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WHAT'S HAPPENING OUT THERE!

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

March—April 2008

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Serendipity At Its Best!

By Tanni L. Anthony

In the next newsletter, I will share more about my professional meetings while I was recently in Israel. For the moment, I want to share a marvelous adventure that I had close to the end of this wonderful 10-day trip.

One of my friends who lives in Israel is an delightful woman named Evie Rote. She is a TVI working with young children who are blind/visually impaired. She took the time to travel to Tel Aviv one day just to spend some time together. We had absolutely NO AGENDA—we agreed to be spontaneous and just let the path take us to new places. Our only concrete decision was to start in Jaffa, a historic 3,000 year old city. As we started meandering this ancient place, we happened on a road near the port. There were many buildings that looked abandoned or in the process of renovation, and our contact with people waivered. At one point, we both agreed we were in the wrong neighborhood. Suddenly Evie looked up at a sign on a newer building and said, “this means something about deafblind.” I thought she misread the Hebrew. What we discovered was a theatre called Nalaga’at Center, which is a stage for the deafblind. Nalaga’at means “do touch” Yes, it was true! This theatre employs 70 people who are blind, Deaf/Hard of Hearing, or deafblind. We walked right in and were able to book seats for the play that evening. Their current play, entitled *Not by Bread Alone*, features 11 deafblind actors. For an hour and a half, the audience learns about the unique and sometimes isolated world of deafblindness. We proceeded the play by having dinner at their Blackout Restaurant, where we dined in total darkness and were served by blind waiters. We found out half way through the meal that the waiting list to get into the restaurant is FOUR months. We simply wandered in and had the most unforgettable and touching evening.

At the end of the evening, I met the Eran Gur, a charter member of the center. We talked about common US colleagues in the field of deafblindness. Unbelievable. Truly, this was a magical experience ... serendipity at its best.

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Bits From Bonnie

By Bonnie Snyder

BonnieLS21@Gmail.Com

The IT Experience

Ok, folks, gather your chocolate chip cookies and banana bread loaves and be ready to do battle. Or, better yet, be ready to avoid battle! More on that later ...

History in the field of technology usually refers to maybe five to ten years ago; particularly when we think in terms of technology in education. It wasn't that long ago we were beginning to feel a glimmer of excitement at the prospect of technology opening whole new worlds for our visually impaired students. There was BEX, there was the Echo speech synthesizer, etc., etc. And our kids were off and running in the technology arena.

The software, particularly, was sparse, but we made use of everything that we discovered would work for our students. Even today, software for the blind is minimal. Commercially, there are some decent programs marketed by APH, but there is very little else. But, if you look around the Internet, you can find all kinds of exciting and useful shareware and freeware that can be used for all areas of disability, the blind and visually impaired included. However, there are viruses and system incompatibilities around the Internet, too, and those in charge of our technology have serious concerns about allowing people to make use of these programs for fear that they will destroy their precious computers.

Here is where our chocolate chip cookies and banana bread loaves come in. First of all, we need to try out these freeware and shareware programs on our own computers and run them through our virus checkers. Next, we need to contact our IT people and invite them to tea ... er, set up an appointment with them. Then, at our appointment, we can share our cookies and loaves in an atmosphere of love and caring, and explain to them what it is we do and how difficult it is to find appropriate software to use with our students to meet their differing needs. We can explain to them that we have extensively tested these programs on our own computers and run them through virus checkers and have found them to be benign. Along with our cookies and loaves, we can give them CDs upon which these programs are stored and as we leave this pleasant meeting of minds, we can be assured that we have done all that we can, in the most positive way, to give the IT people the information they need to justify the installation of the shareware and freeware. And we will hope to hear back from them within our lifetime that the programs we requested will, indeed, be installed for the educational benefit of our students. After all, we're all in this together and are all looking to what is best for students and their education. Right?

Just as a thought, in this atmosphere of cooperation between educators and ITs, I would like to suggest that many of the computer problems anticipated by the ITs would be more easily resolved if they would get either Acronis True Image (my preference) or Norton Ghost and, before school starts, make an image of each district's computers. Then, if the unthinkable happens, the computers can be restored to pristine condition by clearing off everything on the affected computers and installing the image made by Acronis or Ghost.

I would like to think that we, as educators, could have a bit more say in the technology we use to teach our students, but until then, gather the cookies and loaves and do what you can.

Metro Low Vision Clinic

By Donice Fennimore



Great Clinic – A big thanks to Nancy Knight and all the staff of Anchor Center for making the Metro Region 2008 low vision clinic a great success.

There were 17 students presenting at the clinic with 19 low vision devices being dispensed. The students ranged from preschool to high school seniors. There were 16 TVIs present representing 8 districts and Anchor Center. Thanks to Mimi Schaper, Judy Wiepert, Kaitlin Lombardi (our newest UNC student working in Denver), Samantha Hoffman,

Wendy Schlageter, Trina Boyd-Pratt, Janet Anderson, Shelly Moats, Nancy Knight, Nancy Cozart, Edie Smith, Mike Plansker, Sue Larson and JC Greeley, Charlotta Morgan and Sarah Bickford for bringing students to the clinic.

Much interest was aroused among parents of Anchor students during the clinic. They were very interested in what the clinic does and about the devices offered. The team also had the privilege of meeting Sally Roberts, board member of Anchor, Karen Cheeld, office manager of Anchor and Robin Bremner, TVI from Moffat County/NW BPCES who came to observe the clinic. It is awesome how much interest the clinic and its services is attracting.

Thanks to Nancy Knight for having the clinic so well organized and a thank you to JC Greeley and all the staff of Anchor for letting us utilize their beautiful new facility.

Northern Low Vision Clinic

By Donice Fennimore

What an awesome way to finish up the low vision clinic year!

The northern region clinic was held February 22-23, 2008 in Fort Collins at the Ensign Center. The clinic was a great success with 12 students and 9 TVIs representing 5 districts and Outreach. The clinic would like to thank Teresa Barone, Janis Mountford, Danielle McGrath, Wendy Stoltman, Vicki Pearson, Donna Keale, Sally Eldridge, Angel Findler and Jan Wood for bringing students to the clinic.

Students, grades 2nd through 10th, were introduced to low vision devices that will help in their literacy program, as well as, potentially broaden their abilities outside of the school setting.

We would like to thank Carol Love and Sally Eldridge for putting together a well organized clinic and to the staff of Ensign for letting us use their facility.

The clinic team would like to take this time to thank everyone who has helped with the clinics this year. Your efforts are very much appreciated, not only by the team, but also by the students and their parents who have benefited from the clinic experience.

We are already looking forward to another exciting year in 2008-2009. The low vision clinic is growing and developing into a truly awesome service for our low vision students in Colorado. Again, thanks to everyone who helps make this service possible.



Why CSAP Still Works (March 28 News Release)

By Dwight D. Jones, Colorado Commissioner of Education



Imagine for a moment that the results from the Colorado Student Assessment Program were returned only to parents and teachers to improve instruction for each individual student.

At its core, that's the essence of CSAP—to see if students are meeting state standards. While other states have lost legal challenges over the validity of their statewide tests, Colorado is fortunate to have an assessment that has provided educators, policymakers and taxpayers with accurate information about student achievement for 11 years.

Just a few years after being introduced, CSAP results were considered so legitimate they were used to form the heart of the accountability systems for state (School Accountability Ratings and accreditation status) and federal (No Child Left Behind) governments.

Since there are two fundamental uses for CSAP results, let's separate the discussion into two questions. The first question is whether the test is geared to the right standards for students. I think the answer is "the standards need updating and once the update is complete, the state will likely need an updated assessment, too." The second question is whether we should use CSAP results to place schools on track for punitive measures if they don't improve. I think the answer is "we owe it to students to keep taking a hard look and doing everything we can to support schools where achievement continually falls below expectations."

Prior to the introduction of CSAP, the state's approach to accountability was patchwork. Each district selected its own assessments. Comparisons between school systems were challenging, at best. Schools and districts could hide behind averages.

CSAP changed that. It provided consistent information from Trinidad to Fort Collins, from Wray to Grand Junction. Results revealed some tough truths about school performance. That's the sign of a good accountability system doing its job. From the federal government's system through No Child Left Behind, the results revealed that many school districts weren't reaching all their populations. Again, the accountability system put the spotlight on students who needed more of a boost.

CSAP results played a key role when I worked as a district superintendent. The data was critical to spotting gaps in achievement associated with race and income. I used the data to ask questions of schools and identify successful strategies. Principals statewide use the data to drive school improvement planning. Parents use CSAP results—and deserve the results—as an indicator of progress.

Some of the discussions about CSAP are based on faulty information. One criticism is that CSAP eats up lots of class time. From my perspective, that's not true. Students take up to 12 hours of CSAP in grades five, eight and ten. In those grade levels, that's three hours each in reading, writing, math and science. Students in grades three, four, six, seven and nine take nine hours of tests (because no science tests are given in those years). In all, CSAP requires about 1 percent of a student's time during the school year.

Is CSAP too expensive? The statewide testing program costs \$18 million. Each test costs about \$11 to administer and process. For example, the costs for a student taking four tests (reading, writing, math and science)

As the General Assembly passes the half-way point in its deliberations this year, a number of proposals have surfaced that would begin to dismantle CSAP. I believe caution is in order. There are some issues below the surface of CSAP that are less visible and quite substantial, like an iceberg.

One issue is the Colorado Growth Model. Following the lead of the Colorado State Legislature and two bills that received strong bipartisan support, staff at the Colorado Department of Education recently unveiled a new tool that will soon enable parents, schools, districts, and the state to understand how individual students are progressing from year to year and provides a common, statewide means to understand how much growth is needed for each student to reach post-secondary readiness.

The data that fuels this tool is generated by CSAP and draws on year-to-year, student-by-student information. Swapping out CSAP for another test in grades eight through 10, as has been proposed, would render much of our data useless.

The second issue is federal accountability. The federal No Child Left Behind legislation requires states to have tests in place that are aligned to standards, produce valid results and generate the data required to measure Adequate Yearly Progress. The AYP philosophy, I believe, has compelled schools to discuss the needs of every child. That has been an extremely positive step. Swapping out CSAP for another test could jeopardize federal funding and could prove costly. States such as Michigan and Illinois have spent considerable time, effort and money to align new tests with federal requirements. They still lack final approval.

To repeat, it is time for thoughtful changes to CSAP. The current standards need to be updated. The changes in our world in the past 11 years are substantive. What's taught in the classroom must prepare students for their first day after graduation and the current standards may not reflect the world they will soon meet.

We are already working on this review. The State Board of Education joined me in announcing the review of standards last September. The vote was unanimous. We announced also that the review of standards would lead, quite naturally, to changes in the CSAP test itself. The understanding was that the standards review would be done first.

Adjustments should be made after new standards are adopted, not before. Adjustments need to be made so that the growth model can generate useful results and so federal accountability remains intact.

I am a user of CSAP. I believe in the results it generates. I believe it's important to maintain a strong state-wide accountability system for students and schools. Common sense suggests we should fix what needs fixing, build on what we've learned and continue to make improvements.



CSDB School for the Blind Presents

Remaining Short Term Courses 2008

Date:

April 10-12, 2008

Focus:

Introduction to Bus Travel & Social Skills



The Short Term Course offerings are developed to serve students throughout the State of Colorado. They are designed to help students benefit from a short period of intensive instruction in an area of the expanded core curriculum for visually impaired students. We want your help in designing your student's instruction. We have set aside specific weeks (see above) for the training, but we can lengthen, shorten or change the dates based on specific needs for your student.

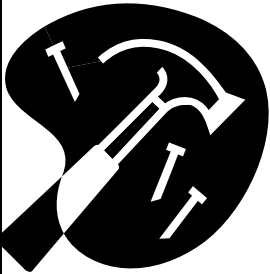
For more information, please contact Donna Keale at <dkeale@csdb.org>.

The SEE THE FUTURE Fund's

"Tools for Life" Update

The Need:

Visually impaired or blind students may be highly motivated and highly educated, but without the proper "tools" they are not able to perform to 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 students greater access to information in their homes, schools, and communities.

**The Mission:**

To provide financial assistance to the families of visually impaired and blind students (Pre-K – Transition) who are residents of Colorado. This assistance is to help purchase necessary adaptive equipment (tools), which students may own and utilize in their home, school, and community. These tools will help support

literacy and the pursuit of higher education allowing students to reach and exceed their hopes and dreams.

The Update:

Over \$23,000 was raised in 2006 which was awarded in December of 2007! Thirteen families were given "Tools for Life" scholarships to assist their purchase of desk-top & portable electronic reading machines. The students ranged from pre-school to 10th grade and over 70% of the families receiving "Tools for Life" assistance had incomes below \$25,000.

Next Application Deadline: April 15, 2008

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.



FamilyConnect: Web Site for Parents

FamilyConnect is a web site for parents of children who are blind/visually impaired that will be launched in April by the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) and the National Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments (NAPVI). Please visit the FamilyConnect Administration Center at www.afb.org/familyconnectadmin

BRaille INSTRUCTION

Tutoring is available for contracted and uncontracted braille by telephone, e-mail, and in person. Braille instruction for use of state and stylus, Braille laptops, and Perkins brailers can be given. Lessons are \$5 per hour. To learn more, contact Edward Zolotarevsky by e-mail at eddyz69@aol.com or by phone at (908) 470-1533.



AN ESSAY CONTEST FOR ALL!!

The American Printing House for the Blind is celebrating 150 years of services this next year. In recognition of APH employees, past and present, they are inviting blind and visually impaired children, adults, and the professional who work with them to tell us how APH products have impacted the creation of an independent lifestyle.

The contest is open to:

- Students with a visual impairment enrolled in grades 3 through 12 for the 2007-2008 school year.
- Adult consumers of APH products.
- TVIs, rehabilitation counselors, and other professionals in the field of blindness.

Contestants must compose an original essay based on their own thoughts and in their own words with limited guidance from others. The topic for student is “How APH has Helped Me to be Independent” and for professionals, “How APH has Helped Me Promote the Independence of My Clients or Students.”

Prizes will include the latest APH technology and gift certificates for APH products. A “meet the author and autograph session” will be held the night of the banquet of the 2008 Annual APH meeting.

All entries must be received by **April 11th, 2008**. For more information about this contest, and to download the rules, please go to the website: www.APH.org/essay.html or call 1-800-223-1839.

BOEC

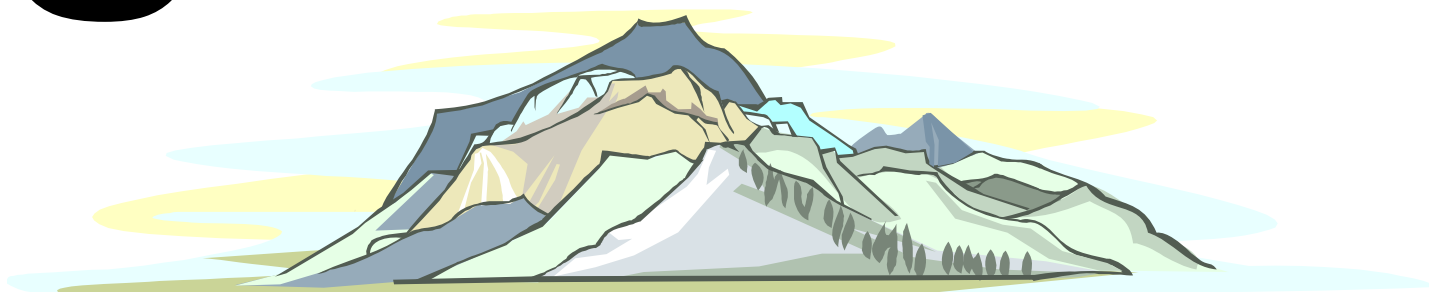
What is the BOEC?



For more than 30 years, the Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center (BOEC) has provided life changing outdoor learning experiences to people of all abilities, with a focus on those with special needs. The BOEC provides a sense of freedom to those who are routinely excluded from activity due to a disability or special need. Whether skiing in the Adaptive Ski and Ride Program at Breckenridge or Keystone Ski Resorts, paddling the Wests' great rivers, or mastering the Ropes Course, the BOEC inspires people of all abilities to discover new places, learn new skills and rekindle their spirit in the heart of the Colorado Rocky Mountains.

Programs for the blind and visually impaired. The Breckenridge Outdoor Education Center offers activities including skiing, snowboarding, snowshoeing, white water rafting, ropes course, adaptive cycling, teambuilding and more! Thanks to a generous grant from the Alcon Foundation, we are currently expanding our programming for individuals who are blind or visually impaired. The BOEC is offering a winter ski and snowboard camp for the visually impaired ages 13-17, and a summer camp for visually impaired adults in 2008. Join our experienced staff for fun and adventure in the Rocky Mountains!

For further information, check out <www.boec.org>, or call 800-383-2632.




Snow Shoe Weekend!


By Elaine Karns


What a powerful experience to spend the weekend with the children who are visually impaired in Colorado! There were 42 participants who attended the 2008 Snowshoe Weekend at the YMCA Estes Park Center this year! On Friday, February 8, we gathered at Twin Sisters Lodge for dinner and a weekend adventure. The morning dawned cold and windy and we packed our lunches and bundled up for a day on the trail in snowshoes. We have two snowshoe groups: Hares and Jackrabbits and we met up about 3:00 at the Fall River Visitor's Center for a program on Winter Ecology with a ranger! It was a wonderful experience to touch both horns and antlers, as well as skins of many of the animals that live in Rocky Mountain National Park! Special thanks to the YMCA for their hospitality and RMNP for providing programs and park passes for our vehicles! On Sunday morning we hit the sledding hills and enjoyed the freedom of flying down the hills, followed by our annual shopping experience at the Visitor's Center and lunch at the YMCA. Then it was awards and our farewells. Each participant received a blow gun with pompon ammunition! Hope all are enjoying!


This was the sixth year of our outdoor winter adventure and we would like to thank all who participated to make it possible, both teachers and CSDB staff: **Teresa Barone, Trina Boyd-Pratt, Deb Carlisle, Terri Emerick, Nancy Knight, Cheryl Leidich, Pat Lewis, Kaitlin Lombardi, Bill Muir, Larry Northrop, Julie Novak, Mike Plansker, Dan Spigarelli, and Tyrone Threats.** It is an amazing staff who help to teach independence and facilitate interactions within the group. **YOU ARE THE BEST!!!** Thanks for all your support, and I hope to see you next year!

Resources and Materials


 **Letting Your Child's Wild Side Out: Raising the Wild and Confident VI Baby, Toddler, Preschooler** DVD; This inspirational DVD is a five-year case study on how one family embraced early intervention services, applied them, and laid a solid foundation for their child to master new skills. She is now a downhill skier, trapeze artist and gymnast. The DVD has photos and videos of the child in action. It is available at <www.babymilagro.org/DVD> for \$49.94 plus tax, shipping and handling. Contact: Grace Tiscareño-Sato 510-967-3339


 **AFB'S Talking Book Archives** The American Foundation for the Blind has launched its web-based Talking Book Archives, celebrating the birth of the Talking Book. Thanks to a grant from the Carnegie Foundation, which funded AFB's first efforts to use audio technology for blind readers in 1932, an electronic binding aid to this historic collection is now available online. The archival finding aid is accompanied by a multimedia exhibit, including audio clips from celebrated narrators, letters, press clippings, and photographs from the collection. . The archives are available at <www.afb.org/talkingbook>.

 **"As I See It"** by Robert Theodore Branco This book is a collaboration of events and facts presented by a blind adult. It discusses a wide variety of topics relating to blindness, including discrimination, myths, adaptive technology, training, legislation, etc. The book's ISBN is 9781434323521 and is available through <www.authorhouse.com>.

 **"Touch the Invisible Sky"** is a new Tactile Cosmos book sponsored by NASA that uses Braille, large type, and tactile diagrams of celestial images observed by the space telescopes Hubble, Chandra, and Spitzer to reveal the cosmos to people who are blind or visually impaired. The tactile diagrams feature raised outlines and textures superimposed on the images themselves to indicate how the objects appear differently according to wavelength viewed in – for example, radio, infrared, visible, ultra-violet, or x-ray. The text explains what each image shows, and even describes how the different types of telescopes capture the images. NASA is making this book a national resource by distributing copies at no cost to schools for the blind around the U.S., the Library of Congress, several blind technology and training centers, and state libraries that have astronomy collections. NASA has funded two other astronomy-related Braille books: "Touch the Universe" and "Touch the Sun."



 **Seedlings Braille Books for Children — 2008**
Anna's Book Angel Project A free book project for children who are braille readers is made possible by donations made to Seedlings in loving memory of Anna Kirstina Bonde, who was killed by a drunk driver in 2001. Every child who is blind or visually impaired is eligible to win **one** free book per year. Adults who are blind can register to win one free book per year to read with their children. Seedlings randomly selects approximately 10 children per week from those who have registered, and they are each sent one free book from their "wish list." Since the beginning of the project, Seedlings has given away almost 6,000 braille books and they will continue to do so as long as funds permit. Visit <www.seedlings.org> and click on "Special Projects" to register. Click on "Anna's Book Angel Project" and fill out the form, including the list of books (from the Seedlings catalog) that you might like to receive. Individuals may also register by calling Seedlings at 800-777-8552. Individuals must re-register each year.

 **Bookshare.org Adds Braille Bug® Reading Club Books** The [AFB Braille Bug®](http://www.afb.org/BrailleBug) Reading Club web site promotes braille reading, and now, Bookshare.org has filled in the last few missing titles included on the reading club list. The books are site available for downloading into braille display or printed out to a braille embosser. Funded by a grant from the U.S. Department of Education to Benetech's Bookshare.org, all U.S. students who are blind or have qualifying print disabilities may access the Bookshare.org library. For more information visit <www.bookshare.org/web/BrailleBug.html>.

 **Princeton Braillists Offer Tactile Maps** A number of tactile maps of Canada and the United States are available from Princeton Braillists, a small group of senior citizen volunteers whose goal is to make high-quality but inexpensive tactile maps and drawings for people of all ages who are blind or visually impaired. Maps and drawings are created by hand in metal foil, then duplicated by the Thermoform process. The maps are detailed, and some experience with the use of tactile drawings is recommended. For more information, phone 215-357-7715 or 609-924-5207, visit <mysite.verizon.net/resvqbx/princetonbraillists/> or contact the group by postal mail at 76 Leabrook Lane, Princeton, NJ 08540.

 **Beeping Eggs** Directions for making "beeping eggs" can be found at: <<http://www.telecompioneers.org/>>



TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!

SCHOLARSHIPS FOR OUR GRADUATES!!

- ☆ **Guildscholars off to College** In early 2007, the Jewish Guild for the Blind awarded 16 scholarships to high school seniors. For information on the Guild's scholarship program, contact Gordon Rovins at (212) 760-7801 or e-mail <guildscholar@jgb.org>.

- ☆ **Friends-In-Art Scholarship Announcement** High school seniors and college students are invited to apply for the Friends-In-Art scholarship for the 2008-2009 school year. This \$1,500 scholarship is offered annually for achievement, talent, and excellence in the arts. The scholarship is for students who are planning to major, or are currently majoring, in the field(s) of music, art, drama, or creative writing, and are blind or visually impaired and live in North America. Obtain an application form by writing to Harvey Miller, 196 E. French Broad St., Brevard, N.C. 28712-3410. Include a self-addressed, stamped envelope when requesting the application. You also may request an electronic application by sending an e-mail to <hhmiller@citcom.net>. Applications and supporting information must be in the hands of the scholarship committee **by the end of May 2008**.

☆ **2008 Scholarship Awards Program** The National Federation of the Blind of Colorado (NFB) is offering scholarships that range in value from between \$800 to as much as \$6,000. NFB is building opportunities for the blind in education and beyond. Students that are legally blind please apply immediately. Teachers, counselors, family member or friends of a student that is legally blind please encourage students to apply.

The deadline is May 16, 2008. For more information please contact Eric Wood, Chairman Scholarship Committee, NFB of Colorado, 1223 Lake Plaza Drive, Suite D, Colorado Springs, CO 80906, (719) 527-0488



SUMMER BRAILLE

MUSIC INSTITUTE

The National Resource Center for Blind Musicians is accepting applications for its seminar for blind college-bound musicians, which will be held July 14-20 at the Overbrook School for the Blind in Philadelphia. Designed for serious Braille-reading music students preparing for or already in college (ages average 17-21), the program tailors instruction to each person's need to develop Braille music and theory skills, and to learn to use technology to submit music assignments in print notation. Applicants must have already studied some music theory, have had several years of music lessons, and be able to present a polished and pleasing performance. Contact the Resource Center regarding tuition, scholarship criteria, and the application and audition procedure. Deadline for requesting applications is April 12; all application materials must be in the Resource Center office by May 8.

Also contact the Resource Center if you are a sighted teacher and would like to gain experience as an intern helping out during the program, or are a parent and would like to bring a younger student for an evaluation. The Resource Center now works with colleges and state agencies to provide phone and online tutoring to students studying music at the college level. For more information, visit <www.blindmusicstudent.org>; call David Goldstein at (203) 366-3300, ext. 229; or e-mail <info@blindmusicstudent.org>.



**National Resource
Center for Blind
Musicians**



A Division of the
Music and Arts Center for Humanity

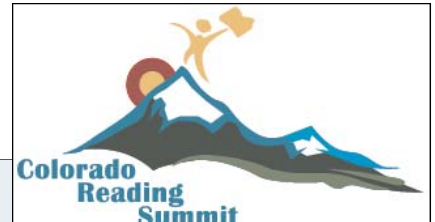
NEC NEC Foundation of America



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE ARTS

2008 Colorado Reading Summit

Breaking Through the Gap



Breakout Session Highlights

Presentations by Colorado schools making gains and closing gaps in reading and writing;

National research on early and adolescent reading and writing instruction; and

Examples of effective Response to Intervention implementation.

Date: May 12, 2008

Location: Adams Mark Hotel,
soon to be Sheraton
1560 Court Place
Denver, Colorado

Time: 7:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Early Registration \$105

by May 1, 2008 5:00 p.m. MST

Regular Registration \$150

after May 1, 2008

Registration fees include all conference materials, continental breakfast and lunch.

Visit the Colorado Department of Education website for additional information.

http://www.cde.state.co.us/cde_readsum/index.htm

Ensight Skills Center



The Ensign Skills Center, a business supported by the Fort Collins and other Colorado Lions Clubs, was established in 2001 as a 501(c) 3 organization. Ensign is now an official state supported Lions program. The mission of the Ensign Skills Center is to provide individuals with low vision the opportunity to enhance their life skills, independence, and self-confidence in a safe environment through adaptive technology and training. It serves people with low vision in northern Colorado and southern Wyoming.

The Ensign Skills Center provides low vision evaluations, training in daily living skills, and a large assortment of low vision aids. These tools and services are provided to those who need them, regardless of one's ability to pay. In addition, the Ensign Skills Center provides counseling services, an assistive technology program, and support groups. The comprehensive program empowers people with low vision to proactively manage their independence and safety through training and care for their visual needs.

Last year the Ensign Skills Center was able to serve over 3000 individuals and continues to grow in several directions. The Ensign Skills Center has been the host organization for the Northern Regional Children's Low Vision Clinic for the past 3 years. In addition, the Center has provided funding for low vision devices, software, hardware and miscellaneous tools for home and school use by students.

In September 2007, Ensign took over the management and operations of the Curtis Strong Center for the visually impaired in Greeley Colorado, which is a program of the Northern Colorado Medical Center Foundation. The Curtis Strong Center has been open Fridays since opening in 2004. The Center will offer the same programs currently offered in the Fort Collins center. By offering services in both locations, Ensign is now able to reach out to more individuals struggling with vision loss.

Ensign has received accreditation by the National Accreditation Council for Agencies Serving People with Blindness or Visual Impairment. In October 2007, the Ensign Skills Center received the Mayor's award of "Service Provider of the Year" by the Fort Collins Commission on Disability.

For more information about the Ensign Skills Center and programs, please call 970-407-9999 or 866-407-9990, or email ensight@qwest.net. The Ensign Skills Center is located at 3307 S. College Ave, Suite 108, Fort Collins, and is open 10 AM - 5 PM Monday thru Friday.

Curtis Strong Center is a program of the Northern Colorado Medical Center Foundation and is located at 918 13th Street, Suite #4 Greeley, Colorado 80631. 970-353-9417

Visit their website at <www.ensightskills.org>.





Web-based Professional Development & Individualized Consultation to Enhance Inclusion

Free continuing education in the Denver metro area!

Students who have access to the curriculum learn more and perform better on the CSAPA.

The Web-PDI continuing education course prepares special educators, therapists, AT specialists or early childhood educators from preschool through grade 12 to facilitate their students' participation in learning and social activities.

Why facilitate student participation?

For any student with a disability, being able to participate in the curriculum is an essential prerequisite to learning. Students who are deprived of the ability to interact with peers and learning materials become spectators in their own classrooms.



Passive Participation

- Low skill development
- Little or no independence
- Students are not engaged



Active Participation

- New skills acquired
- Greater independence
- Students are engaged



What will happen once you are enrolled?

All participants will be required to complete seven learning modules and a classroom project with a student. They will receive consultation, continuing education credit, and a payment of up to \$100 for completion of the course, class project, and all questionnaires. To document the changes in student participation, each student will be videotaped two times during the study. Students will receive a payment of \$20 for each videotape completed.

Contact: Teri Brogdon, UCDHSC, 303-315-2318 teri.brogdon@uchsc.edu

Office of Special Education Programs, Project #H324C040157

COMIRB #06-0460



National Federation of the Blind Junior Science Academy

July 23-27, 2008
Baltimore, MD

For the first time, the National Center for Blind Youth in Science (NCBYS) will be offering a Junior Science Academy (JSA) targeting children in grades three through six. This year, with hands-on experiences, tactile materials, and innovative nonvisual teaching methods, the Academy will open its doors to the youngest group of scientific explorers in NCBYS history.

Students: The four-day session will expose blind children to the excitement of science in real-life applications. Students will discover that science can be fun through hands-on instruction, field trips, and interactive activities as they learn about how different aspects of the environment work together to create the world around them.

The JSA will be rooted in the high expectations of the NFB philosophy and will expose participants to a variety of positive experiences. Under the guidance of accomplished blind educators and mentors, students will learn how alternative techniques help make science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) subjects accessible and more engaging. In addition, follow-up activities will ensure that children and their families stay connected to a variety of resources provided by the National Federation of the Blind, including accessing tools for learning STEM curriculum, acquiring better blindness skills, and interacting with positive blind role models.

Parents: Unique seminars and hands-on workshops will take place in conjunction with the children's activities. These sessions will be designed to help parents better meet the academic and social needs of their child. Sessions will include such topics as Braille literacy, orientation and mobility, advocacy, and empowerment. Parents will also be introduced to a variety of beneficial resources available to them and their families.

Cost: All aspects of the program, including transportation, room, and board for one parent/guardian and one child will be provided by the NFB at no cost to participants.

For more information please go to:

http://www.blindscience.org/ncbys/Junior_Science_Academy.asp?SnID=1446606145



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 or to
Tanni Anthony, CDE, 201 East Colfax, Denver, CO 80203.**



Summer Enrichment 2008

For Students Who Are Blind Or Visually Impaired

Date:

June 1—June 6

Program:

Colorado Adventures (grades 2-6)

Explore the beginnings of Colorado: visit a mine, study the early settlers, explore the Front Range, hike and swim.

June 8—June 13

June 8-10

June 8-13

SPORTS EDUCATION CAMP (ages 10-16)

Junior Camp—ages 10-12

Senior Camp—ages 13-16

June 15—June 20

1 Week Independent Living Camp (grades 7-10)

Orientation and Mobility to include night and some bus travel, socializing, recreation and leisure activities. This introductory course to independence covers the Expanded Core Curriculum found in the National Agenda.

June 15—June 27

2 Week Independent Living Camp (grades 10-12)

Students help create this advanced independence course, including cooking, laundry and personal relationship skills as well as orientation/mobility, recreation/leisure skills and more! The course has a transition focus, involving a visit to a college disability office, and activities with USABA, the Role Model Team, and The Seeing Eye, Inc. guide dog program.

June 22—June 27

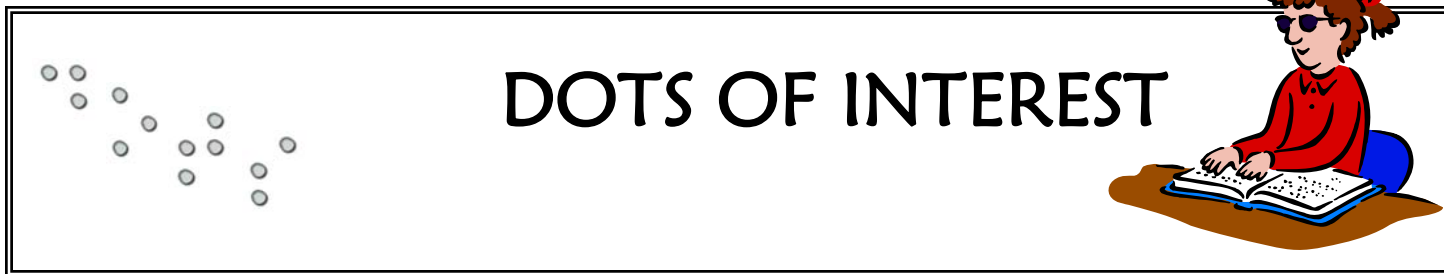
Park and Wildlife Study (grades 2-6)

Learn about the natural habitats of animals living within the Pikes Peak region. Coordinated with the Cheyenne Mountain Zoo, students can touch skins and skulls, feed live animals and learn more about the zoo.

Enrollment is limited. Call or email Donna for applications: dkeale@csdb.org or 719-578-2251.

Cost: \$50.00 per student registering before May 2, 2008. \$60.00 per student after May 2, 2008.

Cost includes all food and activities.



The National Braille Challenge 2008

by Randy Witte



(Editor's Note: Randy is too humble to take a bow for all of this work behind organizing, hosting, and all the behind-the-scenes work on the Braille Challenge—it is a tremendous feat. Randy—you are the greatest!)

CSDB hosted its 4th regional contest of the National Braille Challenge on February 1st, 2008. This contest is sponsored by the Braille Institute in Los Angeles and includes a preliminary round and final rounds this summer in L.A. The top 12 finishers from the regional contests in each of the five age groups are invited to the finals. This year, CSDB had 24 contestants in the Braille Challenge, followed by 15 students in the Rookie Division for a total of 39 Braille students. We welcomed 15 visiting students and their Teachers of the Visually Impaired, and our 24 participating students were most welcoming and cordial! Even though the Challenge is fun, we were glad to see some visiting TVI's, Braillists, and parents joining us—and we welcomed their help!

A BIG thanks goes out to **Mike Plansker, Nancy Cozart, Cheryl Leidich, Carol Love, Julie King, Deb Carlisle, Linda Campbell, Vicki Pearson, and Wanda Gwinn.**

The contestants began the Challenge with encouraging greetings from Superintendent Carol Hilty, Principal Lou Tutt, Colorado Dept. of Education Vision Consultant Tanni Anthony, and our own alumna student and teacher, Ms. Bambi Venetucci! The schedule was reviewed, and the contestants were off and running (walking, actually, as we do not run in the school building).

The Braille Challenge is not easy—the contests range from spelling to reading comprehension, charts and graphs, speed reading and accuracy (which is really a transcribing contest) and proofreading. First graders must take a 50 word spelling test, using uncontracted and contracted Braille, while the middle and high school students have a 25- minute test where they must listen to an audio recording of two 325-word passages, and transcribe the audio to Braille as accurately as possible. The 1st and 2nd grade group (called “Apprentices”) got their first test—Proofreading—and, as Miss Amy Gunning was asking them to look at the test, 3 of the 4 contestants began to cry! Meanwhile, over in the Colorado Instructional Materials Center offices, the 15 Rookies were having fun with our art teacher, Ms. Barbara Jack, making a tactile quilt, along with some other Braille activities and contests. Many of these Rookies will soon have enough Braille skill to move into the official Challenge!

The contests went until we all reconvened in Lion's Conference Center for Louie's Pizza, then it was off to more contests in the afternoon. Finally, the Braille challenged students came back to the auditorium for prize bags and drawings. Students each received a bag with a CD from Independent Records, some salt water taffy and chocolates from Patsy's Candies, some Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory chocolate, and a few lucky names were drawn for a Seedlings Braille book, a Braille bracelet, and a few bigger chocolate bars. And then the Bad News Bulldog Band rocked the house to bring the day to a close.

RESULTS: The results have been tabulated, the tests have been scrutinized and proofread, and all of those speed and accuracy contests have been carefully scored and reviewed for accuracy. So please congratulate the following Colorado Regional Contest winners! These winners will have their scores compared with the other students in their category, and the top 12 finishers nationwide (and Canada) will be invited to the final rounds this summer.

DOTS OF INTEREST



APPRENTICE division—5 students

- 1st Place—Adam Encrapera
- 2nd Place—Jordan Rodriguez
- 3rd Place—Izayah Mendoza

SOPHOMORE division—5 students

- 1st Place—Quinita Thomas
- 2nd Place—Emily Romero
- 3rd Place—Mia Ingallina

VARSITY division—1 student

- 1st Place—Zach Brunetti



FRESHMAN division—3 students

- 1st Place—Juliana Trunfio
- 2nd Place—Elizabeth Romero
- 3rd Place—Jesus Gonzales

JUNIOR VARSITY division—8 students

- 1st Place—Alison Utter
- 2nd Place—Justin Coffin
- 3rd Place—Zach Ehrlich

ALL contestants deserve a round of applause!

✧ **Seedlings Braille Books for Children** has just added 30 new braille books to the catalog of over 860 titles for children ages 0-14. The new books range from BUTTERFLY KISSES by Sandra Magsamen, a Print-Braille-and-Picture Book for toddlers that comes with a finger puppet, to THE MILLION DOLLAR PUTT by Dan Gutman, a book for 8 to 12-year-olds about Bogie, who is blind, and who is competing for a million dollar prize in a golf tournament! For more information and a complete listing, please see <www.seedlings.org> or call 800-777-8552 to request a catalog (available in print or in braille). And don't forget to enter to win one free braille book per year from Seedlings through the "Anna's Book Angel" Project. For more information and to register online, go to <<http://www.seedlings.org/bkangel.php>>. Seedlings is a nonprofit organization dedicated to increasing the opportunity for literacy by providing high quality, low cost children's literature in braille

✧ **Braille Instruction** Tutoring is available for grades 1 and 2 braille by telephone, e-mail, and in person. Braille instruction for use of state and stylus, Braille laptops, and Perkins brailers can be given. Lessons are \$5 per hour. To learn more, contact Edward Zolotarevsky by e-mail at <eddyz69@aol.com> or by phone at (908) 470-1533.

✧ **BANA Codes Update 2007** (*Reprinted with permission from DOTS for Braille Literacy (Development of Teacher Support), Volume 13, Number 2, Winter 2008*) In a continuing effort to be as responsive as possible to braille readers and braille transcribers, the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) has created a new publication entitled **BANA Braille Codes Update 2007**. It is a compilation of braille code changes approved by BANA over the past few years. This publication contains updates to the following three codes:

- English Braille American Edition 1994, Revised 2002
- Braille Formats: Principles of Print to Braille Transcription, 1997
- Nemeth Code for Mathematics and Science Notation, 1972 Revision

BANA is currently undertaking a comprehensive revision of **English Braille American Edition** and of **Braille Formats: Principles of Print to Braille Transcription**. This update is a preliminary release of specific changes prior to the complete revision and publication of new editions of each of the codes. The Nemeth portion of this update is a compilation of all changes and errata to the 1972 edition of the Nemeth Code. It is intended that subsequent BANA Braille Codes Updates will be published as necessary and will contain code changes adopted following the release of this Update. The Update is being distributed in several electronic formats through the BANA web site (www.brailleauthority.org). Users can easily create print and/or braille versions from the files provided. Hard copy print or braille versions will be available free of charge upon request to the BANA Chair using the contact information above. These code changes take effect on January 1, 2008.



National Center on Severe & Sensory Disabilities (NCSSD).

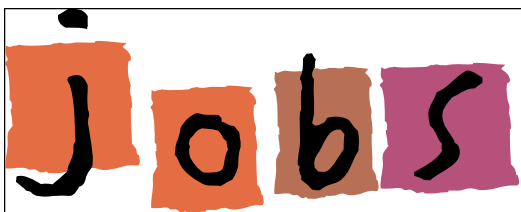
NCSSD recognizes that over 1 million children in the United States have severe and/or sensory disabilities. The distinction of NCSSD is that we embrace the practice of facilitating and promoting collaboration between the severe and sensory disability fields, hence our motto:

"Together WE can do more!"

Why the Name Change? The term low-incidence disabilities is found within federal law and refers to children with: (a) visual impairments, (b) hearing impairments, (c) concomitant visual and hearing impairments or deaf-blindness, (d) significant cognitive impairments, or (e) any impairment for which few personnel have highly specialized skills and knowledge to provide children with the impairment early intervention or a free appropriate public education (Title I (D) (662)(c)(3)). The term *low incidence* emphasizes the small number of children who are blind or visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, or deaf-blind, or who have severe or multiple disabilities. Critical to NCSSD is the emphasis on the needs of children with severe and/or sensory disabilities and the strategies to address those needs; to reflect this value, we removed the term *low incidence* from our name.

Visit our Newly Designed Web-Site February 1st! A second goal of NCSSD is to maintain a website that is accessible and user-friendly, modeling our beliefs and values of utilizing current technological innovations. Please visit the NCSSD new website at www.unco.edu/ncssd.

If you would like to sign up to receive NCSSD's electronic newsletter, *Making Waves*, please email to Shawn.Barnard@unco.edu.



IMPORTANT!

We have JOB OPENINGS!!

Please be proactive with anticipated vacancies for the next school year. .Please keep in touch with Tanni about your job openings.

Jobs for School Year 2008-2009

Metro Region:

- ✓ **Teacher of Children with Visual Impairments / O&M Specialist** (.5 FTE) Contact Ann Marie Jansen in Adams 12 (northern metro area) at <annmarie.jansen@adams12.org>.
- ✓ **Teacher of Children with Visual Impairments / O&M Specialist** (contract work) for Cherry Creek School District. For more information, contact Dixie Periman at <dperiman@cherrycreekschools.org>.

Southern Region

- ✓ There will be a number of vacant positions for TVIs and O&M Specialists in the 2008-2009 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>.

Teachers of the Visually Impaired (anticipated vacancies)

- ✓ All core content areas (English, Social Studies, Math, and Science)
 - ✓ Braille Instruction / Itinerant Services
 - ✓ Elementary Special Needs
-
- ✓ **Teacher of the Visually Impaired / Teacher on Special Assignment (TOSA): Colorado Instructional Materials Center (CIMC)** 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@d11.org> in El Paso 11 District in Colorado Springs for more information.





Calendar of Events

2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008

- | | | |
|--------------------|--|---|
| April 10 | CSDB Board of Trustee Meetings - CSDB
<u>Contact:</u> Susan Pfaffenhauser - or
spfaffenhauser@csdb.org |  |
| April 11 | Metro TVI Meeting - Anchor Center- 2:00-4:00
<u>Contact:</u> Nancy Cozart - ncozart@lps.k12.co.us | |
| April 16 | Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC
<u>Contact:</u> Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org | |
| April 24-26 | Annual O&M Conference—Anchor Center
<u>Contact:</u> Tanni Anthony—(303) 866-6681 | |
| May 8-10 | VIISA Preschool Course (2nd Session) - Anchor Center
<u>Contact:</u> Tanni Anthony—(303) 866-6681 | |
| May 12 | Colorado Reading Summit Breaking through the Gap—Denver
<u>Contact:</u> Christine Hingle (303) 866-6931 | |
| May 13 | CAER Meeting
<u>Contact:</u> Julie Wetzstein - jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us | |
| May 14 | Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC
<u>Contact:</u> Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org | |
| June 1-6 | Summer Enrichment 2008 Colorado Adventures Grade 2-6
<u>Contact:</u> Donna Keale dkeale@csdb.org (719) 578-2251 | |
| June 5-7 | Family Learning Retreat - CSDB in Colorado Springs
<u>Contact:</u> Karla McKechnie— kmckechnie@csdb.org | |
| June 8-13 | Summer Enrichment 2008 Sports Education Camp (ages 10-16)
<u>Contact:</u> Donna Keale dkeale@csdb.org (719) 578-2251 | |
| June 12 | Southern TVI Meeting - CIMC
<u>Contact:</u> Stephanie Isbell - (719) 291-3325 or Isbell@cmsd12.org | |
| June 15-20 | Summer Enrichment 2008 1 Week Independent Living Camp (Grades 7-10)
<u>Contact:</u> Donna Keale dkeale@csdb.org (719) 578-2251 | |

More Calendar of Events

2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008 2008

- June 15-27** **Summer Enrichment 2008** 2 Week Independent Living Camp (Grades 10-12)
Contact: Donna Keale dkeale@csdb.org (719) 578-2251
- June 15-20** **Summer Enrichment 2008 Park and Wildlife Study** (Grades 2-6)
Contact: Donna Keale dkeale@csdb.org (719) 578-2251
- June 25-27** **Summer Institute on Deafblindness** - Breckenridge
Contact: Tanni Anthony (303) 866-6681
- July 7-10** **9th International Conference on Low Vision**—Montreal, Canada
Contact: www.opto.umontreal.ca/vision2008
- July 14-18** **Bresnahan-Halstead Symposia Session 1**—Beaver Creek
Contact: <http://www.unco.edu/bresnahan-halstead/index.htm>
- July 15-17** **Annual PBS Symposium**—Denver
Contact: Barb Bieber (303) 866-6933 bieber_b@cde.state.co.us
- July 21-25** **Bresnahan-Halstead Symposia Session 2**—Beaver Creek
Contact: <http://www.unco.edu/bresnahan-halstead/index.htm>
- July 22-27** **AER International Conference**—Chicago, IL
Visit: www.aerbvi.org for more information
- September 24-27** **Research Summit** for National Center on Severe and Sensory Disabilities
Contact: <http://www.unco.edu/ncssd/> (be watching for more information)
- October 29-November 1** **National Braille Association Professional Development Conferences** for 2008
Visit: <http://www.nationalbraille.org/conferences/NBAFallPDC2008.html>
- November 6-9** **Colorado NFB Conference** - Colorado Springs
Contact: TBD

2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009

- April 23-25** **Western Region Early Intervention Conference**—Colorado Springs
Contact: Be watching for more information



Bresnahan-Halstead Summer Institute

The Bresnahan-Halstead Symposia website has information on this year's 32nd annual symposia. Please share the information with others at your district, agency, etc.

The institute will be held at The Charter in Beaver Creek (west side of Vail) and will cover the following topics:

SESSION 1 – JULY 14-18

Using Strategic Interventions to Enhance Intermediate, Middle, and High School Literacy Skills

With Susan Miller, Harvey Rude & Diane Bassett, Lori Peterson & Jennifer Urbach, Jon Paul Burden, and Luann Todd

SESSION 2 – JULY 21-25

Planning and Interventions for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders –

With Brenda Smith Myles, Robin Brewer & Tracy Mueller, and a parent panel.

For more information please go to:

<http://www.unco.edu/bresnahan-halstead/index.htm> or

<http://www.unco.edu/bresnahan-halstead/sessions2008.html>

There are a limited number of scholarships available that will cover the conference registration costs.

Touch Museum

By Janet Rose



A blind child touches the soft fur of a bobcat kit or the sharp talons and beak of a red-tail hawk, compares the size of a deer, elk and moose, and explores the differences between herbivore and carnivore jaws. This is all possible with the prepared animals and artifacts in the Touch Museum at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind. The museum has over 100 animals mostly Colorado mammals, fish, birds, and reptiles. Some of the exotic (from other countries) animals are the juvenile polar bear, adult and chick ostrich, and the boa constrictor with a mouse in its mouth.

Blind students across the state can benefit from these animals in several ways. Ideas that have been suggested are kits on one theme such as Feathered Friends, Wild Cats, Ocean, and Fossils; books with an animal (owl with Harry Potter, fox and mouse with Dr. DeSoto, etc.); and exhibits and displays during short courses and summer enrichment programs at CSDB. Items in the kits would include animals, sounds, track molds, and an activity sheet. The exhibits would be hands-on and interactive.

If you are interested in obtaining animals for your students or scheduling a visit at the school, please contact Janet Rose at <jrose_80909@yahoo.com>. We appreciate your feedback and suggestions and hope to have most of the animals and several kits available soon.

My First Trip to China

By Anita Wherry



I appreciate Tanni asking me to write this article regarding my trip to China last fall. As teachers of the visually impaired, I think you will relate to at least one part of my China trip.

This past October I took two weeks off from my work as a TVI in Cherry Creek and traveled with two friends to several different places in China. We saw some of the touristy sites in Beijing and observed many building projects in preparation for the summer Olympics. We visited the Great Wall and saw the Terra Cotta warriors in Xian. We visited several foster homes and schools.

My favorite place was Bethel Foster Home and School, approximately an hour's drive from Beijing. This foster home was started in 2003 by a young French couple, the Gauvains, for blind orphans. They now have more than thirty children ranging in age from 1-21 years and fifty staff members. The facility has just relocated to a fifteen acre farm area where they are raising crops and farm animals. Their mission is to provide foster care, education and professional training to foster independent living skills. The farm will be used toward that end.

Guillaume and Delphine Gauvain are musicians by trade. They only intended to start a foster home, but after seeing the educational needs of visually impaired children in China, they also started a school. Presently they have five teachers and para-educators but many visitors and volunteers are welcomed each year. There are nannies for the younger children not yet in school. The children are taught Chinese, English and French. Technology is similar to what we use with our students, i.e., electronic note takers and computer with screen reader software. Their older students travel using white canes due to previous training from staff at the Washington School for the Blind. The students study piano tuning and are in choirs and music ensembles. There are needs for more career training, especially for the older children.

Ruth Chizum and I are making tentative plans to go to Bethel between Thanksgiving and Christmas of this year. After we are there for a while, we will be better able to tell you of the needs for supplies, equipment and personnel. If you want to learn more, there is an excellent web site at <www.bethelchina.org>. My biggest concern before going was whether I would be able to talk to any of the children. The very first student who came up to me was a 17-year old girl who said, "Hi, my name is Rebecca" in perfect English.

If you have other questions or suggestions about things we might do while there or things to take with us, please contact Ruth at 720.747.4963 or me at 303.763.9452. We would covet your thoughts and prayers as we make plans for future work in China. Thanks for your time and interest.

National Federation of the Blind of Colorado

2008 Scholarship Program

Building Opportunities for the Blind in Education and Beyond

Award * Encourage * Achieve

This year the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado will be awarding at least \$15,000 in scholarship funds for deserving students. If you are a blind student from Colorado, please apply immediately! If you are a teacher, counselor, family member or friend of a legally blind student who is from Colorado, please encourage them to apply now!

Each year at its state convention, the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado (NFBCO) gives a broad array of scholarships to recognize achievement by blind scholars. The National Federation of the Blind of Colorado is an organization dedicated to creating opportunity for all blind persons. Recipients of Federation scholarships need not be members of the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado nor the National Federation of the Blind.

- * All applicants for these scholarships must be (1) legally blind, and (2) pursuing or planning to pursue a full-time post-secondary course of study in the fall semester of 2008 or spring semester of 2009, in the state of Colorado, except that one scholarship may be given to a full-time employee also attending school part-time.
- * Students who have previously won an NFBCO scholarship are encouraged to apply again.
- * All scholarships are awarded on the basis of academic excellence, service to the community, and financial need.
- * Applications are due by Tuesday, April 15, 2008

WINNERS:

The Scholarship Committee reviews all applications and selects the scholarship winners. These winners—the same number as there are scholarships to award—will be notified of their selection by telephone no later than June 1, 2008 and will be brought to the 2008 National Federation of the Blind of Colorado's annual state convention and be awarded their scholarship at the banquet ceremonies.

The National Federation of the Blind of Colorado state convention is the largest gathering of blind persons to occur anywhere in the state each year. You will be able to meet other blind students and exchange information and ideas. You will also be able to meet and talk with blind people who are successfully functioning in your chosen profession or occupation. Federal and state officials, members of Congress, and the makers and distributors of new technology attend Federation conventions. Above all, a broad cross section of the most active segment of the blind population of Colorado will be present to discuss common problems and plan for concerted action.

In addition, scholarship finalists will be required to attend the national convention of the National Federation of the Blind in Dallas, Texas, held during the first week of July 2008.

Scholarship applicants who are interested may also be given the opportunity to participate in National Federation of the Blind community internships.

These expense-paid National Federation of the Blind convention education experiences are in addition to the scholarship grant. Winners will participate in the entire convention and in the scheduled scholarship program activities.

All decisions by the Scholarship Committee are final.

For additional information about this scholarship program, NFB Community Internships or the NFB state convention, contact Eric Woods, Chairman, Scholarship Committee, NFBCO, 2233 W. Shepperd Avenue, Littleton, CO 80120 or contact him by phone at 720-351-6903 or email at <ewoods@cocenter.org>.

AWARDS: The day of the state convention banquet the Scholarship Committee meets to determine the scholarship amount to be awarded each winner. The scholarship awards will then be announced and presented at the banquet.

MAKING APPLICATION:

To apply for the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado scholarships, complete and return the application, attaching to the application all additional documents requested.

Multiple applications are unnecessary. Each applicant will be considered for all scholarships for which he or she qualifies.

Send completed applications to: Eric Woods, Chairman, Scholarship Committee, National Federation of the Blind of Colorado, 2233 W. Shepperd Avenue, Littleton, CO 80120.

Form must be received by April 15, 2008.



National Federation of the Blind of Colorado

Voice of Colorado's Blind

2008 Scholarship Awards Program

**Building Opportunities for the Blind
in Education and Beyond**

This year the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado will be awarding at least \$15,000 in scholarship funds for deserving students.

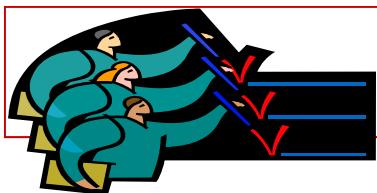
**If you are a blind student,
PLEASE APPLY IMMEDIATELY!**

**If you are a teacher, counselor, family member
or friend of a legally blind student, please en-
courage them to apply now!**

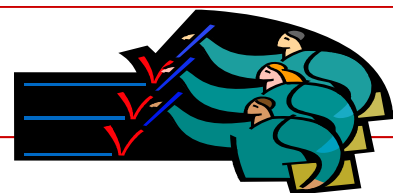
DEADLINE: April 15, 2008

For more information please contact:

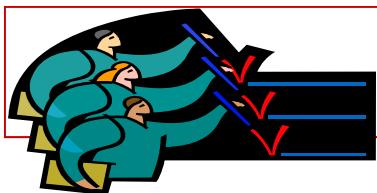
**Eric Woods, Chairman
Scholarship Committee
NFB of Colorado
2233 W. Shepperd Avenue
Littleton, CO 80120
720-351-6903
ewoods@cocenter.org**



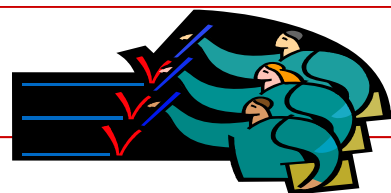
CHECK IT OUT!



- ✓ **Arizona State Study** Dr. Barry Hughes at Arizona State University is conducting a research study to investigate how the fingers and brain work together during braille reading. Hughes seeks individuals to take part in one or more studies (up to a maximum of six) which will take no more than 90 minutes each. The research will involve participants reading sample braille text of various lengths and word familiarity. The study will measure the position of the dominant reading finger and its speed as the participant reads. Qualified study participants must: be over 21; be a good reader of both English and braille; have no usable residual vision; and have no disability other than blindness. Participants will be paid \$25 per study and transportation can be provided to and from ASU Tempe campus. For more information, or to participate, contact Barry Hughes by e-mail at <barry.hughes@asu.edu> or by phone at (480) 334-5374.
- ✓ **CVI—Damage to the Brain— A Common Cause of Visual Impairment to Children** This online accessible course was presented at the 2006 AER International Conference and is broken into 9 sections. The course provides students an overview of the visual system and how it works, disorders of vision due to damage to the brain, and approaches to helping students with vision problems due to damage to the brain. Dr. Dutton provides participants theory and practical application from his expertise as a clinician working with children and their families having been diagnosed with CVI. The course is broken into eight learning modules. The ninth and last section is a question and answer forum for those who attended the Salt Lake City workshop. The intended audience for this course is any care provider working with a child diagnosed or suspected of having cortical (cerebral) visual impairment. For more information and workshop fees, visit <www.aerbvi.org>; use the continuing education link to access this course.
- ✓ **Rules for the Administration of the ECEA, Exceptional Children's Education Act** (Colorado's state-level adoption of IDEA) are now posted on the website. Please follow the link for the pdf document. <<http://www.cde.state.co.us/cdesped/index.asp>>
- ✓ **Guidelines for the Description of Educational Media** American Foundation for the Blind's Policy Center and Professional Development Department will partner with the National Association of the Deaf and its federally-funded Described and Captioned Media Program (DCMP) to develop guidelines for the description of educational media. In 2007, AFB worked with service providers and experts in media description to develop a set of draft guidelines for educational media description that will increase the availability of predominantly visual curriculum to children and youths who are blind, have low vision or deaf-blind. The guidelines include recommendations, suggestions, and best practices culled from an extensive literature review that were then subjected to a consensus review process by experts in description and education of students with visual impairment. AFB would like to have members of the educational community, parents of children with visual impairments, and the public give us feedback on these guidelines and suggestions for items that may need more explanation. The draft guidelines are on AFB's Web page at <www.afb.org/descriptionguidelines.asp>. For more information, contact Dr. Ferrell at <Kay.Ferrell@unco.edu> or Mary Ann Siller at <siller@afb.net>.
- ✓ **Master's Degree in Early Intervention Deafblindness** Project SEIM, the Sensory Impaired Early Intervention Masters Program at Utah State University has openings for new students interested in getting a Master's Degree in Early Intervention Deafblindness, beginning this fall of 2008. The coursework is a three semester Masters program in the Department of Communicative Disorders/Deaf Education. The program is designed to provide a unique experience for the individual desiring to work with infants and young children with combined vision and hearing loss. Applicants who have a bachelors degree in special education, early childhood education, elementary education, family and human development, education of the deaf, education of the blind, or a related field are eligible to apply for this program. All students accepted into the program are eligible for student stipends that cover tuition and other expenses. Out of state students will receive in state tuition rates. For further information, contact Linda Alsop; SKI-HI Institute; Utah State University; (435)797-5598; <linda.alsop@usu.edu>.



CHECK IT OUT!



- ✓ **University of British Columbia Seeking Study Participants** Dr. Cay Holbrook and Ms. Erika Forster, doctoral student, in the Educational and Counseling Psychology and Special Education departments at University of British Columbia (UBC) are recruiting participants for a study on increasing reading speed for young braille readers through a process of repeated reading. If you are currently working with a student in grades one, two, or three who reads braille exclusively, has no known additional disabilities, and appears to be reading slowly, you are invited to contact Erika Forster by e-mail at <ericka.forster@shaw.ca> or by phone at 604-936-4969 to find out more about the study. Participation in the study would involve using the repeated reading intervention with your struggling braille reader over a period of five weeks (i.e., three 15 minute repeated reading sessions per week for a total of approximately 45 minutes per week). Two weeks after the intervention period, repeated readings would be carried out three more times to help determine if students are able to maintain any improvements gained during the intervention. Ms. Forster will provide training and help so that you can carry out the repeated reading interventions for the study.
- ✓ **Hadley School for the Blind Course: Blindness Basics** The Hadley School for the Blind offers a new online course to help students who are new to the field learn about blindness and visual impairment. The course teaches students the proper etiquette when interacting with people who are blind or visually impaired and presents an overview of the field's history, identifies common causes of blindness and visual impairment, and explains how people who are blind or visually impaired live independently. To enroll in this free course, contact Student Services by phone at 800-526-9909 or visit them at <www.hadley.edu>.
- ✓ **"The "What Do You Do When..."** (Article reprinted with permission from the NCSSD - in their Making Waves, Issue 2, Volume 1 March, 2008 edition) Tutorial Series is a self-paced collection of tutorials created by instructional leaders working in the fields of severe and sensory disabilities. The tutorials are designed to familiarize teachers with research-based and promising practices that facilitate the inclusion of students who are visually impaired, deaf or hard of hearing, deaf-blind, or who have severe disabilities into various educational environments. Included within the tutorials are resources and activities designed to support learning. The first of these series is called, The Physical Education Tutorial. This tutorial teaches educators how to include students with visual impairments into general physical education classes. The National Center on Severe and Sensory Disabilities (NCSSD) will continue to expand the "What Do You do When..." Tutorial Series to address the core academic areas of science as well as math and reading and to address the expanded core curriculum areas needed by children with severe and sensory disabilities. Examples of topics we may include are: alternative or functional academic skills, including communication and literacy modes; use of assistive technology; recreation and leisure skills; social skill development; self-determination/self advocacy; independent living skills; transition planning/career education; and family skill development. Visit <http://www.unco.edu/ncssd/resources/what_do_you_do_when.shtml> for more information. If you have an interest in participating in the development of a tutorial in the series, please contact <shawn.barnard@unco.edu>
- ✓ **Social Skills Webcast:** Perkins School for the Blind has released the second in a series of webcasts. The topic is "The Implications of Vision Loss on the Development of Social Skills". Tom Miller is the presenter. https://secure2.convio.net/psb/site/SPageServer?pagename=WEBCAST_LANDING&AddInterest=1242
- ✓ **2009 Colorado State Teacher of the Year Nominations:** It is time to nominate educators for the 2009 Colorado State Teacher of the Year, and CDE is encouraging fellow educators, education administrators, parents, students, and community members to put forward their best and brightest teachers. Please send your nominations or questions to Barbara Lautenbach at lautenbach_b@cde.state.co.us



2008

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LUAU!
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APPRECIATING U!**

**COLORADO SCHOOL FOR THE
DEAF AND THE BLIND
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Tom Sullivan
Keynote

Adventures in Darkness

Singer, Actor, Author, Writer, Producer, Tom Sullivan lives and works by "Sullivan's Rules." Invented by his dad, Porky Sullivan, so young Tommy Sullivan could play baseball with the neighborhood kids, "the rules" became the cornerstone by which the adult Tom Sullivan came to live his life, turning any negative into a positive, turning disadvantage into advantage, playing in every game.

Other topics Include:

- Sibling Shop—This session will be for siblings, to address their feelings about having a brother or sister with a disability.
- Sibling Shop Follow Up—This will be a time for the facilitators to talk with parents about issues they encounter with siblings and how to address them.
- Mom's Group—This will be a time for Moms to talk and network with other moms
- Dad's Group—This will be a time for Dads to talk and network with other dads.
- Disability Specific Support Groups
- Deaf Adult Role Model Panel
- Assistive Technology
- Positive Behavior Support
- Parent Night Out!



Family Learning Retreat 2008



The Family Learning Retreat will be returning to the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind on **June 6-8, 2008**. The weekend retreat is for any family with a child who is deaf/hard of hearing, blind/visually impaired or deafblind. This is a wonderful opportunity for families to meet other families while networking, learning and having fun together.

Parents/adults will attend workshops during the day, while children participate in supervised recreational activities or daycare, depending on their ages. Check-in and dinner begins Friday evening, June 6th starting at 5:00 PM until 7:30 PM followed by an opening session. The retreat ends by noon on Sunday, June 8th. Lodging in the CSDB dorms is provided for both Friday and Saturday nights. Meals are provided for Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast and lunch, and Sunday breakfast.

The cost of the Family Learning Retreat is only \$10.00 per adult and \$5.00 per child under the age of 18. Spanish and sign language interpreters will be provided upon request.



Come and relax. Make new friends. Experience a valuable learning opportunity. Child care will be provided Saturday evening for parents to have time to relax!

Interested or know of someone who is? Contact Diane Covington at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind at (719) 578-2225 to register. For Spanish speaking participants, contact Gloria Romero (719)-578-2288.



Payment
must be received by
May 28, 2008

Low Vision and Blindness Technology Fair
May 7, 2008
10:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.
2211 W. Evans Avenue, Columbine room
Denver, Colorado

- Come meet local technology and service providers who serve individuals that are blind and vision impaired.
- Find out about services and technology that can assist people who are blind and vision impaired.
- Come try out blindness and low vision assistive technology that can make a difference for accessing work, school and improving independence.
- Come meet and exchange ideas with people in Colorado who work in the field of blindness and vision impairment.

Some of the vendors that will have exhibits:

AKB Visions, AGA LLC, Beyond Sight, Colorado Talking Book Library, National Federation of the Blind of Colorado, Recording For the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D), Audio Information Service of Colorado, SansVision Consultants, Team EEI. Products displayed will include Freedom Scientific, Telesensory, Humanware, GW Micro, AI Squared, Vision-Tech, Enhanced Vision, Optilek, and many many more.

Please come join us. For more information:

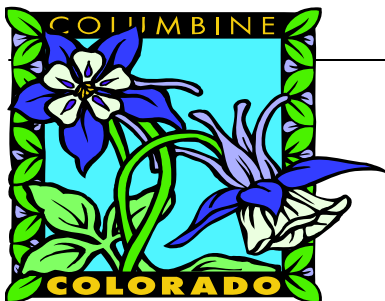
Julia Zanon 303.866.3562

julia.zanon@state.co.us

Michael Bastien 303.866.3316

michael.bastien@state.co.us

Sponsored by the Colorado Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR). Admission is free. Registration is not required.



COLORADO CONNECTIONS

- ❧ "GOOD ON YA!" to **Judy Wiepert** for earning her CDE Certificate of Braille Competency! Judy is a TVI in Cherry Creek School District.
- ❧ CO TVIs, brailist, and paras are well represented in the VIISA Preschool course: **Diane Anders, Elaine Brown, Linda Campbell, Deborah Carlisle, Pam Edinger, Diane Fitzkee, Ann Hicks, Lorraine Hutcheson, Carol Jordan, Phyllis Penniston Jordan, Julie King, Nancy Knight, Kristen LaVergne, Cheryl Leidich, Danielle McGrath, Shelley Moats, Judy Mumford, Marci Reid, Melissa Shular, Angela Sims, Edie Smith, Catherine Sounart, Judy Wiepert, Chloann Woolley, and Mardee Zweibohmer.** A very special thank you to Anchor Center for the Blind OTR **Carol Spicer** and SLP **Zoe Morgese** for their contributions to the first session of the course. Thanks also to Anchor Center for allowing us to host the course at their beautiful new center. One more thanks—to **JC Greeley** for her co-grading expertise.
- ❧ Good for the following people who recently earned braille renewal clock hours: **Jan Wood, Sally Eldridge, Samantha Hoffman, Helle Hill, Mike Plankser, Ann Marie Jansen, Suzan Barlow, Amber Rundle, and Lorraine Hutcheson.** Congrats to **Sally Eldridge, Suzan Barlow, and Mike Plankser** for earning their CDE Renewal Certificate of Braille Competency. Thanks to proctors **Lucia Hasty, Brenda Shepard, and Julie Wetzstein.**
- ❧ A very special thanks to the following TVIs who took the time to offer guidance on the proposed IEP form specific to Learning Media Plans: **Janet Anderson, Teresa Barone, Sally Eldridge, Phyllis Penniston Jordan, Sarah Sonnier, and Linda Witte.** When the final forms and training manual are completed, Tanni will send out an email with more details on how to download these documents.
- ❧ Colorado AER welcomes new and returning members: **Rhynette Bergmann, Ann Gillmeister, Laura King, and Debbie Mendoza.**
- ❧ Thanks to the following folks who are working together to host the next Western Region Early Intervention Conference, which will be held in Colorado Springs in April 2008. This is a multi-state early intervention conference with training strands specific to DHH, BVI, and DB. CSDB's **Jennie Germano** is taking the lead role on hosting the training. Colorado folks on the local planning committee include: **Diane Covington, Gina Quintana, Sheryl Muir, JC Greeley, Sheryl Taber, Sandra Gabbard, Marcia Taber, Janet DesGeorge, and Tanni Anthony.** Be watching for more information about this important conference.
- ❧ A new revised book, entitled *Early Childhood Special Education (0-8 Years): Strategies for Positive Outcomes* (edited by Dr. Sharon Raver) has a chapter on *Techniques for Teaching Infants, Toddlers, Preschoolers And Primary-Aged Children with Low Vision and Blindness* by **Tanni Anthony.** Thanks to **Kay Ferrell** who recommended Tanni for the chapter. There is a featured case study on a Colorado preschooler who is blind/visually impaired –thanks to **Paula Stallman** and **Rita Albright** for their contributions in writing this vignette.
- ❧ As always, thanks to **Lori Kochevar**, for her newsletter work. Lori puts all this good information together in a great newsletter format. Lori, you are the best!

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