



CTEBVI JOURNAL

SPRING 2011

Volume LIII, No. 1

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THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE

*California Transcribers and Educators
for the Blind and Visually Impaired*

Message from the Editor

Well, the 2011 Conference is behind us. While I wasn't able to attend this year, I have heard great things about the workshops and presenters. To all of you who did make it to Conference, I hope you enjoyed it and came away with having learned something valuable.

There are several **IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS** as a result of things that took place at Conference and the Board of Directors meeting. So please be sure to "read all about it" on pages 16-17.

CTEBVI depends on its members' contributions not only monetarily, but with your time as well. Please consider volunteering your time to help put together next year's conference. The conference chair(s) is always looking for people to assist with such things as decorations, registration, "booth sitting," monitoring workshops, planning pre-conference activities, or even chairing a conference committee. If you find CTEBVI conferences worthwhile and educational, please consider helping in whatever you can to ensure they can continue into the future.

If you are interested in participating in the 2012 Conference planning, please contact Judi Biller at ctebvi.membership@gmail.com.

Happy summer to you all.

Marcy Ponzio

THE CTEBVI JOURNAL

Editor

Marcy Ponzio

Layout Editor

Kevin McCarthy

Print Proofreader

Cath Tendler-Valencia

Braille Transcription

Contra Costa Braille Transcribers

Embossing

Transcribing Mariners

Audio Recording & Duplication

Volunteers of Vacaville

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Marcy Ponzio, CTEBVI Publications
Braille Publishing

Braille Institute of America

741 N. Vermont Avenue

Los Angeles, CA 90029-3594

Email: editor@ctebvi.org

Phone: (323) 666-2211

(For **MESSAGES ONLY** and recorded information
about **2011 CTEBVI Conference**)

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CTEBVI Financial Statement

CTEBVI Financial Statement as of December 31, 2010

Cash on hand - January 1, 2010 \$153,700.75

RECEIPTS

Membership Dues		\$25,425.00	
2010 Membership	\$18,200.00		
2011 Membership	6,575.00		
2012 Membership	500.00		
2013 Membership	150.00		
AV Income		\$5,348.52	
NAPVI 2009	2,000.00		
GITWL 2009	3,348.52		
2010 Conference		\$74,750.00	
General Fund		2,327.00	
Donna Coffee Youth Scholarship		404.00	
Katie Sibert Memorial Fund		503.00	
Life Memberships		500.00	
Interest Income		748.64	
Transcriber Listing		140.00	
Total income to date:			\$111,146.16
			\$264,846.91

DISBURSEMENTS

2010 Conference		\$73,284.69	
2011 Conference		6,500.00	
2010 Membership Refund—CAPVI		450.00	
Advocacy (pd for 2009 & 2010 trips)		3,356.30	
Audit, & Tax Preparation		1,700.00	
AV Rental Expenses		1,172.03	
Awards		62.20	
Bank Charges		158.84	
Board of Directors		9,836.73	
Discount to GITWL		27.89	
Gifts and Tributes		26.40	
Historian		79.56	
Insurance		5,542.00	
Office, etc.	\$ 564.00		
Combined Liability	4,978.00		
Membership		2,250.17	
Office – BIA		1,393.95	
Rent	1,200.00		
Phone	193.95		
Publications		25,759.53	
JOURNAL Publishing	22,758.16		
Editor	\$ 2,400.00		
Postage	1,238.76		
Printing	17,519.40		
Publisher	1,600.00		

DISBURSEMENTS – Continued

Website		\$ 3,001.37	
AmEx fees	\$ 121.87		
Visa/MC fees	722.13		
Redwood %	521.29		
EPN fee	120.00		
Linksky	26.08		
Webmaster	1,490.00		
Special Service Projects			\$6,791.87
BANA Dues		1,000.00	
BANA Meetings		2,108.37	
Katie Sibert Scholarships		1,640.00	
Donna Coffee Award		1,043.50	
Vacaville		1,000.00	
Treasurer			149.11
Total expenses to date			\$138,541.27
Cash on hand - December 31, 2010			\$126,305.64
Surplus/Deficit for year			- \$27,395.11
<u>CASH RECONCILIATION:</u>			
General Fund Checking			4,063.61
Combination Funds CD			58,090.38
Contingency Funds	41,332.86		
Donna Coffee Scholarship	3,394.30	(Dedicated)	
Transcriber Support	13,363.22	(Dedicated)	
<u>DEDICATED ACCOUNTS:</u>			
Katie Sibert Scholarship			64,151.65
TOTAL CASH ACCOUNTS			\$126,305.64

CONFERENCE REPORTS2010 CTEBVI Conference

Receipts in 2009		\$ 1,125.00
Receipts in 2010		<u>74,750.00</u>
Total Receipts		\$75,875.00
Disbursements in 2009		\$14,952.91
Disbursements in 2010		<u>73,284.69</u>
Total Disbursements		\$88,237.60
Surplus/Deficit		-\$12,362.60

2011 CTEBVI Conference

Disbursements in 2009		\$11,830.16
Disbursements in 2010		<u>6,500.00</u>
Total Disbursements		\$18,330.16

President's Message

Our successful 2011 Conference is now behind us. As always, the tireless efforts and generosity of workshop presenters, conference committees, volunteers, speakers and performing artists provided a memorable and inspiring experience that will carry us through the next year. At the Saturday evening banquet, our highest accolades – the Fred L. Sinclair Award and the CTEBVI Distinguished Member Award – were presented, respectively, to Mike Cole and Dr. Stuart Wittenstein. Congratulations to you both on this high honor.

Conference 2012 will be held at the Los Angeles Airport Marriott in March; dates announced in next issue. As conference production is a year long endeavor, committees for 2012 are now being formed. Serving on a conference committee is the best way to get a behind the scenes look at what is involved in producing a conference, and we are always looking for new hands on deck. If you are interested please contact Judi Biller, our Membership Chair, at ctebvi.membership@gmail.com.

Cath Tendler-Valencia (after years of failed attempts on her part) has relinquished her position as our Historian and Photographer. With heartfelt gratitude we wish you all the best, Cath, and will be holding you to your promise not to be a stranger at conferences to come.

My welcome to our incoming Board members – Dawn Gross from Camarillo, California, Cristin Lockwood from Edmond, Oklahoma, and Sue Reilly from Chula Vista, California.

The recent change to the CTEBVI Policies and Procedures...

III. BOARD OF DIRECTORS

A. Composition

1. The authorized number of elected directors shall be no fewer than 12 with a maximum of 20.

...should provide for a greater diversity in the composition of our Board in the coming years.

As I mentioned in the Fall 2010 JOURNAL, not all blind and visually impaired students across the state of California are receiving their state mandated textbooks and materials in a timely manner. This untenable situation prompted the writing of a letter on behalf of CTEBVI to Governor Brown and the appropriate personnel in the state Department of Education. (see **page 7**) Other affiliate groups and organizations have

also expressed their concern to the Governor. I ask that all CTEBVI members make their voices heard on this crucial matter by writing to their respective elected officials. There is no fundamental aspect to our work more vital than the assurance that our students will have school books in their hands.

Despite the Board's efforts over the past three years to offset the prolonged economic contraction by drafting and executing conservative annual and conference budgets, our operating costs continue to outpace income. The fiscal reality reflected in our Annual Financial Statement (**please see pages 4-5**) is dramatic and sobering, in that we cannot sustain the organization past 2015 at the current rate of loss.

Since 2002, our cash on hand position has dropped 55%, from \$279,938 to \$126,305. As reflected in our Financial Statement, more than 50% of these funds are dedicated. Membership dues, donations, and conference income comprise our sole sources of revenue. The ongoing membership drives are beginning to show results as we look to expand our base to include parents and students, however 2010 income from active membership has dropped 40% from that of 2006. While our dues and conference registration fees have remained intentionally low, we will have to increase these rates to recover this deficit if membership and conference attendance is unable able to keep pace. As an additional cost cutting measure, the Board of Directors has reduced the quarterly JOURNAL to a tri-annual publication (**see Conference News & Announcements on page 16**).

Membership and conference attendance would stabilize this situation. While most years our conferences have operated at a loss, last year's conference in Oakland, in spite of the difficult economy, realized a higher profit than any other in more that ten years. Clearly, we can turn this around. As those of you who receive this JOURNAL are members in good standing, I ask that you continue to keep your membership current, make copies of this page to pass on to potential new members and to those whose membership may have lapsed, and above all plan to attend conference regularly over the next few years.

The continuation of our 52-year-old organization is in your hands.

Grant Horrocks

Letter to the Governor

May 9, 2011

The Honorable Governor Jerry Brown
State Capitol, Suite 1173
Sacramento, California 95814

RE: Equal Access to Textbooks for Blind and Visually Impaired Students in California Public Schools

Dear Governor Brown:

Over the past several years, many blind and visually impaired students in the California public school system have not received all of their required state adopted textbooks in braille and large print formats. Along with many affiliated organizations across the state, we are concerned that this situation will not only continue, but may in fact worsen.

If this should come to pass, California students who are blind and visually impaired will be denied equal access to the textbooks provided to their peers who are not visually impaired. This would represent a violation of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) as well as other statutes listed on the California Department of Education (CDE) website.

California Transcribers and Educators for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CTEBVI) is an organization with 52 years experience representing the educational interests of blind and visually impaired students in the state of California and nationally. It is widely accepted in our industry that as recently as 2006 the Clearinghouse for Specialized Media and Translations (CSMT) goal of providing braille on demand was largely being met.

The current Reading Language Arts (RLA) textbooks were adopted in November 2008 yet the Invitation for Bid (IFB) did not come out until April of this year. At the direction of the Department of General Services (DGS), CSMT is required to accept only the lowest qualified bid from a single vendor per IFB to produce the Reading Language Arts braille and large print adoption. Previously CSMT had contracted with multiple qualified vendors for all state adoptions. As stated in Addendum 1 of IFB CN100376 pertaining to braille transcription, "This contract will be awarded to one contractor who must be able to provide all four services." Industry standards for these services (formatting, transcribing, tactiles, and proofreading), are set by the Braille Authority of North America (BANA). These standards are in place to help guarantee that blind students receive the quality braille they deserve. Ideally, samples and references demonstrating adherence to these standards should provide a criteria for awarding a contract. As we understand the IFB, no samples or references are required. The optimal timeline including embossing and distribution for producing a braille copy of one 1000-page RLA textbook is 4 to 6 months. This IFB states that there are 200 titles of textbooks and workbooks which must be completed and submitted to CDE by October 1, 2011, which is well over a month after school has resumed for many students.

Our interest is to see that every blind and visually impaired student in the state of California is provided equal access to public education through the timely production and distribution of quality alternative materials as expressly delineated in the ADA. We will give any assistance to the CDE in an effort to provide braille on demand as was achieved by the CSMT model in 2006.

Under your new administration we are hoping to see this problem addressed. Please inform us as to whom we can contact regarding this issue.

Respectfully,
Grant Horrocks, President CTEBVI
siloti@sbcglobal.net
818-730-2646

Donna Coffee 2012 Youth Scholarship

CTEBVI sponsors the Donna Coffee Youth Scholarship in honor of Donna's exceptional service to our organization and to the visually impaired in California. The award is to be used to promote the academic and social development of a California student. The prize, worth up to \$1,000, will be given to the successful candidate. The Donna Coffee Youth Scholarship Committee will select the recipient based on the criteria approved by the Board. The criteria are as follows:

Award: The Donna Coffee Youth Scholarship will be awarded in the amount up to \$1,000 per year. One or more applicants may participate in the award. Award recipients will have their names and the year of their award inscribed on the permanent plaque.

- **Process:** Application materials will be distributed through the *JOURNAL* and the web site: www.ctebvi.org. **Applications are due to the committee by January 27, 2012.** The winner(s) will be selected by consensus of the Committee, and notified by February 10, 2012.
- **The inscribed plaque and cash award will be presented at the Conference.**
 - a. The award recipient and parents shall be invited as guests.
 - b. The nominating person will take part in the presentation.
 - c. The award will be presented at a general meeting selected by the Conference Chair.
- **Selection: Criteria for selection will be based solely upon:**
 - a. The submitted application of the nominations, letters of support, and the student's application. Applications may be submitted in the medium or media the student chooses.
 - b. The consensus of the committee that the student created a plan that is complete and executable and will further his/her individual growth.
 - c. Duties of the recipient(s): recipient(s) shall submit a report of the outcome of the proposal at the succeeding Conference.

Applications for the 2012 scholarship must be received by January 27, 2012, and sent to:

**Donna Coffee 2012 Youth Scholarship
CTEBVI
741 North Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90029-3594**

Electronic submission of the application is preferred, but not required.

I. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS for the Nominating Teacher, Transcriber, and/or Orientation and Mobility Specialist

- 1) In less than two double-spaced typewritten pages, explain why you believe the student will benefit from his/her proposed project/activity.
- 2) The application and use of funds must be approved by the student's parent or legal guardian.
- 3) Fill out the application form completely, sign and date.

Student Name: _____

Student Address: _____

Student Telephone Number: _____

Student Email: _____

Student Date of Birth: _____

Student Grade Level: _____

Student is Blind or Visually Impaired: _____

Parent Name: _____

Parent Telephone Number: _____

Parent Email: _____

School/District: _____

School Address: _____

Name of Teacher of the Visually Impaired: _____

Nominator Name: _____

Nominator Email: _____

Nominator Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

II. APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS for the Student

- 1) In an essay of no more than two double-spaced typewritten pages, explain why you deserve the Donna Coffee Scholarship.
- 2) Parents must approve the application and the use of funds by signing the application.

I approve of the Donna Coffee Youth Scholarship 2012 application and use of funds for the project/activity that my child has proposed.

Parent Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Completed application must be received by January 27, 2012.

Katie Sibert 2012 Memorial Scholarship

The purpose of the scholarship is to foster the acquisition and improvement of skills necessary to provide high quality educational opportunities to visually impaired students in California. In a typical year, the Katie Sibert Committee awards \$3,000 divided among qualified applicants.

These scholarships may be used to attend CTEBVI conferences, provide training, purchase books, materials and/or equipment. Scholarships awarded must be used as stated in the application. Winners will be notified by February 1, 2012.

Katie Sibert was a charter member of CTEVH (now CTEBVI). She began teaching elementary grades in the 1930s before becoming a resource room teacher and coordinator of programs for students with visual impairments for Stanislaus County. During the summers, Katie prepared teachers at San Francisco State, the University of Minnesota, Columbia University, and Portland State. She published and presented in many venues. In 1960, she was awarded the Winifred Hathaway Teacher of the Year Award for the National Society for the Prevention of Blindness. Katie retired from teaching in 1971. After her retirement, she consulted with many schools in the U.S. and internationally (including Denmark and Portugal), and developed materials for APH.

QUALIFICATIONS

- All applicants must be current members of CTEBVI.
- **Transcribers** must be actively transcribing.
- **Educators** must have a credential in the education of students with visual impairments or be enrolled in a program to earn such a credential.
- **Para-educators** must be actively supporting the educational and literacy needs of children with visual impairments.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

- Completed application packet.
- Cover letter describing the applicant's qualifications and/or experience in transcribing or educating the visually impaired. Two current (within the past 12 months) letters of recommendation as follows:

Transcribers must have two letters of recommendation from their group or agency.

Educators must have two letters of recommendation (e.g., principal, college professor)

Para-educators must have two letters of recommendation (e.g., TVI, regular education teacher)

Letters should address the following areas:

- Professional and/or volunteer experiences of the applicant, including those with visually impaired or other disabled persons
- Community involvement of the applicant
- Certificates or credentials held by the applicant
- Personal interests, talents, or special skills of the applicant
- Honors or awards received by the applicant

**KATIE SIBERT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
2012 APPLICATION**

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State & Zip Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Name of agency, school system, or transcribing group with which you are affiliated:

Please answer the following:

1. The total amount of scholarship support requested is: _____

2. Describe how the scholarship will be used. Include a breakdown of expenditures; e.g., training, registration costs, transportation, lodging, texts, materials, equipment, etc.:

DEADLINE: January 16, 2012

The applicant is responsible for sending the complete application packet to:

**CTEBVI KATIE SIBERT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP
741 North Vermont Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90029-3594**

**Marie Hadaway, Chair
Email: dandog1944@yahoo.com**

Gifts and Tributes

OUR GRATITUDE AND THANKS TO ALL THOSE WHO SUPPORT CTEBVI THROUGH GIFTS AND TRIBUTES

<u>General Fund</u>	<u>Donna Coffee Fund</u>	<u>Katie Sibert Fund</u>
Kristi Barrella	Kristi Barrella	Kristi Barrella
Sonja Biggs	Sonja Biggs	Sonja Biggs
Nikki Blackburn	Nikki Blackburn	Nikki Blackburn
Martha Castiglia	Leslie Burkhardt	Leslie Burkhardt
Diane Coelho-Martin	Kathy Dempsey	Kathy Dempsey
Kathy Dempsey	Dawn Gross	Frances Dibble
Frances Dibble	Danielle Hawthorne	Joy Efron
Dawn Gross	Carol Morrison	Dawn Gross
Michelle Gutierrez	Peggy Schuetz	Danielle Hawthorne
Danielle Hawthorne	Sandy Staples	Eileen Howard
Cristin Lockwood		Terry Keyson
Carla Miller		Jamie Dote-Kwan
Suzanne Ostby-Phillips		Peggy Schuetz
Marcy Ponzio		Sandy Staples
Peggy Schuetz		
Wayne Siligo		
Sandy Staples		
Vanessa Stenz		
Leslie Thom		
Fredna Van Dellen		
Sharon Von See		
Fran Whipple		
Dewi Wilson		
Jacqueline Wise		
Henry Wong		



Contributions to the CTEBVI Gifts and Tributes Fund
will be used to improve services to persons who are visually impaired.

Your Name and Address for acknowledgment:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip/Route Code: _____

In honor of: _____

In memory of: _____

May we please know date of death: _____

Let us know your wishes:

- Please direct contributions to the KATIE SIBERT MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND
- Please direct contributions to the DONNA COFFEE YOUTH SCHOLARSHIP FUND

All contributions to CTEBVI are tax deductible. Receipt available upon request.

Make checks payable to CTEBVI and mail them to:

CTEBVI Gifts and Tributes
Peggy Schuetz
10675 Harris Road
Auburn, CA 95603
peggys@juno.com



CTEBVI Membership Application and Renewal Form

CTEBVI membership dues are for the calendar year. Any dues received after October 1 will be applied to the following year. Members receive the CTEBVI JOURNAL.

For your convenience, you may log onto www.ctebvi.org to submit the following information and make payment by credit card. Membership chair gets notified immediately and, upon request, will send an email acknowledging your charge.

Domestic or Foreign (individual or family with VI children) Membership	US \$50	\$
Student Membership (post high school – ID required at conference)	US \$25	\$
Life Membership (check only – no on-line payment)	US \$500	\$
I would like to make the following donation(s):		
• General Fund		\$
• Katie Sibert Memorial Fund		\$
• Donna Coffee Youth Scholarship Fund		\$
Thank you for your donation. Receipt available upon request.		
TOTAL		\$
CHARGE CARD NUMBER:		
EXP DATE:	CVV2:	
Signature (if using your credit card)		

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

AFFILIATION/COMPANY (if applicable) _____

TELEPHONE _____ (necessary if using your credit card)

EMAIL _____ (necessary if requesting virtual JOURNAL delivery)

Please circle your choice of how you want to receive the CTEBVI JOURNAL.

It is available to members online and in the following formats:

Print	Braille	Email *	* You will be notified when the latest JOURNAL is available on our website. Issues are available in both .pdf and .doc formats
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Please help us know our membership by *circling* all descriptions that apply to you.

VI Educator	O&M Instructor	Dual certification	Transcriber	Active
Parent(s) of VI student	Proofreader	Student	Paraprofessional	Retired
Other (e.g. Librarian, Administrator, Counselor, Vendor, Consumer)				

Please send this form with payment to:

Judi Biller, CTEBVI Membership Chair
1523 Krim Place, Oceanside, CA 92054
ctebvi.membership@gmail.com

In Memoriam



RUTH J. HUGHES



Ruth Hughes loved and was dedicated to braille transcribing. She was a long-time member of San Fernando Valley Braille Transcribers, and volunteered many years of service to Braille Institute, where she transcribed anything from children's books to math textbooks, and everything in between. Ruth easily made the transition from a braille writer to braille on a computer. She joined CTEBVI in 1963 and was a life member.

Another big part of Ruth's life was her association with Linus Pauling and the work she did for him at CalTech. If you'd like to read more about this interesting side of her life, visit the CalTech website, oral histories archives, and do a search for "interview with Ruth J. Hughes."

Ruth Hughes died at the age of 94 – a good age for a transcriber.



2011 CTEBVI CONFERENCE NEWS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOME TO THE FOLLOWING NEW MEMBERS OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS:

Vicki Garrett

Dawn Gross

Cristin Lockwood

Sue Reilly

CTEBVI would like to thank the departing members for their selfless service over the years, and their continued support in the future.

You will also note on the Board of Directors page at the back of the *JOURNAL* under Committee Chairs that we now have several vacant positions. CTEBVI would also like to thank the outgoing chairpersons for their dedicated service to the organization.

If you are interested in volunteering your time to support CTEBVI, please consider becoming a chairperson for one of these committees. You may contact Judi Biller at ctebvi.membership@gmail.com.

* * * * *

CHANGE IN JOURNAL PUBLICATION

Beginning with 2011, the decision was made to reduce the number of publications per year of the CTEBVI *JOURNAL* from four to three. This is partly due to financial considerations and the need to reduce the organization's expenses. You can expect to receive the three issues approximately mid-January, mid-May, and mid-September. The distribution schedule is based on the following requirements: The January issue comes before conference with notification of impending changes in Bylaws and Policies, Call for Nominations, decisions made at the October Board Meeting, and any other matters that will need membership vote at conference.

The May issue comes after conference and will provide any announcements regarding member-voted changes, new Board of Directors members (if any), and any other conference news of interest.

The September issue will provide additional announcements of Nominations, Call for Workshops, and any other pertinent conference items that require membership notification prior to conference.

Another change in publication is the audio CD is no longer being offered as an option for receiving the *JOURNAL*. Your choices now are Print, Braille, or Virtual (download/read from website).

If you are currently receiving the *JOURNAL* in print and would prefer to receive it virtually, please contact Judi Biller, Membership Chairperson, at ctebvi.membership@gmail.com. From the website you will have the choice of formats for viewing/downloading issues of a .pdf or .doc file, or screenreader.

* * * * *

FRED SINCLAIR AWARD

A highlight of the banquet at Conference this year was the presentation of the Fred Sinclair award to Mike Cole. This award is given to a visually impaired person who has done outstanding work in the field of services for other visually impaired persons. It was my great privilege to be asked to present this to Mike, and I gave some anecdotes of his activities.

What I didn't talk about were his years of work in education of individuals at the Living Skills Center in San Pablo (now the Hatlen Center) and the Orientation Center for the Blind in Albany. In his own quiet way, the man with the smile in his voice has influenced many others to succeed. It was very evident of the esteem with which others in the field hold him when we saw the large numbers of individuals who came to see Mike receive the award.

Well deserved!
Ann Kelt

* * * * *

SAYING FAREWELL

I wish to thank the Board for having me serve as Foreign Language Specialist this past year. The new "owner" of this title – Saralyn Borboa – is well qualified to do the job, and I know she will do very well. And, with the soon-to-arrive revised BANA Foreign Language Manual, she will be ready to answer all your questions.

Best wishes to Saralyn.

Ann Kelt

* * * * *

SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS FOR 2011

The following Scholarship Awards were presented at the 2011 CTEBVI Conference:

Donna Coffee Youth Scholarship: Desmond Delgadillo

Katie Sibert Scholarship: Gloria Grant and April Pair

Congratulations and good luck to these deserving students.

* * * * *

CTEBVI DISTINGUISHED MEMBER AWARD

At this year's conference it was an honor to be able to present the CTEBVI Distinguished Member Award to Dr. Stuart Wittenstein.

Dr. Wittenstein is well-known not only in association with CTEBVI, but also throughout the braille community. He is a life member of CTEBVI, served on the Board of Directors for six years, including four years as Secretary. He is a published author in the areas of assessment, transition, braille literacy, legislative issues, and the need for specialized services for individuals with visual impairments, and has held positions of president and chairperson for various organizations. Dr. Wittenstein is currently superintendent of the California School for the Blind.

Congratulations to Dr. Wittenstein on receiving this well-deserved award.

Infant/Preschool

Beth Moore and Sue Parker-Strafaci, CTEBVI Infant/Preschool Specialists

LITERACY STARTS NOW:

A few thoughts on the importance of concept development and early literacy

A young child of two and a half sits on the floor with her book, feels the braille on the page and chooses the word "bumpy," to describe this interaction. This amazing realization came about as result of her parent's belief in providing a language rich environment, and an early intervention team that supported their values. Concept development leads to language, which leads to early literacy, which is the cornerstone for learning.

The authors of this article appearing in *Teaching Exceptional Children*, made this point:

"An even more significant issue related to emergent literacy for young children with visual impairments is the development of meaningful concepts through essential life experiences (Finello, Hanson, & Kekelis, 1992). Because children with visual impairments are restricted in their frequent, spontaneous, incidental access to the things and events in their world, their information about these items is limited, inconsistent, or fragmented (Ferrell, 1997)." By Sandra Lewis, Associate Professor and Coordinator, Program in Visual Impairment, College of Education, Florida State University, and Joan Tolla, Orientation and Mobility Specialist, Tift and Irwin County Schools, Georgia.

Without the continued tactile, auditory and a language rich exposure to concept development, young children who are blind or visually impaired will be at risk for limited understanding of their world, which will complicate their ability to develop functional literacy skills. This being said, a trip to the beach coupled with telling the story of their experiences, allows young children to more fully understand and relate their understanding of the concepts of hot sand and cold water. It makes the concepts of smooth and rough come alive through exploring the feeling of sand on their feet or a water-worn shell rubbed by their fingers. They can experience the soft sound of a nearby insect or the loud sound of the crashing waves.

The following suggestions from *On the Way to Literacy* (AFB, Wright and Stratton, 2007) offer steps to support concept development:

- Involve children in early routines.
- Pair hands-on experiences with language.
- Encourage active exploration of all sorts of things.
- Build on children's strengths to enable them to take the next step in their learning.
- Provide extra support for key concepts that underlie many other concepts.
- Plan for complete experiences and think in terms of networks of concepts.
- Provide open-ended play materials.
- Provide a variety of materials that lend themselves to sorting and categorizing.
- Provide materials and support for pretend play and symbolic play.

As we continue in the process of providing support for concept development we need to keep some key points in mind. We need to remember that language is the link to making concepts understandable. Through descriptive language we can point out likenesses and differences, for example, which relates one idea to another. We also have to remember that concept development is fluid and that it is subject to change over time as we acquire new information. Take time to give children and/or students the experiences and language they need to make sense of their world.

Teaching Exceptional Children, Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 22-28, Jan/Feb 2003, with permission from the Council for Exceptional Children, www.cec.sped.org.

On the Way to Literacy (AFB, Wright and Stratton, 2007)

CONFERENCE AND CONSTERNATION

I need to address two issues: the first being how important it is to attend conference; and the second is the shabby treatment of our teachers.

I had several great conference experiences this year. If you attended, you know what I mean. And if you didn't make it, we all missed you.

I'd like to share a story with you. A few years ago Cristin Lockwood, a transcriber for Transcribing Mariners, brought her husband Mike to one of our conferences. He subsequently became interested in helping his wife, and was amazed at how quickly he could create tactile graphics using a computer. Up to now, the Tiger embosser has been in the forefront for creating tactile graphics which have been quite impressive, however, the braille dots were not comparable to the text embossers.

The story continues . . . At this year's conference, Enabling Technologies introduced a new embosser, the Phoenix. This embosser utilizes two different embossing systems at the same time. One is for graphics and the other produces real braille dots like a Romeo embosser. Tony Schenk, the owner of Enabling Technologies, pointed at the Phoenix and said, "Is that what you wanted?" When asked what he meant, Tony said I had talked with him at a conference in 2009 addressing the need for a different embosser to move to the next level of computer graphics. He said he went home and told his development department to design what "Bob wanted". As I was standing there, totally dumbfounded, I noticed Mike Lockwood and Tony were discussing modifications and strategies. That's when I realized that all these years the vendors have been coming to CTEBVI conferences not only to sell products, but also to find out our needs, as we are their product research department. So, when we say we missed you, we are really saying we missed your input into the next generation of "stuff" in our world.

Second article: My consternation over the plight of teachers. Now that our politicians have spent us into a hole, their answer is to cut the number of teachers and deprive our future of an educated population. Should our children suffer for the politicians' inability to run this country? Just because they had to have \$57 hammers and \$200 toilet seats, my grandchildren are supposed to grow up illiterate?

In past articles I talked about being a transcriber, and it just so happens I am also a college teacher/coordinator. The week before attending conference, the college administration asked me to identify teachers/programs that could be eliminated to compensate for the reduction in federal funding. I suggested they reduce the number of Vice-Chancellors and cut out a few Dean's positions, and increase compensation to our teachers. They told me to take some time to reconsider the ramifications, and they didn't appreciate my attitude.

We need to back our teachers NOW! Write to your legislators and congressional leaders and suggest they cut their staff and keep our teachers. A congressional intern didn't teach me to read or do math. And sorry if I stepped on anyone's toes, but if you can read this article THANK A TEACHER!

A **determinant of a matrix** represents a single number. We obtain this value by multiplying and adding its elements in a special way. We can use the determinant of a matrix to solve a system of simultaneous equations.

For example, if we have the (square) 2×2 matrix:

$$\begin{pmatrix} 5 & 7 \\ 2 & -3 \end{pmatrix}$$

The determinant of this matrix is written within vertical lines as follows:

$$\begin{vmatrix} 5 & 7 \\ 2 & -3 \end{vmatrix}$$

Braille representation of the determinant calculation:

$$\begin{vmatrix} 5 & 7 \\ 2 & -3 \end{vmatrix} = 5 \times (-3) - 7 \times 2 = -15 - 14 = -29$$

Braille representation of the matrix elements:

$$\begin{matrix} 5 & 7 \\ 2 & -3 \end{matrix}$$

Braille representation of the determinant result:

$$-29$$

Braille representation of the matrix elements (repeated):

$$\begin{matrix} 5 & 7 \\ 2 & -3 \end{matrix}$$

Computer-Generated Tactile Graphics

Jim Barker, CTEBVI Computer-Generated Tactile Specialist

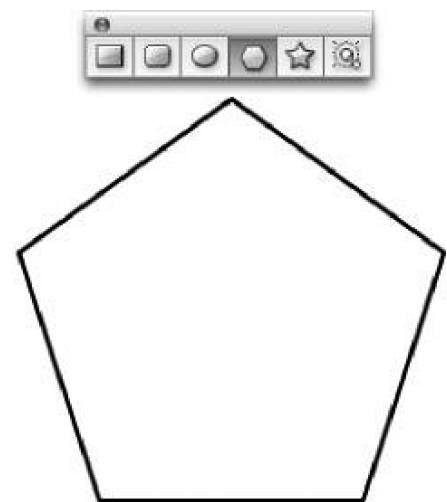
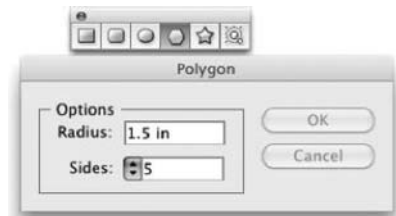
STAR-MAKER

A quick and easy way to draw polygons and stars in Adobe Illustrator.

The Polygon Tool

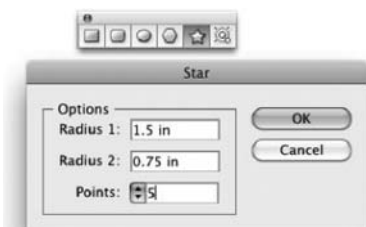
By selecting the Polygon icon and clicking where you want your drawing, you bring up this menu where you can determine the number of sides and the size. For the radius, type in the number and then "in" for inches, "cm" for centimeters, "px" for pixels and Illustrator will automatically convert that number for you.

The resulting object will be as editable as if you had drawn it with the pen tool. It will retain the aspects of whatever your fill and stroke boxes indicate. Remember: triangles are polygons too. You can draw one just as you would any other polygon.



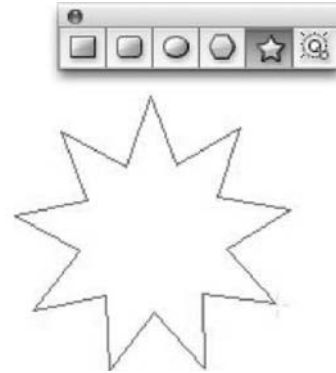
The Star Tool

The Star Tool is the same as the Polygon Tool but adds one more radius factor: the "inside" radius.



Drawing Either Without Using the Menu or Numbers

You may draw a polygon or star “on the fly” by just choosing the tool in the shape tool menu bar and click-and-dragging the shape out. Drag the pointer in an arc to rotate the object. While still holding down your mouse, press the “up” arrow button on your keyboard to increase the number of points or “down” arrow for fewer points. And, while your mouse is still down, you may hold down the SPACE BAR to position your object before it is final. And holding down the SHIFT key will adjust your object to 90° or 45°. Holding down the OPT/ALT key will draw your object from the center. To change the inner or outer radius points of a star (again, while still holding down the mouse), size the object to where you want the inner radius to be, then hold down the CMD/CTRL key on your keyboard. The inner radii will remain where they are, but the outer radii are now re-sizable.



This is where experimentation is really the best training. Have fun.

A FEW NEW TOOLS FROM MY TVI TOOLBOX

Teaching today requires being resourceful and creative. On the resourceful side, it is necessary to locate affordable software and hardware to meet the needs of our students. Sometimes they are free applications, while others are inexpensive but serve a variety of functions. On the creative side, it is helpful to think outside the box and consider how products might be used to meet the individual or specific needs of our students. This may require suggesting minor modifications to the software or hardware companies. Communication with developers in the form of feedback or suggestions is often welcome. They appreciate feedback and will consider recommendations if they will benefit our students. I made suggestions regarding two of the products below and found the developers to be very receptive to the ideas and I hope you will consider doing the same.

Sammy Says

Among my students, there is a wide range of academic abilities and they all seem to have one thing in common: they enjoy creating recordings and listening back to them! Recording software can be used as a means of improving social skills, increasing reading fluency, or simply retelling stories. Sammy Says is a Windows based program that allows kids to record stories as clips and combine (publish) them together as one MP3 file at the end. The program is simple to use and it is amazing how it will draw students out of their shells to construct or retell stories. Students enjoy this process, but you will find that they enjoy adding the sound effects even more. Students can add sound effects such as crowd noises, cartoon characters, and music to their stories making it fun to create. Sammy Says is free software and is perfect for use with students of all abilities. If you are interested in hearing one that a student of mine made, check out the link below. This student has autism and retells a story about a trip to In-N-Out:

<http://dl.dropbox.com/u/6994999/going-to-in-and-out.mp3>. Sammy Says is developed by the same people that wrote Hark the Sound and can be downloaded at: <http://code.google.com/p/samisays/>.

Power Chord Keyboard (PCK)

I purchased a PCK from Exceptional Teaching to accompany the SAL 2 software. It is a USB keyboard that looks similar to a BrailleNote. It has keys 1-6, a back space, a return, and a spacebar. I found that this keyboard works well with the SAL software, but it was great to see it work with other applications. You simply plug the USB cable into a computer and it works. There are no drivers to install. It works well with a variety of applications such as:

- Math Flash: Perfect for answering math facts and inputting the answers using Nemeth Numbers.
- TypeAbility: The lessons designed for the QWERTY keyboard can be practiced using the PCK, students just write them in braille! It is possible to create braille lessons, save the files, and use them with each of your students. It will be possible to share those lessons with other teachers with Version 4 of TypeAbility!
- Talking Teacher: Typing lessons and games are accessible using the PCK.
- Word Processing: Using the PCK is good for writing in uncontracted braille. When using the keyboard for word processing, it is important to note that the PCK uses computer braille input. I was concerned this was going to be an issue; however, the students don't care about the minor differences, they just like using it.

The PCK is very portable and can be used with a laptop computer. This is a valuable tool for itinerant teachers for braille lessons on the go. I found it also works well with JAWS, Window Eyes and the free screen readers too (such as NVDA and System Access Keys for K12). The PCK is \$219 and is available from Exceptional Teaching. You can find more information at: <http://exceptionalteaching.net/pochbrke.html>.

Jarte–The Free Accessible Word Processor!

Students who use Windows based computers at home and school may be interested in Jarte. It is a full featured word processor that runs well on desktop, laptop, and even netbook computers. It can be installed on the hard drive or be used portably from a USB flash drive. It functions well with each of the popular screen readers and it has the same feel as Microsoft Word. Jarte is a typical word processor that has the ability to open and save to RTF, DOC, and TXT formats. It also has a built in spell checker that is easy to use. If there is access to the internet, students can look up the definitions of words on an online dictionary. Pressing control-d launches an internet browser and the word is automatically looked up using wordweboonline.com. If the definition for another word is needed, there is an edit box available. It is possible to access definitions, examples of the word's use, thesaurus entries, and information from Wikipedia.com.

Another helpful feature of Jarte is the ability to send a document that is opened as an email message. Simply go to the file menu and choose send and the choice can be made to send the file as an email message or an attachment. If the choice is an email message, the contents of the file will be placed in the body of the email message. If the choice is made to send as an attachment, then the current file will be attached to the email message. Of course, this means that a student needs to have access to an email account and password to send it.

I find the above tools to be valuable additions to my classroom toolbox and I hope you find them of use as well. If you have any suggestions to improve the tools you are using, consider providing feedback to the developers. You may see those changes being made making them even more useful for all our students. If you have questions about the above products or suggestions for future articles, do not hesitate to contact me at keithchristian@roadrunner.com. I appreciate your feedback.

WHAT'S SO SPECIAL ABOUT SPECIAL SYMBOLS?

The Special Symbols page is a preliminary page located following the title page and dedication page in a braille volume. But what is its purpose? And what makes it so special?

The special symbols page is used as an aid to assist the braille reader in recognizing braille symbols that are used infrequently. These symbols do not include composition signs or punctuation. The symbols listed on this page may be numerous or they may consist of only a few symbols. Each literary work is different and therefore, each special symbols page will be unique to the literary work that is being transcribed. The special symbols page is placed in each braille volume and lists the symbols used throughout and the order in which they are encountered in **that** volume. The symbols that should be included on a Special Symbols page include:

- Accent symbol (and symbols used in foreign words and phrases such as non-Latin letter indicator)
- Asterisk
- Ditto mark
- Line indicator
- Page number repetition or omission symbols
- Print symbol indicator
- Reference indicators
- Poetic scansion and stress symbols
- Boldface indicator
- Termination indicator
- Transcriber's note symbol (only when the termination symbol is used in the same volume)
- Symbols from other codes such as the Computer Braille Code symbols used in electronic addresses
- Any symbols especially devised or assigned special usage by the transcriber
- Symbols for the crosshatch, copyright, ampersand and other infrequently used symbols (Familiar symbols such as the dollar sign need not be listed.)

With the most recent changes to the literary braille code (BANA Update 2007), nearly every student who submits a certification manuscript will have to include a Special Symbols page. Most literary works include the copyright symbol and, as a new symbol, it must be listed on a Special Symbols page.

When preparing a special symbols page, follow these simple steps:

1. Begin a new braille page and center the heading SPECIAL SYMBOLS USED IN THIS VOLUME on lines 3 and 4, followed by one blank line. Line 1 is your running heading.
2. If more than one page is required, start a second page with the heading SPECIAL SYMBOLS (cont.) centered on line 2, *without a blank line following*. List the symbols in the order found in that volume.
3. Use a list format, beginning each symbol in cell 1 followed by its name according to the wording in the text. When names are not self-explanatory, give a description of the symbol's function or a brief description of the print sign.
4. When three or more symbols fall into a category, group them together under an appropriate cell-5 heading and place on the first page. Miscellaneous symbols are grouped under the heading **Other Symbols**.
5. Begin all runover lines in cell 3.

SPECIAL SYMBOLS USED
IN THIS VOLUME

Computer Braille Code Symbols

- ⠠⠠ beginning computer code symbol
- ⠠⠨ ending computer code symbol
- ⠠ colon
- ⠠ slash

Greek

- ⠠ (2) non-Latin letter indicator, precedes a Greek letter
- ⠠ (56) letter indicator, precedes a Greek word or ends a Greek passage
- ⠠⠠ (56, 56) double letter indicator, precedes a Greek passage of more than three words

Other Symbols

- ⠠⠠⠠ copyright symbol
- ⠠⠠⠠ slash between words
- ⠠⠠⠠ ampersand
- ⠠⠠⠠ (6, 3) termination symbol
- ⠠⠠⠠ (6, 3) transcriber's note symbol

Music in Education

Richard Taesch, CTEBVI Music Specialist

Special Features in this Issue:

- * Teaching Orchestra and Band Music Formats
- * **New:** Featured Articles and Announcements; MENVI Reprints
- Hieroglyphic Braille

TEACHING ORCHESTRA & BAND MUSIC FORMATS

Simple band music will often encompass braille issues well beyond what early level students may have studied at a given point in their work. Orchestra “charts” may require some clarifications regarding formats and signs not yet encountered. Some of the basic components that must be addressed with band or orchestra part playing are:

1. Multi-measure rest sections
2. Special rehearsal sections (letters or measure numbers) enclosed between word signs
3. Tempo and mood changes shown on centered free lines
4. Divisis shown as *in-accord* parts
5. Dynamic signs and word-sign expressions
6. First and Second Endings
7. Time signature changes during a piece
8. *Dal Segno* and *Da Capo* repeats
9. Coda sections
10. Repeated sections, and those shown with lower-cell numbers
11. Nuances: staccatos; accents; etc.
12. Irregular rhythm groupings; triplets etc.

Following is a short band part for Trumpet called, *Experimental*. Signs in this music that may easily be quite new for an early braille reader suddenly placed into a school orchestra environment are taken from the list shown above.

- (5) Dynamics preceded by braille word signs

mf = *mezzo forte* = medium loud

p = *piano* = soft

pp = *pianissimo* = extremely soft

f = *forte* = loud

Decrescendo (print “lesser than” *hairpin* sign) = grow softer

- (11) Nuances – *staccatos*; accent
- (1) Multi-measure rests
- (2) Rehearsal section numbers enclosed within word signs

You may find it quite helpful when teaching a blind student to cope with orchestra music, to place signs that are new to him or her into a kind of “*Special Symbols*” preliminary page.

Keep in mind that we are addressing a music teacher, rather than a transcriber. The signs shown below are **NOT** considered to be “*Special Symbols*” according to our code; however, they can be grouped into a kind of special preliminary page specifically for teaching purposes. For example:

SPECIAL SYMBOLS USED IN THIS TRANSCRIPTION

- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ letters *mf* – *mezzo forte* – preceded by the braille word sign, dots 345
(play this segment in a medium loud volume)
- ⠠⠠ (dots 236) *staccato* sign (play the note with a very short attack)
- ⠠⠠⠠ accent sign (this note is played louder than normal)
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ measure six enclosed within word signs (indicates a special rehearsal section)
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ multi-measure rest (indicates four consecutive measures of rest)
- ⠠⠠⠠ letter *p* – *piano* (play softly)
- ⠠⠠⠠ *decrescendo* preceded by the braille word sign (grow softer)
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠ letters *pp* – *pianissimo* (extremely soft)
- ⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ measure thirteen rehearsal indication
- ⠠⠠⠠ letter *f* – *forte* (loud)
- ⠠⠠⠠ (dots 5, 25) print page turn

Take note that the special braille signs under discussion have been highlighted in the facsimile first trumpet part.

EXPERIMENTAL

First Trumpet

FEATURED ARTICLES and ANNOUNCEMENTS!

MENVI – Music Education Network for The Visually Impaired

In a prior issue of our MENVI news journal, our printing service was unaware that braille fonts needed to be installed in a computer in order to reproduce facsimile braille. The result was no less than embarrassing for yours truly, as only ASCII appeared in place of braille examples (sigh). But we musicians have learned to “fake” quite well, and a very interesting discussion resulted. Once it was clear to members that they didn’t need to learn a new *hieroglyphic* braille code, the following discussion was extremely informative.

[Edited from MENVI News Journal, Issue 32. Used here with permission.]

The question sometimes arises as to why some transcribers prefer to braille their files with direct six-key entry, while others use automatic translation followed with manual formatting and proofreading. Personal preference seems to prevail in most cases; some may choose direct entry if it is more efficient for them, whereas others may use automation where vigilant code awareness is distracting, or may prove troublesome for them.

As to proofreading, there is no escape no matter which method you use – errors are errors, and can occur in everyone’s work. The article on proofing one’s braille with the computer ASCII text versus actual reading of the on-screen braille brought this wonderful article by Richard Dortch, President of *Valley Braille Service*. (www.valleybraille.com).

PRESS RELEASE:

"In reading the article in the last MENVI News Journal concerning reading ASCII, we at Valley Braille Service [would like to add that we] train our transcribers to read braille in ASCII, as well as with dots.

"This system seems to be faster for proofreading, and once ASCII is learned it is definitely more efficient and saves a great deal of time. Most of our Nemeth [mathematics code] transcribers read their work in ASCII and find it quicker to proof their work. Some of our literary/textbook transcribers can even type in ASCII without using the six-key method. When I do braille music, I six-key, but it's all done in ASCII. I use MegaDots™ braille [transcription/translation] program for this purpose, and have modified a style sheet for music.

"At the beginning of learning ASCII, it may seem difficult, but once it is mastered, you will save time; and time is money!"

Richard Dortch, Chairman of the Board
Valley Braille Service, Inc.

[Editorial Commentary:]

Thank you, Richard, for this very enlightening and interesting information! I would like to add the following to perhaps broaden this great discussion (Members, send us your thoughts too):

As has been said before, the overshadowing accent in our field has been on the issue of transcribing, and less on the educating of readers to understand what we transcribe. More music transcribers have been certified by the Library of Congress in recent years than ever before in the history of the NLS program. Such a welcome turnaround is due largely to two significant factors: (1) Our highly efficient transcriber training program headed by Karen Gearreald; (2) The dramatic and unprecedented upswing in a demand for music braille literacy in most schools and colleges in the United States and abroad. This upswing is clearly augmented by technology for increased braille production (direct or automated), and the contributions in assistive software such as the *Goodfeel*™ translation program, aiding those who may not be braillists.

Unfortunately, the training of music braille educators has not kept pace with transcriber training and increased production. There is certification for braillists, textbook specialists, Nemeth specialists, and all braille codes – but no certification of any kind exists to help train those who teach the special language of music braille.

As a lifelong educator, my personal preference for direct entry transcription is simply that of placing myself continuously in the braille environment by viewing the same medium as the braille reader. In this way, I can improve communication and develop curriculum more effectively. My eyes see what the reader's fingers see.

Diversification is essential to upgrading and improving state of the art in all fields. Thank you Richard, Andy, Karen, and to all of our specialists laboring daily to make this a better world for our braille readers!

- R. Taesch [Ed.]

TRIVIA FORUM:

True or False: The name braille / Braille must always be used with a capital "B."
[MENVI headquarters vote: False!]

This one brings some heated discussions. However, unless the word *braille* is used as Louis's proper name, at the beginning of a sentence, or as part of a formal entity or product, to use the cap with respect to braille in general, would seem as grammatically incorrect as to use a capital "P" whenever the word "print" appears. Example: "*Music braille is similar to Print music.*" (Opinions?)

True or False: The term "News Journal" is an attempt to create a sophisticated image for what is really just another (yawn) newsletter.

Webster's definition indicates that a *periodical* is simply published at regular intervals. A *journal* is defined as "*any newspaper or periodical dealing with scientific or professional matters.*" Since our MENVI news contains actual technical articles by authors and not only news, it is well defined as a "*News Journal.*"

CTEBVI Music Committee:

Richard Taesch
CTEBVI Music Specialist
(661-254-0321)
richardtaesch@menvi.org

Sam Flores
Opus Technologies
(619-538-9401)
sam@opustech.com

Grant Horrocks
SCCM Conservatory & Piano Divisions;
CTEBVI President, 2008-2012
siloti@sbcglobal.net

William McCann
President, Dancing Dots Braille Music Technology, L.P.
(610-783-6692)
info@dancingdots.com

Robert Smith
Retired Professor of Music
(541-956-8900)
rrrsmith@uci.net

Carol Tavis
Elementary School Music/Special Learners
(626-339-6979)
taviscarol@yahoo.com

Textbook Formats

Jayma Hawkins, CTEBVI Textbook Formats Specialist

THE RESULTS ARE IN! TEACHERS AND TRANSCRIBERS HAVE SPOKEN!

THE RESULTS OF THE DATA COLLECTED BY THE AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND ON CONSUMABLE BRAILLE

The American Printing House for the Blind, Inc. launched a survey on consumable braille and what it means to teachers, transcribers, and the students we serve. The results were very interesting and were recently presented at the CTEBVI conference in Oakland California.

There were 207 responses. Our first response was on 11-29-10 and the last was on 1-28-11. The professions of those who participated were as follows:

- VI teachers – 60.9% or 109
- Certified braille transcribers – 21.2% or 38
- Noncertified braille transcribers – 11.2% or 20
- Paraprofessionals – 1.7% or 3
- Teacher's assistants – 1.1% or 2
- Other – 14% or 25

93.8% of those who took the survey know what the definition of consumable is and only 1.7% did not. We received 168 responses to the definition of consumable. A few of those answers are:

- a book that students write in
- a book that can be written in and does not need to be returned
- a workbook that only one student can use because the student has written or brailled in it

65.9% or 118 people answered that they use consumable textbooks or workbooks with their students. The grade levels where consumable material is used is as follows:

- Grades K-3 – 58.7% or 105
- Grades 4-8 – 46.9% or 84
- Grades 9-12 – 30.2% or 54

58.7% or 105 people said that they have transcribed a textbook or workbook in a consumable format.

One of the most controversial areas of consumable material is how many spaces to leave for different types of answers. Of those who participated in the survey some of the answers are as follows:

How many spaces should one leave for one word answers?

- 1 line of space 34.6% or 55
- 2 lines of space 39% or 62
- 3 lines of space 11.3% or 18
- 4 lines of space 2.5% or 4

How many spaces should be left for a multiple word answer? For example: The door was open.

- 1 line of space 12% or 19
- 2 lines of space 35.4% or 56
- 3 lines of space 25.9% or 41
- 4 lines of space 9.5% or 15

How many spaces should be left for essay questions? For example: What path should the soldier have taken and why?

- 1 line of space 2.6% or 4
- 2 lines of space 1.3% or 2
- 3 lines of space 3.9% or 6
- 4 lines of space 7.8% or 12
- 5 lines of space 62.3% or 96
- More than 5 lines of space 22.1% or 34

The workshop presented at CTEBVI offered the above statistics and much discussion on consumable material and the needs of the student in this area.

This survey gave us good information and a better understanding of what is going on nationwide with consumable materials.

Foreign Language

Saralyn Borboa, CTEBVI Foreign Language Specialist

FOREIGN LANGUAGE EXERCISE MATERIAL DIVIDED BETWEEN BRAILLE PAGES

Should Foreign Language Exercise Material be divided between braille pages?

I have had many interesting discussions with different people and, of course, have heard many different opinions. Suggestions in this article are a compilation of different opinions that may be helpful to you when making your decisions.

Braille Textbook Formats and Foreign Language Guidelines are closely intertwined. In most cases the same guidelines that are listed in *Braille Textbook Formats* also apply to Foreign Language. However there are some guidelines listed in The *Interim Foreign Language Manual* that pertain specifically to foreign language material. Knowing the differences between the two manuals, and when to use which one, is half the battle.

The first reference to use should be the NBA *Interim Manual for Foreign Language Braille Transcribing*. If there are no specific rules given in the *Interim Foreign Language Manual*, the guidelines in *Braille Formats* should be followed.

Interim Foreign Language Manual 1.2.b.(2) NOTE: Whenever specific foreign language formats are not provided in this manual, it is understood that the provisions contained in ***BRAILLE FORMATS*** are applicable. ... For convenience, some sections of that Code are included in this manual to show their proper use in foreign language texts.

Back to the question ... Should Foreign Language Exercise Material be divided between braille pages? In order to answer that, we need to go to the ***Interim Foreign Language Manual*** Section 9: Exercise Material.

9.1. **General provisions.** In addition to the provisions given in ***BRAILLE FORMATS***, observe the following.

...

9.1.c. **Divided questions.** Wherever possible, avoid dividing foreign exercise materials between braille pages.

There are some specific guidelines in *Formats* that explains what exercise material should be divided between pages and how to divide it, but the *Interim Foreign Language Manual* specifically says to avoid dividing "foreign exercise material" between braille pages, if possible.

One very important factor that is often missed is that the *Foreign Language Interim Manual* Section 9.1.c. has the heading "Divided Questions" while the text refers to "exercise material." This can be a bit confusing. Are we talking about dividing questions or exercises?

It may be helpful to think of it like this:

- Exercises can consist of several questions.
- Questions can consist of a variety of different types of exercise material.
- The heading in the manual specifically says "Divided Questions."
- Section 9.1.c. most likely refers to exercise material found within a single question.

As in many cases, braille transcribers are still left to use common sense and make some educated judgement calls. Even keeping everything within a single question together on a braille page can leave a lot of unnecessary blank space, substantially increasing the total number of braille pages and volumes per book.

While making decisions ask yourself:

- What grade level is this text?
 - o Perhaps material that would be best kept on one page at a younger grade level could be divided at a college level.
- Will the reader be required to listen to an audio tape while following along with the written material?
 - o Foreign Language material often uses audio or video exercises that are completed as a class. Visual readers can glance at the exercise as a whole; braille readers can only read one cell at a time. Flipping between pages takes time and may cause the reader to fall behind. If it is a class exercise, the student will probably not have the option to repeat the exercise.
- Will the reader need to flip back and forth between pages in order to complete an exercise?
 - o In addition to an audio exercise, there may be other instances when having all the information required to complete an exercise on one braille page would be preferable.
- Is this an interpoint or single-sided transcription?
 - o Continuing information on a facing page may be acceptable, as it wouldn't be necessary to flip between pages.
 - o Continuing information on the front and back of a page would require flipping between pages.
- Does the agency I am working for have any specific preferences?
 - o Agencies may have specifications that vary slightly from the Guidelines in the *Foreign Language Interim and Formats Manuals*.
 - o Preferences often vary between agencies.

Example 1

1-19 Matemáticas. Imagine that Pedro is practicing his math facts. How would he complete each of the following? Write the missing number in Spanish.

- | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| 1. Once – _____ = dos. | 6. Dos x _____ = cuarenta. |
| 2. Treinta + _____ = noventa. | 7. Cien – _____ = cuarenta y nueve. |
| 3. Ochenta – _____ = diez. | 8. Doce ÷ _____ = dos. |
| 4. Tres x _____ = cuarenta y ocho. | 9. Once + _____ = treinta y dos. |
| 5. Quince ÷ _____ = cinco. | 10. Ocho ÷ _____ = dos. |

Example 1 does not show a question with answer choices.

Each numbered item is independent of each other. This material could be divided between pages at any point.

Example 2

Nota cultural: Los apellidos hispánicos**¿Cómo se llama?**

1. Miguel Martín Soto married Carmen Arias Bravo. Thus, their daughter Emilia's legal name is
 - a. Emilia Soto Bravo
 - b. Emilia Martín Bravo
 - c. Emilia Martín Arias
 - d. Emilia Soto Arias
2. Ángela Rebolleda Castillo married César Aragón Saavedra. Their son Francisco's name, therefore, is
 - a. Francisco Castillo Saavedra
 - b. Francisco Aragón Rebolleda
 - c. Francisco Saavedra Castillo
 - d. Francisco Rebolleda Saavedra

Example 2 shows numbered questions with answer choices.

For all grade levels it would be preferable to keep the questions and the answers together on a braille page. At the college level, it may be acceptable to follow *Braille Formats* Rule 13, Section 6.b. and Section 7.: placing the question on a page by itself, with the lettered answer choices together on the same braille page.

Example 3

2-19 Muchas preguntas. Imagine that you have just met Susana at a party and are trying to get to know her. Taking into consideration her answers, complete each question with the most appropriate interrogative word/s from the word bank. You will have to use one of the words twice.

qué cuál de dónde cómo quién dónde quiénes

- | | |
|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. ¿_____ te llamas? | 2. ¿_____ eres? |
| Me llamo Susana. | Soy de los Estados Unidos. |
| 3. ¿_____ estudias? | 4. ¿_____ estudias? |
| En la universidad. | Historia y matemáticas. |

Example 3 shows boxed vocabulary words that are to be used as answer choices for multiple questions.

It would be preferable at any grade level to keep the answer choices on the same braille page with the numbered items. This eliminates the need to flip back and forth between pages.

Example 4

1-35 Antónimos. Match the opposite adjectives from the following lists.

- | | |
|---------------------|-----------------|
| 1. ____ interesante | a. idealista |
| 2. ____ grande | b. caro |
| 3. ____ realista | c. malo |
| 4. ____ bueno | d. pequeño |
| 5. ____ tímido | e. extrovertido |
| 6. ____ barato | f. aburrido |

Example 4 shows columns to be matched.

Both of these columns will fit across the page. All the information in both columns should stay together on one braille page. This also follows *Braille Formats* Rule 7, Section 1.e.(2).

Example 5

3-18 Sensaciones. Make the most logical associations between the elements of both columns.

- | | |
|---|-------------------|
| 1. ____ En el invierno | a. tengo hambre. |
| 2. ____ En el verano | b. tengo cuidado. |
| 3. ____ Cuando no como | c. tengo miedo. |
| 4. ____ Cuando no tomo | d. tengo frío. |
| 5. ____ Cuando veo una película de terror | e. tengo sed. |

Example 5 shows columns to be matched.

These columns will not fit next to each other on a braille page. According to *Braille Formats* Rule 7, Section 1.e.(2)(c) one column will follow after the other one. Both columns should still be placed on the same page if possible.

Example 6

As you watch the video for the first time, mark any of the following cognates that you hear in Spanish. Compare the ones you checked with the lists of other students. How many did all of you mark?

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> the Andes | <input type="checkbox"/> religion | <input type="checkbox"/> the United States |
| <input type="checkbox"/> telephones | <input type="checkbox"/> latino | <input type="checkbox"/> continent |
| <input type="checkbox"/> African | <input type="checkbox"/> automobiles | <input type="checkbox"/> music |
| <input type="checkbox"/> indigenous | <input type="checkbox"/> contributions | <input type="checkbox"/> vibrant |

Example 6 shows a list words that need to be checked off while watching a video.

Keeping the list of words together on the same braille page will make it easier for the braille reader to find the words, and will eliminate the need to flip back and forth between pages.

Remember:

- The first reference should always be the *Interim Foreign Language Manual* – checking for specific guidelines that pertain to Foreign Language Material.
- The second reference should be *Braille Textbook Formats* used in conjunction with the *2007 Updates*.
- Use these guidelines to make decisions that do not break any other rules.
- Consider the grade level, how the material will be used, agency preferences, etc.

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