

get about

term 3
issue 64



Eastern Raiders

Olympics Camp

The Amazing Race

**Guide
Dogs**

VICTORIA



Note from the Editor

Dear CMSers,

In this edition of Get About you will read a fantastic camp story written by Luke Johnson. Luke writes a wonderful story about a boy attending camp and the boys feelings of being at camp for the first time.

Sam Hobbs has contributed some of his drawings to share with you. Sam has great talent in understanding perspective in drawing, and his drawings are amusing with an outer space feel.

You will read about the Melbourne CBD Amazing Race run by one of our past CMSers Jack for a group of students from Geelong.

Our Occupational Therapy team have provided us with a great article for parents and carers on when to let kids help out in the kitchen. Marnie's story is about the Eastern Raiders trip to the zoo, and Zoron's 'Pupdate' informs us about why Labradors are used as Guide Dogs.

I hope you enjoy reading another fun filled edition of Get About. Please send your stories, drawings and any personal highlights for inclusion in the Get About newsletter to paulaf@guidedogsvictoria.com.au

Paula Foote



Dates for Diary

19–21 August
Family Weekend

19–22 September
Senior Mobility Camp

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Format Reminder

A reminder that if this Get About newsletter is not in your preferred format, or if you no longer wish to receive the newsletter, please contact our referrals officer on 03 9854 4467. We provide standard print, large print (font size 18), audio CD, braille and email formats.

Eastern Raiders – Mobility and Self Advocacy at the Zoo

By Marnie Roth



On June 22nd the Eastern Raiders gang enjoyed the sunshine during an outing to the zoo.

As usual we met at The Glen at 8:30am for the trip, which involved a train into the city and changing platforms at Flinders Street Station to catch another train to take us to Parkville. From Parkville Station it is only a short walk to the zoo. The Eastern Raiders students had lots of opportunities to practise using their mykis and getting on and off trains as well as negotiating the dynamic Flinders Street Station.

Once at the zoo the group split into two groups to use maps and self-advocacy to find animals hidden in riddles. One of the clues was: “I am the biggest cat in the world. I have orange, black and white stripes that help me blend into the forest.

Unlike other cats, I am a great swimmer!” Once we had found all of the animals hidden in the riddle, we ate our lunch and made our way to the education centre. Here we were met with Zoos Victoria staff for an interactive presentation about some of the zoo’s residents. Students got to touch some of the animals and learnt more about the animals and their habitat.

“ We also spent some time exploring the sensory garden including discovering the different textures of pieces of fur and shedded snake skins.

Students then reversed the travel route that we had completed in the morning to make our way back to Glen Waverley to meet the parents. It was a great day where students practised lots of their orientation and mobility skills in a really fun environment. ●



Olympics – Primary Students Mobility Camp

By Luke Johnson

Once upon a time there was a boy who went to a Guide Dog Camp.

This was his second time at Guide Dog Camp. He knew that he had his own room and when he found the number he put his bag and pillow in the room. He was a little nervous when his mum left. He went to sit in the main room and started to talk with the other boys who had arrived.

The first activity was boot camp. He did push-ups squats, sit ups and roll under nets. All the children had lots of fun but they were really tired. Then they had lunch and changed.

The next activity was horse riding. The boy had ridden a pony before and he was looking forward to riding a horse because it looked like fun. There were about 12 horses and all the children took

turns to ride. The boy loved horse riding and felt very good about himself for doing it.

After horse riding they went back to camp and got to hang out and play with some of the cool things at camp like 'Bopit' and the piano. Back at the camp was where he really got to know some of the other children.

They got to meet the night nurse who had a chat to them and then they had dinner. After dinner was the talent show. The boy chose to be a judge with two other children and they watched lots of great acts.

“When he went to bed he realised that he hadn't felt nervous all day but he was a bit now; he snuggled with his teddies and fell asleep.

The next day was full of activities like gymnastics where he got to go on the trampoline, the bars, beams



and then some free time. The boy loved gymnastics. Then he after lunch he went to learn Judo. Judo was great; he learnt to trip and pin the other person which he planned to do to his brother when he got home.

After Judo he did some O&M at the shops to find different types of foods. He then caught a train to tea and had some pizza, and then got to catch a train home in the dark, back to camp.

When the boy woke up the next morning he realised he wasn't worried the night before.

On the last day he packed his bags. He got to go rowing and he and his friends had a competition of who went the fastest. They got to look at all the different types of rowing boats too.

Then they went to the Victorian Institute of Sport. He got to see how high he could jump and how fast he could run. They walked around the centre and saw the ice bath and some athletes training, and spoke to Russell who is competing in the Rio Paralympics.

At the end of the camp they had some races and a certificate presentation. This was a great camp and the boy cannot wait until the next one. ●



Little MasterChefs

Edited by Krystle Prenter and Leah Hamilton

Little MasterChefs...when to let them loose?

Meal times can be hectic, kitchen's never big enough, a range of dangers to contend with... why don't we complicate the situation more by adding kids?

Safety is the most common concern a parent has, and yes hot pots and sharp knives are definitely a danger. The question is, "are hot pots ever not going to be hot, are knives ever not going to be sharp?" Perhaps consider a graded plan that is unique for your child yet suitable to introduce these essential life skills of food preparation. Therefore, when your child approaches high school, young adulthood and moving out of home, they have a foundation of skills to confidently utilise. Involving your child in the kitchen can be beneficial for their development, growth, awareness of the world, personal confidence as well as a multitude of other areas.

What can parents do?

Start small and introduce tasks in an age appropriate manner. This might mean;

- Talking to them about what happens in the kitchen
- Introducing ideas such as what grows in the garden and how to cook it
- Allowing them to be in charge of the measuring cups or stirring the food
- Teaching them the meaning of time and smells to help gauge when food might be ready



- Introducing them to a variety of kitchen equipment slowly, and supervising their use of it. Perhaps begin with buttering bread, then cutting cucumber, and working towards cutting carrots with a sharper knife once confident.

Some considerations for having your child in the kitchen:

- Involve them regularly in cooking tasks that they are interested in
- Allow ample time, perhaps this means starting out during weekends
- Try and provide ample space on the bench tops for them to work on
- Have the kitchen and bench space organised so your child can find things themselves
- Purchase kitchen equipment that has bold or bright colours if this helps their vision
- Use contrast in the kitchen, if this supports their vision. Have a variety of coloured chopping boards so they aren't buttering their white bread on a white board or plate.

- Let them explore or learn about hot or sharp equipment in a safe context and with appropriate parental assistance.
- Provide orientation to the oven and dials when it is cold, and orientate them to a bread knife before working towards sharp knives.

Creating Little MasterChefs can be scary, but the benefits are lifelong for all involved. So what project will you get your Little MasterChef onto?

If you would like an Occupational Therapist from Guide Dogs Victoria to assist you and your child with developing these skills, or any other activity of daily living, please contact our intake team on 03 9854 4444. Happy cooking! ●

My Mobility – The Amazing Race

By Simon McDonald-Kerr



Many students in early secondary school often attend our camps and group programs explaining to us that they don't have any immediate individual goals.

They are able to travel around their home and school safely, they may be able to travel to and from school and they are safe travelling to all required areas outside of school times with their family and friends.

But what happens when they leave school or social/sporting activities require the ability to travel in new and unfamiliar areas? What skills are required? Sure, anyone can have a go at travelling somewhere new but what happens when things go wrong?

To answer some of these questions, the Geelong My Mobility group decided to test their skills and abilities in the most challenging environment accessible for a day program – the Melbourne CBD.

Travelling by train to Southern Cross Station the group was joined by some students from Gippsland who were also keen to find out if they possessed the skills to complete a range of tasks that would

challenge their ability to use skills such as planning, self-advocacy, map reading, personal safety, public transport travel, problem solving and road safety to complete an Amazing Race.

Each team was given tasks sent by text message with the destinations and activities, and travelled to areas of Melbourne's CBD that would be unfamiliar to most people, even people who would work in the CBD.

“The teams pushed their abilities in many areas and with support from the O&M instructors were able to learn what was required to complete all the tasks.

It was agreed that this type of activity ticked a number of boxes for this group: it was fun, it identified what skills each student was good at and where they needed to improve, it allowed them to learn from their peers about ways they could do some tasks, and it showed that the travel skills required for them to be able to react safely when things go wrong need to be practised.

You can't buy experience. So if you are a teen who is looking at building your experience and looking

to test your skills, then speak with your O&M instructor or call Simon McDonald-Kerr on 0449 903 441 to express your interest in future Amazing Race experiences run by the CMS. ●



Another great picture from the 'Olympics' Mobility camp

Introducing Simon McDonald-Kerr as our Acting Team Leader

Meet Simon!

The Children's Mobility Service is excited to announce that our fearless and inspirational manager Laura Hunt has accepted a new role as Guide Dogs Victoria's Client Services Manager. That means she not only gets to be a fearless and inspirational leader for us, but for all client services at GDV including our Adult Mobility Service, Acquired Brain Injury Service and Guide Dogs Client Service.

Simon McDonald-Kerr has stepped into the role of Acting Team Leader for the CMS. Simon will be able to answer all your CMS related questions, and will be working closely with the CMS team to further strengthen our service so that your children have the best available service to address their O&M and daily living skills and needs.

More about Simon...

So how long have you worked at GDV?

Over six and a half years

What areas of GDV have you worked in?

I've predominantly been based in the CMS but I also work with Adult and Acquired Brain Injury clients

Do you work out of both the Melbourne and Geelong offices of GDV?

That's correct. I've been lucky enough to be based in Geelong through the whole of the NDIS trial and that has been a great experience, learning how the National Disability Insurance Scheme has impacted on our clients across all our services.

What is the best thing about working in the CMS?

It's spending time with a variety of interesting and

inspiring people. On any given day I get inspiration from students, parents, teachers, friends of the child I'm working with or one of my CMS team mates.

If you could give one bit of advice to a CMS student what would it be?

Eat your veggies! Nah (chips taste heaps better!!!), I'd actually say that you can't ever buy experience! if you think that as an adult that you won't be relying on Mum and Dad to do everything for you start experiencing doing it for yourself now. CMS camp is a great way to experience some independence!

If you have any questions, suggestions or feedback about the CMS please contact Simon on 0449 903 441 or simonm@guidedogsvictoria.com.au



Pupdate

By Guide Dog Zoron

As quite a famous Guide Dog, I get asked a lot of questions when I'm travelling out and about.

One of the most frequently asked questions people ask me is, 'Why do Guide Dogs Victoria only use Labradors for Guide Dogs?' Guide Dogs Victoria uses Labradors and we also use Golden Retrievers for Guide Dog work. My dad was a Labrador and my mum was a Golden Retriever. Paula says that is one of the reasons I am so handsome.

In the early days of Guide Dog training, well over 50 years ago, dogs were sourced from a range of different places including dog shelters. This meant that trainers had to use the most temperamentally sound dogs for the Guide Dog work regardless of their breed.

“Some of the more unusual breeds that qualified as Guide Dogs were German Shepherds, Border Collies, Boxers, Curly Coat Retrievers, and there was even a Greyhound who trained successfully as a Guide Dog!

There are lots of reasons why Labradors and Golden Retrievers have been chosen by Guide Dogs Victoria to work as guides and these include the following:

- Our coats are easy to maintain – we have a short coat.
- We are easy to train – we work for pats, love and food.
- We don't look scary – people are happy to have us come into their homes and shops.

Our extended family tree of Labradors and Golden Retrievers have been producing Guide Dogs for generations. My brothers, sisters, uncles, aunts and extended family have been specifically bred over many years to be the best Guide Dogs possible.

We love to work and it is known all around the world that Labradors and Golden Retrievers love to work as Guide Dogs.

I especially love my job as I help teach children learn how to be Guide Dog handlers.

I would love to hear your questions about Guide Dog mobility. If you have a question for me, please email Paula and she can pass your questions on to me.

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If you wish to contact the CMS team or would like to ask about our programs, please ring the phone number of the instructor you wish to speak to, or alternatively you can email: cms@guidedogsvictoria.com.au

Feedback?

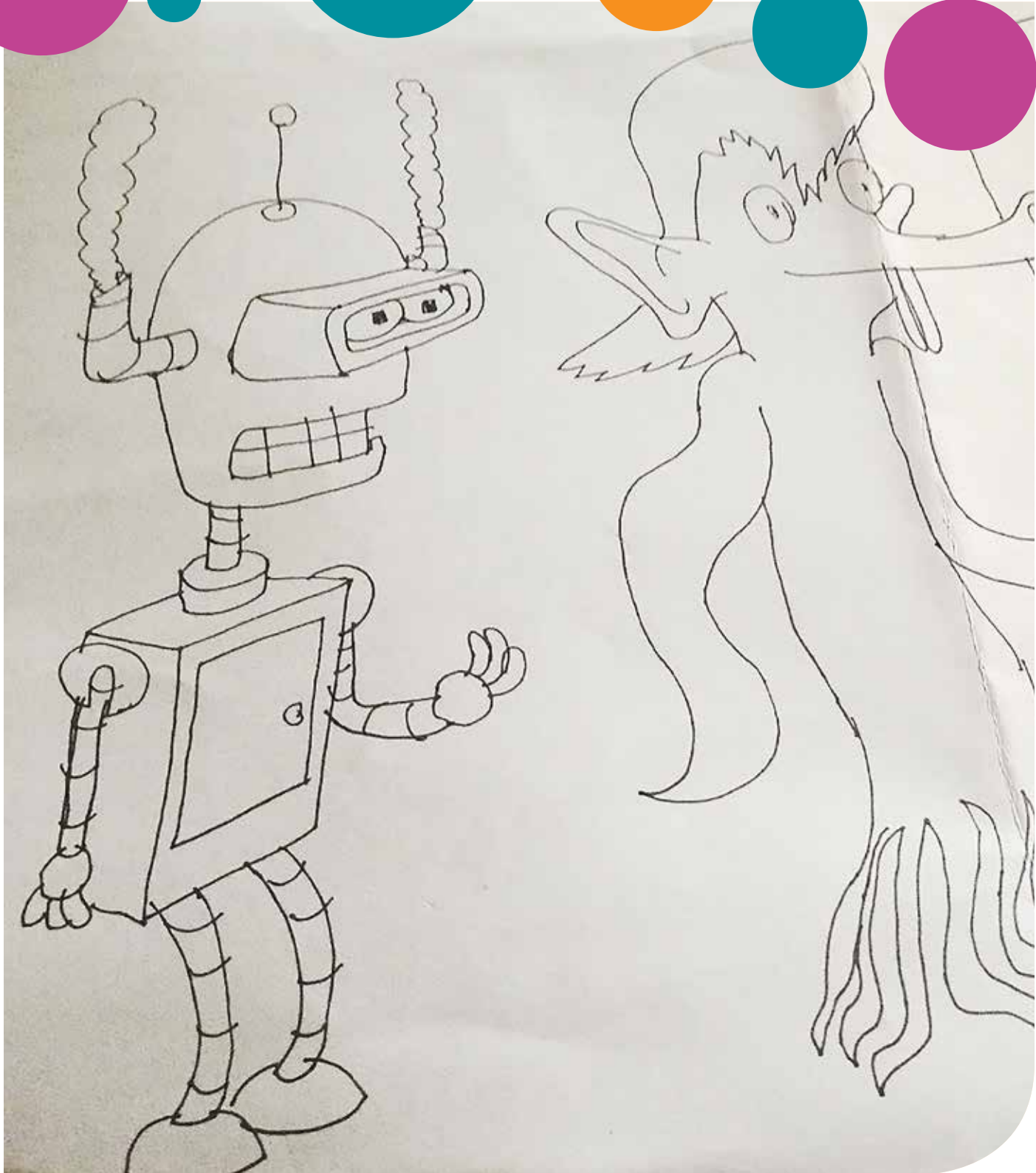
If you have anything to contribute to this newsletter, please feel free to contact us with your piece.

We welcome all contributions from anyone.

Please either contact or email our referrals officer with your contributions as below:

referrals@guidedogsvictoria.com.au or
phone: 03 9854 4467





Artwork by Sam Hobbs



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