

ST GEORGE & SUTHERLAND SHIRE Leader

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'We need work,' says music man

By **Deborah Field**

A visually impaired Sutherland man who has been looking for paid work in graphic design and music for the past 20 years said employers needed to give people with disabilities more of a chance.

Mr Boerebach, 38, is blind in one eye and has Asperger's syndrome, which is an autism spectrum disorder that affects how the brain processes information.

People with the syndrome tend to have higher than average intelligence and excellent factual memory for their chosen fields of interest, but can have social problems.

Since leaving school, Mr Boerebach has developed his own online radio station and completed several college courses in pre-press publishing and graphic design.

But despite the glowing resume and his uncanny ability to see graphic images, employers have not given him a go.

"During the past six months I've had about 15 interviews, but every time I get there there's two different scenarios - either it is very short or they generally freak out when they see my cane. Sometimes you get to the point where nobody wants you, and you feel depressed," he said.

Mr Boerebach said his interest in chart music and record covers began at early age, but that he had reached the point where he was "willing to paint walls" if it meant having a job.

"The problem is if you focus into one particular area such as CD mastering, in a way, you are closing yourself off because there's not much work there. It gets depressing when you get to a situation where you don't have enough money," he said. He cited workplace injury and lost productivity as reasons for why he thought employers were scared of hiring him.

"I've always believed in the phrase, 'Once you stop, you have given up on your dreams'. The dream is always alive when you keep trying," he said.

Mr Boerebach's radio station and music research can be found at www.2prfm.com. His CD covers are at brcaustralia.com



Hitting the right note:
Music and graphic design expert Mark Boerebach wants to pursue his dreams in the work force.
Picture: Carlos Furtado