

DWE NEWSLETTER

December 18th 2009



Introduction: Hello readers! Welcome to our last newsletter for 2009. It's been a most eventful year for DWE! We are now into our 8th month in business and we are happy to say that we are becoming busier by the day. So thank you to those of you who gave us your business by trusting the 'new kid on the block'!

When we started out we decided not to be too prescriptive about what exactly we could offer in the way of services and as with any new business, we have adapted to meet each client's specific needs. As a result, we have developed a second branch of the business that is not disability specific work. The skills that we can bring come from many different work experiences and so that branch of work is to do with organisation development work which includes, facilitation, workshops for team building, effective communicating, giving and receiving feedback, negotiation techniques and more, as well as mentoring and mediation.

As a result, we have redrafted our website a bit to reflect the two aspects and the variety of our services. All 'disabilityconsultants' email and web addresses will continue to operate as normal and we have added another option for contact via web: www.dweconsultants.com.au and email: deb@dweconsultants.com.au. All office phone and mobile numbers will remain the same.

Any feedback or contributions are most welcome.

Our other news:

We have recently returned from a holiday in Africa and were most interested to read the news item below. I never take my 'disability hat' off even on leave and was appalled how little interest there is in the plight of people with a disability. I grew up in Africa and although my family (and soul) is there it crushed me to see such poverty, crime and many violations of basic human rights. I had hoped to use the opportunity in the future to visit more often by potentially doing business in my former homeland but unfortunately 'disability' is still a bit of a dirty word. When families have nowhere to live, no money, no food and are decimated with HIV AIDS, expecting a country to raise funds for improved access for wheelchairs, respite or the like is very low on the government's priority list. Most people with a disability don't even have a wheelchair let alone have respite options available – they end up beggars if they ever live to adulthood. The poverty has always been there, even when I was a young woman but this time it seemed more tragic than ever to me and made me so appreciative of what we have here. I know people get hot under the collar (including us) about things here not being perfect but gee, if we have no income, we have Centrelink to support us, if we had no food, there are soup kitchens available, if we were homeless, there are refuges available and if we get sick we have free health services. Please, as we head into the Festive Season give thanks for what a great country we live in and never take for granted that we have all of our basic human rights met. Have a great festive Season from a very happy Australian business!

Victoria Safaris Strategy in the Emerging Disability Tourism Market in Africa

Disability wheelchair travel in Africa is set to increase in the future with the efforts being put in place and one of the tour operators in Africa – Victoria safaris, specializing in this emerging market. We have several tailor – made disability itineraries meant for wheelchair clients.

Disability (Wheelchair Accessible) tourism in Africa has been ignored by tour operators due to inaccessibility and accommodation facilities within the African hotels, game parks and lodges within the wildlife sanctuaries. Victoria Safaris, one of the adventure tour operators based in Nairobi Kenya has recently started wheelchair accessible safaris into many famous Kenyan wildlife sanctuaries. For beach holidays, we have arrangements with Turtle Bay beach club which is wheelchair compliant and has four disability rooms facing the ocean front. Victoria Safaris are doing its best to advise the various hotels in Nairobi city and other towns within Kenya and its environs to at least have one wheelchair accessible room. This conforms to the world over requirement for every hotel to be wheelchair accessible compliant.

There are over 500,000 disabled persons who are able to travel into Africa, but fears that, they may not be able to access the required facilities for their travel and accommodation. Victoria Safaris with the initiative of its General Manager- James Asudi has urged the lodge management in various parks in Kenya to establish at least one room in every tented camp and one room in every lodge facility in Maasai Mara National Reserve, Lake Nakuru National Park, Amboseli National Park and Tsavo East National Park. In all the named facilities the camps and lodges which have since established accessible rooms are – Sarova Mara Camp in Maasai Mara, Sarova Lion Hill Lodge in Lake Nakuru National Park, Sopa Lodge in Amboseli and Ashnil Aruba Lodge in Tsavo East National Parks respectively.

Disability Safari Vehicles

Victoria Safaris has modified its Safari fleet vehicles to accommodate its wheelchair clients' who include the 4x4 Land cruisers and the 7 seater Tour Safari Mini vans. We have since developed the wheelchair ramps which we use for transferring our wheelchair clients' into and out of the appropriate safari vehicles. We have also supplied the straps for holding the wheelchair in position inside the said vehicles for comfort while our clients are on Safari.

Recently we have finished a successful 16 days wheelchair accessible safari into the Kenyan Wildlife sanctuaries for an Australian Hospital Accountant – Mrs. Kelly Green who uses a wheelchair together with the husband, Michael who is physically fit. This was a test case for Victoria Safaris and for those who would want to confirm the trip facilities and comfortability, you may contact our recent clients on email: michael.green66@gmail.com

Collaboration

Victoria Safaris collaborates with Flamingo Tours of South Africa in this endeavor for making possible Wildlife and cultural Safaris for disabled clients who would want to visit Southern African Wildlife sanctuaries and the East African Wildlife game reserves and game parks.

We invite individuals, families with wheelchair family members, corporate organizations, non-governmental organizations, disability centers and organizations to book their disability members of society or join us in this emerging market by booking their disabled and wheelchair friends and family members for these memorable safaris and tours in Kenya, Uganda, Rwanda and Tanzania.



James Asudi - CEO for Victoria Safaris

<http://www.victoriasafaris.com/africa/disabilitytours.htm>

Kokoda Trail proves Kurt Fearnley's hardest achievement

By Tyron Butson

19 Nov, 2009 09:04 AM

NEWCASTLE paralympian Kurt Fearnley conquered the treacherous 96-kilometre Kokoda Trail yesterday.

But he labelled his superhuman effort "minute" compared with the efforts of the diggers who braved it almost 70-years-ago.

"It's amazing, it's a very special moment for me but if you put it in perspective what I've accomplished in the last 11 days is minute compared to the actions that took place here 60-odd-years-ago," he told The Herald from Papua New Guinea only hours after finishing the trek.



"When this is all over I'm able to go home, return to my family, to my life, but some of those blokes didn't have that chance.

"They overcame amazing odds and suffered through hardship . . . we were not fighting the Imperial Army every step of the way, here."

Fearnley, 28, was born missing the lower part his spine and is unable to use his legs.

Earlier this year he committed to tackle the Kokoda Trail to raise awareness for men's health groups Beyondblue and Movember. He finished the 10-day journey shortly after 8am PNG time yesterday.

The four-time New York wheelchair marathon winner had to drag himself on his hands along the infamous track.

His finish was made even sweeter by the surprise visit of his parents Jacqueline and Glenn, who travelled from their home in Carcoar to see their youngest son finish.

While Fearnley had assistance from 15 close friends and family members during the trek he said it was easily the hardest thing he had done.

"I think we're all exhausted, we're all worn out," he said.

"It has to be the toughest thing I've done."

Four Australians have died this year while walking the track, which was the scene of some of Australia's bloodiest action during World War II.

The 96-kilometre thoroughfare that cuts through the Owen Stanley Range crosses some of the world's most rugged and treacherous terrain and is considered an exceptionally difficult trek.

But Fearnley said more people needed to keep their experiences "in perspective" with the heroic actions of the soldiers who battled along the Kokoda Trail between July and November 1942.

He said he had been inspired by the story of Corporal John Metson who was badly wounded in the legs in 1942.

The non-commissioned officer refused to be carried on a stretcher and started crawling along the track until he was gunned down in a Japanese ambush almost three weeks later.

"[After finishing the track] we visited a war cemetery in Port Moresby, those guys were the real heroes," he said.

While training for the journey in July, Fearnley told The Herald he had not only spent time preparing himself physically but researching the significance of the area.

"You've got to keep it in perspective, it's going to be tough, it's going to be hard, but it's do-able," he said in July.

Veteran trekker and Kokoda Spirit team leader Wayne Weatherall said he was blown away by the paralympian's drive and commitment.

"This is a huge win for everyone involved but most of all for Kurt, he's done an amazing thing," he said.

Fearnley flies home to Australia on Friday and will be back in Newcastle on the same day, where he says he'll lie on Bar Beach and soak up the sun.



WELL BALANCED: River crossings were hard.

Publications and Research - DiVine: Victoria's first online community for people with a disability

Contributor: Clare Burns, Department of Planning and Community Development - 03-12-2009

On Thursday 3 December, International Day of People with Disability, [DiVine](#), Victoria's first online community for and by people with a disability, was launched.

Members from indie rock band [Rudely Interrupted](#) (pictured), where five of the six members have a disability, joined with DiVine writers and Community Services Minister, Lisa Neville, to celebrate the launch on a day that recognises the contribution and achievements of people with a disability across the world.

DiVine aims to provide a place where people with a disability can share their stories, be informed as well as entertained. Stories covered on the site include artists spotlight, accessible venues, online dating, rights and travel – all presented from a 'disability angle'.

Lead singer from Rudely Interrupted, Rory Burnside, said: "Self-expression is extremely important. I hold a strong belief that people with a disability should be able to express themselves and be treated justly and equally, as should all individuals."

Prior to developing the site, research was conducted which revealed people with a disability often felt ignored and isolated on the web. DiVine encourages participation and a sense of belonging – placing people with a disability at the centre of attention.

Visit the AAA site with the best features of web 2.0 at www.divine.vic.gov.au.



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