

Technical Aid to the Disabled (SA) Inc.

NEWSLETTER

No. 155 - Summer



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*Management and Staff of TADSA
Extend to all our Readers
The Compliments of the Season
With every good wish
For the New Year too*



A special “Thank You” also to our volunteers, donors and supporters for the help given to TADSA in 2010

“The heart of a volunteer is not measured in size, but by the depth of the commitment to make a difference in the lives of others”. -- DeAnn Hollis

TADSA Office will be closed from Wednesday 15th December and re-open on Monday 10th January 2011

TADSA's VISION

To be a leader in developing unique and innovative equipment for people with disabilities in South Australia

TADSA's MISSION

To improve the lives of people with disabilities, the frail, the aged and those who care for or assist them through the development of unique and innovative equipment, using the skills of volunteers and staff.

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We gratefully acknowledge the sponsorship of this issue of our Newsletter by the Lions Club of Blackwood Inc.

TADSA INFORMATION



Technical Aid to the Disabled (TADSA) Inc

is an Australia wide voluntary organization, with TAD branches in every State. Technical members are people with skills in many fields, who give their time to helping people with disabilities and elderly people with practical problems for which no completely satisfactory commercial solution is available. This may require modifications to existing equipment, or the construction of new, specialised aids. Sometimes we can provide the means to overcome difficulties that had seemed insurmountable.

Technical Aid to the Disabled (SA) Inc.

Is based at The Royal Society for the Blind, Gilles Plains, on site with The Royal Society for the Blind, Disability Services SA and Disability Services SA-ILC. Our members work, where necessary, in close cooperation with health professionals. If you have a problem for us to solve, or if you know someone who has, contact us at the TADSA office. No referral is necessary; cost is normally only that of materials used, service charge and expenses actually incurred (usually small).

Volunteers Needed -

If you have skills such as mechanical, carpentry, electrical or electronic fields, good handyman etc, you might like to use some spare time on this challenging and most rewarding work. TADSA is always seeking more volunteers. If you would like to know more about how you could be part of our team, please telephone the Office on 08) 8261 2922.



Freedom Wheels Program

is a national program involving all state TADs working with Amway One By One Foundation to develop a range of standard add-ons that fit on a range of modified bikes. This means that an Occupational Therapist or Physiotherapist can "prescribe" the attachments needed to correctly support a child. The bike set up by TAD technical volunteers to suit is delivered to the child. For further information contact the TADSA Freedom Wheels Program Manager, Tony Scully, at the TADSA office.

Page-Turner Loan Program –

TADSA has 12 mechanical page-turners for loan to people with severe disabilities. A small fee for this loan is requested. Each machine has been modified to allow connecting the most suitable control device. Contact Julie in the office for further information.

Electric Wheelchairs Program –

Rugged terrain wheelchairs – TADSA has two electric wheelchairs available for loan to people with severe disabilities living in rugged terrain.

Fold up electric wheelchair – This chair has been added recently to our loan pool of equipment and is available to anyone seeking short term loan of a chair to be used in standard conditions. It can easily be transported in the back of a car.

For further information, contact Julie in the Office.

Home Phone Numbers for Urgent TADSA Business –

<u>Chairman</u>	– Richard Jackson 08) 8294 8591 or 0412 895826 (mob)
<u>Secretary</u>	– Tony Scully 70000022 (H)
<u>Office Manager</u>	– Julie Peak 0411 240118 (mob)

Supported by



Government of South Australia

Department for Families and Communities

CHANGING TIMES FOR TADSA

Technical Aid to the Disabled SA is going through a time of uncertainty. Our Project Manager, Travis James, left a few weeks ago, mainly because we have not yet been able to secure sufficient on-going funding.

TADSA, however, has been in South Australia for 33 years and is well accustomed to operating on the proverbial oily rag. Until 2005, we only had one paid staff position – Julie, our Office Manager. The role of Project Manager was filled by Roger Davis, a volunteer, while Julie looked after the office and acted as our Volunteer Liaison Officer. However, as the amount of work that our TADSA members did, the role of Project Manager increased. We then sought some extra funding from the State Government in order to employ a part time Project Manager. We were surprised and delighted when we were given a one-off grant. This money was used to develop and fund a four-year plan for TADSA to expand its services and to employ a Project Manager and a Public Relations Officer.

Our four-year plan called for us to seek on-going funding in the fourth year – this year. Unfortunately, our plan did not allow for the global financial problems!! We could not have picked a worse time to look for additional support from the government. In two submissions this year, we have argued strongly that much of the work we do for our clients helps them stay more independent, thus saving substantial costs that would be incurred by the State and National Governments if these people need more care at home, or to be supported in hospital or other facilities. Our role in this has not been denied – it is just, we are told, that there is not enough money to meet all the needs of people with disabilities.

We are still pursuing some government support. We do raise some of our running costs ourselves, but it is a hard battle. Our main cost is for salaries and most funding bodies won't support that. It is most unlikely that we will ever be total self-funded.

In the mean time, though, it is still business as usual, or nearly so! Travis did a great job as Project Manager, but no one volunteer can take on the role alone. The project management will be done by a team, mainly comprising Richard Jackson, Ken Lawson and Tony Scully. We have other members who can also help with assessments and coming up with possible solutions.

Our first task is to pick up where Travis left off – we currently have about 80 projects open on our books. These range from ones waiting to be assessed for the client's needs to others waiting for our dedicated Technical Members to send in their paperwork (hint, hint!!).

So over the next weeks and months, you may see some changes in the way we do things. Our aim is to keep things moving along until we can get sufficient funds to employ another Project Manager. In the mean time, Julie will still be our Office Manager (and also our Volunteer Liaison Officer) with Ian Beaton (Public Relations Officer), pushing as hard as he can for funding whilst continuing the promotion of TADSA.

Richard Jackson, TADSA Chairman

Farewell and Thank You Travis

Travis James joined TADSA in March 2007 as our paid Project Manager. and resigned in September 2010. We were sad to say "Farewell" - his enthusiasm, cheerful attitude and skills for the job helped many people during the 3½ years he spent with us. TADSA Management, staff, volunteers and many of his clients wish Travis all the very best for the future.





20+ YEARS CONTINUOUS TADSA SERVICE GROUP



Ken Lawson



Bill Shapley



Richard Jackson



Bruce Steer



Jim Were



Julie Peak with Roger Davis



Ray Thiele



Terry Hall



Ray Jolley

Congratulations to the latest group of TADSA members, who recently achieved 20+ years of continuous service with TADSA. Another enjoyable presentation was held at The Tower Hotel and Roger Davis (previous volunteer Co-ordinator/Project Manager) came along and presented the awards. (Many thanks to technical member Pat Pratt for helping to make our new award).

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2009/2010

TADSA's Annual General Meeting for 2009/2010 was held on 21st September 2010 in the main hall of the Royal Society for the Blind, Gilles Plains.

New Committee consists of –

Executive Committee -

- Chairman - Richard Jackson
- Secretary - Tony Scully
- Treasurer - John Harmer

General Committee - John Williamson, Joe Tieste & Fred Stace



Life Membership was awarded to TADSA Office Assistant Annette, who has been coming into the office on a regular basis, usually weekly for an afternoon. Annette helps with project filing, photocopying, assisting with mailouts – always a willing helper, whatever the job.

Annette received her certificate at the annual Christmas/Thank you party in November.

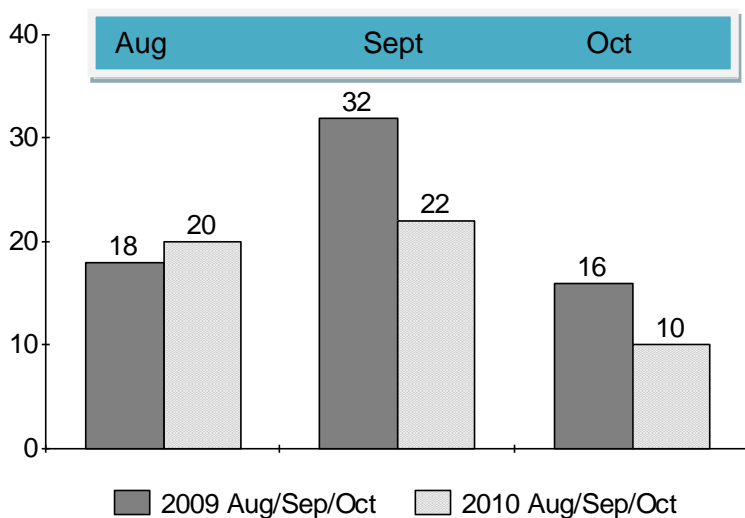
PROJECTS ASSIGNED TO MEMBERS

1st August – 31st October 2010

(tp = technical project ap (999) = in house project)

<u>Project No.</u>	<u>ap/tp</u>	<u>Project Title</u>			
2011-026	tp	Suppository applicator	2011-051	tp	mouth sticks mods
2011-027	tp	Laser line on walker	2011-052	ap	Head brace
2011-028	tp	Chair raiser	2011-053	ap	Bed assessment
2011-029	tp	Chair raiser	2011-054	tp	Steps (x2)
2011-030	ap	Assess car boot closer	2011-055	tp	School chair
2011-031	ap	General home mods	2011-056	tp	Special bike pedal
2011-032	tp	Bike modification	2011-057	tp	Gardening systems
2011-033	ap	Wheelchair mods	2011-058	tp	CareAlert- programme
2011-034	ap	Exercise machine mods	2011-059	ap	Switch assessment
2011-035	ap	Bike footplates	2011-060	tp	Exercise machine mod
2011-036	tp	Reading glasses holder	2011-061	tp	Lifting chair for school
2011-037	tp	Car boot pull cord	2011-062	ap	Chair mods
2011-038	tp	Bike attachment for walker	2011-063	ap	Alarm assessment
2011-039	ap	Phone keypad assessment	2011-064	ap	Wheelchair mods - assess
2011-040	tp	Daily living aids	2011-065	ap	Pick up stick for bowls
2011-041	tp	Wheelchair head rest	2011-067	tp	Computer installation
2011-042	tp	Wheelchair mod	2011-068	tp	Exercise bike foot plates
2011-043	tp	Toilet step	2011-069	tp	Blue phone set up
2011-044	tp	Door lock repair	2011-070	tp	Collapsible walking stick
2011-045	ap	Recliner chair mod	2011-071	tp	Blue phone set up
2011-046	tp	Motorise blind	2011-072	tp	Ring pull can opener
2011-047	tp	Blue phone installation	2011-073	tp	Call pendant - repair
2011-048	tp	Walker - one hand braking	2011-074	tp	Tray for walker
2011-049	tp	Velcro - sew on clothing	2011-075	ap	Sport gun support
2011-050	tp	wheelchair tray mod	2011-076	ap	Assess walker brakes
			2011-077	tp	Internet access
			2011-078	tp	Audio sound for VI sailing

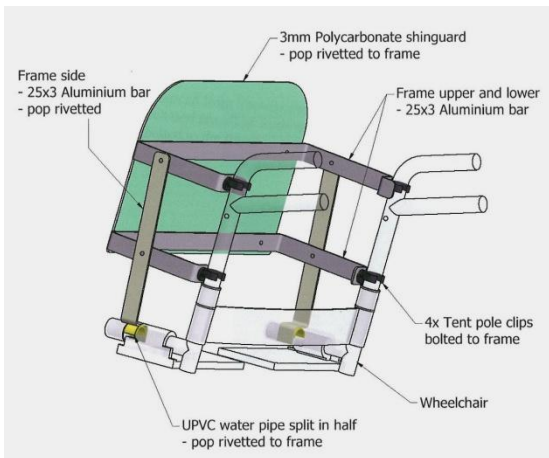
Comparison Statistics Projects Allocated



How it was Done

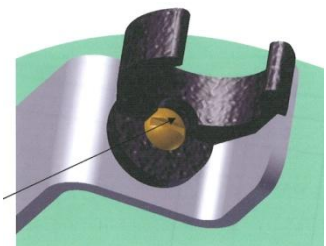
Please Note – Personal names have been altered to respect client’s privacy

PROJECT NO. 2011-042: SHIN GUARD FOR WHEELCHAIR
TECHNICAL MEMBER: TERRY



TADSA was asked to design and make a guard to prevent the client from hitting shins against table-legs etc. when operating an electric wheelchair. After an initial visit to discuss the project with the OT, measure the wheelchair and take photos for reference, the relevant part of the wheelchair was modeled in 3D CAD, the location of the polycarbonate guard established and the frame modeled to suit. Short semicircular sections of UPVC pipe were added to the bottom of the frame sides to locate it.

The upper and lower frames were bent up from 25x3 aluminium bar and



the polycarbonate guard attached with pop rivets. Plastic clips were eventually sourced from Snowys Camping Supplies—these clips are used on tent frames. The clips as purchased are offset from the CL of the shank and were modified (as shown) to enable them to be bolted to the frame with 3/16 whit brass screws and locknuts. A recess for the screw head was machined in a lathe by ‘counterboring’ with a router bit mounted in the tailstock chuck.

The frame sides were clamped to the upper and lower frames and the assembly tested in situ on the wheelchair to determine the correct location of the side frames to avoid fouling the wheelchair footrests – side frames were then pop rivetted in place to complete the project.

TOTAL DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION TIME: 6 Hours

PROJECT NO. 2011-003: ADJUSTABLE WALKING STICK
TECHNICAL MEMBER: MICHAEL



Our client Ted wanted to travel to India to visit friends and generally tour around. He approached TADSA with a request for a collapsible walking stick that could also be used as a crutch, walking aid and a seat to rest upon when needed. Our technical volunteer solved this problem as the photos show.

Technical Member Michael made a new walking stick using a handle and rubber foot from a standard walking stick, which he fitted to a new collapsible stick that he made out of aluminium tubing.

When collapsed, it is suitable as a walking stick or to sit on – when extended it can be used as a crutch or adjusted to suit going down stairs.



TOTAL DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION TIME: 15 Hours

PROJECT NO. 2010-291: SOUND SWITCH
TECHNICAL MEMBER: PETER



Our client Stan is in his forties and has multiple sclerosis. His speech and movement are minimal. TADSA was asked to provide a system to enable Stan to call for assistance in the night. Stan has very limited voice, but can make an open mouthed "aaah".

A modified computer microphone was attached to the back of the bed head with stick on Velcro. The electret mic element was wrapped in foam and the lead replaced with 2 core shielded cable. The device is intended to respond to a continuous sound of specific duration while resisting ambient sounds. When triggered, it operates a wireless doorbell.



In detail: - The green GO LED shows that the power is on and the device is listening. A continuous sound such as an "aaaaah" for 1.5 seconds causes the green GO LED to go out, the red STOP LED to light and a single beep. Then you have 1.5 seconds to stop making the sound. This will trigger the device, indicated by a double beep and the doorbell transmitter will be operated. The red STOP LED goes out and after a second the green GO LED lights to show that it is listening again. The yellow SOUND LED only indicates that the microphone is picking up sound and whether it is continuous but not whether the device is being triggered. There is an internal 9 volt alkaline battery in case of power failure.

Unfortunately our client's condition deteriorated quite rapidly and he was unable to use this device, but the system as designed and constructed by TADSA will be of great benefit in the future for someone else.

TOTAL DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION TIME: 120 Hours

Recognising the signs of a stroke

Blood clots/stroke – they now have a fourth indicator, the **tongue**. **STROKE** – remember the first three letters **S.T.R.** A neurologist has recently reported that if he can get to a stroke victim within three hours, he can totally reverse the effects of a stroke. He said the trick was getting a stroke recognized, diagnosed and then getting the patient medically cared for within three hours, which is tough.

Recognizing a stroke – S.T.R. A bystander can recognize a stroke by asking three simple questions.

S ask the individual to **SMILE**

T ask the individual to **TALK** – and speak a simple sentence (coherently). i.e. it is sunny out today.

R ask the individual to **RAISE BOTH ARMS**

If the person has trouble with ANY ONE of these tasks, call emergency number immediately and describe the symptoms.

New sign of a stroke – ask the individual to stick out his/her tongue. If the tongue is crooked, or if it goes to one side or the other, that is also an indication of a stroke.

Occupational Health and Safety Information

Sun Protection

Prevention is better than cure. By regularly and correctly using sun protection whenever outdoors, you can:

- minimise freckling, wrinkling and ageing of the skin
- minimise the risk of eye damage
- avoid sunburn; sunburn at any age, whether serious or mild, can cause permanent and irreversible skin damage and increase the risk of skin cancer
- reduce your lifetime ultraviolet (UV) radiation exposure; reducing lifetime exposure to UV by 20% is estimated to result in about one third fewer cases of skin cancer in Australia
- ultimately reduce your skin cancer risk.
- Protect yourself in five ways from skin cancer: Slip! Slop! Slap! Seek! Slide!

Slip on sun protective clothing that covers as much of your body as possible.

Slop on SPF 30+ broad spectrum sunscreen liberally to dry skin, at least 20 minutes before sun exposure. Reapply every two hours when outdoors.

Slap on a broad brimmed hat that shades your face, neck and ears.

Seek shade

Slide on sunglasses.

Tanning and solariums A tan, from the sun or solarium, is a warning sign that your skin is trying to protect itself from UV radiation. Solariums use UV radiation to give people a tan.

Ladder Safety

This “Absolute Shocker” picture was taken by an OHS Inspectors. The Inspector explained that his improvement notice was a lot better than the alternative – possible death from falling off the ladder. There is a reason ladders have a safety warning sticker on them.

People using step ladders should stand on or below the second tread below the top plate. NEVER stand on the top plate of a ladder. A better solution is to use a platform step ladder.

“Absolute Shocker of the Week” published by Worksafe Victoria
Further information can be obtained from WorkSafe’s internet site
www.worksafe.wa.gov.au or by contacting customer service on 1300 307877.



Public Relations News

By Ian Beaton, TADSA Public Relations Officer



TADSA shop - You can help us with fundraising by purchasing products from our online shop located on the TADSA website www.tadsa.org.au. Product categories include Health (disability equipment, personal care, mobility equipment, vitamins and supplements), Home and Garden, and Recreation (toys, sporting memorabilia). There are some great ideas for Christmas presents.

Donations – see list below

Volunteers – If you have a friend, neighbour or family member who has skills in woodwork, metal work, plastics, electronics or they are just very handy, why not suggest that they join us as a volunteer. We are happy to send you copies of our volunteering brochure and/or a copy of our A4 TADSA poster to distribute.

Expos/Conferences – TADSA took part in the Disability & Ageing Expo at the Wayville Showgrounds on 13th August, the SA Gerontology Conference on 10th September, the Murray Bridge Disability Expo on October 7th and the Disability SA, Disability Conference on October 13th and 14th.

Talks – Are you or someone in your family a member of a service club or support group? If so please keep TADSA in mind for speaking opportunities in 2010/2011. Someone from our Organisation would be happy to give a talk on the work of TADSA.

TADSA talks given August – October 2010

Perfect Cube Lodge

Parkinsons Support Group Elizabeth

St Peters/Campbelltown Inner Wheel Club

Muscular Dystrophy Support Group Mile End

Rotary Club of Adelaide

Royal District Nurses - Disability Services

Stumpy's (amputee) Club

Letter from a Happy Client – (name and address withheld for privacy)

“Special thanks for Des, Georgia loves her rails and parallel bars. We can see a difference already in her task of walking. Keep up the excellent work you are all doing.

Sincerely.....”

Disability SA – Independent Living Centre

Joint Protection (part 1)

What is Joint Protection? - Everyday the body's joints (the connections between two or more bones) are put under stress and strain as daily tasks and activities are performed. With age, injury or illness, joints can become stiff and inflamed and lose their ability to tolerate as much stress. Joint protection involves using techniques to minimize the stress and force placed on joints, to reduce pain and prevent or protect against further joint damage or deformity.

Respect Pain. Pain is the body's warning sign of excess joint stress. If pain is felt during an activity, it is advisable to immediately stop and rest. It is important to try to understand the source of the pain and learn to distinguish between usual discomforts, which might be caused by regular conditions such as arthritis, and increased pain caused by excess joint stress. For example, if the pain lasts for more than an hour after the activity ceases, it might indicate that the activity was too stressful and needs to be modified.

Adjust the level of the activity according to pain. Consider whether another larger body part could be used, can the activity be avoided, or would an appropriate assistive device be of use?

Avoid Deforming Positions – Avoid positions that cause increased strain on joints by planning ahead and changing the way the body is positioned during everyday activities. Tips on how to achieve this include:

- Limit actions which involve pushing, pulling, jarring or twisting and where possible, try to avoid making a tight fist or small grips with your hands, such as pinching, wringing or squeezing.
- Always perform turning motions (eg taps, jars, lids etc.) toward the thumb side. Where possible, use your left hand to open or turn on, and right hand to close or turn off.
- Use assistive technology (aids and equipment); for example, a jar opener will reduce the stress from twisting and a key turner reduces the stress from pinching.
- Avoid excess pressure against the radial (thumb side) of the fingers.
- Avoid excessive and constant pressure against the pad of the thumb or back of the fingers (such as when resting the chin on the back of fingers).
- Avoid using tight grips such as those used when holding a pen, knife, toothbrush and shopping bag or gardening equipment. Use objects with larger, built up handles made from plastic or foam to reduce joint stress.
- When holding an object, use a grip that keeps the hand in alignment with the arm with the wrist bent slightly back.
- Avoid heavy lifting and if possible, sit instead of stand to perform activities.
- Extend joints as opposed to contracting them.
- Do not force a joint beyond its limit, but beware that your limits may change from day to day.

(more tips on joint protection in next newsletter)

***The Occupational Therapists at the Independent Living Centre can provide information and advice on equipment and techniques that may assist in performing everyday tasks. A range of gadgets and gizmos are available to view and trial by appointment. For further information contact-
Independent Living Centre, 11 Blacks Road, Gilles Plains SA 5086
Ph: 1300 885886 (SA & NT callers) or 08)8266 5260 Email: Website:www.sa.gov.au/disability***

DISABILITY GUIDE

(article taken from Link Magazine Oct 2010 –Vol 19/4 reprinted with permission)

What's in a name? *by Anthea Skinner*



The language we use to describe disability affects the way we see people with those disabilities, reports Anthea Skinner. Why do words about disability keep changing? The language we use to describe disability has changed a lot over the years. Words that used to be benign descriptions of symptoms or conditions have been abandoned as offensive and replaced with new terms, like “person with a disability” or “vision impaired”. Why do words about disability keep changing, and are we destined to replace them with each new generation?

The disability community is not the only minority group that has changed its name over time. Both the African-American community and the gay community have continually re-branded themselves as positive words become used as insults in the mainstream. I’ve watched it happen before my own eyes...

When I was young the word “gay,” had been embraced by homosexuals as a more positive description of their lives than terms like queer or dyke, but when I talk to young people today, they use the term “gay” in the same way as words like stupid or boring. Andrew Peacock’s recent comment that you’d need to be “handicapped not to appreciate that this [Labor] government was dissolving...” reminded us that words about disability are regularly used as insults.

Some people are trying to rehabilitate words that have gone out of fashion, embracing them to describe the pride they take in their difference from the mainstream. There are growing “Freak Pride” and “Mad Pride” movements. Comedian and host of TV’s *No Limits*, Stella Young describes herself as a “stroppy crip”.

I’m aware of the power of language surrounding disability because I have a badly-named condition. I have chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME). The slash in the middle is a hint that no one can agree on what to call it. The ME part of the name refers to the suspected cause of the illness back in the 1980s when it was first described. It turned out to be wrong. As a result, the term, CFS, was added, describing the most obvious symptom, chronic fatigue.

Unfortunately chronic fatigue is a symptom of a lot of conditions, including overwork, and doesn’t describe the myriad of overlapping symptoms experienced by someone with CFS/ME. This has led to some mind-numbing comments when I explain my illness to people: “That’s not a real disability...” “I had a touch of that last month...” “I’d love to have that, I need a rest...”

One family member told me CFS/ME wasn’t an illness, it was “a lifestyle choice”. Next time I choose a lifestyle, it will be one without chronic pain, hallucinations or random stabbing pains in my rectum! I’d like to see CFS/ME renamed after its Japanese title, Low Natural Killer Cell Syndrome. Makes it sound like a Manga cartoon character, don’t you think?

How do we ensure that the words we use to describe ourselves today don’t become the insults of tomorrow? The only answer is education. As long as the world sees people with a disability (or any minority) as being less than equal, our names will continue to be hurled as insults.

Be proud of who you are and next time you hear someone take our names in vain, take the time to correct them.

Anthea Skinner was diagnosed with CFS/ME (Chronic Fatigue Syndrome/Myalgic Encephalomyelitis) and Meniere's disease as a teen. She is a postgraduate student at Monash University's Conservatorium of Music and gives regular talks on disability issues.

Ending this year with a smile.....

Your Duck is Dead!

A woman brought a very limp duck into a veterinary Surgeon. As she laid her pet on the table, the Vet pulled out his stethoscope and listened to the bird's chest. After a moment or two, the Vet shook his head and sadly said, "I'm sorry, your duck, Cuddles, has passed away." The distressed woman wailed, "Are you sure?" "Yes, I am sure. Your duck is dead," replied the Vet.. "How can you be so sure?" she protested. "I mean you haven't done any testing on him or anything. He might just be in a coma or something."

The vet rolled his eyes, turned around and left the room. He returned a few minutes later with a black Labrador Retriever. As the duck's owner looked on in amazement, the dog stood on his hind legs, put his front paws on the examination table and sniffed the duck from top to bottom. He then looked up at the Vet with sad eyes and shook his head.

The vet patted the dog on the head and took it out of the room. A few minutes later he returned with a cat. The cat jumped on the table and also delicately sniffed the bird from head to foot. The cat sat back on its haunches, shook its head, meowed softly and strolled out of the room. The vet looked at the woman and said, "I'm sorry, but as I said, this is most definitely, 100% certifiably, a dead duck."

The vet turned to his computer terminal, hit a few keys and produced a bill, which he handed to the woman.. The duck's owner, still in shock, took the bill. "\$150!" she cried, "\$150 just to tell me my duck is dead!" The vet shrugged, "I'm sorry. If you had just taken my word for it, the bill would have been \$20, but with the Lab Report and the Cat Scan, it's now \$150."

Enjoy your Festive Season!



WOULD YOU LIKE TO CONTRIBUTE TO TADSA?

Simply fill out the form below and return to:-

**Technical Aid to the Disabled (SA) Inc.
PO Box 540, Modbury SA 5092**

Please send me more information and membership application. I am interested in joining as a:

Technical Member Individual Member Organisational Member

Or

I would like to make a donation of \$

Name

Address

Postcode

Telephone:

Mobile:

Email:

Make your donation dollars count and help us make an impact on the lives of people with disabilities by making a donation today. For more information or to donate online please visit our website www.tadsa.org.au

