



# NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

What a year it has been. From the drought of recent years across the Eastern States to flooding rains, these have brought a range of effects from the much needed filling of dams and waterways to destruction of sought after bountiful crops. Concurrently we have drought conditions in Western Australia. Through all of this the human spirit shows strongly, as farmers face another year of lost production, and resolve is necessary to make the most of the situation at hand.

A similar challenge faces people with disabilities, a multitude of conditions which don't go away, and a constant sense of discomfort which hinders achievement of everyday tasks. The human spirit shows through, as it does with the thousands of volunteers who offer their time and energies to make life more fulfilling for participants of RDA, who in turn invariably put in one hundred percent effort and appreciate the wonderful opportunities available for developing skills in the RDA environment.

While regular classes are running throughout the year, Centre, State and the National body are busy administering for the organisation, providing essential services such as Coaching Policy, Insurance, Registrations, Member protection and training, Events and promotion. Finance is always a major part of running RDA, and the Organisation requires more support from Government and Corporate Australia for providing training, therapy, education, social and emotional development and positive outcomes for thousands of people who are constantly at risk of being neglected.

RDAA recently held its AGM and Strategic Planning weekend in Melbourne, when the Organisation resolved to strengthen its branding, an indication of the confidence in the quality of service and esteem in which RDA is held. State Presidents and National Board members are working positively towards building further the reputation of RDA in offering a wider range of services, particularly in the area of therapies for kids. There are so many young people in our community with social, emotional and

mental problems, who could benefit from interacting with horses in the nurturing environment created by mature, caring, skilled volunteers.

RDA is a National social and community asset which deserves strong financial and resources support. It brings people together, creating a sense of consideration for others. – *Ross Goulden* (RDAA Chair)

## RDAA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM was held at Quest Apartments on Sunday 14 November 2010. As there were no vacant positions for election, the returning Board members are:

- Ross Goulden (WA) – Chair
- John Stirk (NT) – Treasurer (shared position during handover)
- Bill Ash (Qld) – retiring Treasurer
- Norma Pearce (Vic) – Secretary
- Judith Van Unen (Vic)
- Steve Hutchins (Vic)
- Peta Wellstead (WA)

## RDAA STRATEGIC PLANNING MEETING

State Presidents from ACT, SA, TAS, QLD and WA met with Board Members at Quest Apartments on Saturday November 12, 2010 for a Strategic Planning Meeting, with the combined goal of working towards the future of Riding for the Disabled, at National, State and Centre levels.

### Diary Dates

Dec 22 – RDAA Office shuts for Christmas  
Jan 10 – RDAA Office opens  
Jan 24 – School returns NT, QLD  
Jan 26 – Australia Day Public Holiday  
Jan 28 – School returns NSW  
Jan 31 – School returns SA  
Feb 1 – School returns VIC  
Feb 2 – School returns WA  
Feb 4 – School returns ACT  
Feb 15 – School returns TAS

**EQUITANA Melbourne**  
**18 – 21 November 2010**



RDA staff and volunteers enjoyed catching up with current and past members of RDA who visited the stand during Equitana. Over \$1500 was raised from donations and entrants to the “Name the Horse” Competition. A life-sized fibrecast model of a horse was painted by artist **Barbel Georgi**. Over the four days of Equitana, Barbel depicted six equestrian disciplines reflecting Equitana. Thanks to the wonderful sponsorship of Hygain and Alltech, daily prizes were awarded to contestants which included a basket of World Equestrian Games merchandise and a voucher for a bag of Hygain pelleted feed.



Daily winners were:

- Kim Humphreys
- Debra Ware
- Holly Bast /Lana Thompson
- Liz Barker

The final winner is Josephine Bonnet with the name of “Capability”

The finished horse will go to Inglis Bloodstock for auction on 18 March 2011 at Oaklands Junction, Victoria with all proceeds to RDA.

Thanks to our sponsors on the weekend.



Huge thanks also go to the volunteers who attended to man the RDA stand over the four days that Equitana was held. Karen Aspery, who oversaw the set up and running of the stand was most grateful for all the support she received.



Daily prize winner Kym Humphreys with Smiley



Debra Ware, daily prize winner



Daily Prize Winner – Holly Bast



Volunteers Sarah, Lori, Smiley and Maddie



Rick and Smiley

## COACHING REPORT

The Coaching Department welcomes new team member, Vicki Price. Vicki is an NCAS Level 1 Coach (EA) and is studying towards her Level 2 qualification. She also has extensive experience in veterinary practices, horse care and lecturing. Vicki will fill the position of Projects Officer for a 6 month contract, working with Karen and Pauline on finalising the syllabus review and developing a Coaching Policies and Procedures manual.

### National Disciplines Meetings 12 – 13 November.

Representatives from all States attended in their subject expert field to plan future coaching and development programs for Hippotherapy, Carriage Driving, Vaulting, Dressage and Riding. Some of the planned outcomes are:

- Review of policy for carriage drivers who use supportive strapping in their wheelchairs
- New training module now available for Carriage Driving Whips who wish to use four-wheeled (Type C) vehicles in the RDA program. This is a stand-alone training module that can be added to your existing Level 1 Whip qualification.
- Proposed National Carriage Driving Workshop, Fairbridge WA 28 – 30 April 2012.
- Hippotherapy Bridging Course, Bunbury WA, 9 April 2011
- Level 1 Hippotherapy Workshop, Victoria in November 2011
- Proposed Level 2 Hippotherapy Workshop (with international presenter) in 2012
- Establish the Barb Heine Memorial Scholarship fund to support members attending Hippotherapy related activities
- Proposed development of Hippotherapy self-paced modules to align with the RDA Coaching syllabus
- Proposed development of RDA ramp guidelines with standards, designs and example plans
- Proposed review and re-print of the Volunteer Information Booklet
- Proposed review of the RDA Risk Management Guidelines (2003)
- Vaulting DVD's completed and uploaded to Coaches Portal
- National Vaulting Workshop, Qld in 2011
- National Combined Competition to be delivered in WA in 2012 (to include Carriage Driving & Vaulting)

### New Coaching Syllabus

The review of the Coaching Syllabus is in its final stages. It was presented for comment to National representatives at the Discipline Committee meetings in November and final edits are underway. The new syllabus will consist of

a core workbook for all trainees, followed by a sports specific component for Riding, Carriage Driving or Vaulting with learning resources and manuals for each section (OTC and Level 1). This will allow coaches to more easily train for multi-discipline qualifications. After the final edit and submission to the Australian Sports Commission, quotes for printing will be obtained with anticipated release of the new training material at the end of January 2011.

We are hoping to put together a calendar of all states Training Programmes for 2011. Please send your calendar dates, at least to June 2011 to National Office by January 31 to ensure your workshops are promoted.

Karen Aspery

Pauline Perry

## VOLUNTEER AWARDS DINNER

The 2010 RDA Australia National Volunteer Awards were again held at The Brass Tavern in Moonee Ponds on 12 December 2010 with 50 people from all over Australia attending to celebrate and recognise the efforts and accomplishments of RDA volunteers.

After receiving 11 nominations from around Australia over all three categories, the winners were chosen by Paul Grogan (ASC), John Bennet (Life Member) and Ross Goulden (RDAA Chair).

- Michael Field Memorial Award: Katy Ash (QLD)
- Volunteer Encouragement Award: Geoffrey Martin (SA)
- Young Volunteer of the Year Award: Heidi Torrens (QLD)

The awards were presented by RDAA life members Wendy Maplestone, Pauline Perry, and Norma Pearce .



Katy Ash, Heidi Torrens & Geoff Martin

Board members Bill Ash and Judith Van Unen with award winner Geoff Martin, Susan Martin and Caroline Partridge.



## NEWS FROM FRDI/HETI



Chair of RDAA Program Delivery, Pauline Perry, has spent time overseas recently in her role as President of the international organisation HETI formerly FRDI, of which RDAA is a full member.

Prompted by her interest in Para Equestrian competition and role of Chairman of Selectors for Australia Pauline attended the World Equestrian Games in Kentucky in Sep/Oct where our Aussie team acquitted themselves very well.

Whilst there Pauline had the opportunity to meet up with Gisela Rhodes, the EO of HETI. They had the opportunity to approach who they thought might be interested in having a trade stand at the FRDI congress in Greece in 2012 as well as generally promote the international organisation.

Two weeks after arriving home Pauline went to Taiwan where she had been invited to have a table at the FEI General Assembly representing HETI (FRDI) and dispensing information about the organisation. She was also most fortunate to be involved in the Hope Cup where she was the Technical Delegate. Pauline hopes this will be the beginning of regular international Para Equestrian competitions within the Asia Pacific region. This will give much needed opportunities for international competition for riders in this part of the world.

The trip to Taiwan was followed closely by a visit to the United Kingdom. The Board of FRDI met for their annual face to face meeting at the Fortune Centre of Riding Therapy in Hampshire (part of the beautiful New Forest area). They had a very intensive and productive four days where the main focus was on the review of the FRDI strategic plan and future directions of HETI.

The board was very grateful to Jennifer Dixon-Clegg and all the staff at this wonderful centre for hosting the event and for their great hospitality. The FRDI board are ever mindful of managing frugally and these annual meetings would not be possible without the kind offers from various organisations of meeting venues and assistance to source cheaper accommodation.

*– Pauline Perry (President FRDI/HETI)*

## STATE NEWS

### RDA ACT:

Sadly it was necessary to retire a large portion of our herd as a result of age related issues during 2010 which has meant reducing our programs. A few major projects have come to fruition, including the renovation and enlargement of our sand arena. The Canberra community has been great support to Pegasus this year and we are overwhelmed and very thankful.

### RDA NT:

#### FRIDAY FUN DAY – PAINT THE PONIES

A great night had by all with the horses all looking very colourful and the kids and adults all having a great time. Rider and Volunteer Certificates were passed out at the BBQ and we welcomed some new people to the RDA Community. This night of paint and frivolity will continue at our Christmas get together on Saturday 4 December at 4.00pm.

### RDA QLD:

Next year's State Conference & AGM will be held over 4 days from Thursday 3rd March to Sunday 6th March 2011 at Pine Rivers. It will include coaching and centre management workshops and promises to be an exciting few days. If you are interested in attending the conference, please contact RDA Q State Office for more details. The RDA Q office will be closed from Tuesday, December 21<sup>st</sup> until Monday, January 10<sup>th</sup> 2011.

### RDA SA:

Look out for our new website, to be launched early in 2011. We are also updating our constitution and policies, and are also paying more attention to our fundraising activities. Another busy year wraps up in South Australia, with the most significant change being the move of RDA Australia from Victoria to share our office space in Adelaide, as well as two of our valued staff (Theresa Moore and Karen Aspery).

We had a record number - 474 - riders this year at our 13 centres, and our centres continue to grow and be more adventurous in the programs they are delivering. The RDA SA Office will be closed from Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December, to Monday January 10<sup>th</sup> 2010.

### RDA TAS:

The State was delighted to receive the Tasmanian Department of Health and Human Services Community Excellence Award for service to people with disabilities. The publicity will be very good for RDA raising awareness and hopefully assisting with some increased funding. The Award consisted of \$1000.00, a lovely trophy and a DVD with an interview with the State President, Pauline Perry, some rider's and their parents at Kingborough RDA centre.

The money will be spent on upgrading the RDA TAS. Website. The award was accepted by Pauline at an evening function with Representatives of many organisations and state government members.

**RIDEABILITY VICTORIA:**

Rideability Victoria Fundraising Trail Ride Adventure, Trentham 11 – 17 April 2011

A trail ride designed by riders for riders – Register now and bring along family, friends and work mates for a great riding holiday with your horse. The company is great, the trails are great and the food is fabulous! Registration includes all meals, souvenir polo shirt, bale of hay/Lucerne, hot showers & clean toilets, beautiful campsites. Proceeds to Rideability Victoria Register by calling (03)9486 5755 or email [admin@rdav.asn.au](mailto:admin@rdav.asn.au)

**RDA WA:**

On behalf of RDAWA Executive, I would like to thank you for another full and successful year for our RDAWA riders. This of course, can only be attributed to the dedication you have shown as volunteers, staff and family and friends. A big thank you to everyone doesn't quite seem adequate. Such small words for such an enormous effort on everyone's part, however it is genuine and the results speak for themselves with smiling and happy riders. Next year is already looking to being bigger and better, with more and more centres taking up the opportunities of training, holding and presenting competitions and new pathways to competing in the up and coming Special Olympics. It's going to be a very exciting year for our riders. The RDA WA office will be closed from Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> December until Monday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2011.

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

**RDA SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS**



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