



VISIONS in Indiana

Fall 2008

Vol. 17, No. 1

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Mark Your Calendar

10-11 November 2008

2008 PATINS Statewide Conference. Accessing the Curriculum. Crowne Plaza Hotel and Conference Center, Indianapolis, IN.; e-mail: Glenda Thompson, Project Planner <glenda.thompson@wayne.k12.in.us>; web site: <<http://www.patinsproject.com/training.html>>.

22-24 January 2009

Technology, Reading, and Learning Diversity (TRLD) 2009 Conference: "Opening Doors to Universal Learning." San Francisco, CA. Contact: TRLD, 26799 West Commerce Drive, Volo, IL 60073; phone: 888-594-1249 or 847-740-0749; e-mail: <trld@donjohnston.com>; web site: <www.trld.com>.

28-31 January 2009

Assistive Technology Industry Association (ATIA) Conference and Exhibition. Orlando, FL. Contact: Assistive Technology Industry Association, 401 North Michigan Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611; phone: 877-687-2842 or 312-321-5172; e-mail: <info@atia.org>; web site: <www.atia.org>.

31 January 2008

The Indiana Braille Challenge. The first annual state Braille Challenge. Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Contact: Toni Hughes, Outreach Coordinator; phone: 317-253-1481, ext. 221; e-mail: <thughes@isbvik12.org>.

20-21 February 2009

Transition Weekend. Marten House Hotel and Lilly Conference Center. Contact: Diane Childers, School Age Consultant, Outreach and Related Services, Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired; phone: 317-253-1481, ext. 175; e-mail: <dchilders@isbvik12.org>.

5-8 March 2009

The Josephine L. Taylor Leadership Institute, American Foundation for the Blind. Contact: Caitlin McFeele, Communications Department, American Foundation for the Blind, 11 Penn Plaza, Suite 300, New York, NY 10001; e-mail: <cmcfeely@afb.net>; web site: <www.afb.org>; phone: 212-502-7615.

12-15 March 2009

California Transcribers and Educators of the Visually Handicapped Jubilee: "Fifty Years in the Golden State." Burlingame, CA. Contact: Sue Douglass, conference chair, California Transcribers and Educators of the Visually Handicapped Jubilee; e-mail: <vipreteach@msn.com>; web site: <www.ctevh.org/conference.htm>

14 March 2009

Early Childhood Conference. Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Contact: Ann Hughes, Early Childhood Consultant, Outreach and Related Services; phone: 317-253-1481, ext. 100; e-mail: <ahughes@isbvik12.org>.

16-19 March 2009

24th Annual International Technology and Persons with Disabilities Conference (CSUN 2009). Los Angeles, CA. Contact: CSUN Center on Disabilities; phone: 818-677-2578; e-mail: <conference@csun.edu>; web site: <www.csunconference.org>.

1-4 April 2009

Council for Exceptional Children Annual Convention and Exposition. Seattle, WA. Contact: Council for Exceptional Children, 1110 North Glebe Road, Suite 300, Arlington, VA 22201; phone: 888-232-7733 or 703-620-3660; web site: <www.cec.sped.org>.

17-19 July 2009

Families Connecting with Families International Conference. Costa Mesa, CA. Co-hosted by National Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments, Braille Institute, and Junior Blind of America. Contact: National Association for Parents of Children with Visual Impairments, P.O. Box 317, Watertown, MA 02471; phone: 800-562-6265 or 617-972-7441; e-mail: <napvi@perkins.org>; web site: <napvi@perkins.org>.



IERC Updates

NEW IERC STAFF

Martha LaBounty joined the IERC staff this July, replacing Ellen Pedigo, who retired after 42 years working for the IERC, Indiana Department of Education, Center for Exceptional Learners. Martha has a master's degree in Library Science and a bachelor's degree in Sociology. Prior to coming to the IERC, she managed a branch library for the Indianapolis Marion County Public Library. She is doing an exceptional job learning and adapting to our unique statewide system and we welcome her as part of our team.

Cantrell (Candy) Cummings has joined the IERC staff as our shipping/receiving specialist. She has a tremendous eye for detail and has worked hard for the past year shipping, receiving, inventorying and maintaining our statewide collection. We are happy to have her as a full-time staff member.

Martha Writt has recently been hired to fill the braille transcription assistant/secretary position in our braille production center. Marti came to us from the corporate world. She has strong secretarial skills and work ethic, a genuine desire to help the students we serve, and likes braille!

Many of you calling in to the IERC have been greeted by Terry Adams. Terry has been with us for just a few months, coming to the job during our busy summer season. She has picked up the more detailed aspects of receiving and disseminating materials and has been instrumental in getting materials out in a timely manner to our students.

PRISON BRAILLE PROJECT

Thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Indiana Department of Education, Center for Exceptional Learners, the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, the Indiana Educational Resource Center, and the Indiana Department of Corrections, a prison braille program has been set up at the Miami Correctional Facility, in Bunker Hill, Indiana, north of Kokomo. Robert Eutz, a certified literary and Nemeth brailist and past coordinator of the Ohio prison braille program, has assumed the position of braille coordinator for the project. There are currently 20 offenders in the program, with a third of those awaiting their literary certification and more ready to submit their final manuscripts. They are currently taking part in a hands-on training from the country's leading experts on creating quality tactile graphics and working with publisher and NIMAS files for braille transcription. The IERC will begin assigning braille transcripts to the project this spring. We welcome Robert to the IERC staff. He has done a tremendous job getting this project off the ground!

PACKING/SHIPPING LISTS

Please remember to sign and return a copy of the packing lists enclosed in your textbook and aids and/or equipment shipments. This will let us know that you received the materials we have shipped to you for your students.

BOOK ORDERS FOR SECOND SEMESTER

If you will need braille and large print books for the upcoming second semester, please send in those orders now to allow for ample time for production, ordering, and processing.

ANNUAL STUDENT REGISTRATION/ QUOTA REGISTRATION

The Annual Student Registration of Legally Blind Students will be coming up soon. The effective date is the second Monday in January. Please mark your calendars and begin preparing for this important procedure. In past years, we conducted the registration for all students who were blind or low vision. Since the DRM's will be registering students ongoing for each school corporation, the IERC will now conduct the registration of legally blind students via the American Printing House for the Blind for purposes of generating quota dollars only. We will continue to conduct this registration with the VI teachers.

VI TEACHER DIRECTORY

Thanks to all of our VI teachers for updating their school contact information for the 2008 VI Teacher Directory. The directory is now completed and has been disseminated electronically to all teachers. Please note that this directory is for VI teacher distribution only. If you are a VI teacher and have not received your directory via email, please contact the IERC.

A *REMINDER*...you can continue to submit paper orders for IERC materials (braille, large print, aids and equipment) until the ICAM web interface goes live. At that time, paper orders will no longer be accepted. (*See PATINS Project News, "IERC Student Registration and Order Policy Change" on page 12.*)



State Library Updates

By Carole Rose
Indiana State Library
Special Services Division



“Catch the Reading Bug” was the theme for the Talking Book and Braille Library’s 2008 statewide children’s summer reading program. Our young readers were delighted with the jumping ladybugs, plush butterflies, cockroaches, growing spiders, and other buggy awards. Perhaps parents were less enthusiastic. Sixty-nine active participants read more than 700 braille, large print and recorded titles. Readers winning outstanding reading awards were Tanakwa Sturgell, Paige Ratliff, Parker Gamble, Nikki Stewart, Sheila Parks, Tanner Akles, Jodi Jones, Tara Abella, Bradley Wright, and Tim Weaver. Once again, Talking Books staff would like to thank teachers throughout the state for supporting this program by encouraging students to read during the summer.

It may be a bit early to begin planning the 2009 summer program, but the theme, “Be Creative @ Your Library,” is so general that it suggests a number of possibilities for creative programming for children and teens throughout the year. During the late 1980’s, the library sponsored several creative writing programs. Children and teens were invited to submit short stories, poetry, personal narratives, etc. One eighth-grade class combined their individual talents and wrote a play.

Everyone received an award, and there were even cash prizes for outstanding contributions. We would like to give our young readers the opportunity to express their creativity through all forms of expression—writing, music, crafts, art, etc. Contributors to this ongoing project would be recognized, and contributions would be exhibited in the state library. This creative project could become the centerpiece for an exciting summer reading program for 2009. It is hoped that educators and parents will support the library in its efforts to create innovative programs for children and teens. We would appreciate your ideas and/or concerns about the creative project we are proposing. We would also welcome your suggestions regarding other programming ideas.



"EYE-DEAS"

By Diane Childers

School-Age Consultant

Outreach and Related Services

Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired



Welcome back to school. I hope everyone had a great summer!

I found some "eye-deas" which you might find helpful:

Large display for scientific/graphing calculator solutions (Susan Osterhaus-Texas School for the Blind and VI): regular Texas Instruments (TI) graphing calculator placed on a color CCTV is effective; you can use a black and white CCTV but Susan reports that her students liked using color the best. TI make a ViewScreen package for the following calculators: TI-73, TI-73 Explorer, TI-80, TI-82, TI-83, TI-83 Plus, TI-83 Plus Silver Edition, TI-89, Voyage 200, TI-92 and TI-92-Plus. Call TI at 1-800-TICARES or e-mail <ti-cares@ti.com>. To read Susan's entire article and suggestions, go to <www.tsbvi.edu/math/graph-calc.htm>.

Washington State School for the Blind has a series of instructional videos in the areas of daily living skills and orientation and mobility. These videos have been posted on ISBVI's Outreach webpage. To view, go to: <http://www.isbrockets.org>, click on "Outreach", then "Instructional videos."

From *Guideway*, a publication from the Guide Dog Foundation for the Blind, Inc.:

Guide dogs are the guiding eyes for people who are blind or visually impaired, and they are specially bred and trained for this important job. For the safety of the handler/guide dog team, it is vital that the dog not be distracted from its work. We've put together some "Do's and Don'ts" to follow when you meet a guide dog and handler.

- DON'T touch, talk, feed or otherwise distract the dog while it is wearing its harness. DO allow the dog to concentrate and perform for the safety of its handler.
- DON'T treat the dog as a pet. DO give it the respect of a working dog.
- DON'T give the dog commands.

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- DO allow the handler to do so.
 - DON'T try to take control in situations unfamiliar to the dog or handler.
DO assist the handler upon his/her request.
 - DON'T walk on the dog's left side as it may become distracted or confused.
DO walk on the handler's right side but several paces behind him/her.
 - DON'T attempt to grab or steer the person while the dog is guiding him/her or attempt to hold the dog's harness.
DO ask if the handler needs your assistance, and if so offer your left arm.
 - DON'T give the dog people food.
DO respect the handler's wishes.
 - DON'T tease or abuse the dog.
DO allow it to rest undisturbed.
 - DON'T allow pets to challenge or intimidate a guide dog.
DO allow them to meet on neutral ground where all parties can be carefully supervised.
 - DON'T allow the dog on your furniture or in areas of the home where the handler doesn't want it to go.
DO ask the handler to correct any misbehavior or trespassing.
 - DON'T let the dog out of the house unsupervised.
DO make sure you know where the dog is. It is an extremely valuable animal!
 - DON'T pat the dog on the head.
DO stroke the dog on the shoulder area but only with its handler's approval.

(For more information visit: <www.GuideDog.org>)

MARK YOUR CALENDARS:

FEBRUARY 20-21, 2009: TRANSITION WEEKEND. This weekend is offered to high school students who have low vision or are blind and their parents. "Building a Framework for Your Future" uses a person-centered planning approach and is facilitated by Larry Schaaf, Project Coordinator/Research Associate at Indiana University, Center for Community Living and Careers, Indiana Institute on Disability and Community. Hotel rooms and meals are free of charge. More information will be sent to teachers of the visually impaired in January.



BRaille CHALLENGE

Bra i l l e C h a l l e n g e

The National Braille Challenge is a unique academic competition designed to actively promote Braille literacy among blind and visually impaired students across the country. It is the only national academic competition specifically designed to challenge and motivate blind students in grades 1-12 to continue their study of Braille, which is essential for their future success. It is a two-part contest for school-aged children. The first contest is at the local level and the second part is the national contest.

The preliminary Challenge is designed to be a full-day competition, with five 25-minute contests. The day typically includes a pre-competition pep rally, lunch following the contests and an awards ceremony. The participants are divided into five academic levels, based on their age and grade level, and compete in five Braille categories – reading comprehension, proofreading, chart and graph reading, spelling, and speed and accuracy (transcribe a taped story into Braille).

The first local Braille Challenge will be held January 31, 2009, at the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. "Save the Date" postcards were distributed through out the state in September. More information will be distributed in the near future. If you have any questions about this new event, please contact Toni Hughes, Director of Outreach and Related Services; phone: (317) 253-1481, ext. 221; e-mail: <thughes@isbvik12.org>.

Have a great year!

Diane Childers, School-age Consultant
E-mail: dchilders@isbvik12.org
Phone: (317) 253-1481, ext. 175





PROJECT VISION

By Karen Goehl
Project Director

Upcoming Inservice Training Activities. There are two inservice training activities “in the works” at this point. Next spring (2009) Project Vision will offer a two-day workshop on the Sensory Learning Kits (SLKs) developed by Millie Smith and available through APH. Project Vision has purchased several of the kits and plans to offer training to teachers of students who are blind or have low vision.

Another training activity being planned is specific to using the VIISA (Vision Impaired In-Service in America) curriculum. The curriculum training is for participants to gain and develop skills in understanding the unique needs of preschoolers who are blind or visually impaired. The focus of the training will be on working with these children in preschool settings as well as in collaboration with the family and other members of the service delivery team. Ann Hughes, an Outreach Department consultant at the Indiana School for the Blind and Visually Impaired, attended a VIISA “train the trainers” workshop in April 2008. Ann can now train other people. It’s likely the VIISA training will be scheduled for next summer. Please be thinking about your own interest in this training as well as whether there might be some preschool teachers in your area who would be interested.

We will let you know as soon as the dates are firmed up for the Sensory Learning Kit and VIISA Curriculum training activities.

Finally, the VI State Committee will be meeting on November 18, 2008 to identify other topics for inservice training for the upcoming year. If any of you have training topics you would like the committee to consider, please let me know via email:

<kgoehl@indstate.edu>.

Please check the Project Vision website <<http://www.indstate.edu/blumberg/pv/projectvision.htm>> for updates on inservice training activities. Please note the website has a new address.

VI Distance Education Training Program. At the present time, two cohorts are enrolled in the VI Licensure program. The five teachers in the 2007 cohort currently are enrolled in their fourth class, *Instructional Accommodations for Individuals with Visual Impairments*. The 2008 cohort of eight students is enrolled in their second class,

Programs and Services for Individuals with Visual Impairments. Recruitment currently is underway for the January 2009 cohort.

Orientation & Mobility Specialist Training Program. Several of the 12 Indiana teachers who have been enrolled in the Pennsylvania College of Optometry (now Salus University) Orientation & Mobility program have completed their internships, while several others continue to complete their 250-hour internship. Indiana is very fortunate to be able to increase the number of Orientation and Mobility Specialists who can serve children and youth across the state who are blind or have low vision.

Project Vision Website. Please continue to go to the Project Vision website <<http://www.indstate.edu/blumberg/pv/projectvision.htm>> for updated information about inservice training activities and the VI licensure program.

VI Discussion List Serve Requests. If you are a VI teacher and want to be added to the VI Discussion List Serve, you can send an email to <SharonBryan@indstate.edu> and she will add your name to the Discussion List. Also, it is important to remember that should your email address change, you must contact Sharon so she can make the necessary changes to the List Serve address list.





PATINS PROJECT NEWS

Promoting Achievement through Technology and Instruction for All Students

By Vicki Hershman
PATINS State Coordinator

PATINS & ICAM Offers Indiana Local School Districts Free Assistive Technology!

The ICAM is pleased to announce a recent agreement made between the PATINS Project and Don Johnston Incorporated, to provide an unlimited school-wide license, with Take-Home Rights, for *Read:OutLoud Universal Access* (a digital text reader software program) at no cost to your school district– through your ICAM registered Digital Rights Manager.

Indiana education administrators, special educators and families will be particularly interested in the Read:OutLoud Universal Access program because of its ability to provide print disabled students and struggling readers with access to a variety of digital alternate formats that can be customized to meet a student's individualized needs.

To read more please see the letter of announcement on the ICAM website at <<http://www.icam.k12.in.us>>

See You at the PATINS 2008 STATE Conference: Accessing the Curriculum

The PATINS Project is please to be hosting two all-day training sessions for teachers of the visually impaired during its 2008 State Conference on Accessing the Curriculum, November 10th & 11th, at the Crowne Plaza Conference Center, Indianapolis, Indiana.

- November 10th: *The Audio Graphing Calculator: What this Self-Voicing Graphing Calculator Can Do!* (This is a hands-on lab.)
- November 11th: *Suggested Math Technology for Accessible Mathematics*

The presenter for these sessions is Susan A. Osterhaus, Statewide Mathematics Consultant, Certified Teacher of the Visually Impaired and a Certified Secondary Mathematics Teacher.

The conference also has many other interesting sessions to choose from including sessions on NIMAS, accessible testing software, RTI and AT, data collecting, accessible textbooks in the classroom, making the most of digital text, and much more. This affordable state conference will be bringing state and national presenters to Indianapolis and includes two wonderful keynote speakers:

- November 10th - Jim Fructerman, Founder and CEO of Benetech
Raising the Floor: Accessible Content and Technology for All People with Disabilities
- November 11th – Donald Leu, Co-director of The New Literacies Research Lab at the University of Connecticut
New Definitions for Accessible Materials and Success: The New Literacies of On-line Reading Comprehensions

For more information on this exciting conference, go to the PATINS web site at: <<http://www.patinsproject.com>> and click on Statewide Trainings.

PATINS Project’s Just-In-Time Technical Training Videos & Tutorials Now Available

The PATINS Project understands that teachers often need technical assistance and supports immediately and can’t wait until a workshop or training will be available. So the project has begun to post short, topic-specific technical training videos and tutorials on their web site. There are plans to post an additional twenty-four of these just-in-time supports over the course of the 2008-2009 school year. If the reader has suggestions for specific topics, please send them to Vicki Hershman, PATINS State Project Director, at <Vicki.hershman@wayne.k12.in.us>

Save Your Word Document as DAISY XML

The new “Save as DAISY XML” add-on for Word 2003, XP, and 2007 makes it possible to save a Word document in the DAISY Standard, the globally accepted method used to publish content for print-disabled users. To download the “Save as DAISY XML” add-on utility for Word, go the ICAM web site at <<http://www.icam.k12.in.us>> and click on the Tools and Downloads tab, then click on the Converters tab.

Accessibility Update for iTunes U, iPod Nano

Apple has announced a new version of iTunes and the iPod Nano (4th generation) which includes an important update in the area of accessibility.

Now, blind and visually impaired students, faculty, and staff can browse, search, download and play content from iTunes U and many areas of the iTunes Store, using iTunes 8 with a screen reader such as VoiceOver on Mac OS X, or GW Micro Window-Eyes 7 on Windows XP and Windows Vista.

In addition, the new iPod Nano (4th generation) features spoken menus, so it can be used to navigate and play tracks downloaded from the iTunes Store and iTunes U just by listening.

These new Accessibility features are critical for education and demonstrate how Apple is bringing innovation across the entire ecosystem - Software, Hardware, and Services in the Cloud - to not only provide a great user experience, but to help meet customers' needs.

You can learn more about these accessibility features for iPod + iTunes on the new Accessibility site: <<http://www.apple.com/accessibility/itunes/vision.html>>.

IERC Student Registration and Ordering Policy Change

The Indiana Accessible Instructional Materials Center (ICAM) is your source for obtaining accessible instructional materials for Local Educational Agencies (LEAs). Please note that ALL student registrations and orders for Braille, large print, tactile graphics as well as aids and equipment are to be submitted directly to the ICAM through the school district's appointed Digital Rights Manager (DRM) as soon as the ICAM web interface goes live. Only DRMS who are registered (by the district's superintendent) with the Indiana Department of Education/Center for Exceptional Learners will have access to the ICAM system of student registration and the ordering process.

This is a policy change from the past when orders were placed directly with the IERC. Once an order has been received and processed through the ICAM, the order will be automatically sent to our partners at the IERC who will fill the order. The IERC will notify the DRM when the order is ready to be delivered to the specified shipping address provided in the order. All the policies and procedures for obtaining and returning aids and equipment from the IERC will continue to be enforced.



Your district's DRM will need the case conference committee's completed **Student Registration and Ordering Forms 3-A and 3-B** before logging into the ICAM. The information obtained on the form will be the information required in the student registration and ordering process. These forms can be obtained from the ICAM web site at <<http://www.icam.k12.in.us>>. To locate these forms on the web site, the reader will need to click on the FORMS tab on the ICAM home page.



For Your Information

NLS has begun offering downloads of digital recorded books to any active NLS patron, in good standing, who has purchased a commercially available digital player and who has an email address and a high speed internet connection. There is an online application at www.nlstalkingbooks.org/dtb. The download collection includes more than 10,000 books and 13 magazines at the present time.

The American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) is offering several training options for NIMAS capacity building. In November 2008, AFB will offer hands-on braille translation software training with NIMAS dates on November 21st and 22nd, 2008, in Detroit, Michigan. To register, go to www.afb.org/nimas.asp. An instructional webinar, "Implement NIMAS in the Individualized Education Program (IEP) and Build New State Strategies," will be presented on October 21, 2008, by Vicki Hershman, PATINS State Project Director (Indiana), and Joy Zabala, Project Manager, AIM Consortium at CAST. You must download the plug-in link prior to joining the meeting that day. To download the plug-ins, visit www.afb.org/nimas.asp.

The Serotek Corporation has announced the *Keys for K-12* program that will allow children who are blind the same access to information on the computer as their sighted peers. Keys for K-12 is a free license to carry the System Access Mobile capabilities on a U3-enabled USB thumb drive. With the SA Mobile software, the student can plug their flash drive into any computer anywhere and have instant access - through text-to-speech and/or magnification - to all Windows-based applications. The System Access Mobile software normally sells for \$499.00 but it is now free to students who are blind in K-12. For more information, go to: <http://www.serotek.com/kk12.htm>.

WebAnywhere is a web-based screen reader for the web. It requires no special software to be installed and allows persons who are blind or low vision to access the web from any computer. For more information, visit: <http://webanywhere.cs.washington.edu/wa.php>.

APH is working with Dr. Richard Woodcock to develop a special version of the Woodcock Johnson III for braille readers. This version would remove the bias against persons with visual impairments. The adapted version will have its own specially programmed Compuscore® CD. The release of the adapted WJ III is expected in the spring of 2009.

Sighted Electronics of New Jersey, distributor of the Index Braille embossers and braille displays from Papenmeier, has gone out of business and closed its doors earlier this year.

The Pennsylvania College of Optometry (PCO) transitioned to University status in July. The new name for PCO is Salus University. The word Salus is Latin for health and well-being. The Department of Graduate Studies in Vision Impairment has become the College of Education and Rehabilitation at Salus University.

RoboBraille is a European based free service that provides translation of text documents into contracted braille and synthetic speech to non-commercial users. It currently handles documents in plain text, rich text, HTML, and Microsoft Word format. Visit <www.robobrace.org> for more information.

The Chicago Lighthouse for the Blind provides technical support on any adaptive technology by calling their toll-free number at 888-825-0080.

AccessWorld from the American Foundation for the Blind features an article about trends in the design of CCTV's and an article on portable audio devices at <<http://www.afb.org/accessworld>>. The July 2008 issue includes an article reviewing the accessibility of digital audio players at <<http://www.afb.org/aw/main.asp>>.

The *Career Key* has been created by a professor in school counseling and career planning and contains a free career interest test online. Visit <<http://www.careerkey.org>>.

Fred's Head at the American Printing House for the Blind provides instructions for using Windows Narrator, the free screen reader that comes with recent versions of Windows. Visit: <<http://www.fredshead.info/2008/07/windows-narrator.html>>.

Visit G.W. Micro's website for an article, "Special Steps to Use Window-Eyes with ZoomText," at <https://www.gwmicro.com/Support/Knowledge_Base/?bnumber=GWKB1089>.

Free eBooks with auditory playback, for any public school for a year, is offered from Sylvan-Dell Publishing. Visit: <www.sylvandellpublishing.com/ResourceGrant.htm>.



Publications

The National Braille Press has announced the following new items:

A Pocketful of Sound: A Quick-Start and Buyer's Guide to Accessible Book and Music Players by Anna Dresner, describes and compares Talking Book players and related software, including the Zen Stone, iPod, Rockbox, Olympus DS series, Victor Reader Stream, Icon, and others. Readers can quickly compare features using the product checklist. Available in hardcopy braille and in ASCII or PortaBook format (electronic contracted braille files) on CD-ROM or for download, for \$14.

Keyboarding commands for Office 2007 that includes PowerPoint 2007; Word 2007; Outlook 2007; and Excel 2007. Each booklet costs \$5.00 or all four for \$16.00.

Illustrated Alphabet Flashcards are 26 plastic cards, on a removable ring, measuring 7" x 7". Each card contains a tactile image that begins with a letter of the alphabet, as well as the letter itself in both raised, uppercase print and braille formats, and the word for the image in uncontracted braille. For ages 4-8. Cost: \$22.00.

The *Braille Caravan* is a new tactile toy from Creative Adaptations for Learning. Made in USA, each block represents a braille cell in goldenrod non-toxic plastic, with six contrasting black pegs that glide up or down to form dots 1-6. Use a stylus, pencil, or your finger to push the peg forward from the underside of the block. Flip the block over and read what you wrote. Blocks interlock to form a caravan of words, numbers, or sentences for tactile reading, writing, and spelling skill practice. Includes 30 blocks in a carrying bag, plus an Activity Guide. Cost: \$30.00.

Label It! is a new book by Judy Dixon that provides labeling strategies for clothing and accessories, medications, food containers, appliances, and a variety of other items. The author also discusses strategies for identifying hard to label items. Cost: \$10.00.

For more information, contact: National Braille Press, 88 St. Stephen Street, Boston, MA 02115; phone: 888-965-8965 or 617-266-6160; web site: <www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/POCKET.html>.

Let's Play: A Guide to Toys for Children with Special Needs is a toy guide that outlines suitable toys for children who are physically impaired, hearing impaired, blind or visually impaired, or developmentally challenged. There is a full description of each toy as well as an explanation of the skills the toy will build and encourage during playtime. For a fully accessible toy guide visit: <www.afb.org/toyguide.asp>.

Richard Taesch, a music specialist for the California Transcribers and Educators of the Visually Handicapped (CTEVH), has an online article providing instructions on how to read music in braille. The article, “Seven Little Steps to Read Music in Braille,” is available for free download in Word or PDF format from the following web site: <www.ctevh.org/journalSamples.htm>.

Adobe has published a guide called “Accessing PDF Documents with Assistive Technology: A Screen Reader User’s Guide.” It describes how to access PDF documents using the JAWS and Window-Eyes screen readers. This guide was a joint project with AFB Consulting, the consulting division of AFB. For more information, visit: <<http://www.adobe.com/accessibility/pdfs/accessing-pdf-sr.pdf>>.

Perkins School for the Blind June 2008 website had the following transition resources listed:

“We’re In This Together – Preparing for Transition into the Adult World (Podcast)” from the American Printing House for the Blind. This is a one-hour podcast on the topic of transition from high school to life beyond, looking at “the roles of students, parents, educators, and the community in working together in the transition process. Students discuss their experiences, including what steps they are taking to prepare themselves for life after graduation. Visit: <<http://blindcooltech.aph.org/info/info12.mp3>>.

“How Can I Participate in Transition Planning?” from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.” This document tells students how to be active participants in planning for their own transition to adult life. It includes specific tips on managing information and keeping records, and is a resource for the expanded core curriculum. Visit: <<http://www.tsbvi.edu/Education/transition-planning.htm>>.

“Transition Happens, Ready or Not!” from the American Foundation for the Blind. This brief introduction defines transition and identifies key elements in the process, emphasizing individual initiative and the importance of planning. There are numerous links on the AFB Career Connect site for families and friends, teens, professionals, job seekers, and employers. Visit: <<http://www.afb.org/Section.asp?SectionID=7&TopicID=269&DocumentID=3535>>.

“Transition Matters: Yikes! Consider Life Without School! Planning Now for a Good Life for Your Child with a Disability” from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Written by a parent of a son who is blind, this article offers specific suggestions for other parents to “create opportunities for work, friends, and meaningful activities for your child after graduation. Visit: <<http://www.tsbvi.edu/Outreach/seehear/summer05/transition.htm>>.

“Helping Your Child Transition from Adolescence to Adulthood” from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. A parent of an adult daughter who is blind shares strategies for families of transition-age youth. This document is available in English and in Spanish. Visit: <<http://www.tsbvi.edu/Outreach/seehear/summer06/helping.htm>>.

“Twelve Things You Can Do to Plan for Your Child’s Future Today” from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. This article is a to-do list of things for parents preparing for their child’s future. The suggestions are appropriate for any age and should begin well before a child is old enough to leave school. Visit: <<http://www.tsbvi.edu/Outreach/seehear/archive/twelve.html>>.

“Improving Transition Service Delivery by Partnering With Parents (Podcast)” from the American Printing House for the Blind. This podcast discusses ways in which parents and teachers can form partnerships to ensure students get the full benefit of the expanded core curriculum and transition services. Visit: <<http://blindcooltech.aph.org/infor/info22.mp3>>.

“Transition from School to Adult Life in the Community” from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. These forms are designed to help guide a team through a three-part planning process: 1) Creating a Vision/Developing Goals; 2) The Ideal Day; 3) A Plan of Action. Visit: <<http://www.tsbvi.edu/Outreach/deafblind/transition3partform.pdf>>.



New Products

American Printing House for the Blind has announced the following new products. (These products are available with quota funds.)

Next Generation™ Perkins/APH Braille Writer has been redesigned to provide a product that is quieter, lighter, and more comfortable for brailleing. New functions include an audible but muted end-of-line bell, built-in eraser, easy-grip handle, a back panel that can be raised to provide a flat surface for reading the page; front panel margin guides, metal inner frame and parts, but high-impact polycarbonate outer shell and high contrast colors between keys and braille body for low vision users. Note: It accepts 8 ½” x 11” paper only. Cat.#: 1-00800-00. Cost: \$650.00.

The Functional Vision and Learning Media Assessment (FVLMA), written by Rebecca Burnett and LaRhea Sanford, is a new assessment tool for practitioners to gather, store, track, and analyze information regarding students’ functional vision and appropriate learning media. It is not a standardized test but has been peer-reviewed by experts in the field of vision and field tested by teachers and students. Cat.# 7-96151-00. Cost: \$63.00.

Braille Construction Recognition (BCR) is an updated version of the Braille Code Recognition whose objective is to increase braille reading accuracy and braille reading rate. It includes a teacher's manual, pretesting and post-testing components that provide a formal measurement tool, and student materials. Cat. # 1-03251-00. Cost: \$107.00.

APH InSights Large Print/Braille Art Calendar 2009 is a 12 month calendar featuring the artwork of visually impaired artists. It includes months, days, holidays, and moon phases. It can be used at a desk or hang on a wall. Cat. #: 5-18971-09. Cost: \$7.50.

Word Playhouse is a kit to teach beginning phonics and reading skills including letter recognition, braille code recognition, decoding, vocabulary, and spelling skills. It includes 436 letter tiles in large print with a braille overlay, contracted and uncontracted on Velcro, a bi-fold felt work board, and a storage binder. Cat. #: 1-03562-00. Cost: \$224.00.

The Large Work-Play Tray measures 21 ¼ x 13 ¼ inches and provides an enclosed work space for sorting, matching, classifying, and counting. It is available in yellow and black. Cat. #: 1-03761-00. Cost: \$25.00.

APH has a new tutorial on *YouTube* for the Braille+ Mobile Manager. To learn about "The Braille Plus Workspace" visit: <<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o2OBVIXFsTs>>.

MathBuilders, Unit 6: Geometry is a supplementary math program separated into eight units by content standards and grade level. Unit 6 focuses on geometry and includes a teacher's guide with lesson plans for grades K-3, a CD-ROM with General Guidelines for Teaching Math to Young Braille Users, 34 student worksheets for additional practice, and manipulative parts. Cat. #: 7-03563-00. Cost: \$288.50.

Azer's Interactive Periodic Table Study Set is designed to make learning about the Periodic Table of the Elements accessible to students with visual impairments or blindness by providing a hands-on interactive model. The set provides instruction and demonstration of concepts related to the arrangement of the periodic table, atomic structure, ionic and covalent bonding, and balancing of chemical equations. Cat. #: 1-08856-00. Cost: \$346.00.

Book 3: Lots of Dots: Coloring the Garden presents a variety of fruits, vegetables, and herbs, and introduces picture building. The book begins with an empty garden and gradually builds on each page. Activities present daily living skills, such as planning, organizing, and food preparation. The book uses uncontracted and contracted braille, where applicable. Cat. #: 1-10002-00. Cost: \$24.00.

Turbo Phonics Software is a computer-based, phonemic awareness and phonics program for young students who are preparing to develop reading skills. This program has been specially designed for students who have low vision and provides simple, high contrast graphics, and audio reinforcement to make learning fun. Cat. #: D-00100-00. Cost: \$155.00.

For more information, contact: The American Printing House for the Blind, 1839 Frankfort Avenue, Louisville, KY; phone: 800-223-1839; fax: 502-899-2274; E-mail: <info@aph.org>; web site: <www.aph.org>.

Duxbury Systems and Design Science have announced the availability of *Duxbury Braille Translator (DBT) Version 10.7*, with support for the direct importing of Microsoft Word documents containing mathematical equations created with MathType. This improvement will allow users to author math with *MathType* in Microsoft Word and then translate these materials to braille via DBT for Windows. For more information about DBT, visit www.duxburysystems.com/dbt.asp. For information on MathType, visit: <www.dessci.com/mathtype>.

All in Play has introduced *TAG, The Anagram Game*. It can be played online at a fast or slower pace and is designed both for people who are experts at word games and those who are not. Visit: <<http://allinplay.com/games/beta.php>>.

GW Micro has launched the *Braille Sense Plus*, an accessible PDA designed to provide visually impaired persons with access to personal applications (word processor, address book and scheduler, e-mail, Internet, and digital audio players and recorders) and offers refreshable braille, synthesized speech, and visual outputs. Cost: \$5995. For more information, contact: GW Micro, 725 Airport North Office Park, Fort Wayne, IN 46825; phone: 260-489-3671; e-mail: <sales@gwmicro.com>; web site: <www.gwmicro.com>.

Lighthouse International has created a new add-on software tool, *LowBrowse*, which allows computer users with low vision to access previously inaccessible web pages in formats suitable to their visual needs. Users configure their preferences for font, text size, color contrast, and letter spacing and those settings stay for every web page visited. It also includes a tool for searching web pages for specific information and speech capability and runs on Mozilla Firefox browser. It works with Windows, MacOS, and Linus operating systems. It is a free download through the Firefox Add-on site at <<https://addons.mozilla.org/en-US/firefox/addon/8762>>. For more information, contact: Lighthouse International, 111 East 59th Street, New York, NY 10022; phone: 800-829-0500 or 212-821-9200; e-mail: <info@lighthouse.org>; web site: <www.lighthouse.org>.

ViewPlus Technologies has announced the availability of the Tiger Elite and the Tiger Premier, the latest additions to its series of braille embossers. The Tiger Premier 80 produces 80 characters per second, handles paper from 4 inches to 12.5 inches wide, and is priced at \$9995. The Tiger Elite 150 produces 150 characters per second, handles paper 4 inches to 12.5 inches wide, and is priced at \$17,995. For more information, phone 541-754-4002 or visit: <www.viewplus.com>.

Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic (RFB&D) has introduced *AudioAccess*, downloadable audio textbooks that are designed to play on Microsoft Windows Media Player (version 10 or higher) and can be synchronized with most Windows-compatible portable media players. AudioAccess files can be read without specialized playback equipment and downloaded immediately after purchase with the RFB&D Download Manager. Books can be downloaded by chapter and page. A high-speed internet connection and Microsoft Windows XP or Vista is required. AudioAccess is different than RFB&D's AudioPlus files, which come on compact discs and require specialized DAISY (Digital Accessible Information System) software or players, and NIMAS files, which are converted by RFB&D and delivered to users in the mail. For more information, contact <<http://support.rfb.org/>>, 20 Roszel Road, Princeton, NH 08540; phone: 866-732-3585; e-mail: <custserv@rfb.org>; web site: <www.rfb.org>.

Freedom Scientific has released version 8.0 of its OpenBook Scanning and Reading Software. *OpenBook 8.0* operates on a PC and converts printed documents or graphic-based text into an electronic text format using speech and optical character recognition (OCR) technology. It includes both Nuance OmniPage and ABBYY FineReader OCR software. Users can choose between two text-to-speech software synthesizers: RealSpeak Solo or Eloquence. The software includes features for persons with low vision, including tools to modify the appearance of text on the screen; the option to change to a split-screen view; tools to allow users to visually follow text as it is read; and a highlight feature, as well as other improved features. Cost: \$995.

Freedom Scientific has announced the release of *Version 6.1 of the PAC Mate Omni*, the accessible Pocket PC that brings the functionality of a mainstream PDA to persons who are blind. The new release includes numerous note taking improvements.

Also released by Freedom Scientific is an interactive training module for WYNN Wizard software. This CD provides easy navigation among 10 informative videos. This allows users to choose the subject they need immediate information on, as they master the use of WYNN's reading technology. Each of the individual videos targets a specific feature and defines its use in WYNN. Running time is three to nine minutes. Cost: \$35 for the training CD.

For more information, contact: Freedom Scientific, 11800 31st Court North, St. Petersburg, FL 33716-1805; phone: 877-775-9474 or 727-803-8000; web site: <www.freedomscientific.com>.

Beta 3 of Window-Eyes Version 7 is now available. Visit: <www.gwmicro.com/beta>.

HumanWare has released the *Trekker Breeze* to its line of talking global positioning systems (GPS) products for people who are blind or have low vision. It is designed to announce streets, landmarks, and points of interest; enable users to record routes and follow them turn by turn, including retracing their steps if they are lost; and can be used whether while riding in a vehicle or traveling by foot. Cost: \$895. Also released by HumanWare is Version 1.2.18 of an English-Spanish multilingual capability for the Victor Reader Stream. This version offers two text-to-speech voices, Monica speaking Spanish and Samantha speaking English. To download this latest version, customers can visit the web site at www.humanware.com/en-canada/support/vr_stream_software. For more information, contact: HumanWare, 175 Mason Circle, Concord, CA 94520; phone: 800-722-3393 or 925-680-7100; e-mail: <us.info@humanware.com>; web site: <www.humanware.com/en-usa/products/gps>

Software tools that convert DAISY XML (DTBook) into a complete DAISY book:

Book Wizard Producer from APH helps to make the process of creating structured text only DAISY books from DAISY XML file simple and efficient.

EasyConverter from Dolphin Computer Access allows the user to convert DAISY XML fields created with the add-in for Microsoft Office Word into fully synchronized text and audio DAISY books. EasyConverter quickly and efficiently converts the DAISY XML file into a DAISY Digital Talking Book, ready for playback on a DAISY player, such as EasyReader.

The *eCclipseWriter* tools from IRTI are now compatible with XML documents, including the DAISY XML output produced with Microsoft's "Save as DAISY XML" add-in. When processed through eCclipseWriter's word processor, DAISY XML easily converts the file into a full text and audio, or text only DAISY book.

The *gh PLAYER Premium* edition can be used to directly open any DAISY SML file produced with the "Save As DAISY XML" add-in. The XML file can be brought into the gh PLAYER using "drag and drop," and it is immediately ready to read. Any text file can be imported for a "barebones" DAISY book. If the XML file that is imported is well structured, the output DAISY book will also be well structured. In the ghPLAYER, the "Save As" feature is used to produce a full text only DAISY book.

ZoomWare replaces the Big Shot from Ai Squared. It is a simple and affordable screen magnifier designed for individuals with early vision loss. *ZoomWare* provides up to two times magnification to enlarge items on its screen for easier reading. The user can adjust the size and color of the mouse pointer and text cursor so they're easier to find and follow as well as adjust screen colors for reduced glare and greatly improved clarity of text and graphics. To download a demo visit:
<www.getzoomware.com/download>.

Next Generation Technologies and T&T Consultancy announce the release of *J-Say Pro Version 6.1*, the program which links JAWS and Naturally Speaking to allow blind users to effectively dictate to their computers. This version supports Office 2007, JAWS 9.0, and includes considerably more training materials and an easier way to select text by voice. Visit: <<http://www.ngtvoice.com/products/software/tandt/jsay/pronew.htm>>.



VISIONS IN INDIANA

Volume 17, Number 1



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