



# NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

## DECEMBER 2013

A Publication from RDA Australia Ltd

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

### EXECUTIVE OFFICER REPORT

What an inspiring way to finish the year! Firstly meeting our three National Volunteer Award Winners and hearing their stories of devotion and commitment to their RDA centre. The Volunteer Awards Dinner was filled with enjoyment and camaraderie. The highlights for me were meeting former RDA President and Life Member Doug Denby and wife Jenny and hearing firsthand stories about Michael Field (namesake for the Michael Field Award) who founded the National RDA organisation with Doug and others. Joann Formosa, Paralympic Gold medallist in equestrian at the London 2012 Games, set the tears flowing with her stories of dreams come true. She shared her gold medal with everyone and invited them to hold it tightly in their hands and wish for their dreams to come true as well. Then it was off to the RDA National Championships the following week, where the RDA National Office team drove over to Werribee to put together the best competition we have had so far. A record breaking number of competitors entered this year with 45 competitors in the 4 events over 3 days. What an action packed three days with National Classifier Jill Shelton completing classifications, Julia Battams talent-identifying up and coming riders for the Equestrian Australia para-equestrian squads, talks and videos from judges Jan Geary and Merrilyn Hamilton-Smith, lessons with Mary Longden, inspiring opening and closing ceremonies with riders all decked out in their team uniforms, a fun fancy dress night and BBQ with Catherine Shelley providing the band and entertainment and again, Joann Formosa, this time with her awe-inspiring horse Worldwide PB performing a divine freestyle test (dressage to music) and renown horse behaviouralist Andrew McLean explaining how Worldwide PB was trained to follow Joann's customised commands.

We have really enjoyed all the emails and Facebook messages from the riders about the great time that they had at the Nationals and we hope that this enthusiasm will continue to help grow this exciting competition into the future.

*Karen Aspery  
National Executive Officer*

### NATIONAL ASSESSOR WORKSHOP, WA

2-3 FEBRUARY 2014

RDA Australia, in partnership with RDA WA, will present an Assessor Workshop for current and aspiring National RDA Assessors, 2<sup>nd</sup> – 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2014 in Western Australia. This 2-day workshop will cost \$65 per person (value \$215).

To maintain accreditation, National RDA Assessors are required to attend an update course every four years. For Assessors who were unable to attend the last course in August 2013 in Adelaide, a second course is now being planned. 4 places at the Workshop will be funded by RDA Australia for participants to attend from interstate (up to a maximum of \$400 per person will be refund on presentation of travel receipts).

Accommodation is available at the RDA WA Bunkhouse (12 rooms @ \$40 each)

Bookings through [admin@rda.org.au](mailto:admin@rda.org.au)

### RDA NATIONAL OFFICE CLOSURE



The RDA National Office will close for Christmas on Friday December 13 and will reopen on Monday 13 January.

We wish everyone a safe and merry Christmas and look forward to all that 2014 holds!

## RDA NATIONAL VOLUNTEER AWARDS

### DINNER



We had another fantastic turn out at this years National Volunteer Awards Dinner, held again at Morphetville Junction in South Australia.

With special guests from Jurox, OAMPS Insurance Brokers and Adelaide Shores Resort as well as VIPs Guy Ockenden from NZ RDA and Guest Speaker Joann Formosa, 2012 London Paralympic Gold Medallist, the night was a fantastic celebration of volunteers and the work they do for Riding for the Disabled all around the country.



Joann's Q&A session with MC Lisa McAskill, was a highlight of the evening, talking about her journey from RDA coach, to rider to Paralympic Gold Medallist

kept the crowd entranced and so many people wanted to have their photo taken with her and her gold medal that she nearly didn't get to eat!

However, the Volunteer Award presentations was what everyone was waiting for! We were thrilled to have two out of the three Judging Panel members attending to be able to present two of the awards, with RDAA Chair, John Stirk, stepping in to present the third.

Congratulations again to all of our winners, as well as all of the nominees – you are all an inspiration!

It was a fantastic night and we can't wait for next years Dinner. Make sure it's in your diaries for 31 October, 2014!

Nominations for the 2014 awards open on May 31, 2014.

Thanks to everyone on the judging panel, our special guests, VIPs Joann Formosa and Guy Ockenden and HorseWyse, sponsor of the Young Volunteer of the Year Award.



#### **Young Volunteer of the Year**

Tyler Harris

Presented by Guy Ockende, CEO NZ RDA



#### **Volunteer Encouragement Award**

Claudia Nevah

Presented by John Stirk, RDAA Chair



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

Pauline Perry OAM

Presented by Doug Denby, RDAA Life Member



## **MESSAGE FROM NEW ZEALAND RDA**

NZ Riding for the Disabled has a strong focus on providing the best possible outcomes for the Riders that come to us. As part of this strategy we are keen to learn from other RDAs around the world, particularly Australia, and to identify opportunities for our two organisations to work together for mutual benefit.

This year I was pleased to be able to travel to Adelaide RDA for the National Awards, my second visit to the Awards. For the first time this year I was also part of the judging panel for the Awards themselves, and having been one of the judges in New Zealand I knew it was going to be a difficult process due to the typically high standard of nominations. After spending time examining and making my decision, the three judges discussed our choices by teleconference and agreed. The winners were all deserving and I was honoured to be part of this process.

The main focus of my visit was to be part of the annual meetings and to learn more about the work being undertaken on a National level. It was clear that your national team, Board and State representatives work very hard on your behalf.

Saturday and Sunday were devoted to examining the key issues and establishing processes for dealing with future challenges. For me, this was remarkably inspiring and motivational. We all face similar issues and it was heartening to see the passion for RDA being directed into, what I think, will be great outcomes. I know that I learned a lot from watching your team in action.

I hope that we can continue to build on the relationship between our two countries; the opportunities for shared training, shared resources and even joint fundraising campaigns offer real synergies for both countries, and we also hope to welcome RDAA members to our organisation in the near future.

*Guy Ockenden*  
CEO

*New Zealand Riding for the Disabled Assoc. Inc.*

## **COACHING REPORT**

Another year has come and gone before we know it! It has been a busy year with National meetings in April, a National Assessor Workshop in August and the biggest achievement was the National Championships,

held at the Werribee National Equestrian Centre in Victoria on the 12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> November. 44 riders in total entered from Victoria, Western Australia, Tasmania, South Australia, Queensland and New South Wales. The weather was cold and rainy, however it did not seem to dampen the spirits of riders, coaches and their support teams. Well done to all states and riders who made the effort to attend. One of the highlights was watching Joanne Formosa on her magnificent stallion Worldwide PB perform a Freestyle dressage test.

As RDA Centres are winding up their programs for the year, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a happy and safe New Year!

Thank you to all Coaches and Volunteers who have given of their time and energy to keep this wonderful organisation going.

*Sharon Nichols*  
National Coaching Coordinator

## **HETI REPORT**

*Taken from latest HETI newsletter:*  
<http://www.frdi.net/newsletters.html>

Dear Members,

I hope this autumn season finds you all well and meaningfully engaged in your equine work!

As Gisela noted [see Newsletter Article], this summer our Board undertook many initiatives, among them a revamping of our membership categories. These changes were arrived at following a period of careful, methodical deliberation. They were created out of a desire to promote inclusiveness and to strengthen our membership base, a vital ingredient to a healthy organization. In the coming months you will be hearing news of enhanced features on our website. We feel very strongly our mission to disseminate information to all our members and this will be one of a series of steps we are taking in that direction.

As we move towards our Congress in Taiwan in 2015, we have every hope of meeting or exceeding our members' expectations. We have never forgotten that HETI is a membership organization and serves its members.

Thank you all for your support.

Cordially,

*Ann O'Shallie*  
President, HETI

### Diary Dates

<b>Dec 13</b>	<b>RDA National Office closes</b>
<b>Jan 13</b>	<b>RDA National office opens</b>
<b>Feb 2-3</b>	<b>National Assessor Workshop, WA</b>
<b>Feb 19</b>	<b>RDAA Board Meeting</b>
Feb 23	RDA QLD AGM
<b>Mar 19</b>	<b>RDAA Board Meeting</b>
<b>Apr 16</b>	<b>RDAA Board Meeting</b>
<b>May 2-3</b>	<b>National Program Delivery Meetings, VIC</b>
<b>May 16-18</b>	<b>RDAA General Meeting, SA</b>
<b>May 21</b>	<b>RDAA Board Meeting</b>
<b>May 31</b>	<b>National Volunteer Awards Nominations Open</b>
<b>June 18</b>	<b>RDAA Board Meeting</b>
June 21-22	RDA Q State Championships

### **A NEW BOARD MEMBER FOR RDAA**



RDAA is proud to welcome Anita Bayford onto the National Board.

Anita Bayford has been working in the not-for-profit sector for nearly 20 years,

most recently as General Manager Client Services and, Client and Community Development at SCOSA (Spastic Centres of South Australia). She has extensive experience working with people with disabilities and brings strong professional skills in quality service delivery including supporting people with severe, multiple and complex disabilities, high health care needs, behavioural and social integration barriers, and intellectual disability.

As a tertiary educated allied health professional (Developmental Educator) her strength and passion is in the holistic development of people living with disabilities, social inclusion, community integration and in supporting individuals to reach their personal goals and aspirations. Her passion to 'make a difference' includes training qualifications and experience to support individual learning and broader organisational change management.

Anita lives in SA with her husband Terry and children Winnie-Mai and Jack. Having been a typical 'teenage horse fanatic', she has enjoyed owning a number of leisure horses over the years and sharing her love of our equine friends with her children. She looks forward to combining her personal interest with professional skills to support Riding for the Disabled Australia.

## **STATE NEWS**

### **RDA ACT:**

Jane Thompson has been newly appointed as Pegasus' Executive Officer. Her experience as an executive manager and professional fundraiser specializing in the non-profit sector will be complementary to the aims of Riding for the Disabled Association and Pegasus.

Jane's non-profit experience extends to educational institutions, alcohol and other drug, aged care and disability organisations.

Having children who have multiple disabilities and having been exposed to a love for horses and the competence gained through riding competitively as a young person she has much to offer the Association. She is keen to assist the Association, Pegasus, and people with a disability, and we look forward to working with her.

### **RDA QLD:**

#### **Diary Dates for 2014**

RDAQ AGM:	Sunday 23 <sup>rd</sup> February, Shaftesbury Campus
RDAQ State Championships:	21 <sup>st</sup> & 22 <sup>nd</sup> June, QSEC
RDAQ State Conference:	26 <sup>th</sup> -28 <sup>th</sup> September, Shaftesbury Campus

#### **National Championships**

2 competitors from RDA Queensland attended this year's National Championships, with Melody Jacobs, RDAQ Events Coordinator, as team coach. Both girls did very well in their events achieving places.

#### **2013 PCAQ Personality Quest**

The 2013 Personality Quest Dinner was held at Gympie Conference Centre on the 29th of November. Lyn Crichton, Sue & Brian Shannon and Jan Ayre attended the event on behalf of RDAQ. Lyn also had the task of judging the 11 entrants.

The evening was a wonderful fun filled event that showcased the hard work and dedication of the 11 (10 girls and 1 boy) quest entrants.

RDAQ greatly appreciates the efforts of each of the entrants in fundraising for affiliated RDA centres across Queensland.

#### **2014 RDAQ AGM**

This will be held on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2014, at Gillespie Grove, Shaftesbury Campus 1-83 Deception Bay Rd Deception Bay, starting at 9.30am. Members and interested people are welcome to attend.

## **RDA NATIONAL DISCIPLINE CHAMPIONSHIPS**



We had a fantastic week in Werribee, Victoria, despite the constant cloud and very regular rain.

With a record 44 competitors entered into this years Championships, we had three very full days which kept everyone very busy!

There are lots of photos of the winners presentations on our [Facebook page](#) and you can see all of the results on our [website](#)

### **FANCY DRESS BBQ NIGHT**



Best Dressed:  
South Australia



Victoria



Western Australia



New South Wales



National Organising Committee

### **SPONSORS**

Thanks to our sponsors; Australian Sports Commission, Jurox Mini Promectin worming paste, Wintec Australia, Horsewyse Magazine, Country Park Herbs, Bafetti's Restaurant, Racing Victoria and Catherine Shelley for sponsoring the "Willy" Encouragement Award.

### **THANK YOU**

Thanks to all our volunteers who helped make such a fantastic event; judges Jan Geary, Merrilyn Hamilton-Smith, Sally Francis and Elaine Hughes; officials Les Davidson, Mary Longden, Sue Cusack, Diedre Grage, Elinor Hannay, Pamela Lloyd, Glen Gault.

*Thank you so much for your help last week and all your hard work, very much appreciated. Once again all worked well and with a few minor probs in the Prix Caprilli all went according to plan!*

*I enjoyed the challenge of the 45 on two days, you can all have a laugh at the judges expense on that one!*

*Hope all the feedback from everyone was positive and there are even more entries next year.....Jan Geary, Judge*

*Dear All, On behalf of the Victorian riders and RDAV, Board thank you all for the hard work in organising the RDA National Championships.*

*The feedback from riders has been excellent and the stories about the impact for some of them in terms of personal development not just riding) has been very positive - making all the effort worthwhile. Lesley Hewitt, RDA Victoria*

### **RESULTS**

- Highest Scoring Dressage Team Tasmania
- Highest Scoring Prix Caprilli Team Tasmania
- Highest Scoring Trec Team Victoria
- Highest Scoring Showjumping Team Victoria

The Highest Scoring Team overall went to Victoria who won the new Bill Roycroft Memorial Trophy which celebrates our late Patrons involvement with RDA and maintains his legacy within our organisation.



The Willie Trophy, donated by Catherine Shelley, is awarded each year to the rider, who is voted on by judges, officials and team coaches for having the best and fairest attitude through the competition. Our winner for 2013 was David Todd from Victoria. David's comment below, posted on our Facebook page, is proof of why he was a very deserving recipient of this award.



*The Closing ceremony has to rate as the best one that I have even been too. And what an honour it was to be asked to carry the Victorian Flag, then the icing on the cake to be awarded this most splendid trophy. It was also a pleasure to be able to meet and make friends with some many wonderful people. It has to rate as one of the most memorable and enjoyable experiences of my life being there for the four days. Thank you everyone who helped to make this happen.*

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: 14 February 2014

## Mission Statement

RDA enables people with disabilities throughout Australia to experience enjoyment, challenge and a sense of achievement through participation in equestrian activities to improve their quality of life, attain personal goals and develop life skills.

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### **RDA SPONSORS & SUPPORTERS**



**Australian Government**

**Australian Sports Commission**



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