REFLECTING ON EARLY INTERVENTION

TRANSITIONING INTO THE POLITICAL PROCESS

FIGHTING THE FIGHT
BRAILLE IN SOUTH AFRICA
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Welcome to the Summer edition of the CTEBVI Journal. For those of you who attended our recent conference, we hope the Journal will help you keep the level of excitement and commitment fostered by conference throughout the year. And for those of you who didn't attend, we hope this edition will remind you of the importance of CTEBVI for all of us.

The Board extends thanks to Vicki Garrett, who has been our membership chair, registrar, and webmaster for many years. Vicki is retiring from her many contributions to CTEBVI, and she will be sorely missed. Enjoy your duty free hours!! Tracy Gaines is taking over, and we welcome her as she steps in.

Finally, as we approach planning for our 2019 conference, we encourage everyone to maintain their membership each year. We have noted that members often will pay their dues only in years when they attend conference. CTEBVI operates yearly, and we depend on the loyalty of our members who attend conference, as well as those who attend only in years when conference is in their part of the state. Dues are an annual commitment, and we hope that you will maintain your membership wherever conference is held.

I hope you had a happy summer, and are refreshed for the new school year ahead! Right now, we are working to set up a new website….wish us well as we endeavor to create a new, fully accessible and modern website for all!

Maureen Reardon
CTEBVI President
Joanna Venneri, a transcriber extraordinaire, a mentor to many, and an avid supporter of quality braille, passed away on June 21st. She learned braille as a 15-year-old in order to provide a blind classmate with school materials. Not only did she learn the dots, but she fell in love with them … a love that remained with her for the rest of her life.

She started on a slate-and-stylus, progressed to a Perkins, and ended up on a computer, mastering each new technology as it came along. Her “career” in braille was mostly as a volunteer, as her paying career was as a Special Education teacher with the San Francisco schools. After retiring, she donated her time and skills to numerous organizations.

For CTEBVI, she served on the Textbook Format Committee, wrote JOURNAL articles, and created workshops which she presented at annual Conferences.

For NBA (National Braille Association) she served on the board, wrote and presented workshops, and was editor for their Bulletin for which she also wrote articles. In 2016, she was awarded the NBA Lifetime Achievement Award, an award justly deserved and of which she was very proud.

For VOV (Volunteers of Vacaville for the Blind Project), a prison braille program, she spent many a day at their facility working with the inmates on braille rules and application of code, proofing their work, and generally being their liaison with the outside braille world.

For BANA (Braille Authority of North America) she was their Administrative Assistant and organized and assembled their board meeting materials in both print and braille.

She was never too busy to answer a question that someone might pose to her. Whether it be code, formats, or braille software, she would research, compose an answer, and help whoever out of their dilemma. Phone conversations could easily surpass an hour.

She was a lover of fountain pens, staplers, trackless trolleys (remember, she lived in San Francisco), ballet, and classical music. She will be greatly missed.
IN MEMORIAM

A TRIBUTE TO JACK HAZENKAMP
By Joy R. Efron

Words are inadequate to express the contributions of Jack Hazekamp, leader, friend, colleague and champion of education of the blind in California. It is with great sadness that we mourn his passing on February 21, 2018.

Jack Hazekamp was born in the Panama Canal Zone, where his father was working, on September 19, 1944. Shortly after, his parents moved back to Momence, Illinois, a small resort area town about 50 miles south of Chicago. Jack graduated high school in 1962. After graduating from Northern Illinois University (1966), he received his M.A. a year later from Boston College. He was one of the first public school O&M instructors in the State of California. Jack was fun—from his “Elton Jack” impersonation to his quick smile and sense of humor to his willingness to listen, talk and share ideas. He was a real presence with intelligence, integrity, warmth, and purpose. Jack demonstrated all the best qualities of humankind. Jack was intelligent, compassionate, and passionate about education of the blind and others with low incidence disabilities, had a love of travel and sense of humor, and was a true advocate who managed to keep his finger in the dike and keep educational programs not only maintained but progressing.

In the 1960’s, Jack was among the first university-trained O&M instructors to be working in a public school district in the State of California. At that time, university-trained O&M instructors were working in local California school districts, but employed by the California State Dept. of Rehabilitation. This was via a federally-sponsored “Pilot Program” designed to demonstrate the value of O&M instruction for high school-age visually impaired students. As CDE consultant in the area of the visually handicapped, Jack was a major and positive force, working against incredible odds to save and improve education of the blind and visually impaired as well as to expand those rights to all students with low incidence disabilities.

In the 1970’s, a movement began toward block funding and a generic philosophy. As this movement was threatening the education of blind students a group of professionals, consumers and parents banded together to form LATVI (Leadership Action Team for the Visually Impaired) to lobby on behalf of the needs of students with visual impairments. Jack was an integral part of this group. With leadership from Jack, it was realized that the blind students were not the only population whose needs for funding and specialized skills and materials were not being recognized by this movement.

It was becoming obvious that the population of blind and visually impaired students was so small that it could not get the attention it needed and so, Jack was one of the originators of a new concept: band together and create a new combination, consisting of the visually impaired, hearing impaired, severely orthopedically handicapped, and deaf-blind and call it “low incidence disabilities”. After all, each of these populations had special needs; each of these populations required specialized materials and equipment to be successful in school and life. Defending the needs of students with low incidence disabilities in a state that was leaning toward generic funding, education and mainstreaming (while minimizing important access skills) was a very challenging task but Jack accomplished this, against great odds, for many years, protecting, defending and advancing the education of our students.
CTEBVI is a nonprofit California corporation, and as such, we do not engage in political activity. We do encourage our members to follow legislation, and to act on their own views and beliefs in the interests of the community of people with visual impairments.

I ask that you stay current and monitor the Department of Education with regard to its potential impact on students, parents, educators and school districts throughout the United States. Please take a moment to read the following links from the U.S. and California Department of Education, and I welcome your comments.

**Assistance to States for the Education of Children With Disabilities; Preschool Grants for Children With Disabilities:**

**CDE Guidance on Disproportionality:**
https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/se/qa/disproguidance112011.asp

**2018 Determination Letters on State Implementation of IDEA:**
By Tracy Gaines

Formerly known as Junior Blind, Wayfinder Family Services is the place to turn for people facing the greatest challenges. They provide expert, individualized support and services to children, youth, adults and families. Wayfinder strives to empower individuals, support families and strengthen communities through five overlapping areas of service: vision loss, special needs, temporary shelter and residential services, foster care and adoption and mental health. At the heart of these services is the belief that everyone deserves a chance to thrive, a safe haven and a loving family. President and CEO Miki Jordan joined Wayfinder Family Services in 2006. Miki is only the third president since the organization’s founding in 1953. The daughter of Fred and Willie Jordan of the Fred Jordan Missions, Miki was born to lead. Below, Miki answers questions about the organization’s new name, what “Wayfinder” means to her and the organization’s unchanging commitment to children and families.

How did the name change from Junior Blind to Wayfinder Family Services evolve?

The name Junior Blind speaks to one segment of the community that we support today. We wanted a name that embraces all of the people we assist. We’re so proud of Junior Blind’s long
history of serving children, youth and adults who are visually impaired and those with developmental disabilities. In recent years, we have expanded to help children and families facing different challenges. For example, we assist medically fragile children who are in the foster care system, as well as children who have been removed from their homes due to abuse or neglect.

What does the name mean to you?

To me, Wayfinder means partner. From the small challenges to the biggest achievements, we walk hand-in-hand with children, adults and families along their journey. Wayfinder is a name that evokes loyalty, determination and collaboration. We want to do whatever we can to help each member of the Wayfinder family.

What is most important for supporters to know about the new name?

We may have a new name, but we are still the same great organization that we have been since 1953! We are serving more children and families than ever before and are one of the most respected organizations in California.

Do you still serve children who are blind?

Yes! We are as deeply committed as ever to the blindness community. In fact, we serve more children with vision loss across California than any other organization. We are one of the few organizations that has the expertise to work with children with vision impairment and multiple disabilities. We are so proud that our services reach visually impaired people of all ages, from early intervention for infants and toddlers, through recreation programs for children, to workforce development for teens and young adults.

Why has the organization expanded? Are you still the same organization?

We are still the same organization with the same responsiveness to people who need our help. Almost from the beginning, the organization has been growing. Norm Kaplan, the founder of Junior Blind, realized that, in addition to blind children, children with special needs needed our help. He opened our special education school in 1962. In 1970, the organization began serving adults and kept on growing. As the needs in our community have changed, the organization has expanded to meet them. We have gained expertise and expanded to assist more people facing different types of challenges.
We are a group started by parents of children with visual impairments to support families who have children with vision issues and conditions. Originally we were the California affiliate of the National Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairment but we are now an independent group. Educators and others who work with children with visual impairments are encouraged to join and participate. We believe that only by parents and professionals working together will the best interests of our children be served.

We have a very active email list and regularly send out information and notices of events that pertain to our children. We believe that parents need up to date information in order to be the best possible advocates for our children. To receive CAPVI emails, please contact Anne Ward at inland2wards@gmail.com mavenno1@aol.com.

We are active participants in symposiums and conferences that are of importance to our members. Among these events is the Lowenfeld-Akeson Symposium held each year at the California School for the Blind. The Symposium features speakers on various vision related topics for children birth to six. We are also very involved in the organizing of the California Transcribers and Educators for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CTEBVI) conference. Over the years we have helped to organize a “Parents’ Strand” at the conference which offers workshops of particular interest to parents of children of all ages. This year we helped organize the first ever Parents’ Institute at the conference. We also offer scholarships for at least ten families to attend this annual event.

For the last five years CAPVI has been running the Filipino Blind Children Project. We solicit new and used braille books, braillers, other equipment for the blind, toys and money for shipping. We presently support two classrooms for the visually impaired, a high school program, a national parent group and children at various eye clinics. If you have things to donate or want to help with this project, please contact Judith Lesner at mavenno1@aol.com.

CAPVI is an organization run by parents of children with visual impairments. We believe that we as parents of children with visual impairments have a unique viewpoint and want to be included in all phases of our child’s education. At present, our board members all have children in their twenties and thirties. This means that we are “getting on”. We are therefore very interested in having parents of younger children join the board as we need new input. If you are interested in joining our board, please contact Anne Ward at capvinews@gmail.com.
Last April 2018, I flew from San Diego to South Africa for two exciting reasons: to learn about braille literacy in South Africa and to go on a photo safari with my sister Nancy. Because Nancy and I were flying into Johannesburg and staying for 3 days before going to the wild life reserve, I searched Google for information on braille in Johannesburg. The first website I found belonged to Blind SA. Immediately I learned that there are 11 languages spoken in South Africa, and there is a braille code for each language: UEB, Afrikaans, nine African codes. Blind SA is based in Johannesburg, so I sent an email to the President of the organization, and received a response from Jace Nair, CEO. My visit to Johannesburg was over Easter weekend, so I was unable to tour the braille production facility or a school. Fortunately, I was connected to Christo de Klerk, Chair of the Braille Committee of Blind SA and leader in braille literacy world-wide. He and his wife Martie offered us tea at their home and a chance to chat. He told me that in 1994 he attended an International Council on English Braille (ICEB) conference in Anaheim, California and was given a CTEVH conference bag, engraved with his name, which he continues to use.

My sister and I arrived at Christo’s lovely house to find a parrot in a large cage on the porch. Christo and Martie came to the door and we had introductions all around. I gave Christo four conference bags as a gift from CTEBVI. Martie offered us delicious homemade scones and tea. They told us about their bird, Chico, a
Congo African Grey Parrot, age 14. Chico is a talker and plays numbers games with Martie and Christo.

I asked Christo about education for those who are blind in South Africa, and he told me that there are 22 specialized schools for the blind in South Africa. There is a strong network of organizations that provide advocacy, vocational and educational support to those who are visually impaired or blind. Christo both benefited from and contributed towards this network.

Christo described his own journey on his Facebook page.

I Matriculated at the School for the Blind in Worcester (now the Pioneer School) in 1967. I then studied at the University of Stellenbosch where I obtained my BA (Law) degree in 1970 and my LL B degree in 1972. I next worked in private practice as an advocate at the Cape Town Bar from February 1973 until 31 May 1979 when I moved to Johannesburg to enroll in the first computer programming training class for the blind in South Africa arranged by Standard Bank and the SA National Council for the Blind. After completion of the course I worked at Standard Bank as a programmer until June 1985 when I moved to Worcester to work at my old school. There I initiated computerized braille production and I taught computers, mercantile law and braille. In January 1989 I started working as a programmer at the United Bank which later became part of Absa where I worked until I retired in October 2012. I spend my time with the things that interest me. I am much involved with braille related matters. I am President of the International Council on English braille, Deputy President of the SA Braille Authority and Chair of the Braille Committee of Blind SA.

My other interests are languages, literature and music.

Christo and I discussed braille accessibility in South Africa. There are braille production facilities which produce braille textbooks for free for students. However, when the curriculum changed, the government did not allow the next textbooks to be brailled due to copyright laws. With the election of a new president in February 2018, there has been movement in this issue. This is how Christo described the situation.

Our Department of Education implemented the new curriculum, CAPS, in 2012, and it’s now 2018 and the children still don’t have their textbooks. So in the meantime, we engaged the services of Human Rights lawyers called Section 27 and they’ve done a thorough
investigation. They’ve produced a report which is available on the internet and it makes for horrific reading. They visited all 22 special schools and the report is titled “Left in the Dark.”

And they then engaged with the Department of Education and [...] the case [was] sent down for litigation. We’ve just received a draft settlement agreement. I’ve been reading through the settlement agreement and making a few comments about things that I’m not happy about in the agreement. But at least now it looks like there is going to be a settlement agreement and it will be made an order of the court, and then they will have to see to it that the books are in the hands of the children.”

I asked Christo how the teachers managed, and he told me about one of his former students, Thinus van Sittert. He became a teacher at one of the special schools and is now the vice principal, but he used to spend his nights transcribing the materials into braille for the children.

I asked Christo about electronic book sources such as Bookshare. He said that South Africa has not ratified the Marrakesh Treaty, which would provide copyright exceptions for books to be accessible to people with print disabilities. Christo pronounced “We are fighting the fight with the government. I’ve even done a presentation to parliament about this [...] the department responsible for this is the department of trade and industry. They seem to think that a handful of blind people are going to cripple the publishing industry.”

Christo’s role in the production of braille for South Africans is related to UEB and the Duxbury translation tables. Through email correspondence, he described his work with the braille code in the following way.

After South Africa adopted the UEB in May 2004, we went about unifying the codes of our 10 local languages. I had by then already developed the Duxbury table for Afrikaans in 1986 and I then adapted it to be compatible with the principles of the UEB; in other words, the only difference [between] it and the UEB is the grade 2 contractions. In 2004 there were already Duxbury tables for most of the African languages, but I then also adapted them according to the principles of the UEB and created new tables for those languages which did not have translation tables and two of the old ones who had changed their codes completely. So, in short, I created UEB print to braille translation tables for our 10 local languages and a braille to print table for Afrikaans. We shared the maintenance work among three of us and Susan van Wyk of Braille Services created braille to print tables for the 9 African languages. This means that we now have print to braille and braille to print tables for Duxbury for all 10 [of] our local languages.

My favorite part of the visit was watching Christo use technology, both new and old. He introduced me to an app called MBraille which allows for braille input on the iphone or android phone without a braille keyboard. He also showed me the Optacon, which creates a tactile representation of print through raised vibrating pins felt by the index finger. He told me that he still uses it for correspondence, even though the company that made it, Telesensory Corporation, is no longer in existence.

I love braille, and the dedicated group of people working to promote braille literacy. Christo and Martie were exceptional hosts, and it was such an honor to learn about braille from an authority such as Christo de Klerk.
GIFTS AND TRIBUTES

By Judi Biller, judibiller.ctebvi@gmail.com

Donations received January 1, 2018 through May 31, 2018
Thank you!!

KATIE SIBERT: Sharon von See, Cath Tendler-Valencia, Sheryl Schmidt, Michelle Gutierrez, Cindy Olmstead, Maureen Reardon, Kelly Cokely, William Ridley, Roxanna Pena, Caryn Navy

DONNA COFFEE: Joan Treptow, Sharon von See, Cath Tendler-Valencia, Sheryl Schmidt, Michelle Gutierrez, Cindy Olmstead, Maureen Reardon, Nikki Blackburn, William Ridley, Roxanna Pena, Caryn Navy

GENERAL: Amazon Smile, Sharon von See, Cath Tendler-Valencia, Michelle Gutierrez, Carmen Zarate, Nikki Blackburn, William Ridley, Linda McGovern (In Memory of Ann Kelt), Melinda Wong, Caryn Navy

Please support CTEBVI by using Smile Amazon! We are listed as California Transcribers & Educators of the Visually Handicapped (our old name), whereby Amazon donates 0.5% of the price of eligible purchases!

And as always, we welcome any and all donations directly to us by using this link to our secure website for credit card or mail a check to: 1523 Krim Place, Oceanside CA 92054.
iCanConnect: The National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution Program

By Maurice Belote, Multiple and Severe Disabilities

If your child, your student, or someone you know is deafblind and could benefit from equipment that would help them stay connected to the world around them, then iCanConnect is a program you will want to know more about.

iCanConnect is the name for the National Deaf-Blind Equipment Distribution program (NDBEDP). The program is funded by the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) as part of the 21st Century Video and Communications Accessibility Act, which was signed into law in 2010 by President Obama.

Individuals who meet the program criteria are not only eligible to receive equipment at no cost, but also assessments of individual needs and training on how to set up and use the equipment.

There is a wide range of equipment available depending on needs. The equipment can be used to facilitate communication and the parameters for what constitutes communication are fairly broad. In addition to speaking on the phone, communication can also include emailing and texting. iCanConnect program staff in each state can help identify specific equipment based on individual needs and preferences.

- Braille devices (such as the BrailleNote Touch and the Braille Sense Polaris)
- Computers (such as desktops and laptops)
- Mobile devices (such as smartphones)
- Phones (big-button phones, amplified phones and large print touch-screen displays)
- Signalers (such a light, sound and vibration signaling devices)
- Software (such as screen readers and screen magnification programs)

An individual who is deafblind must meet three criteria to be eligible for...
the iCanConnect program: 1) have significant combined vision and hearing loss verified by a doctor or professional service provider; 2) be able to be trained to use the equipment, including telephones, computers and other communication equipment; and 3) meet the program’s household income guidelines. Children under the age of 18 are eligible and are considered part of the same household as their parent(s) or guardian(s).

DeafBlind defined: The iCanConnect program defines deafblindness as any individual with combined vision and hearing loss and for whom it is extremely difficult to attain independence in daily life activities, achieve psychosocial adjustment or obtain a vocation.

Vision: The individual must meet at least one of these guidelines related to vision: Visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the better eye with corrective lenses; or A field defect such that the peripheral diameter of visual field subtends an angular distance no greater than 20 degrees; or A progressive visual loss with a prognosis leading to one or both of above conditions.

Hearing: The individual must also meet at least one of the guidelines related to hearing: Chronic hearing disabilities so severe that most speech cannot be understood with optimum amplification; or Progressive hearing loss having a prognosis leading to above condition.

Note that there are criteria above related to the prognosis of progressive vision and hearing loss in the future. Here are just a few etiologies associated with deafblindness that typically involve progressive sensory losses. Some of the conditions that have progressive vision loss include Usher syndrome and infantile Refsum disease (which both involve the degenerative eye condition retinitis pigmentosa). Etiologies that have a progressive hearing loss include Stickler syndrome, Alström syndrome, and Norrie disease. Etiologies that have progressive vision and hearing loss include adrenoleukodystrophy (ALD), neurofibromatosis 2 (NF2), and Cockayne syndrome.

In order to meet the income requirement, household income cannot exceed 400% of the 2018 federal poverty guidelines. For a single earner, that amount is about $48,000 per year; for a family of four, the amount is approximately $100,000 per year.

In California, the statewide iCanConnect program is administered by the LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired in San Francisco. Kathy Abrahamson and Sook Hee Choi are the two primary contacts in California. If you live outside of California, click to find the local contact for your state/territory. Anyone who has questions to contact their state’s iCanConnect coordinating agency to get more information. You can also contact anyone at your state deafblind technical assistance project, which in California is California Deafblind Services. Spanish-language information about the iCanConnect program.
REFLECTING ON EARLY INTERVENTION

By Diana Dennis

As we come to the end of another school year, I want to share with my colleagues that when I started my career in the field of vision impairments I had had more than 5 years of experience in Early Intervention, but not specifically with children with visual impairments. I came to Blind Babies Foundation in 1997, with a solid foundation on working with families, but this was something completely different. Working with families who were experiencing the level of grief and joy that I was about to experience changed my life. I felt like I entered a whole new world, every day I was learning something new. I learned acronyms like, CVI, ROP and ONH. Before I even entered a family’s home I learned about the complexity of each condition and as I met a new family I gained more knowledge than I often knew what to do with. My head often hurt as I had so much to learn. But as I take on this role as a specialist in early childhood, I wanted to encourage each of you to think about where your students have come from, this is the best part of working with infants and toddlers as you get to form relationships with families, and see children move so quickly through various stages. Promoting relationship based early intervention is the key to success and I’d love to see this trickle up into our work with older children.

I’ve come to learn that children who are blind or visually impaired have a different trajectory then their sighted peers and although they may ultimately end up where their peers may be, their path can be very different. I urge anyone working with the birth to five population to learn as much as you can about the various health needs of your little ones and attend medical visits as often as you can; support families through these early times. These experiences can be so critical for parents/caregivers and I was reminded of this constantly at our recent CTEBVI Conference in Los Angeles. As my mentor, former boss, and friend, Julie Bernas-Pierce was given an award at the banquet I left there thinking how lucky I am to do this work. Julie has been a constant figure in my world since I started working with children with visual impairments and I cannot express enough about what she’s taught me. I encourage each of you to find a mentor, someone who challenges you to be a better you. Julie has taught me and so many others how to see the beauty in each little step, and how to see that families letting us into their lives is a gift. I’ve learned through many years of working with families as to how these relationships can guide us. I’m delighted to serve in this role as a specialist with infants and toddlers and welcome others to share their stories. I wish all of you a very happy summer!
I am a TVI in a large county. The majority of students we serve have low vision and they are primarily visual learners. They benefit from large print and/or a particular presentation like uncluttered pages with more spacing between letters and words. Assistive technology and digital book sources like Learning Ally and Bookshare allow our students to access books at the same time as their peers. With assistive technology, accessibility can be controlled by the student who can fine tune the visual and audio settings. This article focuses on Bookshare and reading books with images on an iPad.

**EXPLORING AND ASSESSING OPTIONS:**

There are many format and app choices; what is the best option? The question needs to be individualized, what is the best option for a particular student? A quick list of priorities would be one way to assess what eBook workflow you want to explore. Some categories to consider:
Navigating and reading controls - scroll text vs. simple swipe?

Learning media - reading print visually, using text to speech with highlighting?

Images - need to zoom in on pictures?

Environment - teacher and parents reading with student?

Support - TVI or other staff reformatting books?

Other goals - iPad use for other curricular activities?

Independence - is student searching for and downloading books?

The answers to these questions could influence choosing one format or app over another. I have found exploring and trial and error are often needed.

**BOOKSHARE, IPADS AND BOOKS WITH IMAGES:**

Bookshare continues to evolve and expand to meet the needs of younger readers. Special Collections are a great way to find picture books and decodable readers. The link to Special Collections page is found on My Bookshare page view. “For Kids” currently has 24 great collections including top 100 picture books and Fountas and Pinnell leveled readers. Books with images will have the DAISY with Images download option. EPUB and Word formats of books that are DAISY with Images will include pictures. If a book is DAISY Text Only, the EPUB and Word formats will not include pictures.

**NEW WORD FORMAT:**

Bookshare has recently added Word format as a download option. Word documents can be formatted for best viewing on iPad. Although there are ways to open a Word formatted Bookshare book directly on an iPad without using computer, the process is not streamlined since Word format downloads come as zip file; word doc needs to be extracted. So, Word format Bookshare books likely need to be opened on a computer, possibly reformatted and saved as a Word doc, Rich Text Format (.rtf), PDF, or another format and shared with student. Share with preferred Cloud option such as Google Drive or Dropbox. Remember also for DAISY with Images
that will be opened on iPad with Voice Dream, you can put books on a Student’s Reading List on Bookshare. From iPad, student (or adult can facilitate for younger student) can view Reading List on Bookshare in Safari browser and then open book in Voice Dream. Currently I do not see images when opening a book this way with Dolphin Easy Reader. With certain workflow and format, Easy Reader can display images.

Given a Word document, a book can be formatted to a student’s needs. PDFs in iBooks are very easy to manage given the single page view and simple swipe gesture to turn page. Pinch gestures work for zooming in on pictures. Adults are familiar with iBooks which makes read-together time with iPad go smoothly. If you are reformatting a book into a PDF to view in iBooks, remember that text size on an iPad is one third smaller than the printed font size, if your student needs 24-point font and you are making a PDF to view on iPad, create a document with 36 point font.

The 2018 sixth generation iPad is more affordable, has education pricing and will work with most recent version of Apple Pencil or a Logitech Crayon (Crayon is half the price of the Apple Pencil and can’t roll away). For students using iPad with a stylus (filling out class worksheets for instance), opening a PDF in GoodNotes could allow for additional interaction such as annotating.

**VOICE DREAM, EASY READER, iBOOKS:**

Voice Dream remains the standard for accessing Bookshare books. Images will not be visible automatically. In Voice Dream under visual settings, there are two visual settings, plain text and rich text. Choose rich text to view images. Bookshare and Dolphin Easy Reader have Bookshare integration option so a student can download from within the app. I have only recently looked further at Dolphin Easy Reader; it may have layout and presentation that works well for some students (some problem solving may be needed to figure out how to view images on Easy Reader). iBooks is a great option for EPUB with images and formatted PDFs made from Word docs. To get Bookshare EPUB books into iBooks, you need to download EPUB from the Bookshare website in Safari Web Browser. Then you can choose “Copy to iBooks” when prompted.

If anyone wants further details on any of these options or has a specific question, please feel free to email me at jesmcdowell@gmail.com. I am happy to post a YouTube tutorial on my YouTube channel: JesTVIOandM. Find me on Twitter @JesTVIOandM.
COPYRIGHTS VERSUS MUSIC TRANSCRIBERS

By Richard Taesch

Yes, I did use the word “versus.” Long ago it was thought that we had solved the rather pesky copyright dilemma once and for all - a dilemma somewhat worrisome to music professionals. But as soon as clarifications were sorted out, we found that it was never solved at all - not in any way that most of us could be comfortable with. BANA Formats 2011 and 2016 has brilliantly solved most of those problems for us. And what it did not cover in 2011, UEB has fixed, such as a transcriber’s note symbol that doesn’t conflict with numerous music signs, and one that we can all (finally) agree upon.

SCENERIO: A young student (first chair) is fully involved in a fine high school orchestra and band program. Director Dizzy, as expected, has provided a dozen tattered, tiny marching-band-sized, and scribbled upon charts to the DSS office to be transcribed into braille. It is Friday, and music rehearsals begin on Monday!

Now before we orchestrate further upon this somewhat familiar pedagogical headache, and before we become entertained by what the transcriber must be thinking,
let us look at a few excerpts from the copyright section (statements for preliminary pages) found in Formats 2016 - those which, of course, state the requirements that we all conform to, seeing as we are always eager to follow protocol and to “go by the rules.”

Excerpts: Section 2.3.6 Publisher and Copyright Segment, item e: Under item e., “Reproduction Notices” & “Exception” (Pages 2-6 and 2-7), it is clarified that authorized venues must obtain permission of certain works, among which is named music and lyrics, as well as standardized testing materials. Further down the list there is a “Note” that makes it very clear that, in the United States (excerpts), “… any unauthorized organization, … or unaffiliated transcriber [MUST] obtain permission of the publisher or copyright owner [BEFORE] beginning the transcription of any text.” Given the information in the “Scenario” described above, the music transcriber is required to apply which of the following procedures BEFORE beginning the transcription of this student’s music:

• Recommend that the student drop orchestra class for one year, or at least until you have obtained permission from each of the 12 publishers
• Report the school to the Attorney General for not obtaining authorization to reproduce copyrighted works
• If the copyright notices are illegible, or photocopied off of the page, you must research the government database to find the titles, then proceed as required
• Begin work, as copyright clearance does not apply to us
• Require the band director to learn music transcription
• Ignore the rule just like everyone else
• Open a beer, then lie down until the worry goes away
• Get even with Dr. Dizzy by reporting him for distributing copies of copyrighted music
• Join the growing “Me Too” movement of retiring music transcribers
• Become comfortable with working illegally

A specialist’s answer to the copyright quiz:

,FRANKLY1,I DON'T H A CLUE6,DOES ANYb0dy ELSE8,P]H,NO4,#A MI<T FLY1 Z X APPE>S TO 2!ONLY WAY TO PROTECT \RVS "<& ,DR4 DIZZY”>2 B !N :AT AB ! /UD5T8

Send your solution: richardtaesch@menvi.org.
THE ONE CONSTANT IS CHANGE: A Discussion of Formats in Piano Music (Part 2)

By Stephanie Pieck

In the first part of this article, I reviewed the most common formats encountered in Braille piano music: Bar by Bar; Section by Section; and Bar Over Bar. In this conclusion, I will focus on how readers can effectively cope with these formats. While the three formats have unique qualities that may challenge a reader, there are several basic skills that are useful no matter which format you’re looking at. Think of these as your basic toolkit for Braille reading—they’re just as helpful for other kinds of material, such as books, menus, user manuals, etc.

Get a Good Overview: Before diving into all those dots, take a few minutes to explore the physical document. How big or small is it? How is it bound? Is the Braille on one or both sides of the page? How much “white space” (i.e., areas with no Braille) is on each page? Is there a running header? Are the pages numbered? Taking time to answer those questions (and any others you can come up with) will help you set the tone for the rest of the reading experience. As an example: I have a terrific book that contains music for over 300 English country dance tunes for the violin, an instrument I am learning to play. The books are bound with comb bindings and have plastic covers, so they open easily and stay open. But those plastic covers are slippery! And the entire book takes up three volumes—far too big for a music stand. If I want to use this book during a group session, I’d better come up with some alternatives. One strategy is to find out ahead of time which tunes will be played and make a copy of those tunes on loose sheets, which will stay on a music stand much better than those three slippery books.

Look for Landmarks: Now you’re ready for the next level of your exploration, which starts with another series of questions. Is there a table of contents, and if so, where is it? (Many older
scores from Europe have it at the back of the book rather than the front.) If there are multiple pieces or movements, how are they separated from each other—i.e., a skipped blank line, a centered line of dots, etc.? Does the running head change when the piece or movement changes? What format is being used? How has the music been divided up? Are there indications to corresponding information from the print score? (That last question is crucial if you plan to use your music to teach sighted students or interact with sighted musicians who will be using the same score for their parts.) How did the transcriber indicate new sections especially in Bar by Bar and Section by Section formats, where measure numbers are not usually present? (Techniques include indentation; use of letters to indicate sections; or use of small tactile stars—a common practice in older scores produced by RNIB.) Did the transcriber include any special notes? (This is particularly valuable for method books that rely on graphics to indicate specific information or to correlate teaching materials in a series with multiple books covering several subjects. For example, the Piano Adventures series includes four core books at each level: Lessons; Theory: Performance; and Technique and Artistry. The print uses different icons to show the page numbers in each of those books for related material. Transcribers will usually indicate the signs they have developed to deal with such things. If you plan to use a graphic-heavy book with a Braille-reading student, you’ll need to become familiar with those unique symbols so you can alert your student to their presence.)

If you are memorizing a lengthy piece, look for “musical milestones”—specific measures that you can easily find—to help keep track of where you are in the score.

A Note About Intervals: Today, we take it for granted that intervals read downward in the right hand and upward in the left. However, this was not always the case, and there are plenty of terrific transcriptions out there which were done before this “standardized” approach was adopted. There is not always going to be a helpful note about which way to read your intervals. So before you start learning (or teaching) from your new score, take a moment to figure out the intervals. Try playing a few measures that contain intervals for each hand. If you have access to a recording (YouTube is a boon here), compare the sound of what you played to what you hear? Does it match? If not, try reversing the direction of your intervals. Also look at the fingering. If you know the first chord in a piece for the right hand is a C Major chord (with C as the lowest note), then seeing the note C with a first finger (thumb) followed by the interval of a third and a fifth will tell you that your right hand intervals read UP, not DOWN. (If they read down, the chord would be an F Major chord, F-A-C from lowest to highest note, and the C would most likely be followed by a fifth finger indication.)
Bar by Bar: If you are memorizing a lengthy piece, look for “musical milestones”—specific measures that you can easily find—to help keep track of where you are in the score. Sometimes these are ready-made things like repeat signs, tempo changes, or new key signatures. Don’t count on those, though, and don’t expect the score to be divided into helpful, bite-size pieces. I have old sonata scores that have no indented material except at the first bar. The next time there’s any sectional break is when the movement ends! I’ve also had to use physical pieces of paper to mark my place in books that don’t stay open well because of their bindings.

Section by Section: Most of the time, the sections make musical sense and end at a logical stopping spot. This makes practice/memorization pretty easy. But beware! If there are several sections that are similar but not exactly the same, it’s tempting to skim through the later ones and say, “I’ve already learned that.” Recordings are helpful here. YouTube’s Settings feature allows you to slow down playback of whatever you’re listening to, so you can follow along in your Braille score to catch those small changes and be alert for them as you memorize. For pianists, I’d also recommend putting hands together on each section before moving on to the next one.

Bar Over Bar: For students first learning piano, knowing how the hands fit together can be a challenge, especially if there are indications in one hand that make its measure a lot longer than the same measure for the other hand. One skill I try to teach my blind/VI students is looking at two lines at once. Notice that I said “looking at,” not “reading”! Teaching the awareness of two lines enables the student to independently figure out which left-hand music goes with which right-hand music. To help them learn do this, I have students skim through their piece, stopping at each new measure to explore how long it is for each hand. I also have the student keep a lookout for anything that would make learning the piece easier—i.e., the same two measures repeated, or chord patterns, or measures containing long note values (or better still, rests!). Then, we begin working on the first few measures together. It’s important for blind/VI teachers to model this skill for students, because the students may not believe it’s possible to do such a crazy and difficult thing. It’s not crazy, and it’s not difficult. Like just about everything else in music, it takes practice. Developing this two-line approach to looking at piano music vastly reduces the times I assign the first 16 measures in a new Braille piece, only to have a student come to their next lesson and announce: “I didn’t do it because I couldn’t figure out how to put it together.”

This might sound like a lot of work. It is. It might sound frustrating. Sometimes, it is. But looking at a page of information—any kind of information—and being able to break it down into usable components is a skill that has merit far beyond music-making. I’ve used these skills to my advantage in diverse areas, from taking Civil Service exams to navigating unfamiliar hotels to get to conference workshops on time. You might be teaching a ten-year-old about music today. Whether s/he continues to play for a lifetime doesn’t really matter. But the skills you taught may prove instrumental in helping that student achieve some other great thing. Denying any student access to learning is not something any teacher does knowingly. But before you say you’re not going to try something because it’s a little hard or inconvenient, remember that we, as teachers, hold some of the most powerful keys to the success or failure of the next generations.
By William (Bill) McCann

Some highlights of this new version:

• First provisional support for Unified English Braille (UEB) for text such as titles and lyrics

• Runs under Windows 10 and earlier versions dating back to XP

• Exploits major improvements in the companion Lime notation editor:
  - Virtually comprehensive support for importing scores in MusicXML format
  - New option to use the talking score feature with non-JAWS screen readers such as NVDA and even Narrator
  - Braille and print music track in sync during playback from Lime’s Hear dialog
  - Responsiveness with JAWS and other screen readers much faster than previous versions
  - Lime and GOODFEEL even more stable
  - Runs with JAWS 2018 and earlier versions dating back to JAWS 15
  - New “Silenzio” mode allows you to temporarily silence the “talking score” feature so you can skim through the score hearing only notes and chords without related verbal description
  - Option to mute or adjust volume of metronomic click during score playback
  - Users of Lime Aloud can mix and match Speech and braille cues with special scrolling and magnification features known as Lime Lighter
TRANSCRIBER’S ROLE

By Joan Treptow
joanietreps@charter.net

It was brought to my attention at conference that some people do not know what a school transcriber’s jobs, duties, and responsibilities are during a day. As a school transcriber for 27+ years, I can tell you that there was never a day to relax, read a magazine, or paint my nails. I hope this article helps clarify the question of what a school transcriber does during the course of a day, week, month, year, career.

One-on-one’ transcriber: This student is usually an at-grade-level child. This means that there are at least four subject classes as well as electives. Not all textbooks are available in braille, especially Math and Science (we know those books aren’t good on tape). Transcription is needed for language arts, social studies, math, science, novels, art, and music. Tactile graphics also need to be created. There are also day-to-day worksheets, tests, etc., that seem the mainstream teacher forgot they have to prepare beforehand for a blind student.

Transcriber for a school district: This transcriber is responsible for several students, different grades, K through 12, and large print work orders as well as braille needs. Hopefully there is more than one to help share the load. School districts usually have a caseload of several students who are either braille readers, large print readers, and/or braille learners. Materials need to be produced for all students. Not only does the transcriber need to keep ahead of their students’ material needs, they must research book availability and equipment that the IEP team has deemed necessary for the students’ education. The transcriber is usually responsible for purchasing materials used in the production of braille. The school transcriber also needs to have a team-oriented mentality, because they work closely with the TVI’s to make sure the students’ materials needs are met on an individual basis.

FORMAT SPECIALIST NEEDED

By Jonn Paris-Salb

CTEBVI is seeking a specialist in Formatting. We prefer someone with experience in all forms of formatting, and knowledgeable about the BANA Formatting guidelines. The specialist will respond to technical questions from transcribers, teachers-of-the visually impaired, and perhaps students/parents. We also ask the specialists to write articles to be published in the JOURNAL (two of three issues per year), and hopefully to present at the CTEBVI conference with information that is current.

If you are interested, or know of someone who might be interested, please have them send qualifications (including certifications) to Jonn Paris-Salb jonnps@gmail.com.
By Jake Lesner

It seems like every few years the definition of what makes for a successful transition expands. Now it seems that professionals are asked to work with students on goals relating to education, employment, transportation, personal hygiene and half a dozen other topics. Yet, I seldom hear about goals relating to civic engagement.

It is disappointing to not hear professionals talking about motivating students to vote considering the budget cuts directed at services for those with disabilities. With advances in technology and opportunities to participate in the political process expanding, now is the perfect opportunity to get students excited about voting.

Before you read further, I must stress that when teaching students about voting you need to remain nonpartisan. This means that you can provide students with information, but not tell them who to vote for. Even though there are limitations on what you can tell students about voting, there are plenty of ways to get them to the ballot box when they turn 18.

CIVIC ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS OF ALL AGES

1. Look for ways to help students feel connected to political issues. During the last election, I was helping a student complete an assignment where they had to decide what candidate various 19th-century German political philosophers would support. To say that the student was bored was an understatement. If your goal is to get students to vote, they need to develop a connection to the issue. Is your student mad about not being able to get a bus home from the mall after 6 PM? Perhaps they would be interested in learning more about a proposition that would give each county in the state $30 million to increase bus service. You can copy two or three different articles on the issue, both pro and con, and have the student identify the possible bias in each.
2. Have students realize that others are interested in their ideas. During the weeks and months leading to an election, the media often features stories about what different communities are thinking about as they get ready to cast their ballots. Often newspapers and networks like CNN and NPR encourage their customers to submit stories or articles. One way to show students that their opinions matter, is to have them submit an article or idea for a story to their local newspaper or radio station. Not only will you be helping students develop their writing skills, they will also realize that others care about their ideas. If people can see that others take their opinion seriously they will be more likely to vote or write a letter to a politician.

3. Introduce students on how to cast a ballot: In California, one can cast a ballot in many ways. They can mark a paper ballot with a pen, touch a screen, blow into a straw or hit a big button that is similar to ones on arcade games. Election officials will bring this equipment to your school or agency and let students practice voting.

VOTING ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS OVER AGE 16: HELP STUDENTS PRE-REGISTER TO VOTE.

Starting in 2018 students over 16 can pre-register to vote meaning they can submit a voter registration card. When the student turns 18 they will be automatically added to the voter rolls. You can register. Encourage students to work at a polling place. Besides signing up to vote, students over 16 can get paid to work at their local polling place on Election Day. Students can make $100 or more and gain work experience. Some of my friends with low vision enjoy working at the polls because it shows the public that someone with a disability can do a job. Students who want to be poll workers should contact their county elections office.

VOTING ACTIVITIES FOR STUDENTS OVER 18: MAKE SURE THE STUDENT IS REGISTERED TO VOTE.

If you work with students who are over 18 but under a conservatorship, help the student make sure they are on the voter rolls. In California, if a person is under conservatorship they can still vote unless a judge orders them to be removed from the rolls after a hearing. To ensure that a student is not disenfranchised, help them check if they’re on the voter rolls. If they were removed without an order from the judge, show the people in the election department.
HELP STUDENTS GO THROUGH THE EASY VOTER GUIDE.

Before every state election, the Easy Voter Guide is published in California at a 5th-grade reading level. When reviewing the guide with the student, remind them that they don’t have to vote in every contest. I found that many people think that if one’s ballot is not complete their vote won’t count. Make sure the student knows they only have to vote in the contests that they are interested in.

HELP YOUR STUDENT DEVELOP A PLAN TO CAST A BALLOT.

Before Election Day make sure that your student has a plan to cast their ballot whether it’s by mail or by going to the polls. If they want to vote at the polls, help them figure a route to get there. Some political parties and Para-transit providers offer free rides to the polls. The voter can also bring up to two people with them to help them in the voting booth. If the student cannot get to a polling place but still wants a use a voting machine, one can be set up at their house, upon request. Some counties can e-mail a ballot to you that you can fill out in a Word document. You can mail it back or drop it off at a polling place. On Election Day Disability Rights California has a hotline to call if they have any problems voting.

ENCOURAGE THE STUDENT TO MAKE THE VOTING PROCESS EASIER FOR OTHERS:

After casting their ballot encourage them to talk about their experience with government officials. After each statewide election, the Secretary of State’s office sends out a survey about issues voters experienced at the ballot box. Students can also attend or become members of a county or statewide Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC). VAAC’s meets to talk about improving voting experiences for people with disabilities. Contact your counties elections department to find out if your county has a VAAC. After 2020 all counties will be mandated to have a VAAC.

Hopefully the activities in this article will show your student how much support they can receive if they want to vote in California. If your student still feels that their vote doesn’t matter, remind them of the lengths that politicians go to limit the ability of people to vote. For example, in some states voters need special forms of ID, that take a lot of time and effort to obtain. Furthermore, some states have thrown people off the rolls for reasons that are unclear and illegal. Despite being in California, students can help elect leaders that will in turn make it easier for people in those states to vote. With a well-informed electorate, it may be easier to create more services for assisting students with disabilities in their transition to adult life.
By Tracy Gaines, CTEBVI
BANA Representative

The information in this report comes from the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) press release following its 2018 spring meeting at the Los Angeles Airport Marriott Hotel. The meeting was hosted by the Alternate Text Production Center of the California Community Colleges (ATPC) and immediately preceded CTEBVI’s annual conference. During its three-day meeting, the BANA Board reviewed semiannual reports from its eighteen general and technical committees, each of which works on specific charges from the Board, and acted on recommendations from these committees. Portions of the Monday and Tuesday meetings were dedicated to further development of BANA’s strategic planning.

The Board approved two guidance documents entitled *Graphing Calculator Guidelines* and a revision of *Guidance for Transcription Using the Nemeth Code within UEB Contexts*. 

2018 Revision of Guidance for Transcription Using the Nemeth Code within UEB Contexts: This document is accompanied by a change log that lists updates to the original Guidance for Transcription Using the Nemeth Code within UEB Contexts that was posted in June 2016. Individuals who downloaded the file prior to the new April 2018 version should note the indicated changes.

Both the guidelines document and the change log are available in BRF and PDF versions on the Nemeth Code page of the BANA website. [http://www.brailleauthority.org/mathscience/math-science.html](http://www.brailleauthority.org/mathscience/math-science.html).

*Provisional Guidance for Chemistry Notation Using Nemeth in UEB Contexts:* BANA welcomes feedback from users of this document. Just click on the “Send a message to the Chemistry Committee” link and enter your comment or question. This publication is available in both BRF and enhanced PDF. [http://www.brailleauthority.org/mathscience/math-science.html#chem](http://www.brailleauthority.org/mathscience/math-science.html#chem).
To order: [www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org); 1-800-223-1839
Print: Catalog number 7-09653-00
Braille: Catalog number: 5-09653-00

To order: [www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org); 1-800-223-1839
Print: Catalog number 7-09651-01
Braille: Catalog number 5-09651-01

Jessica (Jessi) Rivera, representing Associated Services for the Blind, was elected BANA treasurer to replace Jaclyn (Jackie) Sheridan, who for personal reasons cannot complete her term of office. BANA welcomed two new Board members—Whitney Gregory from Braille Solutions, Region 4 Educational Service Center and Tina Seger from Clovernook Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Horizons for the Blind has also appointed a new Board member, Cynthia (Cindy) Skandera.

The mission of the Braille Authority of North America is to assure literacy for tactile readers through the standardization of braille and/or tactile graphics. You can follow the work of BANA by signing up for BANA-Announce, a one-way email list that disseminates news and information. To join this list, send a blank email message to bana-announce-subscribe@brailleauthority.org. Follow the directions in the confirmation email that will be sent in response. You can also follow BANA on Facebook and Twitter!
Presented by Kyle DeJute, Braille Trainer for the American Printing House for the Blind

Handouts and PowerPoint

These tools would not exist without

- Rose Zinius, Accessible Media Editor for APH
- Jonathan Carson, Accessible Media Editor for APH
- Jane Thompson, Director of Accessible Textbooks & Tests Depts. at APH

What is a template?

A template is a preset format for a document or file, used so that the format does not have to be recreated each time it is used.

Templates for this workshop:

Title Pages: US Title Page BF2016; Sample 2, Canadian Title Page BF2016; Sample 2

Special Symbols Pages: BF2016 Sample 2-21, IMBT-UEB page 19-13, Nem-UEB possible

Transcriber’s Notes Pages: BF2016 Sample 2-21, history txtbk possible, Nem-UEB possible

APH t-pages: Template, Samples

Miscellaneous: Error Sheet 1, Printable, Error Sheet 2, Graphic Tally Sheet

Compilations for this workshop:

Unicode Braille Cells Table, “Buffet” of Cheat Sheets, Supplementary Guide to UEB Reference Materials; Nemeth Symbol Cheat Sheet / Guide to Nemeth Code, 4 separate UEB symbol quick references, NLS frequently used UEB symbols, CAT Braille Chart 0328, DBT_UEB_black, UEB Crib Sheet, Essential Reference Books and, Resources for Braille Transcribing, Sample Transcriber's Notes

Checklists for this workshop: In Volume One Only, Tactile Graphic Proofreading, Volume Prep Checklist

Other Tools for this workshop: Tactile Graphics Template notes

Exceptional Production Layouts notes: Graphic Organizers, Double-spaced, Consumable

Content Entry Tools: UKAAF Math AutoCorrect, Braille Order chart

TOOLS TO GLIDE THROUGH THE MAZE OF BRAILLE FORMATS 2016
SpeedBraille keys are macros that you can set manually to automate processes that you use every day; Page breaks, format changes, transcriber’s Notes you use frequently, box lines, and page numbering control. These are the keystrokes, B2K V2 also accepts mouse clicks, but version 1 does not:

1. **Alt** – This brings up the “Menu” menu
2. **a** – For “Adjust”
3. **b** – For “SpeedBraille Keys”
4. This brings up a table in a dialog box
5. **n** – For New
6. You now use the key, or chord for your new key. Our sample will use **T (shift+t)** to make a Top Box Line
7. After you press the key, the next Dialog box asks you to Name it (this is the name that will show in the table view dialog box)
8. Once you name it, you can hit **Enter**, or **n** for Next
9. This is the last dialog box before it starts recording (after we press enter, everything we do will be recorded in the SpeedBraille Key)
10. Record keypresses/mouse click
11. When you are finished recording, press the Pause/Break key (this will end the recording)
12. You will have 2 choices: Current File or System
13. Use **f** for Finish, or click finish. If you press enter here, the default will cancel

By Amy Furman, Braille Media Specialist
AMAC Accessibility, Atlanta, GA
Sponsored, in part, by Braille 2000, LLC
By John Paris-Salb

The 2018 CTEBVI conference is now behind us. Sergio Oliva and his staff at Braille Institute, along with Robert Schulenburg with his staff with Wayfinder made the Youth Institute day very special and should be highly commended for their bringing this event to a crescendo. Also credit to Anne Ward and Judith Lesner for helping with the Parent Institute! The presenters at both were captivating, motivating, and deserving of high praise!

The Youth Institute had its second version, the first in Southern California. The event included about 45 youth who came unsure of what would take place. The day was exciting, at times loud with enthusiasm, at times contemplative in table groups with a task to accomplish, at times comfortable as youth shared experiences with each other.

The Parent Institute involved 25 participants, also unsure of the day’s agenda and how it would be useful to them. This was our first parent institute and it was amazing to watch sharing of experiences, caring for personal stories, support for the parent and their children, and also noticeably boisterous and joyful.

This idea of leaving something behind reminds me of being in a boat and looking at the wake on both sides of the boat as it powers through the water. That wake will soon dissolve into calm water with no memory of the waves. Unless…, unless we picture that wake as tangible, as all of our memories are when we recall them. One day can be memorable, but the long-term goal is to connect people throughout the year with each other. All will be receiving the CTEBVI JOURNAL and monthly To Be Continued publications from our organization. We also hope to provide a means for the participants to continue to stay connected with each other through a list serve. If you are interested in the planning of the next iteration of institutes for the CTEBVI Conference in 2019, please contact John Paris-Salb jonnps@gmail.com.
As I stood chatting with Layla Hildenbrand, an 8 year old Apprentice contestant from North Carolina wearing a beautiful pink dress, I heard two Freshman competitors harmonizing, a family talking about how impressive the University of Southern California was, and a father and son talking about getting to do a “guy trip”. We were all waiting for the shuttle bus to take us to the closing ceremony of the 2018 National Braille Challenge. You can watch the ceremony and feel and see the excitement as anticipation mounts to find out who the winners are in each of the five grade group categories along with individual winners for spelling, reading comprehension, and charts and graphs. Each year Braille Institute, the creator and sponsor of this event in its 18th year, honors a Teacher of the Year. For 2018 Jeri Hile from Shawnee Mission Public Schools in Shawnee Mission, Kansas received this prestigious honor. The winner in each grade group category and the Teacher of the Year each receive a BrailleNote Touch donated by Humanware.

The Braille Challenge reminds me of my personal challenges as a child with low vision who “read differently.” Like many of the 1,100 students throughout the US and Canada who participated in 51 regional contests, I was the only student with a visual impairment in my school. Finding ways to excel and to be recognized for my strengths was never easy. The 50 finalists, this year from 27 states and British Columbia, each excel when it comes to braille literacy, and beyond. I met young people who want to be authors, lawyers, scientists, computer programmers, and more. I learned about their hobbies from scouting to track and field to robotics and of course reading!

For me, as a person with a visual impairment, I have to say one of my favorite parts of this event is seeing contestants connect with other contestants. As a youth I found the connections I made through attending a summer camp to be valuable and still do to this day. Though coming together at nationals over the last several years, a group of teens now meet online each Sunday and have formed their own choir. Each goes to public school, but each finds the time together fun and a way to connect with others who like herself love to sing, read braille, and use technology.

To make it to the National Braille Challenge and to be among the winners, contestants must work really hard on their braille skills. In the same way athletes train for their sports, these young people train to ace
competitions in spelling, proofreading, reading comprehension, dictation, and charts and graphs. I can tell you that their papers are scored meticulously – I got to be part of the scoring room crew this year. Luckily, they had lots of chocolate on hand to keep my energy level up! The number of volunteers the Braille Institute pulls together to make this event a success is amazing. My hats off to Sergio Oliva, Marie Saldivar, Christine Pak, and the many others at Braille Institute who are the muscle behind the event and work tirelessly year round to make the regionals and nationals a success.

In 2017 the Braille Institute team moved the National Braille Challenge finals to the University of Southern California. This small taste of college life, complete with twin beds in our dorm rooms, gives finalists and their families the message that a college education is in their reach. Craig Meador, President of the American Printing House for the Blind, shared at the Friday night reception, a quote from Louis Braille, “Braille is knowledge and knowledge is power.” The power of the Braille Challenge is amazing. Spread the word and encourage braille readers in grades 1 to 12 to be a part of an event that can positively impact their lives now and in the future.

And by the way, Layla Hildenbrand from North Carolina won second place for Apprentice, Ciara Peterson, from Tucson, Arizona whose mother took a braille literacy class with me when she was a preschooler, won second place for the Sophomores, and Kaleigh Brendle from my hometown of Freehold, New Jersey won first place for the Junior Varsity.

2018 BRAILLE CHALLENGE WINNERS

APPRENTICE
1st - Hannah Gevers, Arlington, MA
2nd - Layla Hildenbrand, Mills River, NC
3rd - Caylen Coffel, Spring, TX

FRESHMAN
1st - Noa Hottin, Alexandria, VA
2nd - Logan Strickland, Orlando, FL
3rd - Carmynn Blakely, Louisville, KY

SOPHOMORE
1st - Brooke Petro, Leawood, KS
2nd - Ciara Peterson, Tucson, AZ
3rd - Savannah Lindberg, St. Augustine, FL

JUNIOR VARSITY
1st - Kaleigh Brendle, Freehold, NJ
2nd - Julia LaGrand, Grand Rapids, MI
3rd - Ella Yu, Delta, British Columbia

VARSITY
1st - Mitchell Bridwell, Pittsboro, IN
2nd - Griffin Miller, Valencia, PA
3rd - Alexandra Allers, Fort Gratiot, MI

EXCELLENCE IN SPELLING
Hannah Gevers, Arlington, MA

EXCELLENCE IN READING COMPREHENSION
Audrey Bethay, Prairie Village, KS

THE HARLEY FETTERMAN AWARD, EXCELLENCE in CHARTS and GRAPHS
Griffin Miller, Valencia, PA
The following individuals have agreed to serve CTEBVI in varying fields of specialization within education and braille transcribing. These specialists have been recognized for their expertise in their field and their ability to communicate effectively. Please feel free to contact these volunteers with your questions. They are available year-round, not just at Conference. Click on the name to learn more about the specialist. Click on the e-mail address to ask a question.

You will note that one position is currently open, Formats. Please contact Jonn Paris-Salb with your suggestions or questions regarding the responsibilities of a specialist and remuneration for the work done in support of CTEBVI. You may also nominate a person or persons to fill the opening, including yourself!

Advocacy
Jacob Lesner-Buxton
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BANA
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Braille Formats
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O & M
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UEB
Sue Reilly
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Maurice Belote, M.A., Special Education, California Deafblind Services, San Francisco State University, Project Coordinator

Maurice Belote has 36 years of experience teaching children who are deafblind and providing technical assistance to families, schools, and public and private agencies. He currently serves as Project Coordinator for California Deafblind Services, the statewide, federally funded technical assistance and training project specific to deafblindness. He also serves as Co-Chair of the National Coalition on Deafblindness and is active in numerous national initiatives to improve services to children and youth who are deafblind. He is inspired everyday by the courage, resilience and determination of the students he serves.

Jon Crawley, Certified Braille Transcriber

Jon Crawley is a Nemeth, Literary, and Formats certified transcriber. Jon has trained a number of transcribers and is knowledgable about ‘special circumstances’.

Diana Dennis, Infant – Preschool Teacher

Diana Dennis has served as an Early Childhood Special Educator, Vision Impairment Specialist, Program Director and TVI during her career in the field of early childhood and special education. She is currently teaching an early intervention series as part of coursework at Cal State, L.A., and Teacher of Students with Visual Impairments with Azusa Unified School District.

Ralph Cioffi, M.A., Orientation & Mobility, M.A., Elementary Education, Retired O&M Specialist/TVI

Ralph Cioffi is currently dually credentialed as both an Orientation & Mobility Specialist and TVI. He serves as the O&M Specialist for CTEBVI. Ralph worked for a public school district for 24 years where his experiences ranged from providing service to O&M/VI students in Early Start and pre-school programs, along with working with students at the elementary and high school level. Cioffi is a graduate of the O&M Master’s program at Cal State Los Angeles and holds a Master’s degree.

Tracy Gaines, Independent Certified Transcriber

Past President of CTEBVI, currently on CTEBVI JOURNAL Committee, BANA Representative, Website and Registration. Tracy, a long time transcriber, can answer questions regarding BANA decisions and current revisions in codes.

Jacob Lesner-Buxton, M.S.W., Advocate for Disability Rights

Jacob Lesner-Buxton is a person with cerebral palsy and low vision who is a community organizer in Santa Barbara. In his job, Jacob helps communities on the Central Coast advocate for disability rights. Jacob also enjoys writing articles, doing yoga, traveling and going to movies.
CTEBVI SPECIALISTS

Jessica McDowell, Teacher for the Visually Impaired and O&M Specialist working for Marin County Office of Education.

VI teachers are constantly trying to keep up with new technology and tools. Jessica appreciates being part of CTEBVI and a community of teachers who share ideas. She always tries to work toward finding efficient solutions for her students, whether the answer is high tech or low tech. She believes that assessment of student’s skills and needs, learning tasks, and supports are key to finding the right tools.

Sue Reilly, Retired transcriber, active member of BANA

Now retired as a transcriber, Sue keeps busy with her involvement with BANA as an Administrative Clerk. She also has served in many capacities, including President for CTEBVI and working on workshop proposals and several volunteer tasks for the CTEBVI annual conference.

John Romeo, Beyond the Walls, Nemeth Transcriber

A braille transcriber since 1994, John holds certifications in Literary, Nemeth, Braille Formats, 2011 and has his Mathematics Proofreader certification. The driving force behind CTEBVI’s Braille from Beyond the Walls™ program, John is passionate about braille and the rehabilitative qualities the vocation provides offenders who participate in prison braille programs across the nation. John envisioned a way to leverage the knowledge base inside these programs for the greater good of the braille community. John acts as a mentor for Braille from Beyond the Walls™ and helps participating prison groups to develop professional quality presentations for the CTEBVI annual conference.

Sheryl Schmidt, M.A. San Bernardino County Superintendent of Schools, TVI

Sheryl Schmidt received her B.A. in Liberal Studies from the University of La Verne. After two years of teaching third grade she began course work to become a VI teacher at Cal State LA. She has been a TVI for 23 years. Sheryl also holds a M.A. in Early Childhood Low Incidence Disabilities.

Richard Taesch, CTEBVI Music Specialist since 1993

Richard is the founder and retired chair of Braille Music Division at Southern California Conservatory of Music (SCCM established in 1971). He is also the founder of the Music Education Network for The Visually Impaired - MENVI (1997). He authored “An Introduction to Music for the Blind Student” series and “A Blind Music Student’s College Survival Guide,” (www.menvi.org). Richard is a NLS certified music transcriber and has been a music educator since 1961. He has been listed in “Whose Who in America” since 2003, and was recognized as a Recipient for the Albert Nelson Marquis Lifetime Achievement Award in 2017.

Joan Treptow, Braille Transcriber, Treps Consulting & Braille Service

Joan Treptow has been a braille transcriber for 29 years, working six years as an independent contractor. She has served CTEBVI as president 1999-2000, past Tactile Graphics Specialist, and is currently the Large Print Specialist.
CTEBVI BOARD

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If you are moving, virtually (new e-mail) or physically (new mailing, as city, state, or zip code) please let us know. ctebvi@gmail.com