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Winter 2004-05

Volume XLVII, No. 4

WHAT'S INSIDE:

Mr. Bernard Krebs
honored with Migel Medal

Computer Generated Tactiles
Preparing for a Language Major
Conference News 2005
Conference Update 2006

JOURNAL

The official publication of the
California Transcribers and Educators of the Visually Handicapped

*MESSAGE
FROM
THE EDITOR*

I would like to dedicate this issue of the *CTEVH Journal* to the memory of Mr. Bernard Krebs. His dedication to literacy has been profound and unyielding in his many years of service.

Please note that the room rate for the San Francisco Airport Marriot in Burlingame is \$109.00 and not \$99.00 as listed in the previous *Journal* and conference packet. This is the hotel's conference room group rate.

A complete list of Life Members, CTEVH Special Awards and CTEVH Certificates of Appreciation will appear in the next issue of the *Journal*. These items are always available for viewing on the CTEVH website at www.ctevh.org.

THE CTEVH JOURNAL

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July 1, 2005

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September 15, 2005

CTEVH JOURNAL



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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

~PAULA LIGHTFOOT

I just returned from a JAC (Joint Action Committee of Organizations of and for the Visually Impaired) meeting. JAC is a non-profit coalition of blind adults, parents, professionals, agencies, and providers of aids and technology working together to improve the lives of blind and visually impaired persons. One major area they cover is to sponsor, support, or oppose specific legislation or actions that affect the lives, rights or opportunities of people who are blind or have low vision. CTEVH is one of many member organizations of JAC. Jane Vogel is the chairperson of JAC and she sits on our board as a representative of JAC. Thank you Jane for all you do to keep us informed. I encourage you to attend the JAC workshop, on Saturday at 3:45 at our March 2005 conference, to get an update of current issues and legislation.

I am sad to report the death of Bernard Krebs on December 19th. Norma Schechter has written a tribute to Mr. Krebs in this issue. Mr. Krebs was the Head Librarian at the Jewish Guild for the Blind in New York. He donated his copyrights to CTEVH with the proviso that they make every reasonable attempt to keep his work alive and updated. Mr. Krebs was to receive the AFB Migel award in March. Mr. Krebs's dedication and achievements have significantly improved the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired.

Our Board of Directors will hold their next meeting on March 3rd . Please contact me (Paula Lightfoot at pmbrownl@yahoo.com) if you have an idea or item that you would like discussed, presented, etc. We want to be open to member input and new ideas.

Remember to visit our web site at www.ctevh.org.

Paula Lightfoot

Gifts and Tributes

General Fund

*Barbara Rudin
Robert Ego
Hope Smith
Robert Morgan*

Katie Sibert Fund

*Carolyn Dall
Lynn Worch
Robert Morgan*

Donna Coffee Fund

*Carolyn Dall
Susan Fleming
Lynn Worch
Lisa Gesson
Robert Morgan*

Contributions to the CTEVH Gifts and Tributes Fund

will be used to improve services to persons who are visually impaired.

Please make checks payable to CTEVH and mail them to:

**CTEVH Gifts and Tributes
Iona Luke
1301 Ashwood Court
San Mateo, CA 94402**

Donor's Name, Address, Zip _____

In honor of: _____

In memory of: _____

Please direct contributions to:

___ THE KATIE SIBERT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

___ THE DONNA COFFEE YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP FUND

___ CTEVH GENERAL FUND

All contributions to CTEVH are tax deductible.

CTEVH Membership Application

CTEVH membership dues are for the calendar year. **Any dues received after October will be applied to the following year.** Membership includes the *CTEVH Journal* as well as pre-conference materials for the Annual Conference.

CTEVH MEMBERSHIP DUES

Annual dues \$25

Renewal

New Member

Life Membership \$300

Foreign Membership \$35

Institutional Membership \$100

Donation:

Katie Sibert Memorial Fund \$ _____

Donna Coffee Youth Scholarship Fund \$ _____

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ _____

Please make all checks and money orders payable in United States funds to **CTEVH** and return payments with this form. Transactions can also be processed on-line at www.ctevh.org.

Check for address change on renewals.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE (optional) _____

E-MAIL _____

Do you consider yourself primarily (circle one)

TRANSCRIBER

EDUCATOR

PARENT

OTHER (specify) _____

If you require specialized media, do you want **CTEVH** publications in: (circle one)

BRAILLE

TAPE

TAPE w/BRL Examples

RTF FLOPPY DISK

VIRTUAL

(e-mail required)

Return application and payment to:

CTEVH Membership Chair

741 North Vermont

Los Angeles, CA 90029

323-666-2211 (messages)

CTEVH CONFERENCE 2005

THE VIEW FROM HERE:

Learning from the Past, Planning for the Future



Dear Friends & Colleagues,

As we are about to begin our 46th Annual Conference I encourage you to look carefully at our offerings. Members of the Conference Committee have made a special effort to respond to your requests for specific information. We believe the strands we've built for transcribers, teachers, orientation and mobility specialists, other professionals, parents, and friends go a long way to meet these needs.

Our pre-conference workshops include full-day and half-day training sessions that continue to be needed and new offerings including full-day workshops on medical issues and an assessment workshop presented by the American Printing House for the Blind.

However, at the end of the day, each of us as individuals determines whether we are serving our clients successfully. CTEVH offers the tools. You, by your participation in activities directed to making us better, enhance the profession. We look forward to your active CTEVH participation.

If you haven't yet registered for the Conference you may still do so either online or at the door.

Stephen A. Goodman
Conference Chair

**CTEVH Financial Statement
as of December 31, 2004
(Approved by Board as of 10/23/04)**

Cash on hand - January 1, 2004 \$285,001.07

RECEIPTS

Membership Dues	23,104.15
Life Membership	3,600.00
Conference 2004	59,766.44
Conference 2005	7,060.00
Interest	4,552.63
Journal Advertising	895.00
General Fund	2,931.78
Donna Coffee Youth Scholarship	490.62
Katie Sibert Memorial Fund	<u>1,125.00</u>
	103,525.62

DISBURSEMENTS

Conference 2004		70,028.61
Conference 2005		2,291.34
Audit, Taxes & Tax Preparation		1,535.00
Awards		74.62
Board of Directors		8,149.69
Gifts and Tributes		28.65
Historian		27.70
Membership		2,133.05
Miscellaneous		559.34
Office - BIA		2,180.73
President		4.55
Insurance		4,987.00
Publications		23,713.08
CTEVH Journal	21,565.19	
Journal Mailing	724.99	
Website	1,366.35	
Krebs	56.55	
Special Service Projects		8,044.01
ACCESS	7.55	
BANA Dues	500.00	
BANA Meetings	2,726.99	
D Coffee Youth Scholarship	1,040.40	
JAC	325.06	
Katie Sibert Scholarships	1,447.00	
Katie Sibert Expense	7.01	

Special Service Projects (cont.)	
Literary Certification	50.00
Transcriber Support	940.00
Vacaville	1,000.00
Secretary	56.75
Site Finding	421.11
Specialists	11.13
Treasurer	<u>55.25</u>
	124,301.61
Cash on hand - December 31, 2004	\$264,225.08
CASH RECONCILIATION:	
Checking	13,521.76
Savings	<u>110,730.12</u>
	124,251.88
RESERVE ACCOUNTS:	
Donna Coffee Youth Scholarship	4,742.04
Katie Sibert Scholarship	66,601.03
Life Membership	46,002.29
Transcriber Support	<u>22,627.84</u>
	139,973.20
TOTAL CASH ACCOUNTS	\$264,225.08
CTEVH 2004 Conference	
Receipts 2003	9,900.00
Receipts 2004	<u>59,766.44</u>
Total	69,666.44
Disbursements in 2003	37.14
Disbursements in 2004	<u>70,028.61</u>
Total	70,065.75
Excess of Receipts Over Expenditures	-\$399.31
CTEVH 2005 Conference	
Receipts 2004	7,060.00
Disbursements 2004	2,291.34



Jack O'Connell
State Superintendent of
Public Instruction
December 1, 2004

Dear County and District Superintendents,
Special Education Local Planning Area Directors,
and Special Education Directors:

46th ANNUAL CALIFORNIA TRANSCRIBERS AND EDUCATORS
OF THE VISUALLY HANDICAPPED (CTEVH) CONFERENCE

It is my privilege to invite you to join the California Department of Education's Clearinghouse for Specialized Media & Technology (CSMT) at the 46th Annual Conference of the California Transcribers and Educators of the Visually Handicapped (CTEVH). The conference will be held on March 4-6, 2005, at the Airport Marriott Hotel in San Francisco.

State and local school personnel organized CTEVH during the late 1950s to improve education services to students who are visually impaired and to strengthen working relationships and foster exchange of ideas among educators, Braille transcribers, parents, and other groups involved in the education of the visually impaired. CTEVH specialists and other local, state, and national leaders of programs for the visually impaired will make presentations and conduct workshops during the conference. More than 700 people are expected to register for the conference and approximately seventy-five exhibitors will present and display the latest in specialized media, technology, and assistive devices.

Mr. Steve Goodman, Director of Pupil Personnel at the California School for the Blind, is the conference chair. A number of local transcribers and teachers of the visually impaired are volunteering their time and energy to make this conference a success. I encourage you to support members of your staff who wish to present at the conference, attend workshops, and provide professional guidance. Your administrative endorsement and support for conference activities and workshops will be a key to quality education of the visually impaired students throughout our state and to the future of this excellent organization.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the conference, please contact Mr. Goodman at 510 794-3800. Additional questions for the California Department of Education, please call Rod Brawley, Manager, Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Technology Office, at 916-323-2202.

Sincerely,

JACK O'CONNELL

Educators: Here is a letter that can be given to your parents, inviting them to attend CTEVH. Just cover this message with your school letterhead, photocopy, attach the letter to a registration form, and insert your contact information before giving it to parents.

Dear Parents,

I would like to invite you to attend an exciting conference that is designed with your child in mind. It is called "*The View From Here: Learning from the Past, Planning for the Future*" and is sponsored by the professional organization, *California Transcribers and Educators of the Visually Impaired*, (CTEVH). CTEVH is an organization of braille transcribers, teachers of the visually impaired and orientation and mobility specialists who are dedicated to issues about the education of children who are visually impaired.

This year's conference includes workshops about the hottest topics in our field. You will be able to listen to national experts discuss issues surrounding visual impairment, literacy, technology, social skills, transition, learning disabilities, orientation and mobility and many more.

Although each day of the conference you will find workshops of interest, Saturday and Sunday are the days that are designed with parents in mind and workshops have been chosen that will especially appeal to parents. In addition to the workshops, the exhibit center will feature all of the latest technology, curriculum materials, low vision aides, organizations and services for individuals who are visually impaired. Presentations targeted for parents include:

- Dr. Eric Vasiliauskas, *An "Access-It-Yourself" Resource Guide for Parents and Educators of Blind Children*
- Drs. Karen Wolffe & Sharon Z. Sacks in a workshop entitled, *Why Do Successful High School Students with Visual Impairments Become Unsuccessful Adults?*
- Annual Meeting of CAPVI-California Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments
- Al Lewy, M.D., Ph.D., *Body Clock Sleep Disorders in Persons Who Are Totally Blind*

The View From Here will take place March 3, 4, 5, & 6, 2005 at the San Francisco Airport Marriott Hotel. Attached to this letter you will find the registration form for the conference that includes more information about the cost, dates and location. If you have questions or would like to see the full workshop schedule, please call me at:

I hope that you can attend this exciting and worthwhile conference.

Sincerely,

Vision Educator

CTEVH CONFERENCE 2005

Conference 2005 Notes

Please note that the room rate at the San Francisco Airport Marriott is \$109.00 and not \$99.00 as listed in the previous *Journal* and in the conference handout. \$109.00 is the conference group rate.

Registration has begun on-line as of January 15. There will be no refunds after the February 15, 2005 deadline. Confirmation of registration by the registrar is upon request only.

This is our second year of offering on-line registration. All major credit cards are now accepted – Visa, Mastercard, American Express and Discover.

CONFERENCE EXHIBITORS

Alternate Tech Center (ATC)
American Federation for the Blind (AFB)
American Printing House for the Blind (APH)
American Thermoform Corporation (ATC)
At First Sight
Big Brazos World Village, Inc.
Blind Children's Learning Center
Books Aloud, Inc.
Bookshare.org
Braille Institute

California Council of the Blind (CCB)
California School for the Blind (CSB)
Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Technology (CSMT)
Dancing Dots
Duxbury
Enabling Technology
Guide Dogs for the Blind
Guiding Eyes for the Blind, Inc.
IMTREK
Infocon
Innovative Rehabilitation Technology
Library Reproduction Service (LRS)
Living Skills Center
Lucky Touch Fortune Cookie Co.
National Foundation for the Blind of California
Opus Technologies
Orientation Center for the Blind (OCB)
Playworks
Seedlings Braille Books for Children
Solutions for Humans
Viewplus Technologies, Inc.
Wolf Products

CTEVH CONFERENCE 2005

CTEVH 2005 NOMINATIONS

The election of new members of the CTEVH Board will be held at a general session during the 2005 Conference in Burlingame.

CTEVH Board Nominees 2005

First Term:

Sharon Anderson, Transcriber,
Garden Grove, CA

Peggy Scheutz, Transcriber,
Novato, CA

Second Term:

Stuart Wittenstein, Educator,
Fremont, CA

– Carol Morrison
Chair, Nominating Committee

Nominating Committee:

Carol Morrison
11922 Kling Street #203
North Hollywood, CA 91607
dot5carol@aol.com

Jeanne Brown
2127 Moonstone Circle
El Dorado Hills, CA 95762
jea75bro@comcast.net

Susie Rothman
2752 Lakeridge Lane
Westlake Village, CA 91361
rothman3@adelphia.net

Marilyn Westerman
719 Boyer Road
Marysville, CA 95901
mwesterman8@aol.com

Liz Barclay
500 Walnut Avenue
Fremont, CA 94536
lbarclay@csb-cde.ca.gov

Bonnie Grimm
17336 Owen Street
Fontana, CA 92335
bgrimm@brailleinstitute.org

Announcements

Mr. Bernard Krebs to be honored with the American Foundation for the Blind Migel Medal

A press release from the American Foundation for the Blind.

Bernard Krebs to be honored by the American Foundation for the Blind.

Bernard Krebs is known by many for his work over 6 decades in promoting the use of braille through his creation of training guides for transcribers and blind persons learning braille. Mr. Krebs died in December at age 92 but the importance and impact of his work lives on.

Bernard Krebs was selected as the 2005 lay volunteer recipient of the Migel Medal by the American Foundation for the Blind. He is known by blind and sighted people alike for his pioneering work in creating straightforward user-friendly training materials for learning and using braille. The publications he authored include *ABC's of Braille*, *Braille in Brief*, *Lessons in Braille Transcribing*, *A Companion to Transcribers' Guide to English Braille*, *Chart of Braille Characters and Contractions*, and *An Introduction to Braille Mathematics*. These publications were made available without charge to organizations that could get them into the hands of transcribers, teachers, and blind individuals seeking to learn braille.

The AFB Migel Medal, the highest honor in the blindness field, was established in 1937 by the late M.C. Migel, the first chairperson of AFB, to honor professionals and volunteers whose dedication and achievements have significantly improved the lives of people who are blind or visually impaired.

The award will be accepted by his Nephew Alan Krebs during a presentation in Boston on Saturday, March 12. For details about the ceremony, please go to www.afb.org.

News of Groups

Valley Braille Service, Inc.

Valley Braille Service, Inc., has changed their corporate charter from an S-Corporation to a full Non-profit Corporation. In addition, we have added a new member to our working family. Mr. Dennis Melton has come onboard as our Sales/Marketing Director.

Mr. Melton has many years of marketing experience. He has experience in writing grant proposals and has many new and innovative ideas to present to our local hotels and casinos in order to assist our visually impaired and blind visitors in Las Vegas. We feel fortunate to have him join us in our efforts to educate the business community of Las Vegas to the needs of the blind community.

Ventura County Braille Transcribers Association

The VCBTA are selling 2005 calendars from the American Printing House for the Blind featuring artwork by blind and visually impaired artists. Only \$9.00 each.

For more information contact Arlene at (805) 488-1347

New Life Member

Carol James, Transcriber,
San Francisco, CA

A complete list of Life Members will appear in the Spring Issue of the *Journal* and is always available on-line at our website at www.ctevh.org.

Missing Member

Alice Acker

If you have any information on how Alice Acker may be contacted please contact our membership chair, Christy Cutting, administrator@ctevh.org or call the CTEVH phone line at (323) 666-2211. (*messages only*)

Looking For:

Looking for a relatively clean copy of the 1974 issue of *The Transcribers' Guide to English Braille* by Bernard Krebs. This is the last edition edited by Bernard Krebs himself. If you have any copies or have any leads to where copies could be found please contact Lisa Merriam (818) 760-8535, editor@ctevh.org.
Thank You.

Announcements

Alternate Text Production Center Braille Catalog Available

We are pleased to announce that our Braille database can now be shared with institutions outside of the California Community College system. The Chancellor's Office, Alternate Text Production Center (ATPC) grant monitor has approved the ATPC Braille catalog to be listed with the American Printing House (APH) Louis Database. This enables anyone to access our catalog via the APH, as well as from the ATPC website. This data was created from Braille projects for California Community College students, however, some textbooks may be appropriate at the high school level.

There are over 200 Braille/Tactile Graphic listings, to include algebra, statistics, computer, foreign language, music, etc. The ATPC catalog even lists partially completed textbooks. For educational institutions outside of the California Community College system, the ATPC charges embossing fees to cover production costs.

For additional information:

- Log on to the ATPC website at www.atpcnet.net
- Call ATPC toll free, Voice: (800) 858-9984, Ext. 3 or TTY: (800) 858-9982
- Contact sgreenberg@atpcnet.net

CTEVH 2006 Conference Committee Update:

The conference theme is "Focus on the Future, Preparing for Life". The goal is for all of us to learn how to best prepare our students for successful adult life. We plan to have workshops that involve educators, transcribers, para-professionals, rehabilitation professionals, eye care providers, agencies and other service providers, and of course parents and students. We believe that we can't start too early to address the ultimately important issues that seem to "appear" when students approach adulthood and leave programs in the schools.

Collaboration with providers of "adult services" is critical. Hearing from adult consumers and role models, and from parents of our former students will be important too. We don't want students and

parents to ask “Now what?” when students leave school. We want to make sure that we have realistically prepared our students and their families for the most meaningful and satisfying lives possible.

We will be “focusing” on our students that may be going on to a college or university or gainful employment. However many of our students have multiple impairments or special needs that will prevent them from living independently. We will need to adjust our “focus” to meet their unique needs. We must make sure that we provide the appropriate educational programs for each student to help them reach their full potential. Hopefully, we will all leave the conference with new skills and new perspectives to assist us in our task.

If you have any ideas pertaining to the theme, especially if you want to present a workshop or know of a workshop that you think “fits”, please contact us.

We will also be contacting people who have not been our “typical” workshop providers in the past. We are making an effort to go “way outside of the box” to make sure that we address our theme thoroughly and to help make the

connections and provide the training that will help us achieve our goal.

Many of us on the committee have done this once or twice or even more times before, but it’s good to learn the latest tips that can really make a difference.

If you have any suggestions for us email them to me at jrvogel@earthlink.net and Conference Co-Chair, John Zamora, at jzamora@brailleinstitute.org.

Don’t forget, this will also be a FUN conference, taking place next door to Disneyland at the Anaheim Marriott. We have lots of surprises planned and know you won’t want to miss out.

Start planning now by marking March 10-12 (Friday-Sunday), 2006 on your next year’s planner or organizer. The room rate is only \$99.00 and will be available for several days before and after the actual conference dates. This is a good time to plan a vacation in the “happiest place on earth” (and to also attend a terrific conference)! We hope to hear from you, with any ideas you may have!

–Jane Vogel, Conference Co-Chair

Announcements

Joint Action Committee (JAC) Update:

We will have held our winter meeting (January 8, 2005) by the time this Journal is received. There will be an opportunity for everyone to join us at the annual JAC/LIDAC Public Session Workshop held on Saturday afternoon at the 2005 CTEVH Conference at the San Francisco Airport Marriott. We always have a good turnout and welcome input from any conference attendee that wishes to share ideas or concerns with us.

JAC is pleased to announce that JAC's Chairperson, Jane Vogel, has been appointed to be a member of EDWAC (Evaluation of Detectable Warnings Advisory Committee). This is an ad hoc committee that will help determine appropriate detectable warnings and surfaces in accordance with a California Assembly Bill (AB 685) that was passed 9/15/99 and became Section 4460 of the Government Code of California. Anyone who wants to learn more about this committee can go to <http://www.dsa.dgs.ca.gov/universaldesign/edwac.htm>.

Jane represents JAC on this committee and would like input from anyone who has ideas or concerns related to detectable warnings. (An example of detectable warnings would be the raised "bumps" used as warnings on the ground, as one approaches a train or rail transit system.) The next EDWAC meeting is February 17-18, 2005, in Sacramento.

JAC is also pleased to announce that Dr. Ronald Cole has been nominated to receive the American Academy of Ophthalmology Humanitarian Award, for his work in the area of low vision rehabilitation. Dr. Cole is the representative to JAC from the California Academy of Ophthalmology. He is one of the few ophthalmologists in California that provides low vision rehabilitation services.

He is an eye surgeon who realized the need for low vision services many years ago and has been active at the national level to try to pass legislation and create awareness in the area of low vision rehabilitation. Although no legislation has been passed yet, he and his colleagues and others advocating for low vision

rehabilitation reimbursement have helped change the awareness level at the national level so that Medicare and Medi-Cal patients can now receive low vision services. In addition, he is the inspiration for a bill that JAC is hoping to sponsor soon that would address magnification devices for these patients.

JAC held its October meeting in conjunction with California Council of the Blind Convention at the LAX Marriott. CCB's President Jeff Thom attended part of the meeting, as well as other CCB Convention attendees. Catherine Campesis, Director of California Department of Rehabilitation spent a long time at the JAC meeting, telling us about the changes in the "Department" and what the future may hold. She answered all questions asked of her. All of her comments were very helpful.

JAC is planning to hold its April meeting in conjunction with the CCB Convention in Sacramento. This is a new arrangement that we are exploring to help make attendance as easy as possible for many JAC member organizations. To learn more about JAC contact Jane Vogel at jrvogel@earthlink.net or visit the web site at www.jacforvi.org.

The Princeton Brailleists Produce

MAPS OF CALIFORNIA

Maps of California contains 19 maps. The initial maps provide an overview of the state. These maps are followed by 6 maps on specific topics — rivers, cities, mountains, highways, parks and counties. All of the information is combined in subsequent maps of Northern, Central and Southern California; about 275 cities are shown and are indexed at the end of the volume. Enlarged views of San Francisco, the Los Angeles area, San Diego and Yosemite National Park have fold-out sections or appear on facing pages. Experience with tactile drawings is highly recommended. Places on the maps are generally labeled with two key letters taken from the corresponding place name. These key letters are identified in key pages that precede each map.

Maps of California is a single volume with 84 pages and 19 maps. It is bound with cardboard covers and a multi-ring binder. Cost is \$15.00 Shipping is by free mail for the blind unless other arrangements are made.

Announcements

To order, please send check or purchase order to the address above. Credit card and fax service are not available.

Please allow 4 weeks for delivery. For further information, please call Ruth Bogia at (215) 357-7715 or Nancy Amick at (609) 924-5207.

Valentines from National Braille Press

Each year, National Braille Press offers print-braille Valentines for kids to pass out to their classmates or for friends to remember the special people in their lives.

This year's Valentine design is a bookmark that says: "Dots Where I Stopped Reading!" At the bottom, a bright red heart appears between the words "Happy" and "Day." The year is marked: "2005."

This is a keepsake, perfect for family & friends, classmates & teachers.

Valentine bookmarks are available in either Small or Large Packets:

a. Small Packets contain 20 print-braille bookmarks and 20 envelopes: \$10

b. Large Packets contain 32 print-braille bookmarks and 32 envelopes: \$14

Our previous Valentine cards are also still available!

You can see the new Valentine Bookmarks and link to other years' styles at <http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/val05.html>.

Book on Line!

Drawing and The Blind
<http://hdl.handle.net/1807/1021>

(Thank you Sharon von See and the braille-n-teach listserv)

"This groundbreaking work explores how children and adults who have been blind since birth can both perceive and draw pictures. John M. Kennedy, a perception psychologist, relates how pictures in raised form can be understood by the blind, and how untrained blind people can make recognizable sketches of objects, situations, and events using new methods for raised-line drawing."

— as quoted from abstract on-line

In March, Bernard M. Krebs would have been presented with
THE MIGEL MEDAL
of the
AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND.

A MEMORIAL TRIBUTE

Let us all join in this tribute
of respect and affection
for the memory of

BERNARD M. KREBS

A leader, a doer,
the Founder of the National Braille Association,
a broadener of braille library services,
a teacher and a teacher's teacher,
a remarkable brain,
a friend, a listener,
a lover of all human kind,
a lifelong promoter of excellent braille,
a lifelong warrior for the cause of universal braille literacy.

All this and more:
A twinkling spark of humor
to make it all delightful.

—Norma L. Schecter
CTEVH Literary Specialist

Don't Be a Pain in the Perkins!

STROLLING DOWN MEMORY LANE, leading to SOME (LANGUAGE) MAJOR GOOD ADVICE

by
Norma
Schechter

Danish Braille

Our CTEVH JOURNAL was born back in the late 1950's as "THE CALIFORNIA TRANSCRIBER", and sometimes it's fun to take a glimpse of long-ago articles for a peek at our past. Here's one from 1984:

A GLIMPSE OF ANOTHER CODE

Here are just a few examples of Grade two Danish Braille. They too have whole-word alphabet signs, whole- and part-word contractions, etc., with rules that govern their usage, just as we do.

They do fractions the way the British do (the way our music braillists do time signatures) with upper and lower numbers. Some examples:

3/4 is ⠠⠨⠠⠠⠠ and a mixed

fraction, 3-5/8, is ⠠⠨⠠⠠⠠⠠

Interestingly, they have a sign for % (which they call "procent") and also a sign for o/oo which they call "promille") – a useful mathematical concept we don't even have in print, to my knowledge.

It doesn't add to our skills as American braillists, but it does give an insight into the problems of blind readers who attempt to be multi-lingual. So many European languages have their own independent systems of contracted braille!

Norma L. Schechter
CTEVH Literary Specialist

Stk. 1. Alfabetforkortelserne (28)

<u>ord</u>	<u>forkortelse</u>
at	⠠ a
bliver	⠠ b
du	⠠ d
efter	⠠ z
eller	⠠ e
for	⠠ f
før	⠠ ø
gør	⠠ g
han	⠠ y
har	⠠ h
hun	⠠ u
hvad	⠠ w

This brought a couple of things to mind. First, on re-reading the outstanding article by Pamela Lorimer (based on her doctoral thesis) on the origins of braille, * we're struck by Louis Braille's concern to express as much meaning as possible, as compactly as possible.

So instead of using another cell for the fraction-line, Louis Braille himself used the upper part of the cell for the numerator and the lower part of the cell for the denominator (as is still done in music Braille throughout the world today.)

Thus Louis Braille used ⠠⠨⠠⠨ (dots 3456, 14, 246) for the mathematical fraction as well as for the waltz time-signature in his now-international music braille code, rather than the slower-reading ⠠⠨⠠⠨⠠⠨ (dots 3456, 14, 34, 145).

Preparing for a Language Major

Second (and more important) thought: In picking a foreign language to major in, American blind students might do well to consider that many languages are entirely in uncontracted Grade 1 Braille, while others have contractions, and still others have LOTS of contractions. Why should that matter so much? Time yourself on a standard page of a textbook in both contracted and uncontracted form.

Then think ahead to graduate school. At that level, it would have made sense to learn the contracted language in you major as early as possible. Think of the books you'll need for your "Comparative Lit" class, for instance, which could come by return mail from Paris or Madrid while your fellow-students are still frantically searching for a transcribing group to do their required-reading books.

If you think you know your future language major while you're still in high school—or better yet, in middle school—it could be a major leap forward to start learning to read and write (fluently) in that language, in their own braille code.

Get yourself some pen-pals over there who want to improve their English perhaps.

Meanwhile you'll begin to find out all about their sources of braille: Braille presses (both religious and lay), transcribers available (both volunteer and professional), whether book-sources are primarily governmental or private-agency or both, approximate cost per volume for press-equipment, and whether their Braille lending libraries will serve foreigners. It will also be useful to find out what the size of their Braille pages (and hence their Braille volumes) is – they might not fit in your standard American bookcases!

All that information can't be accumulated in a few weeks, can it? And wouldn't that make a whopping difference in your entire life as a Language Major?

(P.S. This fact shouldn't affect your choice of a language to major in, but if it should just happen to be Spanish, "LA ONCE" (the Organización Nacional de Ciegos Españoles) happens to be the wealthiest organization of the blind in the entire world, making their braille books the least expensive in the world.) I don't know how it happened, but they own the National Lottery!

* From the first chapter in the book, BRAILLE INTO THE NEXT MILLENNIUM, free in print from the Reference Section of NLS, 1-800-424-8576.

Foreign Language

*Ann
Kelt
CTEVH
Foreign
Language
Specialist*

Foreign Language: Letters Standing Alone and Part Words

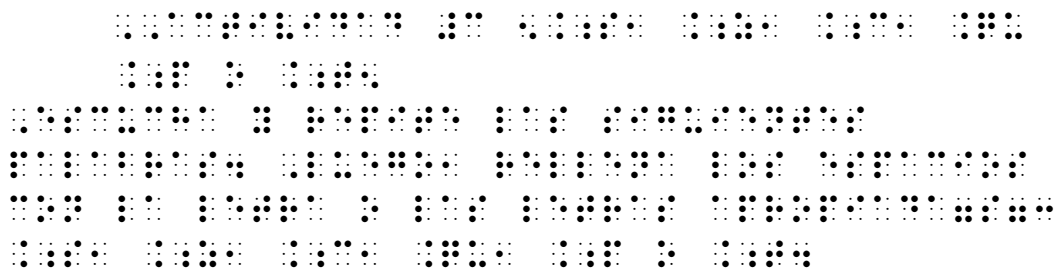
Sec. 3.4 Single Letters

Italicize and use the letter sign for each single foreign letter. These letters are nearly always in boldface type in print. If there is a string of these letters, each one gets an italic symbol.

Example:



Escucha y repite las siguientes palabras. Luego, rellena los espacios con la letra o las letras apropiada(s): s, z, c, qu, p o t.



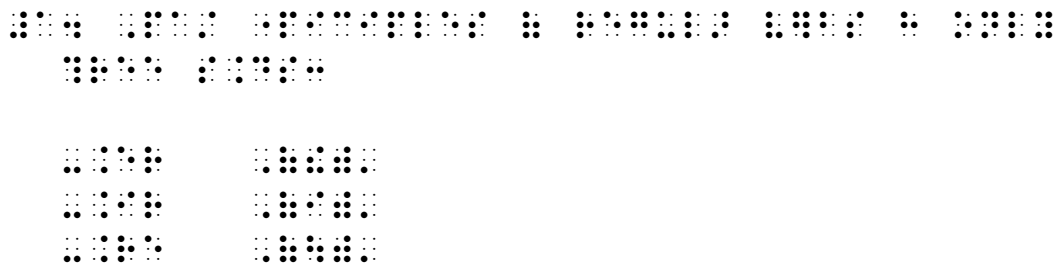
Note: Single foreign letters printed within pronunciation symbols must use phonetic notation. FL sec. 11.2a. Because the diacritic enclosures are the same symbols as some foreign accented letters, we must use the opening phonetic symbol (⠠⠨) and closing phonetic symbol (⠨⠠) as shown in Formats Rule 18.4.

Foreign Language

Example:

1. Past participles of regular verbs have only three sounds:

-er	/é/
-ir	/i/
-re	/ü/



Parts of words: Freestanding prefixes, suffixes, verb endings, other word parts.

The typeface (*italics*) is retained as with single letters. Each of these receives its own italic sign as with single letters.

The italics sign is placed **between** a beginning hyphen and the part word.

Special Note #1: The symbol two dots over a letter in pronunciation is called a **diaeresis**. It is only an **umlaut** if you are in the German language.

Special Note #2: FL rules do not show the symbol for **æ** ligatured. It is dots 345 (ar).

Foreign Language

We found an unusual example where foreign and English letters were used in the same sentence.

Following the rules of Formats and Foreign Language, we italicized and used the letter sign with the boldface single letters.

The italicized *c* is brailled with a letter sign only to distinguish it from the foreign letters.

Example:

ACTIVIDAD
1 **La *c* y la *qu***

Recuerda que en español, la *c* ante las vocales *a*, *o* y *u*, se pronuncia como la *c* en la palabra *café*. La *c* ante las vocales *e* o *i*, se pronuncia igual que la *s*. Escucha las siguientes palabras.

café
café
café
café
café
café
café
café
café
café

Tactile Graphics

Computer-Generated Tactile Graphics

My training in graphic design software has allowed me to contribute to the tactile graphics department at Braille Institute since May 1999. Before that I have worked in both the printing and fashion industries since 1993. I received a computer graphic design certificate from Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles, and I am currently working on a Graphic Design Degree at Cal State Los Angeles. My love for art, illustration and graphic design has brought me to the exciting and rewarding world of tactile graphics. I look forward to working alongside other specialists to bring the most information possible to those who receive our tactile illustrations.

Computer Graphics as a means for creating tactile images for the blind has replaced handmade tactile graphics at Braille Institute since the late eighties. The advent of the computer has allowed us to easily recreate complicated diagrams and run large quantities, using our Nylo-Plate/ Heidelberg Press, or the Tiger-embosser. The computer has also facilitated editing of drawings, adding braille, and using simple pre-set as well as complicated textures. Since the actual scan is used as a template ghosted back underneath the new drawing, the ability to accurately redraw diagrams is greatly increased. Along with accuracy, our speed has also improved, thus giving us the ability to handle a larger volume of drawings. The archiving, digitally organizing and backing-up of diagrams is another advantage. We have built a secure, permanent library of diagrams that can be digitally accessed and requires minor shelf space.

In following articles I will introduce Adobe Illustrator version 10, as a tool for redrawing and modifying drawings featured in textbooks, for the application to tactile format. Adobe Illustrator is not the only program which can be used for this purpose and the concepts and techniques can be adapted to other programs with similar capabilities.

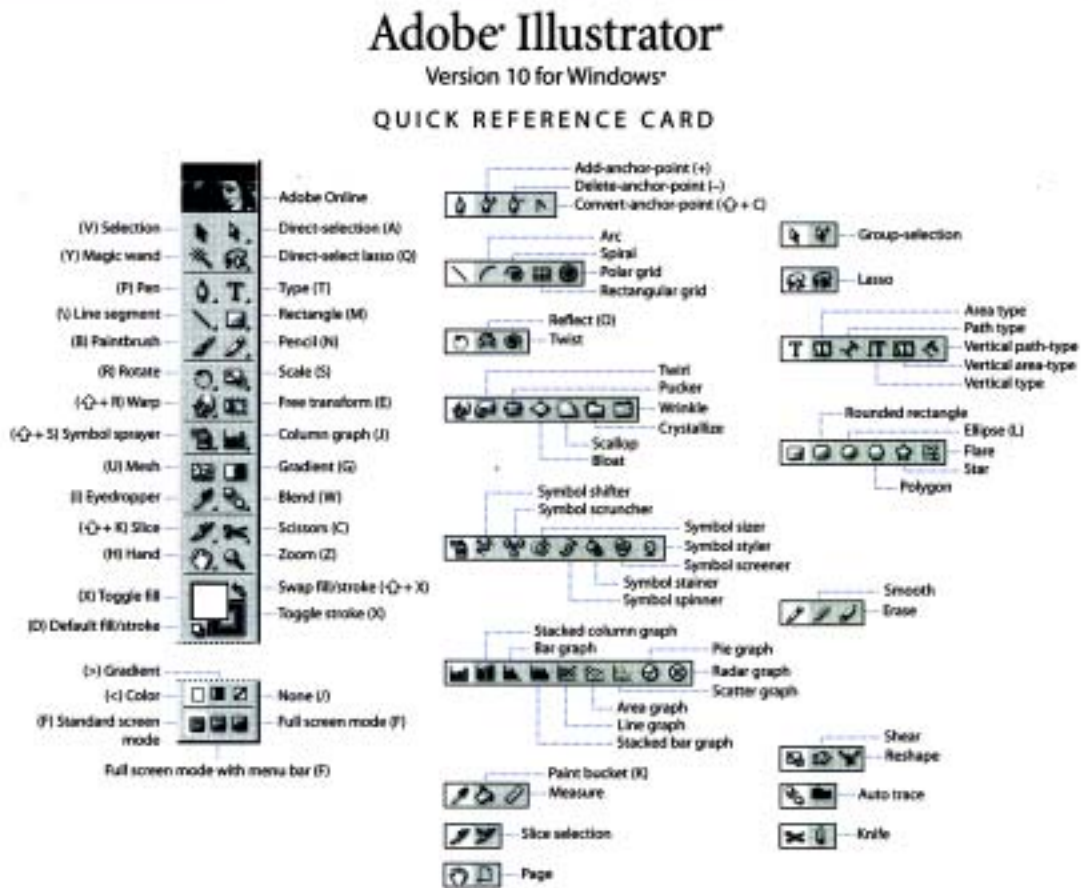
But for now let me introduce some basic commands and tools for drawing basic shapes in Adobe Illustrator.

*Raphael
Camarena
CTEVH
Tactile
Graphic
Committee*

Tactile Graphics

1. Introduction to Tools

The following is a reference card that comes with each version of Adobe Illustrator. On the left is the main (*default*) toolbar and on the right are the pullout options from each tool. The rectangle tool has five options when clicked on. Clicking on any tool will open up the options available with that particular tool. In parentheses are the short cut keys to all the tools. Holding the mouse over any tool for more than a second will display the name of each tool and its keyboard shortcut.



Toolbar shortcuts

- Press shortcut key (in parentheses) to select tool.
- Double-click tool or select tool and press Enter to display Options dialog box for selected tools.
- Right-mouse click to display context-sensitive menu.
- Press Caps Lock to change pointer to cross hair for selected tools.

Tactile Graphics

Don't be intimidated by the myriad of tools available in Adobe Illustrator. For now we will focus on the preset shapes and preset textures.

A word about drawing:

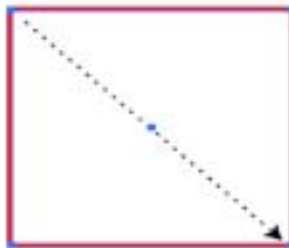
Adobe Illustrator uses vector-based images. This means that images are drawn using *anchor points* and lines or *segments* (either straight or arched). You modify lines by moving the *direction points*, at the end of *direction lines*. Not every drawing we make comes from drawing every single line. Illustrator also allows us to use pre-set shapes that will come in handy when dealing with basic shapes such as circles, squares, rectangles, stars, arrows, triangles and other polygons. There are also preset texture, animal, symbol, line and brush libraries, which we may use for our diagrams.

Drawing using the shape tools:

Click on the rectangle tool to select it as your active tool. Clicking once in the drawing area will open up a dialog box that will allow you to specify exact width and height measurements for a rectangle. This is the most precise manner of drawing a rectangle but not the only way. Another way of drawing a rectangle is to drag your mouse across the drawing board. Holding down the shift key while dragging will constrain the width and height to the equal measurements. In other words, to get an exact square and not a rectangle hold down the shift key while dragging the mouse. In some cases you will want to make a perfect square that starts from the center. In this case hold down the ALT key while dragging your mouse to get a rectangle that starts from the center of your pointer. These key options also work when working with round-edged rectangles, circles, polygons and stars, (*all located to the right of the rectangle tool*). To constrain a shape that starts from the center, hold down **Shift** and **Alt** keys together while drawing.



RectangleTool (Drag To Draw)



Holding Down Shift Key

Moving shapes around:

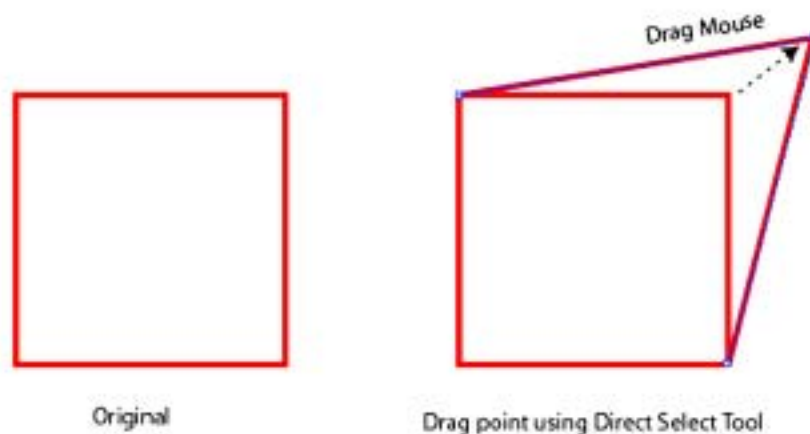
To move a shape from one area of the drawing board to another, click on the *Select Arrow* tool (Pressing keyboard shortcut “V”). It is the closed (black) arrow at the top left of the tool bar. This tool will let you move shapes, images and text around the drawing board as a unit.

Leaving an original:

Leaving an original is a helpful shortcut that will enable you to make quick duplicates of shapes, text and other images, instead of having to redraw them or retype them. It's sort of like a quick cut and paste except with more control over where your shape is pasted to. First select the shape you want to duplicate. Drag the shape where you want the new copy shape to be, then before releasing the mouse button, press the **ALT** key and release the mouse button. You should see that the original has been left untouched. If you want to make a copy directly horizontally, vertically or at 45 degree increments, you can hold down the shift key. To continue making duplicates, without deselecting the copy, press **CTRL-D**, to make copies. This will make copies continually by continuing to press **CTRL-D**.

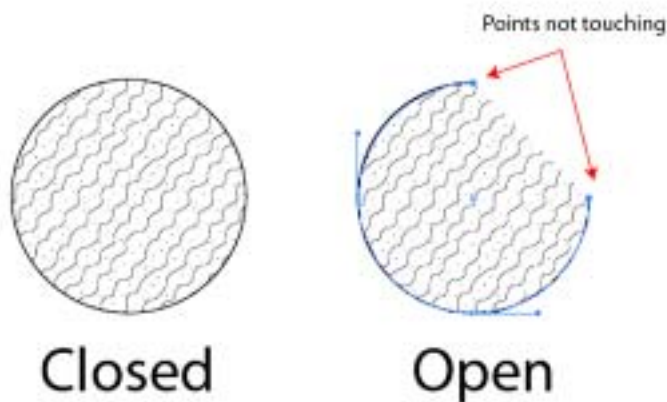
Reshaping shapes:

The direct select tool (white arrow) is used to select the individual points within a shape. For example, a square is comprised of four points, one at each corner. In order to reshape the square you use the direct select tool to “grab” an individual point and drag to the desired position.



When drawing a simple shape such as a clock or a pie graph, mostly comprised of circles, use the circle tool located in the pullout option of the rectangle tool.

Eventually you may want to insert a texture, to differentiate the individual shapes from the rest of the area. In order to insert a texture you need to have a closed shape. An open area will not fill correctly so make sure that all points are connected to each other.



Pre-set Textures

Opening pre-set textures:

Click on Window> Swatch Libraries> Other Libraries>. When Window opens:

Look In> C:Drive > Program Files> Adobe> Illustrator 10> Presets > Patterns> Pattern 2.

This will open a window within Illustrator which when you select a shape will fill with the selected pattern. Following the same steps will open Pattern Window 1, except I found the patterns in Window Pattern 2 work better tactually. You can run samples and test run them. Different students prefer different patterns. (*Feedback from students is Gold when drawing tactiles.*)

Tactile Graphics

Printing

Swell Paper:

At Braille Institute we use a Kyocera Mita Printer that can print directly from Adobe Illustrator to swell paper. This eliminates the step of having to print originals that can then be photocopied onto swell paper and finally run through a toaster.

Negatives For Nylo-Plates:

Nylo-plates can be used on a Heidelberg press, to run large format maps at a very high speed. This is helpful when producing thousands of the same maps or diagrams. It can also run two 11x11 maps at the same time. Designing for this takes some trial and error and a lot of feedback from proofreaders. Negatives have to be made either in-house by a Xante Accel-a-Writer 3G or be sent to an output center, a print shop, or service bureau. Nylo-plates are re-usable up to 1500 to 2000 copies depending on the drawing, and can easily be re-exposed with the original negative.

Conference 2005

These very topics will be expanded upon in my workshop at Conference. Look for "Tactile Graphics Using Adobe Illustrator Drawing Software". In this workshop we will learn the basics of scanning, importing, and modifying print pictures in Adobe Illustrator for Tactile Graphics re-creation on swell paper. Basic drawing tools will be covered including quick and easy keyboard shortcuts that facilitate the reproduction of maps, illustrations, math and science diagrams. We will discuss the proper use of various lines, shapes, and textures provided by Adobe Illustrator as well as the creation of our own. Some computer knowledge is required. Macintosh or Windows 95 or later strongly recommended.

Textbook Formats

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6 ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠

CORRECT

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Pokadot

*Len
Dozier
CTEVH
Pokadot
Specialist*

POKADOT Free Braille Transcribing Software

Reformatting of Paragraphs: I have been surprised at how many Pokadot braillists have not realized the power of the paragraph reformatting function which can be invoked with the keystrokes Ctrl(Right Arrow). When you revise a portion of a paragraph you usually find that you have created at least one line that has a lot of unused space. To make efficient use of the space in the braille page this requires that the line be completed and the following lines be revised. The Ctrl(Right Arrow) function will do this for you automatically, saving the time involved in doing it manually.

This is how to use it. Place the cursor on the first incomplete line and press Ctrl(Right Arrow). Words from the next line will be moved up to complete that line and the next line will now be short. The cursor will move automatically to that next line. Simply continue this process by pressing Ctrl (Right Arrow) on each line until you reach the end of the paragraph. You then have a completely reformatted paragraph.

Inserting Data from Another File: It is frequently necessary to insert all or part of a second braille file into the primary file. Here is how to do that without the need to rebraille the second file into the primary file. Load the second file into the Pokadot word processor. Then shift to the Pokadot braille section and place the cursor at the point where you want the second file to start. Press Alt(F3). The entire contents of the word processor will be moved into the primary braille file starting at the cursor position. Save the revised file and you are done. If the second file is something that is supposed to be inserted at several locations you can do this by repeating the insertion with Alt(F3) as many times as needed.

Check for Updates: It is a good idea to check for Pokadot updates on the web site listed below. As of December 2004 the latest was version 7.51.

Help: I offer free personal help via e-mail at lend@braille-pokadot.com or phone: (360) 574-6167 after 9 AM Pacific time

Source: Pokadot and/or BrlProof-2000 can be downloaded for free from the internet at www.braille-pokadot.com. Both are also available from the National Braille Association, 3 Townline Circle, Rochester, NY 14623-2513 for \$5 each.

Itinerant/Resource Room/Special Day Class

*Sheila
Bonito*

CTEVH

Itinerant

Resource

Room

Special Day

Class

Specialist

ANOTHER NEW YEAR HAS BEGUN - with new rewards, new challenges, and new ideas. Integrating what we know with the new ideas we are learning is the chance we can take to make this new year the best ever for ourselves and for our students.

Others can perceive things which are 'old' to us as new. We as professionals in the field have the opportunity to share our expertise not only with our students but also with teachers in regular and special education settings, with the school site and other support service staff and with other professionals in our field! We can share with parents and family members of the students as well! A Perkins BrailleWriter, a Braille Note, a CCTV are brand new to whole sets of people who can become excited and enthusiastic when they discover how other people can do the same things they can but with different tools.

These people can then be amazed that their names, their classroom books, the room names at their school buildings are also readable to someone who 'knows the code in the bumps.' Then a Braille Note used in the classroom becomes both exciting and commonplace when the totally

blind 5th grader turns in his print copy of the States report or the spelling test. This is what we do – integrate our students/their tools/their modes of reading and writing/their white canes into everyday life for everyone on that campus and in that school community. It can be 'new' every time we help someone else find out more about 'new' ways to do something. We can be invigorated when we become integrated parts of the community.

For veteran teachers, a light box may be something we have used many times with many students in various settings – but a fledgling teacher can teach us how our student can use it in ways we had not yet considered! We have the opportunity to not only bring old tools and ideas and skills to new settings, but also to new people who may find it the perfect way to educate the students in those classes.

This Fall, I was able to bring my 'old' skills to 'new' students and their families and schools as well as to 'new' teachers who were willing to try new things to add to what they already had learned in teacher preparation classes. I also learned to use 'new' tools myself so that I could share

Itinerant/Resource Room/Special Day Class

them enthusiastically with my students, even if they don't necessarily want 'new' skills to add to their 'old' ways of doing things. My ongoing struggle to keep abreast of all of the various technologies from the newer TouchWindows on iMac screens, to Braille Note / Palm Pilots / infrared ports, to ZoomText. I am attempting to become familiar with the Bookport and make it useful to more of my students. I am aware of how much 'new' information my students need to be exposed to if they are going to be competitive in the college and work worlds in the near future! And then I help a staff person learn the mysteries of turning on a computer and writing a Word document – old to me, new to her, but how can my students do their work in the classroom without the teacher understanding the basics of computers? And so the circle of life continues.

I was also reminded at an IEP today that when the special education teachers are well integrated into that school staff and seen by their colleagues and all of the students at that site as 'teacher,' life is more pleasant. This is true for the teachers but also for the students with whom

they work and who are better accepted into the school community as well. An itinerant teacher who makes a habit of spending a few minutes a week – eating lunch with other teachers, giving short presentations on Braille to students and staff, helping out when needed on the playground or during fire drills – that teacher is seen as a natural part of the environment! Leaving a coffee mug in a staff lounge cabinet for use on the one or two times a week you might actually chisel out a moment for a 'break' (collaboration time, actually) makes a statement that you are a part of that staff. The teacher who may have your student in 2 years may feel far less apprehensive about having a 'blind' student when she has overheard the teacher of visually impaired talking to friends on campus during morning recess on Wednesdays. It is crucial, in my experience, to do this and schedule in these lunches or breaks into my weekly work schedule because of long term benefits: meet my human needs for food, bathroom facilities, and friendship as well as building working relationships with staff members. My students are less likely to be asked 'why do you have to leave class with that stranger again?' by their peers

when those students are also familiar with me as someone they see on campus on a regular basis. It also makes it much easier for teachers to make appropriate services for VI students when they can chat about a student's problems informally when they have concerns.

Topics of interest in the field gleaned in the past months from the Braille 'n' Teach listserv: accelerated reader, fees for eye reports from eye specialists, Braille Reading Standards, being and staying tech savvy with assistive technology, qualifying students, researching rare eye conditions. If you are not yet a member of this wonderful group of teachers and transcribers, join us – you may have that Braille book sitting on your shelf in Northern California that someone needs tomorrow in Southern California!

The topic of this year's CTEVH conference combines the new with the old: *The View from Here: Learning from the Past, Planning for the Future*. Rod Brawley, Dennis Kelleher, Tammy Allen and I will be panelists for the session 209, "Itinerant Roundtable" on Friday, March 4. Topics to discuss: Caseloads, trunk organization, working spaces, public relations, scheduling, isolation, paperwork, highly qualified teacher requirements, etc. Let me know what is on your minds by

e-mailing me or phoning me with topics you want to be sure are addressed during this forum or come prepared to discuss 'hot topics' of import to YOU!

Remember that a great day of parent/family orientation presentations is on Saturday and the registration booklet includes an easy-to-copy and share letter to parents to get them interested in attending! I am especially encouraging my adolescent students to come to see all of the exhibits and explore all of the items available to them. They can start their own collection of catalogs and get on mailing lists for companies producing the most pertinent equipment for each of them!

I plan on seeing **you** at the 2005 CTEVH Conference, **on March 4-6, 2005, at the San Francisco Airport Marriott at Burlingame!**

Sheila M. Bonito
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Music

MUSIC IN EDUCATION

Braille Music in Education

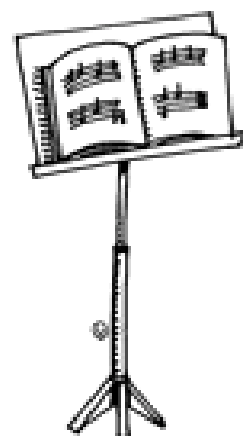
Teachers and tutors for music braille have often asked what is the best order in which to present signs when teaching the music code to a new reader. Following is a progressive list taken from the first few graded lessons of "An Introduction to Music for The Blind Student," Part 1. Perhaps this will present some ideas for you.

A SUGGESTED ORDER OF NEW SIGNS PRESENTED TO BEGINNERS

(4th octave marks are used for all notes here)

- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ fourth octave (dot 5)
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ do (middle C) an eighth note
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ re (D) an eighth note
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ mi (E) an eighth note
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ do a whole note (demonstrates the use of value dots)
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ ending double bar
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ fa (F) an eighth note
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ sol (G) an eighth note
- ⠠⠠ eighth rest
- ⠠⠠ braille number sign (for measures & time signatures)
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ three-eighth time signature
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ do a quarter note
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ four-quarter time signature
- ⠠⠠ quarter rest (one count)
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ mi (E) a half note
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ la (A) an eighth note
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ do a half note
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ ti (B) an eighth note

*Richard
Taesch
CTEVH
Music
Braille
Specialist*



Music

Remember that the solfege syllables would mean different notes in new keys where moveable **do** remains scale-step 1. But for now, this can get us started for the early lessons. Let us know if you would find a discussion series on lesson ideas useful to you.

REMEMBER YOUR OCTAVE MARKS!

Whether learning, teaching, or transcribing braille music, octave marks and their proper usage always manage to confuse the best of us. Since we are discussing the teaching of braille music, let us review a few little rules on octave marks.

1. Always use a new octave mark when moving up or down an interval of a sixth or more – even in the same octave. Think of intervals from the lower note up to the higher note.
2. An octave mark is necessary when moving an interval of a fourth or a fifth when crossing over into a new octave.

Passing the Note C will always place us in a new octave!

3. Always use a new octave mark on a new line of music.
4. Always use an octave mark following a word sign.

* * *

WHO'S AFRAID (to teach) BRAILLE MUSIC - Part II

... a fantasy:

Imagine waking up one day to these headlines:

MUSIC TRANSCRIBERS OUTNUMBER VI MUSIC EDUCATORS 4:1



There is much stir these days about braille music transcribers and braille transcribing as a career in general. It is indeed welcome to see the activity for training of new NLS certified music transcribers. This year's conference will include two workshops by Karen Gearreald, Braille Music Advisor for the National Library Service. The current enrollment of transcribers in the certification program is so very encouraging to those of us who are on the endangered species list.

Music

But as we pointed out in the last Issue, who will now teach the students to read and to be proficient in the use of what we produce? Is it unrealistic to expect The Library of Congress to one day offer a basic certification in the pedagogy of teaching braille music reading? Clearly, transcribers are excellent candidates to become teachers in the application of their craft, but even NLS certification does not guarantee that one can teach a blind child to read music. These are two very distinct fields, in that one must produce, and the other consumes the product.

Very few music transcribers have ever worked directly with a reader, and even fewer are qualified and experienced music teachers. The good news is that one need NOT be a transcriber, or even a career music teacher to teach beginning braille music effectively. One must, however, be aware of very simple music basics that will prepare the student to read music notation. The little book, "*Who's Afraid of Braille Music*," (Dancing Dots Publ.) attempts to do just that, and to dispel myths that have managed to discourage generations of otherwise successful blind music readers.

Our point is that, if the real education of the braille music consumer – the literate and skillful reader – has been done properly, the chances of discouraging and ignorant myths are defeated before they can do harm. Setting the stage for subsequent issues containing actual sample lessons, is the well-known case of the Indonesian piano student who was told by her piano teacher that blind people should not be allowed to teach the piano! Of course, those of us who know that Louis Braille himself was a blind piano teacher may tend to disagree.

PREPARING BLIND STUDENTS FOR SUCCESS

Among those who helped advocate for our Indonesian student and to encourage her and her teacher, was Stephanie Pieck. Ms. Pieck is a concert pianist and distinguished piano teacher who just happens to be blind! She conducts a very successful piano studio in New York and maintains a very large roster, most of which is made up of sighted students. She is a MENVI Specialist and Advisor, and often tours the world impressing audiences whenever she performs.

Stephanie has prepared this fine article for us. As a stellar example of a career music educator who is blind, we felt her article might be very timely.

* * *

(Reprinted with permission from MENVI News Journal, Issue 19)

Music

ATTITUDE AND APTITUDE:

- Preparing Blind Students for Success ~ by Stephanie Pieck

As a piano teacher who happens to be blind, I have encountered all kinds of attitudes among students, parents, and colleagues regarding the abilities of blind musicians.

There are those who believe, falsely in my opinion, that, if you're blind, then you're automatically a musical genius. Well, there may be a few of those folks out there, but my hours of practice to prepare for recitals and competitions lead me to believe that I, and most other blind musicians, can't be counted in this group. No matter how many times I explain the merits and necessity of good training, high expectations, and just plain hard work, they just don't get it! For the most part, this view is an annoyance and can be ignored as long as their awe doesn't translate into making special exceptions to the general rules and requirements of society because of it.

The second attitude is that blind people are helpless, incapable of independent participation in society, especially through employment. These people feel that the best place for the blind is somewhere they can be taken care of, or, barring

that, somewhere that their influence on and contact with the sighted can be kept to a minimum. This attitude is highly dangerous, first because it poisons all its followers' dealings with the blind, and second, because it is too often unwittingly taught to the blind themselves. It is based on fear and misunderstanding.

The third attitude I have come across is one of acceptance, equality, and respect. While many people who come to this attitude have initial questions, doubts or concerns, they can be reasonable in changing their perceptions when given the opportunity.

You may wonder what this has to do with music. Quite a bit, I think. Many parents, whether their children are blind or sighted, see the value of musical instruction and encourage their children to pursue it. We as educators must be aware of the attitudes our blind students will encounter in their lives. We have the responsibility to act as role models, teaching independence and respect to children, acting as advocates when we must, but ultimately giving the blind the tools and skills to advocate for themselves.

Among my own students (who are all, at this point, sighted), my primary goals are to teach independent thought, respect, and an appreciation for music. I don't spend an inordinate amount of time focusing on the aptitude of each one: they are as varied as any group of children and adults.

When I have taught blind students, my goals and expectations don't change. They must work just as hard as everyone else, play the same recitals, practice sight-reading, and perform to the best of their ability. But with many of them, I have had the additional challenge of trying to change attitudes. I have no foolproof way to bring people to a balanced view of the capabilities of blind people. I can only try to instill it in each of my sighted students and their families, in the blind people I teach, in colleagues who might hear one of my recitals. Actions speak louder than words. And for the times

when actions alone aren't enough, let the music do the talking. Expect nothing less from a blind student just because of blindness. At the same time, don't assume they will be prodigies. We are human beings, just like everyone else, with all the strengths and weaknesses the human condition brings with it.

Ed. Note:

Ms. Pieck is also composer of the piano series, "NEW DIRECTIONS." It is a beautiful collection of her own compositions, masterfully written for her students, and published in braille and print editions.

Contact her at:

<stephpieck@hotmail.com> for information.

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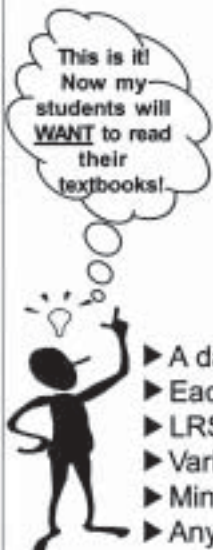
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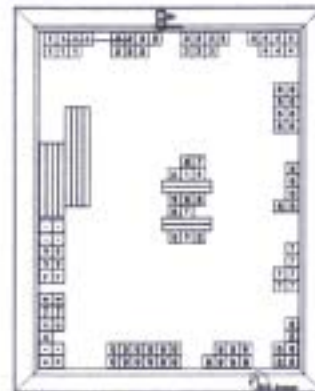
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