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• Call for Nominations

• Behind the Scenes at the CTEBVI Conference

• Squirrels and Rabbits and Snakes, Oh My!! Dots and Anxious Moments

And lots of good information in the Announcements Section!!
MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

Hoping you all had a happy and safe Holiday Season, and Best Wishes for a wonderful New Year.

Braille Challenge regionals are in full swing. Be sure to register your students for this amazing event.

Because the Announcements section contains a lot of material which may not apply to everyone, beginning with this issue I’m going to try and categorize them to better help you decide what might be of interest or helpful to you. The categories will be: Students/Parents, Parents/Teachers/Educators, General, and CSMT Monthly Updates.

During the editing process several errors were made in the TEXTBOOK FORMATS article in the Fall issue. Therefore, it is being published again in this issue.

CORRECTIONS:
Textbook Formats article
Board of Directors and Committee Chairs – name should read:
   Peggy Schuetz

Happy reading,
Marcy Ponzio

THE CTEBVI JOURNAL

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(For MESSAGES ONLY and recorded information about 2010 CTEBVI Conference)

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Consider the word – Imagine – a landscape without boundaries or limitations, of infinite potential and promise, where ideas and knowledge meet to become tangible applications.

This is the theme of our next conference, and the essence of our work.

For many years on the Executive Board, I have been advocating for an increased parent presence in our organization through conference attendance. Parent interest and involvement in all strands enhance both the caliber and vitality of every workshop presentation. The exchange of ideas and concerns with those most personally involved with the students who sit in our classrooms and receive our materials could only serve to benefit all.

Beginning with our 2010 conference, the CTEBVI Board has decided to waive all conference registration fees for any CTEBVI member who is the parent of a blind or visually impaired child. It is our hope that this new policy will encourage and enable parents to become active members and ongoing participants at our conferences.

Many thanks to our Membership Chair, Judi Biller, for her vigorous work on the 2010 annual membership drive. While our conference has been structured to alternate between Northern and Southern California in part to best accommodate those members who may only be able to attend within their region every other year, the consequence has proven to be somewhat counterproductive to our fiscal health. As membership dues currently constitute the sole consistent revenue stream for CTEBVI, any discrepancy is sharply felt. We have managed to maintain our dues at a low cost for decades, however, this will only be possible to sustain if your membership remains in good standing, regardless of your ability to attend conference each year.

Understandably, as many of our agencies and districts have imposed cutbacks and restrictions, there are those who may be, for a time, unable to attend conference. We are working towards an arrangement which, in the future, could make available to members an overview of the substantive aspects of a number of conference workshops in the form of a synopsis with accompanying materials.

More than ever, Continuing Education Units are an essential component to certification and wage scale advancement. Our conference offers an ideal opportunity to attain CEUs for a nominal administrative fee of $35, which will cover as many workshop hours as you wish to attend.

In October, I once again enjoyed the opportunity to represent CTEBVI at the APH Annual Meeting in Louisville. Our continued relationship with APH is a privilege, and vital for our advocacy. CTEBVI was also present at the most successful Getting in Touch With Literacy conference this past fall in Costa Mesa – both at our booth in the exhibit hall (kudos to Tracy Gaines, Bonnie Grimm, Jenny Tsimogianis and Holly Werlwas) and throughout the conference by providing AV equipment and tech support. Our AV kits were also used at the November CAOMS conference in Monterey. This gear, along with 24/7 onsite tech support, is available at a substantial discount for those within our field.

Also beginning this year, we will once again be offering advertising space in the JOURNAL for agencies, services and products related to our trade.

Our conference dates are somewhat later this year, April 23-25, at LAX Marriott.

Again, consider the word – Imagine – make plans to attend, and bring your imagination with you.

Grant Horrocks
In Memoriam

CAROLYN (ODELL) CARD
1929-2009

Carolyn attended and graduated from New Jersey Women’s College (now Rutgers University). When her two children were in school, she took a braille transcribing class in the early 1960s and that started a lifetime of dedication to braille. She was a member of The Braille Transcription Project of Santa Clara County, CTEVH, and the National Braille Association.

Carolyn was a skilled transcriber of both music and mathematics/science braille, as well as a teacher of braille transcription. She also played the organ and was a skilled needlewoman.

Carolyn served as president of CTEVH from 1971-1973 and became the music specialist for CTEVH in 1976. She served on the CTEVH Board of Directors again during the 1990s.

Through several years of cancer treatments, she continued transcribing mathematics books for math students in elementary schools and in the junior college system both as a volunteer transcriber and as a paid transcriber for the state of California and for the Alternative Text Production Center in Ventura.

The transcribing community has lost a great resource.

SONIA ABRAMS

It is with great sadness we must inform you of the sudden death of Sonia Abrams on December 29, 2009, at age 77. Sonia was a wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister and friend.

Sonia graduated Phi Beta Kappa, and was a braille transcriber for over 35 years. During many of those years, she was an active member of CTEBVI, NBA, and the San Fernando Valley Braille Transcribers, as well as a volunteer for Braille Institute. Sonia was studying her final Nemeth lesson and looking forward to taking and passing the exam soon.

She was a seamstress, a crossword puzzle maven, and our local Braille 2000 tech support.

Sonia will be a loss to all of us, and greatly missed.
CALL FOR NOMINATIONS

CTEBVI BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Call for Nominations

The election of new members of the CTEBVI Board will be held at the general session of the CTEBVI 2010 Conference in Los Angeles. The following people have been selected by the nominating committee for the upcoming term:

**First Term:**
Sandy Greenberg, Braille Coordinator, Ventura, CA
Robert Walling, Transcriber, San Antonio, TX

**Second Term:**
Tracy Gaines, Transcriber, Upland, CA
Marie Hadaway, Educator, San Gabriel, CA
Elizabeth Perea, Educator, Whittier, CA

As per the Policies and Procedures (III-D-2): “Additional nominations, if any, from the membership must be received, in writing, by a member of the Nominating Committee no later than three weeks prior to the Annual Meeting. These written nominations must include name, address, qualifications, and a signed statement by nominee that he/she understands the requirements of Board membership and is willing to serve if elected.”

*The Board of Directors elected the following members as officers for the 2010-2011 term:*

Lisa McClure, President
Patty Biasca, Vice President
Tracy Gaines, Secretary
Sharon Anderson, Treasurer
Elizabeth Perea, Member at Large

*Nominating Committee:*
Bonnie Grimm (Chair)
CTEBVI
741 North Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90029-3594
bgrimm@brailleinstitute.org

Sue Douglass
vipreteach@msn.com

Tracy Gaines
tdgaines@brailleinstitute.org

Lisa McClure
lisa@readmydots.com
CTEBVI Membership Application

CTEBVI membership dues are for the calendar year. Any dues received after October 1 will be applied to the following year. Members receive the quarterly CTEBVI JOURNAL.

For your convenience, you may log onto www.ctebvi.org to submit the following information and make payment by credit card. Membership chair gets notified immediately and, upon request, will send an email acknowledging your charge.

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<th>Membership Type</th>
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<tr>
<td>Domestic or Foreign (individual or family with VI child/ren) Membership</td>
<td>US $50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Life Membership</td>
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I would like to make the following donation(s):
- General Fund
- Katie Sibert Memorial Fund
- Donna Coffee Youth Scholarship Fund

Thank you for your donation. Receipt available upon request.

TOTAL $ 

CHARGE CARD NUMBER:
EXP DATE: CVV2:
Signature (if using your charge)

NAME ____________________________
ADDRESS ____________________________
AFFILIATION (if applicable) ___________ COMPANY (if applicable) ___________
TELEPHONE __________________________ (necessary if using your credit card)
EMAIL ____________________________ (necessary if requesting virtual JOURNAL delivery)

Please circle your choice of how you want to receive the quarterly CTEBVI JOURNAL. It is available to members online and in the following formats:
- Print
- Braille
- Audio CD
- Email**
- Compact Disk (.doc file) If NO internet access

**You will be notified when the latest JOURNAL is available on our website. Issues are available in both .pdf and .doc formats

Please help us know our membership by circling all descriptions that apply to you.
- VI Educator
- O&M Instructor
- Dual certification
- Transcriber
- Parent(s) of VI student
- Proofreader
- Student
- Other (e.g. Librarian, Administrator, Counselor, Vendor, Consumer) ____________________________

Please send this form with payment to:

Judi Biller, CTEBVI Membership Chair
1523 Krim Place, Oceanside, CA 92054
ctebvi.membership@gmail.com
CTEBVI sponsors the Donna Coffee Youth Scholarship in honor of Donna’s exceptional service to our organization and to the visually impaired in California. The award is to be used to promote the academic and social development of a California student. The prize up to $1,000 will be given to the successful candidate. The Donna Coffee Youth Scholarship Committee will select the recipient based on the criteria approved by the Board. The criterion is as follows:

Award: The Donna Coffee Youth Scholarship will be awarded in the amount up to $1,000 per year. One or more applicants may participate in the award. Award recipients will have their names and the year of their award inscribed on the permanent plaque.

- **Process:** Application materials will be distributed through the JOURNAL and the web site: www.ctebvi.org. Applications are due to the committee by March 10, 2010. The winner(s) will be selected by consensus of the Committee.

- **The inscribed plaque and cash award will be presented at the Conference.**
  a. The award recipient and parents shall be invited as guests.
  b. The nominating person will take part in the presentation.
  c. The award will be presented at a general meeting selected by the Conference Chair.

- **Selection:** Criteria for selection will be based solely upon:
  a. The submitted application of the nominations, letters of support, and the student’s application (applications may be submitted in the medium or media the student chooses).
  b. The consensus of the committee that the student created a plan that is complete and executable and will further his/her individual growth.
  c. Duties of the recipient(s): recipient(s) shall report the outcome of their proposal at the succeeding Conference.

Applications for the 2010 scholarship must be received by March 10, 2010, and sent to:

CTEBVI Donna Coffee Scholarship
741 North Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90029-3594

Liz Perea, Chair
(562) 698-8121 ext. 1437
FAX: (562) 907-3627
Email: liz.perea@wuhsd.k12.ca.us

*Electronic submission of the application is preferred, but not required.*
I. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS for the Nominating Teacher, Transcriber, and/or Orientation and Mobility Specialist

1) In less than two double-spaced typewritten pages, explain why you believe the student will benefit from his/her proposed project/activity.

2) The application and use of funds must be approved by the student’s parent or legal guardian.

3) Fill out the application form completely, sign and date.

Student’s Name: ____________________________________________________________

Student’s Address: __________________________________________________________

Student’s Telephone Number: _______________________________________________

Student’s Date of Birth: _____________________________________________________

Student’s Grade Level: _____________________________________________________

Student is visually impaired or blind: __________________________________________

Parent’s(s’) Name(s): _______________________________________________________

School/District: ___________________________________________________________

School Address: ___________________________________________________________

Name of Teacher of the Visually Impaired: ______________________________________

Nominator’s Name: _________________________________________________________

Nominator’s Email: _________________________________________________________

Nominator’s Signature: __________________________ Date: _______________________

II. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS for the Student

1) Explain why you want the Donna Coffee Scholarship in an essay of no more than two double-spaced typewritten pages.

2) Parents must approve the application and the use of funds by signing the application.

I approve of the Donna Coffee Youth Scholarship 2010 application and use of funds for the project/activity that my child has proposed.

Parent’s Signature: __________________________ Date: _________________________

Completed application must be received by March 10, 2010.
The purpose of the scholarship is to foster the acquisition and improvement of skills necessary to provide high quality educational opportunities to visually impaired students in California. In a typical year, the Katie Sibert Committee awards $3,000 divided among qualified applicants.

These scholarships may be used to attend CTEBVI conferences, provide training, purchase books, materials and/or equipment. Scholarships awarded must be used as stated in the application. Winners will be notified by April 1, 2010.

Katie Sibert was a charter member of CTEVH (now CTEBVI). She began teaching elementary grades in the 1930s before becoming a resource room teacher and coordinator of programs for students with visual impairments for Stanislaus County. During the summers, Katie prepared teachers at San Francisco State, the University of Minnesota, Columbia University, and Portland State. She published and presented in many venues. In 1960, she was awarded the Winifred Hathaway Teacher of the Year Award for the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness. Katie retired from teaching in 1971. After her retirement, she consulted with many schools in the U.S. and internationally (including Denmark and Portugal), and developed materials for APH.

QUALIFICATIONS

• All applicants must be current members of CTEBVI.
• Transcribers must be actively transcribing.
• Educators must have a credential in the education of students with visual impairments or be enrolled in a program to earn such a credential.
• Para-educators must be actively supporting the educational and literacy needs of children with visual impairments.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

• Completed application packet.
• Cover letter describing the applicant’s qualifications and/or experience in transcribing or educating the visually impaired. Two current (within the past 12 months) letters of recommendation as follows:
  
  Transcribers must have two letters of recommendation from their group or agency.
  Educators must have two letters of recommendation (e.g., principal, college professor)
  Para-educators must have two letters of recommendation (e.g., TVI, regular education teacher)

Letters should address the following areas:

• Professional and/or volunteer experiences of the applicant including those with visually impaired or other disabled persons
• Community involvement of the applicant
• Certificates or Credentials held by the applicant
• Personal interests, talents, or special skills of the applicant
• Honors or awards received by the applicant
KATIE SIBERT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
2010 APPLICATION

Name: ________________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________

City: ________________________________________________

State & Zip Code: ______________________________________

Telephone No.: ______________________________________

Email Address: _______________________________________

Name of agency, school system, or transcribing group with which you are affiliated:
__________________________________________________________________________________

Please answer the following:

1. The total amount of scholarship support requested is: _______________________________________

2. Describe how the scholarship will be used. Include a breakdown of expenditures; e.g., training, registration costs, transportation, lodging, texts, materials, equipment, etc.:
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________
__________________________________________________________________________________

DEADLINE: March 1, 2010

The applicant is responsible for sending the complete application packet to:

CTEBVI KATIE SIBERT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

741 North Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90029-3594

Marie Hadaway, Chair
Email: dandog1944@yahoo.com
# Gifts and Tributes

We would like to thank the following donors for their generous gifts and tributes:

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<thead>
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<th>General Fund</th>
<th>Donna Coffee Fund</th>
<th>Katie Sibert Fund</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lynn E. Carroll</td>
<td>Dawn Gross</td>
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<td>Christy Cutting</td>
<td>Robert Morgan</td>
<td>Debby Lieberman</td>
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<td>Vicki Garrett</td>
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<td>In Honor of Vanessa Stenz</td>
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<td>Aura Lee Stogsdill</td>
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<td>Kathleen E. Talley</td>
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Contributions to the CTEBVI Gifts and Tributes Fund will be used to improve services to persons who are visually impaired.

Your Name, Address, Zip for acknowledgment:

Name: _____________________________________________________________

Address: ___________________________________________________________________

City: ______________ State: __________________________ Zip/Route Code: ______

In honor of: ______________________________________________________________________

In memory of: ______________________________________________________________________

May we please know date of death: ________________

Let us know your wishes:

☐ Please direct contributions to the KATIE SIBERT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND

☐ Please direct contributions to the DONNA COFFEE YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP FUND

All contributions to CTEBVI are tax deductible. Receipt available upon request.

Make checks payable to CTEBVI and mail them to:

CTEBVI Gifts and Tributes
Norma Emerson
18271 Santa Lauretta Street
Fountain Valley, CA 92708-5528
GENERAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

NBA RECEIVES AWARD FROM THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED PARTNERSHIP

On June 1, 2009, David W. Shaffer, NBA’s Executive Director, traveled to the Patch Golf Tournament to receive a $25,000 grant. National Braille Association (NBA) was first invited to the Patch Open Golf Tournament to accept a contribution in 1983. Since that time, NBA has continued to be the major grantee at each year’s Patch Open. This year’s award brings the Visually Impaired Partnership’s (Patch Open’s sponsoring organization) total donations to $302,800.00.

This year marked the 30th anniversary of the Patch Open. It was a bittersweet celebration, as they celebrated a milestone for their organization and honored the life of a friend who had passed. Arthur Rogers, one of the original 16 founders of the Visually Impaired Partnership, passed away suddenly, shortly after last year’s tournament. Arthur’s support of NBA was a major factor in why NBA came to be the recipient of an award. His late wife, Edna Rogers, was not only a braille transcriber, but a life member of the Association. They both had a keen understanding of how important NBA’s work was to the lives of individuals who are blind.

The National Braille Association owes Arthur Rogers and the Visually Impaired Partnership a debt of gratitude. Their years of support have meant so much to so many people. NBA congratulates the Visually Impaired Partnership for their thirty years of charitable service.

NEWS FROM BRAILLE-N-TEACH

DISCLAIMER: The following material has been reprinted from the Braille-n-Teach ListServ and is provided strictly for informational purposes only. Information has not been reviewed for accuracy and reprint does not imply endorsement by CTEBVI.

STUDENT/PARENT ANNOUNCEMENTS

AFB CAREERCONNECT®

Dress and Impress

Going after your first job interview? Don’t let it become a grueling undertaking. If you haven’t had any workplace experience or have never been through an interview, you might think the process will rob you of all dignity and courage! It doesn’t have to be that way. Instead, have fun as we show you how you can dress and impress any potential employer to snag that all important first job.

Transcript of Dress and Impress Video

NARRATOR: AFB CareerConnect, a program of the American Foundation for the Blind, presents “Dress and Impress — The Youth Job Interview.”

Meet Aaron.

Aaron is a high school senior who has his life together. His teachers think he is brilliant. His friends love him and his girlfriend thinks he’s hot.
He’s his own person and has his own style and his own look. He’s looking good, in his shorts, t-shirt, nose and ear piercings, arm tattoo and spiky hair. There’s nothing phony about Aaron. What you see is what you get.

[Knocking sound] Today, opportunity knocks for Aaron. He has a job interview at a local hospital.

Sure, it’s an entry-level position, but because Aaron hopes to work in health care someday, this job could help him build his resumé and get to know people who could help him in his career.

This interview is Aaron’s chance to make a good impression. How will he handle it?

AARON: Man, I’m going to show them that I’ve got skills and they’d be lucky to have me work for them.

NARRATOR: Uh-oh, this could be interesting.

[Whispering, like a golf tournament] Today is the big day — Aaron’s job interview! He enters the room with flair, dramatically swinging his cane left and right. It is a professional office, and the employer rises from her chair behind her desk to greet him.

INTERVIEWER: Good morning, Aaron. I’m glad you could come in for this interview.

AARON: [Smacking chewing gum] Uh, yeah, I’m sorry I’m a little late — I had a phone call, you know.

INTERVIEWER: Yes, well please take a seat.

NARRATOR: Aaron leans his cane against the desk and falls back into the leather chair in front of her desk.

AARON: Here’s my resumé.

NARRATOR: He reaches for a folded up resumé in his pocket.

INTERVIEWER: Oh well, um, why don’t we start with some questions? Tell me, why are you interested in this job?

AARON: Oh yeah, man, I need to get a big guitar amp. And I have a girlfriend and she likes to go on dates a lot and stuff, so that’s real expensive. And I don’t really want to flip burgers, I figured this would be more fun, and uh, I really wanted to work somewhere where they really wouldn’t make me cut my G-awesome hair, you know.

INTERVIEWER: Uh-huh, I see. Um, tell me, what kind of personal strengths do you have? What could you bring to this job?

AARON: Man, I got skills, I got skills, I got skills. I mean, I can play the guitar like crazy awesome, man. And I’m like in a band and stuff too. And man, I’m like, my friends they say I’m hilarious and smart and uh, you know, I think you’d be real lucky to have me around, you know. Know what I mean?

INTERVIEWER: Aaron, have you had any work experience before?

AARON: Nah man! Nah, I don’t work. I’ve never worked before.

INTERVIEWER: What do you think might be your greatest challenges and how might we be able to accommodate you?

AARON: Man, I think it’d be kinda hard to get up before 12, I mean that’s just gonna be killer. And you know, not being able to hang out with my friends all summer, I mean, not be able to go to movies all the time and whenever I feel like it and not be able to stay up late and hang out with my friends, you know. And uh...

NARRATOR: Aaron thinks this job interview is going well, but the employer looks like she’s about to lose it. Let’s just freeze this scene and find out what she’s thinking right now...

INTERVIEWER: Thanks...

AARON: No problem, G.
INTERVIEWER: [Record scratch] Okay, so as the interviewer, in my mind right now I am thinking that this kid is a total waste of my time. I know his teachers have recommended him, his school record looks great, but for this job, I need more. I need an employee who cares about work and about being a part of a successful team.

Aaron has forgotten about the two most important things in a job interview: Dress and Impress. For starters, let’s take a look at how Aaron is dressed.

I appreciate his style and creativity, but it just isn’t appropriate here. And I have to wonder, if he can’t dress professionally for a job interview, what in the world might he wear to work?

NARRATOR: Maybe a rainbow colored Mohawk wig?

INTERVIEWER: Aaron needs a job interview makeover.

First, he needs to brush his hair and lose the piercings.

Then a wardrobe change is needed. A suit might be a little more than necessary. A shirt with a collar and khaki pants look just fine. Cover the tattoo.

The way you dress for your interview speaks volumes about what an employer can expect you to look like on the job. It also tells me if you are the kind of person who will put the goals of the company and the team first, before your personal need to express yourself.

Next, IMPRESS me.

Please be on time, show that you respect my job and the things I have to do. Fresh breath is nice, but spit out the gum before the interview. Greet me with confidence. Shake my hand and make good eye contact. Sit up in your seat. Show enthusiasm for your job. And when it comes to those important interview questions, here’s a clue...it’s not about you. If I hire you, it’s because I think you can help make our work successful, not because I want to help you buy something, support your social life or make your mommy happy. Sell yourself to me by thinking about what I need — someone who works hard, learns quickly, is smart and dependable. Be positive in your answers. Show me you can make my hiring dreams come true.

So far, Aaron’s interview has been a disaster. And unfortunately, there are rarely second chances in a job interview.

However, this is just a video...so let’s rewind the tape and give Aaron another shot!

NARRATOR: [Rewinding tape sounds] This is Aaron’s job interview—take two! A well-dressed Aaron enters the office confidently and professionally, with a spiffy resumé in hand. He walks straight to the employer’s desk and reaches to shake her hand.

INTERVIEWER: Good morning, Aaron. I’m glad you could make it to this interview.

AARON: It’s nice to meet you, Ms. Brown. Thank you for giving your time to meet with me today.

INTERVIEWER: Very good. Please have a seat.

AARON: Here’s a copy of my resumé for your files.

INTERVIEWER: Oh, why thank you. This is very nice, very impressive. I see that you have some experience in computer software.

Tell me Aaron, why are you interested in this job?

AARON: For the past couple of years I’ve been thinking about a career in health care, and I’d like to work in an environment where helping people is important. I have chosen classes in high school to help me with this career. And I think I’d be a hard worker for you because this is what I’m pretty sure I want to do with my life.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Aaron, what do you think are personal strengths that you have that could aid you in this job?
AARON: I’d say I’m a hard worker and I get the job done very well. And if I have a question or problem, I’ll just ask about it. And I also like to work with people to get things done.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Aaron, have you ever had any work experience before?

AARON: Yes, I have. Last summer I was a counselor at a youth summer camp, and that gave me great leadership skills and helped me make my work an example for others.

INTERVIEWER: Tell me, what do you think your greatest challenges might be and how can we accommodate some of those for you?

AARON: I think my greatest challenges will be learning about the hospital and the medical terms that will be used, but I’m very excited to learn these things. And for accommodations, I’ve looked over the job requirements and I think there’s just a few technical adaptations that we can put in place, that I can get your IT people in touch with other people that could get those done for you.

INTERVIEWER: Okay. Thank you very much.

NARRATOR: [Ringing bell. Cheering] Well, it looks like Aaron is on the right track now and well on his way to getting that important job. His parents and his teachers will be so proud.

So the next time you’re preparing for a job interview, remember the important lesson of this story ... Dress plus Impress equals Success!

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

SUBJECT: RFBD and MP3 players

Hi listers,

I spent two evenings on this task, and I’ll share my results.

The SanDisk Sansa Clip plays WMA files at the 32 kbps bit rate needed for RFBD files. If you’re looking at mp3 players, you have to make sure that they can play at that slow rate. Most music files are at the 128 kbps bit rate, and they won’t work with RFBD files.

You also need Windows Media Player version 11. The RFBD file saves to that program. The book I got from RFBD saved each page as a separate file. When I downloaded it to the mp3 player, the pages got out of order, because of the headings. It put Heading 21 after Heading 2. I had to go in and change the headings through Windows Media Player so that they were numbered from 001 through 044, which was the last file for this book. After I numbered them, and saved them as a new playlist, I was able to sync it to the Sansa Clip. I found the book on the Sansa Clip, and the audio book was manageable. Hopefully, the next time I download a book, it will be easier to deal with.

The whole process was challenging, but workable.

Take care,

Martha

~ ~ ~ ~ ~
SUBJECT: Newest Initiative In Audio Description

Hi all,

I’ve been asked to share the following:

Listening is Learning
Promoting a Sound Education

The Described and Captioned Media Program and the American Council of the Blind are pleased to announce the launch of Listening is Learning, a new campaign intended to promote the educational benefits of listening to description (also called “audio description” or “descriptive video”) on video-based media.

Description provides equal access to educational video for students who are blind or visually impaired, but can increase the effectiveness of educational video for students without vision loss as well.

Posters, brochures, and more information available at http://listeningislearning.org.

Stuart Wittenstein, Ed.D., Superintendent
California School for the Blind
500 Walnut Avenue, Fremont, CA 94536  510-794-3800, x201

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SUBJECT: Accessible Phones – Responses

Hi there— I have a student who is blind and due to get a new cell phone through Sprint this month. Are there any suggestions on which phone is best and most compatible for vocal options (i.e. text messaging)?

Thanks for your ideas,
Tawnya

Hi there ... many of you asked for the info on responses I received about accessible phones for our students. Here they are...
Tawnya

* * * * *

From a UC student who is blind:
There are currently no phones with screen reading technology with Sprint, but there may be some which allow the user to text vocally with the push of a button. This person will need to contact the provider directly for more information, since they do not support Talks or MobileSpeak.

* * * * *

The only thing that is accessible as far as texting goes is this software developed by Humanware for the Blackberry called Orator. It works on certain models, and you can find out more at www.humanware.com.

* * * * *

Hi, this is Dr. Bill. I use Sprint and have the Motorola Q 9c. It has a tactile QWERT keyboard. However, it does not have built-in speech. I had to purchase MobileSpeak at a price of $295 from Vision.
If he does not have to stay with Sprint, he can consider AT&T and Verizon. Verizon and AT&T have phones that come with speech for around $250. AT&T: 866-241-6568    Verizon: 800-922-0204

The Motorola Q and Pantech are nice phones.

* * * * *

One of our blind students really likes the Rumor by Sprint.

~ ~ ~ ~ ~

SUBJECT: Audio Description Now Available at Disneyland

Did you know the Disneyland Resort has several services available for guests with visual and hearing disabilities? I am 40 percent deaf, and I didn’t know about Disney’s Handheld Device until last month.

I’ve never been able to hear all of the audio in attractions such as the Enchanted Tiki Room, and I’ve often wondered if I’m missing some of the rich storytelling that Walt Disney Imagineers carefully and creatively incorporate into all of the attractions at the Resort. Now, thanks to Disney’s Handheld Device, I won’t be missing those special details anymore.

Disney’s Handheld Device is a palm-sized wireless device that was developed in 2002. The device features several services, including Assistive Listening, which provides amplified audio at 12 attractions, and Handheld Captioning, which displays text for 14 attractions.

A new service was just added yesterday. Audio Description, now available at Disneyland Resort and Walt Disney World Resort, provides narrated audio for guests with visual disabilities by describing visual attraction elements, such as actions, settings and scene changes.

Audio Description is being offered at 19 attractions at Disneyland and Disney’s California Adventure Parks.

So, now that you know all about it, where do you get it? Guests with visual or hearing disabilities can obtain a handheld device at the Guest Relations offices, near the entrances to Disneyland and Disney’s California Adventure parks. The devices are provided on a first-come, first-served basis, and there is a fully-refundable $100 daily deposit for use.

Editor’s Note: Disneyland will also be offering in the near future Large Print and Braille Guides to the Park and all the attractions, as well as a braille transcript of the audio description.
SUBJECT: Program Reductions at CSB

Hi all,

I am saddened to announce that due to a new round of budget cuts, the California School for the Blind will be reducing some services during the first six months of 2010. We had been able to absorb previous budget cuts without much apparent reduction in services, but just a few weeks ago we learned of another budget cut to this fiscal year which makes it imperative we reduce services from January through June of 2010.

The majority of these reductions affect outreach services which support students in their local school districts. Much of our funding for on-campus school programming is intact and we will continue to enroll new students. We have space in our day and residential programs. Therefore, if you know of students who could benefit from these services, please continue to refer them to CSB.

However, beginning January 1, we need to make the following reductions:

1. Short course programming is cancelled.
2. Summer technology academies are cancelled.
3. Low vision exams will still occur at CSB, but we will no longer provide this service in other regions.
4. Professional development activities are curtailed. We will be able to host some events on our campus, such as the APH Sensory Learning Kit (January 14-15) and the Lowenfeld-Akeson Early Years Symposium (February 20), but will not be able to provide such opportunities to off campus sites.
5. Outreach visits from assessment staff and assistive technology staff will be greatly reduced. If you are already scheduled for such a visit, please check to determine the status of that visit.
6. No conference attendance – we will miss being with you at the CTEBVI conference this spring, as presenters, as attendees, and as colleagues and friends.

These are strange and difficult times and we are sorry to have to make these tough choices, but the reality of the late budget cuts forced the reductions in services. Our decisions were based on trying to do the least harm -- not a very pleasant way to think about our school’s funding.

Here’s hoping that the next budget cycle is kinder to our services and to the children with whom we work.

Stuart
Stuart Wittenstein, Ed.D.
Superintendent, California School for the Blind
500 Walnut Avenue, Fremont, CA 94536; 510-794-3800, X201

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SUBJECT: What About Protecting That One “Good” Eye

B-N-T Colleagues,

I could use some more opinions about our middle school student who has one eye with vision after losing her other eye surgically from early childhood retinoblastoma. She wears glasses most of the time. Her parents bought her goggles to wear during PE and other activities which could possibly result in an eye injury. Her class is about to begin playing football. She is very resistant to wearing goggles. She is an attractive girl with wishes to be seen as “totally normal” (which is so common in our students this age). We had problems last year getting her to use her laptop because a few of her peers commented that she was “special.” Her brother of the same age, who also had retinoblastoma, uses his goggles but still has both of his eyes. Her parents are concerned to the point that they made a consequence for not wearing the goggles during PE.

Have any of you had the same situation? How can we convince her how important it is to protect her eye? I would appreciate your comments.
Carol

Hi,

This is Dr. Bill, and this is a common thing we go through when students are teenagers. You can only remind her of the possible consequences and she will eventually have to make the decisions.

I would offer another alternative to the goggles. The goggles are often less attractive so she may prefer to wear Oakley sunglasses, a very popular pair of glasses among young people, including beach volleyball players.

It may also be helpful to offer another form of PE for her. She may run a mile or walk with some friends during the football class.

As for general use, there are other protective glasses that will look very stylish. She can have any frame made into a protective pair of glasses. Ask for Polycarbonate lenses.

* * * * *

Carol: I am new to Braille-N-Teach and not sure how to post, but would really appreciate seeing your responses. I am currently enrolled in the TVI program at CSULA.

In addition, I have a daughter with monocular vision and may benefit from this discussion. I know my daughter’s surgeon/ophthalmologist is completely on the side of letting her be “normal” and forgo the goggles if she does not want them. My daughter’s “second opinion” ophthalmologist is more likely to say she should wear the goggles regardless of any social impact.

If you could either forward responses to me, or tell me how to send a request to everyone to also include me on responses to you, it would be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your time.
Kimberly

* * * * *
I am a parent of a girl with one “OK” eye. We have taken the stance from the very beginning that “yes, she is special,” especially to us, and it is my job to see that I protect her whenever necessary. We do A LOT of talking and securing friends that like her for who she is. I also did a vision lesson in her classes beginning in K (she’s now in 5th). It’s hard but necessary. If it wasn’t goggles, it would be something else. Perhaps if she had to use a white cane, she might soften on the idea of goggles.
Just some thoughts, Laura

* * * * *

I would recommend she not play football but have an alternate thing to do so she is not standing around looking odd.
Rosalind

* * * * *

Have you tried excluding her from P.E.? My student with one eye (which is at great risk of retinal detachment) works out at the local fitness club and gains P.E. credits.
Denise

* * * * *

That is tough. Sometimes we have to be the mean old teacher. Flat out it is a safety issue -- you don’t wear your goggles, you don’t play! … could it be she is looking to avoid PE? The PE teacher has to have a united front with you, her parents and the school administration. Without her goggles, she is not properly dressed for PE. What consequences do kids incur when that happens? Seems she should incur those penalties. If she doesn’t want to wear safety prescription corrected goggles, she needs to get an order from her eye doctor and have her parents sign that it is okay to go without.
Paula

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SUBJECT: Braille Keyboard

Has anyone ever used this product before? Is it better NOT to have braille on the individual keys when learning how to type?

I would appreciate any comments and/or suggestions on your experiences regarding typing programs and equipment.

Thank you.
Leah Kanegawa, Teacher of the Visually Impaired  lkanegawa@sjcoe.net

Braille USB Computer keyboard. Convert existing computers for use by the visually impaired. Enables those losing their sight to learn braille. Keyboard is ready to plug in, braille labels are already installed. The braille legends are embossed to meet Americans with Disabilities Act standards. The clear backing allows the legends to show through for sighted users.

The perfect solution for the visually impaired in the computer age comes in Hooleon’s braille-ready keyboard. This 104 Key keyboard assists the visually impaired keyboard operator by providing the raised braille equivalents for the legends of all 101 keys.

Installation: The cable comes with a IBM USB connector that connects directly into your existing IBM or look-a-like computers. No special software needed.

Here are the responses I received so far. Most of them had the same opinion I did about having braille on the keys. Thanks for your responses.

* * * * *

Looks like a cool idea, but not! It encourages “scrubbing”, which makes for poor braille readers. Have student learn regular keyboard, you can place “markers” (a raised dot) on strategic keys (tab, f, j, backspace, return). Will you put all your responses on braille-n-teach once they all come in? We can all learn something new.

* * * * *

Students don’t need to feel braille on the computer keyboard, just as sighted don’t need to see print letters. Save your money.

* * * * *

It says that it is a 104 keyboard, so it is a QWERTY keyboard with braille dots.
Beth

* * * * *

I have sight but was taught to type without “looking” at the keys. I tried braille stickers on the keys for some of my students, but it really just got in their way. I’ve had good luck with my upper elementary and a high school student using the Talking Typer program (APH). Once the students know how to locate the f/j keys, they are on their way!

* * * * *
I do not believe in labeling keyboard keys with braille. I think it slows down the learning process as the user is constantly trying to verify what key a finger is placed on instead of memorizing the keyboard layout. Using an audio typing tutoring program produces great results when used regularly. Finger position is critical to the success of the student.

* * * * *

Fun with TypeAbility, from Yesaccessible.com or Talking Typing Tutor from APH is useful.

* * * * *

NO reason to use a keyboard with braille on the keys! Teach touch typing just as you would do with ANY student learning to type. Try the demo of TypeAbility at www.yesaccessible.com . . . students love it! You need to have JAWS running when using it (either the full version or demo version of JAWS).

* * * * *

I don’t think students need anything other than a dot on the f and j keys. That is for finding the home row and that is about it. I use a typing warm-up that gets students to learn the keyboard. The fingers on the home row are used to press a home row key and then the other key they want to press. This trains students to use the correct fingers. If they ask where the letter c is, I just say “dcd” and they get it. I’ll attach a copy.

* * * * *

I think it is better to teach without braille labels on the keys, just from experience, even though the braille keyboard sounds good. You know how the j and f keys have little bumps on them to orient yourself to the home row, I think that is sufficient. Now, it is harder to recognize the very top row with the numbers and symbols, even I still need to look at that row to get the keys right, so maybe when they are advanced enough you could just label that top row??

* * * * *

Why not use braille on the keyboard? Our other students get to have the print letters on their keyboards all the time!!

* * * * *

Thank you for sharing the responses, Leah. Both sides make perfect sense. Yes, we can all type without looking, but how often did we use our vision to confirm the keys we were pushing while we were learning? It’s a hard call. I have sticky bumps on the #1, -/_-, and tab keys and I can see just fine. I do love that TypeAbility program too.

* * * * *

My braille student who is very bright has no sight at all has braille labels on the keys. I thought…why not give him equal access? Other sighted students have print labels so why play tricks with my blind student? I would say put braille labels on if your student will benefit from them.

* * * * *

Thanks so much for posting those responses. They were informative, and reinforced my own opinion on the subject; this is also how I feel about putting ZoomCaps or using large print keyboards: students need to learn touch-typing to be effective users of a computer (perhaps if they have some additional motor and/or cognitive
disabilities, then the labels may be appropriate). I will share that a parent added braille labels to his home keyboard for his son who is low vision and autistic. It did seem to help him be more proficient at school.

SUBJECT: Optometric Developmental/Perceptual Comprehensive Evaluation???

Hello all,

I just received a doctor’s note that recommended that an “optometric developmental/perceptual comprehensive evaluation” be included on an IEP for a student with left esotropia and amblyopia and poor tracking whose best corrected VA is 20/50 od and 20/200 os. The doctor states that upon completion of the visual skills assessment, a vision therapy program can begin. This student is 9 years old.

Can anyone give me advice as to what my role is here? Should I conduct a functional vision assessment or is there something else I should use?

Should I be doing anything for this child as far as vision therapy goes?

Any suggestions/recommendations will be greatly appreciated!
Erika, TVI

RESPONSES

1. Can answer some of these questions. The optometric part is not something we can do or recommend (unless the district is willing to pay for it). We of course do not do vision therapy. If you have access to the binocular clinic at UC Berkeley they do some of these things. The doctor’s recommendation should be seen as a referral to a medical clinic, please get clarification from your boss as to how to deal with this.

I would do a functional vision assessment and assess things like eye movement, tracking and the like for the benefit of the optometrist. We have some visual perceptual skills tests that we can give informally (but TVIs are not qualified to give them formally – just see if there is a trend). Talk to the psychologist as one can do some of the tests formally. If the parents are going to the eye doctor you can offer to accompany.

A link about optometrists involvement in some of these issues is here: http://www.children-special-needs.org/vocvis.html

2. Thank you for posting this message. I am wondering if you would consider letting me know how people respond to this important question. TVIs are not required to do vision therapy (see the California State VI Guidelines available online on the CA State Dept of Ed website) but this is becoming a very tricky area when working with kids who have visual impairment related to brain injury.

3. This sounds to me like vision therapy which TVIs are not qualified to do. A functional vision assessment which TVIs are qualified to do, do not determine perceptual/developmental problems. Some school districts try to get TVIs to service these kids because parents don’t want to pay for vision therapy and feel the school districts should. Also some school districts aren’t sure what the difference is between what we do and vision therapy. But again, we are not qualified to do this. I hope this helps and I would like to see other responses you get. Thanks

4. In our area we have an optometrist who is considered to be a “Developmental Optometrist” (Dr. Cammie
Hunt in Ben Lomond, CA). She also does vision therapy. It sounds like the doctor is recommending an eye exam by such an optometrist. Not every optometrist is one.

As I understand it, only optometrists trained in providing vision therapy can offer that service. We as TVIs are not trained to do “vision therapy.” It is a prescribed course of activities and eye exercises done under the direction of the optometrist. I would do a functional vision assessment and ask your administrator about the recommended optometric/developmental/perceptual comprehensive evaluation.

Your functional vision assessment will yield valuable educational information about most appropriate symbol size at various viewing distances. As an aside, I wonder, who would pay for the recommended exam, the parents or school district? I can’t imagine our administrators agreeing to do so! I would think that a low vision exam would yield similar information minus the vision therapy.

Also, look on the web as “vision therapy” doesn’t definitively solve visual issues. There are two schools of thought about it, I believe. I bet you’ll find information about both sides of the vision therapy.

Good luck and let us know the outcome.

5. As a Developmental Optometrist, I do not feel that this is the responsibility of a TVI. The recommendation for a visual perception evaluation may be performed by the school psychologist if the IEP team feels that it is necessary.

As for the need to perform vision therapy, strabismus and amblyopia are medical conditions that should be treated by an optometrist or ophthalmologist. These services are often covered by major medical insurance and require the use of specialized equipment that requires training in the use of these devices.

With the student’s best acuity measuring 20/50, this student is not partially sighted or legally blind. If you want to confirm the student’s functional vision, you may perform a functional vision assessment and observe the accuracy of tracking.

Hope this helps!

6. What I would do is call the M.D. that made the recommendation for the ‘eval’ and get clarity on just exactly what that eval is and who does that eval. Sounds like he/she does, in order to provide a basis for prescribing Vision Therapy.

Vision Therapy is not something that a TVI is capable of providing. Vision stimulation, yes.

My understanding is that vision therapy is performed at the eye specialist’s office. A functional vision evaluation by the TVI would be appropriate. It is the role of the TVI to provide that for the IEP, as a basis for any school based intervention. Other than that, vision therapy (my understanding) is left to the eye care specialist.

Hope this is some help. Let me know how this turns out.

7. OMG vision therapy means you believe you can “fix” the problem. That is the goal of therapy. Watch out!! These are very muddy waters!!

8. When it says “optometric” don’t even offer!!

9. My understanding is that teachers of the visually impaired are NOT vision therapists. A vision therapist is an optometrist who has had special training to do vision therapy. It sounds like the doctor is recommending that an optometrist perform this evaluation, which to me sounds like it might be
a good thing for the child. (As a TVI, I have a visual perceptual test that I could do with a student, but this doctor is calling for an “optometric...evaluation.”) So this makes me believe that the doctor recommending the evaluation realizes that TVIs do not do vision therapy.

I guess the IEP team could refer the child to an optometrist who does this kind of assessment and vision therapy.

10. You might mention to the family that there is a free comprehensive eye exam available through the UC Berkeley Optometry program. They have clinics at the CA School for the Blind three Tuesdays/month, and once in Southern CA. To arrange for a test call 510-794-3800 and ask for the vision clinic. Another contact might be Dr. Amanda, professor at San Francisco State University, amandal@sfsu.edu, who is very knowledgeable on vision issues.

11. I’m not sure what to recommend to you as far as an FVA is concerned, but we’ve always been told by our administrators (and info I’ve gotten from various sessions at CTEBVI) that our role NEVER involves vision “therapy.” A good person for you to talk to may be Linda Clarke in Southern Calif. The only number I have for her is 818-522-2517. She helped me out a couple years ago with some info from the State Guidelines eligibility section and wording I could use as to why a child didn’t qualify for TVI services.

In our SELPA, we wouldn’t be involved at all with a student who’s better eye acuity is better than 20/70!!

12. It is clearly stated in the California Program Guidelines for the Visually Impaired that a visual impairment does not include visual perception or visual motor dysfunction. It should never be included in an IEP.

13. The law that was passed a decade ago that says that “visual-perceptual” disability is a specific learning disability and not a visual impairment was passed to respond to your type of situation. V.I. teachers don’t provide medical services, which is what that vision therapy would be.

You may certainly provide a functional vision assessment if you think he might qualify as V.I., but please don’t volunteer to carry out vision therapy exercises during the school day. Those exercises are up to the parent, doctor, and insurance company to schedule and pay for.

Poor tracking may be a visual-perceptual or a visual-motor disability, and would not qualify the student as visually impaired. Neither does a lack of depth perception on its own. When an acuity was written into state law for V.I. qualification, it was 20/70. I would suggest caution in taking this child onto your caseload. If the only accommodation the child needs is to sit in the front row, I would suggest no plan or a 504 plan, not an IEP for V.I.

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SUBJECT: AFB offers Low Vision Technology Workshops

Many professionals in our field have expressed a concern about the difficulty of keeping up to date with the latest advances in technology for people with low vision. The American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) has received a gift from the Robert W. Woodruff Foundation to address this issue.

What
Four 1-day workshops on Low Vision Technology presented by Ike Presley, National Project Manager, AFB
When and Where
March 3, 2010, Region 4 Education Services Center, Houston, TX, 8:30-4:30; Applications due 1/22/10
April 22, 2010, Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary, Boston, MA, 8:30-4:30; Applications due 3/12/10

Who Should Attend
Ophthalmologists, optometrists, low vision therapists/specialists, occupational therapists, rehabilitation teachers, teachers of the visually impaired, assistive technology specialists, allied health professionals working with people who have low vision

Cost
Free! In fact, we will be able to offer a travel reimbursement stipend of up to $400 for each participant.

Objectives
These workshops have two broad objectives. Participants will acquire a general knowledge of the current types of technology available for people with low vision, and participants will provide input to AFB about the most effective strategies to keep professionals up to date on this topic.

Application
Please contact Shirley Landrum at slandrum@afb.net for an application. Selected participants will be notified within five days after the application due date.

For additional information please visit www.afb.org and select Calendar of Events under AFB Community, or contact Ike Presley at presley@afb.net, 404-525-2303.

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SUBJECT: Critical Shortage of TVI Short Survey

We are graduate students at Portland State University doing our master’s project on the critical shortage of teachers of visually impaired (TVI) in the nation. We are seeking the number of students served as visually impaired or blind in 2007.

The following link will take you to a survey that should require only five to 10 minutes to complete. You will find the complete explanation about our project and the four questions at the beginning of the survey.


If you would like a copy of the compiled results, please send an email to Janice Stripling (striplin@pdx.edu) separately and I will send you a copy.

If you have further questions and/or would like clarification of the survey, please contact our project advisor, Cheryl Grindol at grindol@pdx.edu.

Thank you in advance for your time and participation.

Sincerely,
Janice Stripling striplin@pdx.edu
Saaron Almaguer salmamaguer@nwresd.k12.or.us
Darlene Schultz danielsdar@gmail.com
Cheryl Grindol grindol@pdx.edu
SUBJECT: Read 180 Follow-Up

Hello Listers,

Thank you for all your responses to my Read 180 question posted October 13th and restated below. I was asked to share the responses I got to the question:

Has anyone had success enlarging the text in the SRI test portion of Read 180?

The responses are as follows:

1. Try changing the screen resolution.
2. Have you tried the built-in accessibility program that is standard in Windows? There is a screen enlarger in there that works for standard Windows programs, but I have never used it with Read 180. Let me know if you have any success.
3. We have installed a large screen monitor for Read 180 students because ZoomText would not work.
4. Have you tried installing ZoomText on the computer? I recently installed it on a student’s computer so he could access Read 180.
5. Last year I talked to a tech support person at Read 180 and he said it is not possible...

* * * * *

I haven’t entirely solved this dilemma and am still working on it. I was unable to right click on the mouse and either change the screen resolution, increase the text size, or access Accessibility Wizard as the computers were in a locked mode. What I did do was to type the SRI questions on the student’s laptop in large font (24 point) so he could read them. My student is able to access the text in Read 180, but the SRI tests that provide a Lexile level have a smaller font that is difficult for him to read.

Thank you all again,
Ginger, TVI/O&M

CSMT MONTHLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Translations
Curriculum Frameworks and Instructional Resources Division
California Department of Education

BRAILLE-N-TEACH MONTHLY UPDATES

Friday, October 2, 2009

BRAILLE AND TEACH A few of you are not getting the email notices from the Braille-N-Teach listserv. We do know that most of the rejected mail comes from people using username@aol.com addresses. We suggest that you use a different address (e.g., gmail.com or another service).

Additional problems occur when new firewalls have been installed by your district, country, or SELPA. To remedy this you need to request of your Information Technology (IT) department to allow the mail through
that has braille-n-teach@mlist.cde.ca.gov in the address heading. When a receiving district sees mail coming to multiple people it reads this as spam, unless it knows otherwise. Your IT department can fix this problem by allowing the address through the firewall.

A final reason you might not be able to access the listserv, is that you’ve changed your email address, but did not inform us. When you try to send an email the listserv does not recognize you at the new address, and will not allow the message to go on the listserv. You can send a request to change your user name email at any time, by sending an email to Steve Yee, here at CSMT; syee@cde.ca.gov.

APH FUNDING The new federal fiscal year begins on October 1st. As soon as we complete our accounting process for the 2008-09 year we will upload the new APH funding and begin to take orders for materials and products in the 2009-10 fiscal year. Currently all APH accounts are on hold. Check your APH account beginning on the 2nd or the 5th to see if you may order. Thank you for your understanding as we are working as fast as we can to allow new orders to come through.

ELECTRONIC SUPPORT The CSMT is providing many electronic textbook files to support students needing access to this format. These files are generally in rich text files (rtf) and may be downloaded from the IMODS website.

If you are looking for a book needed by your students, and do not find it by searching on IMODS or through a request to Braille-n-Teach, please send an email to CSMT@cde.ca.gov. Please include the title of the book, the publisher, grade level, subject and the International Standard Book Number (ISBN); either a 10- or 13-digit number. We will then check the CSMT files, NIMAC, and APH to see if it is available. In some cases we have also been able to get files directly from the publisher. When we receive these files, we will upload the files to IMODS and let you know the files are available for downloading.

Friday, November 6, 2009

IMODS ORDERS The 2009-2010 school year is in full swing and orders are coming in fast, too fast actually. We need your help; please send in only one order up to 30 items for regular IMODS orders, and a maximum of 20 APH orders. Multiple orders from one teacher in one day really tie our hands, so in placing orders put items in the cart, but do not complete the order until the end of the day. We appreciate your assistance. These procedures will help us to provide efficient service in delivery of materials to your students.

APH FUNDING The new federal fiscal year began on October 1st. APH funding for the federal fiscal year 2009-10 ends September 30, 2010. All APH funds have been placed in your accounts based on the registration numbers sent in January 5th, 2009. When placing an order we encourage you to print out your order number. All stock items, if available, will be sent within a week. If we are out of stock, you will be notified that some of the items are on back order. We have no control on when these items will be provided by APH, and appreciate your patience.

BRAILLE AND TEACH With over 800 members and growing we have the most efficient list service in the industry. Among the many qualities of this list service include: sharing of materials, catching up with teachers of transferring students, notifying others of articles and research related to the field, listing of openings for positions across the state, asking for help in purchasing the right tool for individual students, asking important braille dot configuration questions, and many more supportive connections for all of us in the business of working with students to achieve independence and knowledge for a successful future. If you know of someone who is not using Braille-and-Teach, or was somehow not receiving the information, please contact Steve Yee at CSMT or call 916-445-1843.
MAXIMEYES CAMERA CONCERN Recently, we have heard about a concern regarding the Pan-Tilt-Zoom (PTZ) camera, not available from APH, as being difficult to focus. As we do not offer these through APH, we suggest you contact the manufacturer or supplier directly.

READER SERVICES FOR LEGALLY BLIND TEACHERS: UPDATE A letter dated August 28, 2009, by Jack O’Connell, State Superintendent of Public Instruction, provides information on budget reductions and categorical flexibility. The state budget for 2009 identifies fiscal year 2007-2008 funding levels as a base year for apportionment to local education agencies by the School Fiscal Services Division, California Department of Education. The budget also stipulates a 15.4 percent across-the-board reduction for categorical programs, which includes the Reader Services for Legally Blind Teachers program. Reader Services for Legally Blind Teachers reimbursement program has been discontinued and is no longer available through the CSMT.

FINDING AND USING ELECTRONIC TEXTBOOK FILES
Determine which type of electronic versions of textbooks and workbooks (e-text) you need:
- Rich Text Files (rtf) raw text with little or no formatting or photos/graphics
- Braille files (most are in .abt format)
- Audio files in MP3 format
- PDF files of workbooks

Download the files to your computer and open with Word, then format, enlarge, or read with text reading software.

We also have a number of books in DAISY format, too large to download, which have to be ordered and we will ship you the files on a CD.

Steps to finding the files you need:
1. Search the IMODS website using both the 13- and 10-digit ISBN’s. Only members can download files. (If you need a free membership, download the New Account Form.)
2. Request the file on the Braille-n-Teach listserv; include the full title, ISBN, publisher, grade level and copyright date. To register for Braille-n-Teach membership contact Steve Yee.
3. Search the BookShare or Recordings for the Blind and Dyslectic as both received federal education grants to make these books and files available free of charge.

If you have tried these steps unsuccessfully, send a request to CSMT email and include: full title of the book, ISBN, publisher, grade level and copyright date.

DIGITAL TALKING BOOKS The National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS) part of the Library of Congress recently began its rollout of their digital-based recorded talking books (DTB) system, not to be confused with the DTB product we provide through IMODS. Recorded materials and DTB players are loaned free. According to an NLS study, DTBs seem to be easier to use, have improved audio quality, and are more durable. To borrow the free equipment and accessories, you must be registered with the Library of Congress Talking Book program. Students in public or private schools must be certified as eligible on an individual basis and must be the direct and only recipients of the materials and equipment. For more information please visit the NLS website.
A RANDOM ACT OF BRAVERY ON THE T
by Victoria Groves

Reprinted with permission from Victoria Groves

Wed Jan. 28, 2009, 02:33 PM EST

West Roxbury – By now, most Parkway residents have heard how West Roxbury resident Frank Sullivan came to the aid of a fellow T rider who was mugged last week on Wednesday. What they might not know is the journey that brought him to make that quick decision, and why he thought it was just a small act to help another.

Originally from Dorchester and one of seven children, Sullivan, 53, was a victim of violence himself 30 years ago this May, at the age of 24. Shot three times -- twice in the head -- after leaving a restaurant in Chinatown, Sullivan spent 2 1/2 months recovering at New England Medical Center. He eventually gained back mobility with the help of physical therapy, but was left legally blind and suffering hearing loss. A bullet that had entered his temporal lobe miraculously didn’t affect his speech, but was left in his head when doctors deemed it too risky to remove. But what strikes others as misfortune gave Sullivan the courage to take advantage of what he calls a second chance.

“There were things I never had the guts to do until I almost missed out,” Sullivan said. “I lost my vision, but it increased my ability to see.”

Always a joker, he had dabbled in stand-up comedy before the shooting, but only after was he able to get up on stage. He even has photos of times he dressed in costume to cheer up the other residents of his hospital unit while they were recovering from various injuries.

But a “not guilty” verdict in the shooter’s trial a year and a half later pushed Sullivan to move beyond comedy and enroll at Suffolk University. He majored in journalism and got involved in student government, which allowed him to pursue an interest in writing as well as public service. While at Suffolk, he met his wife, Lisa, and the couple now has two teenage daughters they are raising in West Roxbury. They’ve lived in the Parkway for 23 years. “I saw love in a different way through my friends, family and faith,” Sullivan said. “It’s a blessing to have them.”

Before the shooting, Sullivan always thought he would be a firefighter, a police officer or a priest. When he lost his sight and some of his hearing, he thought the first two occupations would be out of the question. But in the late 1990s, friends urged him to take the civil service exam for “fire alarm operator,” also known as a dispatcher, which would help him fulfill his interest in public service.

Following in the footsteps of his grandfather and uncle, this year will mark his 10th year on the job for the Boston Fire Department.

“Dispatching is the most stressful job I’ve ever done – it’s sweaty palms all day long,” said Sullivan. “But I can go home every day and say I was able to help.”

About a dozen years ago, Sullivan considered a run for Boston City Council, but his daughters were toddlers then, and he thought his family might suffer if he spread himself too thin. “My passion is public service, but my kids are so important,” he said.
When he’s not working as a dispatcher, Sullivan is writing -- everything from a newspaper column to a screenplay of his life.

“It has everything -- crime, violence, love,” he said. “It took away a lot, but it gave me a lot.”

Another way Sullivan helps others is through an organization he founded in 2002 called the PINCH (People In Neighborhoods Can Help) Foundation. The PINCH Foundation honors those who help the police “pinch” criminals and also donates funds to those who find themselves in a “pinch” after a crime, or a tragedy such as a house fire.

“My friends in Dorchester had a fundraiser for me when I got out of the hospital, and I said that someday I would find a way to thank them,” he said. “We want to encourage people to do small acts of kindness every day.”

Small acts of kindness, in fact, were exactly what Sullivan was thinking about on the Orange Line last Wednesday. Reading a copy of “Practice Random Acts of Kindness,” he heard a scuffle and saw a mugger trying to steal an iPod from a Suffolk University student.

“I take the T every day, and I’m sick and tired of the foul language and the violence,” he said. “Years from now, I hope my daughters understand that their dad was just helping someone who needed it.”

The would-be mugger jumped off the T at the New England Medical Center stop, and Sullivan and the student were close behind. Sullivan tackled him at the base of the escalator and rode with him to the top of the station. Once there, he held the accused until police arrived.

“I came close to death, so I appreciate life,” he said. “I try to do a little bit extra.”

A bit cut-up and bruised, Sullivan headed back to work the day after the incident. But he’s quick to stop anyone from using the word “hero.”

“There have been two Sullys in the news the past couple of weeks,” Sullivan said. “The Sully who was a hero landed a plane on the Hudson River. I just decided to do a good deed and landed on an escalator on the Orange Line.”

WickedLocal.com, Roslindale MA, USA

SOURCE
BRAILLE ROCKS ON MANLY BEACH
by Bruce Maguire
bruce@brucemaguire.com

Reprinted with permission from Bruce Maguire

September 22, 2009, Sydney:

After 18 months of planning, Braille on Manly Beach became a happening thing on Sunday, September 20, as part of the Manly Arts Festival.

Teams of volunteers coordinated by artist Anne Walton, and under the expert guidance of sand sculptor Dennis Massoud, worked enthusiastically to make a giant braille message in the sand of Manly’s West Esplanade harbour-side beach. The teams that had been recruited prior to the event were joined by dozens of beach-going locals and tourists of all ages who pitched in to shovel sand and carry buckets of water. The shovelling and water-carrying began at 9:30, and the 23-dot message quickly took shape. Each dot was 1 metre in diameter and 0.5 metres high. The entire message was completed at about 3 p.m., two hours ahead of schedule, and just in time for the helicopter fly-over that produced some stunning aerial photographs of the message set amid the panorama of Sydney’s northern beaches.

Those who preferred a more relaxed experience kept themselves busy buying tickets in the raffle for four tactile T-shirts with the alphabet embossed on the front in braille and print. Long lines of children formed near the marquee waiting to have messages brailled for them by a crack team of on-location braille transcribers, while others contributed messages to the braille time capsule.

Just before 5 p.m., a short ceremony took place, during which Disability Discrimination Commissioner Graeme Innes unveiled the message that had been made in the sand: braille rocks (using the “brl” contraction for “braille”).

Graeme also announced the four lucky winners of the braille T-shirts. Quite a few people expressed an interest in purchasing the T-shirts. If we receive enough advance orders, we will be able to have T-shirts produced with “braille rocks” embossed on the front in braille and print, and the alphabet embossed on the back.

For information on purchasing a T-shirt please contact me by email or phone (02 96863665) if you’d like to order one of these unique T-shirts.

For those of you who would still like to contribute a message to the braille time capsule, there is good news: We received so many messages that the two antique bottles we intended to use quickly overflowed. We now have to find some larger bottles. So if you would like a short (two-line) message included in the time...
capsule, there’s still time to send me the text. I’ll emboss it and add it to the collection. We’ll let you know when we’ve decided on a new date for the ceremony to seal and consecrate the time capsule. The time capsule will be earmarked for opening on January 4, 2109, the 300th birth of Louis Braille. Graeme and I have already put it in our diaries.

Braille on Manly Beach was conceived by Anne Walton, who has become internationally respected for working with braille in ways that are both artistic and inclusive, and braille advocate Bruce Maguire. It was made possible by the expertise and enthusiasm of sand sculptor Dennis Massoud, and the event was supported by a grant from the Community Partnerships Division of the Australia Council. And it all happened because so many people were inspired by the coming-together of braille and the beach, and gave generously of their time and energy. Thank you to all who were involved.

Braille on Manly Beach was a celebration of the 200th anniversary of the birth of Louis Braille with a truly Australian flavour. We want to spread the word that braille rocks, so as soon as we’ve collated all the photographs and edited the video footage, we’ll be publishing the highlights on YouTube and elsewhere.

In the meantime, please contact me if you have any questions about the event.

Braille rocks!!

Bruce Maguire

★★★★★
BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE CTEBVI CONFERENCE
WHY WE NEED YOU

I had been happily attending CTEBVI conferences for several years, many of them presenting workshops, so I knew a small bit of what happened out of sight of most attendees. But it wasn’t until I became a board member that I got a first-hand look behind the scenes to see what it takes to put on your conference.

What a learning experience that has been! There are roughly 15 conference committees — everything from hotel arrangements, entertainment, AV equipment, exhibits, conference program, publicity, receptions and events, registration, and workshops, to name a few, all staffed by volunteers. The Site-Finding committee works years in advance to book a hotel under the best terms they can negotiate. The LAX Marriott, for instance, is under contract for 2010, 2012, and 2014 and the Oakland Marriott for 2011.

The LAX Marriott contract is 22 pages long and full of every conceivable detail. Let me point out a few items that may help explain why we want you to come to conference, stay at the hotel, and attend our banquet functions.

Typically, the hotel does not charge CTEBVI for exhibit space, workshop rooms, or banquet hall rental. In exchange for this “free” use, they expect a minimum number of room nights and a minimum dollar amount of food from banquet meals and receptions (but not including meals in the hotel restaurants). If this amount is not reached, CTEBVI is assessed damages. If you stay at another hotel nearby, you are not contributing to our room nights. If you don’t attend banquet functions, you are not helping us reach our food minimum.

The hotel must make money to stay in business and CTEBVI must also meet certain financial goals to stay a viable organization. Cancelling a conference in bad economic times is not an option, as the hotel charges HUGE cancellation fees. We as a board have been holding our breath and hoping we can make our required minimums.

We hope to see you all at conference!
Patty Biasca
DOTS AND ANXIOUS MOMENTS

by Jana Hertz

As a literary braille transcriber, my days are anything but boring. My office is situated on an elementary school campus, surrounded by hillsides dressed in chaparral .... where wildlife such as squirrels, rabbits, and field mice can be found frolicking outside my door, and occasionally, a lonely coyote can be spotted in the hills as the late-afternoon sun begins to settle into darkness. There is no hint of danger in my surroundings and I am left to the solitude I so enjoy in my daily work. The following story was submitted to the staff at my school after a typical day with a not-so-typical visitor. It tells of the perils of braille transcribing.

The story you are about to read is true. The names have not been changed to protect the innocent.

This is the city. Laguna Niguel, California. … George White Elementary School, Portable 5. I work here... I'm a braille transcriber.

It was Tuesday, October 13th, 2:00 pm. It was cloudy in Laguna Niguel. The school children were preparing to go home. I was just finishing up with my braille work and preparing to go work with a student at the middle school. Marco Forster Middle School. I had disconnected the braille flash drive from my computer when the carrying case fell under my computer desk. Dropping to my knees in order to reach the fallen object, my eyes wandered to the left corner, where there appeared to be something curled up. What could it be? A piece of rope? It didn't look like rope … Being that the corner was dark, I thought perhaps my eyes were deceiving me … a snake? Was I really seeing a snake? Couldn't be! After all, this is the city. This is a school. There are kids on these premises. Noise, activity, chaos … and snakes typically don’t attend school.

I rubbed my eyes and looked again. Indeed, I believed I was staring at a snake! But why was he here? Surely he had not come to see me about reading braille dots. Dot-reading requires fingers … and snakes don’t possess fingers.

I grabbed for my camera … no one would ever believe this! I needed a picture … validation that I was not completely bonkers! You see, my days are generally spent working in the quiet … in most situations, mine is not a social job. I am alone with the solitude that comes with this slow, methodical, nit-picky task of creating dots. So the camera would prove that my eyes did not deceive me. I grabbed a broom and swiped at a label that had fallen to the floor near the snake: FREE MATTER FOR THE BLIND AND PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED. After all, I wanted a clear shot of this snake. The snake did not move. I snapped a picture. FLASH! Still the snake did not move. Was he real? Was he alive? What was he doing here? How long had he been there?

I quickly telephoned Marcia in the front office and calmly said, “Marcia, this is Jana. There is a snake in my office.” Marcia exclaimed, “A snake?!”

“Yes, a snake” I replied. “He doesn’t look very big but he is curled up under my computer desk. Can someone come remove him?”

Marcia responded that she would notify Mike, our principal, since the custodian had already left for the day, and that she would send him out to me.

Enter … Animal Control.
A minute or so later, Marcia telephoned me. “Jana, I have Animal Control on the way. Don’t leave, and don’t disturb him.”

This gave me time to reflect ... what to do? There is a snake in my portable! Why is he IN here? Ah ha ... the mice population! Yes, I’ve encountered mice in this portable ... usually after they have died and have left a foul-smelling odor behind. Perhaps the snake came in looking for food ... particularly mice! Yes, that MUST be why he is in here! Of course! It has nothing to do with my braille skills ... or his dot-reading ...

I glanced at the clock ... 2:10 PM. I need to be in place at the middle school by 2:30 or my braille student would be left to his own devices without me 6th period. I quickly called Marco Forster Middle School and asked them to deliver a message to the teacher, stating I would be arriving late to work with the student, and to please hold him in class until I got there. I told her I would come directly to her room to get him.

The attendance clerk, Sandy, agreed to send a message, then asked if there was a problem. I calmly but quickly replied there was no problem ... but that there was a snake under my computer desk. How’s that for an excuse? Sandy sort of chuckled and I reassured her it was the honest truth. Sandy shrieked! “A snake?! Oh my!”

“Yes, a snake” I calmly replied. “But he is small ... not very big.”

I walked up to the office to show Marcia the picture I had so cleverly snapped. She was not amused. About that time, the Animal Control Officer arrived. I exited the office and went to greet her in the parking lot. I actually thought this whole snake business was sort of humorous. The Animal Control Officer, a woman, retrieved a long stick device about four-foot long with a metal hook-like noose on the end. I explained to her that the snake was small, and I was sort of feeling foolish over having to call animal control to come remove this little snake. I told her, “I have a picture ... see? He is small ...” as I opened my camera to show her the picture.

“That is a rattlesnake!” the officer told me. “We need to get him out of there quickly. He is extremely dangerous!”

We both hurried out to the portable ... and I excitedly exclaimed to Kim (a co-worker who comes to P-5 on Tuesday afternoons) “That snake is a rattlesnake!”

As the officer poked into the corner where the snake was peacefully resting, he suddenly came to life and was not pleased at having been disturbed. With the noose securely surrounding the snake, the officer began to pull the snake from the corner, revealing a very angry creature between 16”-18” in length. The snake opened its jaw and tried unsuccessfully to strike at anything it could.

As the YMCA children prepared for an art project at the tables outside, the officer announced that she was going to have to euthanize the snake for the safety of everyone. It was small enough around that is was slipping from the rod and noose that was holding it at bay. It would not be safe to try to relocate the animal, especially with young children outside.

Within seconds, on a plastic dustpan, that rattlesnake suffered from separation of mind and body. I felt a little sadness ... that the snake could not be spared ... after all, it had spent the entire day with me, inches from my foot, and it never once (to my knowledge) felt threatened. And I never once felt threatened ... until I learned it was a rattlesnake ... and then I felt like I was the luckiest person alive!

★★★★★★
Hello, everyone,

I’m going to dedicate this first column to advice contained in “What Every Young Transcriber Should Know.” This, the first of The California Transcriber’s supplements, was originally published in the spring of 1966. Ruth S. Lowy was the editor. The California Transcriber was the predecessor to our current JOURNAL.

At the end, you’ll see an excerpt from Appendix A: Tips for Transcribers. More will follow in future issues.

NB – All comments with the notation NB are mine – other materials in parentheses are from the original text.

Sue Douglass

I. TRANSCRIBERS AND THEIR GROUPS

A. The Transcriber

1. Definition: The term “transcriber” has been broadened to include all who share in the volunteer production of books and other reading materials for those with visual impairments.
   a. Braillists, large print typists, those who do voice recording.
   b. Proofreaders and audio “monitors.”
   c. Illustrators of large print books; those who produce raised-line or over-lay drawings for braille books. (NB – note the lack of a capital on the word “braille”)
   d. Members of workshops who duplicate, collate, bind, label, pack, and mail the completed work.
   e. Fund raisers and publicity chairmen of transcribing groups.

2. Function: To make it possible for the right person to have the right book at the right time.

3. Affiliation: May work for a particular school or agency, for the Library of Congress, as a member of an organized group, or as a free-lance transcriber.

B. Transcribing Groups

1. Formation and sponsorship: May be organized or initiated by an agency for the blind, school, service or religious group, interested transcriber or other individual.

2. Financial support: By sponsoring or other group(s), school district, fund raising by the members.

3. Organization: Ranges from the informal association of several transcribers through the diversified, incorporated organization providing varied types of transcribing and other allied services.

4. Incorporation
   a. Advantages
      i. Incorporation as a charitable organization makes it possible to apply for tax exempt status and non-profit organization mailing privileges; lays the foundation for later adding paid staff, auxiliaries, etc.
      ii. Many businesses will contribute to or allow discounts to an incorporated charitable organization.
      iii. In many areas, only incorporated groups may legally conduct fund-raising activities.
   b. Forms and applications
      i. “Application for Exemption from Tax” form, and information regarding “Organization of California Nonprofit Nonstock Corporation”: Secretary of State, Sacramento.
      ii. “Sales and Use Tax Regulations”: State Board of Equalization.
      iii. “Exemption Application form 1024”: District Director of Internal Revenue.
C. Be Known – And Know

1. Register: Unaffiliated transcribers and group chairmen should notify the following of their existence, ask to be put on mailing lists for appropriate catalogs, news letters, etc.:

2. Join the transcribers’ organizations
   a. California Transcribers and Educators of the Visually Handicapped
      i. This is your organization. Membership is $3 annually, payable to the Treasurer. (See Directory, back cover/)
      ii. Membership includes a subscription to THE CALIFORNIA TRANSCRIBER which serves as a statewide grapevine, gives news and information of interest to all.
      iii. Specialists in various phases of transcribing are available to help with puzzling problems
   b. National Braille Association
      i. The term “braille” is loosely used to cover all types of transcribing. Dues are $5 annually, payable to the National Braille Association, Inc.
      ii. Members are given preferential rates when ordering some NBA-produced materials and receive the quarterly BULLETIN.
      iii. NBA Service Awards are given in all areas of transcribing.

3. Learn about those you serve
   a. If possible, visit the local school program for visually handicapped children or an organization or agency for the blind.
   b. Read books and publications about the problems of visual impairment (See lists, Appendix B.)

TIPS FOR TRANSCRIBERS

Editing notes in inkprint copy: Erase before returning book. Avoid marking colored areas (oceans, etc.) as these fade when erased.

“New” inkprint editions of old texts: Check with previous edition to determine if a real revision has been made, or only minor alterations in wording or illustrations that do not out-date an available transcription.

Keeping the place while copying: Open and flatten a #2½ (large) can. Place behind page. A narrow strip of paper (black is especially good) is held in place under the line being copied by a small household magnet.
CTEBVI MEMBERSHIP
Judi Biller, CTEBVI Membership Chair

Welcome to 2010! A new year, or perhaps just another day?

As you carry the holiday spirit into the new year, our hope is that you’ll take a moment to reflect and remember what this organization has meant to you over the years – providing educational workshops for transcribers and educators, and supportive/informational workshops for students and parents at our annual conference; awarding scholarships to deserving students, transcribers, and educators.

All this could not be possible without your continued support and participation.

Please take a moment this week to check your yellow flyer that you received in October to see if you are a current member. If next to your name it says 9 or less, you need to renew your membership! (There will be a letter next to that number, indicating what format you chose to receive the JOURNAL.) Please note, there is NO reinstatement fee for lapsed dues.

If you are a Life Member or current with your membership, please consider donating to one of the CTEBVI funds. If you are not current, please consider renewing your membership now, whether or not you are planning on attending the 2010 Conference. Your $50 annual membership is needed for CTEBVI’s ongoing operation.

If you know of people who could benefit from becoming a member, please encourage them to fill out an application today, or perhaps ask them to donate whatever they can to one of our funds. Donations of any size are always welcome.

You can use the membership application in the JOURNAL, or go to our website, www.ctebvi.org, and renew your membership online and pay by credit card, as well as make a donation to one of our Funds. Life membership MUST be paid by check only.

CTEBVI cannot survive, grow, and remain a productive organization unless we have your help.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions you may have about membership.

Thank you for your past, present, and future interest in CTEBVI, and we look forward to serving your needs for many years to come.

Judi Biller, CTEBVI Membership Chair
1523 Krim Place
Oceanside, CA 92054-5528
ctebvi.membership@gmail.com
1. The heading is centered. A blank line is required after a centered heading at the top of the page. If there is text above the centered heading, a blank line is required before the centered heading.

2. Directions in Nemeth Code begin in cell 5. If there are runovers, they are in cell 3.

3. A blank line is required before directions. The directions precede spatial problems, because the problems are spatial, a blank line is needed before the problems.

4. The problems begin at the margin in cell 1.

5. The numeric indicator is not used in spatial multiplication, addition, subtraction and division problems that are aligned for computation.

6. The separation line at the end of problems consists of dots (25). The line extends one cell to the left and right of the longest entry.

7. When spatial arrangements are identified by number or letter, there must be one blank column of cells between the identifier and the symbol the furthest left of the problem. In the braille example, this refers to the space between the period at the end of the problem number and the beginning of the separation line in the problem.

8. No symbol of one spatial arrangement or its identifier may be less than 3 cells distant from any symbol of a neighboring identifier. An example of this is the space between the end of problem 1 and the beginning of problem 2.
Here’s a quick-and-easy way to create a Bell Curve using Adobe Illustrator.

Select the pen tool. Hold down the shift key and click-and-drag the first point to the right. You’ll adjust it later, so don’t worry how much you drag; a little or a lot. With the shift key still held down, click-and-drag the center point. And, again with the shift key held down, click-and-drag the final point. This will assure that the beginning and ending points will be aligned.

With the direct selection tool (hollow arrow pointer), select just the middle point and drag it to the height and lateral position you wish.

Using the direct selection tool and the shift key, drag the individual point handles to achieve the bell curve you want.
MUSIC IN EDUCATION

Special Features in this Issue:
- More on teaching piano music
- Ensemble group teaching
- The state of music education for the blind child

As we continue a journey through the music educator’s world and the braille reader, we’ll take a new path expanding duet work into that of piano ensembles. Groups can easily be assembled for students who may not even study the piano formally. The keyboard remains our learning and reading tool no matter what instrument or voice is preferred, and all students who study music braille can participate. Teachers need not be trained pianists to work with basic ensemble groups.

Read through the two steps provided in our last issue, and apply them to this simple blues duet. If you cannot play the teacher’s Part II, simply recruit another student to learn the left or right hand alone, thereby creating a trio.

TWO FOR THE BLUES
Duet Part I

Richard Taesch

[Music notation image]
TWO FOR THE BLUES
Duet Part II

Richard Taesch
For those who may not have seen the highlighted braille slur sign in Part II before, it is a special slur meaning to simply “let the note ring.”

**ENSEMBLE MUSIC FOR PIANOS**

You will find it quite fun to combine students into trio and quartet groups. Well before solo music is ready to be performed, these combinations can produce very impressive results even when using only one hand for each individual part. It is an ideal first training for exposure to band music, and for the experience of performing in an orchestra on any instrument. Following is an introductory trio composed by Stephanie Pieck taken from her book, “Creative Ensembles for Beginning Musicians.” ([www.dancingdots.com](http://www.dancingdots.com)). The music is simple in nature, but strives to train students in rhythmic independence; thus the title, “Rhythmic.”

*(Used here with permission.)*

**RHYTHMICAL**

Stephanie Pieck
The braille for each of the three parts is shown separately. Following is a print facsimile for the braille version of the trio, "Rhythmical." Simple notation is used in order to allow focus on the special skills of ensemble practice. You may even choose to make a student project of dictating the music for each part. The braille version for the complete collection can be obtained from the Library of Congress free of charge for your blind student. Print is available from Dancing Dots (www.dancingdots.com).

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THE STATE OF MUSIC IN EDUCATION
One Music Teacher’s Perspective

My last conference presentation for CTEBVI (then called CTEVH) was in 2008. The title was: Music Education, Networking, and the Visually Impaired Student. I was delighted at the acceptance and response for that session, and would like to revisit some of the highlights while creating new discussions on music education and blind students in 2010.

Some may feel that I am stepping away from the role as Music Specialist by presenting issues other than those that affect only music braille transcription. Workshop committees in many organizations seem to resist placing music education sessions under the “educators” category, as somehow, music teachers within education just don’t seem to fit. Such then, is my point!

The upsurge in newly certified music transcribers has never before been equaled in the history of The Library of Congress training program. Inspired by this welcome trend, the 2008 workshop description included: If you are planning to teach English, English and literature must be a part of your music education degree;
If you plan to teach music, you must major in music. What then is the credential [training] to teach music braille? **Surprise: There is none!**

Is not literacy the primary catalyst and communication vehicle necessary for each and every college training program? Why then is there no similar standard for braille music teachers who carry an enormous responsibility for music literacy in the education of blind students? Can anyone make a correlation as to why there have been so many myths about the so-called impractical aspects of teaching a blind musician to read music? Why are most blind students un-prepared for college with respect to music literacy requirements, while academic literacy is unquestioned in all other fields?

The questions are limitless, and the answers are few. In following issue, I will devote some space to continue the following discussion tracing highlights of the 2008 session.

**2008 – Reflections (edited)**

"Yes, music transcribers are being certified – more today than any other time in the history of the program! Wonderful and competent new transcribers, carefully examining every little dot as they deliver the joy of music and literacy to … the lucky few who might know how to read it.

"Why then are students still coming to us year after year, with no choice but to beg for inadequate crash courses, with as little as a few weeks to satisfy college music department entrance requirements?

"In this session [2008], I will strive to convince you that we have the ability to bring about critical changes, and yet we have not succeeded. I will put forth my own observations and (perhaps biased) opinions, that we are all affected by the efforts of those who have molded policy, standards, and have decided on what, why, whether, and how, our blind children are [or are not] being taught today.

And for those who were here 18 years ago*, you may remember that we were asking the same questions then, and long before us, others were asking similar ones – questions about, “Just what direction is the education of our children taking, and who is responsible for that direction. And of course, what does braille music have to do with it?”

*1994 session titled: The Literacy Movement – What does Braille Music Have To Do With It?

Many things were discussed and debated at the 2008 session, including a most intriguing quote attributed to John Dewey, known as “The Father of American Education.” One source has quoted his Pedagogic Creed to be:

"The school is primarily a social institution. Education being a social process, the school is simply that form of community life in which all those agencies are concentrated that will be most effective in bringing the child to share in the inherited resources of the race, and to use his own powers for social ends."


Spend some time thinking about John Dewey’s creed; do you feel that the arts and music education are included, and do they share the social priorities described in Mr. Dewey’s creed today? Read the five questions below, and see how many answers you can provide.

**FIVE QUESTIONS FOR THOUGHT:**

1. How many parents and educators are aware that music degrees for blind and sighted graduates have been honored highly in many fields **OTHER** than music performing and / or teaching? (2) If they were in possession of this information, would they have been more willing to encourage a musical child to pursue
his or her dreams? (3) How many are aware that more than one state rehab office has been known to discourage a blind student seeking funds for a music education, stating: “… your direction is unrealistic.” (4) Do you feel that it is acceptable for a counselor to act as an expert in viability – or employment opportunities that could result from a music education*? (5) And, how many are aware that published labor statistics clearly dispel these myths*?

*See: A Blind Music Student’s College Survival Guide
Free download – www.menvi.org (Downloads section)

As we ponder the subject for the next issue, I will leave the reader with the following statistics published in the notable theses and research project: Blindsight; Literacy, Language, and Learning for Blind students Enrolled in Postsecondary Music Schools in the U.S. (2000)
– Valerie Gaer-Sandler M.M. [see Articles link – “College Music Programs …” at www.menvi.org]

Between 1992-96 - [Source: APH statistics]:
- Less than 20% of blind and visually impaired people ever finish college
- 75% of the blind and VI population does not ever have a job
- 90% of the blind population has some degree of usable vision; only 10% are totally blind.

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LITERARY QUESTIONS? WHO YA GONNA CALL …

As a transcriber, do you ever come across a situation that confuses or puzzles you? Do you have specific questions without a clue where to find the answer? A good transcriber need not KNOW all the answers … a good transcriber needs to know where to go to find the answers!

The National Braille Association, a non-profit organization dedicated to providing continuing education to those who prepare braille, has an interactive web-based forum called Ask an Expert where one can post questions and have them answered by national experts. These experts are all volunteers, many whom work through philanthropic, religious or service groups in their own communities or are professionals in related fields. While membership in the National Braille Association has numerous advantages, one need not be a member to post questions to the Ask an Expert Board. All that is required is for an individual to register by creating an account with a user name and password in order to post to the forum.

While the braille code has been in existence since 1821, the code continues to change and evolve. Often transcribers are faced with certain situations that lack clear distinctions in the code on how to handle them. Such situations can be posed in the appropriate forum where collective examples and responses may be gathered and discussed; and in some instances, where there may be more than one way to solve a particular issue. On the Ask an Expert board, one has the capability to upload print and braille examples, download someone else’s examples, email a moderator or member, or just browse the various aspects of the braille code through specific forums such as Literary Braille, Braille Formats, Music Braille, Mathematics, Science, Computer Braille, and Foreign Language to name a few. If you are interested in joining the conversation, or just want to browse and learn, point your browser to http://www.nationalbraille.org/Forum/.

From Ask an Expert – Your Questions Answered © NBA

Letter Indicator

Q. This is a partial phrase that I ran into: “radiated a New Age-y ambience”. My question is should the ‘y’ be preceded by the letter indicator? Otherwise it would read Age-you. There is nothing in the rule that makes it clear.

A. The answer is NO. No letter indicator for a word that is part of a word, even if that word is contrived or made up.

Double capped Paragraphs

Q. Our group is transcribing a group of children’s books (Junie B. Jones). This kindergarten child does a lot of shouting and the author uses full capitals to indicate this shouting. Full caps are not used otherwise. Every use of double caps is accompanied by ‘shouted’, ‘yelled’, ‘hollered’ except for two. The first is immediately after the teacher tells her to be quiet, and the second is where she interrupts her shouting to jump up and down in front of her father. EBAE says to italicize these paragraphs, but we feel these shoutings should be brailled consistently throughout the book. Many of these shoutings are single sentences. Should we italicize them also? EBAE says that single sentences in all caps should be brailled in double caps.

A. I recommend that you treat ALL the double caps as italics and follow the rules for a whole paragraph in italics when you have that, and the rules for a single sentence in italics when you have that. First, my rationale for using italics. It seems to me that the issue here is the emphasis and not necessarily the way in which the emphasis is depicted. It is very fortunate that the text itself indicates the shouted and/or excitement and then, boom, the young reader is led right to the emphasized print.
Double caps in print are very visually effective, especially for young readers.

As we know, braille is not a visual medium. Print emphasis is invariably shown by changing the physical appearance of the print itself, whether by italics, caps, other special typeface and so on. The physical appearance of braille is always, always the same. The only ways we have to show emphasis is by adding indicators of various types. An indicator is something that the finger encounters BEFORE reading the word. So despite everything, an indicator is really a barrier to the word itself. Of course experienced braille readers sail right through these things and it’s not a problem at all.

A braille paragraph in italics shows emphasis as well as double caps, but with far less clutter (indicators preceding words) than double caps. EBAE makes special provision for this as was mentioned. In fact, the “technically correct” name for italics is “emphasis indicator” which reminds us that the 46 indicator can and should be used for different types of print emphasis. For consistency, I decided that the sentences should be also.

**Copyright on Title Page**

**Q.** If the word “copyright” is represented in print by its symbol, should I spell out the word or use the symbol on the title page? Also, if the copyright date or publishing date is in Roman numerals, should I use Roman or Arabic numerals? Since the copyright symbol occurs in almost every book, then more times than not we will have a special symbols page, right?

**A.** The latest update from BANA for the literary braille code has given us a copyright symbol (Rule VIII Section 31.g). Now that we have a braille symbol for the print symbol for copyright we no longer need to spell out the word copyright unless it appears in print as well. The braille copyright symbol must appear on the special symbols page. Even though that Special Symbol appears before the Special Symbols page, the reader knows to look for the Special Symbols page if there is a symbol he/she doesn’t know when reading the title page or any page.

**ISBN**

**Q.** I am brailling a literary book which has two ISBN numbers. One says (trade) after it and one says (library binding). Do both of them go on the title page? And with the words (trade) and (library binding) after them?

**A.** Rule 2.2c(5) offers clarification on the ISBN. When a book shows both a 10-digit and a 13-digit ISBN, both must appear on the title page. There is nothing that tells us to add the words (trade) or (library binding) so these words are omitted. In the case of the book you are transcribing, you want to use the ISBN that applies to that particular book. Is it a trade edition or the library binding?

Be sure to insert the words Transcription of before the ISBN. **Example:**

Transcription of ISBN: x-0000-xxx-0

OR

Transcription of ISBN-10: X-0000-XX00-X
ISBN-13: 000-X-0000-XXXX-0

**Q.** I have a book with the ISBN shown with spaces but without hyphens. How should I go about this? If I leave the spaces, I would have to put new number signs after every break. What do you think?

**A.** The EBAE does not address this issue, but two other points of reference do. Literary Braille Instruction Manual Rule 19.2.b(9) says to follow print for punctuation. Braille Formats Rule 2.2.c.5.c says to follow print for capitalization, punctuation, and spacing of the abbreviation and the following numbers. So this would mean that you would retain the spaces and repeat the number sign.

Come join our **Ask an Expert** Forum and be sure to check out the National Braille Association while you are there! You never know just what little tid-bit of information you may find ….
CTEBVI CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

For years I have wondered: Why is it that no one questions the $25 per hour sign language interpreter for a hearing impaired student, but would delay or deny braille to the visually impaired student? The answer I get is that the deaf community has a louder voice.

CTEBVI has been here for over 50 years, and the visually impaired community is starting to get a voice. CTEBVI has been a major player in advancing the proliferation of quality braille. Our major event is conference, where we network and cement the relationship between transcriber and educator. This gives us a united voice.

Over the years I have proudly watched conference evolve and witnessed the fruits of the process. Last year I was saddened by the effect of the economy on the conference. I am not only referring to the pillars of our community who were told not to attend — but also to the drastically reduced number of participants. School districts could not justify the cost to send their people. Lower participation adds up to lower operating funds.

My last few articles have asked (pleaded…begged) for your money. I have tried to raise awareness that CTEBVI needs operation capital. However, all the money you and I can give will not keep CTEBVI alive if we don’t have any members. I have asked each of you to keep your membership current — not just on alternate years. Did you make it to conference last year? Can you make it to LA this year? Now that may be hard, but if you plan ahead you can do it. We need to have you there. I have been in numerous planning sessions and this conference is looking like a humdinger.

Now comes the really hard part. This will determine if we can maintain our momentum in the education of the visually impaired. It’s up to you. YOU must attend this year, and make every effort to bring a new person to conference. I will even settle for an old member who hasn’t attended lately. Now is the time to overcome the adversity of the economy and keep our voice strong.

New subject. You are reading this in the new year of 2010. As your Business Editor I can’t tell you how to be rich. But I can tell you how to be needed. The last “great depression” made several people wealthy. Look at this recession as an opportunity. The administrators need you because of ADA. You know the kids need you. Stay optimistic. All the cards are in your favor. This recession may be a turning point that catapults your career to new heights. Hang in there. If it came down to being rich or being needed, I would always pick needed……and YOU are.
TACTILE GRAPHICS:
Lines and Point Symbols for Collage

I thought I’d share some materials and supplies which can be used on collage diagrams and are safe for thermoforming.

Adhesives and Glues

Xyron adhesive can be adhered to most “porous” surfaces like paper and cardboard. This double sided adhesive film effectively turns your material into a sticker. Materials can be cut before or after the adhesive is applied. Xyron is available in several flavors, buy “Permanent.”

Aileene’s Tacky Glue, both “Original” and “Super” can be used to attach lines and point symbols.

Tombo Mono Aqua comes with a pen tip and a broad tip. Use this glue sparingly because it can warp your paper if used too heavily.

Please don’t use Elmers Glue. It doesn’t hold up well to thermoforming, and it tends to warp the paper because of its moisture content.

Metal tips, which can be screwed to the tip of the glue bottle, allow you to draw a very fine line with the glue. These can be found at Michaels craft store or online.

Plastic syringes, available at hardware stores, can also be filled with glue and will lay down a thin line.

When working with glues, if your glue spreads out beyond where the line or point symbol will be, make sure you clean up the excess glue before it dries. A dental pick, available used from your dentist, is the perfect tool for scraping up the excess.

Materials With Adhesive

Stair tread, an adhesive backed rubber coated sandpaper, has a very strong adhesive. It is tough to cut, but is thicker than regular sandpaper, resulting in a raised, textured point symbol.

Drywall tape is often used to represent water.

Materials Without Adhesive

Xyron adhesive can be added to any of the following materials.

Cereal or food boxes create thick, easy to feel lines and point symbols, but sometimes delaminate during thermoforming, resulting in a fairly low, hard to find points and lines. So, please don’t use food boxes for 1/8” point symbols on graphs.

Manilla file folders are a bit thinner than cereal boxes but don’t have the problem with delamination. File folders can be cut into 1/16” wide strips which can be gently curved for lines on graphs.

Watercolor paper has the advantage of being slightly thicker than file folders, and less likely to delaminate than cereal boxes. Depending on the brand, you may need two layers. The layers can be joined with Xyron adhesive, spray adhesive, or regular glue.
Expired credit cards can be cut up with hole punches and used as point symbols. Use Xyron adhesive or a glue which bonds to non-porous materials.

The following materials may be more appropriate for areas than for point symbols: coffee cup wrappers, corrugated light bulb boxes, and textured wallpaper.

Point Symbols

A variety of interesting point symbols can be found at arts and crafts stores, including jewelry split rings, brads, eyelets, and many others. Avoid plastic and foam objects which may melt and deform.

Scissors or paper cutters can be used to cut square and rectangle point symbols. It is harder to cut triangles, so consider running your material through your printer to print triangle shapes, then it will be easy to cut on the lines and make nice uniform triangles.

Inexpensive kitchen scissors are available at dollar stores and Harbor Freight. They don’t last long, especially if you are cutting sandpaper, but at $1 each, you can afford to buy several.

Hole punches work great for creating point symbols. I use 1/8” circle, 1/4” circle, 1/4” equilateral triangle, 1/4” square, and 1/4” by 1/8” rectangle punches. Circle hole punches can be found at office supply stores.

Hole Punch Suppliers
www.dickblick.com/products/fiskars-hand-punches
www.joann.com
www.mcgillinc.com
www.holepunchworld.com

Lines

Pearl cotton, buttonhole or topstitching thread, braided candle wick, and florist wire can all be glued down.

If you need straight lines and want to use a floppy string or thread, consider pretreating the thread. Pull the string through some glue then hang the thread. After a few hours, your straight strings are ready to go.

Graphic tape, available in office supply and drafting stores, can be used when stacked 2 or 3 layers thick.

Spur wheels can also be used on collaged diagrams. A fine spur wheel works great for leader lines. A coarse spur wheel can also be used if the two resulting lines are tactually distinct. Spur wheels can be purchased from fabric stores, leather stores, arts and crafts stores, Howe Press, and APH.
DISPLAYED MATERIAL

Braille Formats: Principles of Print to Braille Transcription Rule 14, Section 1

1. Displayed material. Examples that are displayed, i.e., set off from the body of the text by blank lines, a change of margins, reduced type, or special typeface, must be transcribed as follows.

   a. A single example or a series of examples must be preceded and followed by a blank line. If a heading is shown in print, follow the provisions given in Rule 4.

   b. No blank lines must be left between individual items in a series of such examples unless required by other braille formats.

   c. Special typefaces must be ignored except when required for emphasis or distinction.

   d. Follow the print copy for material that is printed in paragraph form. Indented paragraphs must begin in cell 3 with runovers in cell 1, blocked paragraphs must begin in cell 1 with runovers also in cell 1.

   e. A single word or a sentence must begin in cell 1. The runover(s) of a sentence must begin in cell 3.

   f. When a series of single words or phrases is shown widely spaced apart on the same print line, these words or phrases must be brailled with three blank cells separating them.

      (1) The first word must begin in cell 1, and all runovers of such a series must begin in cell 3.

      (2) Whenever possible a phrase should not be divided between braille lines in order to make the spacing between phrases apparent to the reader, it may be necessary to begin each succeeding phrase on a new braille line in cell 3.

   g. Listed items must each begin in cell 1 with runovers in cell 3.

   h. Columned materials must be transcribed according to Rule 7, Section 1.

   i. The indentation of dialogue and poetry must be in accordance with Rules 9 and 10.

Examples

Redundant Phrases

completely finish exactly the same honest truth my own personal opinion
Linking Verbs or Action Verbs

appear  become  feel  grow  look  remain  seem

All of these sentences are in the imperative mood:

Please give me the phone.

Give it to me right now!

Give it to me—or else!

Acceptable uses of a fragment include the following:

• When you’re quoting someone
• In a bulleted or numbered list
• To make a quick point—but only when the construction isn’t confusing to the reader
### COMMON PREPOSITIONS

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Use quotation marks to show words are being stated exactly as they were spoken:

When the telephone rang, Nick picked up the receiver and said, “Hello.”
Nora screamed into her end of the phone, “Who is this?”

Nick: “Nick.”
Nora: “Nick who?”
Nick: “Well, who is this?”
Nora: “You know darned well who this is.”
Nick: “Huh?”
Nora: “That’s right. I’m hopping mad, and you know why.”
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