

AUTUMN 2012

SHOULDER-TO-SHOULDER

The quarterly newsletter of Road Trauma Support Services Victoria Inc.

Road Trauma...about people

For every person who has lost their life or been seriously injured, there is a cast of people left grieving, broken and trying to pick up the pieces of their lives. Road trauma is not about numbers – it is about people who suffer real loss, grief and injuries.

RTSSV presents the human face of road trauma through its Road Trauma Awareness Seminars in an effort to promote road safety and save lives. By humanising the statistics, participants get to understand that their driving behaviours have real consequences both on people and communities. The seminars utilise volunteer speakers (people directly affected by road trauma and emergency services personnel) who give firsthand accounts of their personal experiences.

It is these personal stories and open accounts from volunteers that lend intensity, reality and gravity to the seminars and contribute largely to their success in changing driver attitudes and behaviours – something that any presentation, facts or figures alone could not achieve.

Ann's life changed one tragic day nine years ago; her world crumbled after receiving devastating news of her child's involvement in a road crash – Ann's life would never be the same again. Helping others was a way for Ann to cope with the loss of her daughter. She trained to become a peer supporter and volunteer speaker with RTSSV. "We share our stories, painful as that may be, in the hope that we get through to these drivers and make them think twice about their actions when behind the wheel."



Ann recalls a time during one of her speaking engagements that reaffirmed the impact telling her story has – participants were asked at the end of a seminar what they had learned from the session and one young girl while wiping

away her tears said, "I don't want my mum to go through what Ann has had to go through." This demonstrates the power of stories told by Ann and others like her, on drivers.

Confronting driving behaviours and understanding the consequences of their actions on other road users and the wider community, goes a long way in reducing the risk of driver reoffending. It also gives people like Ann, a bereaved mother impacted by road trauma, a purpose in life and an opportunity to contribute something positive from the devastation she has experienced.

RTSSV is a registered statewide road safe group delivering a range of education programs aimed at addressing attitudes and behaviours of drivers in order to reduce the incidence of crashes, injuries, fatalities and the associated trauma and grief.

For more information about our education programs or if you are interested in sharing your story to assist others, freecall 1300 367 797 or visit us at www.rtssv.org.au

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Message from the CEO

Welcome to the Autumn edition of our newsletter which you will now receive every quarter. We look forward to being in touch more frequently to provide you with information on our programs, services and inspiring people, as well as sharing stories about how

your support is making a real difference to our work.

In this issue we present you with highlights from our programs, profile of one of our educators and keep you informed on activities and upcoming events.

For us here at RTSSV it has been a busy start to the year as we are well into the business planning and budgeting process. We have also seen many changes; our former CEO, Paul Ashton left the organisation at the end of February and I am caretaking in the role until the end of May. Margie Coe, who had been with us for many years also sadly left - we wish both Paul and Margie all the very best for the future.

We welcome new members of the team Bernadette Nugent - Counselling Support Services Manager, Margarita Herouvim - Development and Communications Manager and Melanie Sanders our Volunteer Coordinator. Providing support in the office we have Irene Harrington, Kathleen Dawes, Gillian Scaduto and volunteer Jill Hohn who are all doing a sterling job.

As you can see it is a time of exciting change at RTSSV. As always, it brings with it new people and new possibilities, fresh ideas and enthusiasm, and we are looking forward to a positive future. I would like to acknowledge the continued support of our donors and trusts/foundations. Thank you to our valued staff and volunteers whose spirit, commitment and generosity is unwavering.

We appreciate each and every contribution you all make, as without it, we would not be able to deliver the services or do the work we do.

Thank you for giving generously.

Jeanette Suhr OAM
Caretaker CEO & RTSSV Ambassador

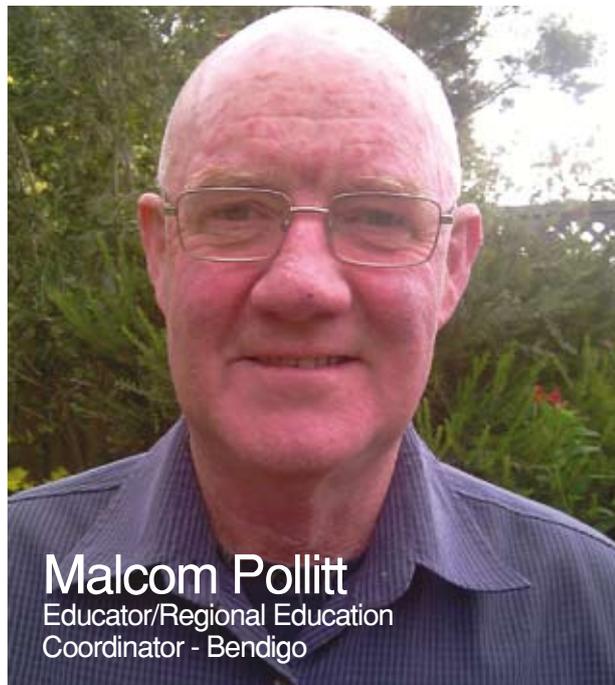
Information Sessions on Road Trauma expand to Regional Victoria

Thanks to funding from QR National Limited, RTSSV will host a number of regional information sessions for people who have been affected by road trauma from July this year.

With over 50% of crashes in Victoria occurring in regional areas, the sessions are open to anyone in the community, and aim to provide valuable information and resources. Delivered by Road Trauma Support Counsellors and volunteers sharing their personal stories, the sessions will run in Bendigo, Geelong, Horsham, Mildura, Morwell and Shepparton.

The introduction of these sessions in regional Victoria will provide greater access to information for those affected by road trauma.

IN PROFILE



Malcom Pollitt
Educator/Regional Education
Coordinator - Bendigo

How are you involved with RTSSV?

I facilitate road trauma awareness seminars and undertake Education Program coordination in the Bendigo region. I work with Mark Cattell, an SES Emergency Services representative and the (in) famous Sue Cox, a volunteer, to deliver seminars in our region.

How and why did you first get involved?

After resigning from being a secondary teacher after 30+ years I became heavily involved in Community Road Safety Programs through RoadSafe Central Victoria and RoadSafe Central Murray. I met Chris, Education Services Manager, at a presentation she did on RTSSV in Central Victoria.

Hobbies:

Bit of a home boy now so recently renovated our old, large and a bit quaint house, lots of gardening and serving the needs of 6 children and five grandchildren. I also inherited a love of 'The Grand Old Flag.....' from my father (Go Dees). I occasionally drive my rather lovely 1956 Peugeot 203 which I bought in Bundaberg while on the 50th anniversary rerun of the first around Australia RedeX rally which was won by a Peugeot 203.

Favourite TV Show:

Probably 'IFish' and 'Letters and Numbers' but mostly because they are on when I am ready to collapse into a comfy chair at the end of the day if I have managed to convince wife or daughters to do the cooking for the evening meal.

Worst Habit:

I find it difficult to say no to people who ask for help and are having a go, or programs that I think are really worthwhile even when I just don't have the time to become involved.

If you were an animal, what would it be and why?

A Donkey - they are a whole lot smarter than their name suggests.

Counselling after road trauma: a privilege and a challenge

From the moment a road incident occurs the impact on the people involved is immediate. For many, their world, the meaning they have developed about their lives, their values and beliefs and ultimately their future have changed. Normal isn't normal anymore. RTSSV sees anyone impacted by road trauma including witnesses, first on scene, drivers, passengers, family members, emergency workers, friends and colleagues.

As counsellors, we recognise and acknowledge that each person in each group of people brings with them a unique and equally important set of issues and circumstances. The common threads that weave through the stories our clients experience include both physical and emotional responses.

Counselling may be a new and scary experience for many people. As counsellors we respect each story and provide a safe space so people can try and make sense of what has happened. In the context of road trauma, the counselling journey needs to be travelled slowly, mindful of the clients unique relationship to what has happened. Developing a trusting relationship with the counsellor is vital in the process.

Counselling can play a vital role in supporting people who have been impacted by road trauma. It is important to acknowledge that a 'one size fits all' approach to the type of support and services is not the answer. Responding to relevant service evaluation, programs need to be developed that are reflective of client needs. Different levels of support and intervention such as being present with the clients and assisting them to find the words that can adequately reflect



their feelings and their intense grief is imperative in the development of an individual program of care for each client.

Bernadette Nugent
Manager- Counselling Support Services

RTSSV's counselling support team understands the unique aspects of helping people try and come to terms and cope with their trauma. If you or someone you know has been directly or indirectly affected by road trauma, free professional face-to-face and telephone counselling support is available by contacting us on 1300 367 797.

I would like to support Road Trauma Support Services Victoria.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____ Mobile: _____

Email: _____

My donation is \$500 \$250 \$100 \$50

Other \$ _____

Method of Payment:

Cheque MasterCard Visa AMEX

please make cheques payable to Road Trauma Support Services

To donate please complete the form with your cheque or credit card details and mail or fax to:

Road Trauma Support Services Victoria PO Box 1283, Blackburn Vic 3130 OR Fax: (03) 9877 9799 Telephone: (03) 8877 6900

Card Number: _____ / _____ / _____ / _____

CCV _____ Expiry: ____ / ____

Name on Card: _____

Address: _____

Signature: _____

Date: ____ / ____ / ____

If you would like further information regarding our work please indicate below:

Information on your bequest program

Information on volunteering

I would like to make a major gift, please contact me

Donations of \$2.00 or more are tax deductible and a receipt will be provided.

Privacy Statement: The personal information we collect on this form will be used to track and manage donations and for marketing purposes. This information may be disclosed to other members of the organisation or third parties who do things on our behalf where it is required or allowed by law or where you have otherwise consented. You can access the personal information we have collected, if we have retained it, by calling the organisation.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Fatality Free Friday

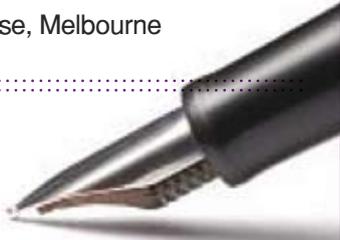
Focuses on road safety and encourages all road users to think about road trauma and to drive safely. The aim is to NOT have a single road death in Australia for just one day.

Date: Friday 25 May 2012
Venue: Federation Square, Melbourne

The 12th Annual Time for Remembering

Date: Sunday 18 November 2012
Time: 12:00pm
Venue: Queen's Hall, Parliament House, Melbourne

*For further information
on these events,
please visit www.rtssv.org.au*



ANNOUNCEMENT

RTSSV is planning to roll out an online booking system for its Road Trauma Awareness Seminars.

The introduction of a technology based system in July will make the booking procedure simpler and more efficient for participants and will also assist the courts and legal fraternity in the referral process for driving offenders.



Great Feats at this year's Alpine Challenge Event Report

Over 60 people took part in the Alpine Challenge 2012 to raise much needed funds to support the work of RTSSV in the community. Faced with inclement weather in the lead up, the event went ahead and achieved some amazing results; over \$38,000 in proceeds was raised surpassing last year's total and many participants came away with great personal milestones of their own!



Pam Knight, an RTSSV volunteer, took part in the challenge for the second year running to not only better her time from last year but also her fundraising tally.

We would like to thank the many involved in the Alpine Challenge – from fundraisers and donors, to volunteers and Running Wild who hosted the event. Without all of you, we would not have achieved the success we did and for this we are very grateful. We look forward to your continued support.

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