



## A Bright Today and Future of Accessible Text

By Tanni L. Anthony

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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 and April 2009**

I had a wonderful opportunity on March 17th - on St. Patty's Day to be exact. No I was not hugged by a leprechaun and I did not find a pot of gold, but it was pretty wonderful all the same. I was invited to be on the Advisory Board of Bookshare™. Their goal is to increase access so that people with print disabilities, including blindness/visual impairment, have access to a broad spectrum of print materials. They are working diligently to build a digital library.

I spent the day at Benetech's (the home to Bookshare) headquarters in Palo Alto CA with an impressive group of colleagues to learn more about Bookshare, meet their dedicated and highly skilled staff, and to provide input to the company's CEO and personnel. It was an amazing day with an opportunity to learn more about the Office of Special Education Program's grant award to Bookshare to fund student memberships.

We are in an amazing phase of (1) accessibility with companies like Bookshare; (2) an increase in publisher's responsibilities to ensure accessible formats; and (3) digital / audio / braille technologies that are increasingly more portable and inexpensive. We are truly making progress. Our students will have more options for tapping into the printed word during their public school and college years ... and life as independent adults.

I will be providing more details on Bookshare and Colorado's plans to increase student memberships in the next newsletter. In the meantime, if you would like to learn more about Bookshare, please go to <http://www.bookshare.org/>.

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# Bits From Bonnie

By Bonnie Snyder

[BonnieLS21@gmail.com](mailto:BonnieLS21@gmail.com)

My latest interest, one might even call it an obsession, is the DAISY format. What is really unique about this format is that it can be used to read books and other printed text auditorily, with refreshable braille and with braille hard copy (or any combination of the aforementioned). DAISY readers can also display text which can be adjusted to the size most comfortable for the reader.

There is a variety of DAISY readers out there that I have tried out. So far, the most satisfactory to me is the Bookshare version of the Victor Reader Software. If your student is a subscriber to Bookshare, either individual or institutional, the Bookshare Reader Software can be downloaded from their site for free. They also have a free reader that is focused on other print disabled readers. It is from Don Johnston and is called Read Outloud. This too can be downloaded from their site.

I am also trying out several other software DAISY readers: FSReader from Freedom Scientific, Book Wizard Reader from APH (the first is commercial and the second can be purchased on quota from APH), Amis which is an open source DAISY reader (I am emailing with the authors of this program to discuss using it for Bookshare books) and TPB Reader from Sweden which is free, but I have not yet found a DAISY version it can read!

The BrailleNote, BookPort, Icon/BraillePlus, Voice and Braille Sense, and the Victor Stream all have very good DAISY readers in them, and I have tried all of them out with very satisfactory results. The PlexTalk and PacMate also have DAISY readers, but I haven't gotten to them yet.

## **National Conference on Physical Education and Children with Visual Impairments, Blindness, Deafblindness, or Multiple Disabilities**

**What:** A national conference related to physical activity barriers, teaching strategies, and sports for children with visual impairments, blindness, deafblindness or multiple disabilities. The forum will be panel discussions, guest speakers and round table discussions pertaining to issues faced by physical education teachers from schools for the blind in the US.

**When:** October 18-20th, 2009

**Where:** Perkins School for the Blind

**Who:** Any teacher, parent, or specialist interested in improving the lives of children with visual impairments

**How:** Registration will begin in August through the Perkins School for the Blind web site

## New APH Products Announced

By Jim Olson, CLVT, COMS, TVI

The following items have been ordered by the CIMC from APH. Please check with CIMC staff as to their availability for loan.

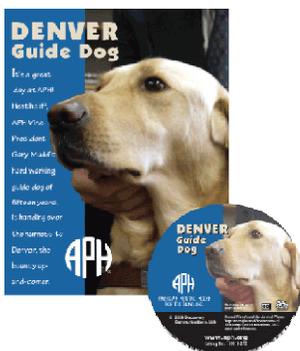
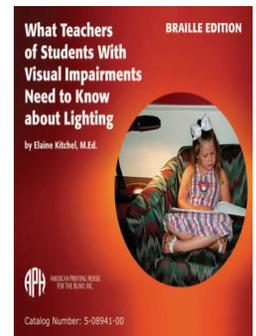


### **Braille+ QWERTY Docking Station (1-07452-00 --\$600.00 plus shipping)**

The QWERTY Docking Station is a new accessory for use with APH's Braille+™ Mobile Manager. Smaller than a laptop, the Docking Station provides connectivity and comfort on-the-go or at your desk. Simply snap the Braille+ Mobile Manager into the QWERTY Docking Station and you have a highly functional, comfortable-to-use, portable notetaker with Ethernet connectivity!

### **Lighting Guide Kit (Large Print Book with Better Vision Lamp)(1-08941-00 -- \$138.00)**

This kit includes a Better Vision Lamp and a book about appropriate lighting for students with visual impairments. The lamp was specially developed by an inventor and APH staff in order to provide the best light possible for students with visual impairments. This energy-saving lamp gives off light that doesn't cause photo stress in most people with retinal, corneal or lens disease/injury, or cortical visual impairment. It uses a special 27 watt, 2700K, compact fluorescent tube that is different from most tubes of its type because it emits no blue or ultraviolet light. The lamp and the book together make up the Lighting Guide Kit. The lamp is not offered separately.



### **Denver the Guide Dog DVD (1-30010-DVD -- \$15.00)**

Produced by the Discovery Channel cable network for their Animal Planet® Pet Stories series, this video is for anyone who'd like to know more about guide dogs or would just like to meet Denver.

### **Textured Matching Blocks Available Again (1-08950-00 -- \$57.00)**

Featured on page 34 of your APH products catalog, this is one of the products affected by the APH plastic vendor's fire several weeks ago. The Textured Matching Blocks product is once again available.





# The CDE Low Vision Evaluation Clinic Schedule



## Proposed Clinic Schedule for School Year 2009-2010

Region	Dates	Location	Site Coordinator's
Southern	September 18-19, 2009 March 5, 2010	CSDB in Colorado Springs	Melissa Shular
Western	September 25-26, 2009	Grand Junction	Sarah Sonnier
Metro	November 12-14, 2009	To be Determined	Nancy Knight
Northern	February 19-20, 2009	To be Determined	Wendy Stoltman and Danielle Hildenbrand

## Update on Northern Clinic

By Donice Fennimore

The Northern Region Colorado Low Vision Evaluation Clinic (and final clinic for the 2008-2009 school year) was held in Fort Collins Friday March 13. The one-day clinic was very productive and the six students evaluated and their parents were very excited with the devices and information they received from the low vision team. The six students represented 5 districts and four teachers of students with visual impairments (TVIs) were present. **Vicki Pearson** brought a student from Larimer 1; **Paula Conroy** brought 2 students from Boulder 2; **Marsha Roberson** brought a student from Weld 6; **Lorraine Hutcheson** brought a student from Aurora School District: unfortunately the TVI from Larimer two had conflicting engagements and could not attend the clinic, however the student was able to attend.

Of the six students seen, 2 were there for follow-up evaluations and 4 were initial visits. Several devices were dispensed at the clinic. Once again we would like to thank the **Ensignt Center** for allowing us to use their facilities for the clinic and **Carol Love** and **Sally Eldridge** for coordinating the northern region clinic. We appreciate all they do to ensure the clinic is a success. Next year we will have two new coordinators for the northern region clinic, Wendy Stoltman and Danielle McGrath. We are excited to have them on board.

The 2008-2009 CLVECs were a great success with many students receiving devices to assist in their literacy tasks and many parents now having a better understanding of their child's visual impairment. The low vision team would like to thank everyone involved with this year's clinics. We appreciate all the effort that is put into making each one a success.

The team is certain that the clinic will only get better with each year it is held and our goal is to get the appropriate low vision devices into the hands of all Colorado student's with visual impairments. Again, a big thanks to everyone from the low vision team.





## COLOBOMA

Information found at: [http://www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/PublicWebsite/public\\_rnib003643.hcsp#P36\\_3100](http://www.rnib.org.uk/xpedio/groups/public/documents/PublicWebsite/public_rnib003643.hcsp#P36_3100)



**What is Coloboma?** A coloboma is a gap in part of the structures of the eye. This gap can be large or small and is normally in the bottom part of the eye. A coloboma is caused when a baby's eyes do not develop properly during pregnancy. The eyes develop between the fourth and anything up to the fifteenth week of pregnancy, though development is usually completed around eight weeks. This condition occurs in about 1 in 10,000 births.

Coloboma can affect one eye (unilateral) or both eyes (bilateral). Coloboma can affect a number of different parts of the eye. A coloboma does not mean that there is a hole in the eye, but that certain structures or parts within the eye did not fully form.

**Which parts of the eye does a coloboma affect?** A coloboma can affect the iris which is the colored part at the front of the eye. It can affect the lens, the part of the eye which helps focus light onto the retina. Coloboma can also affect the choroid which is a thin network of blood vessels which help to keep the retina healthy. Finally, it can affect the retina at the back of the eye. Very rarely coloboma can also affect the optic disc or the eyelid.

**How can it affect all these different parts?** A coloboma forms while the baby grows in the womb. The eyes develop early during pregnancy and start off as little buds. Usually the eye folds in on itself as it develops which leaves a small gap called the fetal cleft. The fetal cleft helps maintain the blood supply to the developing parts of the eye. In the final stage of eye development during pregnancy the cleft seals up from the back of the eye forwards and all the structures of the eye are formed. In an eye with coloboma this gap does not

**What effect does Coloboma have on vision?** Coloboma may affect one eye more than the other, so one eye may have better vision than the other. The effect coloboma has on vision depends a lot on which part of the eye is affected and how big the gap is. Normally the gap is at the

Most commonly coloboma only affects the iris. Children with this type of coloboma often have fairly good vision. Their pupil may be shaped a bit like a keyhole. They may have some problems with and dislike bright lights because the iris, which usually limit the amount of light entering the eye by controlling the size of the pupil may not work properly.

Too much light entering the eye can cause discomfort and distort the image created. Measures can be taken to help protect a child from sunlight such as tinted glasses, sun hats or sunblinds in cars. If the coloboma goes further back into the eye then the child may have more visual problems, especially if the retina is involved. If this has happened then central vision may be affected. Central vision is used for detailed activities such as reading, writing and close work or play.

The effect of coloboma has on vision depends a lot on which part of the eye is affected and how big the gap is. Normally the gap is at the bottom of the eye (where a 6 is on the face of a clock) and runs from the front to the back of the eye. Coloboma may affect only the front of the eye if most of the cleft has sealed up. It may affect the eye from the front to the centre and back if more of the cleft has failed to close.

**Does it only affect the eyes?** Sometimes children with coloboma may have other problems and some 'syndromes' which include coloboma, such as CHARGE, a rare condition which stands for:

**C** - coloboma (80% of cases) and cranial nerve abnormalities

**H** - heart malformation

**A** - atresia of the choanae (problems with the nose passages) (58% of cases)

**R** - retardation of growth after birth (87% of cases) and delayed development (94% of cases)

**G** - genital hypoplasia (underdevelopment in males) (75% of cases) and urinary tract malformations

**E** - ear malformations or deafness (88% of cases)

**Do glasses help?** Children with coloboma may need glasses. Glasses cannot correct the vision problems caused by the coloboma. However, glasses can correct short-sightedness or long-sightedness which can help to correct the parts of vision that haven't been affected by coloboma.

Sometimes cosmetic contact lenses may be considered at a later stage. These can help to make the pupil look round rather than keyhole shaped. Prescription sunglasses due to the light-sensitivity may also be suggested, as may some low vision aids and equipment to help a child make the most of their sight.

## Resources

- ✓ [MACS Children Society](http://www.macs.org.uk/) can provide support and information to parents and caregivers of children with microphthalmia, anophthalmia, coloboma and related conditions. The website is:  
<http://www.macs.org.uk/>
- ✓ [Coloboma Support Group](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/coloboma/): <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/coloboma/>
- ✓ [The Charge Association Foundation](http://www.chargesyndrome.org/): <http://www.chargesyndrome.org/>



**Children are the world's most valuable resource and its best hope for the future”**

**John F. Kennedy**

# Audio Information Network of Colorado

The Audio Information Network (AIN), has been providing the blind, visually impaired and print disabled, access to print materials since 1991.

## **LISTEN to AINColorado's programming using:**

- ♦ Stereo Television—When tuned to Rocky Mountain PBS, choose the Secondary Audio Program. Some local city / county cable television channels also carry the broadcast.
- ♦ Telephone—The Information-On-Demand menu system or Live Broadcast are both free.
- ♦ Pre-tuned Receiver—AIN Colorado provides receivers at no cost on permanent loan.
- ♦ Internet—Live streaming broadcasts and podcasts are available at [www.aincolorado.org](http://www.aincolorado.org).

## **LEARN from a variety of publications in English and Spanish that contain information used in day to day living. Volunteer readers donate 18,700 hours annually to provide access to:**

- ♦ Nearly 100 Colorado newspapers
- ♦ Ads – grocery / discount / classified
- ♦ Magazines / newsletters covering:
  - ♦ Health and nutrition
  - ♦ Financial / business news
  - ♦ Consumer tips
  - ♦ Science and technology
  - ♦ Senior issues
  - ♦ Disability issues
  - ♦ Cooking
  - ♦ Gardening
  - ♦ Children's publications



# Audio Information Network of Colorado

**CONNECT with your local community and resources to positively impact your life. AINColorado provides blind, visually impaired and print disabled individuals with equal access to information that sighted persons often take for granted. This allows individuals to make independent choices and can result in:**

- ♦ Increased self sufficiency
- ♦ Informed consumer decisions
- ♦ Managing finances more effectively
- ♦ Finding employment
- ♦ Participating in the community
- ♦ Reduced feelings of isolation
- ♦ Completing academically

**JOIN US as a listener or volunteer! Apply at [www.Aincolorado.org](http://www.Aincolorado.org) or you may call us at 303-786-7777 or 877-443-2001.**

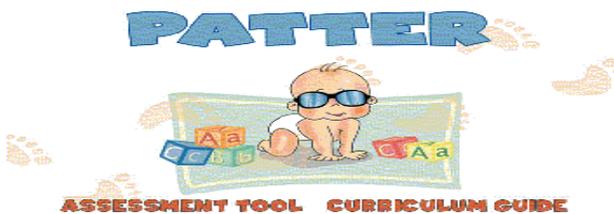
**All services are provided at no cost to listeners.**

- ♦ Online at [www.aincolorado.org](http://www.aincolorado.org)
- ♦ By mail at AINColorado  
2200 Central Avenue, Suite A  
Boulder, CO 80301
- ♦ Contact Kim Ann Wardlow regarding corporate sponsorships 303-786-7777, ext. 112  
Email: [ainc@ainccolorado.org](mailto:ainc@ainccolorado.org)

# Resources and Materials

- ♦ **NEW! PATER: Preschool Attainment Through Typical Everyday Routines**

Large Print Guidebook with CD and DVD: 8-76001-00 -- \$23.00  
Braille Guidebook with CD and DVD: 6-76001-00 -- \$23.00



This curriculum and assessment tool from the American Printing for the Blind is designed to facilitate skill development by children who are visually impaired in the areas that preschoolers are expected to master through involvement in typical household routines. *PATER* is appropriate for use with children with varying degrees of visual impairment, as well as those with additional impairments. Based on simple task analysis, *PATER* breaks down an everyday activity into its component parts and allows for measurement of a child's level of participation during each step. Continuous

- ♦ **NEW O&M TOOL** The STEP-HEAR system is a new orientation and mobility device based on radio frequency (RF) technology and is comprised of two units: a transmitter/base and a small receiver/activator. Installed at strategic locations, the base sends out

a continuous signal. When the activator, held by the user, is within the range of the base, it vibrates and beeps. Pressing a button on the activator will trigger a pre-recorded voice message from the base. This helps the user to obtain information and become oriented toward the location. For more information on obtaining the system, contact Yael Furman at [yael@step-hear.com](mailto:yael@step-hear.com) or internationally by phone at 972-3-5710794. On the web, visit [www.step-hear.com](http://www.step-hear.com)

- ♦ **BLIND COUNSELOR'S MEMOIR**

Professional counselor and author Carmella Broome, who has been legally blind since birth, has released her first book. "Carmella's Quest: Taking on College Sight Unseen" is a memoir about her first year at a small college in upstate South Carolina. It is published by Red Letter Press of Columbia, S.C. For more information, or to order the book, visit [www.camellasquest.livejournal.com](http://www.camellasquest.livejournal.com)

- ♦ **National Literacy Center** has eight items available for FREE at this time. Check out what you can get at no cost for your classroom, office or school. To check it out, go to the following url: <http://www.afb.org/Section.asp?SectionID=6&TopicID=19>





## **TRANSITION INFORMATION ABOUT MOVING ON!**

### **AFB CareerConnect Webcast Presentations April 28 and 29, 2009**

<[http://www.afb.org/images/AFB\\_Webcasts\\_Header.jpg](http://www.afb.org/images/AFB_Webcasts_Header.jpg)>

AFB CareerConnect® presents two free online seminars for professionals working with children and adults with visual impairments.

**Session 1:** Lifelong Learning in Career Education April 28, 2009, 2-3:30 pm (EST) Dr. Karen Wolffe, Director, Professional Development and CareerConnect, will discuss the career education model, how to help move children and adults through the appropriate stages of the model, the activities and resources available to instruct children and adults with visual impairments in career education, and more.

**Session 2:** Determining Current and Future AT Needs April 29, 2009, 2:00 -3:30 pm (EST) Ike Presley, Project Manager, Professional Development, will show attendees how to create a "toolbox" for success by presenting the tools needed to access and create printed and electronic information. This session will also feature professionals with visual disabilities discussing the career planning techniques and assistive technologies that have helped them compete in the workplace and advance their careers.

Both seminars will broadcast live to your computer. For more information, and to register for one or both webcasts today, visit [www.afb.org/careerconnect](http://www.afb.org/careerconnect), or contact 888-824-2184 or [careerconnect@afb.net](mailto:careerconnect@afb.net).

Brought to you free-of-charge through the support of AT&T.



## MORE TRANSITION INFORMATION

### The GuildScholar Program

## A Scholarship for Visually Impaired High School Students

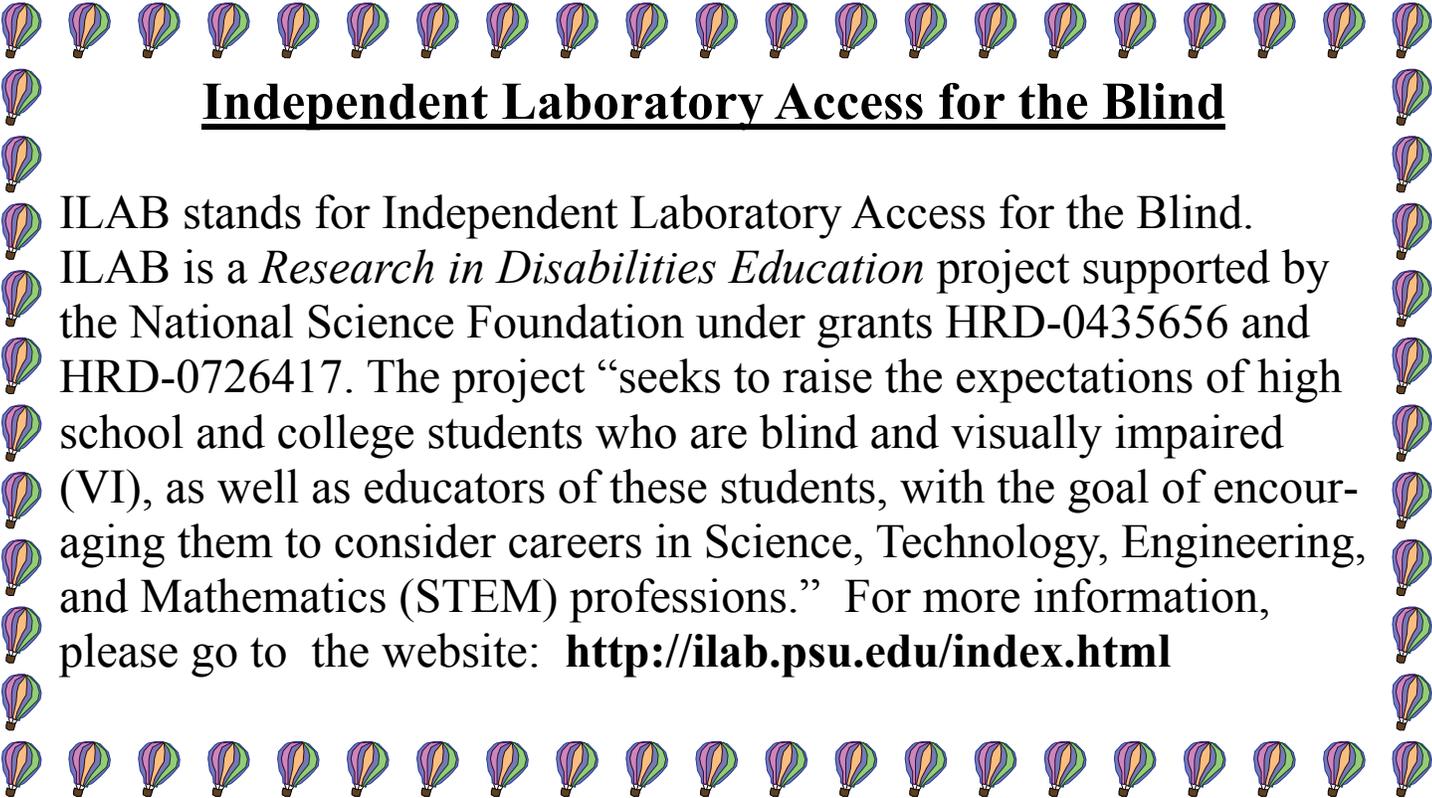
Open to all legally blind high school students entering college in September 2010. Application to be made at the end of the junior year of high school.

Must be a US Citizen or a legal resident, have excellent academic record and have demonstrated school and community leadership.

Scholarships of up to \$15,000 will be competitively awarded to qualified students. The deadline for the 2010 scholarships is **July 1st, 2009**. The GuildScholar application is online.

Please log on to: [www.jgb.org/guildscholar.asp](http://www.jgb.org/guildscholar.asp)

For more information, contact Gordon Rovins at [rovinsg@jgb.org](mailto:rovinsg@jgb.org)



### Independent Laboratory Access for the Blind

ILAB stands for Independent Laboratory Access for the Blind.

ILAB is a *Research in Disabilities Education* project supported by the National Science Foundation under grants HRD-0435656 and HRD-0726417. The project “seeks to raise the expectations of high school and college students who are blind and visually impaired (VI), as well as educators of these students, with the goal of encouraging them to consider careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) professions.” For more information, please go to the website: <http://ilab.psu.edu/index.html>

# Technology 101

## What Works for Me (and My Students!)

Lori-Moroz-White, TVI

Morozwhite.cox.net

*(Reprinted with permission from the Council for Exceptional Children,  
DVI Quarterly, Vol. 54,C2, Winter 2009)*

In the past few years, I have been fortunate to serve a very small population; high academic Braille students in middle and high school. This population has been underserved, mainly due to the technology explosion in the regular education curriculum. Teaching today—versus five years ago— has drastically changed. A 4.0 grade point average used to be the best possible score, now it is possible to achieve above a 4.0 and just recently an 8.0 was achieved. Along with the new requirements in testing to acquire a regular education diploma; advanced placement classes are now the norm for honor students with college exams as early as the sophomore year. Braille students are not going to survive high school without technology.

MySpace, Facebook, instant messaging, and text messaging are tools for learning. Recently a 10th grade honors English class assignment was based on Facebook and MySpace. The assignment was to write a persuasive essay on why—or why not— schools have the right to monitor MySpace and Facebook, and impose discipline on a student because of what is on the website. Technology is a work tool needed to be able to compete in the sighted world. Just as the abacus and the Perkins braille are extremely important tools to compete in elementary grades, high-tech is not a luxury, but a necessity for middle and high school students. Imagine an academic, sighted 14 year old who never used a cell phone, never accessed the Internet, was never exposed to Facebook, never text messaged, has no keyboard skills, cannot read fluently, and doesn't have any idea what a scientific or graphing calculator is? How will we prepare them for proficiency testing, and for transitioning to college or the world of work?

There are as many different options as there are many different needs; for the purpose of this article, I will describe what technology should look like for a Braille high school academic student who does not use print. First, you need a Braille PDA with six key entry and a refreshable display. After reviewing the many PDA's available, the one that is most proactive for this population would be the Pacmate. I do not want to go into an in-depth discussion of why this is really the only choice for academic Braille high school students, but it is the only note taker that can read PowerPoint presentations, Excel spreadsheets, audible files, has a scientific calculator that states undefined when dividing by zero, GPS, reads bar codes, works with Bookshare, can be used as a refreshable Braille display and has Windows mobile capabilities for Internet use (which includes mobile Facebook). It is a bit more complicated to learn but well worth the extra work. Once the student learns the basics they figure out much more on their own; allowing them the opportunity to learn how to problem-solve.

*(Continued)*

*(Continued—Technology 101)*

Now that you have a PDA, what you can do with it is fantastic. Textbooks can be uploaded from the publisher or from scanned copies onto a compact flash card, or a USB drive; no need to emboss. Let's go Green! The student now has access to all volumes of textbooks, anywhere! This is huge! Science textbooks tend to have many diagrams; thus a separate hard copy of just the non-text part of the book will be necessary as a supplement to the electronic version and also a hard copy for math.

Living in the Windows environment on the Pacmate, high school students can either have their teachers email them directly their PowerPoints or class handouts or give it to them on a thumb drive, the Pacmate will recognize these formats and give immediate read-only access. If filling in the blanks is required this can be done by translating the file into Braille with translation software such as Duxbury or Braille 200. For literary reading materials, the Library of Congress and Bookshare offer free accounts, and I have yet to come across anything that is not available. Again this goes onto a USB drive and then directly onto the Pacmate. Often an audio book with professional narration is desired. Audible.com books can be uploaded to the Pacmate directly from a computer. The Audible.com website, under choices of PDA's, has included the Pacmate due primarily to the Windows mobile technology. The days of the green boxes and funky RFB&D players are gone with this population. Music has also come along with technology. With music translation software, such as Goodfeel from Dancing Dots, scores can be scanned, separated into parts and uploaded onto the PDA giving that much needed immediate access to the Braille music student.

Another advantage of the Windows capabilities of the Pacmate is active sync. This is a Windows software applications that allows a computer to sync features such as email, contacts, and calendar with Outlook and most importantly, files. This allows the student access to the work tools of the real world. With Outlook, the possibilities of scheduling meetings and contacts is endless. The file capabilities allows the teacher or clerk to save tests and other materials on a computer to be uploaded onto the PDA when appropriate. Since the Pacmate uses JAWS, the student simply syncs with any Internet computer and can use the display and keyboard to navigate the web. This gives students access to any computer on campus at any time. Many of these features (uploading textbooks, Web Braille, Bookshare, and MP3 players) are available on other PDA notetakers. I also would like to note that the RFB&D does have software available for almost all of the notetakers. In addition to the PDA, access to a computer is necessary for mathematics and advanced science classes. The AGC (Accessible Graphing Calculator) software in combination with the scientific calculator, and Excel on the Pacmate will get you through high school advanced math classes nicely.

Technology for the blind has made it possible to prepare students for the real world.



SAVE THE DATE



**Getting In Touch With Literacy Conference**  
**The Hilton Orange County/Costa Mesa**  
**Located in Southern California**

**November 12–15, 2009**

Look for more information soon on our web site!

[www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.com](http://www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.com)

COSTA MESA, CA

Families Connecting  
with Families



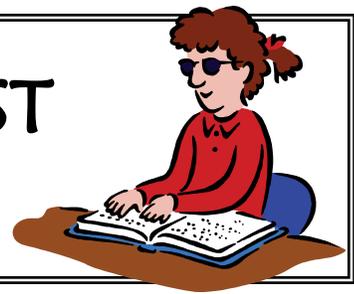
## **NAPVI's Families Connecting with Families 2009 International Conference**

*July 17, 18, 19, 2009 at the Hilton Orange County/Costa Mesa 3050 Briston Street, Costa Mesa, CA 92626 (Within 15 miles from Disneyland and Knott's Berry Farm Amusement Parks, 5 miles from Newport, Laguna, and Huntington Beaches! To register, go to:  
<http://www.afb.org/FCRegistration1.asp>*

### **OPPORTUNITY TO GIVE YOUR INPUT TO THE CSAP!**

The Unit of Student Assessment is very interested in having TVIs participate in their yearly Content Validity and Alignment Review. During this review, content experts and teacher specialists examine every new item for alignment and bias issues before it becomes a part of the next test. This year's review will take place **June 1-4, 2009** for the different content areas – please be in touch with Tanni if you are interested in participating.

# DOTS OF INTEREST



## The 2009 National Braille Challenge

by Randy Witte

On February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2009, Braille students from across Colorado converged at the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind. These 41 students, some parents and other family members, some TVI's and some Braille transcribers had traveled for up to 4 hours for a special purpose—to participate in the Colorado Regional Contest of the National Braille Challenge. There were Braille rookies just learning the Braille alphabet up to returning veterans of the championship rounds in Los Angeles. There were little first graders up to seniors in high school. All were there to have fun, show off their Braille skills, meet some new and old friends, and celebrate their own medium for reading and writing—Braille.

Students were greeted by CSDB Superintendent Carol Hilty, who honored the students for their commendable efforts to challenge themselves by participating in the rigorous contests. She shared that Governor Ritter had tried to include the National Braille Challenge in his busy schedule, but was unable to attend—she did pass along his words of encouragement. Mr. David Dawson spoke of the critical importance of his Braille literacy skills in his personal successes directing the Audio Information Network of Colorado and serving on the CSDB Board of Trustees. Mr. Chris Foster, the Communications Director for the National Federation of the Blind of Colorado, also spoke of how Braille has played an important role in his success, and he stayed the day to work with our Rookies and to award one of the special prizes at the end of the day.

The NBC would be impossible to pull off without the help of our visiting TVI's and transcribers, who gladly offered to help with proctoring the test sessions and scoring the tests. A HUGE thanks goes to these folks, and if I forgot a name here, I apologize: Debbie Mendoza, Mike Plansker, Ann Marie Jansen, Nancy Knight, Nancy Cozart, Julie King, Michelle Chacon, Lorainne Hutchinson, Marci Reid, Judy Wiefert, Carol Love, Wanda Gwinn, Elaine Karns, Linda Campbell, Barbara Adams, and Cheryl Leidich. And we need to thank Rae Cunningham (CSDB) and Burt Haas (CIMC), our two nationally certified transcribers here at CSDB, for their help with scoring, along with the staff at the School for the Blind. It is a true team effort!

Then students were off finding their rooms, and our visiting TVIs put on their test proctoring hats. Most of the testing was hard, but we all agreed that the Apprentice Proofreading contest might as well have been on Nuclear Physics. I will certainly let the Braille Institute know that the format for the test is extremely difficult for 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> graders—but this year, none of the eight Apprentice students cried! After a couple hours of grueling Braille work, the NBC contestants chomped on some pizza before heading back to the tests while the Rookies made tactile wood sculptures, played Braille Jeopardy and tried to figure out how to make a Braille heart from Trina's excellent Braille art book. Finally the tests were completed and we reunited in the auditorium. Principal Louis Tutt congratulated all of the Braille students and thanked them and their support teams for coming to CSDB. Prize bags were handed out which included Patsy's Candies, some toys from Toys R Us, some cuddly stuffed animals courtesy of Bronco Billy's in Cripple Creek, and some t-shirts and tote bags from Mushroom Monday's in Manitou Springs. Then Chris Foster presented a certificate redeemable for a Louis Braille Commemorative coin courtesy of the NFB, which was won by Morgan Hansen! Zach Ehrlich from Colorado Springs had his name drawn to win one of the new Perkins Braille writers! The concluding entertainment was provided by the Bad News Bulldog Band with special guest Alison Utter on flute. Students were seen leaving the building with chocolate, smiles, and hopefully satisfaction, pride, and feelings of accomplishment. Please congratulate the following winners of the Colorado Regional contest:

### Apprentice Category:

1<sup>st</sup> Place: Hannah Bachus  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Andre Jackson  
3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Evan Starnes

### Freshman Category:

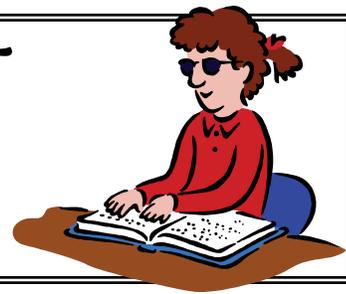
1<sup>st</sup> Place: Juliana Trunfio  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Adam Encrapera  
3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Roni Kerin

### Sophomore Category:

1<sup>st</sup> Place: Elizabeth Romero  
2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Casey Schueler  
3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Jesus Gonzales

*(Continued)*

# DOTS OF INTEREST



(Continued—The 2009 National Braille Challenge)

## **Junior Varsity Category:**

1<sup>st</sup> Place: Alison Utter

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Quinita Thomas

3<sup>rd</sup> Place: Emily Romero

## **Varsity Category:**

1<sup>st</sup> Place: Ijemmer Ramos

2<sup>nd</sup> Place: Carlos Ramirez

## **Educational Technology**

By Mary Hattick, Educational Technology Coordinator,  
Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind

At the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind, I hold the position of Educational Technology Coordinator. I was trained as a teacher of the deaf but am now working to infuse technology in classrooms in both schools. In the school for the deaf, an obvious solution for bringing visual support for teaching is using interactive whiteboards such as SmartBoards. The students interact with the technology as they would a computer are motivated to work in groups to solve problems. Teachers use technology to bring multimedia resources to their lessons.

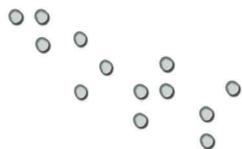
Using the digital whiteboards in the school for the blind was not as obvious to me, but we had a portable SmartBoard that had been purchased for use in the Library and one of the new teachers was interested in using it so we set it up in one of the primary classrooms last year. The students benefit from the large size of print and graphics that are projected on the boards. The contrast can be set (using the settings on the computer monitor) so that the projections is accessible for students. Font size, color contrasts (between the pen and the backgrounds on the digital whiteboard) as well as lighting in the classroom can be easily adjusted to make the digital whiteboard an excellent way for students to access the computer monitor.

The interactive whiteboard can also be used for other projected media. If a book is scanned, it can be projected and students can interact, not only with the text, but with the illustrations. Especially at an early reading level, the illustrations often add much to the story. Students can work individually or in groups to answer questions using pictures, text or diagrams fill in blanks, learn to form letters (when learning to write) and do all the kinds of tasks normally associated with worksheets.

There is the added benefit for younger students of directly using their fingers or pens in hand to activate objects on the board instead of trying to make the connection between the mouse and the cursor. Although the cursor can be made as large as necessary, the student does not have to locate it and try to manipulate the mouse. There is a direct connection between what action the student wants to take, and what he activates with his hand. Using the interactive whiteboard to make print accessible is one more way to open the door for students to the world around them.

*Reprinted from Howe's Now Councils of Schools for the Blind, Winter 2009. Vol. 12 (2)*

# DOTS OF INTEREST



## **DOTS FOR BRAILLE LITERACY**

*Dots for Braille Literacy* is a newsletter for teachers, parents, and other persons interested in knowing about Braille. It is available on-line or in Braille from AFB. Published only a few times per year, you can find the most recent issue. Summer 2008 as well as archived issues from Summer 2003 to Summer 2008 on AFB's Website: <http://www.afb.org/Section.asp?SectionID=6&TopicID=19>

## **NEW PORTABLE BRAILLE DISPLAY**

Adaptive Technology, a division of Perkins Products, has developed the Seika Braille Display. Features of this new device include: 40-cell display, portable and lightweight, USB connection, compatible with JAWS, Window Eyes, HAL, and Virgo screen readers, and repositioned cursor keys for easier operation. It is available for \$2495. To learn more about this product, visit [www.perkinsproducts.org](http://www.perkinsproducts.org), call (978) 462-3817, or e-mail [adaptivetech@perkins.org](mailto:adaptivetech@perkins.org)

## **NBA Announces New Website FEATURE**

### **“ASK AN EXPERT”**

*Ask An Expert* is a new feature where you can post questions to skilled experts in the field of Braille transcription. Lists are moderated by NBA Members skilled in particular areas of expertise:

- ♦ Braille Formats Course
- ♦ Educated Materials (Textbook Format)
- ♦ Literary Braille
- ♦ Music Braille
- ♦ Tactile Graphics
- Computer-Assisted Transcription
- Foreign Language
- Mathematics and Science
- Online Learning
- Transcriber and Educator Services

Visit [www.nationalbraille.org](http://www.nationalbraille.org) and ask your questions and network with others in the field who may have similar questions and answers.

# DOTS OF INTEREST



**Dancing Dots offer publications and technology (along with related training) that addresses the following challenges that commonly confront blind musicians:**

**Challenge:** I'm blind and I read literary Braille. I need to learn to read and write music notation in Braille. **Solution:** Series of Braille music courses authored by Richard Taesch: "An Introduction to Music for the Blind Student: A Course in Braille Music Reading", etc.

**Challenge:** I'm blind and I need to learn to perform music only available in printed notation. **Solution:** Scan print music, play pack with your PC and subsequently convert it to the equivalent music Braille. **Product:** **GOODFEEL Braille Music Translator**

**Challenge:** I'm blind and I compose music which I want to print out for sighted people to read and perform. **Solution:** Enter notes via the PC or MIDI musical keyboard, review/revise with an accessible music editor, print out on standard ink printer in conventional music notation for sighted players. **Product:** **GOODFEEL for Braille readers or Lime Aloud for non-Braille readers.**

**Challenge:** I'm blind and I want to independently create sound recordings. **Solution:** Access to mainstream digital audio workstation software that allows you to convert your PC into a multi-track recording studio. Sing or play into a microphone, enter parts for synthetic instruments using an electronic, MIDI musical keyboard. Apply audio effects such as reverb and equalization. Mix down results to two-stereo master and burn to a CD. **Product:** SONAR from Cakewalk with CakeTalking for SONAR access method and tutorial.

**WWW.DANCINGDOTS.COM**

**1754 Quarry Lane P.O. Box 927 Valley Forge, PA 19482 Ph: 610-783-6692 Fax: 610-783-6732**



AFB's popular Braille Bug Reading Club has returned and this year the Braille bug is asking, "How do people cope with challenges in their lives?" The recommended books feature people who face challenges because they are different than the majority of their neighbors and friends. They are of different races, ethnicity, religion, or abilities and because of this they face challenges that others may not have to face. Their stories highlight how they cope with those challenges through their own ingenuity or inventiveness and strength of character.

Books are recommended for a variety of reading levels and, as always, a variety of media (print, Braille, audio, and electronic formats). For the winter quarter, the Book Club will highlight Louis Braille. The two recommended books are:

- ♦ **A Picture Book of Louis Braille**  
David A. Adler (Grades 3-5)
- ♦ **Out of Darkness: The Story of Louis Braille**,  
Russell Freedman (Grades 5-8)

For updated reading lists, message boards, and more, visit:

[www.afb.org/braillebug/readingclub.asp](http://www.afb.org/braillebug/readingclub.asp)

**Joint Resolution SJR0-031**

**Noting the release of the Louis Braille Coin  
and its attendant literacy program adopted on 3/26/09**

First Regular Session

Sixty-seventh General Assembly

**STATE OF COLORADO**

**REVISED SJR09-031**

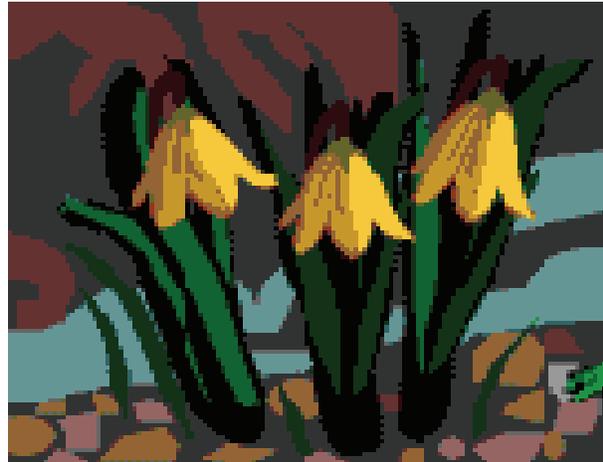
LLS NO. R09-0962.01 Joel Moore

**SENATE SPONSORSHIP**

**Shaffer B.,**

**HOUSE SPONSORSHIP**

**Rice,**



Senate Committees House Committees

**SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 09-031**

**CONCERNING THE CONTINUING IMPORTANCE OF BRAILLE LITERACY  
IN THE LIVES OF BLIND CHILDREN AND ADULTS IN COLORADO AND  
ACROSS THE NATION, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH,  
RECOGNIZING "NATIONAL BRAILLE READERS ARE LEADERS DAY".**

WHEREAS, Since its invention by Louis Braille, the reading and writing code for the blind that bears his name has become the accepted method of reading and writing for the blind the world over; and

WHEREAS, Braille is used to represent not only the alphabets of most written languages but also mathematical and scientific notation and the reproduction of musical scores; and

WHEREAS, Braille provides people who are blind with the power of knowledge, expanding their opportunities and equipping them with the tools to be productive and imaginative contributors to society; and

WHEREAS, While technology has improved the lives of blind people by facilitating quick access to information, no technology can replace Braille literacy since literacy is the ability to read and write and to do both interactively; and

WHEREAS, Despite Braille's efficiency, versatility, and universal acceptance by the blind, the rate of Braille literacy in the United States has declined to the point where only 10 percent of blind children are learning to read and write Braille; and

WHEREAS, Just as a literacy rate of 10 percent among this nation's sighted children would be rightly viewed as a crisis and as cause for national outrage, the decline in Braille literacy is a crisis, and swift action must be taken to reverse this dangerous trend; and

WHEREAS, Braille literacy is the key to independence, productivity, and success for blind people, as evidenced by the fact that, while 70 percent of the blind are unemployed, 85 percent of those who are employed use Braille; and

WHEREAS, The United States Congress officially recognized the importance of Braille by passing the Louis Braille Bicentennial—Braille Literacy Commemorative Coin Act, authorizing the striking of a United States silver dollar in commemoration of the two hundredth anniversary of the birth of Louis Braille; and

WHEREAS, The National Federation of the Blind, the nation's oldest and largest organization of blind people and the leading advocate for Braille literacy, has launched a national "Braille Readers are Leaders" campaign to promote awareness of the importance of Braille and the magnitude of the Braille literacy crisis and to increase the availability of competent Braille instruction and of Braille reading materials in this country, with funding for said campaign to come from a portion of the proceeds of the sale of the Louis Braille Bicentennial Silver Dollar; and

WHEREAS, The National Federation of the Blind has today released a comprehensive report, "The Braille Literacy Crisis in America--Facing the Truth, Reversing the Trend, Empowering the Blind", and the United States Mint has this day released the Louis Braille Bicentennial Silver Dollar for purchase by the general public; now,  
therefore,

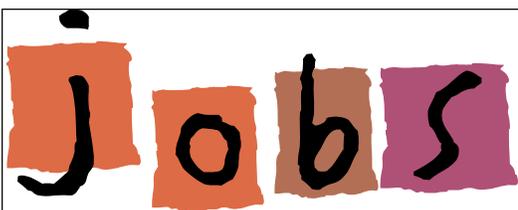
*Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Sixty-seventh General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:*

(1) That we, the members of the Colorado General Assembly, do hereby proclaim March 26, 2009, as National Braille Readers are Leaders Day, to celebrate the hope, opportunity, and power that literacy in Braille provides to the blind and to our nation; and



(2) That we call upon all public officials, educators, and citizens throughout Colorado and this nation to recognize the importance of Braille in the lives of blind people and to assist the National Federation of the Blind in its efforts to increase instruction in and use of Braille in Colorado and across the United States.

*Be It Further Resolved,* That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent to Governor Bill Ritter, Jr.; the members of the Colorado Congressional delegation; and Scott C. LaBarre, President, National Federation of the Blind of Colorado.



# 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. We have THREE metro-area TVIs looking for employment for this next school year, so we have a chance to really ensure that anticipated vacancies are filled.

If you know of an anticipated opening in your part of the state, please begin working to recruit someone into our field by ensuring he or she has an opportunity to learn about being a TVI and/or an Orientation and Mobility Specialists. This may be a paraeducator, a brailist, and/or a colleague already in the teaching profession. Please work with Dr. Paula Conroy to learn more about the UNC distance education / graduate program to prepare TVIs and O&M Specialists in Colorado!

### Jobs for School Year 2009-2010

TVI = teacher certified in the area of visual impairment.

COMS = certified orientation and mobility specialist

#### Metro Region

- ✓ **TVI / COMS** (1FTE): Contact Ann Marie Jansen of Adams 12 District in Northglenn at (720) 972-4789 or [annmarie.jansen@adams12.org](mailto:annmarie.jansen@adams12.org)
- ✓ **TVI / COMS** (1 FTE): Contact Dixie Periman of Cherry Creek School District at (720) 554-4250 or [dperiman@cherrycreekschools.org](mailto:dperiman@cherrycreekschools.org)

#### Southern Region

- ✓ **TVI / COMS** (1. FTE): Contact Leah Bitat at [bitatlm@d11.org](mailto:bitatlm@d11.org) in El Paso 11 District in Colorado Springs for more information
- ✓ **TVI / Elementary / Special Needs** (1 FTE) for the CSDB School for the Blind in Colorado Springs. Contact Chelle Lutz at [clutz@csdb.org](mailto:clutz@csdb.org)
- ✓ **TVI / Transition Program / Outreach Services** (1 FTE) for the CSDB School for the Blind in Colorado Springs. Contact Chelle Lutz at [clutz@csdb.org](mailto:clutz@csdb.org)
- ✓ **TVI / COMS** (.1FTE or five hours a week for 2010-2011): Contact Debi Blackwell of Canon City Schools at [BLACKWD@canoncityschools.org](mailto:BLACKWD@canoncityschools.org)
- ✓ **TVI / COMS**.3 FTE): Contact Dr Carolena Steen of Cheyenne Mountain Schools at [csteen@cmsd12.org](mailto:csteen@cmsd12.org) or (719) 457-6100



# Calendar of Events

2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009

- April 15**                      **Southern TVI Meeting** - Colorado Springs  
Contact: Stephanie Isabel - [isbell@cmsd12.org](mailto:isbell@cmsd12.org)
- April 16-18**                      **Short Course Program on Orientation & Mobility**—Colorado Springs  
Contact: Donna Keale at [dkeale@csdb.org](mailto:dkeale@csdb.org)
- April 17**                              **Metro TVI meeting**—Anchor Center from 2—4:00 pm  
Contact: Nancy Cozart - [ncozart@lps.k12.co.us](mailto:ncozart@lps.k12.co.us)
- April 22**                              **COACT State Test Date**
- April 23-25**                      **Western Region Early Intervention Conference**—Colorado Springs  
Contact: Diane Covington at [dcovington@csdb.org](mailto:dcovington@csdb.org)
- May 6**                                      **COACT Makeup Test Date**
- May 7-9**                              **Short Course Program on Orientation & Mobility** - Colorado Springs  
Contact: Donna Keale at [dkeale@csdb.org](mailto:dkeale@csdb.org)
- May 7-9**                              **Annual O&M Conference** - Anchor Center in Denver  
Contact: Melissa Shular at [melissa.shular@asd20.org](mailto:melissa.shular@asd20.org)
- May 13**                              **Southern TVI Meeting** - Colorado Spring  
Contact: Stephanie Isabel - [isbell@cmsd12.org](mailto:isbell@cmsd12.org)
- June 5-7**                              **Annual Family Learning Retreat** - CSDB in Colorado Springs  
Contact: Stefanie Morgan at (719) 570-0793.
- June 8—12**                      **Confidence Camp for Kids—Elementary Program**  
Contact: Co Center for the Blind —[ccb@cocenter.org](mailto:ccb@cocenter.org) or 303 778-1130
- June 15-19**                      Confidence Camp for Kids—Elementary Program (ages 5 -10)  
Contact: Co Center for the Bind —[ccb@cocenter.org](mailto:ccb@cocenter.org) or 303 778-1130
- June 23-25**                      **2009 Summer Institute on Deafblindness**  
Contact: Tanni Anthony— [Anthony\\_t@cde.state.co.us](mailto:Anthony_t@cde.state.co.us)

## More Calendar of Events

2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009 2009

July 20—August 8

**Initiation to Independence” Middle School Program**

Contact: Co Center for the Blind —ccb@cocenter.org or 303 778-1130

June 13—August

**Earn and Learn — High School Program**

Contact: Co Center for the Blind —ccb@cocenter.org or 303 778-1130

June 13—August 8

**Summer for Success—College Prep Program**

Contact: Co Center for the Bind —ccb@cocenter.org or 303 778-1130

July 14-17

**13th International Mobility Conference - Marburg, Germany**

Visit: [www.imc.blista.de](http://www.imc.blista.de)

July 17-19

**Families Connecting with Families Conference, Costa Mesa, CA**

Visit: [www.napvi.org](http://www.napvi.org)

October 15-17

**APH Annual Meeting of Ex Officio - Louisville, KY**

Contact: American Print House for the Blind

October 28-31

**AT Industry Association Conference - Schaumburg, IL.**

Visit: [www.atia.org](http://www.atia.org); [registration@atia.org](mailto:registration@atia.org) Contact: 1-877-687-2842

November 12-15

**Getting In Touch with Literacy Conference—Costa Mesa, CA**

Visit: [www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.com](http://www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.com)

2010 2010 2010 2010 2010 2010 2010 2010 2010 2010 2010

July 20-25

**AER International Conference - Little Rock, AR**

Visit: [www.aer.bvi.org](http://www.aer.bvi.org)

August 8-13

**World ICEVI Conference— Jomtein, Thailand**

Visit: [www.icevi.org](http://www.icevi.org)



# APH's New Louis Database and New Online Shopping!

New versions of APH's Louis Database and APH's online ordering system will be launched on Monday April 6th. APH has implemented major upgrades to both sites to improve your APH shopping experience. Both sites have many new features too numerous to list here, but below are a few highlights.

Like the current Louis site, the new Louis site will allow users to search for all APH products & textbooks, plus educational materials from about 140 other agencies. The new Louis site features:

- ♦ An easier basic search plus more advanced search capabilities
- ♦ Convenient "My List" feature that allows you to save, email, or print items of interest
- ♦ Ability to add APH products to our new shopping site cart



The Louis web address will change to:

<http://louis.aph.org/>

The new APH shopping site features:

- ♦ A familiar interface similar to many commercial shopping sites
- ♦ Relationships between products that allow you to see optional, replacement, and related products
- ♦ Ability to browse for products by categories

The shopping site web address remains  
the same:

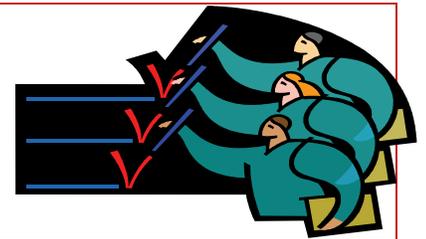
<http://shop.aph.org/>



The shopping site will continue to be improved over the coming months -- for example, more product photographs and relationships between products will be added.



# CHECK IT OUT!



**2009 Touch of Genius:** National Braille Press is now accepting applications for the 2009 Touch of Genius Prize for Innovation. The award was developed to inspire an innovator to continue the promotion of Braille literacy for blind and Deafblind people worldwide. The \$20,000 prize will be granted for a new educational method, new tactile literacy product, or new technological advance in tactile literacy. Whatever your idea—whether a tactile-based technology project, a viable Braille teaching technique, a way to inspire preschool Braille learners, or a Braille writing instrument—you are encouraged to apply. Applications are due by **July 20, 2009**. For more information, visit [www.nbp.org](http://www.nbp.org).

**YouTube** has videos on different topics related to the field of blindness. Past the following link into a Google search: blind and visually impaired site: [youtube.com](http://youtube.com) and see the various topics that appear.

## AFB

[American Foundation  
for the Blind](http://www.afb.org)

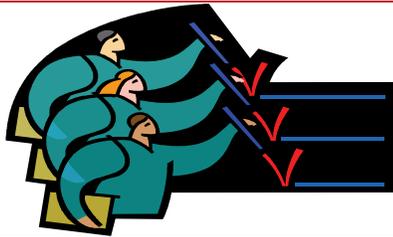
™

The February issue of the *Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness (JVIB)*, inaugurated an exciting new feature whose development was spurred by the journal's readers. Practice Perspectives will appear several times throughout the year to highlight professional practice and the concerns and techniques of practitioners throughout the field. Edited by Dr. Jane N. Erin, one of the most respected voices in the field of visual impairment and blindness and editor emerita of the journal, Practice Perspectives will also provide readers with the opportunity to exchange thoughts and suggestions with Dr. Erin, featured authors, and each other. Dr. Erin's first column features the unique approaches of three professionals from across the United States and offers creative solutions for supporting reading with learners of all ages. For a limited time only, the column will be free and available through *JVIB* Online to nonsubscribers and the public at large. For more information on the exciting developments of *JVIB*, visit *JVIB* Online at [www.jvib.org](http://www.jvib.org), or e-mail Rebecca Burrichter, senior editor, *JVIB*, at [rebeccab@afb.net](mailto:rebeccab@afb.net).

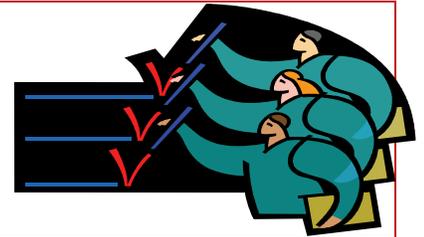
### Field Test Opportunity:

The American Printing House for the Blind is seeking 12 field test sites for a 3-month trial for a product entitled *Child-guided Strategies: The van Dijk Approach to Assessment for Understanding Children and Youth with Sensory Impairments and Multiple Disabilities*. Each field tester (the assessor), in cooperation with the principal caregiver(s) and educator(s), create situations for the learner where he/she is given the opportunity to show his/her abilities. Each field test site requires access to a computer with a DVD drive. The product consists of a training DVD and a guidebook complete with sample and blank assessment forms. Multiply disabled children and youth who participate in the field test should be nonverbal and have sensory impairments, including visual impairment, blindness, or deafblindness.

This new training assessment was developed by Dr. Catherine Nelson, Dr. Jan van Dijk, Teresa Oster and Dr. Andrea McDonnell. Dr. Nelson will be the field test consultant. To apply for this opportunity, contact Tristan Pierce at [tpierce@aph.org](mailto:tpierce@aph.org) by April 1, 2009.



# CHECK IT OUT!



## Description Guidelines Now Available

The Described and Captioned Media Program (DCMP) has partnered with the American Foundation for the Blind to forge “guidelines” to equal access for students with vision loss, called the **Description Key: Guidelines for the Description of Educational Media**. The guidelines are now complete and posted online, and are intended for new and experienced describers, description agencies, media producers and distributors, and others who want to make educational media more accessible.

For this valuable resource, go to:

[www.afb.org/descriptionguidelines.asp](http://www.afb.org/descriptionguidelines.asp)



## Experience the Great Outdoors!

The National Parks Department has a lifetime pass that offers discounts and free admissions to persons with a permanent disability. The pass holder can bring, with them at no charge, three other adults. The pass is named “America the Beautiful Access Pass” formerly the “Golden Access Passport”. You apply for it at a National Parks Departments website for all the documentation is required. Check out the National Parks Departments Website for all the particulars.

[http://www.nps.gov/fees\\_passes.htm](http://www.nps.gov/fees_passes.htm) (<http://www.frommers.com/articles/5436/html>)



## Fred's Head Transition from Database to Blog Is Complete!

Fred's Head, the free service from APH that publishes tips, articles, and resources for blind or visually impaired people, has changed format. At the end of March, the traditional Fred's Head Database was discontinued. The current Fred's Head blog ([www.fredshead.info](http://www.fredshead.info)) will continue to grow, with new articles posted almost every business day.

The Fred's Head blog is one of the first places you'll find announcements about new APH products. We also publish articles and links on dozens of topics of interest to blind people. A few of these are: adjusting to blindness, assistive technology, clothing, deafblind resources, dog guides, employment, family life, health, kitchen hints, organization skills, safety, and transportation.





# 2009 Sports Education Camp

For Students Who Are Blind Or Visually Impaired

<u>Date</u>	<u>Program</u>
June 14—June 19	Sports Education Camp—ages 10-16
June 14-16	Junior Camp—ages 10-12
June 14-19	Senior Camp—ages 13-16

**Experience track and field events,  
wrestling, goalball and more!**

**Register by May 8, 2009**

**Enrollment is limited to 20 students**

**Contact Donna at 719-578-2251 or [dkeale@csdb.org](mailto:dkeale@csdb.org)**

**Cost: \$50.00 per student**

**(includes all food, lodging and activities)**



CSDB does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, age, religion, marital status, disability or handicap on admissions, access to, treatment, or employment in educational programs or activities in which it operates.

**33 North Institute  
Street  
Colorado Springs,**



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

### AER ANNUAL MEETING AND AWARDS BANQUET

**AWARDS:** It is once again time to honor our friends and colleagues who work with individuals who are blind or visually impaired. CAER grants three awards annually to recognize professionals in our field who have gone above and beyond in representing the needs of students and clients. Please take this opportunity to nominate a deserving individual for state recognition!

#### Award Criteria:

**President's Award:** This award recognizes outstanding leadership in service to people with visual disabilities. The current board president, Samantha Hoffman, will select and present this award.

**Gary Schmidt Award:** This award honors an AER member who works directly with student/clients. Nomination criteria include: ethical standards, sense of humor, degree of excellence in job performance, and professionalism. The CAER Board and Janice Schmidt review the nominations.

**Connections Award:** This award recognizes cooperative efforts that cross organizational lines, perhaps even groups working collaboratively to benefit our field. The CAER Board considers the nominations.

**Lifetime Achievement Award:** This award is presented to professionals who have given of themselves to clients/students throughout their career and are preparing for retirement.

Please review the above noted award criteria, and nominate a dedicated professional for recognition. Please submit a brief narrative describing the nominated individual's achievements, as well as letters of support. Nominations may be e-mailed or mailed directly to:

Julie Wetzstein  
9999 Grove Way Unit B  
Westminster CO 80031

[jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us](mailto:jwetzste@jeffco.k12.co.us)  
Cell: 303-819-7887

Award recipients will be recognized at the annual CAER Meeting and Banquet on Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup>, 2009. Thanks!

#### BOARD VACANCIES:

Since everyone is spending more time at home and less money on outside activities during these lean economic times, do we have an opportunity for you! Join the CAER Board! We meet once a month, approximately seven or eight times a year, and it is free! We have one vacancy this year and need to have the slate ready for vote at the CAER Annual Meeting on Friday, May 8<sup>th</sup>. Please nominate an interested colleague (with their permission of course), or yourself. Interested parties must be an AER member. Serving on the CAER Board is a wonderful opportunity for networking state wide and a great way to support students/clients in Colorado.

Please submit a paragraph or two outlining why the interested individual would like to serve on the CAER Board and a brief description of the interested party (who he/she is, where he/she works, work experience, etc.) Nominations may be e-mailed or mailed directly to Julie Wetzstein. (see above contact information)

Thank you for your continued interest in serving the needs of individuals who are blind or visually impaired in Colorado!



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

### Mini-Grants for Professionals

Mini grants may be available for Professionals. Funds are available to help defray the costs of: conference attendance, professional development projects. The maximum amount per grant will be \$500. Grants will be reviewed/awarded in April and November by the CAER Board. Grant applications may be submitted at any time. Please visit the website at <http://co.aerbvi.org/> to download a application and e-mail it to the board before April 7th.

**To apply:** Go to the downloads link on the left column on the website, read the criteria, and fill out the application. Send completed application as an attachment to the CAER email address: [caerboard@gmail.com](mailto:caerboard@gmail.com)

### Mini-grant Application for Non-Professionals (Students, Parents, Families)

Funds may be available to defray the costs of: conference attendance, student activities and programming needs. The maximum amount per grant will be \$500. Grants will be reviewed/awarded in April and November by the CAER Board. Grant applications may be submitted at any time.

**To apply:** Go to the downloads link on the left column on the website, read the criteria, and fill out the application. Send completed application as an attachment to the CAER email address: [caerboard@gmail.com](mailto:caerboard@gmail.com)

## 2009 AER Regional Conference Featuring COMA's Conference within a Conference November 13-15, 2009 in Cleveland, OH

### A Rockin' Opportunity for...

- ◆ Education and professional development at an affordable price, starting at \$219 for members
- ◆ 2½ days of training in all specialties in the blind and visually impaired field
- ◆ COMA's Conference Within a Conference
- ◆ Top notch presentations in a relaxed setting
- ◆ All-important networking with colleagues
- ◆ AER Exhibit Hall showcasing the latest products and services
- ◆ Pre-conference Obstacle Avoidance Workshop with a separate registration fee of \$129. Limited to 35 attendees who receive a free 'K' Sonar valued at \$750.

### More Information

Visit the AER Web site <http://aerbvi.org/modules.php?name=Content&pa=showpage&pid=179> for more information. Call for papers and online conference registration open in April.

# **Hadley School for the Blind and Utah State University Partnership Offers Online Courses for Paraeducators**

In January 2008, a partnership between The Hadley School for the Blind in Winnetka, Illinois, and Utah State University (USU) in Logan, Utah, was created to provide pre-service education in the area of blindness. As a result, a new online program of study is being offered which will lead to either a USU Associate's Degree in General Studies with a Focus in Blindness or a Certificate in Blindness.

The coursework is designed for paraprofessionals who work with children and youth who are blind or visually impaired, but is available to anyone who is interested.

## **Courses Include:**

Introduction to Blindness and Visual Impairment

The Human Eye and Visual System

Introduction to Low Vision

Introduction to Multiple Disabilities

Introduction to Braille

The Role of the Paraeducators with Individuals who are Blind with Individuals who are Blind or Visually Impaired

## **Certificate Options**

There are two certificate options available:

**Level I:** Nine (9) credit hours of coursework plus practicum hours

Required courses include: Introduction to Blindness, The Role of the Paraeducator in Working with Individuals who are Blind or Visually Impaired, additional coursework will be added according to the student's desired emphasis, and a Practicum (one to six credit hours)

**Level II:** Eighteen (18) credit hours of coursework plus practicum hours.

Required courses include: Introduction to Blindness and Visual Impairment, The Human Eye and Visual System, Introduction to Low Vision, Introduction to Multiple Disabilities, Introduction to Braille, The Role of the Paraeducator in Working with Individuals who are Blind or Visually Impaired, and a Practicum (one to six credit hours).

## **Associates Degree Option**

**Level III**—Associates Degree in General Studies with a Focus in Blindness and includes 30 hours of General Education courses, 18 credit hours of coursework in blindness plus practicum hours.

Required courses include: Introduction to Blindness and Visual Impairment, The Human Eye, Introduction to Low Vision, Introduction to Multiple Disabilities, Braille Basics, The Role of the Paraeducator in Working with Individuals who are Blind or Visually Impaired, and a Practicum (one to six credit hours).

For more information about this program or for available courses, contact:

Linda Alsop, [linda.alsop@usu.edu](mailto:linda.alsop@usu.edu), 435-797-5591

Dawn Turco, [dawn@hadley.edu](mailto:dawn@hadley.edu), 800-323-4238 ext. 2829

# COLORADO CENTER FOR THE BLIND

Email: [ccb@cocenter.org](mailto:ccb@cocenter.org) Website: [www.cocenter.org](http://www.cocenter.org)

## 2009 YOUTH SERVICES PROGRAMS

**“Confidence Camp for Kids” Elementary Program : June 8-12 and June 15-19:** An interactive, two week program for blind and visually impaired children ages 5 to 10.

**“Initiation to Independence” Middle School Program—Monday, July 20<sup>th</sup> – Saturday, August 8<sup>th</sup>:** The Middle School Program is a three week residential program for young teens, ages 12 to 14. These students will participate in job shadows where they will meet competent blind role models. Students work on basic skills such as Braille, daily living and travel.

**“Earn and Learn” High School Program: Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup> – Saturday, August 8<sup>th</sup>**

For eight weeks high school teens live in apartments with summer counselors. The students work part time at local businesses. They participate in a wide variety of classes and build confidence through challenge recreation activities.

**“Summer for Success” College Prep Program: Saturday, June 13<sup>th</sup> – Saturday, August 8<sup>th</sup>**

The College Prep Program is an eight week residential program where students learn all aspects of higher education as well as skills to be fully independent. Topics covered include using technology effectively to master classes in math and science, orientation around college campuses, and being a full part of college life.

## The Colorado Braille Competency Documents Have Been Updated

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

**CDE Guidelines/Support Documents, ECEA Regulations, and National-Level Documents Related to Blindness/Low Vision**



**To locate the documents, please go to the CDE Blindness/ Low Vision webpage at**

**Colorado Braille Mastery Test Documents**

- ◆ [Braille Competency Testing Guidelines](#)      [Braille Mastery Test Accommodation Procedures](#)
- [Prep for the Colorado Braille Mastery Test](#)      [Braille Competency Renewal Testing Guidelines](#)



## Family Learning Retreat 2009

Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind  
33 North Institute Street  
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903  
June 5-7, 2009

The Family Learning Retreat will be returning to the Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind June 5-7, 2009. The weekend retreat is for any family with a child who is deaf/hard of hearing, blind/visually impaired or deafblind. This is an opportunity for families to meet other families while networking, learning and having fun together.

Parents /adults will attend training during the day, while children participate in supervised recreational activities within the youth program. Check-in and dinner begins Friday June 5<sup>th</sup>, 5:00 PM-7:00 PM followed by an opening session. The retreat ends by noon on Sunday, June 7<sup>th</sup>. Lodging will be available Friday and Saturday nights in the CSDB dormitories. Meals provided include Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast and lunch, and Sunday breakfast.

The cost of the Family Learning Retreat is only \$25 per adult and \$20.00 per child under the age of 18. Spanish and sign language interpreters will be provided upon request.

Parents will be responsible for providing any assisted feeding or medical procedure their child requires. A nurse will not be available during the Family Learning Retreat weekend.

Come and relax. Make new friends. Experience a valuable learning opportunity. Youth programming 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**.





## **El Retiro de Aprendizaje de Familia 2009**

**Colorado School for the Deaf and the Blind  
33 North Institute Street  
Colorado Springs, Colorado 80903  
5-7 de junio del 2009**

El Retiro de Aprendizaje de Familia regresará a la Escuela de Colorado para los Sordos y los Ciegos el 5-7 de junio del 2009. El retiro de fin de semana es para cualquier familia que tiene un hijo/hija sordo/duro de oír, ciego/discapacidad visual o sordo ceguera. Esto es una oportunidad para familias a conocer a otras familias mientras establecen contactos, aprenden y se divierten juntos.

Padres /adultos asistirán una variedad de entrenamientos durante el día mientras que los niños participan en actividades recreativas supervisados por medio de un programa juventud. La facturación y la cena empiezan la tarde de viernes, el 5 de junio a las 5:00 PM hasta las 7:00 PM, una sesión de Bienvenida seguirá. El retiro concluye al mediodía en domingo, el 7 de junio. Habrá habitaciones disponibles en los dormitorios de CSDB para ambos viernes y sábado. Las comidas proveídas serán la cena el viernes, el desayuno y almuerzo en sábado y el desayuno en domingo.

El costo para el Retiro de Aprendizaje es solo \$25 por cada adulto y \$20.00 por cada niño bajo la edad de 18 años. Interpretes de Español y de señas serán disponible por solicitud.

Será la responsabilidad de los padres administrar los alimentos o medicamentos requerido por el niño. Una enfermera no estará disponible durante el horario del Retiro de Aprendizaje de Familia.

Vengan para relajarse. Conocer nuevos amistades. Tener una experiencia de aprendizaje inolvidable. Durante la tarde en sábado, un programa de la juventud estará disponible para que los padres puedan ir a pasarlo bien.

Si le interesa o conoces a alguien con el interés de asistir, por favor llame a Diane Covington en la Escuela de Colorado para los Sordos y los Ciegos al **(719) 578-2225** para inscribir. Los participantes de habla español pueden llamar a Gloria Romero al **(719)-578-2288**.

**La cuota es debida antes el 8 de mayo del 2009**



# COLORADO CONNECTIONS

- 🔊 Congrats to the following individuals who finished the three semester hour course on Reading Instruction for Students with Visual Impairments: **Rita Albright, Janet Anderson, Linda Campbell, Deb Carlisle, Jen Carpenter, Dena Curran, Michelle Chacon, Bev Cherry, Nancy Cozart, Angel Findler, Barb Galgano, Holly Guinan, Amy Gunning, Danielle Hillebrand, Lorraine Hutcheson, Ann Marie Jansen, Julie King, Stephanie Isbell, Elaine Karns, Donna Keale, Julie King, Julie Johnson, Mary Labeck, Kaitlyn Lombardi, Ruth Massara, Debbie Mendoza, Shelley Moats, Judy Mumford, Sue Newhart, Kevin O'Brien, Mike Plansker, Trina Boyd Pratt, Amber Rundle, Mimi Schaper, Janice Schmidt, Melissa Shular, Angela Sims, Wendy Schlageter, Wendy Stoltman, Morgan Turner, Leslie Kelly Watrobka, Judy Wiepert, Julie Wetzstein, and Chloann Woolley.** Thanks to Professor **Dr. Cay Holbrook** for all of her work in providing the content and instruction.
- 🔊 A special WOW to **Trina Boyd Pratt** for working very diligently with her ELL team mates to figure out how best to administer the CELA Test with her young student. Trina's work will help inform how best to gather a body of evidence for our students who are blind/visually impaired who are also English Language Learners.
- 🔊 Congrats to **Edie Smith** of Douglas County School District and **Julie King** of Mountain BOCES for earning their CDE Certificates of Braille Competency! Good for **Ann Marie Jansen, Deb Carlisle, Judy Wiepert,** and **Marsha Roberson** for completing braille modules toward their renewal certificate. Thanks to proctors **Lucia Hasty** and **Julie Wetzstein!**
- 🔊 Welcome new CEC DVI Members **Kaitlin Lombardi** and **Peg Collins.**
- 🔊 CO's visual impairment / deafblind community was represented by **Gina Quintana** (CO CEC President), **Lou Tutt** (National CEC Board member), **Kay Ferrell, Silvia Correa Torres,** and **Tanni Anthony** (for one day) at the recent national CEC Conference in Seattle, WA.
-  🔊 Congrats to **Sally (Eldridge)** and **John Burch** who were married on April 3! We wish the happy couple all the best!
- 🔊 Yippee and Welcome to **Anna Langegger,** who is the new support staff team member on Tanni's CDE team. This is Anna's first newsletter and she did an amazing job!!

**State of Colorado Department of Education**

**Colorado State Board of Education**

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3rd Congressional District

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