

VISION ACCESS

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by

the Council of Citizens with Low Vision International.

VISION ACCESS is a magazine by, for, and about people with low vision. VISION ACCESS is published quarterly in three formats (large print cassette, and email) by the Council of Citizens with Low Vision International (CCLVI), a not-for-profit affiliate of the American Council of the Blind. Views expressed in VISION ACCESS are those of the individual contributors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the editor or of CCLVI. All rights revert to individual contributors upon publication.

VISION ACCESS welcomes submissions from people with low vision, from professionals such as ophthalmologists, optometrists, and low vision specialists, and from everyone with something substantive to contribute to the ongoing discussion of low vision and all of its ramifications. Submissions are best made on 3.5" disk in a format compatible with Microsoft Word. Submissions may also be made in clear typescript. All submissions should include a self-addressed stamped envelope. VISION ACCESS cannot assume responsibility for lost manuscripts. Submissions may be mailed to Joyce Kleiber, Editor, 6 Hillside Rd., Wayne, PA 19087, jmkleiber@hotmail.com

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From the Editor

It became harder for me to read the newspaper with my ClearImage glasses. Were my glasses dirty? Or were my cataracts to blame? In March I learned that I had cystoid macular edema caused by the leakage of blood vessels on my retina. My stress level went off the charts. I didn't want to lose any amount of the vision I have. Over a lifetime I'd gotten used to seeing what I can see and to accepting its limitations.

This crisis gives me a renewed appreciation of CCLVI. Here there are people I can talk to who understand and help. Bernice Kandarian asked Dawn Wilcox of the Health Library to email me reports on cystoid macular edema and a new treatment my doctor recommended—an injection of Avastin.

The first retinal specialist I consulted is a man who gave several presentations to my local CCLVI chapter, the Delaware Valley Council. Then I made phone calls and I sent emails to members of CCLVI who had faced similar crises. One member helped me to talk with a man who had received the same treatment I am considering. I truly felt helped and understood.

But, of course, I am still anxious as I anticipate treatment later this week. Without all that CCLVI offers, my anxiety might be unbearable.

Information and support are available to all our members and to anyone who calls our 800 line.

Value your organization. It works. It helps people. You will not be alone in the visual challenges you may face.

In this issue of Vision Access, you will learn more about our organization, our members, ways to enjoy major league baseball, how to approach an MP3, how to minimize eye fatigue and pain, stem cell research, the genius of Louis Braille, advocacy, and new assistive technology.

Enjoy this issue. Let us here from you. Thanks to everyone who contributed articles and ideas to this magazine. JMK, 6/4/07.

Organization News

President's Message

By Bernice Kandarian

I hope you have made your arrangements to attend the convention in Minneapolis. Program Chairperson John Horst has put together a great program for people with low vision. Be sure to check out the new low vision devices in the exhibit hall. Please introduce yourself to the two scholarship winners that will be at the convention, Robin Lipsker and Lisa Drzewucki.

Since our last convention in Jacksonville, we have lost the following members: Edwin Druding, Joyce Holsey, Julia Jeffries, Russell Florko, Sue Illingworth and Elizabeth Lennon. They were all active members and will be greatly missed.

See you in Minneapolis!

In Memoriam, Elizabeth Lennon

By Dr. Sam Genensky

I was very sorry to learn that Elizabeth Lennon is no longer with us. I knew her during the time that I was actively involved with the American Council of the Blind and with the Council of Citizens with Low Vision. I remember her as a dedicated member of both organizations. She was a very kind and considerate person and a woman you could trust and on whom you could depend. Her opinions and comments were well worth listening to and her advice was right on the mark.

I am confident that there are many members of the blind and partially sighted community who will miss Elizabeth, and I am certain that, like myself, most of these people will remember her with great affection, love and respect.

All of us are better people for having known her and having had our lives intersect with hers.

Summary of CCLVI Board Meeting

The CCLVI Board met by teleconference on May 11, 2007. Minutes of the past meeting and the treasurer's report were read and approved. Scholarship Committee: Catherine Schmitt Whitaker, Chairperson, reported that 25 people applied for scholarships. This committee interviewed 12 applicants who met qualifications. Scholarships of \$3000 were awarded to 3 applicants. These recipients will attend CCLVI's convention where they will be introduced at CCLVI's general session and at ACB's general session. Each winner has been given a one year membership in CCLVI. Each applicant will receive a complementary issue of Vision Access. This committee appreciates the work of Joel Isaac who made on line application possible. This greatly simplified the work of this committee. Bernice Kandarian, President, complemented the Scholarship Committee--Catherine Schmitt Whitaker, Richard Rueda, Donna Pomerantz, and Fred Schiebert as well as Joel Isaac for their work.

Membership Committee: Carol Ann Ewing, Chairperson, reported total membership of 290, including 97 Life Members. We would like to increase our membership and are planning to produce a DVD to be used to publicize our organization.

Program Committee: John Horst, Chairperson, noted this change in the program--the topic of the first session will be one that applies to low vision in general rather than to a specific eye condition. People were asked to help with Game Night and to serve as greeters at program sessions. Mike Godino, Treasurer, has initiated an effective way to record money that is collected at convention events. We are to get a written agreement with Gordon Kent who plans to provide music at CCLVI dances. All requests for equipment such as cordless and podium microphones are to be made through John Horst. The board complemented John Horst for planning a fine convention program. Vision Access: The board approved funds for the repair of our cassette duplicating machine. Members with technical expertise will be asked to address converting the audio version of Vision Access to either CD or MP3. Another problem to be address is one faced by some members who receive email subscriptions of Vision Access and whose internet providers do not accept long emails.

Rick Morin was asked to contact Pat Beattie to obtain ACB's White Paper on rehabilitation issues. This White Paper contains a number of references to low vision. This document will be disseminated to board members.

Next board meeting will take place at 3pm on June 30th in Minneapolis. This meeting adjourned.

Tampa Bay Students Awarded 2007 FCCLV Scholarships By Barbara Grill

Michael Andrew Hall 22, of Lutz, Florida is the recipient of a \$750 scholarship from the Florida Council of Citizens with Low Vision. This scholarship is awarded, annually, to outstanding students with impaired vision who demonstrate academic and leadership excellence and who plans to pursue a college degree.

Michael graduated from Gaither High School in Tampa. After graduation, he entered the University of South Florida majoring in Religious Studies. Upon completion of the bachelors program, he plans to continue studies either at a seminary or a post-graduate program at a state university. Michael's current long-range goal is be a full-time minister.

For such a young person, Michael has extensive work experience. His vision impairment, due to a retinal scar, has not hindered him from working part-time since 2002. He worked for a church childcare program from 2002 until 2003. After a brief interruption, Michael continued working part time as a staff technology support person for an elementary school. His responsibilities include building and maintaining the school's website, installing and updating software and, acting in the role of an all around troubleshooter.

Michael volunteers as an adult counselor for summer youth camps. He teaches Sunday school classes and is involved with his church's student band where he plays guitar. He states, "I feel like my career path is leading into full-time ministry, in the area of music." At present, he is pursuing both avenues.

The Florida Council of Citizens with Low Vision awarded Rachel Shepherd, of Englewood, Florida a \$750 scholarship. Rachel, 22, is in her junior year attending the University of South Florida.

Although Rachel has retinitis pigmentosa, which leads to increasing vision loss, she states, "I have been very lucky that my vision has stayed pretty stable throughout my life." Rachel has never allowed her vision impairment to get in the way of anything and doesn't draw attention to herself due to her disability. She prefers that people treat her just like anyone else.

"I don't believe that my impairment should be the focus of anything. I plan on accomplishing all of my goals regardless of any disability."

Because of her excellent grades, she has received many awards. While attending community college she was elected to the Phi Theta Kappa honor society. She has been on the dean's list, national dean's list or president's list for every semester. "My grades are extremely important to me."

"I plan on getting my master's degree probably in social work right after my bachelor's degree from USF. It has always been a goal of mine to go to law school, so that is a possibility after graduating with my master's degree."

Rachel enjoys reading, traveling, hanging out with friends and family. She has been an active volunteer in her community and church. She loves going to the theater and says that her favorite show is Foot Loose.

For information about the Florida Council of Citizens with Low Vision Scholarship Program, email grillbh@comcast.net or call Project Insight in Florida at 800-267-4448... For more information about FCCLV, please email grillbh@comcast.net.

CHAPTER NEWS

Delaware Valley Council of CCLVI is offering members and friends free tickets to nine Philadelphia Orchestra concerts at the Mann Center for the Performing Arts. The Philadelphia Orchestra has offered free under the roof tickets to the Mann Center for the Performing Arts, which has in turn offered these tickets to be distributed free of charge to organizations such as DVCCLV. Summer concerts begin on June 26 and conclude on July 28. For further information, call the New DVCCLV telephone number, 215-748-3822: select menu option 5.

Metropolitan Council of Low Vision Individuals

Congratulations to all the new members of the Chapter's Board of Directors as a result of our recent electronic/postal elections. They are; Vice President Raphael Rivas, Secretary Todd Wallerstein, Treasurer Donna Meduski, and Directors Artie Elefant and Rick Morin. For information about this chapter call 845 986-2955 or email cclvi@yahoo.com

Sound Bites By Ken Stewart

Cucumbers can repeat but carrots do not speak, at least not yet. Nor shall I speak a word of the ideas and gimmicks that will be employed at the CCLVI Mixer at this year's Annual Convention in Minneapolis. These ideas and gimmicks are intended to permit any attendee without usable vision to identify the food offerings before touching them.

I shall share here though, one idea not being utilized. It was submitted in our contest, as will be evident, "tongue in cheek." Positioned next to each particular food offering, will be a portable cassette player which plays on a loop, a sound which will illustrate something which rhymes with the food being served; a sneeze for cheese, two lovers kissing for crackers--since they are smackers, a clock ticking faster and faster signifies quicken for chicken, an auto crash for succotash, elderly dogs growling are old mutts for cold cuts, that unmentionable body sound which rhymes with tart--Pop tarts will be on that plate. The sounds of someone out of breath will, of course, indicate the presence of turkey stuffing, since stuffing rhymes with huffing and puffing. The sound of

a galloping horse is a fast pony for bologna; the sound of NASCAR competition will represent careeners to indicate wieners.

No broccoli or orange slices will be served because there is no word that rhymes with broccoli or orange.

People

Rick Morin Accepts Employee of the Year Award

Editor's Note: Here are Rick Morin's remarks after he was presented with the Careers and the disABLED Magazine's Employee of the Year Award:

Thank you Mark Bilger for the kind remarks and EDS for giving me a level playing field for the last 30 years.

Thank you Nancy, my beautiful wife of 30 years and mother of our two beautiful daughters who keep us young. Without you, I'd have nothing.

And thank you John, Jim, Tamara and everyone at Equal Opportunity Publications for all the work you do to promote and facilitate the employment of people with disabilities. Employment is the key to full integration into all facets of society.

It is very fitting to receive this award here in Boston literally steps away from Northeastern University where I graduated Summa Cum Laude with a bachelors degree in business administration in 1977.

In the mid-70's, the John Hancock Tower was for a time known as the Plywood Palace.

I spent many hours at the Christian Science Reflecting Pool where I would gather my thoughts and contemplate the future. I have a distinct memory of sitting there in 1977 wondering where life would take me and where I would be 30 years from then. Well here I am! In the Middle of Red Sox Nation!!!Who needs Roger Clemens, anyway?

I was born with acute optic atrophy and am legally blind with low vision. The disability does not define who I am..... but I want people to know about it. My self-effacing humor sets people at ease and allows me to address misconceptions and myths about the abilities of people with disabilities. The White Cane assists me with mobility as well as identifying me as having a vision disability that may otherwise be hidden.

My first assignment with EDS was at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, which continues to be an EDS customer. I joined EDS 13 years before the ADA and 5 years before IBM introduced its first Personal Computer.

Since then, there have been huge advances in adaptive technology for the blind and vision impaired -- computer screen readers and screen magnifiers, Braille displays, GPS devices for increased independence in mobility, are but a few. With such accommodations, employment opportunities for the blind and vision impaired should be limitless, especially for knowledge workers.

But yet unemployment and underemployment of people who are blind and vision impaired - many highly educated - is a staggering 70 percent. That troubles me greatly.

When you ask employers why they don't hire more people who are blind or vision impaired, many answer that they see few resumes from blind and VI candidates.

Before graduation in 1977, I contemplated my options of continuing my education, which Grad Placement was insisting I do, start a business career, work for McDonald's, or collect SSI.

Over the course of the 5 years at Northeastern, I had co-op jobs working for the state of Massachusetts, a major manufacturing firm, and with a munitions supplier to the US Navy. One co-op employer fired me on my second day of work, allegedly for not sufficiently disclosing my disability. While that experience was extremely upsetting and traumatic, my survival instincts taught me that I can deal with adversity. My early work experience with McDonald's that I started at age 15 and the co-op program provided me with the self-confidence and track record to launch a business career.

I joined EDS and never looked back.

I've always been a risk taker.

I attribute my success to keeping my eyes open and seizing high-risk opportunities that were outside of my comfort zone and those of many of my colleagues. One third of my career has been spent overseas. I accepted a position in Europe on a Tuesday and was on the plane with Nancy and our two cats that following Saturday to be at work in The Hague, Netherlands on Monday. I've traveled independently and extensively all over the world, including Russia during the fall of Communism and Czechoslovakia immediately after the fall of their Communist regime.

Travel taught me the value of diversity. We as people with disabilities are an important part of the diverse American workforce.

I am a fiercely committed advocate in the blindness community focused on improved quality of life through greater access to the arts, entertainment and sporting events - elements important in living a full and balanced life. These things require money.

Employment provides choices.

I hope that individuals who are blind and vision impaired preparing to enter the job market can benefit from my experiences and advice.

There are many very successful people in all walks of life who are blind and vision impaired. There are also many people in the disabled community who are in need of some tough love.

The ADA has done a lot to level the playing field so that we can compete fairly. And we MUST compete. There are NO entitlements. We need to write good resumes, hone our communication and interviewing skills, do due diligence into the companies we are interested in working for.

You have to DO the work. We must get out of our own way and stop negotiating with and limiting ourselves. Force yourself out of your comfort zone. Seek professional help if you are depressed. Take control of your demons.

The best advice I can give anyone is - take risks.

Have a strong work ethic and find work at an early age.

Don't let yourself be victimized. When you land an opportunity - settle for nothing less of yourself than excellence in how you perform your work. If you need certain accommodations, ask for them, and be reasonable.

Get out there in front of employers. Learn something from every interview.

I have never been denied an opportunity in EDS because of my disability. Any opportunity I had was because I was qualified. Whatever doubts that anyone had about my disability were dispelled by my contributions.

Don't use continued education as a way to delay the inevitable. Decide what place you want to take in society and use education to help achieve that goal. Take responsibility for your destiny and make conscious choices. Remember that doing nothing or taking on the role of a victim is your choice and only furthers negative stereotypes.

To everyone looking for a job - don't give up. For the employers, thank you for your proactive efforts in leveling the playing field.

Thanks again for the recognition. I'm very proud to be a valued member of the EDS team.

Good Luck!

Go Sox!

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Quality of Life

Baseball at Miller Park

--A Game for All Senses

By Mike Smyczek

In Phillip Roth's novel "The Great American Novel" people never dream of baseball being played at the Milwaukee Brewer's Miller Park.

But Miller Park is special. When this park was designed, much more than the avid Brewer's fan was considered.

Since I have lost a good bit of my vision, my other senses have really kicked in to help me adapt, even at this ball park. I enjoy the sounds and smells of Miller Park just as much as the game itself. From the smell of newly cut grass and the brats with the secret stadium sauce, my senses are really charged.

Miller Park's designers have done something different in this stadium. Just above the first level of stands, there is a wide open concourse with plenty of areas to sit down at a table and enjoy a meal of stadium foods and beverages. The concession stands are at right angles to the field so this opens up the area, and the sight lines to the playing field are great! I can stand in line for refreshments and still feel that I am near the action. Even with limited vision all that I need is a set of binoculars and I am right there. Another thing that helps with the whole Miller Park experience is that the main concourse completely surrounds the playing field. All of the seating areas are clearly marked so it is easy to find my way. There is also a crew of great ushers to assist fans.

I take a portable radio and listen to the game on my local station. We Brewer fans have a real gem. Bob Uecker along with Jim Powell make listening to the play by play a real treat. Like in "The Great American Novel", we have our own word smiths. Their insights about the game and how they deal with the game make this priceless entertainment. Uecker and Powell are a great team and they give the game a special flair. Together they are just outstanding. So let your senses take you on a visit to your favorite ball park. Let the play by play on the radio be your guide to what is going on. Let the announcers be your eyes to what is happening on the field. But let your other senses give you a whole new respect for the game.

Mark Attanasio, the new owner of the Brewers, has listened to the fans. If there is something that the fans would like to see changed or improved, he definitely takes it under advisement and tries to make everyone comfortable. The Kids Area is one of his ideas. If young children are in your group, this Kids Area offers plenty of activities and, as a parent, you can watch the kids while seeing the game.

Mark has converted some of the suites in the left field area to a large meeting place where fans can meet and mingle. It is all first class.

You may wish to take a quick tour of Miller Park. You can start behind home plate and walk all the way around the outfield. In the left field corner is "Friday's Front Row"-the restaurant. Miller Park has a gift shop for those avid fans who wish to purchase merchandise. On your tour you can stop anywhere around the concourse and see the field. And when you go into the outfield walkway, you can stop, move to the railing and watch the game from the outfield. Miller Park and Brewer's baseball is an experience that everyone will enjoy.

I think the best part of Miller Park is the sight lines. Even with my poor vision with a pair of binoculars I can stand at the top of the lower grandstand and have plenty of access to the field to enjoy the game.

I communicated with Mr. John Steinmiller, Manager of Media Relations for the Brewers, to find out what other steps the Milwaukee Brewers have taken to make the whole Miller Park and Brewers experience more accessible for fans who have handicaps. This is what he said: "We provide ample ADA parking, a drop off area, shuttle service and wheel chair service to accommodate handicapped guests. We have a TTY for fans who have hearing impairments (phone communication). Our restrooms, concession stands, and water fountains are ADA compliant. All areas of the park are wheelchair accessible via lift elevator or ramp. Our Fan Assistance Center is located near the home plate gate."

In all respects I have found the baseball fan experience from a visually challenged fan a very good experience at Miller Park. To top the whole experience Miller Park has a retractable roof. So no matter what the weather there are no rain outs. When the weather is beautiful, the roof is open and the warm sun is there for all to enjoy.

If you would like to go to your favorite team's game, by all means go! Contact the team and take advantage of all the features they have to offer. All you have to do is ask! What have you asked for? What will you ask for? What's been your experience? Enjoy America's pastime and root for your favorite team.

With my so-called handicap, I have the better of the situation. I use my other senses and this gives me a much larger picture of the experience. Go out and enjoy life!

I Want My MP3

Part One, The iPod

By Joey Stuckey

On a recent trip to New York City, it seemed that everyone had an iPod--on the street, on the subway, even in the restaurants. The portable music player is now commonplace, but there are so many different players. How many of them will work for people who are blind? This is a subject many manufacturers have not addressed and that few people seem to know much about. Don't worry though. There are lots of options for us and I will review them in this and subsequent articles--just keep reading.

First, let's do away with the idea that the iPod is the only product out there. It has become like Kleenex. That is what everyone calls a facial tissue, but it is just a brand name. It is the same with the iPod. There are many other options; however, unlike most blind people, I don't believe that the iPod is totally inaccessible. In fact, I have a video iPod! I can't see the video, but I can hear and I just love having my favorite movies and TV shows available at the press of a button. The video iPod is not designed with a blind person in mind, but with a little work and occasional sighted assistance, it can be used and enjoyed!

The iPod Shuffle, the smallest member of the Apple family, is easy to use. The sighted user doesn't really have any advantage over the blind user with this model as the Shuffle lacks even a basic display to show song titles. The iPod Shuffle is like a portable CD player with buttons for track skip, play, stop, pause and a volume control. Even if you go with one of the more advanced models of iPod, like my video iPod, you can still navigate if you have a great memory. You just have to put your songs and playlists in alphabetical order, which is an option in the settings menu. Then, just count the clicks of the jog wheel to keep track of where you are in the menus. According to a recent article by Ars Technica online at <http://arstechnica.com/news.ars/post/20060504-6753.html>, the people at Apple are considering this problem, not that they have the blind market in mind. A patent has been filed that reportedly describes an audio navigational system which would announce user commands and tracks being selected. Existing iPods could potentially be upgraded to include this audio feature. As yet, there is no word about when this update might be available.

For now, you can use an iPod if you want to work at it and as I say, I have one and love it, but here's the rub. Transferring the audio/video to the iPod from your PC or Mac is almost impossible without someone sighted to help you, and that makes it somewhat unattractive. While I think that this is the major reason to choose another MP3 player, you do have the option of downloading scripts for the JAWS screen reader from the T & T Consultancy Web site at www.tandt-consultancy.com. The JAWS iTunes Accessible Interface software available from T&T Consultancy allows users to easily purchase, transfer and listen to music from the iTunes Music Store on the iPod or iPod Shuffle through easy to remember keyboard commands. The software costs about 30 UPK, that is about \$45 US. The scripts work with JAWS versions 5.0 to 7.1. A trial version of the iTunes Accessible Interface software is available. Even if you go with another portable music player, like the BookCourier (www.bookcourier.com) or iRiver (www.iriver.com) you might want to get the JAWS scripts so you can access iTunes, which is still one of

the best and most popular ways to download music. It should be noted here that you can install Rockbox (www.rockbox.org) which is a program that will allow your music player to speak to you just like JAWS; however, while you can install it on the iPod, it does void the warranty and makes the unit malfunction with the iTunes software. We will talk more about the amazing Rockbox software later with other players. One final selling point to consider with the iPod is the awesome array of third-party accessories, including boom boxes, car adapter kits and audiophile docking stations, which allow you to not only control your iPod with a wireless remote, but also to connect it to your home stereo or theater system.

In my next installment, we will examine the BookCourier.

I Want My MP3

Part Two, BookPort v. BookCourier

By Joey Stuckey

Okay, so after reading my last article you decided that the iPod isn't for you and you want to go with a product designed for people who are blind. In this article we will take a look at two of the most popular products out there, the BookPort and the BookCourier. We'll start with the product that I am more familiar with and actually own, the BookCourier, available from www.bookcourier.com. The BookCourier, made by Springer Design, Inc., is the best product that I have worked with as far as allowing you to read a variety of text formats. BookCourier's text-to-speech engine reads text files from numerous sources, including Kurzweil Educational Systems, Bookshare.org (DAISY 3 text), grade 2 braille, TNAUK (Talking Newspaper Association of the United Kingdom), word processing programs, e-mail packages, and Internet browsers. BookCourier also plays spoken word MP3 files from providers such as Audible.com as well as DAISY 2.02 audio files. And, when you have read enough, BookCourier will play standard music MP3 files.

I love that I can take e-books that sighted people can access and convert them to a format that I can read on my BookCourier. One of the ways I do this is with a little program called PDF Magic-3 from Premier Assistive Technology, Inc., available at www.readingmadeeasy.com. This program allows me to convert files into 11 different output file types, including HTML, RTF, Microsoft Word and text. Many of the output types are supported by BookCourier, so I can transfer the desired files in a snap and read books, letters, e-mail messages and other important documents on the go! I love the sound of the BookCourier. Its voices are so much better than most high-end screen readers and the inflection is pretty good. Another great feature is how easy it is to use. It has a great talking help feature and the buttons are all different shapes and sizes so it is easy to find the button you need quickly. You can change the volume, reading speed, voice type and voice pitch so that the reading environment suits you.

BookCourier also has a "Where am I?" feature that will tell you, at any moment, what file you are listening to and your exact location within it. You can't get lost, even if you take advantage of BookCourier's huge storage space, up to 4 GB with the SD card.

Users choose the level of detail BookCourier provides when it makes announcements. The expert user may switch off the information, while the novice user may choose to hear every possible announcement.

Sometimes you may have trouble understanding a word in a file. BookCourier's spell feature allows you to pause a text-based file to spell a word to ensure you understand exactly what is being read. BookCourier has a "plug and play" architecture that allows your PC and BookCourier to communicate without the hassle of configuring either one. All you have to do is plug the supplied cable into BookCourier and your PC and you are ready to go. It is just like moving, copying and deleting files in Windows!

Like with any good product, there is an online user's forum. Join the BookCourier User Group for the inside scoop on the product. This is a great forum for obtaining information as group members share tips and tricks for operating the BookCourier. You don't need to be a customer to sign up. To join, send a blank e-mail to bookcourier-request@freelists.org and include "subscribe" in the subject line. The Achilles' heel of the BookCourier is playing music. It is almost so annoying that it makes one not want to buy it at all, but the other features are still so superior that it is worth keeping in the running for your dollars. The music files sound muddy and the difference in the volume between the speech while navigating, text reading and music playing is so drastic that you really can't switch between applications with ease. For music, I like my iPod much better!

By comparison, the BookPort, available from the American Printing House for the Blind, www.aph.org, is the same as the BookCourier in many ways. First there are the formats supported. BookPort reads text files, electronic files, braille ready files, Web pages, MP3 (compressed audio), WAV (uncompressed audio), DAISY and DOC files (Microsoft Word 97 or later). The BookPort comes with a 64 MB SD card.

The BookPort and BookCourier have many similar features. For example, both units have sleep timers, time and date functions, recording ability for note-taking and speech controls. As with JAWS and Window-Eyes, pitch, pronunciation and volume can be adjusted. The products are even about the same price and unfortunately, both products have poor sound for music applications. The BookPort does however have a few features that make it a tempting product. For one thing, while both units are compatible with Audible.com, BookPort Transfer, the software that runs on your PC, now supports the ability to compress time from audio files including those from Audible.com. This is the world's only method for listening to Audible.com files at a rate faster than the original recording speed, which is useful for speed listeners like me. Another unique feature of the BookPort is its ability to send Web pages directly to BookPort from Internet Explorer. Perhaps the biggest selling point for me is the search feature that allows you to find every occurrence of a search term in a file. There is reportedly a user's forum for BookPort but you must own the product to join.

I think either BookCourier or BookPort are perfect for users who are mainly concerned with reading documents, books or other spoken word applications. I really don't like either unit for music.

Editor's Note: The preceding two articles were first published in DIALOGUE, January-February and March -April, 2007.

For a free sample issue of DIALOGUE or information about other publications, contact Blindskills, Inc., P.O. Box 5181, Salem, OR 97304-0181; Phone: 800-860-4224; E-mail: info@blindskills.com; Web site: www.blindskills.com.

Science and Health
Eye Fatigue and Pain
By Bill G. Chapman, Ed.D

A common complaint of people with partial vision is, "My eyes hurt and get tired quickly." The complaint is valid, but most diseases that cause vision loss do not cause pain. The pain comes from other sources. There is one notable exception. Rapid onset glaucoma can be very painful.

Pain is a warning that something is wrong, so don't take it lightly. If your eyes hurt discuss it with your doctor to make sure it isn't something that could damage the vision you have left.

I have met people who would not read, that is, make their eyes work, trying to preserve the vision they have left. It is vital for you to understand that there is no way you can damage your vision by using your eyes; nor can you preserve vision by not using your eyes.

The following are things that can make your eyes hurt or feel tired. **The Nondominant Eye**

One of our eyes is always dominant; the other eye simply follows the lead of the dominant eye. Many eye diseases begin their destructive work in one eye. In other cases one eye deteriorates more or faster than the other. For these reasons, people who lose vision usually enjoy better vision in one eye than the other. This better eye normally becomes dominant. The signal sent to the brain by the poorer eye is rejected in favor of the clearer signal. When this happens, the poorer eye may quit working, and it may wander out or in, up or down from the point of fixation of the better eye. Once this happens, when patients look at something up close, like lighting a cigarette, the nondominant eye may try to match the fixation point of the better eye. This can cause a sharp pain in the eye that has been "off target." The muscles in the wandering eye are "out of shape" and when they suddenly work, they hurt.

Exercises may help to eliminate this type of pain, but increase the amount of exercise gradually. Sit about twenty feet from a visual target. Hold a pencil or other small object about ten inches in front of your eyes. Without moving your head, look at the pencil, and then look at a distant object on the far right. Look back at the pencil, and then look at a distant object on the far left. Repeat several times, all without moving your head. Do these exercises a few minutes each day to strengthen those flabby eye muscles that turn the eyeballs in their sockets.

Other Muscle Problems

There are several sets of muscles in the eye. One set changes pupil size and others focus the lens at the proper distance. Once visual acuity drops so much that patients can't read, they tend to shift the eyes into neutral. They don't really make their eyes work.

If a person starts reading again with the help of a low vision aid, a burden is placed on the eyes. They have to work, and various muscle groups may complain bitterly. You should increase your reading time gradually. Read until your eyes begin to hurt and then read a few minutes longer. Rest your eyes before continuing. With persistent effort, the pain and fatigue will diminish.

Dry Eyes

Blinking lubricates the eyeball. Each time a person blinks, a new coating of tears moistens the eyeball. Heavy concentration can short-circuit this reflex, so the eyeballs dry out. The eyes then feel rough, gritty, and painful.

This same short-circuiting effect can occur when patients concentrate hard when they first learn to read with a magnifier or a reading machine. If you work with computers, or if you are learning to use visual aids, consciously and deliberately blink at the end of each line of print you read.

The eyes tend to become drier as we grow older. People above age forty may profit from using artificial tears available without a prescription.

Stem Cell Therapy Shows Promise for Rescuing Deteriorating Vision

For the millions of Americans whose vision is slowly ebbing due to degenerative diseases of the eye, the lowly neural progenitor cell may be riding to the rescue.

In a study in rats, neural progenitor cells derived from human fetal stem cells have been shown to protect the vision of animals with degenerative eye disease similar to the kinds of diseases that afflict humans. The new study appeared on March 28, 2007 in the journal Public Library of Science (PLoS) One.

The lead author of the study, University of Wisconsin-Madison researcher David Gamm, says the cells - formative brain cells that arise in early development- show "some of the best rescue, functionally and anatomically" of any such work to date. In animals whose vision would typically be lost to degenerative retinal disease, the cells were shown to protect vision and the cells in the eye that underpin sight.

The new findings are important because they suggest there may be novel ways to preserve vision in the context of degenerative diseases for which there are now no effective treatments. Macular degeneration, an age-related affliction that gradually destroys central vision, is a scourge of old age, robbing people of the ability to read, recognize faces and live independently.

The finding that the brain cells protected the cells in the eye was a surprise, according to Raymond D. Lund, an author of the new study and an eye disease expert at the University of Utah and the Oregon Health and Sciences University. The neural progenitor cells, which arise from stem cells and further differentiate into different

types of cells found in the central nervous system, were being tested for their ability to deliver another agent, a growth factor that has been shown to be effective in treating some types of degenerative disease.

What was surprising, say Gamm and Lund, was that the cells alone demonstrated a remarkable ability to rescue vision.

"On their own, they were able to support retinal cells and keep them alive," says Lund, who has conducted pioneering studies of cell therapy for eye disease. "We didn't expect that at all. We've used a number of different cell types from different sources and these have given us the best results we've ever got."

How the cells act to preserve the deteriorating eye cells remains unknown, says Gamm. Like all cells, neural progenitor cells do many things and secrete many different types of chemicals that may influence the cells around them.

"The idea was to test the cells as a continuous delivery system" to shuttle an agent known as glial cell line-derived neurotrophic factor or GDNF, Lund explains. "It's not a sensible thing to inject the eyes many times over years. The idea was to use the cells as a continuous delivery system, but we found they work quite well on their own."

Lund has experimented with other cell types as therapies for preserving vision. The neural progenitor cells, a cell model developed by Wisconsin stem cell researcher Clive Svendsen, have been used experimentally to deliver the same growth factor in models of Parkinson's disease and Lou Gehrig's disease. Svendsen is also an author of the new PLoS One report.

"It seems that the cells in and of themselves are quite neuroprotective," says Gamm. "They don't become retinal cells. They maintain their own identity, but they migrate within the outer and inner retina where they seem to confer some protection to the light-sensing cells that typically die in the course of degenerative eye disease."

For researchers, the work is intriguing because the progenitor cells come from the brain itself, and not from the part of the nervous system devoted to vision.

"This cell type isn't derived from the retina. It is derived from the brain," says Gamm. "But we're not asking it to become a retina. They survive in the environment of the eye and don't disrupt the local architecture. They seem to live in a symbiotic relationship" with retinal cells."

Gamm and Lund emphasize that the new work is preliminary, and that much remains to be done before the cells can be tested in humans: "The first thing is to show that something works, which we have done," says Lund. "Now we need to find out why, but this is a good jumping off point. "

The new work was funded by the Walsh Foundation, the Heckrodt Foundation and the National Institutes of Health and was conducted in conjunction with the Waisman Center Stem Cell Research Program at UW-Madison.

Source: University of Wisconsin-Madison

Advocacy

Advocate's Alley-Sound Judgments

By Ken Stewart

It was an acoustic nightmare. The room was cavernous, with multi-story high windows with no drapes, and a carpet-less wood floor. The seating for the members of the radio station's advisory board were spread all across the front of the room in an almost straight line. Too many rows of hard chairs for the sparse audience were set well back from the front of the room. And, street sounds were so strong it was easy to judge the frequency of the local bus service on Central Park West.

I had been in the audience several times for the monthly meetings. When I was elected to the advisory board, a body required for all N.P.R. stations receiving federal funding, I hoped the acoustics would be better at the table up front. They were, but not much. When I expressed my concern informally to my new colleagues, I got friendly responses but no action. So I arrived early the next month and shifted the board tables a little closer together. That minor adjustment was tolerated but not endorsed by anyone as far as I could tell. The next month the tables were back in their previous sprawl and the Chair expressed concern that members appreciated the space to spread out.

Any further mention of the limitations of hearing what colleagues said, or the even less clear audience comments, were met with compassionate inaction. It was apparently accepted as my unique problem. I suspected it wasn't just mine, and that others were evidently more willing to do without hearing a word or phrase here and there. Once I even pleasantly verbalized my hunch that other Board members were supplementing what they were hearing with some unconscious lip reading.

Finally this month, an audience member, after asking one Board member to repeat what had just been said, voiced boldly, "You know the acoustics are horrible in here!" Earlier in the session, I took note of another symptom of the problem. A Board member sitting toward the far left of the long string of tables, interjected several humorous comments during a long report. Each comment received chuckles from Board members near her but total silence from all the Board members on the right side of the room. At the close of the session, the Chair invited other Board members to join her in an inspection of several other and smaller rooms elsewhere in the Society for Ethical Culture's majestic edifice, any of which could be available for future meetings. We found two excellent candidates and agreed unanimously on which would be the site of our next gathering. That outcome of course, was heartening to me. I also drew solace if not vindication from remarks from several of my colleagues, immediately acknowledging the physical features that would ease things for more people than just the one Johnny-Come-Lately making waves, making sound waves.

Tips for Public Speaking

By Ardis Bazyn

Do you feel nervous about making a presentation for a strange audience? How do you feel speaking with a Senator, Congressman, or local Representative? How do you handle interviews? Some people tell me they even find simple networking intimidating.

Here are some tips to make your next interview, presentation, or networking event easier.

1. Practice speaking slowly. Most people talk faster when they are nervous.
2. When you know you will have to speak, plan ahead. Write a script or just make some notes. You will be less nervous and unlikely to make mistakes or forget important information.
3. Practice as often as time permits. Just running the key points through your mind while dressing or showering helps.
4. Read through your talk before bedtime. Your subconscious will absorb the information.
5. Record yourself making your presentation. It may help you notice undesirable habits...uhs and ands. Listen for mistakes.
6. Listen to yourself as you talk to friends, clients, and family. Get into the habit of noticing when you make statements that are unclear. Most of us can improve our communication to others.
7. When planning what to say, think about the points you wish to make as well as a personal story. Stories help create an emotional response.
8. Visualize yourself doing well. Imagine yourself easily presenting just the right information.
9. Eat a light meal ahead of time. An empty stomach or having too much to eat before a presentation can be a distraction.
10. Have a glass or bottle of water near you. A dry mouth is common when you're nervous.
11. Take a few deep breaths before you start speaking to help you relax.
12. Smile at the audience before you start. They will smile back and help you feel more comfortable.
13. Make good eye contact with the audience. It helps them relate to you.
14. Focus on what you want the audience to learn rather than on what they think of you.

Ardis Bazyn is an inspirational speaker, business coach, and author.

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Book Review

LOUIS BRAILLE: A TOUCH OF GENIUS

By C. Michael Mellor

Reviewed by Winifred Downing

Editor's Note: The California Council of the Blind recognized this Book Review as the "Best Issue Oriented Article" for 2006.

Reviewer's note: Several words in this review had accent marks which were not preserved as there was concern that they would not be reproduced properly in the various formats of the BC. These words are: Haüy (umlaut on "u"; Abbe, Becheret (acute accent on the first "e"), Simon-Rene (acute accent on the last "e"). and Francois (cedilla on "c"). Rest assured that these words will be produced properly written in the format you choose when buying the book.

It has been several years since readers of THE MATILDA ZIEGLER MAGAZINE (itself of historical importance) learned that Michael Mellor, the former editor, intended to produce letters written by Louis Braille that had never been translated. Now, in 2006, a full-length biography including the letters is being published. In the Preface, the succession of events leading to the collaboration of Mellor and National Braille Press are set forth, an inspiring blend of talents, meticulous research, and the obvious affection and devotion of everyone associated with the project. Reading it is a never-to-be-forgotten experience. Having a tiny boy born in a rural village in France who experienced what the family viewed as a tragedy become the single individual who has contributed most to the advancement of opportunities for blind people all over the world is an astonishing event. Mellor, however, adds to this widely known occurrence details that greatly enhance our appreciation of the person involved: "... allowing Louis Braille to speak for himself through his letters and other writings-by examining in more detail the often unhealthy environment in which he performed his pioneering work, the awful sadness he faced, and his chronic poor health, but also his friendships, his extraordinary musical talent, his doggedness in the face of prejudice against his code, even traces of wry humor-then we will at last have had a glimpse of the real man."

The structure of the book is unusual and reveals the great care expended in its preparation. It begins with a discussion of the life of Louis Braille and then goes back to furnish additional material on various aspects of that life, the people and places associated with Louis Braille, the early developments of work for the blind, the birth of the braille code, and the emergence of blind persons' determination to control their own destiny.

Page numbers occur at the top of the page for print pages and also at the bottom in the braille edition. "Endnotes," providing scholarly details of the research conducted, are placed after the text in each volume with each group headed with the name of the section they concern. The print page number, the number of the note itself, and the braille line number on which it occurs assist the reader who may wish more information on the source of the note. The careful details furnished make it possible for anyone to seek further information, especially anyone with a knowledge of French. The inclusion of a bibliography and an index add to the stature of the work.

Of particular interest are the many pictures in the book which add much to our knowledge of the people and events involved. Those who read it in braille may well want a print copy to share with family and friends just for the pictures. Because of the importance of these pictures, National Braille Press has exerted every effort to bring the information they contain to braille readers. Allusions are made to the pictures where they occur in the print text, and a brief description occurs there after the words "Picture caption;" but, since many of the representations contain much more detail than could be included at that point, many make reference to a "figure" which is numbered and can be found after the Endnotes. After each figure is introduced, the print page involved is given so that readers can easily associate what they learn from the figure with the text.

Since Boston has been the city of origin for so much of the art of audio description, it was to these describers that NBP went to find expertise. The fact that a textbook has been written to train people in this art indicates that description is a real skill

supported by training and experience, clearly obvious in the figures. Here, for example, is a figure describing Helen Keller's hands as she read in 1952 at a ceremony when Braille's body was transferred from Coupvray to the Pantheon in Paris: "This close-up photograph shows a page of braille, Helen Keller's hands, and the cuff of her sleeve at her wrist. Her aged hands have thickened knuckles with soft wrinkled creases. Her wrists hover above the page as her fingertips touch the raised dots." Mellor tells us that it was reported that she spoke in "faultlessly grammatical" French but then in an endnote explains that Keller could say only a few intelligible words and regarded her inability to speak clearly as her most serious handicap.

Also described are many postage stamps from all over the world celebrating Louis Braille and other people of note mentioned in the book. The stamps have been magnified to make it possible to observe their details.

For those who are able to visit Coupvray, the experience is similar to that of people who can go to the shrine of a much-loved saint. That reaction is reflected in the Epilogue, where Geraldine Lawhorn, a well-known deaf-blind person and long-time teacher at the Hadley School for the Blind, expresses her reverence when she touched the baptismal font where Louis Braille was baptized.

Mellor takes the reader with him to Coupvray as he describes Braille's home: the room on the second floor with a bed similar to the one in which Braille was born, the stone sink, utensils, table, baking oven, and, beside it, a warm place for processing brie cheese. Details are also given of the workshop on the first floor where Braille's father plied his trade as a harness maker and where Louis, at the age of three, injured his eye, leading to his total blindness. In an economy based on the horse, Simon-Rene Braille, who achieved distinction as a master harness maker, was a valued member of the community.

Mellor explains that the skills required for that trade were quite different from those necessary for saddle makers, and Braille's harnesses were often decorated with fringe. His son early realized the importance of excellence in work.

Early, too, the Braille family determined that Louis would receive whatever education was available and would not be a mendicant or a town crier, bell ringer, or water carrier, tasks often done by blind people. Abbe Palluy, the parish priest, became his first teacher and when the boy was seven years old, obtained agreement from the new teacher, Antoine Becheret, to accept him in the village school. Three years later, he entered the National Institute for Blind Youth in Paris. A fascinating account speaks of his arrival, of the school building, and of the life of the children there.

Inspiring accounts are given of the lives of a number of people who sacrificed their own personal convenience and monetary gain to force advancements in opportunities for blind children so that their adult expectations would be improved. Chief among these people was Valentin Haüy, who opened the first school for blind children. There is nothing known that would establish that Louis Braille ever met him, but Braille was present at a benefit given for Haüy at the Paris school to relieve his poverty.

The ideas which governed education for the students differ markedly from more recent emphases, for the entire effort was to teach students to write so that sighted people could read what they had to say. Haüy realized, however, the importance of reading and achieved, with the help of one of his students, Francois le Sueur, a way of

embossing print so that very sensitive fingers could feel the letters produced in relief. Those were the books that Louis first read.

The next significant figure affecting education was Charles Barbier, a military engineer who produced a method of using dots that could be read at night by soldiers in the field. He used a 12-dot cell and a grid of 36 dots producing characters that expressed, not single letters or words, but sounds in the French language. Barbier showed this method to the students at the school, thus suggesting dots as the means for touch reading. Since his system did not have letters, though, it could not support spelling and had, therefore, no grammar either. Braille, not yet 16 years old, saw that a 12-dot cell produced characters too large to be recognized by a fingertip, so he modified Barbier's slate of six lines to produce two groups of three lines and set about composing the braille system. Letters, punctuation signs, numbers, and, finally, the entire music code were produced and eagerly absorbed by the students so that, when in 1840 a new director was assigned who opposed and forbade the use of braille, the students continued employing it. Its acceptance by sighted educators in France was most influenced by a public contest held as part of the ceremony inaugurating the new home for the school for the blind in February, 1844.

Guadet, a deputy of the director Dufau, sketched the history of dot reading and then had one student write verses in the new code and another write some music phrases. Students who had not been present when the writing occurred were asked to read the material and did so perfectly. Louis's mother and brother were in the audience on this great occasion.

Throughout these years, Braille gave a great deal of his time and attention to the development of a Raphigraphe, a printing machine that produced print letters composed of dots, the principle of the dot matrix printers of our own time. Using it permitted people who are blind to write in print, thus fulfilling the original expectations of directors and teachers.

Louis Braille's letters, the impetus for this book, are placed where they relate to the subject being discussed. Some are written in his own handwriting, some he wrote with the Raphigraphe, and some were dictated to a scribe. With rare exceptions his handwriting is completely legible and only occasionally in lines that slant rather than being straight, whereas the ones done by the scribes are full of misspellings, words run together, and anything but straight lines. Many of them relate to Braille's affection for Coupvray, especially when he went there more often to rest as his illness worsened. The familiarity of the surroundings and the rural character of the village were balm to his soul. In the letters written to directors, teachers, and others of a more official nature, the formality Braille used may seem strained by present standards as in this closing of a letter to Pignier, the director of the school for most of Louis's years there: "Please accept the wishes that my family and I address to you and Mademoiselle your sister." In his letters to Pignier, he always referred to his sister, of whom he was very fond.

For more than 20 years, Braille suffered from tuberculosis. Mellor includes writings from others who had that disease and give graphic details of their sufferings so that readers have some understanding of Braille's final days. Serious illness brought him close to death in December, 1851, and he requested the Church's last rites. The next day, however, he rallied and spoke to his friend about his life and faith in words the

reader will always remember. In succeeding days, he forgave the debts owed to him, made arrangements for the care of his family, and carefully disposed of his possessions among friends and those who had been kind to him. He died on January 6, 1852, just two days after his 43rd birthday.

Near the end of the book, Mellor writes of modern developments regarding braille and summarizes some of the efforts toward changing it. "These questions reflect the inquiries voiced by leaders in the blindness field over 100 years ago. Perhaps the answer is that now with modern braille transcription technologies braille can be what it needs to be for all its readers. But ultimately, braille belongs to its readers, and their voices must be heard and abided by in the crusade for unification."

The 4-volume braille edition of LOUIS BRAILLE: A TOUCH OF GENIUS costs \$25; the full-color hardcover print book is \$35; and the hardcover braille book intended for libraries is \$50. Order at 1-800-548-7323 or online at the Website www.nbp.org.

Assistive Technology Menus That Talk

Taylannas Inc. announced the launch of an electronic restaurant menu system, Menus That Talk(TM). In addition to print menus, restaurants can now offer guests a portable, compact device, approximately the size of a DVD case. This device speaks to diners, describing selected food items. Menus are prerecorded on a flash card by Taylannas Inc. Restaurants can claim a tax credit for half the cost of this system.

Here is how this system works. A lighted array of buttons displays major menu categories like DRINKS, APPETIZERS and SEAFOOD. Guests simply press a button corresponding to a category and hear brief descriptions of cuisine, wine suggestions, sides and prices. At the touch of a button, Menus That Talk describes what's for dinner.

No habla ingles? No problem: Just press the language button for Spanish or another language. No more squinting in dim light or turning page after page of complex printed menus. No more awkward conferences with busy waiters.

When you're ready to order, a service button pages your waiter. The buttons are also imprinted in braille. Guests who can't see the button names and don't use braille can browse the menu simply by tapping buttons to hear categories. Another tap brings up the details.

In noisy restaurants or for the hearing impaired, Menus That Talk features a detachable hand-held earphone. The earphone also interfaces with Tele-coil equipped hearing-aids.

Menus That Talk(TM) serves the needs and comforts of all restaurant patrons with its simple layout, ease of use and ability to deliver voice anywhere in the restaurant. Benefits for the restaurants include streamlining menu selections, reducing server assistance time and bringing the menu to a larger, appreciative audience.

"Menus should be able to communicate without being a challenge," said President and CEO Susan Perry. "We're making a restaurant's entire menu available to all its customers, and we're making it a pleasurable experience."

The idea originated in an Olive Garden restaurant where Ms. Perry was having lunch with her niece Jessica, a pretty 24-year-old with advanced macular degeneration who cannot read a menu from any distance. Jessica asked her aunt to please read the menu to her. Susan had forgotten to bring her reading glasses. They laughed about it, but Susan thought, "Why shouldn't menus be able to talk?"

Menus That Talk(TM) premiered to the public at the National Restaurant Association show in Chicago, May 19-22, 2007.

More information is available at www.menusthattalk.com Contacts: Susan Perry, President, CEO susan.perry@menusthattalk.com
305-255-9600

New Auto Reader from HumanWare

HumanWare announced the launch of myReader2, the next generation of the low vision auto-reader originally launched in 2004. myReader was a breakthrough reading machine when it was first introduced. myReader2 improves upon that technology with multi-page storage capability, improved page processing and low contrast improvements, together with user interface upgrades allowing even greater freedom and comfort for sustained reading.

The breakthrough feature in myReader2 is multi-page storage. Users can capture up to 10 pages, then read through them as quickly or slowly as desired. An additional three reference pages can also be stored and used again and again.

myReader2 has a simplified user interface that makes the most-needed features easier to access.

myReader's key capability is recognizing columns and word breaks on a page and converting all of the text into a single stream. myReader2 improves on this, handling a wider variety of pages quickly and easily.

myReader2 does a better job of handling low contrast paper/print combinations found in many publications.

With myReader2, the user can simply capture a page image, then pan around the image onscreen -- no need to move an X-Y table around. This can be done with flexible features like image resizing, contrast and color controls.

myReader2 can process the captured image and convert it into a flexible stream of words. This allows myReader2 to display the text in a single column, a single row or a word at a time -- no panning left to right, up and down to read.

myReader2 has the same size and shape as the original myReader--a single, compact, folding unit with a built-in color LCD screen. myReader2 is easy to transport to and from school, home and office.

myReader2 is available now from HumanWare. Current users of the original myReader can call HumanWare for information on upgrading to a myReader2. Call HumanWare at 800-722-3393.

Access to Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus

The latest addition to Humanware's BrailleNote family is the Concise Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus. Running on the BrailleNote family of products, the Concise Oxford Dictionary and Thesaurus may be accessed by QWERTY keyboard or braille input, and read and heard by both braille and auditory output. They run on the latest version of HumanWare's KeySoft 7.2 Build 47, on BrailleNote mPower, VoiceNote mPower or BrailleNote PK, as well as other BrailleNote Classic models.

To learn more visit www.HumanWare.com, or call JoAnn Becker at 800-722-3393 Ext 242 joann.becker@humanware.com

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CCLVI gratefully accepts contributions from readers and members to help pay for the costs of publishing Vision Access, the costs related to our 800 line and Project Insight, and for funding the Carl E. Foley and Fred Scheigert Scholarships. Please send contributions to CCLVI Treasurer, Mike Godino, 104 Tilrose Avenue, Malverne, NY 11565-2040. Our Tax ID number is 1317540.

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Ardis Bazyn, inspirational speaker, business coach, and author.

www.bazyncommunications.com

Ars Technica arstechnica.com/news.ars/post/20060504-6753.html

BookCourier (www.bookcourier.com)

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BookPort

American Printing House for the Blind, www.aph.org

Dialog Magazine

Blindskills, Inc.,

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