any further information please contact me or go to the FRDI website or facebook, [www.HETIfederation.org](http://www.HETIfederation.org), [www.frdi-athens2012.gr](http://www.frdi-athens2012.gr) [www.facebook.com/HETI.international](http://www.facebook.com/HETI.international)

As always I remind you that we appreciate your communications and any queries or suggestions you may have.

*Pauline Perry – President, HETI*

## **EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT**

The office has welcomed a number of visitors these past two months including our ASC Sports Consultant, Amanda Beehag, Peter Nicholson from Jurox Pharmaceuticals, the audit team from Moore Stephens, judges Rai Walla and Fiona Heysen for the National Video Championships and RDA Board members, John Stirk (NT) and Judith Van Unen (Vic). Next month we will welcome Ben Harris from Equestrian Australia during his visit for the Adelaide 3-Day International Horse Trials.

Out and about from the office has been National Coaching Coordinator, Sharon Nichols and myself on a visit to Victoria to participate in a very successful Vaulting Workshop. Sharon launched the release of the new Level 1 Vaulting syllabus which received favourable comments from all the participants. We had a great time meeting the girls in the RDAV office, Ariella, Jackie and Edwina, and catching up with RDAV Board members Martin Gray, Tina Pallot and Jenny Stidston.

I am recently returned from visiting RDA Malaysia where I spent time presenting the RDA Coach Education syllabus to coaches and potential coaches from Malaysia. There are plans for Australia to provide ongoing support to Malaysia and we are hoping five or more coaches will attend the National Coaching Workshop in July next year. There has also been a great deal of discussion about an international coach exchange program with opportunities for Australian coaches to visit, coach and share their knowledge in Malaysia and Malaysian coaches to visit Australia to gain knowledge of our coaching practices and principles. Anyone interested should get their passports ready! Japan and Indonesia have also opened discussions with RDA Australia and RDA New Zealand CEO, Guy Ockenden will be visiting Toowoomba as a key note speaker at the RDA AGM with the aim of strengthening ties between Australia and New Zealand. All exciting news for coaching programs.

RDA Hippotherapy are holding their breath and crossing their fingers and toes while we wait for the outcome of a grant application to hold an Advanced Hippotherapy Workshop in 2012. More news soon.

The RDA Office has been bustling on in my absence with the judging of the National Video Dressage Competition, sending out the Annual Surveys, and

planning for the Volunteer Awards Dinner. It was lovely to see all the results from the competition and the awards on the website. Congratulations to all our winners!

Sharon has made bookings for the National Coaching Workshop for July next year at Marcus Oldham College, Victoria and preparation of the program has commenced.

Our staffing situation has settled into a regular routine now and although we are all part time we rotate our days to make sure that the phone is answered as much as possible. We hope you have noticed this improvement in our service to you. It will be an exceptionally busy time for everyone in the office from now until the end of the year as we work towards a number of major events. The office will be closed upon our return from Toowoomba in December to catch up on our paperwork – we still have boxes waiting to be unpacked!

*Karen Aspery - National Executive Officer*

## **2011 NATIONAL VOLUNTEER AWARDS**

The Judges Panel met Monday October 3 to decide the winners of the 2011 RDAA National Volunteer Awards. The Panel consisted of Evelyn O'Loughlin (CEO Volunteering SA&NT), Marguerite Francis (RDAA Life Member) and Norma Pearce (RDAA Board Member).

*"The judges would like to commend all the nominees for their commitment to RDA in so many ways over so many hours, days, weeks and years.*

*After examination of all the nominees and the supporting statements the judges reached unanimous decisions in each category."*

### **Michael Field Memorial Award:**

Cathy Bantick (TAS)

### **Volunteer Encouragement Award:**

Christine O'Neill (WA)

### **Young Volunteer of the Year Award:**

Magdelaine O'Moore (SA)

*"We congratulate the successful candidates and encourage them to continue in their support of RDA and its various activities nationally."*

The Awards Dinner will be held on Saturday 3 December in Toowoomba, Qld. If you would like to attend, please see the booking form on our website ([www.rda.org.au](http://www.rda.org.au)) – spaces are limited so book quickly!

## COACHING REPORT

The last couple of months have been very busy with National competitions and workshops. The new Level 1 Vaulting Sports Specific syllabus was launched at the Vaulting workshop in Victoria on 1-2 October which was attended by coaches from SA, Vic and Qld. Tina Pallot was the presenter on Saturday, instructing us in the basics of vaulting and selecting and training a vaulting horse and Sara Nicholson from the USA presented a fun and informative program on Sunday getting everyone involved and limbered up for vaulting, which surprisingly we all did! (If we middle-aged, unfit people can do it, anyone can!!!) All of the coaches achieved their vaulting qualification so hopefully vaulting will become a stronger presence in RDA nationally. We hope it will be one of the disciplines represented at the Multi-disciplines National Championships next year.

The National Dressage Video championships were held again this year. The response was excellent with 13 tests from Victoria and 13 tests from South Australia. Wintec very generously donated the prizes this year for the winner in each class which consisted of a Saddle bag, saddle blanket, carry bag, set of bandages and Wintec saddle cleaner. The EA judges were Fiona Heysen-Smith (B Level) and Rai Walla (D Level). Prizes, Rosettes and participation certificates have been sent out to all of the entrants.

Congratulations to all!

Next year we are going to have a National Multi-Disciplines Championships in Werribee, Vic. Discussions will take place at the National Disciplines Committee in November as to what the disciplines involved will be. Results from the meeting will be posted in the next Spotlight and the end of year Coaches Newsletter.

The updated coaching OTC and Level 1 syllabus will be printed shortly and will be available either directly through RDAA or your State Coaching coordinator. The Level 2 manuals will remain the same for the present.

### 2011 NATIONAL DRESSAGE VIDEO CHAMPIONSHIPS

Fiona Heysen and Rai Walla came to the RDA National Office to judge the 2011 RDA Australian National Dressage Video Championships on Thursday, 6 October.

Overall 22 riders entered 26 tests. Congratulations to all riders who participated!



We are pleased to announce the following results:

<u>Place</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>%</u>
<u>Introductory Walk B</u>			
<b>1</b>	<b>Harvey Filgate</b>	<b>VIC</b>	<b>68.5</b>
2	Sarah Vadidis	VIC	65.3
3	Natasha Heffernan	SA	62.1
4	Kayla Medhurst	SA	61.4
5	Tegan Bruders-Gray	VIC	60.7
6	Garth Weston	VIC	60.0
7	Rachel Dimattina	VIC	51.4
8	Elaina Newman	VIC	50.7
9	Sandra Bergroth	VIC	47.5
9	Jeremy Hogan	VIC	47.5
10	Benjamin Gartside	VIC	47.1
<u>Introductory Walk D</u>			
<b>1</b>	<b>Kayla Medhurst</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>60.0</b>
2	Tom Arthurson	SA	56.5
3	Coby Dennert	SA	51.9
4	Aiden Hurley	SA	50.7
5	Bonnie Gropler	SA	48.8
<u>Introductory Trot B</u>			
<b>1</b>	<b>Jack Futter</b>	<b>VIC</b>	<b>62.8</b>
2	Ashleigh Simpson	SA	62.5
<u>Introductory Trot E</u>			
<b>1</b>	<b>Matthew Davis</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>72.5</b>
2	Ashleigh Simpson	SA	68.5
3	Jack Fuller	SA	62.8
<u>Introductory Canter A</u>			
<b>1</b>	<b>Lauren French</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>68.6</b>
2	Lauren Holmes	VIC	65.0
<u>Introductory Canter D</u>			
<b>1</b>	<b>Lauren French</b>	<b>SA</b>	<b>66.8</b>
<u>Para-Equestrian Team Test 1B</u>			
<b>1</b>	<b>Madeleine Sobb</b>	<b>VIC</b>	<b>51.8</b>
<u>Para-Equestrian Individual Test 1B</u>			
<b>1</b>	<b>Madeleine Sobb</b>	<b>VIC</b>	<b>58.6</b>

*Sharon Nichols - National Coaching Coordinator*

## RDA MALAYSIA

In September 2011 I was offered a wonderful opportunity by RDA Australia to visit Malaysia and deliver some training to coaches over there who were interested in learning more about the Australian system of coaching.



Coaching in Malaysia was a new experience coping with the heat and humidity. They have 6 centres, all with covered arenas and most RDA horses are on loan from commercial riding schools. Lessons are generally held between 10 – 12.30pm. The horses are all stabled and get fed at 12.30pm so they start to get fidgety if their lunch gets delayed. The workshop was held at the Royal Selangor Polo Club with beautiful green grounds and views over Kuala Lumpur. I also visited the centre at Bukit Kiarah Equestrian Centre, a gorgeous private equestrian centre with Indoor Arenas, outdoor arenas, show jumping, and polo grounds with instructors from all over the world offering lessons. Everyone was interested to hear about how Australian horses are stabled and fed and surprised that we just let them roam around in paddocks to eat grass.

RDA Malaysia coaches have been following the UK system of coaching with Level 0 being training for volunteers (including a log book of hours to be completed), Level 1 is a Helper Coach, Level 2 is a Group Coach and Level 3 is a Coach Educator / Assessor. I met coaches and trainees from UK, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa and Malaysia who are all working in RDA. With England so far away they have not had trainers or assessors visit for a few years and were very impressed with the Australian system for Orientation and Level 1 Coaches. I have been invited back for two visits next year and we are hoping five coaches will come to Australia in July for the National Coaching Workshop. I have already received several “friend requests” on Facebook and will be staying in touch with these great, fun coaches and looking forward to my next visit.

RDA Australia has also received interest from Japan and Indonesia and we will be talking more at the National Disciplines meetings in November about setting up an international coach exchange program

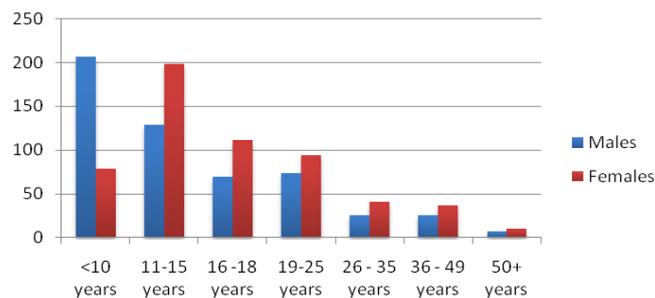
for Australian coaches to visit and coach overseas and for Australian centres to host international coaches and trainees.

## ASC SURVEYS

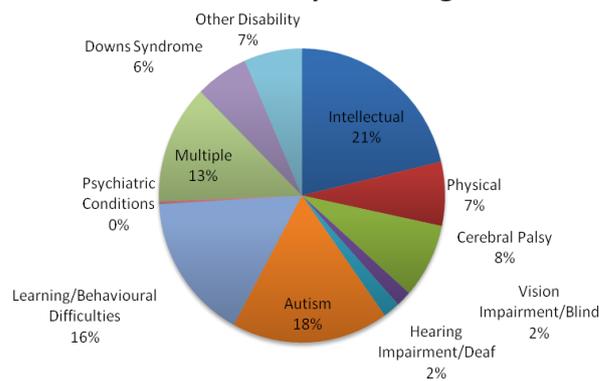


Surveys collecting information for the Australian Sports Commission were sent to State Offices in late September. These surveys provide information for the ASC to determine what services we provide as a sporting institution in Australia. These surveys also provide important information for RDA as we are able to better gauge our client spread across the country which is very useful in deciding what programs are most important to RDA in different states. Stacey Seal (RDA Office) has created a package of RDA statistics using information from the 2009 annual survey. These were sent to all State Offices in September. Please see the sample below.

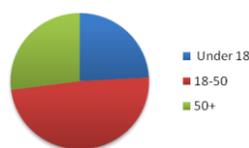
### Rider Demographics



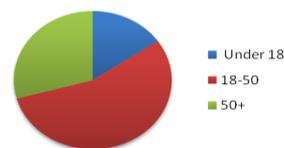
### Disability Percentages



#### Female Volunteers



#### Male Volunteers



The ASC included information about Social Media in their Play By The Rules e-bulletin ([www.playbytherules.net.au](http://www.playbytherules.net.au)). You can read the article [here](#)

## DANIEL'S STORY

### TODAY I AM GOING VAULTING – I WILL RIDE CHEEK

*Story from Chris Kitson*

In January 2009 I was approached by Daniel's RDA Coach Kay Fowler and asked if I would be interested in helping with a vaulting program she was establishing at Ripplebrook RDA. I agreed to help as long as Daniel could attend. Her immediate answer was "Of course he can". So began a wonderful journey for both Daniel and myself. We had 9 months to get Daniel to accept getting on a barrel, do movements on a horse other than just riding and plan and teach him routines. As the weeks went by he became very comfortable with his new equine interest and his skills both on the horse and barrel developed very quickly. As the 2009 Championships approached we were confident Daniel had learnt his routines and was comfortable with his helpers.



Competition day arrived. We took a team of 6 vaulters and what a weekend we had. Daniel executed his routines to the best of his ability and

placed in 2 events. The team won the Hi Point award and everyone came away with a lot more knowledge ready to prepare for the next year. I was very proud of Daniel as he not only coped with the competition but as we took the opportunity to camp at Brookleigh he had to mix with other children and seemed to enjoy the interaction.

Planning for 2010 Championships began in March and much of our focus was on improving the technique of our vaulters. We decided to challenge Daniel by including several slightly more difficult moves both in his individual and pas de deux routines. By mid-year it was clear he had accepted his new routines and now it was just a matter of him trying to remember them.

The championship weekend arrived and Daniel was entered into 5 events:

- Individual walk freestyle
- Pas de deux Integrated Barrel
- Compulsories Walk
- Pas de deux Integrated Horse
- Individual Barrel



I was again concerned he may not cope with the competition but he took it all in his stride and the results spoke for themselves. He won 4 out of the 5 events he entered and came 2<sup>nd</sup> in the other. He executed his routines without fault. He seems to enjoy performing in front of an audience and judging by the audience reaction they appreciate his achievements - there wasn't a dry eye in the arena.

Now as the 2011 championships draw nearer we are well underway with new routines and this year we are trying to get Daniel to stand on both the barrel and on the horse. I am very confident that he will.

Whatever the results this year I am very proud of Daniel as he is competing in a sport he loves with people who understand that it's OK to be different.

### AUTISM GRANT FUNDING FROM RDA



Funds have generously been made available to RDA Australia by the Southern Tier Healthlink Association in the United States of America. The director hoped these funds would be used specifically for riders within RDA who have been diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. Autism affects Australians widely and greatly impacts the Riding for the Disabled association. In the spirit of Southern Tier Healthlink's donation, we have initiated the RDAA Autism Fund where \$15,000 will be made available through this generous donation to aid riders with Autism.

A successful application will demonstrate how this money will be spent to benefit Autistic riders and that this expense reflects the criteria. A centre or state has the potential to successfully apply for \$1000 worth of funding for their riders with Autism! We hope that your centre or state will take advantage of this wonderful opportunity to make a difference to lives of riders with Autism in the Riding for the Disabled family. Three streams of funding have been created:

Stream 1 – \$300 per centre for Resources and Education

Stream 2 – \$200 per centre for Rider Scholarship

Stream 3 – \$500 per centre for Autism Projects

The first round opened on October 17 2011 and will end November 18 2011, please see the RDA website for more information on round dates and how to apply for funding.

### Diary Dates

<b>Oct 26</b>	RDA ACT Volunteer Celebration Dinner
<b>Nov 4-6</b>	<b>RDA TAS State Coaches Workshop</b>
<b>Nov 18-20</b>	<b>Adelaide 3Day International Horse Trials</b>
<b>Nov 26-27</b>	<b>National Disciplines Meetings (Melbourne)</b>
<b>Nov 26 &amp; 27</b>	<b>RDA WA Vaulting Championships</b>
<b>Dec 3</b>	<b>RDAA AGM (Toowoomba, QLD)</b>
<b>Dec 3</b>	<b>RDAA National Volunteer Awards Dinner (Toowoomba, QLD)</b>
Dec 3-7	5 day TTEAM workshop at Rokeby, Victoria – contact <a href="mailto:sue@mckibbin.net">sue@mckibbin.net</a>
<b>Dec 4</b>	<b>RDAA National Delegates Meeting (Toowoomba, QLD)</b>
Dec 5	RDA National Office closed for Administrative catch up
<b>Dec 8</b>	<b>First round Autism Funding Close</b>
Dec 9	QLD School Term 4 finishes
Dec 10	RDA Pegasus Christmas Party
Dec 12-15	Level I International seminar on therapeutic riding (Athens, Greece)
<b>Dec 15</b>	<b>Autism Funding Approvals</b>
Dec 15	WA School Term 4 finishes
Dec 16	NT, SA School Term 4 finishes
Dec 20	VIC School Term 4 finishes
Dec 21	ACT, TAS School Term 4 finishes
<b>Dec 22</b>	<b>RDA National Office closes for Christmas Break (reopens 9 Jan)</b>

### NEW PARTNERSHIP

Riding for the Disabled Australia is thrilled to announce that Cavalletti Classifieds are partnering with RDAA to offer all RDA centres with complimentary advertising!

Cavalletti is an Equestrian website which started in 1998. Cavalletti have a genuine equestrian following of over 30,000 visitor sessions per week. They have For Sale listings, Business and Club listings, Events and Wanted advertising and have generously offered to provide RDA centres with promotional advertising for their centres and events. As part of their support of RDA Australia all centres will be given the opportunity to register and receive complimentary advertising for help in Centre promotion, Horse rehoming, and other forms of advertising as required.

Please contact Trina on [trina@cavalletti.com.au](mailto:trina@cavalletti.com.au) if you have any questions or would like assistance in setting up your account.



### STATE NEWS

#### RDAA NT:

Riding for the Disabled in the Top End Inc is starting a new and innovative program and is looking for expressions of interest from qualified RDAA coaches (Level 1 or 2). The role will include tutoring, mentoring and coaching a group of 10 students for a 40 week period. This is a paid position with a 12 month renewable contract. The program is a joint venture between RDA in the Top End Inc, the Northern Territory Government and The Education Department of the NT. Please call Lesley Monro (Centre Manager) RDA in the Top End Inc (08) 8931 0093.

#### RDAA SA:

Bob Gurr is a dedicated Riding for the Disabled volunteer at his local Mount Barker centre, where his knowledge of horses is matched by his desire to help people with disabilities. Bob is also a horse-owner and at the age of 79 is still a regular competitor in the tough sport of endurance riding.

On October 1, he tackled the 160km Tom Quilty National Championship Endurance Ride, run in several loops through Mount Crawford forest from its base at Mount Pleasant oval, east of Adelaide.

As if the course was not challenging enough, the weather added to rider woes, rain and at times stormy conditions tested the sturdiest of constitutions.

On the final leg, in the dark of night, Bob's horse Grevillea Bint Bindii, lost heart so he dismounted and walked with her for the last eight kilometres, coaxing her to the finish line 12 minutes past the final cut-off time.

Bob didn't win a coveted silver Quilty buckle for his efforts, but won accolades from his RDA friends for not giving up, for living up to the endurance motto of "To finish is to win."

He achieved what riders half his age had failed to do.

RDAA SA state manager Kay Milton said, "Bob's achievement inspires all of us to 'believe and achieve', and proves it is never too late to chase your goals."

"We congratulate him on his efforts and hope he will continue to enjoy both his endurance riding sport and his RDA volunteering."

#### RDAA TAS:

RDA North is delighted to have been successful in the Federal Government Volunteer Grants 2011 recent round. This money will enable us to buy equipment to help make volunteering a little easier – we will be purchasing new wheelbarrows, shovels and rakes for mucking out. Also, a small TV and DVD player for showing training DVD's and tables for help with our fundraising activities.

Please email [admin@rda.org.au](mailto:admin@rda.org.au) if you no longer wish to receive RDAA's bimonthly newsletter, **Spotlight**.

Next issue: 22 December 2011

## Mission Statement

RDA enables people with disabilities & volunteers throughout Australia to experience enjoyment, challenge and a sense of achievement through participation in equestrian activities, resulting in the development of life skills, improved quality of life and attainment of personal goals

We are dedicated to providing these services through an organisation which is relevant, innovative, effective and rewarding.

### **RDA SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS**



Australian Government  
Australian Sports Commission



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