



“Shaping the Future Together”

SPRING 2009

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### **QUOTE OF THE SEASON:**

*Thanks Edward for supplying this one....*

**When I was born, I was BLACK, When I grew up, I was BLACK, When I went in the sun, I stayed BLACK, When I got cold, I was BLACK, When I was scared, I was BLACK, When I was sick, I was BLACK, And when I die, I'll still be BLACK.**

**NOW, you 'white' folks.... When you're born, you're PINK, When you grow-up, you're WHITE, When you go in the sun, you get RED , When you're cold, you turn BLUE , When you're scared, you're YELLOW, When you get sick, you're GREEN, When you bruise, you turn PURPLE, And when you die, you look GRAY.**

**So who y'all callin' C O L O R E D folks**

## Shaping the future together

Our vision / mission is to increase employment opportunities in Australia  
For people with disabilities and from diverse backgrounds.

- **PRESIDENTS REPORT:**

ADDE welcomes on board **Geoff Crawford** as our first part-time staff member in a paid role as Coordinator. This step into transitioning ADDE from a group of volunteers with a passion to developing a more professional approach to what we do is very exciting for us.

Alan Bartlett also starts in the second paid position to focus on sourcing more funding for some of the projects we hope to get happening over the next few years.

Following the publishing of our research “Leading from the front”, ADDE has been asked to be part of a project board with DHS and NDS to try and implement the key findings of this research across the not-for-profit sector in Victoria. We hope in time this will make a real difference to employment opportunities for people with disabilities across this sector.

We thank Helen Macpherson Smith Trust for their support Peter Rickards

ADDE President

- **MEMBER PROFILE**

### **Geoff Crawford - Project Coordinator**

I was born in 1953 with a genetic eye condition called ocular albinism. I have three grown up children, two daughters and one son and one beautiful grand daughter. I have worked on the factory floor right through to senior management positions in the commercial world and for the past 11 years worked in the Not for Profit sector managing a factory for people who are blind or have low vision. The major focus of this factory was to create employment opportunities for people with a disability, particularly people who are blind or have low vision. Many of the staff had multiple disabilities and the barriers for employment are very high. I have a bachelor of Engineering (Production) and have worked in a wide range of roles. My family and I spent two years living and working in New York where I managed two manufacturing facilities in New York and North Carolina.

Over the past 11 years I have developed a passion for helping others with a disability improve their quality of life, particularly focusing on the area of obtaining employment. I have a “can do” attitude towards any challenge and always focus on the ability, not the disability. It gave me a feeling of great pride to be the instigator to develop a partnership with Holmesglen TAFE to give two vision impaired staff the opportunity to participate in Certificate 111 furniture making (wood machining).

My current role, as ADDE project coordinator, is to put to good use the wide

range of skills and resources held by the members of ADDE, so that we can undertake a number of key projects over the coming year to ensure the growth and sustainability of our organisation.

### **– JOB HUNTING TIPS FROM AROUND THE WORLD...**

\*80% of job hunters find their jobs through means other than adverts. What can be learnt from this statistic? Let as many people know as you can, that you are in the market for a job.

\*Network - do as many nice things as you can for as many people as you can and keep on doing it. Networking is about giving not taking. So why do it? Because if you sow enough seeds you will reap some rewards

\*Analyse the job - figure out what knowledge, skills (what you can do), abilities (how you use and transfer your skills) and attitudes (what makes you tick) you have. If any attribute you can identify as a result of this analysis will increase your fit in a position then include it in your resume and bring them up in an interview.

\*In your resume, for every job responsibility give examples of achievements. Give evidence by referring to a particular event. Write them as short stories which are easier for you and the employer to remember ie. "Our organisation was tendering for a mentoring program for the local government and I was asked to put the application together into a readable, well written document. We won the tender and my boss praised me for the quality of the application saying we would not have been successful had it not been for the fine editing I did and the document presentation." Save some of your achievement stories for the interview. Include any voluntary work you may have done.

\*Think of two or three questions to ask at the end of the interview. You can say "Tell me a bit more about ....."

\*You can increase your chances of finding a new job if you're open to relocating, switching industries or doing different work. People who limit themselves to a particular geography or type of position generally stay unemployed the longest.

\*Make sure the resume you send/give to the employer is the best fit for the job you are applying for. Only include information that is relevant for the job at hand. Tailor-make the resume to fit. Cut stuff out that doesn't relate to the job. Definitely don't include age, marital status or children. Do you have to include information about your disability? Most of the time, no. It may be relevant if you are going for a job that is in the disability field.

- **I REFUSED TO TAKE 'NO' FOR AN ANSWER.....**

Hi, my name is Brian Caccianiga. At 2 months of age I came in contact with a floating germ called Polio. Polio paralysed my right arm, both legs, gave me a curvature of the spine, but did leave me with a good left arm, minus triceps. As I grew up, I learnt to walk with a pair of full length callipers and using an elbow crutch. I managed to get around quite well.

If there is one thing that I have learnt when applying for a job, it's not to take my disability with me to the interview. To take my abilities with me has always proven a better approach. By this I mean, obviously having a physical disability the prospective employer will notice me as soon as I walk in. To sell my abilities to them in a way that, by the end of the interview, I have done my best to convince them I'm the person they're looking for.

During my growing years I also learnt that 'no' was never an option. This I believe has been one of the most important things learnt in respect to me getting a job. Over the years there have been quite a few places of employment that I've enjoyed being part of. Having worked as a telephonist for 013 in Sydney, then operating switchboards for a few different mobs in Adelaide, a clerical position in Melbourne for 5 years, back to Adelaide to driving taxis, owned and drove a ute as a courier for a few years, and finally finished up being a two way radio operator for various companies in Adelaide for about 12 years. These companies ranged from Couriers, taxi trucks, tow trucks, Hire Cars, and taxis.

My refusal to accept 'no' as an answer is what launched me into the two way radio work. Living in the far southern suburbs of Adelaide, my nearest employment office was Noarlunga. I was 34 years of age, with no computer experience other than a Commodore 64 playing 'Pacman'. During a visit to the local employment office, I saw a job vacancy. 'Courier Company looking for a 16-18 year old female, living in the northern suburbs with computer experience.' Wow, that's my job!" was what went through my mind. For some reason, the employment person was not inclined to agree with me! He told me that there was no use in applying as I wasn't who they wanted. I persisted and he finally rang the company but his attitude on the phone lost me my interview straight away. We then had a heated discussion about his attitude and I managed to get the name of the company. When I rang the company from home they tried to tell me the same. However, after speaking to the person for about 10 minutes I finally convinced her that with my abilities, my knowledge of Adelaide and that I could help with the wage difference with support from a govt scheme, she agreed to meet me. Employment commenced with that company the following Monday.

Some people have said that I was just lucky. That's not true. My refusal to accept 'no' as an answer and selling my abilities is what helped me gain employment. By the way, they knew nothing of my disability until I walked

into their office. The initial 'sale' (of myself) was made over the phone and all that was required was the follow up at the interview. Oh yeah, when asked about my computer experience, my reply was " It doesn't really matter does it? I presume you will have your own program and I will need to learn it, won't I?" She agreed and Bob's your uncle, away we went.

By refusing to accept 'no' as an answer and relentlessly pursuing that job, over the next 12 years I operated and worked with quite a few different companies including managing a sub office in the city of Adelaide for 18 months.

Due to encouragement from a few people I've told this story in the hope that maybe it will help some other person gain employment. As people with disabilities, we already have an uphill challenge. Whatever you do, don't go for an interview expecting favours because of your disability. Approach that interview with your head held high, a confident attitude and do the best sales job you've ever done. Your prospective employer will probably notice that you have a disability, your job is to get past that and show them your abilities, how it will benefit them by employing you. When you do that they will ask you how can they make the environment more user friendly for you. Why? Because you convinced them that they need you.

I wish you well in your search for employment and hope that this has been of some help. You can do it. As the advertising goes – "Just do it!"

- **I HAD THE FUNNIEST EXPERIENCE ON THE TRAIN THE OTHER DAY.....**

I am an ADDE committee member and I have found that Getting to an ADDE committee meeting is an opportunity for a mobility challenge, a chance to brush up on my travelling skills, essential if one is trying to obtain employment. A recent incident I had during a train trip from Boronia to our ADDE monthly committee meeting held at Northcoat emphasizes the challenges of having sight impairment and using Melbourne's public transport.

I was travelling in school holidays and I managed to find a club seat in the train that takes me to the city. A grandmother, I guessed were three grandchildren, sat opposite me. My colleagues might ask how I know who was sitting there; however, the answer is I listened to the conversation as they settled in for the journey.

I was sitting with my cane on my lap. It fell to the floor with a crash drawing attention to me. I quickly picked it up and put it back on my lap.

The next thing I heard was the lady with the kids opposite saying "Excuse me

sir I think you might have also dropped this.

I reached out my hand and was handed a package that felt square shiny and had a rubbery movable circular ring inside.

Oh my god it was a condom!

I was about to say to the lady did she realise that the package was a condom, But I had to stop what I was about to say. I felt suddenly embarrassed that a blind man like me could accurately identify this package. I was admitting prior use of them which is too much information. I thought that mentioning condoms was not an appropriate conversation to have with the lady as she was sitting next to a young child. Lucky I pay attention to who is sitting near me.

I dropped it and said it wasn't mine. I must admit there was a moment where I had a random thought that the little package might come in handy sometime, luckily it was not preloved. I decided to drop it on the floor as I just couldn't imagine myself putting someone else's prophylactic in my pocket.

I wonder if the lady knew what it was. I guess I will never know.

- **YAMDAISY CAFÉ.....A BRIGHT LITTLE FLOWER OF AN IDEA**

Hello,

My name is Joy and I am here to tell you about my idea for a franchise of neighbourhood cafes that sell fresh, delicious food.

I came up with the idea because I know what a struggle, everyday meals can be for people with chronic illness and disabilities. It isn't just the cooking, it is the shopping, the preparation and, of course, the cleaning up afterwards. Managing meals can be the difference between being able to live independently or not. Managing meals can be the difference between living independently as pleasure and empowerment, to it being a crushing, relentless struggle.

The cafes I imagine are called 'YamDaisy' after the bright little flower in the Melbourne area that was a staple food here for thousands of years. YamDaisy Cafes would sell every day food, at prices pensioners and health care cardholders could afford. Other people can pay a bit more.

The food will be delicious, nutritious and made on the premises from fresh, seasonal produce.

Each day the café will provide a soup and a main meal at lunch time, and another main meal and a fruit based dessert available by mid afternoon.

How would you use the YamDaisy café? Drop in once a week for lunch and buy takeaway for that evening while you are there? Nip in on the way home from work to grab something for dinner? Take the newspaper up there most days for a slow morning's read and meal and catch up with the other people

coming in?

To have the cafes working as vibrant delicious additions to the neighbourhood, depends on a strong and vibrant YamDaisy Franchise that sets them up, supports them and holds them accountable. They will need good financial support to get started, but once they begin they can be run sustainably, so the bills are paid, the ingredients are bought and the Chef/Manager makes a fair income. I have researched and studied to make sure this is a structure that works. This isn't a charity, it is a business model, with a social aim.

I have set out more detail on the YamDaisy Website (<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~yamdaisy>) and I hope you will have a look and let me know what you think. Ask questions! I have a blogspot connected to the site as well as three Facebook connections. Plenty for you to get involved in!

I think everyone should be able to access delicious, everyday meals, and YamDaisy is my idea to help this be possible.

Joy Stevenson  
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