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WHAT'S HAPPENING OUT THERE!

A Newsletter for Parents and Service Providers
 of Colorado Children Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired

August—September 2007

Getting Off to a Good Start!

By Tanni Anthony

As an early interventionist, I believe in good early starts. When we work together at the beginning of the life of a child, we can see the difference over the course of time. Colorado has a lot to celebrate with our early intervention services. We have two infant-toddler programs, one at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind and one at Anchor Center for Blind Children. Between the two programs, services are provided to families of little ones who are blind/visually impaired across the state.

This fall, it is a thrill to announce the advent of a new building for the Anchor Center. Hats off to Director Alice Applebaum, her staff, and their Board of Directors for all their impressive work to create a showcase site for our youngest of learners. Please check out JC Greeley's article on page 20 and I hope to see many of you at their ribbon cutting ceremony on September 28th.

I also believe in good starts for a school year. This newsletter has been a summer-long project to provide parents and service providers with an abundance of information to get started for our 2007-08 school year. Thanks to a number of great people, we have a compilation of key projects, contract people, important dates, and state/national resources. Please hang on to this version as a resource for the school year.

On behalf of the Colorado Department of Education, I wish you all a good start to this new school year!

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Bits From Bonnie

By Bonnie Snyder

BonnieLS21@Gmail.Com



Have you heard of Linux? For those of you who haven't, Linux is a computer operating system (just as Windows is for the PC and OSX is for the Mac). Linux has been around since about the '70s, but has not been too terribly popular because it was very complicated to use. However, it is now much more user friendly, depending on which flavor of Linux is chosen. Oh yes, and Linux and its many applications are free.

I am presently playing around with Ubuntu Linux. It downloads to one CD, and when you install it, providing you are connected to the Internet, it will automatically search the Net for updates and just as automatically install them.

Linux has Xwindow which allows you to use graphical icons, just as you use in Windows and Mac. Additionally, downloading and installing applications to use with Linux used to be very complicated, but Ubuntu Linux resolves that problem and makes it as easy as doing the same in Microsoft Windows or Mac.

Linux has two really good screen access programs for the visually impaired: Orca and Gnopernicus. Both support screen reading, screen magnification and braille displays.

Another nice thing about Linux is that you can use older PCs, such as Pentiums 3s and 4s with it, thus making the whole process of obtaining a computer that is affordable, considerably easier for those who cannot afford the state of the art.

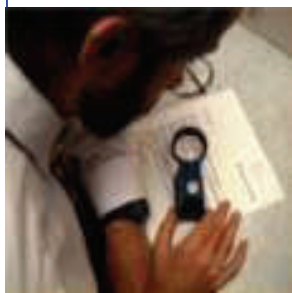
During this school year, I am going to be hauling around a laptop with Ubuntu installed on it, along with a variety of applications, including the accessible ones. I am hoping that we can find some time during my visits to take a look at Linux and see what it can do.

Keep in mind that many small businesses have been using Linux for many years. Since we are all invested in getting our students into the world of work, familiarity with the Linux system is not a bad idea for them before they leave the K-12 environment. Additionally, as mentioned above, having a computer with the Linux operating system offers our students an avenue through which they can have computer systems of their own without spending a large amount of money.



Editor's Note: Bonnie will continue to provide statewide technical assistance specific to technology for students who are blind/visually impaired. Please be in touch with Bonnie to set up regional and/or individual technology consultations. If you set up an individual session, please let your TVI Regional Meeting Coordinator know so that a record can be kept of the Bonnie's time in each region. The TVI Regional Meeting Coordinators are highly encouraged to be in touch with Bonnie to set up a training on a specific technology at the regional meetings to be use Bonnie's contracted time with the Colorado Department of Education. Further technology-specific questions can be sent to Bonnie at her above listed email.

Colorado Department of Education Low Vision Evaluation Clinics



For the past nine years, the Colorado Department of Education has provided low vision evaluation clinics for school-age students with visual impairments throughout the four broad TVI regions of Colorado at no cost to families or school districts. Once a student is selected as a candidate for a low vision evaluation by his or her teacher of students with visual impairments (TVI), that teacher gathers current eye health exam information and works in conjunction with the parents of their student to complete the necessary paperwork in preparation for their student's 90-minute low vision evaluation. The TVI sends this paperwork, available on the CDE low vision website, on to their regional clinic coordinator who compiles the paperwork for all of the clinic appointments and

turns it into Donice Fennimore, the clinic coordinator, two weeks prior to their scheduled clinic. This paperwork is then reviewed by the evaluation team prior to the clinics. Our clinic team is comprised of Donice Fennimore, clinic coordinator; Dr. Thomas Theune of Low Vision Services of Southern Colorado, P.C.; and Jim Olson, a certified low vision therapist in the Outreach department at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (CSDB).

Low vision devices must be prescribed by a low vision specialist, an eye doctor specializing in low vision. Students, their families, and school districts are given the opportunity to purchase the prescribed low vision devices at wholesale prices once they are prescribed by Dr. Theune. Most devices are available on site the day of the clinic. After the clinic evaluation, a final written report is sent to the TVI, the student's family, eye doctor, and any other persons identified by the student's family. It is the responsibility of the TVI to review the final reports with their student and families after the clinic. Follow-up assistance regarding low vision devices, training in low vision device usage, as well as IEP goals and objectives around low vision is available to TVIs upon request from the Outreach department of CSDB.

Clinic forms have been emailed out to all site coordinators. They are also available on the CDE Blindness / Low Vision webpage; <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-BLV.asp>

The CDE Low Vision Evaluation Clinic schedule for the 2007-08 academic year:

Region:	Dates:	Location:	Regional Site Coordinators:
Western Slope	September 28-29, 2007	Grand Junction	Sarah Sonnier
Southern	October 25-27, 2007	Colorado Springs	Melissa Shular
Metro Denver	January 24-26, 2008	Stapleton (Anchor Preschool)	Nancy Knight
Northern	February 22-23, 2008	Fort Collins	Carol Love & Sally Eldridge

Please contact your regional site coordinator(s) or a member of the clinic team with any questions you may have specific to your upcoming clinics.

Donice Fennimore

Clinic Coordinator

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Thomas W. Theune, O.D.

Low Vision Specialist

Low Vision Services of
Southern Colorado, P.C.

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Jim Olson

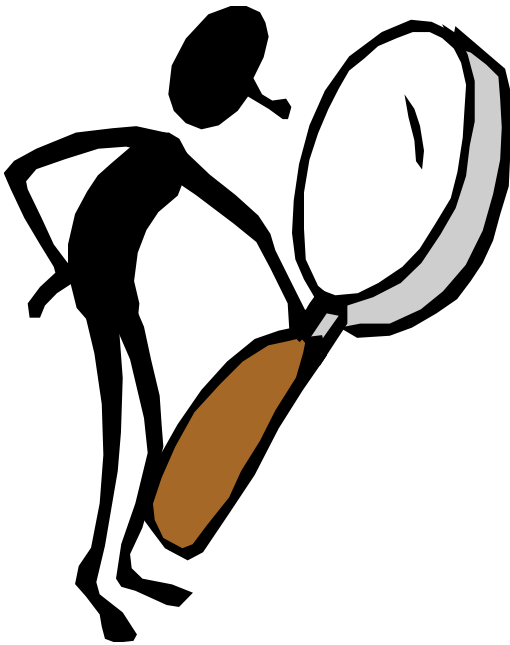
Certified Low Vision Therapist

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A CLOSER LOOK: LOW VISION NEWS

By Jim Olson, CSDB Outreach Department

Welcome to the new *What's Happening Out There* monthly Low Vision column. A recent internet search engine provided more than 90,600,000 links on the topic of low vision. I thought it might be helpful to narrow those options down to a more manageable number. Below are seven of the websites that I refer to most frequently to answer my questions and further my understanding of the topic of low vision. Refer to them often as you begin to formulate IEP goals and objectives around low vision as another academic year begins for students who have been prescribed low vision devices by an eye doctor specializing in low vision.

American Foundation for the Blind (AFB): The AFB website contains information for friends and family, seniors, kids, professionals, and employers. AFB's website includes a Virtual Worksite for low vision users, tips for computer users with low vision, educational interventions for students with low vision, and a link to the AFB Center on Low Vision in Dallas, Texas. The inaugural edition of their *Connections* newsletter, written by their Professional Development and CareerConnect (PD/CC) team, is now available on their website. Their website also contains links to their online Braille transcriber tutorial "Managing Source Files", an online course "Bridging the Gap", the *DOTS* newsletter, Braille Bug, and much more.

✓ American Foundation for the Blind <http://www.afb.org>

Colorado Department of Education (CDE): In addition to archival issues of this newsletter, the CDE blindness/low vision web page includes a link to all of the necessary paperwork for the CDE low vision evaluation clinic, as well as a link to a nine-page document of low vision related goals and objectives for TVIs to use during IEP development for their students with low vision. The goals and objectives have been a big hit in our region. Tanni Anthony has had two requests over the summer by other states to use this particular document, which was developed by a CDE sponsored work group.

✓ CDE Blindness/Low Vision <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-BLV.asp>

The Foundation Fighting Blindness: (FFB) Since its inception in 1971, the Foundation Fighting Blindness has raised over \$270 million dollars to promote its mission "to drive the research that will provide preventions, treatments and cures for people affected by retinitis pigmentosa (RP), macular degeneration, Usher syndrome, and the entire spectrum of retinal degenerative diseases." According to FFB website, over nine million Americans are experiencing vision loss from these diseases.

✓ The Foundation Fighting Blindness <http://blindness.org>



The International Society for Low Vision Research and Rehabilitation (ISLRR): The objectives of the ISLRR are “to stimulate scientific research in the field of low vision and in the field of rehabilitation of people with low vision; and to promote the exchange of information in these fields.”

✓ International Society for Low Vision Research and Rehabilitation: www.islrr.org

Lighthouse International was founded in 1905 and remains one of the leading non-profit organizations worldwide “dedicated to preserving vision and to helping people of all ages overcome the challenges of vision loss.” According to their website, there are “161 million people worldwide who are visually impaired – 37 million are blind and 124 million have low vision.” Interested individuals can sign up for their e-newsletter through the link on the website.

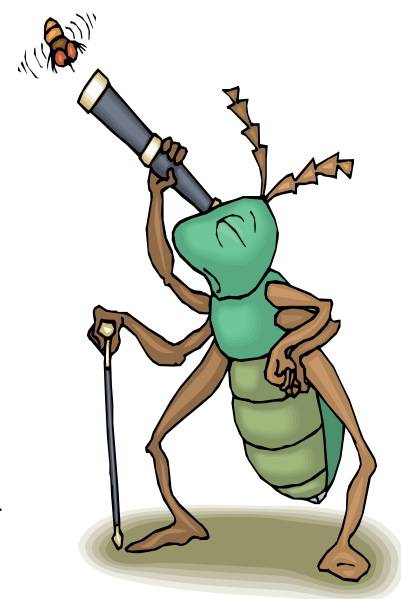
✓ Lighthouse International www.lighthouse.org/low_vision

The **Low Vision Gateway to the Internet** describes itself as the “starting point to the world’s resources for vision loss, vision impairment, blindness, low vision aids and low vision rehabilitation services.” This website contains a low vision rehabilitation specialist directory, a listing of organizations for the blind and visually impaired, computer and internet access,.

✓ Low Vision Gateway <http://lowvision.org>

The **National Eye Institute (NEI)** is one of nineteen of the US National Institutes of Health (NIH). The NEI website lists disorders of the eye alphabetically with a definition accompanying each entry, some have accompanying videos. NEI’s website also offers illustrations of basic eye anatomy, eye disease simulations, and a lengthy publications and materials list. It contains a Spanish language link.

✓ National Eye Institute <http://www.nei.nih.gov>





If I can be of any assistance to you at the start of this 2007-08 academic year, please feel free to contact me:

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TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

 **Going Places: Transition Guidelines for Community Based Physical Activities for Students Who have Visual Impairments, Blindness, or Deafblindness** by Dr. Lauren Lieberman, Dr. Scott Modell, Dr. Paul Ponchillia, and Leah Jackson. Copyright 2006, American Printing House for the Blind, Inc. Louisville, KY. Catalog Number: 7-13090-00. Going Places is a resource guide for teens and young adults that promotes independent physical activity. It outlines a step-by-step process for choosing and participating in sports and other physical activities outside of the school arena. It includes worksheets for choosing an activity, descriptions of activities, any modifications or accommodations that may be necessary, suggestions for developing needed skills, information on safety and self-advocacy, and athlete profiles encouraging a healthy lifestyle.” For more information, go to www.aph.org

 **Fact Sheets on Employment and Youth and Disabilities** The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) recently issued three new fact sheets on employment and youths with disabilities. The first, *Advising Youth with Disabilities on Disclosure: Tips for Service Providers*, is intended for professionals who provide occupational skills training and job readiness training. It offers information on how to help young people decide if they should share information about their disabilities with prospective employers or institutions of higher learning. Disclosure is, by law, a personal decision that individuals with disabilities must make for themselves. The second, *The Why, When, What, and How of Disclosure in an Academic Setting, After High School*, explores the complex decision of what to do after high school for youth with disabilities, who are, according to DOL, less likely to start postsecondary education than are their peers without disabilities. The third, *Youth, Disclosure, and the Workplace: Why, When, What, and How*, covers the topic of disclosure of disability for job seekers who are disabled, including those with visual impairments. Print copies of the fact sheets are available for free download from the web site of DOL’s Office of Disability Employment Policy: www.dol.gov/odep/current/current.htm. For more information, contact: Office of Disability Employment Policy, U.S. Department of Labor, Frances Perkins Building, 200 Constitution Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20210; phone: 866-633-7365.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

Parents: If you are moving out of state or your child is graduating, please be in touch so we can remove your name from our newsletter mailing list. Also, please be in touch with your address changes if you move to a new Colorado location.

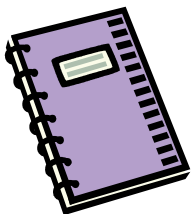
TVIs and O&MSs: If you have any changes in program contact information over the school year, please help us out and send Tanni these changes.

Thanks to everyone for helping to keep our mailing list up to date!!!

**Just send your changes to [anthony t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:anthony_t@cde.state.co.us) or to
Tanni Anthony, CDE, 201 East Colfax, Denver, CO 80203.**

People in New Jobs!

Welcome to New Folks and Welcome Back to Others!



Dr. Laura Douglas is the new CSDB Outreach Coordinator. “I began as the new Director of Outreach Services at CSDB July 1, 2007. I was formerly employed at CSDB as the school psychologist for 9 1/2 years and had worked with students with vision losses and deafblindness for 9 years before moving to Colorado from Louisiana. I worked for 3 1/2 years at CDE as the state consultant for school psychology and most recently in Cherry Creek Schools and Lewis Palmer School District as a Director of Special Education. I am returning to CSDB with the goal of collaborating with CDE's Tanni and others to expand services and supports to student with vision needs, their parents and staff in public school districts. My Louisiana jambalaya was an enticement for Tanni joining her at the University of Denver to pursue a doctoral degree.” (*Editor's Note: Not to discredit Laura's good cooking, but it was her great leadership and teamwork that inspired me to be a co-doctoral student with her!*)

Carol Jordan is a new TVI to Douglas County School District and will be working with Shelley Moats, Edie Smith, and Ruth Chizum. “My name is Carol Jordan and my husband, Jerry, and I moved to Castle Rock recently from College Station, Texas (Aggieland). I am very proud to be a part of the Douglas County School District as a part-time TVI. I earned a BA degree from the University of Michigan in Elementary Education and D/HH and a MA degree in Reading/LD from Oakland University in Michigan. I obtained my VI certification in Texas from Stephen F. Austin University and did my O&M instruction through Texas Tech University. I taught students with visual impairments for 15 years in Texas. Other certifications obtained while in Texas include ED and Educational Diagnostician. My hobby is training and riding our two Peruvian Paso horses.”

Debbie Mendoza will join the Adams 12 team of Ann Marie Jansen and Michael Plansker: “I have been an Occupational Therapist for the last 9 years. After attending a VIISA course given by Tanni Anthony and JC Greeley, I decided I really liked the similarities between OT and TVI. I have completed my course work and will be finishing up my two practica this school year to become dually certified in TVI and O&M. I am really excited about combining the two fields with my OT experience!”

Judy Weipert is new to Cherry Creek School District team of Anita Wherry, Barb Galgano, Mimi Schape, and Lorraine Hutcheson: “I earned my Elementary Ed degree from University of Denver and then went on to University of Arizona where I met Sheryl Herlevich and we got our masters in Teaching Visually Impaired. I was the Teacher of the Visually Impaired for Aurora Public Schools from 1972-1978. I have 3 sons. Two are married and one lives in Oregon and the other in Florida and the youngest is still in Colorado. I have a granddaughter and a grandson in Oregon. I have been a Title 1 reading teacher for Aurora Public Schools for the last 6 years and now she is excited to get back into vision with Cherry Creek Schools. I have an Arab gelding and love to ride.”

Lorraine Hutcheson is working part time in both Aurora School District with Janet Anderson, Trina Boyd Pratt, Wendy Schlageter, and Amber Rundle AND the above listed Cherry Creek team. Lorraine worked for a year in Brighton before returning to her New Zealand home, but now is back for her second year in Colorado.



People in New Jobs: Part Two!



Bill Muir has also joined the Aurora team. "I have been a TVI and COMS since I graduated from UNC in 1982. I have worked in residential schools in Idaho and New Mexico, public schools in Colorado and with adults with the Curtis Strong Center for the Visually Impaired. I have done video tape projects for several grants and APH. For a while I was at UNC helping with the personnel preparation program. I have been involved with AER in a number of capacities in several states. I am thrilled to be included on the Aurora Public School team and look forward to getting involved with the metro teachers group."

Danielle McGrath will be working in Brighton School District with Wendy Stoltman: "I am so excited to begin the year in Brighton working with Wendy! I am originally from Minnesota where I obtained my undergraduate degree from Minnesota State University of Moorhead in Special Education in the areas of Developmental Disabilities, Mild/Moderate Disabilities, and Early Childhood Special Education. I then came to Brighton where I have worked for the last 5 years as a Teacher for Students with Significant Support Needs. I worked closely with Wendy with several students and that is how I came to pursue my Master's for TVI and COMS. I plan to complete my student teaching by December."



Elizabeth Umphress is new on board with the Colorado School for the Blind staff after completing an internship at CSDB through Portland State University: "I am from a small town in Oregon called Estacada, the Christmas tree capitol of the world. I moved to Colorado a month ago to be the new elementary teacher at the School for the blind."

Loretta Finegan-Nelson joins the CSDB Transition Team, supervised by Louis Tutt: "My name is Loretta Finegan-Nelson. I recently moved to Colorado from Hawaii where I was the transition teacher for the Hawaii Center for the Deaf and the Blind. I have my M.Ed in Deaf Education. I am excited about this new year and what it will bring."

MeLinda Carter will join the Jefferson County team of Samantha Hoffman, Sheryl Herlevich, Gwen Carroll, Sue Newhart, Julie Wetzstein, and Karen Jamison. Melinda has worked with the Cherry Creek team the past two years and is a recent UNC grad!

Holly Guinan is coming our way from Vermont. She will be working with Diane Fitzkee and Jen Scott in Pikes Peak BOCES. Holly is a veteran TVI with 18 years of experience. She speaks Arabic and Urdu, in addition to English and has some pretty impressive over sea's living experiences!

Kaitlin Lombardi is new on board with the DPS team of Cheryl Leidich, Marci Reid, Suzan Barlow, and Deb Carlisle. Welcome Kaitlin to our field as a TV-in-training!

Tim Richards is starting work for the Colorado Springs office of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation as an O&M Specialist/Vision Rehabilitation Therapist in September. Tim previously worked at CSDB as the Lead Transition Teacher for the Deaf and Blind Transition Program. Prior to this, he served as the Student Transition and Enrichment Program (STEP) Coordinator at the Foundation for the Junior Blind in Los Angeles. Tim contracted as an O&M Specialist at the Center for the Partially Sighted in Los Angeles for six years. He also served for five years as an O&M Specialist at Braille Institute after receiving his O&M certification from California State University, Los Angeles. Tim and his wife had a new baby boy in April and are excited about being new parents.



CSDB: School for the Blind Update

By Louis Tutt

Louis Tutt, Principal/Transition Coordinator, is starting his 5th year at CSDB. The School for the Blind and the Transition Program welcome two new teachers this year; Elizabeth Umphress will teach our elementary students and Loretta Finegan-Nelson will work with our Transition Students. Ms. Karla McKechnie has accepted a position as the Daily Living Skills teacher on campus, working with students from kindergarten through Transition. We are still interviewing for two Para-Educator positions in the School for the Blind. Anastasia Campbell, who taught English and Social Studies the past two years, has resigned and that position will be filled by a long-term substitute teacher. Four long-time staff members will be retiring at the end of the 2007/2008 school year; we will miss Ann Hicks, Linda Witte, Randy Witte and Cathy Kearney. Dr. Laura Douglas has been hired as the new Outreach Director at CSDB and she will supervise Ann Hicks and the CIMC staff, as well as Jim Olson, Certified Low Vision Therapist and Donna Keale, Outreach Coordinator.

We have 6 prospective new students in the School for the Blind, both from in-state and out-of-state. Our projected enrollment for the school is 50 students with another 50 projected to be in the Transition Program. The Transition Program includes both blind and deaf students. We had three students attending the Extended School Year program this summer, while our Summer Enrichment Program drew 40 participants from public schools in Colorado.

Congratulations go to Jim Olson, as he was selected as one of five APH scholars this school year. He will receive an all-expense paid trip to the APH convention in early October 2007.

This year at CSDB, Superintendent Hilty and the administrative staff will focus on leadership as we lead our students toward excellence in their pursuit of education.

ANNOUNCEMENTS from DESIGN to LEARN PROJECTS


Tangible Symbols: Tips from the Field


There is now a new page on the tangible symbols section of this web site, "Tips from the Field", that displays the tips that you provided. The link is: <http://designtolearn.com/pages/train.html>


Self-Paced Online Courses

Design to Learn now has two noncredit online courses that can be taken on your own schedule. The first one is on **Tangible Symbol Systems**. The second, entitled **Pre-symbolic Communication**, is new. Each course costs \$165, which includes an accompanying book. You may access information about these courses at: <http://designtolearn.com/pages/tsonline.html>


Resources and Materials

 **New Telescoping Cane:** California Canes has developed a new telescoping cane. The cane comes in sizes from 42" to 62" and is made from the same carbon fiber material as their standard canes. The powder coating reflects light and glows in the dark for added visibility at night and in inclement weather. The cane has been adapted to fit all tips. For more information or to place an order, call 1-866-332-4883.


 **Blindsight** is a documentary following six blind Tibetan teenagers who set out to climb the 23,000 foot Lhakpa Ri peak in the Himalayan mountain chain, led by Erik Weihenmayer. The film won the best documentary at the AFI film Festival in 2006 and the Palm Springs Film Festival in 2007. For more information, contact the Little Film Company; Studio City, CA; (818) 762-6999.

 **Independent Movement and Travel In Blind Children: A Promotion Model** by Joseph Cutter is a book about contributing to the understanding of Development of Orientation and Movement, independent movement and travel in blind children. Some of the goals are 1) to increase knowledge of a developmental perspective for the young blind child 2) to increase confidence both in thinking about the blind child's O & M needs and in interactions with the blind child, 3) to promote in blind children a positive thinking about their own movement and travel 4) to facilitate the setting of age -and stage- appropriate movement and travel expectations for blind children. For more info, contact www.infoagepub.com




 **Cortical Visual Impairment: An Approach to Assessment and Intervention** by Dr. Christine Roman is now available through the AFB Press. A copy has been ordered for CDE's

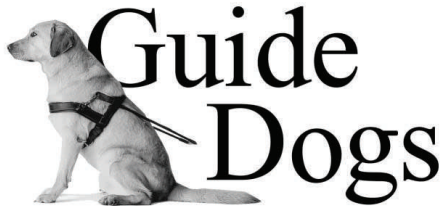
Deafblind Project lending library. To order a copy, contact www.afb.org/store.

 **Catalog on Accessible Assessment Tools:** In response to the pressing need for accessible assessment tools and materials for students who are blind/visually impaired, the American Printing House for the Blind (APH) recently released its Assessment Catalog



2007-2008. The catalog features standardized accessible tests, tools, and "manipulatives" that can be used for conducting assessments, as well as information about the way in which APH produces its accessible assessment materials. Products featured in the catalog include ISAVE, a visual acuity assessment test, and the Sense of Science Series, which introduces young students to the natural world of science. The free catalog is available in print, CD-ROM, and online. For more information, contact: American Printing House for the Blind, 1838 Frankfort Avenue, Louisville, KY 40206; phone: 800-223-1839 or 502-895-2405; e-mail: catalogs@sph.org; web site: http://sun1.aph.org/catalogs/catalog_form.html.

 **Textbook on Psychology and Blindness:** *A Psychologist Looks at Blindness*, by Allan Dodds, is an updated and expanded version of the 1993 book of the same title. It covers literacy, sociological, and psychological perspectives on adventitious blindness. Intended to be used as a textbook for graduate training courses in rehabilitation of individuals who are blind or visually impaired, the revised edition includes additional material on the British model of structured discovery learning and psychological adjustment to vision loss. In addition, the book includes an appendix on electronic mobility devices. The 306-page paperback book is available for a cost of \$15.99. For more information contact: BookSurge Publishing; web site: www.booksurge.com or www.amazon.com



Guide Dogs NSW/ACT



The Renwick Centre
For Professional Education and Research



**Guide Dogs NSW/ACT & the Renwick Centre,
Royal Institute for Deaf & Blind Children, University of Newcastle**

Announces its new journal:

International Journal of Orientation & Mobility

The *International Journal of Orientation & Mobility (IJOM)* will present qualitative and quantitative research articles and analyses, essays, conceptual papers, comprehensive reviews, case studies, policy analyses, and innovative practice reports and evaluations on:

A wide variety of issues and topics related to the Orientation & Mobility (including Guide Dog Mobility) of people who are blind or vision impaired.

The journal will become a way of informing researchers, administrators, state and federal government, parents, family members, service providers and others about research, issues, policies, and their implications for practice.

Articles submitted to *IJOM* will be subject to peer review by members of the journal's Editorial Panel as well as anonymous reviewers selected by the Coordinating Editors.

Journal Editors are Dr Desirée Gallimore, Guide Dogs NSW/ACT and Dr Mike Steer, Renwick Centre, Royal Institute for Deaf and Blind Children, University of Newcastle.

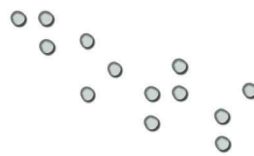
Subscription information and detailed information on manuscript submission is available from:

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Envelopes containing manuscripts should be marked "Private and Confidential – *IJOM*"



DOTS OF INTEREST BRAILLE UPDATE



Nemeth Code Tutorial for Notetakers

Dr. Gaylen Kapperman and Jodi Sticken of Northern Illinois University have developed a Nemeth code tutorial for the BrailleNote mPower family of notetakers. The tutorial consists of 18 chapters, with lessons covering everything from the basics of writing numbers up to statistics. Each lesson is broken down into four parts: an explanation to the lesson, and reading, writing and proofreading exercises. It is available as an option for the BrailleNote Power BT and QT only, running the latest version of KeySoft. For more information, contact Richard Krafzig at Integration Technologies group at (703) 698-8282 x262, or e-mail him, richard.krafzig@itgonline.com.

Braille Writer Service and Repair

I am a new braille writer repair person in southeastern Colorado. I have experience in repair including Jumbo and electric brailers, and can assure a prompt turn-around. I can be contacted by mail, phone, or email to:

Paula Quintana
217 E. Strong Avenue
Trinidad, CO 81082Cell:

Phone: 719-846-9688
Cell: 719-859-4648
Email: pleal85@msn.com

Or the brailer can be sent to above address with a note stating the problem or service request.

National Braille Association Features "Ask An Expert" on Its Website

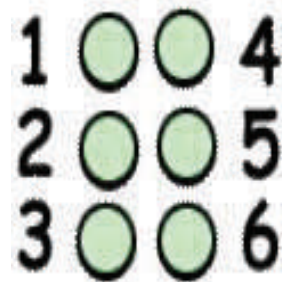
The National Braille Association (NBA) has announced a new website feature called "Ask An Expert." The new feature offers an opportunity for individuals to post questions to skilled experts in the field of braille transcription. Lists are moderated by NBA members skilled in particular areas of expertise, including Braille Formats Course, Computer-Assisted Transcription, Educational Materials (Textbook Format), Foreign Language, Literary Braille, Mathematics and Science, Music Braille, Online Learning, Tactile Graphics, and Transcriber and Educator Services. Visit www.nationalbraille.org to ask your questions and network with others in the field who may have similar questions and be able to provide helpful answers.

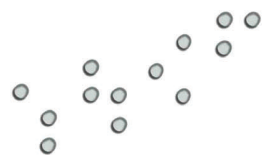
APH Braille Book Corner

The American Printing House for the Blind offers a number of recreational books in braille (Quota funds can be used). Each of these titles was originally transcribed and produced by APH for the National Library Service which has graciously granted permission for this offering. As usual, these titles have been added to the APH Louis Database where you can find thousands of titles produced in accessible formats. For more information, contact www.aph.org

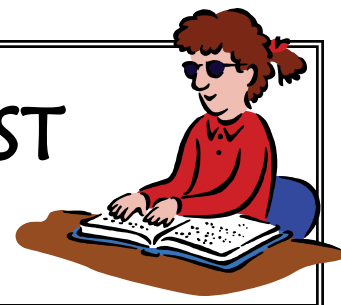
Seedlings Goes Electronic

Seedlings Braille Books for children has begun offering some of its most popular two-volume books in electronic Braille for \$10, a considerable discount from the hard copy process. The BRF formatted files are sent via e-mail. To browse the selection, visit www.seedlings.org.





DOTS OF INTEREST Continued



Freedom Scientific Offers FSBraille Coach

A free web download from Freedom Scientific allows teachers to use everyday word processing software to create custom interactive braille study lessons. The tutorial is called FSBraille Coach and comprises 51 lessons that include basic tests for beginners and more rigorous exercises for more advanced braille readers. The free software download was created for use with Freedom Scientific's PAC Mate accessible Pocket PC using PAC Mate version 4.1 or later. Students use their PAC Mate braille display to learn through a series of lessons and reading exercises and can get immediate spoken help with any braille symbol they encounter by pressing a button above the symbol. The PAC Mate will first say the symbol, then speak the word and spell it out. Lessons are designed as a teaching support for uncontracted and contracted braille. Visit www.FreedomScientific.com or phone (800) 444-4443 for more information

Register Now to be A Regional Site for the 2008 Braille Challenge™ Contest

Come and be part of the fun—bring the excitement of the Braille Challenge™ to your state! A Braille Challenge™ Regional Event gets your entire community involved. Those who have done it say it was well worth the time and effort to encourage kids to take pride in their braille skills.

Now is the time to begin planning for 2008. Last year 17 different schools and agencies across the United States and Canada hosted their own Challenge, and our goal is to add 5 new sites in 2008. Colorado participated with our own 2007 Braille Challenge Event at the Colorado School for the Blind. The date for our next Braille Challenge will be **February 1, 2008**. Randy Witte is the contact person - rwitte@csdb.org

The Braille Challenge™, a program of Braille Institute, is a nationally acclaimed contest for first through twelfth grade students who read and write braille. Contestants are divided into five age groups and asked to complete a series of exercises demonstrating their proficiency in braille speed and accuracy, reading comprehension, spelling, proofreading, and interpretation of tactile charts and graphs.

The contest has been structured to be as turnkey as possible for you to host your own event. Once you assign a regional coordinator to work with Braille Institute staff, we guide you to help make the event your own—providing ideas on special guests, ways to solicit local awards and how to recruit community involvement. We send you most everything you need in a complete “how-to” handbook. It includes sample schedules, planning ideas and electronic forms. We design and produce the contests and send them to you, and provide the artwork for you to create your marketing materials. The students love it, and a coordinated regional event is the best way to include blind students of all academic levels. The visibility this program generates also helps raise public awareness of blindness and literacy issues.

The upcoming Braille Challenge contest period will run from January 1 to March 7, 2008 and is open to all braille readers from first grade through high school. The final round for the top 60 students who qualify will be held once again in Los Angeles, on June 28, 2008.

To learn more about the Colorado 2008 Braille Challenge, be in touch with Randy!

CSDB Literacy Backpacks



This article was sent to us via Judy Mumford on behalf of her student and his parent. Thanks to Geanina and Jacob for sharing their important story about their experience with the CSDB Family Literacy Backpacks!

My son Jacob and I were able to use the Birthday Backpack for two weeks prior to his birthday. Jacob was very excited to bring homework home. I was surprised to see the dedication from teachers who put this together. He was so happy with all the fun hands-on activities. There were enough activities to do with each member of our family. Jacob has a big brother and a big sister. My husband and I took turns reading the different books that came in the Family Literacy Pack to him. He truly enjoyed the birthday pack. We cannot wait to see another one come home. I am very grateful for all the activities they provide for my son. The family literacy pack really made a difference for Jacob. He loves to do activities with us at home. Sincerely, Geanina Brown

The Family Literacy Back Packs are available for check out through the CIMC! For more information, check out the reference to this service on page 41.

Example Job Descriptions Now on CDE Blindness/Low Vision Webpage

<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-BLV.asp>

Paraprofessional Working with Students with Visual Impairments

CDE Certified Brailist

Nationally Certified Brailists

Thanks to the 2006-07 Vision Coalition and the leadership of Carol Love and Nancy Cozart, we have three example job descriptions now posted on the CDE Blindness/Low Vision Webpage. These examples are offered as potential templates for administrative units to use as they develop job descriptions for these positions. Go to the webpage section on *Careers in Visual Impairment*.



IMPORTANT!

We have JOB OPENINGS!!

Please be proactive with anticipated vacancies for the next school year. It is never too early to advertise an expected opening. Please keep in touch with Tanni about your job openings.

Jobs for School Year 2007-08

Metro Region:

- ✓ **Teacher of Children with Visual Impairments / O&M Specialist** (1. FTE) Contact Ann Marie Jansen in Adams 12 (northern metro area) at <annmarie.jansen@adams12.org>.

Southern Region

- ✓ **Middle / High School Teacher of Children with Visual Impairments / Social Studies and English (1 FTE)** at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (School for the Blind) located in Colorado Springs. Contact Chelle Lutz at CSDB at (719) 578-2114 or clutz@csdb.org.
- ✓ There will be a number of vacant positions for TVIs and O&M Specialists in the 2008-09 school year at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind (School for the Blind) located in Colorado Springs. Contact Chelle Lutz at CSDB at (719) 578-2114 or clutz@csdb.org.
- ✓ **Teacher of Children with Visual Impairments / O&M Specialist** (.5 to 1 FTE). Contact Kim Lovelace at lovelkm@dll.org or d11.org in El Paso 11 District in Colorado Springs for more information.

Training on Mountbatten Learning System

CSDB will be hosting a training session for TVIs interested in learning how to use and teach with the Mountbatten Learning System. Kevin Hughes and JoAnn Becker from Humanware will present the 3 hour training session and furnish machines for the training. We are limited in number, so please contact Randy Witte to reserve your spot.

- Who:** Southern Colorado region TVI's
What: Mountbatten Learning System training
Where: CSDB in Colorado Springs, probably in Lion's Conference Center
When: Tuesday, October 2nd, from 2:00 PM until 5:00 PM
Cost: FREE!
Contact: Randy Witte rwitte@csdb.org; (719) 578-2204



Calendar of Events

2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007 2007

September 13	CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB <u>Contact:</u> Susan Pfaffenhauser - spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
September 14	Vision Coalition - Talking Book Library <u>Contact:</u> Tanni Anthony—(303) 866-6681 or anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
September 19	Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC <u>Contact:</u> Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org
September 21	Traumatic Brain Injury Educators Conference—Parker, CO <u>Contact:</u> thorfam@rmi.net
September 25-30	Deafblind 14th International World Conference - Perth, Australia <u>Contact:</u> www.dblink.org
September 28	Ribbon Cutting Ceremony of the new Anchor Center building - 2:00-5:00 with a Program at 2:30. RVSP to (303) 377-9733
September 28-29	Western Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic—Grand Junction <u>Contact:</u> Sarah Sonnier— ssonnier@mesa.k12.co.us
October 4-6	National Federation of the Blind of CO Conference—Denver <u>Contact:</u> http://www.nfbco.org/
October 11	CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB <u>Contact:</u> Susan Pfaffenhauser - spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
October 17	Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC <u>Contact:</u> Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org
October 18-20	Colorado Fall Conference on Visual Impairment—Denver <u>Contact:</u> Tanni Anthony— anthony_t@cde.state.co.us
October 25-27	Southern Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic—Colorado Springs <u>Contact:</u> Melissa Shular — melissa.shular@asd20.org

More Calendar of Events

November 8	CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB <u>Contact:</u> Susan Pfaffenhauser— spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
November 9-11	Canadian Vision Teachers' Conference—Montreal, Canada <u>Contact:</u> www.canada.aerbvi.org
November 14	Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC <u>Contact:</u> Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org
November 15	Deadline for Tools of Life applications <u>Contact:</u> Dr. Tom Theune— (719) 471-3200
November 29-Dec 2	Getting in Touch with Literacy Conference—St. Pete Beach, FL <u>Contact:</u> www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.org

2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008

January 10	CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB <u>Contact:</u> Susan Pfaffenhauser - spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
January 16	Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC <u>Contact:</u> Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org
January 24-26	Metro Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic—TBA <u>Contact:</u> Nancy Knight— nknight@lps.k12.co.us
Jan 30 - Feb 2	AT Industry Association (ATIA) Conference—Orlando, FL <u>Contact:</u> www.atia.org or call (877) 687-2842
February 1	Braille Challenge - CSDB <u>Contact:</u> Randy Witte - rwitte@csdb.org
February 8-10	Snowshoe Weekend <u>Contact:</u> Elaine Karns - elk@psdschools.org
February 14	CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB <u>Contact:</u> Susan Pfaffenhauser - spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
February 20	Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC <u>Contact:</u> Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org
February 22-23	Northern LVE Clinic—Ensign Center <u>Contact:</u> Carol Love— love_carol@stvrain.k12.co.us Or Sally Eldridge— eldridge_sara@stvrain.k12.co.us

More Calendar of Events

2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008

- March 1** **Deadline: See the Future Fund Scholarship Applications**
Contact: Dr. Tom Theune - twtheune@prodigy.net
- April 10** **CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB**
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser - or spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
- April 16** **Southern TVI Meeting – CIMC**
Contact: Stephanie Isbell – (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org
- May 14** **Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC**
Contact: Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org
- June 5-7** **Family Learning Retreat - CSDB in Colorado Springs**
Contact: To Be Announced
- June 12** **Southern TVI Meeting – CIMC**
Contact: Stephanie Isbell – (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org
- June 12** **CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB**
Contact: Susan Pfaffenhauser - spfaffenhauser@csdb.org
- July 7-10** **9th International Conference on Low Vision—Montreal, Canada**
Contact: www.opto.umontreal.ca/vision2008
- July 22-27** **AER International Conference—Chicago, IL**
Visit www.aerbvi.org for more information

Help us keep the Calendar of Events as up to date as possible! Please send Tanni the dates, title, location, and contact information of any regional TVI meetings, conferences, important meetings, etc. so they can be posted in future editions of the What's Happening Out There newsletter. Thanks.

NFB CO Conference

The Annual Convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado is scheduled for October 4-6, 2007. It will be held at the Double Tree Hotel in Denver. There will be a Possibilities Fair, which will focus on blindness in the later years of life, on Thursday. Friday and Saturday will have sessions specific to visual impairment and featured speakers from Colorado and other states. For more information, contact <http://www.nfbco.org/>

Announcing The SEE THE FUTURE Fund's “Tools for Life” Program

Applications Now Available

***Application Deadline:
November 15, 2007***

The Need:

Visually impaired or blind students may be highly motivated to learn, but without the proper “tools” they are not able to perform at their highest level. Visually impaired and blind children need special “tools” or devices to interact and compete in a world with their sighted peers. These tools allow visually impaired and blind students greater access to information in a variety of settings and it is the hope of the SEE THE FUTURE Fund that the “tools” improve literacy and independence allowing students to reach and exceed their hopes and dreams.

The Mission:

To provide financial assistance to visually impaired and blind students and their families, who are residents of Colorado. This assistance is to help purchase necessary adaptive equipment, which students may own and utilize in their home, school, and community. This adapted equipment will help support literacy which will enhance both career and personal success.

To apply for a “Tools for Life” scholarship and to obtain more information, please go to: www.seethefuture.org and click on “Tools for Life” scholarships.

You may also call Tom Theune, OD – Chairperson of the SEE THE FUTURE Fund at (719) 471-3200.



Sweet Goodbyes and Hello to a New Building!

By JC Greeley, Program Coordinator at Anchor Center



Anchor Center for Blind Children said goodbye to five little preschoolers in June and began to pack up the school in July. In late August, staff will bid a final farewell to the humble cottage on Clayton Campus—the site of many memories, joys, and accomplishments for hundreds of visually impaired children and their families.

The last preschool graduation on the Clayton Campus was held June 14. All of the children attended Anchor Center programs since they were babies and will be entering kindergarten in the public school system this fall. During the 2006-07 school year, Anchor Center teachers and therapists served a total of 411 children throughout the state.

Also during the year, preschoolers made several trips to the construction site of Anchor Center's new home at Stapleton. The children loved wearing hard hats, navigating the unfinished building with their canes, and making friends with the Fransen Pittman building crew.

It's hard to believe, but Anchor Center staff will be moving into the new building on August 27! The parking lot is paved and striped, the fence is up, the foundation for the greenhouse is in and the "weeping pine" trees are wonderfully odd; the children will love them.

Everyone is invited to attend the Ribbon Cutting Celebration at Anchor Center's new home on Friday, **September 28, at 2 p.m.**

The building is located at 2550 Roslyn Street in Stapleton (corner of 26th Avenue and Roslyn Street, one block east of Quebec). After the ceremony you will have the opportunity to tour the new building.





The Colorado Chapter of the Association of the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired

Update by Samantha Hoffman

The CAER Annual Meeting was held on May 4, 2007. The board was pleased to present The Gary Schmidt, Connections, and the Lifetime Achievement Awards on behalf of the membership. The President's Award will be presented at the fall 2007 conference. The award recipients are listed below. Additionally, a slate of new board members were presented and approved by the membership. The 2007/2008 Board is also listed below.

2007 CAER Awards

The Lifetime Achievement Award: Ann Gillmeister

The Gary Schmidt Award: Wendy Schlageter

The Connections Award: Kevan Worley

The President's Award: JC Greeley



2007/2008 Board Members

Past President - Elaine Karns

Vice President - Samantha Hoffman

Treasurer - Trina Boyd-Pratt

Board Member - Janet Anderson

Board Member - Mike Plansker

Board Member - Paula Conroy

President - Julie Wetzstein

Secretary - Louise Gettman

Board Member - Barb Galgano

Board Member - Sally Eldridge

CAER would like to express their appreciation to outgoing and outstanding members of the board: Ann Hicks, Melissa Schuster, Amber Rundle, and Tim Richardson.

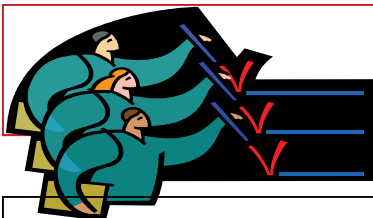
CAER is excited about co-sponsoring the annual fall conference. We also would like to remind members that support is available to them as well as families and clients through mini-grants. Requirements and applications for the mini-grants are available on the CAER website at <http://www.co.aerbvi.org>. Fall mini-grants will be awarded in November 2007.

Please contact any board members with questions or suggestions for the board. Have a wonderful fall.

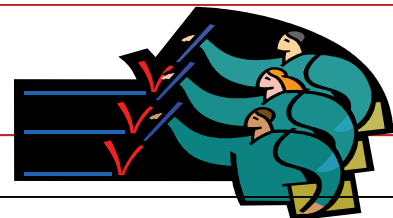
Many persons have a wrong idea of what constitutes true happiness. It is not attained through self-gratification but through fidelity to a worthy purpose.

Helen Keller

US blind & deaf educator (1880 - 1968)



CHECK IT OUT!



Check out this website from the U.S. Chamber of Commerce “Leaders and Laggards” report on education today). You can move the cursor over each state and each indicator (see menu to left of US map), and to get a more detailed review of each component. <http://www.uschamber.com/icw/reportcard/default>

International C – Education: The new ICEVI website www.icevi.org has been made more user-friendly for low vision persons. You can view the website and offer your suggestions for its refinement. Following the most memorable 12th World Conference of ICEVI held in Kuala Lumpur in July 2006, ICEVI is inviting bidders for the 13th World Conference. Some countries have already expressed interest in hosting the next World Conference in 2010. The executive committee of ICEVI will review these offers. For further information on preparing a bid for next World Conference please contact the Secretary General sgicevi@vsnl.net

Sport Specific Blindness Organizations

- | | |
|--|--|
| ✓ American Blind Skiing Foundation | www.absf.org |
| ✓ Blind Judo Foundation | www.blindjudofoundation.org |
| ✓ Blind Sailing International | www.blindsailing.org |
| ✓ National Beep Baseball Association | www.nbba.org/index.htm |
| ✓ United States Blind Golf Association | www.blindgolf.com |



Order Your Free Copy of “All About Low Vision”

Our updated brochure offers an overview of the most common causes of vision loss, and how low vision and rehabilitation services can help people with uncorrectable vision loss remain safe and independent. The brochure includes a fold-out poster illustrating how the world looks to someone with macular degeneration, glaucoma and diabetic retinopathy, among other conditions. This poster can be especially helpful in explaining your vision loss to family and friends. To order free copies, call (212) 821-9566 or e-mail kcheng@lighthouse.org.



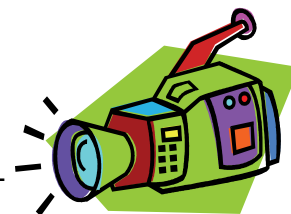
Alabama Space Camp for Interested Visually Impaired Students (SCIVIS) information about next fall’s program can be downloaded from the www.tsbvi.edu/space/ website.

Call for Proposals For 2008 CTEVH Conference

The 49th Annual CTEVH Conference workshop committee is seeking potential presenters who can host informational sessions that share research, offer practical solutions, and demonstrate interactive activities and usable tips for the enrichment of conference participants. If you're not ready to commit to a full workshop but still have useful information to share, then a Poster Session may be just what you're looking for.

The upcoming conference will be held from February 28 to March 2, 2008 at the Los Angeles Airport Marriott. The deadline for workshop and poster session proposals is September 1, 2007. The workshop proposal form has more information, please visit the CTEVH conference website at www.ctevh.org/conference.htm. To submit your proposal form electronically, fill out the downloaded document and send it as an attachment to workshop@ctevh.org. If you would like additional information, call Adama Dyoniziak, conference co-chair, at 323-906-3130.

Washington State School for the Blind (WSSB) declares Lights, Camera, Action! In their quest to provide educational opportunities we have expanded our web served—Video Clips on Blindness Tips. The newest tip that will help parents, those working with the blind, and individuals that are blind or visually impaired is called “Sighted Guide Techniques”. This 3 minute clip quickly and succinctly demonstrates how a sighted guide can be used to help move through space safely and efficiently. Tip#1: When you are going to offer sighted assistance you would just ask the person, “Would you like some sighted help today?” Check out <http://www.wssb.wa.gov> for other tips.



APH Flea Market of Surplus and Discontinued Inventory

A new listing of overstocked and discontinued APH products is now available at www.aph.org/products/fleamarket.html. This discounted inventory is available on a first come, first served basis. Please order early to take advantage of the extra dollars off.

The Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center (BOEC), located in Breckenridge, CO is a leader in providing outdoor, experience based education and adventures to individuals and groups of all abilities. We offer a variety of summer and winter activities including adaptive skiing and snowboarding, snowshoeing, adaptive cycling, rafting, ropes course, and more. Over the next few years we are expanding our programming for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, thanks to support from the Alcon Foundation. For more information, please contact the BOEC at www.boec.org or (800) 383-2632. Scholarships are available!

AFB's Analysis of Proposed Regulations Part C of the IDEA

Proposed regulations implementing Part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004 were published in the Federal Register on May 9, 2007. The analysis, which was prepared for Dr. Kay Ferrell, is accompanied by several tables comparing current regulations with the proposed regulations.

The analysis is at <http://www.afb.org/Section.asp?SectionID=3&TopicID=138&SubTopicID=92>

Space Day

May 4, 2007



Space Day was a big event at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind. The reason for the big event? CSDB was chosen by Lockheed and NASA to be a part of their "Signatures in Space" program. The School for the Blind held activities throughout the day to get students involved in the big event and later signatures were added at the School for the Deaf.

Students participated in several activities that focused on the different aspects of space. Ben Wentworth, former CSDB science teacher and 2001 Disney Teacher of the Year, brought items such as tactual books, models of stars, planets, and constellations, as well as tents that displayed tactual constellations during each solstice of the year. These all helped visually impaired students see the universe up close and personal which is the only way they could understand it. Mr. Megarry was the UFO guru guiding students to use their creativity to make their own UFOs.



Students had opportunities to participate in paper airplane making and throwing contest, experiments about trajectory, and the drag of landing gear a plane (balloon). The most flavorful part of the day was the homemade Moon Pies with cookies, marshmallow crème, and chocolate. Of course, the most important activity was making sure each of their signatures were placed on the special poster to be sent into space. This poster will be sent back to Lockheed, go into space on a space shuttle, then returned to CSDB to be framed and displayed for all to see.

Outdoor Fun for Students Who Are Blind/Visually Impaired!

By Jennifer Schappert



The Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center has received a grant from the Alcon Foundation and we will be expanding our programming for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. At this time we are planning a ski/snowboard camp in April, 2008 for people ages 13-17. In order to accommodate students and their families, I am asking for input on days/dates that you feel would best fit student needs. For example, could it be a four day camp over a weekend (they'd have to miss some school) or a two day weekend camp. We have to run the camp between April 6th and 18th, 2008.

Students would stay at our Scott Griffith Lodge, ski/snowboard, spend evenings playing games, discussing goals, reflecting on their experiences, cooking, cleaning, etc. The cost of the camp would be \$675 per person, but as I mentioned earlier, we have a lot of scholarships to give away. Please be watching for more information and keep in touch with me if you have questions or ideas on how best to run this four-day camp.



CDE Technology Committee Update

The survey results that the you completed relative to technology needs for your students have been compiled and the establishment of a technology task force is the next step. Summer came upon us before regions were able to meet and determine if and who would serve as a representative for this task force. Determining what others states are doing relative to meeting technology needs of students in academic classes with visual impairments and their TVIs will be a first task force goal. It will be helpful to all if each region is represented on this committee.

Contact Rita Albright at rita.albright@bvsd.org or Vicki Pearson at vickip@psdschools.org with questions, suggestions, and/or to volunteer.

CIMC UPATE

By Ann Hicks

Happy fall to everyone! We hope you all had time this past summer to do some relaxing.

Status of Books: We have been busy at the CIMC working on getting instructional aids, materials, large print books and braille books from various vendors and sources for your students. At the end of May we had received 587 book orders. As of the start of school 500 (85%) of those orders were shipped complete. As of today, August 23, 2007, CIMC has 837 orders with 595 (72%) shipped complete and 4% more have been shipped partial. When most vendors braille books for us, they start with the Table of Contents and then skip to the back of the book and do all of the reference pages. After that they go back and start doing the chapters in order.

When we order a book to be reprinted, that request goes to the bottom of that vendor's pile of requests as they reproduce books in the order in which they receive the request. It takes from 6 to 8 weeks to reproduce a book, braille or large print – they are the same in amount of time in this case. We have very few vendors who create books only for us, so we are in competition with every other state to get our books for you.

In order to create a braille book which has never been done before, it takes from 6 months to a year and it takes from a week to two months for a new large print book. Novels are usually much quicker because they are easier to format so they usually can be completed within a month. We are doing some brain-storming to come up with some creative ways to solve this continuing dilemma. We are very open to all of your suggestions so just let us know if you have ideas.

We have continued to build in steps to the process to accommodate the challenges along the way. We had a very serious situation this summer when a book was not even near completion by the expected due date. We ordered 3 ink print editions of that book and found several vendors that were willing to braille parts of the book for us, so we now have three vendors working on that book. The original vendor also agreed to allow the brailist to work only on that book and authorized overtime for that person at their own expense. As result we have been able to stay ahead of that student so that he will not fall behind in his classes. Due to this situation, we have implemented a new method tracking book orders so that, hopefully, in the future, this will not happen again. If we do not have the entire book completed in time for school to start then we want to have the chapters finished that the classroom teacher intends to begin with. Any time you, as the Teacher of the Visually Impaired (TVI), can send us a copy of the class syllabus, that would be fantastic. We ask the brailist to start with whatever chapter the classroom teacher plans to use first.

VI Registration Forms: We have made a slight change in the forms that you use to register new students with us. On the same line as the student's name is written, we have added a place to write the Student's SADID (state ID number). This was a request from Tanni for specific data interpretation opportunities (e.g., CSAP and CSAPA overall results for students with visual impairments).

CIMC Handbook: Another project that is being done is to up-date the CIMC Handbook. We plan to have new pages available at the State Conference on Visual Impairment in October.

Families Connecting With Families: This conference was held in Omaha, Nebraska in July. Both Debbie and I were able to attend in order to help out with child-care thanks to CAER paying for the airfare as a grant. The Nebraska Center for the Visually Impaired provided housing for us and the conference fed us for free so there was no cost to the CIMC. Debbie and I enjoyed the few sessions that we were able to attend as well as having a good time with the children. This would be an excellent resource for parents of any child with visual impairment. This conference is held every other year.

August—September 2007

Braille Translation Software Training with NIMAS Updates: The American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) is offering a braille translation software training with NIMAS updates on November 28 and 29, 2007 at St. Petersburg College in St. Pete Beach, Florida. The training will be held prior to the Getting in Touch with Literacy Conference (GITWL). The November training will be provided by experts in braille software development and braille transcribing. The training sessions are designed to help people who currently transcribe instructional materials into braille learn more about the new updates associated with NIMAS and the three Braille translation software programs. The November training will be a train-the-trainer approach for national capacity building.

Burdine Haas, CIMC Braillist, Bonnie Snyder, CDE's Technology Consultant for the Blind and I plan to attend this training. After we return, we will host training for Colorado's Braillists. This training will probably be held in the Denver area in the new year. Be watching for more information.

NIMAC: NIMAC is the National Instructional Materials Access Center which is housed at APH (American Printing House for the Blind) in Louisville, KY. As part of the Reauthorization of IDEA, NIMAS (National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard) was put into place during this past year. This law makes it mandatory for publishers to send a file of any textbook that a school places on their orders when ordering. So, when the curriculum director orders books from the publisher, it should be specified that the electronic file be sent to NIMAC as part of the order. If each district would do this with every book, then the NIMAC would already have that file when the TVI needs the book for their student.

This publisher file will not be formatted in a way that can be embossed without a lot of work but at least a braillist will not need to scan the book onto a file. We will also still need an ink print edition of each book but, as the files become more available, the easier it is going to be.

NIMAC is set up to have established Authorized Users for each state and CIMC has been designated by Tanni Anthony as the AU for Colorado. That means we are the only agency that can authorize files be given to an AMP (Accessible Media Producer) in Colorado. For instance, if you order a book to be put on tape from Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic, they will let us know that the file is at NIMAC and then we will go on line and approve them to download the file in order to record it for you. NIMAC does not have too many books yet, but as time goes on, they will continually have more files.

If you would like to learn more about NIMAS and NIMAC, please go to their websites at:

NIMAC: <http://www.nimac.us/>

NIMAS: <http://nimas.cast.org/>

Calls from Ann: Last year, at the Vision Coalition request, the CIMC put out a Q and A (Questions and Answers) in the WHOT. As a follow-up to that article, the CIMC has decided that, in the next few weeks to talk some of you to ask you how our service has been for you and your students. We want you to be honest with us and let us know just how we can do our job better. If we do not catch you and you would like to hear from us, just give us a call and we will call you back as we do want your suggestions and comments. We are continuing to strive for improvement in all areas of the CIMC in order to obtain all materials and books needed by your students.

Thanks so much for all you do for your students.

The 2007 Braille Challenge Weekend!

By Proud Dad Andrew Trunfio

What an honor for Juliana Trunfio to be one of 60 finalists invited to the 2007 Braille Challenge in Los Angeles California. We checked into the hotel on Friday, June 22nd, and briefly rested before attending the “ice breaker” buffet in the pool area. They came from all parts of the United States and it was richly rewarding to share information, support and a fun weekend. The kids ranged from elementary school level through high school and had no trouble making friendships. We all went to sleep exhausted and excited.

The next morning, buses from the Braille Institute were waiting to whisk us away to the challenge. We had no idea what awaited us! As the contestants gathered together in their groups, we were treated to the sounds of some of the USC Trojans marching band as they led them into the auditorium. We were bursting with pride as our daughter marched with the others to the stage where each contestant introduced themselves to thunderous applause. After that it was all business as they were led away to begin the competition that would eat up a good portion of the day.

The buses took us all back to the hotel for a brief rest before the awards dinner atop the hotel overlooking Hollywood. The awards ceremony welcomed everyone and, after dinner, paid tribute to the Teacher of the Year. And then the awards themselves. The Braille Institute managed to get the man behind the voice of TV’s “SpongeBob SquarePants”! He was very entertaining and did a wonderful job of presenting the awards. I probably can’t name one other winner but I can tell you that the first award he presented was to the Apprentice level, 3rd place winner, Juliana Trunfio. Our daughter just beamed from ear to ear as she headed for the stage, but her smile was no bigger than that of her parents, Catherine & Andrew, her sister Tara, her grandmother and great aunt. Juliana’s award included a \$500 Savings Bond. It was a beautifully memorable experience made possible through the hard work of Juliana and her Vision Teachers; Nancy Cozart, and braillists Sharon Benn and Tracy Jones.



Colorado is so very proud of Juliana, who took third at the Apprentice Level.

Another participant from Colorado in the national competition was Nimer Jaber from Cherry Creek who took 6th place at the Varsity Level!

Congratulations to both of these students and all the students who participated in last year’s Braille Challenge in Colorado.

For more information about the Braille Challenge, go to the following website:

www.brailleinstitute.org/About/BrailleChallenge.htm

Questions and Answers: Division of Vocational Rehabilitation

By Julia Zannon

Editor's Note: Julie is a member of the Vision Coalition, represented the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation. She graciously agreed to do a Q and A for the newsletter on commonly asked questions about DVR Services for secondary-aged students with visual impairments. Thanks, Julia!

1. What is the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation?

The Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) is a state agency under the Department of Human Services. Individuals who are blind and visually impaired are one of the populations served by Colorado DVR. It is the mission of the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation to assist individuals whose disabilities result in barriers to employment to succeed at work and live independently. You can find more information at www.cdhs.state.co.us/dvr.



2. How do I find out what vocational rehabilitation counselor to call for my school district?

DVR offices are located throughout the state in larger cities/towns. The larger metropolitan areas such as Denver, Ft. Collins, and Colorado Springs will have a designated counselor who works with individuals who are blind and vision impaired. This position is called the Rehabilitation Counselor for the Blind or "RCB." The best way to find your counselor is to contact the nearest local DVR office and ask if there is a designated RCB. If not, then ask for the counselor who works with the school district transition program. You can find a list of the offices on the DVR website at www.cdhs.state.co.us/dvr.

3. At what age should a rehabilitation counselor be contacted to become involved with a student who is visually impaired to plan for post-graduation activities?

The best time to contact the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation is when the focus of the student's program is in the process of moving from academic to employment. Because our services are so individualized, there is not a "one size fits all" answer to this question. For example, if the student is doing well academically and is planning to attend college, then I would contact vocational rehabilitation during the student's second semester of junior year or first semester of senior year. If the student is not heading for college and the focus in school has been work experiences and community living, then you probably want to contact DVR sooner. Remember that the job of the rehabilitation counselor is to focus on employment as well as the services and support systems that will assist the student to become employed. It is really great for a counselor to have at least the senior year to get to know the student and work with the TVI and any other transition members to best prepare for adult life. There is no "waiting list" for DVR services so there is no need to apply earlier than when the services are needed.

4. Are there criteria of who will be served by DVR Services? If so, what are the criteria?

To be eligible to receive DVR services, the individual must have a disability that results in a substantial impediment to employment and need vocational rehabilitation services to be employed. It is all based on whether the student has a disability and how this disability impacts their ability to prepare for, get and keep a job. A low vision student is just as welcome to apply as students who are legally blind. Sometimes students also have other disabilities in addition to the vision impairment and the counselor will need to obtain information about those disabilities. Colorado requires that any applicant be able to legally work in the state of Colorado meaning that they have to be a citizen, legal resident or have a "green card." If the student is 18 years or older, the counselor will need to have a copy of the applicant's Colorado state I.D. Card or Driver's License if they are able to drive. If the student is receiving social security income based on his/her disability, then the Colorado DVR presumes eligibility with the appropriate documentation.

5. What type of services does DVR provide?

Services are based on the needs of the eligible individual and are designed to support the employment goal of the individual. Some of the most common services include vocational counseling and guidance, vocational training, assistive technology, independent skills training (we call this Personal Adjustment to Blindness skills training), orientation and mobility skills training, job placement, job coaching, job seeking skills training, work adjustment training, vocational evaluation and adaptive computer skills training. In order to determine what services will be needed and appropriate for that individual, the counselor will work together with the eligible individual to identify the specific needs and services that will help that individual reach their employment goal. Services provided to any individual have to be necessary, appropriate and least possible cost. For example, if the individual can obtain the academic or vocational training they need at a local community college, then DVR will need to choose that resource rather than a similar training program at a private school.

6. Who is responsible for follow-through?

The best way to answer this is to describe the Individualized Plan for Employment. Once an eligible individual and the counselor have identified an employment goal, the services needed to reach that goal and the sources for those services, they will write a plan called an Individualized Plan for Employment or IPE. This plan will list the employment goal, the objectives needed to reach that goal and the specific services needed by that individual. The plan will list who will provide the services and how the progress will be measured. It is the responsibility of the rehabilitation counselor to monitor the progress of the plan and to help the individual make changes if needed or manage problems if they come up during the life of the plan. Since the goal is employment, a file is not closed until the eligible individual is in suitable, stable employment. .

7. Why should a student be involved with vocational rehabilitation?

If the student is able to access the resources and support they need without any assistance, then they probably do not need DVR services. For example, I just recently began working with a young man who did not need DVR services while in college, but now that he is looking for a job, he needs help with the job search and assistive technology he will use on the job site. Most people apply for services because they find that blindness and vision impairment create barriers that are not so easy to accommodate once they are out of the protected public school environment. While in public school, students are provided with materials in accessible format and a lot of support services as well as a team of teachers and professionals who are planning for their needs. Once they graduate, they are suddenly on their own and have to advocate for themselves to get what they need. There are plenty of employers who have very little interest in their needs. The applicant needs to be able to market their skills to the employer and be very comfortable with their disability and asking for appropriate job related accommodations.

8. What is the likelihood that a vocational rehabilitation counselor can attend a student's IEP?

You will want to make sure you invite the rehabilitation counselor to the IEP staffing. This will make the planning for the students transition needs comprehensive and meaningful. When possible, a rehabilitation counselor will be able to attend an IEP staffing before the student has applied for services. I would encourage you to establish a productive working relationship with the rehabilitation counselor to encourage this participation. If the counselor is not available, then he/she should be able to provide you with information about referrals, eligibility, and other resources so that you can share this with the student and parents.

9. What should the parents, school personnel, and the student be doing to prepare for life post-high school graduation?

There are so many things a student and family and teachers can be doing that it is hard to distill into a simple answer. I think the most important thing to remember is that students with disabilities are just like everyone else. They will want to be able



want to work or not, how they want to live, who they want to live with, whether they want to get married or stay single and whether they want a family or not. Some students are ready for these choices and then the vocational rehabilitation process is a very rewarding and productive experience. Some students are not ready to make these choices and they will need some time before they come in for help. It is all about readiness on a physical, psychological and emotional level. We all can help them by encouraging them to be responsible, self advocating, courageous, self aware, knowledgeable about jobs, aware of their own skills and abilities as well as their limitations and teach them how to locate and access needed resources, self advocate and figure out strategies for getting their needs met.

10. Are there any books or resources that you would recommend for TVIs, parents or students to read?

These are recommendations from Cheryl Carver from our state office:

Cooperative Services Handbook for Youth in Transition (can be downloaded for free from the CDE website <http://www.cde.state.co.us/>)

The 411 on Disability Disclosure: A Workbook for Youth with Disabilities (can be downloaded and reproduced for free from NCWD and can be found at <http://www.transcen.org/>)

Preparing for Life: the Complete Guide for Transitioning to Adulthood for those with Autism and Asperger's Syndrome by Dr. Jed Baker (can be purchased from NPR at <http://www.nprinc.com>)

Transition to Employment by Craig A. Michaels (part of a transition series published by pro-ed <http://www.proedinc.com>). There is another book in this series titled Transition Issues Related to Students with Visual Disabilities. Although I have not read it yet, I did scan it and found some useful information.

11. What will DVR pay for in terms of equipment for my student to go to college? Or to get a job?

DVR may help individuals obtain the assistive technology and/or blindness or low vision equipment they will need for training and work. This is individualized based on the specific disability needs and the employment outcome. For example, someone going to college is going to need to use a computer as well as the assistive technology to make that computer accessible. They might also need a notetaker, daisy player, digital recorder and scanner, depending on the tasks they have to complete. Another individual who is going to work polishing silver at a local restaurant is probably not going to need the same technology as the college student. That is why it is important for the rehabilitation counselor to work together with the individual to develop an employment goal and determine the unique services and needs. In Colorado, there is also a financial need analysis that will be done by the rehabilitation counselor to determine if the eligible individual and his or her family have any surplus resources that could be used to help purchase that equipment or technology. Throughout the planning process as well as during the implementation of the employment plan, the counselor and eligible individual will be working together to find the resources and services that best fit that individual's needs. In addition to DVR funding, there are several other funding sources that can help, such as the Blind Equipment Fund and the Howard Fund.

12. Are blind students who are not yet 21 and have socially graduated and participating in a transition program eligible for DVR services?

To be eligible for DVR services, the individual must have a disability that results in a substantial impediment to employment and need services from DVR to achieve employment. This means that a student certainly can apply for DVR services at any time along the continuum of educational services, including transition services. Specifically, the CSDB transition program is a good example. DVR has worked together with the transition coordinator and students in this program to provide career counseling and guidance as well as other support services. It depends on the needs of the individual and if you would like to get more information and/or discuss a specific situation, you can contact the RCB or the supervisor I in the local office as well as the transition coordinator in the DVR administration office in Denver at 1575 Sherman St. Howard Fund.

CHINA TRIP

March 15-31, 2007

By Jan and Dian Megarry



In years past, as we taught world history, who would have thought we would have the opportunity to experience China on a first-hand basis. What a surprise! About a year ago we were given the opportunity, as members of the Universal Kempo-Karate Schools Association, to visit China and train with the Shaolin. We decided this could be an education for us and benefit students in the future. Well worth the money. Boy, did we have an experience! Sixteen days traveling and flying around China, eating traditional Chinese food, and learning about the culture and history of the Chinese people.

We got our first exposure to China as we flew into Shanghai approximately 18 hours after leaving Colorado Springs. It was nothing like the textbooks. Gone are shacks made of wood and mud. Now there are skyscrapers and high rises everywhere. Dirt roads are being replaced with paved roads with cars, trucks, and motor scooters. The bicycle is slowly disappearing as the Chinese find the need to travel faster and farther for work. This is where the China Experience began for us.



We realized we were going to begin to see the real China, not the images created by pictures in magazines and the food from Chinese restaurants. First, let's talk about the food. The food consisted mainly of noodles, rice, and vegetables with little or no seasoning, and almost everything was cooked in peanut oil. Very bland and far from being exciting. The fish were cooked with heads on and shrimp were cooked whole their beady little eyes sticking out above their heads. The markets were huge with a combination of many small shops selling everything from clothes to live food all meshed together in one big shopping plaza. Dian, being legally blind noticed the pungent smells as we sauntered through the market on the first night. One end of the market smelled like shoes, clothes, bags, people, and other material items while the other end was the sickening smells of raw vegetables, raw fish (some alive, some dead) and a variety of raw un-refrigerated meats—mainly pork. There were people on bikes and motor scooters riding buzzing around everywhere within the confinement of the many dividing walls along the alleyways inside the market place. They would honk and ride right on by. If you didn't move out of the way the driver would continue honking and pushing until a path opened just large enough for them to go on their way. A mall in the U.S.A. does not compare to the confusion and crowded atmosphere of a Chinese market.

The people of China barter for almost everything. You look at what you want, decide how much you want to spend, ask "How much?" then came to an agreement to satisfy both the seller and yourself.

After a good night sleep and a breakfast of Chinese food we headed for the domestic airport to fly to Zhengzhou, capital of Henan Province. We stayed in Dengfeng at the Shaolin International Hotel for four days as we trained with the Shaolin, visited the Shaolin Medicine Shop, shopped at the Jade Shop and Shaolin Sword Shop, walked up a thousand steps to Dharma's Cave and white Jade Buddha, and ate the same food morning, noon, and night.

August—September 2007

We flew to our next destination which was Chengdu to visit the panda reserve, but our government guide had scheduled things so we could only stay over night. The next morning we flew on to Lhasa, Tibet. It was like stepping into a totally different world. As we left the airport for Lhasa it was clear skies and barren land, but after crossing the path made by the head waters of the Yangtze River, there were buildings, roads, and people everywhere. When we left the bus to get our first taste of Tibetan food—which was better than traditional Chinese food—people rushed in from everywhere—hands out, bowing, and begging for money. Dirty faces and hands pleading for a handout and others trying to sell anything they thought tourists might be willing to hand over money to possess. We visited the Jokhang Temple, the Drepung Monastery, and Potala Palace, former home of the Dalai Lama. We ate yak meat, shopped in a Tibetan market place, and enjoyed traditional dances, were offered butter tea and special Tibetan beer to get a flavor for the Tibetan culture. As we toured Lhasa we got a clear picture that their religion and the Buddha were what their lives were all about. Everywhere we went and everything we saw contained something related to the Buddha.



We moved on to Chongqing to begin a fantastic cruise on the Yangtze River after seeing the Second World War II and Stillwell Memorial Museum, and Erlin Park. We were very surprised how China looks at the American Volunteers as their heroes and spoke very highly of how the Japanese were defeated and driven from China by Americans. The story is displayed for all to read. We obtained as many pictures as possible to use in a PowerPoint to support teaching this part of history.

The next part of our China Experience was a cruise on the Yangtze River to the Three Gorges Dam. We began our trip with the night lights of Chongqing glimmering in the distance. As we traveled the contrast between old and new was very evident. The water had risen 145 meters and many villages had been moved and live in modern high rises while others still lived in shacks or holes in the ground. Factories with pollution spewing out of their stacks spotted the banks of the river all along the trip. We took sampans up one gorge with its villagers performing along the way, monkeys fed by the government, and coffins hanging high in caves. We stopped to tour Fengdu (The Ghost City) displaying statues of ghosts waiting to give you the punishment you deserve. We arrived at the end of our cruise in Sandouping to tour the Three Gorges Dam with its ship locks, power plant, and four thousand soldiers to guard against terrorist attack. It is still under construction and will be until 2010. When completed it will be the largest hydro power plant in the world.



We transferred to Yichang to begin the final part of our trip. An hour and a half bus ride through the countryside to a domestic airport and a flight on China Air brought us back to where we started, Shanghai. Our last day was a full one. We were taken to the Jade Buddha Temple in the middle of modern buildings; Yu Garden consisting on buildings, trees, and an arrangement of water and plants; the Children Palace, an old mansion used for after school of arts of drawing, painting, music, and dancing; and the silk factory where silk worm cocoons are soaked in water, and either loosened then threads wound around spools or pulled, dried and stretched to use as batting for quilts. What a way to end a phenomenal

learning experience. On our flight home we reflected on what we had learned and what we would share to improve other's understanding of China and its people.

A very special thank you to Lori Kochever for all of her work to put this newsletter together. Lori is the new support staff teammate of Tanni (and others) in our Exceptional Student Services Unit. She has been on board since July and has already established herself as a wonderful partner. This was her first WHOT newsletter experience and she has pulled it all together beautifully. So thank, Lori!

New VRT Exam To Be Beta Tested In The Fall – CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

ACVREP is in the final stages of completing a new Vision Rehabilitation Therapy (VRT) exam. After they host four technical workshops this month (to ensure that the questions written for the new exam are technically and structurally correct), they will be ready to beta test the new VRT exam. Beta testing will probably take place in October. Beta exam dates and locations will be announced at a later time.

ACVREP will need 100 people to take the VRT beta exam. Twenty-five (25) of the 100 people should be individuals who would fail the exam; these should be individuals who don't work in the vision rehabilitation and education field. Twenty-five (25) people should be individuals who would definitely pass the exam. The remaining 50 people should be individuals who might pass or fail the exam (our borderline candidates). This group might consist of VRT students, O&M specialists, low vision therapists, teachers of the visually impaired, VRTs without a degree in VRT, etc.

For ACVREP certificants who take the beta exam, you will receive ten (10) points for recertification under "Category 4 – Professional Service" of the new recertification criteria. For individuals not currently certified, but who would like to seek certification in VRT, you can use the beta exam (if you pass it) for certification purposes. In other words, if you pass the beta exam and want to use it to get certified, you would pay \$25.00 versus the normal \$100.00 exam fee.

If you would like to take the VRT beta exam, please contact Sharon L. Mikrut at 520-887-6816 or smikrut@acvrep.org.

Magic Milkshakes

Makes 3 servings

1 cup	milk
1(3-ounce)	package gelatin (any flavor)
1 pint	vanilla ice cream softened
1/2 cup	frozen or fresh fruit such as blueberries, strawberries or peaches (optional)

Pour milk and gelatin in a blender container. Cover and blend 30 seconds. Add ice cream and blend again until ice cream is incorporated into gelatin mixture. Pour into chilled glasses and serve with straws. Gummy worms make a colorful (and fun) garnish.

Note: Fresh or frozen fruit can be blended into the shake (an easy way to add more nutrition). For example, puree peaches in an orange shake for a Fuzzy Navel



Audio-Assisted Reading and Braille

Carol Anne Evans, Ph.D.

This article was reprinted with permission from the DOTS for Braille Literacy, Volume 12, Number 3, Summer 2007.

Teachers of students with visual impairments who teach braille have had experience with students who learn to read easily and well. They have also had experience with students who struggle to learn to read. The reasons why students have difficulty in learning to read braille vary. Students may have identified or unidentified learning disabilities in addition to being blind or visually impaired. If the origin of a student's visual impairment is neurological, there is a greater likelihood that he or she has additional disabilities. Nevertheless, even students with strictly ocular causes of blindness or visual impairment, will sometimes have difficulty learning to read braille independently and efficiently.

Some students struggle for years, reading character by character, or worse, dot by dot. [Years ago I evaluated the braille reading of a 14-year-old student who stumbled over each character; her teacher prompted her to say the dot numbers, and then she could identify the letter. This method was more struggle than reading, and the student was unable to derive meaning from reading braille in this way.] Many students have reading deficits that cannot be explained by vision loss alone.

Some of these students have experienced traumatic brain injuries (e.g., auto-bicycle accidents, truck rollovers, and falls from trees or flagpoles). One of my students had such fine tactile discrimination that he could read accurately through a Band-Aid. However, his brain injury resulted in severely reduced processing speed. That, and his habit of compulsively checking his accuracy by backtracking, made his braille reading so inefficient that completing assignments in a timely manner was impossible.

The use of recorded materials in a variety of formats (e.g., tapes, digital, and computer synthesis) has come a long way from the days when it was primarily a substitute for reading when materials in braille or large print were not available, or when students had to read large quantities of material in a short period of time.

Audio-Assisted Reading is a method of using recorded books simultaneously with the corresponding book in another medium. For the purpose of this article, I will concentrate on methods for using recordings along with braille. It can assist students who struggle with braille for the various kinds of reasons detailed here.

The choppy, word-by-word reader, or one who is accurate, but very slow

Observe the student's speed of reading independently. Read to the student as he or she tracks along in the braille, just slightly faster than he or she reads independently. About once per sentence, stop reading and let the student read the next word. Gradually increase the frequency of stopping your oral reading, and allow the student to read the next several words. Read chorally with the student, at a speed slightly faster than his or her independent reading speed. Do this several times, and then allow the student to read the passage independently.

As a compensatory method, for students with large volumes of material to read

Using playback equipment with variable speed, allow the student to adjust speed to his or her own tracking ability. Some students will gradually learn to read braille with auditory support at very high rates of speed with excellent comprehension. The recorded book provides a model of fluent reading, discourages backtracking, and increases comprehension.

Some advantages of use of recorded materials along with braille include the following:

1. When braille reading is slow and labored, it consumes all the energy needed for comprehension. Research has proven the link between fluency and comprehension.
2. Use of dual sensory modalities may reduce the attention difficulties that interfere with comprehension.
3. Recorded textbooks provide cues to when it is time to examine charts, maps, and other graphics. They then instruct the reader to return to the text. Much valuable information may be obtained from this verbally guided exploration of the graphic materials.
4. Some students will improve their independent reading speed, fluency, and comprehension by using this method. Others may simply benefit from improved access to the general curriculum, and will require auditory support for efficient study. Students with a variety of print-related disabilities have successfully completed college and graduate school using Audio-Assisted Reading.

**Children Served, by Percent of Disability
Ages Birth to 21
as of December 1, 2006**

Primary Disability	12/1/06		
	Admin Units	State Operated Programs	State Total
Significant Limited Intellectual Capacity	3,426	9	3,435
Emotional Disability	7,985	189	8,174
Specific Learning Disability	30,044	116	30,160
Hearing Disability	1,384	153	1,537
Vision Disability	303	46	349
Physical Disability	9,558	12	9,570
Speech or Language Impairment	20,759	4	20,763
Deaf-Blind	29	10	39
Multiple Disabilities	3,088	6	3,094
Preschooler with a Disability	4,194	0	4,194
Infant with a Disability	46	0	46
Autism	1,892	0	1,892
Traumatic Brain Injury	413	0	413
Total	83,121	545	83,666

JUST FOR YOUR INFORMATION: The above chart highlights the number of students in Colorado public schools with IEPs by their primary disability label for the 2006 December 1 Count. This information is collected annually by the Colorado Department of Education. It is called the December 1 Count as it is a record of all enrolled students with IEPs on this date each year. The data specific to students identified with a primary disability label of “vision disability” and “deafblindness” do not accurately reflect the true numbers of these learners in Colorado. This is due to a number of factors. One factor is that this count does not capture the majority of infants and toddlers in the state who are blind/visually impaired and/or deafblind, as many of these children are not counted by most administrative units. A second factor is that the December 1 Count ONLY includes the primary label of the student, which is determined by the IEP team. If a child has additional disabilities beyond visual impairment, he or she is often classified as having multiple disabilities. This is often the case with learners who have combined vision and hearing loss. We have two other state counts that help us maintain an accurate record, though these data are not reported directly to the federal government.

According to the CIMC 2006-07 Count, we have 1,069 learners, ages birth through 21 years, who are blind/visually impaired. There are 704 students with visual impairments in Colorado schools between the ages of three and 21.

According to the Colorado Services for Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss annual census of children 0-21 for the 2006-07 school year, there were 132 children in Colorado with deafblindness. Of this number, 107 of these learners were school age or between the ages of 3 and 21. A note was attached to our December 1 Count report to the federal government explaining the discrepancy of the number of learners identified as deafblind on the December 1 Count and the project’s census.



Who Ya Gonna Call?

Barbara Adams at (970) 963-3243 x 206 or badams@mtnboces.k12.co.us

- ✓ Representative of Western Slope TVIs/COMSs at Vision Coalition meetings

Rita Albright at (303) 447-5001 (ext. 8772) or rita.albright@bvsd.org

- ✓ Co-Coordinator of the CDE Technology Task Force

Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

- ✓ Braille Competency Testing / Braille Certification Renewal
- ✓ CDE web pages on Blindness/ Low Vision, Deafblindness, and Orientation and Mobility,
- ✓ Colorado Services for Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project
- ✓ Eligibility of Learners with Visual Impairments
- ✓ Job Clearinghouse – TVI and O&M Specialist positions within Colorado
- ✓ Learning Media Assessments / Plans for Learners with Visual Impairments
- ✓ NIMAS and NIMAC procedures within Colorado
- ✓ Response to Intervention (RtI) for students with visual impairments or deafblindness
- ✓ State Conference on Visual Impairment / Annual O&M Conference
- ✓ TVI and O&M Specialist Licensure Questions
- ✓ *What's Happening Out There* newsletter
- ✓ Vision Coalition

Betsy Boudreau at 303-692-9213 or betsyrbfd@qwest.net

- ✓ Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFB&D)

Paula Conroy at (970) 351-1651 or paula.conroy@unco.edu

- ✓ UNC's Teacher Training Program on Visual Impairment

Nancy Cozart at (303) 734-3090 or NCozart@lps.k12.co.us

- ✓ Representative of Metro TVIs/COMSs at Vision Coalition meetings
- ✓ Metro Region TVI Meetings
- ✓ State Reviewer of CSAP Braille Format

Diane Cullen at (719) 578-2205 or dcullen@csdb.org

- ✓ CSDB's Library (School for the Blind)

Julie Deden at (303) 778-1130 or jdeden@cocenter.org

- ✓ Colorado Center for the Blind

David Dawson at (303) 786-7777 x 101, rrsr@rrsr.org

- ✓ Radio Reading Services of the Rockies

Donice Fennimore at (719) 578-2198 or dfennimore@csdb.org

✓ Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Coordinator

Kay Ferrell at (970) 302-1995 or kay.ferrell@unco.edu

✓ National Center on Low Incidence Disabilities (housed at UNC)

Louise Gettman at (719) 578-2189 or lgettman@csdb.org

✓ School for the Blind Infant Toddler Program

✓ Early Years Family program for children birth to 5 with visual impairment (southern region)

Jennie Germano at (719) 578-2116 or jgermano@csdb.org

✓ CSDB Early Education

J.C. Greeley at (303) 337-9732 or jandkqb@aol.com

✓ Anchor Center for Blind Children

Roger Harwell at cell: (719) 648-6844; CSDB: (719) 578-2201, or r.harwell@juno.com

✓ Adult Role Model Team for Blind/Visually Impaired

Lucia Hasty at (719) 577-4710 or lhasty2@earthlink.net

✓ Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor



Ann Hicks at (719) 578-2195 or ahicks@csdb.org

✓ Braille or Large Print Instructional Materials for Students

✓ CIMC Loan Materials

✓ Annual CIMC registration of students with Visual Impairments

✓ Braille Transcribers Mentoring Project

Samantha Hoffman - (303) 216-6251 or shoffman@jeffco.k12.co.us

✓ Representative of Colorado Chapter of AER at Vision Coalition meetings

Stephanie Isbell at (719) 291-3325, isbell@cmsd12.org

✓ Representative of Southern TVIs/COMSs at Vision Coalition meetings

✓ Southern TVI meetings

Elaine Karns at (970) 225-6720 or elk@psdschools.org

✓ Coordinator of the Annual Snow Shoe Weekend

Donna Keale at (719) 578-2251 or dkeale@csdb.org

✓ CSDB Summer Enrichment Program

✓ Sports Camp

Carol Love at (303) 776-8674 or love_carol@stvrain.k12.co.us

- ✓ Northern Region TVI Meetings
- ✓ Co-Coordinator of the Northern Low Vision Evaluation Clinic

Debbie Macleod at (303) 727-9277 or Macleod_d@cde.state.co.us

- ✓ Colorado Talking Book Library

Karla McKechnie at (719) 578-2201 or kmckechnie@csdb.org

- ✓ Representative of CSDB TVIs/COMSs at Vision Coalition meetings

Kevin O'Brien at (970) 874-7607 or kobrien@mcsd.k12.co.us

- ✓ Western Region TVI Meetings

Vicki Pearson at (970) 490-3248 or vpearson1@yahoo.com

- ✓ Co-Coordinator of the CDE Technology Task Force
- ✓ Representative of Northern TVIs/COMSs at Vision Coalition meetings

Susan Pfaffenhauser (719) 578-2102 or spfaffenha@csdb.org

- ✓ CSDB Board of Trustees' meetings

Gina Quintana at (303) 866-6605 or quintana_g@cde.state.co.us

- ✓ Colorado Services for Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project

Melissa Shular at (719) 234-1388 or mshular@asd20.org

- ✓ Site Coordinator for Southern Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic

Brenda Shepard at (303) 340-0520 (ext. 28539) or brendas@ctech.aps.k12.co.us

- ✓ Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

Bonnie Snyder at (719) 322.3854 or bonniels21@adelphia.net or TVIVIP.org Website

- ✓ CDE Regional Technology Assistance

Sarah Sonnier at (970) 254-5414 or ssonnier@mesa.k12.co.us

- ✓ Site Coordinator for Western Region Low Vision Evaluation Clinic
- ✓ Colorado Braille Test Proctor and Renewal Modules Proctor

Lou Tutt at (719) 578-2200 or 2201 or ltutt@csdb.org

- ✓ CSDB School for the Blind
- ✓ CSDB Transition Program

Jon Vigne at (719) 578-2177 or jvigne@csdb.org

- ✓ Questions about CSDB and enrollment



WHAT'S HAPPENING AND WHAT'S FUNDED

School Year 2007-08

Compiled By Tanni Anthony

We have a busy year ahead of us with many training and support activities! Unless otherwise noted, please contact Tanni Anthony if you have any questions about the highlighted activities. Tanni's email is <anthony_t@cde.state.co.us> and her phone number is (303) 866-6681. Contact information for many projects is also listed in the *Who Ya Gonna Call* section starting on page 37.

Legend for Acronyms:

CDE = Colorado Department of Education

CIMC = Colorado Instructional Materials Center

CSAP = Colorado Student Assessment Program (our statewide tests)

CSDB = Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind

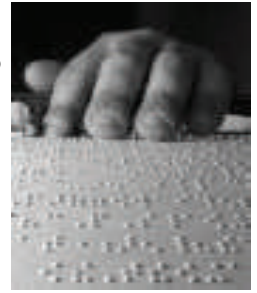
TVI = teacher certified in visual impairment

The funding for each project is listed after its title. CDE Set Aside Funds = federal discretionary funds approved in Tanni's CDE budget.

Adult Role Model Team: (CDE Set Aside Funds flowed through CSDB) Article by Roger Harwell: The Adult Blind and Visually Impaired Role Model Team's purpose is to provide students who are blind or visually impaired, their parents and teachers the opportunity to meet accomplished and motivated blind and visually impaired adult role models. To openly and frankly discuss, from personal experience topics related to low vision, vision loss and blindness. Team members share their experiences, triumphant and otherwise, on topics ranging from low vision aids and high-tech devices to overcoming denial and when and how to seek support. We also discuss careers, social interaction, drivers' license, organizations, resources, orientation/mobility, daily living skills and all sorts of other frenzied topics that can and do come up. We certainly don't have all the answers, however many questions can be answered, "Been there done that," let me tell you what worked and didn't work for me. For over a decade this diverse group of accomplished blind and visually impaired adults and college students have volunteered to mentor Colorado's blind and V/I elementary, high school and transition students. We celebrate those teachers, students, and role models who have participated and supported this effort. We have all grown richer in spirit and understanding as a result. As a member of the Role Model Team since 1990, I have seen the positive impact role models can and do make. If you think a Role Model Team member might make a positive difference for even one of your students I encourage you to contact me. Roger Harwell, Project Facilitator, Adult Blind and Visually Impaired Role Model Team - E-Mail: r.harwell@juno.com; Cell: 719-648-6844; CSDB: 719-578-2201.

Braille Competency: (CDE Set Aside Funds): Funds have been reserved for four braille proctors (Lucia Hasty, Brenda Shepard, Sarah Sonnier, and Julie Wetzstein) to provide opportunities to TVIs / Braillists to take the Colorado Braille Mastery Test and/or the 15 clock-hours of CDE established renewal modules. Care should be taken to spread out the completion of the modules over the five year renewal period so that competency can truly be demonstrated across a period of five years. For information about braille competency testing and renewal requirements, please go to <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-BLV.asp>

Braille-Format Colorado Student Assessment Program (CSAP) Test Review: (CDE Set Aside Funds): TVIs had the opportunity to meet with the CDE Assessment Unit and the CSAP publisher to review the large print and braille CSAP tests each year since June 2004. Thanks to the feedback of many of you, we had helpful data to draft “theme recommendations” for improvement to future CSAP tests. Funds have been reserved to review the 2008 braille tests BEFORE they are sent to Colorado. Sarah Sonnier, Nancy Cozart, and Tanni Anthony will return to Boston’s National Braille Press in November or December for a third year of onsite test review. They will meet with the tactile graphics experts and the test publisher over a two day period. TVIs are once again encouraged to send in their comments on the 2007-08 CSAP CSAPA, and CELA tests. Together, we are making a difference with our state tests.



Braille Transcriber Project: (CDE Set Aside Funds flowed through CSDB) Details provided by Ann Hicks. The Braille Transcribers Mentor Project is for experienced Library of Congress certified braillists to mentor new braillists who are working on their LOC certification. Ann Hicks, who is in charge of this project, needs to know who is interested in being mentored. She will then link the new braillist with a veteran braillist. Arrangements will also be made to pay the mentor for his or her time. For more information, contact Ann at (719) 578-2195 or <ahicks@csdb.org >.

Close Up: Close up involves a 7 day learning adventure in Washington, D.C. for high school students and educators. Experience the excitement of Close Up’s flagship program! This 7-day, 6-night program develops students’ knowledge of basic concepts of government and citizenship. Through onsite study-visits, students will also see the city’s monuments and memorials, explore the Smithsonian museums, and enjoy the cultural diversity of D.C.’s historic neighborhoods. On Friday, students have independent time to visit colleges, and explore sites not covered during the program. The pinnacle of the week is Capitol Hill Day where students have the opportunity to spend time with their Senator(s), Representative (s), and/or staff. CSDB & Outreach Services will be attending CLOSE UP for a week in February 2007. It is the hope of CSDB to send one student from the state of Colorado as an Outreach student and one student from CSDB. Students interested in going need to apply to Donna Keale, CSDB Outreach Coordinator for the Blind, 33 N. Institute St. Colorado Springs, CO 80903; <dkeale@csdb.org>.

Colorado Center for the Blind Summer Activities: Each summer, the CCB offers programs to students who are blind/visually impaired. During summer 2007, they offered programs for elementary, middle, and secondary- aged students. The Youth Services Coordinator is Eric Woods. He can be reached at (303) 778-1130 (ext. 230) or 800-401-4632 or <ewoods@cocenter.org>.

Colorado Instructional Materials Center (CIMC): (Set Aside Funds flowed through CSDB, district-assessment fees of \$250 per identified child with visual impairment): The role of the CIMC is to provide braille and large print textbooks and materials for all students who are visually impaired in Colorado. The CIMC is housed on the campus of the CSDB. CDE funding of the CIMC has been supplemented by district fees (\$250 per student with visual impairment). The CIMC worked through the summer to order / produce books for our Colorado students. For questions, CIMC, contact Ann at ahicks@csdb.org or (719) 578-2195.

CIMC Braillist Scholarships: (Sponsored by the CIMC) Details provided by Ann Hicks: The CIMC is again able to offer scholarships to help three certified Library of Congress braillists attend the National Braille Association conference this fall. Persons who are selected to receive a scholarship will be required to share the information gained with other braillists in Colorado. We have \$200 for the first three LOC certified braillists to apply for assistance. For more information, contact Ann Hicks at ahicks@csdb.org or (719) 578-2195.

CSDB Internship placements: (CSDB Sponsored). CSDB offers an educational setting with a diverse student population for university students completing their graduate training in vision to obtain internship or student teaching credits. Contact: Diane Covington, CSDB School Community Liaison, 719-578-2225.

CSDB Lending Library: (Sponsored by CSDB): The library provides materials and information in a variety of formats for students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing and/or blind/visually impaired, as well as their parents and those who work with them. Most items may be borrowed by anyone with a CO Library Card (available at public and academic libraries throughout CO) or through interlibrary loan from any library. The libraries are open Monday—Friday during the school year from 8:00 AM to 3:00 PM. Please call before coming in person to either library. For more information, please contact Diann Cullen at dcullen@csdb.org or (719) 578-2206 or the CSDB website at www.csdb.org.

CSDB Short Term Placements: (Sponsored by CSDB): CSDB will offer short term placements to focus on the expanded core curriculum during this school year. The three-day placements that will begin on a Thursday afternoon and run through Saturday afternoon. Check out dates and a description of short-term placements for the 2007-08 school year in future editions of *WHOT*. If you have questions, contact Donna Keale at dkeale@csdb.org or (719) 578-2251

CSDB Summer Enrichment Program: (Sponsored by CSDB): Each summer a series of programs are offered to students who are blind/visually impaired across the state. The programs focus on braille/O&M/social skills, social relationships, and lots of recreational fun. The dates and themes for the 2008 Summer Enrichment Program will be shared in future editions of *WHOT*. For more information, contact Donna Keale at dkeale@csdb.org or (719) 578-2251.

CSDB Touch Museum: (housed on the campus of CSDB in Colorado Springs): The CSDB Touch Museum is closed for the 2006-2007 School Year. The collection is currently being inspected to make sure they are still safe to touch adhering to the new Federal Wildlife Standards. It is the hopes of CSDB to have the Touch Museum reestablished for the 2007-2008 School Year. Watch for future updates.

Colorado O&M Workshop: (CDE Set Aside Funds): This training is co-sponsored by CDE, CAER, CSDB, and Insights Inc. A planning committee is currently working to determine the theme, presenters, dates, and location. Be watching future newsletters for more details on the dates. This training is reserved for Orientation and Mobility Specialists.



Colorado Services for Children with Combined Vision and Hearing Loss Project: (Funded by the federal office of Special Education Projects, housed at CDE): The project will soon be in its fourth year of a federally funded five-year-cycle. There are currently 138 children and youth, age birth through 21 years, who have combined vision and hearing loss (deafblindness) in Colorado. Free technical assistance is provided the families and service providers of these children. The project has a newsletter, *Vibrations*, which is disseminated three times over the course of a school year. The project website has over 60 fact sheets (in English and Spanish) on information specific to deafblindness. The library is open to parents and professionals and is stocked with great resources, including about 50 items specific to visual impairment. The library's inventory is listed on the website, where there also is a downloaded book-loan order form. For more information, contact Tanni at (303) 866-6681 or Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us or Gina Quintana at (303) 866-6605 or Quintana_g@cde.state.co.us and/or go the project webpage: www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-Deafblind.asp

Family Learning Retreat 2008: (CDE Set Aside Funds flowed through CSDB and CSDB funds): The Family Learning Retreat will take place at CSDB on **June 5-7, 2008**. The weekend retreat is for any family who has a child who is deaf/hard of hearing, blind/visually impaired, or deafblind. . This retreat allows families to come together and learn ways of coping with the hardships of raising a child with a disability. This is a great opportunity for families to meet other families and share their stories, have fun, make friends, and learn something new. Karla McKechnie, who works as a TVI at CSDB, and Stefanie Morgan, a parent, represent the blindness/visual impairment on the retreat planning committee. Gina Quintana and Shannon Cannizzaro will represent deafblindness. More information about the Family Learning Retreat will be posted in future *WHOT* newsletters.

Family Literacy Packs: (CSDB supported, housed at the CIMC): Each Family Literacy Pack contains several books (braille and print) along with a Video or DVD of all the stories and several Activity Kits placed in a colorful child's back pack. Students keep the items they make and return the extra materials to the pack. These activities may be a game, a song or an activity. These are well thought out and well put together activities and stories that the whole family can enjoy together. The packs are available for TVIs to check out by contacting Ann Hicks at ahicks@csdb.org.

Low Vision Evaluation Clinics: (CDE Set Aside): The Low Vision Evaluation Team was once again funded for four regional clinics. The clinic team consists of Dr. Tom Theune (optometrist), Jim Olson (certified low vision therapist and TVI) and Donice Fennimore (clinic coordinator). Donice will continue to be responsible for clinic paperwork, including getting the reports out the door, and will be the contact person for setting up each clinic. Donice's low vision clinic duties have been built into her job as an Administrative Assistant with the CIMC. The dates of the 2007-08 clinics are posted within this newsletter, as are the local site coordinators for each clinic.



National Braille Challenge: (Sponsored by CSDB) The Colorado regional contest will again be held at CSDB on Friday, February 1st, 2008. Students may also compete individually in their home school with their TVI administering the tests. Students compete in various categories such as spelling, reading comprehension, speed and accuracy, proofreading, and charts and graphs. The top 12 students from each age group are then invited to the final rounds in Los Angeles, CA around the 3rd week of June, 2008, where they can win prizes including a Braille notetaker valued at over \$5000. In 2007, two students from Colorado have qualified for the final rounds! Contact Randy Witte at CSDB for more information: rwitte@csdb.org or (719) 578-2204. Visit www.brailleinstitute.org and then find pages on the National Braille Challenge for more info.

New Teacher Mentor Project: (CDE Set Aside Funds): This will be the fourth year of the mentor project! The goal is to provide mentoring assistance to students enrolled in the UNC Visual Impairment Program, as well as new teachers in Colorado school districts. Each participant will be paired with a mentor teacher currently working in Colorado. Mentors will receive a \$500 annual stipend for their time and commitment. Tanni Anthony is the project coordinator and can be reached at <anthony_t@cde.state.co.us>.

Psychological Assessments and Consultation: (CSDB staff) Psychological assessments (cognitive and social-emotional) provided to school districts by Ellen Trapp, Ed. S., school psychologist to assist school districts in developing appropriate educational services and supports for students with vision losses. Contact: Ellen Trapp 719-578-2234.

Regional Technology Consultation: (CDE Set Aside Funds): Thanks to the input of TVIs to their Vision Coalition teacher reps, funds were built into this year's budget to sponsor a pilot project for technology consulting in each region. Bonnie Snyder has been hired to provide 28 days of consultation across the state. Each region will have five days of Bonnie's consult time. Information will be sent to each Regional Meeting Coordinator (Carol Love – northern, Nancy Cozart- metro, Chloann Woolley – southern, and Kevin O'Brien –northern) about how to access Bonnie's time.



Snow Shoe Weekend: (sponsored by hardworking teachers!): Details provided by Elaine Karns. The 5th Annual Snowshoe Weekend is tentatively booked for February 8th - 10th at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park. Teachers have graciously volunteered their time to staff this event over the years. Anyone interested in this exciting outdoor opportunity should contact Elaine Karns at (970) 225-6720 or elk@psdschools.org.

SMART Team: (staffed by CSDB personnel): The Statewide Multidisciplinary Assessment Resource Team (SMART) at CSDB is available to consult with your districts' OT, PT, SLP, & School Psychologist staff in the area of blindness. The specialists in each area are certified in their fields and have 7 to 10+ year of experience in working with students who are blind and visually impaired, including learners with multiple disabilities. Contact Donna Keale, CSDB, 719-578-2251; dkeale@csdb.org for more information.



Space Camp: (CSDB Outreach): Space Camp for Interested Visually Impaired Students (SCIVIS) is a week long camp that takes place at the U.S. Space and Rocket Center in Huntsville, AL. Accessible; computers used by students in the Space Camp Programs have been adapted for speech and large print output; materials and equipment used during missions are available in braille and large print. Students participate fully (each student is screened based on their eye medical condition -- limitations may be placed on some). Be watching for more information.

Sports Camp: Sports Camp is a wonderful opportunity for students to get moving and involved with sports and recreation events. Sports Camp has been funded the last 2 years by ABAC, Association of Blind Athletes of Colorado & United States Association of Blind Athletes. Contact for ABAC is Ken Armbruster (President) at 719-210-3978 or Donna Keale at <dkeale@csdb.org>.

State Conference on Visual Impairment: (CDE Set Aside Funds): The dates for the state conference are **October 18-20, 2007**. The conference is co-sponsored by CDE and the Colorado Chapter of AER. It is for parents and professionals who work with children and youth who are blind/visually impaired. A conference flyer and registration is at the end of this newsletter. For more information, contact Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

Student Specific Training and Instruction (CSDB Outreach): CSDB offers opportunities for highly qualified staff to consult on students in school districts across the state to support the school district in meeting a student's specific educational need that occurs as the result of a vision loss. Such services may include social-emotional screening or behavior support as well as academic and compensatory skills. Arrangements for services are made in coordination with local special education directors. Contact: Dr. Laura Douglas, CSDB Director of Outreach. Contact: ldouglas@csdb.org or 719-578-2110.

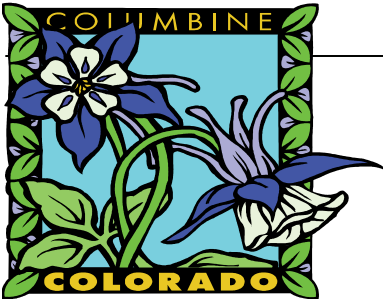
What's Happening Out There (WHOT) Newsletter: (CDE Set Aside Fund): A monthly to bi-monthly newsletter will be mailed to parents of children with visual impairments, and the following professionals working in Colorado schools (TVIs, braillists, VI-paras, and O&M Specialists). It will also be posted on the Blindness/Low Vision website. The newsletter began in 1994 as a result of a Vision Coalition discussion on how to upgrade statewide communication on issues related to visual impairment. If you have something to contribute to future editions, please send it to Tanni at <Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us>.

Vision Coalition: (CDE Set Aside Funds): The mission of the Vision Coalition is to bring the collective resources of the group together to address state priorities improving services to students who are blind/visually impaired." (April 1998) The VC meets three times during a school year. Membership includes representatives from: CDE, CAER, the CIMC, CSDB, NCLID, UNC, and teacher representatives from CSDB and the metro, northern, southern, and western regions. Reps are listed in the Who Ya Gonna Call section at the end of this newsletter. The meetings minutes are published in the What's Happening Out There newsletters.

VIISA Training (CDE Set Aside Funds): The "Working with Preschoolers with Blindness and Vision Impairments in Center-Based Settings" course is anticipated to be offered during January – April 2008 (dates yet to be set) in the Denver metro area. The course will be open to TVIs, COMSs, parents, and other interested early-intervention professionals. Be watching the newsletter for more information. Tanni Anthony is the contact person.



We have a lot going on this year—take time to select what projects work for you, your students and your children. Be in touch with your training needs along the way. Please use this newsletter and the regional TVI meetings as a vehicle of communication and professional development opportunity. Welcome back—here's to School Year 2007-08. Lets make is a great one!



COLORADO CONNECTIONS

☞ A very special thank you to the hard working committee and consummate hosts of the 2006 Family Learning Seminar: **Gina Quintana, Shannon Cannizzaro, Jon Vigne, Diane Covington, Stephanie Morgan, Karla McKechnie, and Sandy Fuentes.** Thank you also to the folks who were on the Panel on Visual Impairments: **Jim Olson, Audrey Levi, Linda Campbell, Patty Wagner, and Tanni Anthony.**

☞ Many folks were busy with their braille competency work over the summer. Congratulations to **Amy Gunning** who earned CDE Certificate of Braille Competency over the summer months! Yay, Amy! Good for **Phyllis Penniston Jordan, Samantha Hoffman, Karla McKechnie, Kristen Lavergne, Mike Plansker, and Suzan Barlow,** and for working on their braille modules.

☞ Congrats to **Michael Plansker, Charlotta Morgan, and Michelle Palazzolo** for earning their ACVREP certification as a certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist!

☞ Congrats to our very own **Louis Tutt** for his article in the July 2007 *Journal of Visual Impairments & Blindness* on his past experience teaching motor skills to young children with deafblindness back in the early days of his career. His article was featured in the journal's section on "This Mattered to Me."

☞ The members of the 2007-08 Vision Coalition will include: **Barbara Adams, Tanni Anthony, Paula Conroy, Nancy Cozart, Kay Ferrell, Ann Hicks, Samantha Hoffman, Stephanie Isbell, Karla McKechnie, Vicki Pearson, Cathy Smyth, and Julia Zanon.** Please be in touch with any of these individuals on any key issues important to you. There is representation from all four TVI/O&M regions of the state, CDE, CSDB, CAER, UNC, NCLID, Vocational Services, and Anchor Center/ CSDB Infant Program.

☞ Thanks to **Janet Anderson** and **Nancy Cozart** for their expertise in reviewing the 2007 CSAP TVI comments. Together with Tanni Anthony, each comment was analyzed for its accuracy and possible next steps such as working to improve CSAP questions, altering tactile graphics, and/or offering more training to the TVIs administering the tests. Thanks again to everyone who took the time to send in this feedback. Thanks to **Sarah Sonnier, Wendy Stoltman, and Nancy Cozart** for their comments specific to the CSAP Accommodations Manual.

Bringing the Expanded Core Curriculum Home:

Putting Colorado Kids on the Map!



When:: October 18-20, 2007 (Thursday evening through Saturday afternoon)

Thursday, October 18th - 2:00 – 5:30 – Braille Proctored Session for persons interested in taking the CDE approved braille modules. You must reserve your time and indicate which modules you will be taking. Reserve your space with Tanni via email.

Thursday, October 18th - 6:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m. *Light* reception munchies will be served. This is an information-packed session where resources will be shared by the American Printing House for the Blind and CO folks, including a State of the State Update on state wide initiatives and work groups specific to visual impairment.

Friday, October 19th - 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Dr. LeRhea Sanford will present on *Functional Vision Assessment and Learning Media Assessment*. Dr. Sanford's FVA / LMA tool has been published by the American Printing House for the Blind and APH is sponsoring her Colorado presentation!

Saturday, October 20th - 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. – Colorado Local Talent Mini Sessions

These sessions are still being finalized. Be watching the website for more details at <http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/SD-BLV.asp>

Tentative sessions include: abacus update, low vision, organizational skills, technology, and other Expanded Core related topics.

Where: Radisson Hotel at Denver Stapleton Plaza, 3333 Quebec Street in Denver.

The hotel phone number is (303) 321-3500. The hotel is located off of I-70 on the east side of I-25. Take exit 278 (Quebec) and travel south. The hotel is located on the west side of Quebec. If you need more detailed directions, please go to MapQuest. A block of sleeping rooms has been reserved. To make a reservation for a sleeping room for October 18, 19, and 20th, please call 1-800-333-3333. Ask for the block reserved for the CDE State Conference on Visual Impairment. The room rate is \$89 plus tax for both single and double rooms.

Credit: The training will be offered for one semester of UNC credit for participants attending all sessions and writing a follow-up application paper. ACVREP clock hours will be offered and prorated to the individual's attendance.

Questions: Please be in touch with Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or anthony_t@cde.state.co.us

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FORM

Please complete and return this form to Tanni Anthony, CDE, 201 East Colfax Ave., Denver, CO 80203. If you have any questions, please contact Tanni Anthony at (303) 866-6681 or Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY!

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Yes, I will be coming for the full conference. I have enclosed my registration fee (*payable to CAER*) and have indicated the amount of the registration costs. We cannot accept credit cards.

_____ \$40 parent, para, brailist, or **full time** university student rate **on or before** 09-28-07

_____ \$60 parent, paraprofessional, or full time student rate **after** 9-28-07

_____ \$60 professional rate **on or before** 9-28-07

_____ \$80 professional rate **after** 9-28-07

_____ \$40 Single day of registration only _____ Friday only or _____ Saturday only

Please check here if you plan on attending the Thursday night session so that we have an accurate count for the evening reception: _____

Registration forms must be postmarked by **September 28, 2007** to ensure your reserved place as a conference participant. Conference rates will increase after September 28 and we cannot guarantee that your registration form will be accepted based on limited available space. **There will be no registration refunds. Please indicate any accommodations that you might need:**

braille materials _____ large print materials: _____

other: _____

To fully accommodate these requests, they must be made no later than **September 18, 2006**

HOTEL ARRANGEMENTS: Call 1-800-333-3333. You will need to ask for the CDE State Conference on Visual Impairment. The room rate is \$89 plus tax.

THANKS!! A confirmation email will be sent to you once your registration is received.

August—September 2007

State of Colorado Department of Education

Colorado State Board of Education

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6th Congressional District

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