



Living a LifeAccessing Entertainment

A cold winter's day with the sun shining on the frosty ground is beautiful, especially if I am rugged up in my room in front of the heater.

I don't spend all of my time there, I still '*do the books*' for my daughters business to keep me occupied. I'm 89 and still pretty healthy, but I can't get out much anymore. I've recently moved into a hostel for 'older adults'. Access to entertainment, especially at the hostel, is really important. I've spent most of my life in education, teaching or learning. I have five University degrees in a range of areas from commerce to science and finished by Batchelor of Science with Honours when I was in my seventies. I tutored students in physics and chemistry until a couple of years ago and I still have one student who comes to me once a week for help.

I'm not one for 'sing a longs' or reminiscing about 'the old days', I'd much rather watch Shane Warne 'bowl a maiden over' (so to speak) or Lleyton Hewitt win a Grand Slam. I'm pretty keen on crime shows on the telly too, although I have plenty of books to keep me amused on that subject.

It was a great day recently when Foxtel was installed into my room at the hostel. I told the hostel managers before I moved in, that it was 'essential to my well being'!!

I insisted on staying in my home unit until Wimbledon was over and then moved into the hostel the next day. My grandson downloads the tennis draws from the internet for me so I can keep track of who is still in and out during the tournaments. I can watch the cricket when it is on, all night if I want too. Although, with tennis, if it's too tense during a game, I can turn it off and when I find out if Lleyton has won, I can watch the replay the next day.

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Access Audits Australia

provides the following range of services to support improved access to the built environment and to the provision of goods and services:

- ◆ Access Awareness training presentations and products
- ◆ Community consultations
- ◆ Access projects
- ◆ Development and review of Disability Action Plans, Community Planning policies and processes
- ◆ Access Audits & Evaluations

Access Audits Australia is pleased to advise or assist you with any access issue.

Contact 

Access News

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Access Audits Australia

92 Old Eltham Road, Lower Plenty

Victoria, Australia. 3093

T. 0394313472 F. 0394313046

AAAaxs@bigpond.net.au

www.accessauditsaustralia.com.au

Please contact AAA for a text only copy

If the TV is too loud, I can use my wireless headphones so I don't wake anyone else up. They help me hear the commentary better anyway, as I'm a bit deaf now. I don't need to use captions yet, but I can see the day when they will be very useful.

I'm not much interested in the free to air TV, the ads drive me mad and I don't find there is much I like. I can watch the Classic movies on Foxtel or the History or Discovery Channel which often have some terrific programs, especially for my age group.

If I get sick of the TV, I can tune into Radio 3RPH where they will read the daily papers. It's a great service, as I find the newspaper print is very small and hard to read.

I'm always looking for things to do, but when it's cold, I won't go outside so I am very happy to snuggle up and read, watch, listen and cheer....*go Lleyton.....*



Poker and Putting Passion

William Rockwell from San Diego has a passion for poker and hasn't let his disability interfere with his playing. Rockwell lost the use of his arms after a motorcycle accident in 1990. He uses his feet to hold his cards. This display of dexterity and determination has earned him the respect and admiration of everyone that has played with him or watched him in action.



Rockwell recently participated in the biggest poker tournament in the world 'World Series of Poker' in Las Vegas. A popular Internet casino provided the entry fee of \$10,000 so Rockwell could live his dream and play for the most coveted title in poker. Rockwell did well against the world's best players, making the cut into round two of the tournament.

Rockwell also earned national media attention in 1997 by qualifying for the finals of the World Putting Championships. Rockwell, using only his bare feet to putt, was one of only 300 who qualified to compete against Tour professionals and amateurs alike for the title of World's Best Putter.

Tantalisingly Talented

"Autistic savant" refers to people with autism who have extraordinary skills not exhibited by most. There are many forms of savant abilities. The most common forms involve mathematical calculations, memory feats, artistic abilities, and musical abilities. Some people with autism with savant abilities are incredible artists. Mark Rimland is quickly establishing himself as an excellent watercolor artist. A child named Nadia drew beautiful pictures of horses, and her drawings have been compared to those of Rembrandt. Another artist with autism, Richard

Wawro, who is blind draws in crayons. His works sell for up to \$10,000, even the Pope owns one of his works.

Music is another common savant ability. Many performers with autism have perfect pitch and also have a great memory for music. In some cases, a person can hear a classical piece once and play it back in its entirety. Tim Baley, who also has Fragile X, is a concert pianist highlighted recently on *60 Minutes*.

Echoing Amplifiers

Late night TV talk show host, David Letterman, actors Steve Martin, Richard Thomas, Burt Reynolds and Sylvester Stallone, music stars Engelbert Humperdinck, Jeff Beck, Sting, Cher, Eric Clapton and Bono (whose stage name was concocted from the name of a hearing aid store in his hometown of Dublin, Ireland) are among the thousands of entertainers experiencing tinnitus and often severe hearing impairment.

Many, including Bono's U2 band, Peter Frampton and Bob Dylan sing about their hearing problems. In his song, Turn the Page, Bob Seger describes their shared sense of untreated tinnitus desperation:

"Later in the evening as you lie awake in bed, with the echo from the amplifiers ringing in your head."

New AAA Access Products and Services

AAA has recently released a new tent shaped Customer Counter Card as well as stickers, depicting mobility, hearing, vision and pram symbols with 'Please let staff now if you require assistance' printed on the front. These were originally released (without the pram symbol) a number of years ago and 1000's have been distributed Australia wide. On our last training visit to Canberra, there was even one on the front counter of Parliament House!

Along with these we have also produced "**Assistance Animals Welcome**" stickers for

organisations to display on their front windows and service counters. These have already been a great hit and we are into our second print run to keep up with demand. You can view these products on our website at www.accessauditsaustralia.com.au and email, fax, phone or SMS your order to us. The first 10 of each are free!!

Access Tours

Not everyone wants to sit in a training room to learn. Its great to get out and about and experience access issues first hand. AAAs new **Interactive Training Programs**, which include **Access Tours** of a variety of locations are now available. Contact AAA for further information on (03) 9431 3472.

Did you know ?

- Virtually, every Australian household has a TV set, while 67 per cent of all homes have two or more sets.
- In Korea, Watching TV while driving **may not** be allowed for safety reasons next year
- A Minnesota Timberwolves basketballer was watching a 'film' in a DVD player mounted on the dashboard of his car when he crashed into another car parked on the side of the road
- Cher has achieved success in two major fields of entertainment, but because of a learning disability, she has a challenge remembering phone numbers and balancing a cheque book.
- Walt Disney was fired from the Kansas City newspaper for not being creative, he was also labelled 'slow' as a child.
- Despite being a success in his chosen field, Tom Cruise can learn lines only by listening to a tape.
- Samuel L. Jackson over came stuttering when advised by a speech therapist to audition in a play.

Ray Charles - Touch

To fill the time between the two shows he played on some nights, Ray Charles could often be found in front of a chessboard, In fact, the "Genius of Soul" felt at home in front of either a key board or a chess board. Most of us are familiar with the image of Ray with his black sunglasses and captivating smile sitting in front of a piano, yet the image of this blind musician looking with his hands at a chess board may raise a few questions. How did he do it?

Chess can be easily adapted to the needs of a person with a vision impairment. Ray played on a board where each square is the same color but the depth of the squares are altered i.e. the "black" squares are raised while the "white" squares are lowered. In addition, the black pieces may have sharper tops, whereas the white ones are flat, and all pieces include a peg on the bottom that fit into any hole drilled into the squares on the board. In order to make the game a bit more user-friendly, you would probably have heard Ray Charles and his partner calling out moves as the game progressed, making this type of chess a louder, more interactive experience.



Information about AAA training, publications & products is available on our website.

AAA Web site

Details about services provided by Access Audits Australia can be found on our website at www.accessauditsaustralia.com.au

Our site is designed to be accessible for all users. It has AAA W3C level compliance and is AAA Bobby approved. Earlier Access News editions can be downloaded and there are also links to other relevant access related web sites.

Information contained in **Access News** is intended to highlight the importance of improving access for every person

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