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Vision Access welcomes submissions from people with low vision, from professionals such as ophthalmologists, optometrists, low vision specialists, and everyone with something substantive to contribute to the ongoing discussion of low vision and all of its ramifications.

Submissions are best made as attachments to email. Submissions may also be made in clear typescript. VISION ACCESS cannot assume responsibility for lost manuscripts. Deadlines for submissions are March 1, June 1, September 1, and December 1. Submissions may be mailed to Joyce Kleiber, Editor, 6 Hillside Rd., Wayne, PA 19087, jmkkleiber@hotmail.com
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From the Editor

Welcome to the Spring 2012 edition of VISION ACCESS! In coping with my low vision, I have found role models, science, advocacy, assistive technology and a supportive organization/community indispensable. My hope is that the contents of this magazine will add good things to your life. Thanks to all who have contributed articles and ideas to this VVISION ACCESS. We look forward to hearing from you.

JMK, 3/9/2012
Letter to the Editor

Dear Joyce, I must say that the new type size and spacing makes VISION ACCESS easy to read. I can even read it wearing my distant glasses. So for me personally it is larger and more spacing than necessary, but if these changes are good for others, I approve. I did find the large bold page numbers helpful. The extra line of space between paragraphs seemed unnecessary.

Mike Vogl

Organization News

President’s Message,
It’ll Be July before You Know It!
By Richard Rueda

This July, CCLVI invites you and your friends and family to join us at our annual conference and convention in conjunction with the American Council of the Blind in Louisville Kentucky. Whether this is your first time, second time or tenth conference, each year’s event has unique
qualities, ideas, trends and aspirations to provide and engage members.

As I write, the CCLVI Convention committee, under the strong direction of Lisa Drezewucki, is fast at work assembling a fantastic convention experience. Please visit our web page at www.cclvi.org for a convention program preview in late April.

If you are still on the fence on whether or not to trek to the mid-west for a wonderful week of new experiences and enriching learning opportunities, consider this:
* There is no other time in a calendar year where you will have the chance to network with hundreds of people from all walks of life who have low vision.
* Have the ability to listen in and participate in both consumer and commercially initiated focus groups on how to make everyday products and services more low vision user friendly.
* Engage with extremely talented folks singing and acting their hearts out at the annual Friends in Art showcase, which by the way performs to a packed room, often with standing room only.

* Experience finely crafted tours specially geared for the blind and low vision community.

* Participate in the many CCLVI sponsored educational, interactive and social activities.

For over 30 years, CCLVI has actively had a presence at the ACB conference and convention. If that’s not enough, know that you do make an impact in our advocacy, leadership and more. Your attendance helps CCLVI.

There are several ways to stretch that dollar when planning your trip. Whether it’s finding friends that you know who may attend and splitting the cost of a hotel room, bringing snacks to replace the cost of a few meals and of course scouring the internet for great deals on flights,
there are ways to save and make this July meeting an unforgettable event.

If there is anything that I can personally do to assist in your planning and grant you additional ideas on how to get to Louisville, I invite you to call me. There is power in numbers and why not do it with CCLVI.

Readers Want to Know
By Valerie Ries-Lerman

In the last issue I was “consternating” about the way legally blind people get treated sometimes, that is, spoken to as if they are “less than” or “talked down to” by the “helpful” public. Below you will find the thoughtful responses of two of our dedicated readers.

Mike Vogl writes: Valerie, I asked a friend with a handicap your question. Here is her response: “I've had people wanting to help when I'm in a scooter at the store. At first it took me by
surprise, and I was irritated! Shame on me! I just didn't get it! They wanted to help. I didn't need it, I was doing just fine, but they wanted to help. When I got over my shame I learned to say, 'So sweet of you to offer! I'm really doing well today. Thanks again. God bless.' I would always take any offers, no matter the attitude, as an act of kindness. Respond kindly. Some people just don't get it, but they mean well."

My response would be along the same line, I guess. It has been my experience that about 3 percent of the population gets it -- they assess the situation immediately, know you don't want to be put in an embarrassing spotlight, and quietly ask if they can help. Then there’s the 7 percent that treat you like a kid, and call you "sugar" and drag you by the arm. The other 90 percent are completely unaware of anybody's problems but their own. They'd let you walk into a closed glass door as not. So, annoying as they might be, I'll
take the 7 percent of mean-well baby-talkers over the 90 percent of the clueless. If it really gets annoying, I might say, "I am legally blind, but have some vision, and I like to be as independent as I can. And my hearing is 20/20."

A good question, Valerie, and I think you will get some better answers than mine.

Not so, Mike. That was an excellent response!

Here’s another engaged reader’s take.

Tom Frank writes: I try to handle all awkward situations with humor. I first take the attitude that I am not the one who is acting stupid. The person who is treating me like a child is:

Ignorant: aren't we all.
Stupid: Nothing can be done to help.
Insensitive: Their problem; not mine.

Remember that most people have never had to deal with someone who can't see very well. They are curious but have no concept as to how to approach the situation. That means that I am
stuck with educating them. I can look at this as either a burden or opportunity. I choose opportunity.

When I first dated my wife seven years ago, we would walk down the outdoor Church Street Mall in Burlington, VT. I was joyful; I was with the woman I loved, so I would start to whistle. "Stop whistling," she would command. So I started humming. "Stop humming. "Woof, woof, moo, moo." "And absolutely no animal sounds. They already think you're stupid because you can't see."

Six years later, when traffic is heavy and we want to cross the street in the same outdoor mall... "Where's that magic stick of yours," as she pushes me in front and watches the cars screech to a halt.

Life is too short to get upset about what others
think of you. Just smile, thank them for their help, and continue to live your life as a competent blind person. Think of all the amusing stories you can tell your family and friends.

“Amen” to that, Tom!

Thank you both so much for your thoughtful responses.

Well readers, what’s on your mind?

Please keep me “in the loop” at:
sacramentovalerie@yahoo.com

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Science and Health

Biomarkers for Glaucoma
By Martin B. Wax, MD
Reported by Matt Kickbush

Note: This article by Martin Wax, MD originally appeared in GLEAMS, the newsletter of the Glaucoma Research Foundation in San Francisco CA, and is copyrighted by the Glaucoma Research
What is a biomarker? A biomarker is an indicator of a biological condition that, in some cases, can assist in the diagnosis and management of disease.

Molecular biomarkers have yet to be explored in glaucoma. Currently, in the management of glaucoma we look at structure and function of the nerve tissue at the back of the eye. We try to evaluate if the patient’s retina or optic nerve is losing tissue and whether this is accompanied by diminished sensitivity to light across the visual fields. These important areas of clinical practice are still actively researched and continue to yield promising findings. However, the benefit of identifying molecular biomarkers that indicate when a patient’s nerve tissue is injured is to provide the physician with a new tool to track
progression, before the tissue is lost permanently and further visual field deterioration occurs.

Identifying molecular biomarkers for glaucoma promises many possible benefits. A molecular biomarker might have predictive use that could help guide more specific therapy in some glaucoma patients. For example, it might help a glaucoma physician know when to intervene earlier. In addition a good biomarker could be used to demonstrate efficacy of drug activity, potentially accelerating federal approval for glaucoma drugs, particularly those that protect the retina and optic nerve.

The Glaucoma Research Foundation will be emphasizing research into biomarkers for glaucoma to stimulate activity in this area. The identification of a metabolic marker indicating tissue injury with accuracy could potentially help predict glaucoma in patients who do not yet show symptoms of vision loss. Such a marker could
help doctors treating glaucoma know whether the patient is likely to progress and therefore treat the disease more aggressively or whether treatment is even required in certain patients.

In the search for a glaucoma biomarker, we hope to find a tool to predict accurately and early if tissue is damaged and with greater sensitivity than the diagnostic tools currently available. Such a biomarker might serve as an early indicator for disease monitoring and intervention.

National Eye Institute Announces 2nd Symposium on Stem Cells

The intramural science program of the National Eye Institute, in collaboration with the NIH Center for Regenerative Medicine, is organizing its Second Symposium on Stem Cells, to be held on the NIH Campus in Bethesda on Monday April 16, 2012. The symposium will focus
on advances in stem cells research as they relate to ocular physiology and disease analysis.

Symposium speakers include Kevin Eggan (Harvard Stem Cell Institute), David Gamm (University of Wisconsin-Madison), Thomas Reh (University of Washington), and Sally Temple (Neural Stem Cell Institute, NY).

For more information visit http://www.nei.nih.gov/news/stemcells/

Research Indicates Peripheral Vision Can Be a Smart Alec
By Ken Stewart
Reading recently about research studying dyslexia aroused my curiosity about my own peripheral vision, the only useful eyesight I have ever had. I was well into adulthood before medical examiners finally confirmed what should have been easily diagnosed throughout my childhood. Unless I looked to the side I never could see things
straight ahead of me, whether it was the face of someone who wanted my attention or an oncoming pedestrian. But when swinging a bat at a nice new white softball pitched to me above a dark green grassy ball field, I might give it a healthy whack when I spotted its approach out of the corner of my eye. And several of my panoramic photographs drew high praise, even contest awards, including a County Fair Blue Ribbon!

Now I read in the NEW YORK TIMES, thanks to the Newsline phone service, that the human brain can do some things better with peripheral visual information than what comes in centrally. In a February Sunday Review article, "The Upside of Dyslexia", noteworthy findings are detailed. People with dyslexia, traditionally also called "word blindness," have difficulty recognizing letters in the central viewing sector. But, to the surprise of scientists, this group, estimated to be
15% of the population, has been proven to be better at finding details around the outer portion of the field of vision. Perhaps that is why people with dyslexia are found in occupations like art and architecture in unusually large numbers. Scientists have concluded the brain separately processes the visual information received from the periphery. Thus those most skilled at reading are likely "to be less proficient at recognizing patterns and features located in the far reaches of the periphery." Evidence is being gathered in a Harvard research project that astrophysicists who are dyslexic are better at processing the vast quantities of visual data scattered throughout the outer space view shed.

So, perhaps those of us who are without central vision have a skill that can be marketed to potential employers! And alas, there was a reason that I seemed to have superior skill in composing those photographs of sweeping
landscapes. The winner of the blue ribbon was a shot of a roaring brook crossing a meadow nestled in the Scottish Highlands. Perhaps my peripheral vision contributed to my apparent success designing the house I have lived in for the past quarter century. Now I even think back to my experiences as a first grader. My drawing of our school, P.S. 27, was admired so much by my teacher she sent me down to the principal's office to show her my drawing. That was the same principal who, when I advanced from kindergarten, had recommended that my parents enroll me in P.S. 9, the School for the Handicapped in the Yonkers Public School System!
Beauty, Simplicity, and Gratitude: An Inside Look at the Life of Shirley Purdy

By Sarah Peterson

Close your eyes for a moment and imagine standing in a picturesque little village on the lush English coast. The view is post-card perfect with quaint thatched roof dwellings scatter throughout the countryside. The village’s main street is barely wide enough for two cars to pass each other. No pavement or sidewalks can be found. Quite frequently you’ll notice people riding horses through the village. Key features of the small community include a fourteenth-century church, a pub, and a village school. Buses occasionally transport people to the nearest town, and the closest post office is three miles away.

Such is the setting for the simple, quiet life of Shirley Purdy in rustic Devon County England.
Born on February twenty-third, 1943, sixty-seven-year-old Shirley lives alone apart from her “very ancient cat.” After marrying at nineteen, Shirley lived with her husband for forty-three years until his passing six years ago. She enjoys the company of her two children, Stephen and Claire, and four grandchildren, one of which is extremely clever with Latin and math, and identical twin granddaughters who visit every Sunday to play board games. Her interests include reading thrillers and mystery novels, but never romantic fiction. Every fortnight, a traveling library arrives at the village, so she always tries to take advantage of this opportunity. Recently she read a book by Christopher Hitchens which was “crammed full of American politics,” a subject Shirley finds extremely fascinating and therefore seizes every opportunity to learn more about. She claims to be in love with America in general and says its citizens are “kind and decent people,
wonderful and generous in manner.” Not too long ago Shirley attended her first political meeting in the area at the invitation of her landlady’s daughter.

Although Shirley has lived in the village for thirty-five years, she admits to having had a shy, anxious childhood and then maintaining those personality characteristics as an adult. She is aware that social events have helped her to become more outgoing. Crosswords, jazz music, and laughing are favorite pastimes. Shirley also possesses a large collection of recipe books and she loves to cook, jokingly admitting that she is “consequently quite plump,” although she always tries to lose weight.

For several years, Shirley served as the supervisor for a probation office, dealing with many critical elements. On many occasions, this occupation has led her to travel to France, especially Normandy. “I’m the only person in the
village who speaks a smattering of French, and it’s my favorite subject,” she says. Shirley enjoys phone conversations on weekends with her French friends who live in Limoges.

While she has also traveled to North Africa and Holland, the Greek islands are perhaps her most favorite adventure. Shirley recalls their beauty with great reverence, describing the Mediterranean as “the deepest blue and clearest crystal.”

While Shirley may seemingly lead a somewhat ordinary life, her vision loss has made her experiences distinctly unique. She explains that congenital cataracts run in her family. Her older sister was born blind with congenital cataracts and had operations every year until age six.

While Shirley is grateful to have a good amount of functional vision, problems arose at age twenty-six when her husband noticed that she was unable to see things he pointed out.
Fellow villagers also became disgruntled when Shirley stopped greeting them as they passed on the street. Upon her visit to the doctor, she learned about her cataracts, possessing no knowledge of her family’s genetic pattern at the time. Because having two children especially created the need to see, she consented to surgery. After an operation was performed on one eye, she remained in the hospital for about three weeks. Since receiving lens implants would not have been suitable due to her age, she was content with her new hard contacts. Shirley remembers her profound joy in response to her newly improved vision, especially seeing the “peaches and cream” skin of her children and “their white blond hair.” While the contacts gave her the sensation of having “a lump of coal” in her eye, she gradually became accustomed to the feeling and, after a few years, received an operation on her other eye. This improved her
vision considerably, even enabling her to read the bottom line on the eye chart.

Unfortunately, Shirley began experiencing a severe dry eye problem, so extreme that if she was wearing lenses, they would have to be cut off. At one point she was required to replace her lenses with very large aphakic glasses “like the bottom of coke bottles.” This was difficult for Shirley, as she always of cared about how she looks. She currently uses two types of glasses, one for reading and one for other occasions.

Despite these hardships, Shirley never hesitates to testify how fortunate she truly is, especially being able to read and see people four feet before her eyes. “Being able to pick up clues from people’s expressions really does affect my confidence,” she admits.

Shirley has no need to use digital readers or any other of the various assistive technology the modern age offers. However, she does have a
white folding cane, using it only rarely. When she was in town with her daughter a few years ago, she expressed how she was fed up with people running into her. “Well, Mum, to be quite honest, you’re running into them,” Claire responded bluntly. She admits that it’s perhaps only sensible to use it.

“I have no in-home service, but I muddle along the best I can,” she says. She can see well enough to cook and manage in other ways, and her daughter helps out if she has trouble. Stephen changes the light bulbs and does her gardening. She also is grateful for a kind neighbor who assists her with shopping, so she considers herself extremely blessed.

Shirley explains that her other health problems actually make her visual impairment seem like less of an obstacle. Prominent cancer issues run in her family, as well. Her father died of cancer when he was forty-one, and she and her sister
both have been diagnosed with endometrial cancer. She also has Lynch Syndrome; women who carry the gene for this syndrome have a fifty percent greater chance of acquiring bowel cancer. “It’s not that bad,” Shirley says, “I just have to get a colonoscopy every two years. It’s the preparation beforehand that is the worst.

Despite the difficulty Shirley’s low vision often creates, this inspiring woman possesses a great deal of insight concerning society’s current situation, especially the financial strain. “Things here are very difficult,” she says, explaining that the price of gas in England is equivalent to our twelve dollars per gallon and heating and food costs have also drastically increased. Services are being cut, including those for mentally and physically handicapped children. Thirty percent of people have been taken off medical benefit, and jobs are hard to come by. “It upset me when I saw something about the situation in America,”
Shirley shares. “It was heartbreaking to see so many hardworking people go without, just because of the cynical greed of bankers. But if we saw the terrible poverty of other countries, we could not call ourselves poor. The gap between haves and have-nots is ever widening, and there is a greater sense of a community being fractured.” Shirley remembers growing up in a rough area, but a very beautiful town on the coast. People knew and helped each other, even rallying around to help when her father passed. No welfare system existed as it does now, and she claims to have been “very poor” when she married. She went to work as soon as she was able as an office administrator for probation. “I saw the very worst side of human nature, and to be honest, I don’t feel I got involved with people’s lives enough until it was too late.” Although work was quite stressful, she had a wonderful team of secretaries working for her at the time, and they
had a tremendous amount of fun together. She claims to have preferred the younger ones since “they weren’t too set in their ways and weren’t menopausal.” The social services, according to Shirley, are absolutely terrible in her country. Tuition fees have risen to eighteen thousand dollars. Shirley maintains that an unfair policy has been implemented exempting children from Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland from paying tuition, while English children are not exempt.

Shirley truly provides a fine example of one who possesses great wisdom and possibly some valuable answers to society’s great problems. “There’s so much greed now in the world that it’s ruining societies. I don’t feel the need for a great many things to be honest. I love my books and nice fresh food, but I’m certainly not someone who needs new carpets and such or a three piece
every two years. If something works, that’s fine. I feel quite well-off.”

Shirley Purdy’s honest, positive, and heartfelt perspective serves as a reminder for the sighted and those with low vision alike to have gratitude for all of their blessings. As a British woman, her lifestyle shows that whether or not we too live in a village with one main street and a fourteenth-century church, we essentially are all the same, possessing many interests, dreams, and ponderings. Her thought-provoking statements concerning society should also encourage all of us to remain involved with people and to gather knowledge of the world around us, no matter what limitation we may have.

Jane Kardas, Chair of the international segment of the Council of Citizens with Low Vision International in California, graciously provided the cassette tapes from which the information for this article was compiled. Jane and Shirley pen
pal and correspond regularly, which sometimes includes the exchange of tape recordings. The California Council of Citizens with Low Vision, a chapter of CCLVI, pays the dues for their international members like Shirley. They encourage other chapters across the country to do the same. By doing this, American organizations for those with low vision can spread awareness about the visually impaired, learn from people in other countries with similar situations, and share their inspiring stories through publications such as Vision Access. Thanks to people like Shirley Purdy and Jane Kardas, the low vision community touches many lives and helps others find a voice, no matter how far the distance may be.
Quality of Life

Low Vision Down and Dirty Gardening
By Leonard I. Tuchyner

Editor’s Note: This article was first published in DIALOGUE, Winter 2011. 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.

Nothing tastes better than food grown in your own garden. Some of the beans might have gotten a little stringy, but it doesn’t matter when they come out of your own dirt and by the sweat of your own labor.

I’ve been a fanatic gardener most of my life. When my eyesight was reasonably good, I’d often take teeny-weeny seedlings and transplant them in long rows, drilling tiny holes in the ground with
a pencil, to receive each ephemeral plant. Now I can’t see those plants, and their little bodies are too delicate to handle solely by touch.

It hasn’t slowed me down, though. Well, not much. I’ve just had to make adjustments. Most of them are only common sense, but what in life isn’t? I’ll share a few of these adjustments here, just in case you haven’t thought of better ones. If you have, let me know what they are.

**Tilling:** I’ve tilled ground with rotary tillers, pull-backwards electric tillers, and the good old grub hoe. I have two gardens, each about 25 feet square. Even at 70 years of age, with the usual accoutrements of a senior body, I prefer the grub hoe. But whichever method is used, one must be able to discern where the ground has already been worked and where it hasn’t. I rely on three sensory cues for this:

**Vision** is one of them. I may not be able to see exactly where my hoe blade has already landed,
but if the light is right, I can notice that the newly broken earth is darker than the unplowed ground. I can only tell that difference if the sun is right. With macular degeneration, blinding sunlight is just that--blinding. So you don’t want to be facing it. On the other hand, you don’t want to be in its shadow, where the contrasts between light and dark are muffled. So when you start the procedure, experiment to see where the sun placement helps you the most. Actually, a cloudy day usually works best.

Another way to know where the plowed part lies is to feel it with your feet. Simply put one foot on the soft, pliable soil and the other foot on the harder, less giving ground. Then plow those swatches, each in its entire length.

The third way I can tell which ground has been plowed is by the feel of the plowing tool as it comes into contact with the soil. In using a grub hoe, with each slice I can feel the earth cleaving.
It’s a totally different feel when the blade is plunged into already softened dirt than when it newly breaks the surface. It’s more difficult to discern the feel of a rotary tiller going through virgin earth, but it is doable.

Now the time has come to make a straight row that will receive the seeds or plants. There are several ways to do this without much sight. Here is my favorite: Sink a stake into the ground at each end of the row to be prepared. Then string a clothesline between them, keeping it taut. It can be as high or low as you like. You’re going to use the feel of the rope along your side as you make your row. You won’t have to stop and feel the line with your hands, because you’ll feel it through your clothing along your contact side.

I have used a grub hoe for this in the past, but these days I prefer an electric-powered, pull-from-behind rotary tiller. It’s quiet, and it does not pollute the environment with fumes. It also
does a much better job of making the ground soft and friable than you can do with a hoe. The cost of one is relatively low. Maintenance is easy and cheap. Its plowing width is about twelve inches. That is perfect. Here I go deep--about a foot.

After the row is tilled, put in your compost and till it in. That’s easy and quick with the little machine. You’ll be left with a lovely, straight, soft row with a shallow trench and puffy little hills on either side of this slight indentation.

Putting in the seeds is done completely by feel. People with normal eyesight can’t do this as well as we can. Feel each little fine seed like you would the bumps on a page of braille and lay them in the trench. Cover them up just like the package says. One little hint here is to take a number of skinny sticks about one foot long, because you won’t be able to see the seeds when they are on the ground. As you move along down the row, every time you move, you are in danger of failing to
keep track of where the last seed was laid. Simply stick one of the little sticks in the ground where you left the last seed. Do this before you move. Then you have a starting marker for the next addition to the line of seeds. Leave these marker sticks in place as you go. That will make it possible to identify the exact placement of your row. It’s a good idea to leave the guide ropes up until the plants become obvious. That will give you additional tactile and strong visual cues.

Well, I’ve got you to the point of the planting. There’s a lot more to talk about, such as weeding and harvesting. But it seems I’ve run out of space. It’s a wonderful adventure just to figure out how to get around the rest of the challenges in gardening. In the end, nothing beats a beet you’ve grown, cooked or pickled, and eaten for that sense of wonder and fulfillment. Happy gardening!
PS: One quick note about harvesting--get your partner to do it!

Putting Drops in Your Own Eyes
By Mike Smyczek

Putting eye drops in your own eye can be a frustrating exercise. The easiest method is to take a break and lay down on your bed. Remove the pillow from under you head. To insert eye drops in your left eye turn your head to the right. Put the drops on the inside corner of you left eye. Now the easy part. Open your left eye and roll your head slowly to the left and let the fluid wash over your eye. It's fool-proof.

For the right eye just turn your head to the left and put the required number of drops into the inside corner of your right eye.

I learned this method while I was in the service. We did not want to waste the time of the medical staff on our ship and we learned this
technique from the Hospital Corpsman on the ship I was on.

Advocacy

Legislative Update
By CCLVI’s Legislative Team
One of the most rewarding aspects of living in America is for American citizens to have a say in how laws and regulations are crafted and administered. This statement holds true to those of us who have a visual impairment. We need to keep up-to-date with the happenings of local, state, and national government. Elected officials are receptive to feedback; both positive and negative. Let your elected officials know how you feel about particular bills which may greatly impact your quality of life. This brief overview of a couple of bills is not to persuade you how to respond; rather, this serves to bring to the surface a couple of legislative items which are currently in discussion. We also hope to highlight
progress on a couple of other issues which have been discussed over the past few years.

Senate Bill 1813 has been introduced. This amendment would allow states to enter into commercial ventures at rest areas on federal highways and interstates and would dramatically impact Randolph-Sheppard vendors. This bill is currently being debated at the time of publication.

H.R. 4087, the Accessible Prescription Drug Labeling Promotion Act of 2012 has also been introduced. This piece of legislation hopes to give all individuals, regardless of visual acuity, access to information on prescription drug labels. Ideas for making the labels more accessible have included developing a way to incorporate large print, Braille, and digital voice recordings as a part of the labels, or in addition to the pharmacy check-out process.

Over the past year, ACB, along with many other advocates, has assisted with the guideline
creation for safe guide dog relief areas inside of airports. This regulation will allow for service animals and their handlers to not have to leave a secure area when the service animal needs to relieve himself/herself. Many airports across the country have already implemented these guidelines as they have expanded or remodeled current facilities.

Finally, many individuals are working to advance and assist with the creation of guidelines concerning the 21\textsuperscript{st} Century Communication Act. From ensuring that cell phones and small computers are accessible to showing the FCC the importance of audio descriptions for crawlers and other forms of television entertainment, many individuals are pushing for an optimum interpretation of the act.

Much of the recent focus during the NIB Public Policy Forum consisted of educating Congress on the Social Security earnings cliff. As legislation or
new guidelines are developed, this publication will keep you informed of the proposed changes and recommendations. Hopes would be that the earnings cliff for social security recipients could be modified so that a working individual would not lose all benefits if he/she made greater than a calculated amount. This would allow for individuals who are blind to upwardly grow in their respective jobs without the fear of losing all social security benefits.

Please stay informed with those legislative matters which concern you most. Remember, a good consumer of any product or service is an informed consumer. This publication will have another legislative update in the next volume. We will try and highlight current legislation, while at the same time track the progress of archived past legislation.
Empowering Women with Impaired Sight

Just US Blind Girls, an organization concerned with empowering women who are visually impaired, is hosting a conference entitled “I’m Every Woman—Mind, Body and Soul.” This event will take place on May 18-19 at the Holiday Inn Airport Center in West Palm Beach Florida. For more information and to register go to http://justusblindgirlspbc.org/conference.htm. Justusblindgirlspbc.org. Just Us Blind Girls hosts a live chat line on Monday and Wednesday evenings beginning at 6pm EST. Call in number is 218-548-2869, ID# 151515#.

Summit on Eye Health

Prevent Blindness America is hosting “Focus on Eye Health: A National Summit” on June 10, 2012 at the Washington Marriott at Metro Center. This event will launch the update of two very
significant public health reports—Vision Problem in the U.S. and Economic Impact of Vision Problems. In addition to these updates, a variety of public health presentations will address vision and eye health in the United States.

Attendees will include patient advocates, community-based organizations, national vision and eye health organizations, government agencies, and policymakers.

VISIONS 2012 in Minneapolis

The Foundation Fighting Blindness invites you to attend its 2012 VISIONS Conference, being held June 28-July 1 in Minneapolis. The Hyatt Regency is the setting for this conference. Here are some speakers who will be featured at VISIONS 2012.

For information about VISIONS 2012 call the Foundation Fighting Blindness at 800-683-5555 or go to www.foundationfightingblindness.org.
Serotek Releases Major Update to Accessible Event Meeting Platform

Serotek Corporation announced a major update to its Accessible Event meeting platform. Accessible Event makes meetings, webinars, lectures and conferences fully accessible to everyone, including blind, deaf, and deaf-blind attendees. Accessible Event can be run alongside existing meeting platforms, such as Adobe Connect, GoToMeeting, and WebX, or as a standalone solution. The platform supports high quality audio and video, with Microsoft Word, Excel and PowerPoint content, as well as HTML documents and web pages. Attendees join the meeting through a standard web browser; either through a Windows, Macintosh, or iOS device. Content is presented in the browser much like any other web page, so there is no need to learn new...
commands or functionality. Meeting attendees who use technologies such as braille displays, speech synthesis, or screen magnification will simply navigate the event’s content using their assistive technology of choice.

Visit http://accessibleevent.com to sign up, or call (612) 246-4818 and speak with the enterprise sales department to get started.

Request for Contributions

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.

2012 Membership Application

Name__________________________________A
Membership Status: I am:
___ New member.
___ Life member of CCLVI.
___ Renewing my membership.
___ Life member of ACB.

Visual Status: I am a:
___ person with low/no vision.
___ fully sighted person.

I wish to receive the CCLVI publication, Vision Access in:
___ Large print  ___ Cassette  ___ E-mail
___ Audio CD  _____Data CD  _____Do not send

Please send the American Council of the Blind Braille Forum in:
___ Large Print  ___ Cassette  ___ Computer Disk
___ E-mail  ___Braille  ___ Do Not Send

Dues Structure (Payable in up to three annual installments):
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$_______ Annual Dues
$_______ Life Membership Dues (full or installment)
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$_______ Total Amount

Make check or money order payable to “CCLVI” and send to
CCLVI Treasurer:
Mike Godino
104 Tilrose Avenue
Malverne, NY 11565-2024
Ph: 800-733-2258
www.cclvi.org

For Office Use Only:

Date Paid:_________, Date f Dep_________
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