



# NATIONAL SPOTLIGHT

## RDA BOARD MEMBERS REQUIRED

In 2009, RDA celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. As we start our fourth decade our organisation is changing and adapting to better meet the needs of our clients. Our chairman is leading a process of Board Renewal and we seek applications from individuals with the skills and experience to be part of a board that will deliver significant benefits to our local, state and national organisation.

To register your interest, please contact:  
[admin@rda.org.au](mailto:admin@rda.org.au).

## NATIONAL OFFICE

The RDA national office is staffed five days a week by our Administrator, Caroline Partridge. She is contactable by telephone on 03 9731 7388 or you can email Caroline at [admin@rda.org.au](mailto:admin@rda.org.au).

## INTERNATIONAL NEWS



The FRDI XIII International Congress of Therapeutic Riding will take place in Munster on 12 to 15 Aug 2009. Individuals will be attending from Australia RDA.

For further information on FRDI Congress visit  
<http://www.frdi.net/congress.html>

### 2009 DIARY DATES

Oct 19	Board Meeting Teleconference
Nov 21	Volunteer Awards Dinner
Nov 22	RDA AGM & Company Meeting

## FUNDRAISING DEPARTMENT

RDA is delighted to announce that the PETStock Foundation is generously sponsoring:

1. A new Young Coach Development Program
2. 2009 RDA Young Volunteer Award

This is an important grant, not just in terms of money but in recognition of the great work of RDA and its volunteers/coaches, particularly in the current economic climate. [www.rda.org.au](http://www.rda.org.au)

## PETSTOCK/RDAA YOUNG COACH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

RDA is delighted to announce a new initiative. The PETstock Foundation has generously agreed to sponsor a dedicated 'Young Coach Development Program'.

This program is aimed at young aspiring RDA Coaches aged 17-25 years who wish to develop a more in-depth knowledge and understanding of RDA and what it means to be an RDA Coach.

Participation on this program will also help fast track young coaches towards the next level of RDA accreditation.

Young coaches must be nominated by their local RDA Centres to their State Office. There are a limited number of places on this dedicated course. For further information visit: [www.rda.org.au](http://www.rda.org.au).

## RDA COACHING WORKSHOPS

### 2009

- National Young Coach Development Program
- Discipline Committee meetings 19 Nov 2009
- Coach Assessors' workshop 20 - 21 Nov 2009 to be held in conjunction with RDA Discipline Committee's meetings, VIC

### 2010

- Carriage Driving Workshop 26-28 March 2010, Bendigo, VIC
- National coaching workshop: Tentative booking at Marcus Oldham, VIC, July 2010.

## RDA COACHING DEPARTMENT NEWS

After consultation with RDA, State Coaching Coordinators and Discipline Committees, Pauline Perry has offered to come back and assist the coaching department until the end of this year. Her role will include:

- Liaison between RDA, State Coaching Coordinators and Chairs of Discipline Committees.
- Acting Chair of Program Delivery.
- Communicate and deliver coaching priorities.
- Answer coaching emails passed on from RDA or on her email [p.perry@bigpond.net.au](mailto:p.perry@bigpond.net.au).

After reviewing the program delivery priorities the main tasks underway are:

### **Coach Education Materials**

- Ensuring Level One manual is completed edited and printed
- All modules ready for edit end of July
- Level One pole work module for work book and manual is being formatted
- Level Two jumping module completed and will replace the module in the work book
  - a manual module have been completed and is being formatted
- Amendment to last page of competency assessment forms done and distributed
- Clarification of ASC RDAA coaching qualifications and updating procedures completed

### **Other matters underway**

- Helmet policy (July 09)
- Coaching Newsletter (Quarterly)
- Band accreditation addition (being circulated)
- Horse forms
- Competency assessment forms for stand alone modules (completed)
- Volunteer Training Package (completed being formatted)
- Volunteer Booklet
- Manual Handling and Loading Ramps
- Special Equipment Register (revamped)
- Operations Manual (Program Delivery)

### **Vaulting**

Priority to finalise competency based syllabus, work book and produce DVD

### **Dedicated Online Coach Support**

Work is currently being carried out on the development of a new dedicated Coaches section for the RDAA web site which will enable coaches to access information and ensure improved channels of communication for all RDAA coaches. RDA Discipline Committees are helping RDAA collate content required for website pages.

## **RDAA ASIA/PACIFIC VIDEO DRESSAGE COMPETITION 2009**

It's difficult enough for disabled horse riders to find a horse and rider combination that works. Add to that the cost of travel, and it's impossible for many disabled riders to compete. So for the first time, Riding for the Disabled's 2009 Asia Pacific Dressage Competition is being held by video.

RDA trainer, Avril Troon, was in Alice Springs recently preparing a local rider who's entered the competition.

*"It's a wonderful idea because there are so many riders out there who want to compete but they can't get out there or they don't have the transport so this is going to open it up to a lot more riders now."*

Competitor Karyn Clark says she wouldn't be taking part in the competition if it weren't for the possibility to do it by video.

*"It's quite a new thing where you can compete by making a DVD and you just send it off to the assessors and that's how they judge everybody."*  
Penelope Bergen (ABC Rural Radio NT: 14.07.09)

Entries for the 2009 RDA Australia Asia/Pacific video competition are now closed. Competition results to be announced on 1 September, 2009.

## **RDAA NATIONAL VIDEO DRESSAGE COMPETITION 2009**

The National Dressage Competition is an important part of the RDAA calendar.

This year, RDA Australia will hold a National Video Competition for its riders. Information on this competition will be available on the website soon.

### **VISIT TO LOCAL RDA CENTRES**

RDAA fundraiser, Rosemary Mc Donald, was delighted to be invited to visit a number of local RDA Centres in Queensland in June.

Rosemary travelled down to the Arundel RDA Centre at Coombabah on the Gold Coast. There she met several board and staff members who shared their plans for the future of the Centre and ideas for working with the national office

Next stop was the McIntyre Centre in Brisbane, where she was given a guided tour by Centre Manager, Denis Keates. The McIntyre Centre is the oldest RDA Centre in Australia and will celebrate its 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary in 2015.

Rosemary then travelled up the Sunshine Coast to the Cartmill Centre at Burpengary. Both the McIntyre and Cartmill Centre had been badly affected by recent floods. The Cartmill Centre lost 2 horses and 20 years of work. Jane Sayer, Centre

Manager told Rosemary that the community response had been amazing and a lot of hard work was taking place to get the Centre back on track.

Rosemary's final visit was to the Gympie RDA Centre. Centre Manager Coralie Kedzlie showed her around this charming rural Centre describing her vision for the Centre and their future plans.

### RDA GREY NOMADS

RDA Alice Springs was lucky enough to have 2 special volunteers from RDASA pass through recently - Joan Lemmon, a Level 2 Coach/Assessor and her husband Bob - who quickly came to be known as:



'Bob the Builder'!

Joan & Bob are 'grey nomads'. They are spending time on the road going around volunteering at RDA Centres all over Australia, in any way they can.

Joan was soon busy coaching and training, as well as helping to set up policies & procedures, and stocktaking. Besides assessing two Alice Springs candidates for their RDA Level 1 Coaching accreditation, she also made time in her busy schedule to assess visiting Coach Averil Troon for her RDA Level 2 Coaching accreditation. In that time Bob also redesigned and assisted guys from CEA (Work for the Dole) to build two new stables as well as general repair and maintenance around the centre.



They have visited a few centres in Victoria and Queensland and look forward to visiting others in this beautiful country.

You can contact Joan and Bob on [rojoa@bigpond.com](mailto:rojoa@bigpond.com) to cheque if they are going to be in your area if your Centre needs any help.

### FANTOM RIDER RAISES MONEY FOR RIDING FOR THE DISABLED

Willie Robert Fantom aka the Fantom Rider has raised over \$7,000 for RDA. Unfortunately one of Willi's horses developed a chronic skin problem and had to be retired from the trip. The trip is on hold until a suitable new horse(s) has been sourced. Willi is currently trying out a new horse Banjo, a pure stock horse gelding, on loan from a generous RDA supporter.

### RDA UK ORGANISES WORLD'S BIGGEST RIDING LESSON



The Riding for the Disabled Association UK (RDA) hopes to unite riders around the globe this autumn for the world's biggest riding lesson.

On 30 September 2009, disabled and able-bodied riders in the UK and abroad will complete a simple routine devised by the RDA as part of its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebrations.

Event chairman Doug Smith said:

*"A global lesson with the same routine on the same day has never been done before, so we will set a world record."*

The RDA hopes at least 5,000 riders will take part and riding schools in the UK, US, Portugal, Australia, Singapore and Hong Kong have already signed up.

*"Anyone who rides anywhere in the world can join in," added Mr Smith. "We want riders to unite — once we're on a horse we're all the same. Anyone who rides could need the RDA at some point."*

The first lesson of the day will be launched by the Princess Royal at Chigwell Riding Trust for Special Needs, Essex - the first purpose-built riding centre for disabled people in the world.

If any RDA Centres would like to participate in this great event you can register online at:

<http://www.rda.org.uk/40th/WBRLEnquiry.htm>

## DONKEY WISDOM



Donkeys are good at being donkeys. You may tell a horse but you need to ask a donkey. A donkey isn't good at solving problems that are acceptable to humans. We (humans) don't see things as they are; we see them as we are.

A donkey's nature isn't to be stubborn or difficult, but purely to learn and survive. Donkeys, like most of us, are motivated most successfully by things that are naturally enjoyable.

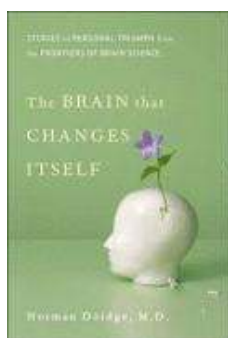
Positive reinforcement is anything a donkey (person or animal) will actively work for, anything that encourages him or her to continue to work for reward. This is the kindest, safest and most effective way to teach and change behaviour in man and beast.

*Positive Reinforcement* – patience and little rewards, tender acts of kindness and encouragement – reap positive long term benefits for all concerned. Everyone benefits from this approach, not just horses and donkeys.

[Adapted from: *The Wisdom of Donkeys – Finding Tranquillity in a Chaotic World* by A. Merrifield]

## RECOMMENDED READING

**'The Brain That Changes Itself'** by Norman Doidge



A new scientific discovery called 'Neuroplasticity' is overthrowing centuries old notion that the human brain is fixed and unchanging. Recently it has been discovered that the human brain is able to change its own structure and function, and transform people's lives, even

into old age. This has major implications on how illness, injury and disability can be addressed, particularly in early intervention programs for young children with a disability. This is a must read book for RDA coaches and parents...

## RDA AUSTRALIAN STORY

RDA Australia would love to record people's stories to highlight some of the achievements and the lives that have been touched and improved in the past 30 years through their connection to RDA.

In order to do this, we are asking for stories, photos and case studies from you, which we can publicise and include in a book or booklet, upload on to the website or download as a podcast.

Whatever your role or connection with RDA, it is likely that you can recall at least one incident or activity, or you have a comment that sums up your feelings for the organisation.

Your stories will capture the essence and strength of RDA and are a valuable resource that may be used in many ways for the benefit of the whole organisation:

- These stories could be included in an RDA 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebratory Booklet.
- To raise the profile of RDA.
- To motivate supporters and donors.
- To stimulate medical interest.
- To encourage new volunteers to come forward and get involved.
- To capture the history of the organisation.

Young participants may like to recount particular triumphs and stories about their ponies and the magic of HORSE POWER, while adults could tell about overcoming logistical nightmares connected with getting to RDA events.

Volunteers could relate how they became INVOLVED and what they get out of it, and those small incidents that made them smile and that '*say it all about RDA*'.

Parents and carers may tell how RDA has IMPROVED LIVES.

Please do not dismiss your story as not being of any interest to anyone. It may be ten words or two pages (preferably not more than that), and, if necessary, RDA will edit it to suit a particular use.

If you have a RDA story you would like to share with us, please email it to [fundraising@rda.org.au](mailto:fundraising@rda.org.au).