

MAQ

Montrose Access Quarterly

Summer 2009–10

Let them eat cake!



Everyone loves a good morning tea... and what better excuse to tuck in for seconds when Montrose Access benefits from every piece of cake eaten?

The team from Myer Indooroopilly put their money where their collective mouth is, and on 20 August presented Montrose Access staff with a cheque for \$18,143 – half of which was the takings from a year's worth of bake stalls and raffles.

The remaining \$9,071 was matched by the Myer Community Fund in recognition of their efforts.

Led by inspirational store champion, Mrs Maria Horrigan, Myer Indooroopilly staff have been raising money for Montrose Access since 2002, and with the support of the Community Fund, have raised in excess of \$45,000 during this time.

"We are so grateful for the support of Myer Indooroopilly, and especially the tireless efforts of Mrs Horrigan," said Montrose Access Chief Executive Officer Darrel Bourke. "Maria is proof that community spirit is alive and well, as year after year she goes out of her way to support our organisation and encourage her workmates to do the same."

Maria's achievements were reported in an August issue of local Corinda newspaper, *The Satellite*, which brought some much-deserved limelight to the modest retail assistant. "After *The Satellite* story appeared I received two phone calls, a thank you card, and a lady came into work to personally thank me for fundraising," Maria said. "They were all Montrose Access mums."

Maria's endless enthusiasm in promoting the work of Montrose Access to her colleagues, as well as outstanding culinary skills, saw her receive a well-deserved 2008 Myer Inspirational People Award in the category of Community Passion.

Montrose Access would like to thank Maria, the staff of Myer Indooroopilly, and the Myer Community Fund for their continued generosity.

Myer Indooroopilly's Maria Horrigan (centre) fundraises for Montrose Access with regular morning teas for staff. Photo courtesy of The Satellite





Message from the President

Hello everyone, and welcome to the final issue of MAQ for 2009.

It is with great pleasure that I welcome our newest Ambassador, Clare McMeniman of the Queensland Firebirds. Clare is currently studying for her Masters in Speech Therapy, and, like us, is passionate about helping children with disabilities to reach their potential. We look forward to working closely with her in the years to come.

In this issue you'll also find an update on two of our other Ambassadors, Charlie Earp and Paul Rigby. MontroseAccess' Ambassadors do a marvellous job representing our organisation and helping gain public awareness of the vital work we do in the community.

I would like to take this opportunity to extend our thanks to Mr Kevin Seymour AM and Mrs Kay Seymour for their recent donation of \$12,000. Mr and Mrs Seymour have supported MontroseAccess for many years, and we are tremendously grateful for their generosity.

Even as 2009 comes to an end, MontroseAccess staff never slow down! In the coming pages you'll read about a number of exciting new programs, including speech pathology initiatives 'Reading 4 Fun' and 'Fussy Feeders'; the second year of the groundbreaking 'Shark Bait Kids'; and the expansion of arthritis clinics to regional offices.

It's also wonderful to see staff acknowledged for the outstanding work they do. Congratulations to Marion Langdon and Christine Stache for their Early Childhood Quality Inclusive Practice Award for Excellence for their work with children with developmental delays.

Despite the tough economic times we find ourselves in, MontroseAccess is committed to innovation and providing the best possible support to our clients.

On that note, I hope you have a happy and safe Christmas break, and we'll see you next year!

Mark Greenup
President



Marion Langdon and Christine Stache with their award

Strathpine staff recognised

Marion Langdon, speech pathologist, and Christine Stache, occupational therapist, were recently recognised for their 'active learning approach' therapy techniques when dealing with young children with developmental delays.

Marion and Christine, from MontroseAccess' Strathpine office, received the "Early Childhood Quality Inclusive Practice Award for Excellence" under the category of Service Delivery.

The award was presented at a cocktail function held in late-August as part of Early Childhood Intervention Awareness Week. The Week is a national initiative developed to celebrate the commitment of professionals working with young children.

"Marion and I are thrilled to be recognised for our therapy work, since we are both passionate about inspiring quality lives among young children with disabilities," said Christine.

MontroseAccess General Manager Client Services, Clare Besly, said that Marion and Christine's 'Active Learning Program' for children with significant developmental delays is enabling children to interact with their parents, siblings and peers.

"Parents are reporting progress in all facets of their child's development. One mum reported that she'd never seen her child having so much fun," said Ms Besly.

The active learning program encourages the use (in no specific way) of everyday items and materials. This approach enables a child's creativity to emerge in random play actions and develops their cognitive understanding of objects and properties. It also leads to improved communication and motor and sensory-perceptual skills.

Rheumatology Clinic expands to regional offices

The Paediatric Rheumatology Multi-disciplinary Clinic was established at MontroseAccess in October 2008. The clinic is staffed by Dr Navid Adib, Queensland's only Paediatric Rheumatologist, and is supported by a MontroseAccess physiotherapist, occupational therapist and social worker. It now runs at the Corinda site for a full day once per month.



Cathy Hartwig, Dr Navid Adib and client Matthew Dickinson

Due to the demand for services at regional sites, an extension of the clinic has been established at the Gold Coast office, supported by Gold Coast therapy staff. The first of these clinics was held in July, and they are set to continue for one session per term. A clinic was also held at the Strathpine office in October, benefiting MontroseAccess children who live in Brisbane's northern suburbs and the Sunshine Coast.

"Prior to the establishment of these regional office clinics, all children had to travel to Brisbane for medical review," said physiotherapist Lynne Borgert. "The regional clinics provide a time efficient means of reviewing the clients and their therapy needs.

"Parents, in particular, are appreciating the fact that they don't have to travel to Brisbane for such appointments, and that the MontroseAccess team dealing with their child can be present," she said.

Enquiries about the Paediatric Rheumatology Multi-disciplinary Clinics can be directed to Lynne Borgert on **07 3717 1131** or email lborgert@montroseaccess.org.au.

Staff run Bridge to Brisbane

On Sunday 30 August, a group of MontroseAccess staff and their families braved the hot conditions to complete the Bridge to Brisbane fun run from the Gateway Bridge to the RNA Showgrounds.

Three energetic staff members completed the 10km run (with General Manager Client Services Clare Besly achieving a personal best!) with 15 others preferring to do the 5km walk – all in stylish MontroseAccess running shirts.

All have vowed to give it a go again next year!

Mia Robinson, Clare Besly and Felicity Leon model the MontroseAccess running shirts



Reading 4 Fun

MontroseAccess is currently beginning a pilot project called Reading 4 Fun. This project is designed to promote language, literacy and a love of books amongst our clients and will connect trained volunteers to clients for regular joint book reading.

"The sessions commenced on 19 October, and are for an hour a week," explained speech pathologist Renee French. "The project will initially run for 4th term only, with the view to continue in 2010 if successful.

"As well as supporting oral language and literacy development in our clients, the program gives parents a regular quiet moment," she said.

Places in the program are still available for clients and volunteer readers. If you would like to put your name on the list to be connected with a volunteer, or volunteer yourself, please contact Reading 4 Fun co-ordinator Sarah Klaebe on **07 3717 1185** or speak to your MontroseAccess speech pathologist.



Staff profile: Pam Bignold

Pam Bignold (nee Grant), the Strathpine-based speech pathologist, is one busy lady. When she's not helping MontroseAccess clients with their speech and literacy, Pam is playing for the Brisbane Roar in the Westfield Women's National Football League.



"Playing football is a great stress relief, and playing in the Roar team is a wonderful opportunity to be part of something special," Pam said. "We are getting more and more supporters every season. It's great for the game and it's really enjoyable to play in front of a crowd."

As well as playing in the women's Premier League, Pam – who retired from the Australian team The Matilda's in 2006 – coaches her local club team and the Queensland under-15 girls side. "I will be juggling work at MontroseAccess with five training sessions a week, and travelling interstate for games every weekend," she said.

Bon appetit!

MontroseAccess' speech pathology department launched an exciting new eight-week program for picky eaters and fussy feeders in October.

"More and more families are identifying that their children are having difficulties transitioning from puree to table foods," said speech pathologist Pam Bignold. "This program is designed to encourage children to have fun with food – by exploring food without the pressure to eat."

The program encourages children to look, touch, smell and taste different foods and learn about what their mouth needs to do to chew and swallow. "We hope that the program will increase the participants' range of preferred foods, support them to learn the skills required to eat different foods, and support parents to implement effective mealtime routines," Pam explained.

Although places are currently at capacity, if you are interested in attending with your child please speak to your speech pathologist about future programs.



Shark Bait Kids dive in the deep end

December can't come soon enough for the 2009 Shark Bait Kids.

That's when seven MontroseAccess clients with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy (DMD) will graduate from 10 weeks of hydrotherapy at Brisbane Dive Academy to dive with the sharks in an artificial reef.



The program, now in its second year, is the brainchild of MontroseAccess physiotherapist, Sue Nicklin, and gives the children the unique opportunity to experience the underwater world in a safe and therapeutic environment, despite the progressive impairment of their mobility on the surface.

"Kids with DMD are used to being told of all the things they can't do," Sue said. "The Shark Bait Kids is all about defying that."

"Hydrotherapy is such a beneficial form of exercise – the program makes it more interesting, social, and goal orientated," she said.

Although it's designed with the children in mind, the whole family gets involved in the Shark Bait Kids. Following last year's successful pilot program, several of the 'Shark Bait Dads' have even got their dive qualifications.

"Shark Bait Kids really benefits the kids socially and emotionally, as well as physically," Sue said. "They have an absolute ball."

MontroseAccess would like to thank the confirmed corporate sponsors and supporters of the 2009 Shark Bait Kids – Markinson Business Software Solutions, Bielenberg Enterprises, Infront Solutions and Whatsinaname.

We would also like to acknowledge the ongoing generosity of Mick and the team at Brisbane Dive Academy.

To make a donation to the Shark Bait Kids program, please phone MontroseAccess on **07 3379 9200**.

Kyle, Sam, Kevin and Max - the 2008 Shark Bait Kids - prepare for their big moment: swimming with the sharks



Reilly's birthday wish



Reilly at his birthday party in May

Eight-year-old Reilly Baird of Arana Hills had an unusual request of guests at his birthday party in May.

Instead of buying him a present, Reilly asked that his classmates bring along a donation to the Shark Bait Kids.

Reilly's Mum, Vanessa Baird, said that rather than ending the day with "too many presents", she and Reilly discussed how he could help other children less fortunate than himself.

"Reilly's friend Kyle, who has DMD, participated in the Shark Bait Kids program last year, and he and his family found the experience very rewarding," Vanessa said.

"Reilly decided to donate the \$220 from his party to MontroseAccess to help the kids doing the program this year. Because Shark Bait Kids benefited Kyle, it made the donation more personal," she said. "Once Reilly made up his mind to do this he stuck with it. We are really proud of him."

Towards a brighter future

The 2010 Neuromuscular Disorders Conference is taking place at The University of Sydney from 26 – 27 February.

The theme is "towards a brighter future", and the conference aims to provide an informative and stimulating environment for the advancement of neuromuscular disorders by disseminating the most up-to-date research.

The Duchenne Foundation has secured a grant to enable interested MontroseAccess parents to attend. For more information, please phone Helen Posselt on 07 3717 1137.

Westfield Chermside Community Day

The generous folk at Westfield Chermside are once again putting on an exclusive Christmas do for MontroseAccess on Sunday 29 November. It's sure to be an excellent morning, with plenty of food, fun activities, and a meet-and-greet with the big jolly man himself – Santa!

Clients of MontroseAccess are invited to attend, along with a parent or carer and one sibling.

Numbers are strictly limited, so please phone Rachel on 07 3717 1184 or email rmorgenbesser@montroseaccess.org.au if you would like to attend. First in, best dressed!

Lifestyle & Leisure clients get revved up



A group of car-mad Lifestyle & Leisure clients enjoyed a hot and dusty day at the V8 Supercars at Willowbank on 21 August. Pictured (L-R) are Niki Portland, Matthew Potts and Joshua Gourlay.

Ambassador update



Clare McMeniman meets President Mark Greenup and clients Joshua Gourlay, Carly Morrison and Sally Foote.

Photo courtesy of The Satellite.

Clare McMeniman

Queensland Firebirds netballer Clare McMeniman was appointed an Ambassador of MontroseAccess in August.

"I wanted to be involved with an organisation dedicated to enriching the lives of children with disabilities," said Clare, who is currently studying for her Masters in Speech Therapy at The University of Queensland. "I'm really looking forward to meeting the families that MontroseAccess assists."

Chief Executive Officer Darrel Bourke said he is thrilled to have Clare on board.

"Clare's tremendous sporting achievements and community spirit make her a role model for our young clients," said Mr Bourke. "Her role as Ambassador will mean representing our organisation at corporate and community events."

Welcome, Clare!

Charlie Earp

Long-time MontroseAccess supporter Charlie Earp was profiled in the August 2009 issue of *Golf Australia*.

Mr Earp, who once coached Greg Norman, has represented MontroseAccess at a number of fundraising events.

"I'm busier than I've ever been. I'm involved in so many things with people asking me to be a patron for this or an ambassador for that. It's a great thrill and an honour that people still want me around and I love doing it," he told the magazine.

Paul Rigby

Former MontroseAccess client and fundraiser Paul Rigby paid a visit to the children at St Brendan's Childcare Centre at Moorooka on 13 October.

"The children loved sitting with Paul to do drawings, and they all got to have a go on his walker and push it around the room!" said Centre director, Brooke Williams. "They loved the visit and the money boxes that he brought along."



Carers' morning tea

Not busy on Thursdays?
Then why not join us once a month for a get-together over morning tea?

The next Carers' morning tea is at 10am on Thursday 26 November, MontroseAccess Corinda. Please RSVP to Rhonda Mullaly on 07 3717 1142.



Tell us what you think

Our organisational complaints and feedback system has been updated. The Complaints Policy and associated flowchart are now available on our website at www.montroseaccess.org.au. We are interested in any concerns you may have, and are committed to using the information you give us to improve the way we provide service.

If you would like to discuss the complaints process, please contact Sue Tonks on 07 3717 1114.

Thanks Westfield

Westfield Helensvale's September fundraising raffle for retailers and staff raised \$740 for MontroseAccess.

With a Wii Fit pack (courtesy of EB Games) and passes to a Gold Coast United match up for grabs, over 400 tickets were sold in a single day.

"I am very proud of Westfield Helensvale retailers for their support and enthusiasm with regard to our fundraising efforts for MontroseAccess," said Centre Manager Savvas Koutoufides.

Grantley Stable Memorial Bursary

MontroseAccess offers an annual bursary in memory of Dr Grantley Stable, for the purpose of funding a research project, study tour or other activity which will benefit MontroseAccess clients.

Any staff member, client family member or member of the public may apply for the bursary, which provides a grant of up to \$10,000. For more information, visit www.montroseaccess.org.au or phone 07 3379 9200.

Christmas closure

MontroseAccess' Corinda, Strathpine, Gold Coast and Sunshine Coast offices will be closed for Christmas from close of business Thursday 24 December 2009 until Monday 4 January 2010.

Thank you

MontroseAccess would like to express its thanks to the Gold Coast City Council, who provide a generous discount on the rates at our Gold Coast office.

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To provide support services to clients with physical disabilities and their families to assist these clients to achieve their maximum individual potential for participation in the community.