

Vision Educators' Network of Ontario

SHARING VISIONS NEWSLETTER Issue 10 - November 2011

Message from the Editor

Welcome to the first edition of Sharing Visions for the 2011-2012 school year. The fall has proven to be a very busy one indeed!

Planning and preparation for the upcoming Canadian Vision Teachers' Conference continues. A call for papers closed November 1st. The Organizing Committee and Subcommittees are busy finalizing details. We're all looking forward to the conference!

Susan Osterhaus returned to Ontario to train another group of teachers. Nine new teachers, representing each region of the province, came together in October. This year the focus was on Math technology. Three of the original group, trained last year, returned to join Susan's new training sessions. Subsequently, the two groups of trainers provided three workshops, each two days in length. "Math Tech" was offered twice and "Math Tools" offered once.

Congratulations to each of the trainers for sharing their passion for math and for working tirelessly to provide the cutting edge workshops that you did. The store front and carousel activities were a huge hit! Who knew that iPads would be such a wonderful tool for math? It was an honour to work with each of you!

As always, we send huge thanks to Susan for sharing her vast expertise, for the laughs, the fun and her endless energy!!

Please be sure to check out our featured students. We have an Orientation and Mobility story, "Celebrating Deafblind Awareness Month", and the 2010-2011 Resource Services Bursary Award. Congratulations to all!

Many of our students enjoyed and benefited from attending VIEWS summer camps. Camp Freedom and Braille Music Camp were full. A number of "student mentors" attended and contributed to the camps huge success.

As we near the holiday season, I wish each of you a wonderful holiday filled with family and friends.

Best wishes,

Elizabeth Dunton, Editor
Principal—Resource Services & Outreach
W. Ross Macdonald School

**Canadian Vision Teachers' Conference 2012
April 3 – 5, 2012
Richmond Hill, ON**

**CONFERENCE REGISTRATION OPENS IN
EARLY DECEMBER 2011**

Go to: www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca - Go to the right side
bar!!!

The following pages provide an introduction/overview of CVTC 2012

Pre-Conference Day April 3, 2012 8:30 am – 4:00 pm

Lunch and breaks included.

**“Meeting the Learning Needs of Students with Autism Spectrum disorders and
Visual Impairments (ASDVI)” led by Jay and Marilyn Gense**

Canadian Vision Teachers' Conference April 3-5, 2012

Conference Registration Opens at 5:00 pm on April 3, 2012; Opening Address 7:00
pm followed by 2 full days of conference proceedings on April 4 and April 5, 2012.
Lunch and breaks included.

**Keynote Addresses from Kevin O'Connor, Jessica Jones, Dr. Naomi Dale and
Dr. Alison Salt**

On-The-Town Wednesday Evening

On the evening of April 4, 2012, conference participants will have opportunities to
participate in selected activities around Toronto at their own personal cost. When
registration opens on Dec. 5, 2011, be prepared to consider the list of events and
register to reserve your spot.

Registration Information

Register by Feb. 1, 2012

Cost

- **Early Bird**: Pre and Main Conference:

Tuesday April 3-	8:00 am-4:00 pm & 6:30 pm-11:00 pm
Wednesday April 4-	8:00 am- 5:00 pm
Thursday April 5,-	8:00 am -5:00 pm
	\$360.00

- **Early Bird** Main Conference only:

Wednesday April 4-	8:00 am-5:00 pm
Thursday April 5-	8:00 am-5:00 pm
	\$250.00

Register between Feb. 2 and March 19, 2012

Cost

Regular Rate: Pre and Main Conference:
Tuesday April 3- 8:00 am-4:00 pm & 6:30 pm-11:00 pm
Wednesday April 4- 8:00 am- 4:00 pm
Thursday April 5,- 8:00 am -4:00 pm
\$410.00

Regular Rate: Main Conference only:
Wednesday April 4- 8:00 am-4:00 pm
Thursday April 5- 8:00 am-4:00 pm
\$295.00

Last Minute Pre and Main Conference Registration Rate:

Cost

(Register between March 20-27, 2012)
\$500.00

Professional Day Rates:

Cost

- Pre Conference Only

Tuesday April 3, 8:00a.m.-4:00 p.m. only
\$150.00

- Professional Day Rate:

Wednesday April 4, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
\$175.00
Thursday April 5, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
\$175.00

Parent Rates:

Cost

- Parent Pre-Conference Day Rate

Tuesday April 3, 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
\$100.00

- Parent One Day Rate

Wednesday April 4, only 8:00 a.m.-4:00 p.m.
\$100.00

-Parent and Educator Day

Thursday April 5, only 8:00a.m.-4:00 p.m.
No Charge

(Educators welcome at the Professionals rates, noted above)

-Parent Pre and Main Conference Rate

Tuesday April 3- 8:00 am-4:00 pm & 6:30 pm-11:00 pm
Wednesday April 4- 8:00 am- 4:00 pm
Thursday April 5- 8:00 am -4:00 pm
\$200.00

Accommodations

The Sheraton Parkway Toronto North Hotel and the Best Western are two connected, franchised hotels with shared conference facilities which are independently owned and operated by Parkway Hotels and Convention Centre Inc.

The 312 room Sheraton is a full service 4 diamond hotel offering luxurious rooms and Jacuzzi suites in two towers. Best Western is a 3 diamond hotel. For further information on the two hotels, please refer to: www.sheratonparkway.com

Conference participants must book their rooms directly with one of the hotels.

The above rates are in Canadian funds and are based on single or double occupancy per room per night, plus taxes. Additional persons 18 years or older are \$15.00 per night, per person. Maximum room occupancy is four persons including persons under the age of 18 years of age.

Hotel Amenities

- Complimentary Indoor & Outdoor Parking
- Complimentary internet in all guestrooms
- Complimentary use of large Athletic Club Facilities
- 20% off treatments at Caesar Spa, located in the lower level of the Sheraton Parkway Toronto North Hotel.

Conference participants who have dog guides, please book your room in the Richmond Tower, due to the convenience of the dog parking area.

<u>Guest Room Type</u>	<u>Sheraton Rate</u>	<u>Best Western Rate</u>
Standard	\$139	\$109
Corporate Jacuzzi Suite	\$149	N/A

CVTC Awards

Do you have a colleague who provides exceptional service to students who are blind or who have low vision?

Do you know someone who provides resources or support services that enhance the lives of students who are blind or who have low vision?

**TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY
TO HONOUR THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS!**
Deadline for Submission – **February 8, 2012**

Awards Available:

Excellence in Teaching

Distinguished Service Award

Visit www.yrdsb.edu.on.ca for complete details about the CVTC Awards (note: information will be posted shortly).
Further communication will be sent via e-mail.

Judy's Travels

*Submitted by Sue Blackford,
O & M Specialist, W. Ross Macdonald School, Brantford*

Judy Kurtz is an O&M success story. Judy is a 20-year-old student at W. Ross Macdonald School. She is currently in the second year of the work experience program. Her placements have been varied from working with seniors in a health care facility to working in the kitchen at our local Moose Winooski's. What makes Judy a success story? It is her determination to travel independently to her work placements.

Judy is blind and has had a kidney transplant. While she has had O&M consistently throughout her time at WRMS, she had not had the opportunity to put into practice everything that she had learned. Work experience gave her that chance. She has had three placements in the community and travelled by city bus to each of them. Any challenge that she has faced has been met with the determination that she can be successful.

As an O&M department that has watched Judy grow, we are extremely proud of her accomplishments.

Way to go, Judy!!

“Celebrating Deafblind Awareness Month”

*Submitted by Lynn Watkins, Deafblind Resource Consultant, W. Ross
Macdonald School, Brantford*

From Canadian Deafblind Association (CDBA) Ontario “Monitor” – Spring/Summer 2011

The Toronto Blue Jays provided CDBA Ontario with the opportunity to throw out the ceremonial first pitch at a recent game on May 30th to celebrate Deafblind Awareness Month.

Steffen Zimmer had the honour of making the pitch. Steffen is a nine-year-old boy with CHARGE Syndrome, and his family has been using our Children's Intervenor Services for a number of years. While he is not attending school, Steffen is without the support of an Intervenor. CDBA Ontario funds Intervenors to fill the service gaps during March Break, Christmas and the summer.

Over 160 friends, family, staff and consumers came out to support Steffen and celebrate Deafblind Awareness Month. People came from as far away as Windsor to show their support!

CDBA Ontario was featured on “A News” (Barrie channel) on multiple occasions as well as in numerous newspapers like the Barrie Examiner and the Bradford Times. CDBA Ontario is grateful to the Toronto Blue Jays organization for providing us with this unique awareness opportunity.

2010-2011 Resource Services Bursary Award W. Ross Macdonald School

Submitted by Sue Bendall, Deafblind Resource Consultant, W. Ross Macdonald School

Shawnie Snell was the recipient of the Resource Services Bursary Award for 2010-2011. Shawnie is a student served by Deafblind Resource Services at W. Ross Macdonald School.

Shawnie is an avid Sledge Hockey player, not only in the Sarnia-Lambton area, she was also named on the Ladies National Team. She has volunteered with the Sarnia Dive Club (cleaning up the waterways) and both the United Way and Cancer Society (preparing mail-outs). One of her greatest honors has been carrying the Olympic Torch as part of the Pathways Centre for Children's team for the 2010 Winter Olympics.

She has recently volunteered to be on her community Accessibility Committee and has drawn up plans and made suggestions to Doctors offices, new washrooms being built in a campground, and most recently on a college tour that needed some corrections on their accessible installations.

Shawnie is an active participant in her school being the class rep for the Wellness Committee, as well as participating in SWAT (Special Well-Acquainted Team Members) it is a club that meets at noon hour who fundraises and runs social events and is fully integrated.

In preparation for college, she would really like to get an iPad. This scholarship would really help towards paying for this device.

Shawnie works exceptionally hard for all the excellent marks she gets, overcoming many obstacles like her hearing loss, vision loss and cerebral palsy. She has a very positive attitude, which makes her an exemplary student and a joy to work with.

Mock Vote at W. Ross Macdonald School

Submitted by Mary Martin, Elementary Vice-Principal, W. Ross Macdonald School, Brantford

In June of 2011, the Ministry of Education and Student Vote proposed that W. Ross Macdonald School, in Brantford, join with them in a pilot project designed to support the participation of students who are blind/low vision in a parallel election to the Ontario Provincial Election in October 2011.

Student Vote is a non-profit, non-partisan organization dedicated to educating students about the electoral process and to creating their awareness and interest in politics. Student Vote has successfully co-ordinated parallel municipal, provincial and federal elections across Canada for the past nine years.

Student Vote provided written materials for the students at WRMS in accessible formats that complemented the Grade 5 *Social Studies* and the Grade 10 *Canadian and World Studies* curricula. They assisted and supported us in planning a program that engaged our students. As well, they co-ordinated the services of Elections Ontario in bringing accessible voting machines to the school for our students to use on voting day.

As the article below indicates, the project was extremely successful. We wish to thank everyone involved for the support and hard work they provided in both promoting and effecting the Student Vote at W. Ross Macdonald School.

Fun, fun and more fun! That pretty much sums up VIEWS summer.

Submitted by Dawn Clelland, VIEWS President

We had our VIEWS Camp Freedom, which was pretty awesome. The focus this year was cooking and, as always, helping to develop social and recreational skills. Some of the campers learned how to read a recipe and follow the instructions to create appetizing dishes. Each of the campers was provided a recipe book in the format of their choice and each went home, knowing how to prepare their own breakfasts.

VIEWS Music Camp for Braille Users was an opportunity for new and old friends to come together and get to perform individually or in groups. This year, international performer, Lesley Andrews, became the newest member of our professional staff. She became the Director of our Drama Troop. Tim Boyd, Music Teacher at W. Ross Macdonald School, did another amazing job this year as our choral director. The remainder of the music team pulled together to make it another memorable camping experience.

VIEWS Family Week at Lake Joseph was so much fun. VIEWS donated an extra boat and crew, each afternoon, so that children had more wakeboarding and waterskiing opportunities. Children had fun playing together and parents had a chance to share experiences and relax. The weather was wonderful, the water was perfect, and the connections made will last a life time. We are taking applications for the 2012 year, as this is something which VIEWS sees as a valuable experience for families. If you have a family you feel may be interested, please ask them to register as soon as possible, as it does fill up fast.

October was an extremely busy month for VIEWS. A lot of really exciting initiatives that we partnered with others on, came to fruition.

The Math Workshops were exceptional! VIEWS partnered with the Ministry of Education on this initiative, which was hosted by W. Ross Macdonald School in Brantford. We had two different workshops running, with twelve incredible Vision Teachers from throughout the province, sharing their knowledge in a very hands-on way. One was the original workshop from last year, which ran for one two-day session and the other was created this year. It was Math Tech, which included hands-on exploration of tools such as the Audible Graphing Calculator, Scientific Note Taker, Apple iPad, and Tiger Embosser. We ran two of these courses and plan on having more of both run in the future. Please let us know if you are interested in participating in one of these workshops.

Another very positive outcome of partnering was the October conference, called "Perspectives 2011 – Innovations, Knowledge and Support". This partnership between CNIB, AER and VIEWS produced this incredible conference, with so many fantastic workshops that it was almost impossible to select only one for each session. The assistive technology displays were wonderful, with some new folks, like Apple, in attendance.

VIEWS was invited by CNIB to participate in a Saturday morning program at a petting zoo just outside of Peterborough, with approximately 50 participants. What an incredible day that was! This was a hands-on opportunity for families to explore farm animals while creating connections with other families who also have children who are blind or have low vision. We met with these families, answering their questions and helping to develop a social network of communication. We shared information on opportunities and programs available throughout the province. As a result of this, some families have already benefited by enrolling their children in programs they were previously unaware of.

As a provincial support and advocacy group for children who are blind or have low vision, it is incredibly inspiring to see so many stakeholders working together, creating positive outcomes for the blind/low vision community. We all differ in our connections, abilities and opportunities, however, we are united in our goal. How enriching it has been for us to work with all of you – professionals, Ministry of Education, CNIB, AER, W. Ross Macdonald School – thank you for supporting our children, as you do.

WEBSITES TO CHECK OUT

Submitted by Fred Boer, Vision Resource Consultant,, Vision Resource Services, WRMS

Public libraries offer a wide range of materials and useful services. Most public libraries provide braille and large print materials, and many public libraries are beginning to offer electronic books (e-books) that can be downloaded to MP3 players, as well as other e-books, including e-books which combine both the text and the hardware needed to listen to the book. Johnny and his family are encouraged to visit their public library.

The e-books which are both hardware and software are about \$50.00-\$75.00.. Guelph had about 50 of each type of e-book.

Here's a link:

<http://www.playaway.com/view/>

Short Term Programs at The W. Ross Macdonald School

Low Vision Weekend – September 30 – October 2, 2011

A group of 12 adolescents participated in our Low Vision Weekend. They tested their technological skills by going on a “virtual tour” of the Lynden Park Mall on-line. Each student was given a number of tasks while navigating through the website. Later in the day the group went to the mall where they participated in an engaging and fun scavenger hunt. This scavenger hunt was designed with life skills and Orientation and Mobility in mind.

Students compared prices of the same item at different stores. They also had to find out what the most expensive item was in the jewellery store! The group used low tech items such as the monocular to read the menus in the food court.

The group then headed off to Kelsey’s for dinner.

The following highlights what the participants thought of the weekend:

By Cyndie Vanderwerf

I thought the Low Vision STP was a lot of fun because I got to learn about new programs that could help me out in the future. The programs were Evernote and the Gmail calendar. Also I got to see what different campers had for a phone. I found out that an iPhone 4 is a good choice to have for a phone because it can talk to you, make the screen bigger and have the text size go to 56. When we went to the mall and we had the scavenger hunt, I thought it was really neat and I haven’t done it before so it was cool to do. I got to learn what the most expensive jewellery in the mall was and it was \$12000 -- that is expensive! When we went to Kelsey’s for dinner, we ordered our own meal which was a cool experience. We learned how much we should tip if the service was good or bad. I thought our dinner at Kelsey’s was really good. I found the entire weekend was fascinating.

We should have STP’s because you get to learn things that you didn’t know before and also it is a time away from home that you get to meet new friends or to see your old friends. I always have an awesome time!

By Cassie Vanderwerf

The low vision STP was a lot of fun. It was a lot of fun doing the stomp kind of music and how we created a video of the music we made. I really did learn a lot this weekend, too. The kind of things I learned this weekend were about some different types of programs like the Google calendar and Google Docs. I found when we discussed about the cell phones other campers had and which ones would help everyone the most was really interesting. From that discussion, I know now what kind of cell phone I want. So the combination of learning and having fun on the weekend was great. I learned a lot and I got to have a bunch of fun too.

By Jack McCormick

Hi, my name is Jack McCormick. I have attended several short term programs at W. Ross Macdonald school. The STP's have taught me many great life skills, helped me meet great new friends, shown me computer software to help make my life easier and, last but not least, they're great fun.

From these STP's I've learned about helpful computer software programs and how to use them. I also learned how to use software programs I already had. When I learned how to use Zoomtext (a screen enlarger and reader it made my day to day computer life easier). Learning other software programs has helped me on my way to success.

The 2nd great thing about the STP's is that I have met many great long-lasting friends. My friends and I have enjoyed playing many team building games and activities in the gym. This is another great thing about the STP's.

By going to STP's, I have learned many great life skills such as, how to organize my wallet, and strategies of how to determine which coin is which. They have also helped me gain the confidence to run for student council at my high school, yes I have been elected for 2 out of 2 years at Glendale High School.

By Danika Blackstock

A few weekends ago I got to attend the Low Vision STP. It was great being able to learn about all the different types of technology out there that will help with keeping school notes and assignments organized. We also got the chance to go out for dinner where we were responsible for ordering for ourselves and calculating a tip, which was taught earlier in the day. We also went to the mall for a scavenger hunt. We had to solicit aid and advocate for ourselves. Even though we had a jam packed weekend full of learning, we had time to go swimming, play goal ball and just hang out with everyone. It was such a fun weekend and I am so lucky to be able to attend these programs. I can't wait for the next one!

Leadership Development for Teens

October 29 – 30, 2011

This weekend was dedicated to teens 15 and older who came together to hone their leadership skills. Twelve of these teens explored their own unique leadership skills through a number of carefully designed activities. One such activity was looking at any possible barriers to success that each had encountered. After exploring what the barriers were, participants wrote on a piece of wood. In a moving ceremony later in the day, participants broke the piece of wood and then burned them on a camp fire that night. Symbolically, each had broken and burned the barrier they had earlier identified. We look forward to future STPs with this new and wonderful group of young leaders.

Travel to STPs

Submitted by Elizabeth Dunton, W. Ross Macdonald School, Brantford

We are delighted to announce that we can now provide travel at no cost to students wishing to attend an STP and who live at a distance.

We have made arrangements with our transportation officer to use incoming flights/and buses on Fridays coming to pick up our students and to use out-going flights/and buses returning our students on Sundays. STPers can access these flights. We have flights coming from the following locations:

- Ottawa
- Pembroke
- Trenton/Kingston
- Sudbury
- North Bay
- Timmons

In addition we have bus transportation from a number of locations. To inquire about these, please contact us.

**W. Ross Macdonald School at the
9th Annual JuneFest
Mel Lastman Square
Toronto
Wed. June 15th, 2011
www.junefest.ca**

W. Ross Macdonald School Deafblind Program and Deafblind Resource Services joined our Community Partners in celebrating June as the official Deafblind Awareness Month in the Province of Ontario. JuneFest is hosted by Rotary Cheshire Homes (RCH) and Canadian Helen Keller Centre (CHKC). Mel Lastman Square in Toronto was a perfect opportunity to enjoy the outdoors, meet people and display our information booth.

It was a day for guests and participants to enjoy the BBQ, activities, music, etc., and browse through all the information booths that were set up.

“An Introduction to Deafblindness and Intervention”

Submitted by Grace Soldaat, Educational Co-ordinator, Deafblind Resource Services, WRMS

Deafblind Resource Services at the W. Ross Macdonald School in Brantford held its annual fall workshop “An Introduction to Deafblindness and Intervention” on September 28 & 29, 2011. We hosted 29 people from several school boards and agencies across the province with participants coming from as far away as Sault Ste. Marie. Participants had an opportunity to experience simulations of deafblindness using goggles and earplugs, while doing routine activities.

Participants had an opportunity to learn more about:

- What is Deafblindness?
- What is Intervention? Who are Intervenors?
- Total Communication (including calendars, experience books, visits to the Creative Communication Centre)
- Activity – Based Programming (including visits to our deafblind transition house, Snoezelen Room, and Active Room)

which helped participants to discover methods to individualize programs for specific student needs.

This year we again had the opportunity to listen to the Deafblind Program’s Bell Choir perform a variety of songs under the leadership of Amy Wark, Music Therapist. As well, a former student of WRMS was present with her intervenor to answer questions from the group about the need for Intervention to lead an independent life.

Notice of next year’s sessions will be available by mid-April 2012.

Teaching the Blind Part II Summer 2011

*Submitted by Debbie Balog, Hearing and Vision Resource Teacher,
Catholic District School Board of Eastern Ontario.*

From July 4 to July 22 this past summer, during the heat wave of up to 40 degrees, five teachers came together for Part II of the Blind and Low Vision Additional Qualification Course held on-campus at W. Ross Macdonald School, in Brantford. The course was taught by the Vice-Principal of Elementary School at W. Ross and everyone came away feeling so much more confident, knowledgeable and inspired in their work with their students.

The course was invaluable! Our instructor had us research, learn, and present back to the class, which made the three weeks pass very quickly as we prepared to present and also complete our daily Braille homework and work on other assignments.

Among other topics, we covered:

- the anatomy of the eye (including dissection of a cow eyeball – even the squeamish got beyond their squeamishness and appreciated a totally fascinating educational experience)
- eye conditions, eye diseases and syndromes which involve vision
- Functional Vision Assessments - with teaching staff from W. Ross Vision Resource Services
- Learning Media Assessments
- Functional Vision and Literacy

A real highlight was our class visit to the Lion's Dog Guide Centre in Oakville where we learned about how the dogs are raised, trained, and matched to an owner. The presentation was followed by a tour of all areas of the centre. The experience left an indelible impression as we each personally navigated a course of pylons while blindfolded, first, using a cane, then with a dog guide! This experience, in addition to the vision loss simulation done on Day One of the course in which we wore various simulation goggles to move around the school, gave context to everything we were learning in the classroom and provided us the opportunity to reflect and empathize with the daily realities of living with low vision.

Especially meaningful also, were our two high school student visitors who both have low vision conditions. They openly shared their experiences – academically and socially — at Short Term Program weekends at W. Ross Macdonald and in the integrated settings of their home school boards. We also had a chance to meet some of the participants of the VIEWS Independent Living Skills camp that was running at the same time.

Thanks to our Braille instructor for being so supportive and helping us through the intricacies of Braille (italics, footnotes, poetry) while reviewing everything we acquired in the Teaching the Blind Part I AQ course, in such a short time!

Finally, I am sure that everyone in this course would recommend the book 'Cockeyed' by Ryan Knighton of B.C, Canada. After the first few pages, everyone forgot it was assigned reading, and thoroughly enjoyed it for its humorous, yet sometimes cynical, first-hand description of losing one's vision to retinitis pigmentosa, (RP).

Everyone left at the end feeling exhausted, but excited and inspired (together with loads of handouts and extra information to use as references!)

Thank you again to Mary Martin and everyone who was involved, on behalf of Part II, Summer 2011 for a fantastic experience and a great course!

Collaborating to Learn and Teach Through Math

Professional Learning, Leadership and Resources

Compiled and Written by: Matthew Charles and the Vision Teachers Math Team

For two weeks during the month of October the Ministry of Education, in Partnership with VIEWS (Provincial Advocacy Group), hosted 2 training sessions at W. Ross Macdonald School in Brantford and welcomed a total of 64 vision resource teachers from around the province and North America.

The sessions were built around the train the trainer model which helped continue a Ministry of Education's focus to increase math skills, concepts and abilities for Blind and Low Vision students by raising the awareness of math tools and technology and connecting teachers from around the province.

During the first week of October, VIEWS and the Ministry brought together 9 Vision Resource teachers for a week long learning session under the tutelage of Math expert Susan Osterhaus from the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. These 9 teachers became part of an existing team of trained Vision Resource teachers who worked with Susan in 2010-2011 to deliver workshops on math low-tech tools used in classrooms with visually impaired students to teachers in a similar format.

Both teams combined this year to collaborate and design instructional Math centered workshops that focused on both, the use of low-tech math manipulatives, tactiles and tools, and high-tech computerized software programs. These teams delivered hands-on workshops to the additional Vision Resource during the second week of training.

Math Technology Teacher Trainers included;

Tammy MacDonald-Doran – Halton District School Board
Matthew Charles - Hastings Prince Edward District School Board
Joanne Shuttleworth - Kawartha Pine Ridge District School Board
Iris Maxwell - Lakehead District School Board
Lynda Kadey - Ottawa Carleton District School Board
Cindy Kovac - Thames Valley District School Board
Marcia McDonald - Renfrew District School Board
Kathy Robinson - Simcoe Muskoka Catholic District School Board
Carol Gear - York Catholic District School Board

Math Tools Teacher Trainers included;

Pat Bolger - Durham DSB

Maggie Batson – W. Ross Macdonald, Vision Resource Services

Kerry Fowler - Waterloo Region District School Board

Computer Lab Training and Carousel Sessions included;

- **Audio Graphing Calculator:**

Software designed to make graphing and calculations that can be done on scientific graphing calculators accessible through auditory feedback. Simple equations, functions, etc. can be entered easily into this self-voicing program that generates on screen pictures of graphs which then the user is able to access by listening. One can print, emboss or create swell graphics of the graphs created as easily as printing a document. This software can be used with all students, but is extremely beneficial to those who are Blind/Low Vision. Software is available as a 30-day free trial download or purchase at:

<http://www.viewplus.com/products/software/math/>

- **Scientific Notebook:**

This software is designed to work with the Duxbury Braille Translation software and is used by Vision Resource Teachers, Transcribers, Parents, and Support Staff to quickly and easily create Nemeth Code Math Braille. Program is useful as a computer aide for those who have low vision to complete math work, or by the classroom teachers to make worksheets, tests, and lessons that are more accessible. Software is available as a 30-day free trial download or purchase at:

<http://www.mackichan.com/licensing.net/downloadreq.aspx>

-Cindy Kovac and Tammy MacDonald-Doran

- **iPad and UDL:** A hands-on carousel station allowed participants to explore the many uses of the iPad for students. The iPad allows students with Low Vision easy magnification of PDF text books and the ability to record their answers in a number of ways including; high-contrast handwriting on the screen, keyboard entry, speech-to-text or Braille keyboard entry. The workshop also gave a quick outline of the overall built-in accessibility features of the iPad, discussing the tremendous potential and the current limitations of the device for use by students who are blind or have low vision. – Marcia McDonald

- **Talking Tactile Tablet:** The Talking Tactile tablet is a touch surface tool connected to the computer via a USB. The Talking Tactile Tablet comes with a few graphic overlays however the power comes in creating tactile overlays and programming the computer for audio feedback when parts of the graphic are touched. It has an advantage where the information about a graphic can be layered. For example a tactile graphic of a line can have points with the X,Y co-ordinates listed. A simple graphic of shapes can also list the properties of that shape. Graphic overlays can be made from your own creations using tactile materials to Sewell paper and Braille prepared graphics. - Lynda Kadey
- **Math Flash:** A fun, motivating, basic math training program. It is a self-voicing application which, by using a sound card, helps sharpen your math skills through drills and tests. It uses animated characters and high quality digitized speech along with fun responses to help make learning basic math skills enjoyable for students. Math Flash lets you configure the program in a variety of ways and it can generate drill and test material with certain predetermined criteria or your very own specific problems to present for drill and practice. Software is available as a free trial download or purchase at:
http://tech.aph.org/mf_info.htm - Iris Maxwell
- **PIAF (Pictures in a Flash):** Used in conjunction with specially designed Swell paper, this device heats up the Swell Paper in order to create raised line drawings, graphs and pictures. Printing print graphs to regular paper using Swell Braille font, photocopying the print onto Swell Paper and then passing the Swell paper through the PIAF creates perfect tactile replicas.
- **Quick Tac:**

Free software for making quick tactiles from Duxbury. This software works with most embossers and is available as a free download from the Duxbury website. A great complement to an embosser and a tactile language or math program, the "sky's the limit" software allows the user to draw on the screen using a mouse or drawing pad with stylus. Tactile drawings are made using regular Braille dots in whatever design one needs. Commonly used templates such as; multiplication and addition tables, grids, shapes, number lines, rulers, thermometers, clocks, pie charts, pictographs, x and y axis, birthday or holiday celebration cards, colouring pages, tracking sheets, games and mazes can be made, saved and shared with others to support student tactile learning needs. Software is available as a

free download at: <http://www.tactileaudio.com/QuickTac-beta1.msi>

Low Tech Tools for teaching Math concepts:

APH Hundreds Board

One of the most popular items seen during the hands-on sessions of the Math Tools workshop was the APH Hundreds Board. A great tool for primary students learning patterning, counting, addition, subtraction and multiplication, ordering and comparing numbers. This tool is of universal design, incorporating large print, Braille, visual and tactual distinctions. – Maggie Batson

Math Window

The Math Window allows for students to develop the skills and concepts related to spatial math. Problems can be presented to the student how they would be seen in print in “real-time”, allowing for the student to have access to taking up homework on the board along with their peers, or the last minute examples that have not been prepared for by the vision teacher ahead of time. The Math Window can be used as a teaching tool, or independently by the student. Peers or educators do not need to have a background in Braille to be able to use this tool with a student...making it an inclusive addition to any math class! – Maggie Batson

Participants overwhelmingly responded that they appreciated the easily understandable demonstrations and instruction, the hands on approach, introduction to new technologies, the array of choices available, the appropriate application of the tools and technology. Most of all, they valued the networking that occurred with colleagues from across the province.

Requests and changes to future workshops included; more group work and problem solving, longer workshops, more time to network amongst colleagues. Participants were also interested in the continuation and expansion of Math focused workshops in future years.

Trainers and Vision Resource Teachers wish to thank the Ministry of Education, VIEWS, W. Ross Macdonald School, Susan Osterhaus, Liz Dunton (Principal Vision Resource Services), Kerri Readings, and the rest of the staff at W. Ross Macdonald for the support, sharing and opportunity for leadership and collaboration.

Watch for possible continuation of these workshops and demonstration of math resource kits at the **CTVC** Canadian Teachers Vision

Conference, **OAME** Ontario Association for Math Educators and at an **Eastern Board** invitational workshop.

Please continue our learning and conversations at the new...

Vision Resource Teachers of Ontario Blog

A Collaborative e-Staff Room for Vision Teachers and other Stakeholders: Sharing our Best Practices – Hosted by Matthew

Charles and the Hastings and Prince Edward District School Board

<http://blogs.hpedsb.on.ca/ec/vision/>

Participants are encouraged to post your current Math activities and tools for our collective learning and student success. Subscribe to the RSS feed and dip into the stream of interconnectedness.

Abolishment of a Handicap

Submitted by Bill Morgan, Educational Assistant, W. Ross Macdonald School, Brantford

Team sport is a primer for life's lessons masquerading as a game. Sharing, determination, focus dedication and team work are all found in team sports.

These opportunities, which turn developing children into well rounded, contributing adults are not readily afforded to children who are blind or have low vision. At best some inclusionary, modified activity is used which further reinforces the difference and limitations of the student with a visual disability.

Goalball is a team sport developed more than 70 years ago to rehabilitate war blinded veterans. Since the early 1970s goalball has been an integral part of physical education at the W. Ross Macdonald School. Goalball encourages WRMS students to conduct themselves as a team working towards a common goal. This objective is shared by every team sport introduced to able bodied children. Like adding flavour to medicine, sports fulfills an important role hidden inside an engaging game.

Message Received Loud & Clear

W. Ross Macdonald School alumnus, Jeff Christy, was introduced to goalball while a student at the school. He went on to compete for Canada in 5 Paralympic Games. Jeff strongly believes in the power of goalball to teach children who are blind or have low vision the life lessons listed above. He also believes goalball is an important tool to introduce able bodied students to both the limitations and possibilities when faced with living with vision loss.

It is worth noting that Jeff attributes a large part of his current business life success to lessons learned through participation in competitive/organized sports. Jeff operates Targe Innovations Inc. His company designs, manufactures and distributes sports equipment for the blind and low vision as well as sport medicine products for all athletes and active people. One of their products is the GAPE Kit (Goalball Adaptive Phys. Ed. Kit) specially packaged and priced for use in accredited educational institutions. This product satisfies core curriculum objectives in and out of the gymnasium.

The Clear Winner

The clear advantage of the GAPE's system is:

- it has not been modified to include the child who is blind or has low vision
- it has been created to integrate the blind or low vision participant

Transcends Phys. Ed. Class

The awkward nature of discussing a disability is effectively washed away. Socially ingrained discomfort is replaced by open classroom discussion between those with and without a visual disability.

Without instruction, able bodied students:

- begin to comprehend life without vision
- become aware of social challenges faced by students who are blind or have low vision

Targe Innovations' GAPE kit provides all that in one small backpack sized educational tool.

“Experience Leads to Understanding.

Understanding Leads to Change.”

If you contact us, be sure to mention the Sharing Visions newsletter.

www.targe.ca

Students with a Vision Impairment Can Remain Successful in the Classroom

Submitted by Ryan Heeney, National Sales Manager, Canada—Eschenbach Optik of America

For students diagnosed with Stargardt's, retinopathy of prematurity, albinism or a variety of other eye diseases, school can sometimes be challenging, especially when it comes to viewing the whiteboard or reading textbooks. Fortunately, there is wide assortment of magnification solutions that can allow them to maximize their remaining vision, thereby increasing their independence and quality of life. The solutions can range from hand-held, stand and spectacle magnifiers, to telescopic and electronic devices, the selection of which depends on the task that the student is trying to accomplish.

If a student wants to view a bus number or a sign in the cafeteria, for example, they can use a monocular telescope such as the Microlux (See item A). This pocket-sized telescope is compact and has a unique self-contained case that when squeezed, allows the lens to pop-out (squeezing it again hides the lens in the case). This feature, along with its fixed-focus lens, allows it to be completely operated with just one hand. When magnification is needed, the user can take this monocular telescope out of their pocket, squeeze the casing, look at the object of interest through the 4x lens and then quickly close it and store it away. The Microlux's small size and quick operation also allows the student to remain discreet when using the device.

A common magnification solution for long-term reading is an illuminated stand magnifier called the Makrolux (see item B) which is available in two different magnifications, 2.2x and 3.6x. This device sits on a textbook page, magazine or newspaper and the student simply slides it across the lines of text while looking down through the lens. Providing a wide 90mm (or 3.6 inch) field of view, the Makrolux's award-winning rectangular design makes it easy for students to stay on track when reading, thereby offering higher reading speeds than ordinary round lenses. The illumination is provided by an SMD LED which lasts over 10,000 hours, so it won't ever have to be replaced.

A hand-held electronic device called the Mobilux Digital (see item C) is ideal when the text has a variety of font sizes or if the text needs to be modified to maximize reading success.

This portable video magnifier offers 3x and 6x magnification views which can come in handy when reading a magazine or newspaper where less magnification may be needed to read the headlines, but higher magnification may be needed to read the main article. The Mobilux Digital also allows the viewer to modify the colors of the image of the object so that, for example, they can make a text page appear with white letters on a black background instead of black letters on a white background. As it turns out, for most people with a vision impairment, a loss of contrast (the ability to separate an object from its background) is also typically found. By altering the text colors, contrast can be increased so that it is easier to recognize letters, thereby leading to increased reading speed and comprehension.

For those situations where students need both near and distance magnification, such as in the classroom when they need to see the whiteboard and their textbook, a video magnifier that attaches to a laptop computer is ideal. The Opti Verso (see item D) is such a magnification device and, when connected to a laptop computer, its camera can be focused on either a distant object or rotated to focus on a textbook page with the enlarged image being displayed on the laptop screen. The Opti Verso provides 2-20x magnification, has over 10 different viewing modes, allows the user to take a snapshot of an image, and is stored in an easy-to-carry backpack.

So, whether it's a distance task like viewing a whiteboard, or a near task like reading, there are a wide variety of magnification solutions available for visually impaired students to help them maximize their learning experience and increase their overall independence and quality of life.

Accessible Media Inc.
1090 Don Mills Road, Suite 200 Toronto, ON M3C 3R6
Tel: 416.422.4222 Toll Free: 1.800.567.6755 Fax: 416.422.1633

INSPIRATION, CELEBRATION, PLUS HOLIDAY MOVIES AND SPECIAL FESTIVE EPISODES OF FAVOURITE SERIES ON THE ACCESSIBLE CHANNEL (TACtv) THROUGHOUT DECEMBER

Accessible Media Inc.'s (AMI)TACtv is the place you will want to tune into for December to celebrate the festive season while also celebrating the great accomplishments of people with disabilities and individuals who help make the world more accessible.

With one month to go before the start of our fourth year of successfully broadcasting all programs and movies on TACtv with open Described Video and Closed Captioning, AMI is delighted that we can best celebrate our accomplishments by providing blind, low-vision and other disabled Canadians shows that will entertain them and inspire them.

AMI is particularly proud to announce the debut of a new AMI original documentary, A Whole New Light, a one-hour special report exploring the scientific, medical and therapeutic treatments helping to improve quality of life for people with vision loss. This a ground-breaking special that will connect with viewers on a very personal level, supporting AMI's aim to create, advocate, collaborate and enable accessibility to all media.

In addition to A Whole New Light, TACtv will be broadcasting two other disability-related programs (of which more below) as well as a special in which the broadcaster turns the camera on itself to give viewers A Day In the Life of AMI.

AMI has a festive fare of programming that includes everyone. After all, it's the season of giving and we want to provide the widest possible choice in programming to help in

having the happiest holiday possible.

Highlights for December's Programming

Four Great Specials On TACTv:

A Whole New Light (AMI Original Program): **Sunday, December 4 at 9 p.m. Eastern. Repeated Saturday, December 10 at 8 p.m. Eastern.**

Told through personal stories and anecdotes, this special looks at the latest research, surgeries, implants and experimental therapies. Don't miss this exciting report on the potential for significant breakthroughs in vision care.

Attitude Awards: **Thursday, December 15 at 1 p.m., 8 p.m. and midnight Eastern.**

It's an event that celebrates some extraordinary people. Tune in for an awards program like no other: New Zealand's 2010 Attitude Awards, devoted to honouring great accomplishments by people with disabilities -- and by individuals who lead the way in making the world more accessible.

SexAbility: **Sunday, December 4 at 10 p.m. Eastern. Repeated Thursday, December 8 at 11 p.m. Eastern.**

Can a person who uses a wheelchair enjoy sex? That's the simple, yet provocative question that led to the making of SexAbility, the revealing documentary that explores new frontiers in disability and human sexuality through the lives of several individuals who have agreed to share their private, most intimate thoughts.

A Day in the Life of AMI (AMI Original Program): **December 1 at 7 p.m. Eastern. Repeated throughout December.**

A fun and informative look at an average day at Accessible

Media, the unique work we do and the staff and Volunteers behind the scenes who make print and entertainment programs accessible to all Canadians.

Holiday Programming On TACtv: Movies

Road to Christmas:Tuesday, December 6 at 9 p.m. and 1 a.m. Eastern. Repeated Friday, December 23 at 9 p.m. and 1 a.m. Eastern.

Starring Jennifer Grey, it's a funny, touching film full of unexpected twists as a high-powered fashion photographer finds herself stranded hundreds of miles away from her dream wedding.

Crazy For Christmas:Wednesday, December 7 at 9 p.m. and 1 a.m. Eastern. Repeated Friday, December 23 at 9 p.m. and 1 a.m. Eastern.

Meet Fred Nickells, a lonely old eccentric with an unusual Christmas Eve plan: hire a chauffeur to drive him around while he gives away huge amounts of cash to deserving pedestrians.

Plus:

29th Street: Monday, December 12 at 9 p.m. and 1 a.m. Eastern.

Jingle all the Way:Tuesday, December 13 at 9 p.m. and 1 a.m. Eastern.

Miracle on 34th Street:Wednesday, December 14 at 9 p.m. and 1 a.m. Eastern.

Happy Christmas Miss King:Sunday, December 25 at 2 p.m.

Eastern.

Gospel of John: **Sunday, December 25 at 9 p.m. and midnight Eastern.**

Holiday Programming On TACtv: Series

Ring in the season with holiday episodes of your favorite TV shows. From December 19-24 tune into TACtv and enjoy Christmas at Archie Bunker's; Matlock's spirited defense of Santa; and Eid's a wonderful life on Little Mosque on the Prairie. Plus: Touched by an Angel memorably reconnects a boy and his brother; Franklin the Turtle searches for the perfect gift; and many more.

***All In The Family:* Monday, December 19 at 1 p.m., 8 p.m. and midnight Eastern.**

***Matlock:* Tuesday, December 20 at 1 p.m., 8 p.m. and midnight Eastern, plus Wednesday, December 21 at 1 p.m., 8 p.m. and midnight Eastern.**

***Touched By an Angel:* Thursday, December 22 at 1 p.m., 8 p.m. and midnight Eastern.**

***Franklin:* Friday, December 23 at 8:30 a.m. Eastern.**

***Corner Gas:* Friday, December 23 at noon, 7 p.m. and 5:30 a.m. Eastern.**

***Little Mosque:* Friday, December 23 at 12:30 p.m., 4:30 p.m., 7:30 p.m. Eastern.**

***Magnum P.I.:* Friday, December 23 at 1 p.m., 8 p.m. and midnight Eastern.**

***JR Diggs:* Friday, December 23 at 11 p.m. Eastern.**

***Word Travels:* Saturday, December 24 at 3 p.m. Eastern.**

For Further Program Details and Where To Find TACtv or VoicePrint In Your Area, Please Visit: www.ami.ca

About Accessible Media Inc.

Accessible Media Inc. (AMI) is a not-for-profit multimedia organization operating two broadcast services, VoicePrint and The Accessible Channel - TACtv, and a companion website (ami.ca). AMI serves more than five million Canadians who are blind, deaf, vision, hearing or mobility impaired, learning disabled, print-restricted or learning English as a second language by making print, broadcast and online media accessible.

www.ami.ca

iPhone Tactile Screenshot Quick References

Submitted by Tom Dekker, VRT

First of all, a big thank you for the incredibly encouraging response from those of you who attended the BALANCE for Blind Adults CNIB Conference session on "iPhone As An Independent Living Aid", where we introduced this exciting new booklet. Since the number of attendees was actually double the number of registrants, we know that there weren't enough copies for everyone. However, I am pleased to announce that, in co-operation with Tactile Vision Inc., the booklet is now available.

It covers a physical description of the iPhone and includes diagrams for home screen, telephone, calendar, contacts, iBook and, of course, Siri.

The booklet incorporates both large print and tactile diagrams, providing a "visual" frame of reference to blind and low vision users alike. Studying these diagrams in conjunction with exploration of an iDevice helps to cultivate mental mapping processes, which maximize the potential to relate visually to the graphical user interface.

This approach is as helpful for teaching as it is for learning, because the student learns to conceptualize the positional relationships of screen elements in a visual, or at least spatial way. Many students will explore a diagram with one hand while swiping or dragging through screen elements with the other, automatically and naturally drawing mental maps for themselves. Otherwise, a student can easily be guided through diagram and screen exploration, hand over hand when necessary.

Similarly, gestures can be rehearsed using the diagrams, then transferred to the iDevice, first in practice mode if necessary, and then live. With practice, this approach develops the same muscle memory in the blind user's hand, that would otherwise be attained through eye-hand coordination. And with the mental maps on file, the proficiency increases.

I have been working with Tactile Vision for over a year to develop these diagrams, which I have envisioned through the process of teaching BALANCE program participants. So far, all students exposed to this material and the techniques described here, are in agreement that they have gained a much higher level of proficiency as a result. They say that their information management environment has "taken shape", not only in their personal experience, but also in a way that makes it much easier to interact and receive support from family, friends and colleagues. We know that you and yours will have a similar experience and we look forward to your input regarding future ISQR products.

For further information, contact Tactile Vision Inc. as follows:

Email: cecelia@tactilevisioninc.com

Web: <http://www.tactilevisioninc.com>

Phone: 905-696-8819

HOLD YOUR SPOT for Northern Exposure 2012

CNIB Lake Joseph Centre is once again hosting the Northern Exposure Program.

If you would like to join us for this year's program runs on TWO different dates. Please indicate which date you would like to attend:

Monday May 28th to Thursday, May 31st, 2012

OR

Monday June 4th to Thursday June 7th, 2012

Registration Details

Please fax or email back this form with the information completed to confirm your registration:

Name of School or School Board:

Contact Name:

Contact Person's Phone Number:

Contact Person's Email Address:

No. of Participants (including chaperones/organizers):

Rate: \$255 per person (students, teachers, and/or chaperons)

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at 1 877 748 4028 or lakejoe@cnib.ca

Note: To secure your spot, we ask that payment be sent no later than January 27, 2012 We expect the spots to fill very quickly, so don't delay.

Northern Exposure 2012

What Is Northern Exposure?

Northern Exposure is a recreational program that fosters interaction between blind and partially sighted school-aged youth in a safe, accessible and fun environment.

Who Participates In Northern Exposure?

Participants are blind and partially sighted elementary and high school students, along with parents, teachers and educational assistants (EAs) from across Ontario.

Where is the CNIB Lake Joseph Centre?

Located in the heart of Muskoka, two hours north of Toronto, Ontario, Lake Joe is a world leader in providing people with vision loss with life-changing experiences. Lake Joe's innovative programming and facilities excite and inspire blind and partially sighted children, youth, families and adults meet new friends, experience exciting new adventures and leave with memories that will last a lifetime.

Here are just some activities you can enjoy at Lake Joe:

Swimming	Fishing	Canoeing	Kayaking
Sports	Campfires	Sing-a-longs	Pontoon
	Cruises		
	Paddle boats	Voyageur canoes	
Nature hikes	Horse shoes		Shuffleboard

COME JOIN THE FUN!!!!!!

Reading Reimagined! Print Alternatives for the Forest of Reading

The CNIB Library is proud to provide access to many books in OLA's Forest of Reading programs in audio, braille, and printbraille (picture books with braille added). Young readers who are blind, partially sighted, or have a learning or physical disability that prevents them from reading print, will be able to participate. This year, we have increased the number of titles available in braille, in response to requests from teachers and parents. Forest of Reading books are available to CNIB clients and public library users with print disabilities through the CNIB Library's Partners Program. For more information: www.cnib.ca/librarypartners

Picture caption: Printbraille version of Blue Spruce nominee, *Giraffe and Bird* by Rebecca Bender. Braille is embossed on clear plastic sheets that are inserted between the print pages. This format can be enjoyed by both sighted and blind or partially sighted readers.

The CNIB Library is proud to provide access to many books in OLA's Forest of Reading programs in audio, braille, and printbraille (picture books with braille added).

Young readers who are blind, partially sighted, or have a learning or physical disability that prevents them from reading print, will be able to participate. This year, we have increased the number of titles available in braille, in response to requests from teachers and parents.

Forest of Reading books are available to CNIB clients and public library users with print disabilities through the CNIB Library's Partners Program. For more information about the Partners Program: www.cnib.ca/librarypartners

For more information about CNIB Library services and programs for kids and teens: <http://www.cnib.ca/en/services/library/kids/>

Wondering who the winners were in the CNIB Library's annual Braille Creative Writing Contest?



Wonder no more! The winners were announced in September and you can find the full list plus all of the winning stories and poems on the [contest website](#).

Or, read about it in the [CNIB blog](#).

Regards,
Karen Brophey
Library, Content & Programs Coordinator
CNIB
1929 Bayview Ave.
Toronto, ON
M4G 3E8

T: (416) 486-2500 ext. 8657
F: (416) 480-7700

CNIB: Vision health. Vision hope. Visit cnib.ca

Registration is now open for the CNIB Conference: Perspectives 2011! Visit www.cnib.ca/en/support/events/cnib_conference for full details.
CNIB: Seeing beyond vision loss. Visit www.cnib.ca

Vous pouvez dès maintenant vous inscrire à la conférence d'INCA « Perspectives 2011 ». Pour en savoir plus, consultez www.cnib.ca/en/support/events/cnib_conference
INCA: Voir au delà de la perte de vision. Consultez www.inca.ca

**Vision Technology Service
Inclusive Design Research Centre**

OCAD University

205 Richmond St. W., 2nd Floor

Toronto, ON M5V 1V3

(416) 977-6000, ext. 3967

For information go to:

<http://idrc.ocad.ca>

or e-mail:

pmurray@ocad.ca

International Council on English Braille

Fifth General Assembly

Call for Papers

Date: 21 September 2011

The International Council on English Braille (ICEB) is holding its Fifth General Assembly from Sunday 6 May 2012 to Thursday 10 May 2012 near Johannesburg, South Africa. We are delighted to invite friends of braille to submit papers for presentation at the General Assembly. Details about the papers and the process are as follows:

- 1 The papers should be related to Unified English Braille (UEB) or braille in general. Some suggestions are:
 - * UEB research and results of UEB implementation.
 - * research, education and teaching braille and technical codes to children.
 - * teaching braille to blind adults in today's potentially computer-assisted environment.
 - * technological developments in braille production.
 - * tactile graphics - research into readability and cost-effective production techniques.
 - * challenges facing developing countries in the production and teaching of braille.
 - * the future of braille code monitoring and maintenance - what international organisational structures would best suit this role?
- 2 Closing date for submission of Abstracts of up to 400 words: Thursday 15 December 2011. Late abstracts will only be considered if there are insufficient suitable abstracts received by the due date. Please provide the abstracts as Microsoft Word or text (.txt) attachments to the ICEB secretary, Dr Judith M. Dixon, email jdix@loc.gov
- 3 Abstracts will be assessed and selected by the Papers Subcommittee of the ICEB who will advise submitters of the acceptance (or otherwise) of their papers by 5 January 2012.
- 4 What to include in your abstract: To assist the Committee in assessing your proposal, please ensure that you address the following five points as part of your abstract of up to 400 words:
 - * Title of paper;
 - * Name(s) of author(s), including organisational or corporate affiliations;
 - * Contact details of author(s) (address, telephone and email);
 - * Key objectives of paper - up to five key points;
 - * Outline of paper.
- 5 Papers should be a maximum of 6,000 words in length, exclusive of abstract, footnotes and appendices.

A paper may be written by two or more co-authors, or by an individual. Authors or co-authors need not be delegates to the General Assembly.

- 6 A paper may be written by two or more co-authors, or by an individual. Authors or co-authors need not be delegates to the General Assembly.
- 7 Completed papers are due by 29 February 2012 as Microsoft Word files to be sent to the ICEB secretary, Dr Judith M. Dixon, email jdix@loc.gov
- 8 All accepted papers will be emailed to ICEB member countries by 1 March 2012 to circulate to all delegates. This deadline is so that delegates may read and discuss the papers with others prior to their attending the General Assembly.
- 9 Presentations: As delegates are expected to have read the papers, each presenter will be asked to give a summary of their paper in up to 25 minutes, allowing time for questions and discussion to follow. A presenter is not required to be a paper's author/co-author nor to be a delegate to the Assembly. The person emailing the abstract to the ICEB secretary should indicate who is going to be the paper's presenter.
- 10 All accepted papers will be published in the proceedings of the General Assembly.

Submitted by John Martin, Educational Co-ordinator, Vision Resource Services, WRMS

SAVE THE DATE!

NFB Jernigan Institute Teacher Leader Seminar

The National Federation of the Blind understands how important it is for teachers working in a low incidence field, like blindness, to find opportunities to collaborate and network. In an effort to foster learning, interaction, and community, the NFB is hosting the first-ever Teacher Leader Seminar! During this three-day conference, teachers will have the opportunity to learn, grow, and meet other professionals. This conference will include learning sessions and Make and Takes, networking with other teachers and professionals, and best practice and technology discussions. Teachers will have the chance to influence the content of sessions and lead discussions. Participants are strongly encouraged to take advantage of social media before, during, and after this seminar to stay in contact with each other and teachers in the field.

The National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute is collaborating with the National Organization of Professionals in Blindness Education to hold this Teacher Leader Seminar on January 27-29, 2012 in Baltimore, MD. This conference is open to teachers of blind students, orientation and mobility instructors, classroom teachers, students in graduate programs and all other blindness professionals. Registration cost is \$100 dollars and includes meals during the program. The first fifty teachers to register will be offered on-site accommodations. Please register at www.nfb.org/tls.

If you have any questions please contact Emily Gibbs, Education Program Specialist at (410) 659-9314 ext. 2407 or e-mail egibbs@nfb.org.

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Fax: (410) 659-5129

Email: EGibbs@nfb.org

Web: www.nfb.org/education

Submitted by John Martin, Educational Co-ordinator, Vision Resource Services, WRMS

**AER 2012 NC Conference on Visual Impairments and Blindness
March 16-17, 2012
CALL FOR PAPERS**

Welcome to Raleigh! The North Carolina Conference on Visual Impairments and Blindness is a collaborative conference involving NCAER, NC Division of Services for the Blind, The Governor Morehead School for the Blind, NC Department of Public Instruction, the NC Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, and the Vision Impairment Training Program at NC Central University. We invite you to come to beautiful Raleigh, North Carolina, and share your experience and knowledge by submitting a proposal to present at our conference.

Theme: "Listening, Learning, Living: Working Together for Successful Outcomes."

Strands: Orientation and Mobility, Teacher of the Visually Impaired, Pre-school, Vocational Rehabilitation/Independent Living Rehabilitation (focus on adult), and Vocational Rehabilitation/Transition (focus on ages 14-21).

The committee will consider proposals for presentations on other topics of interest related to the field.

Enclosed is a form to use in submitting your proposal. Please note the due date for submission of proposals is November 18, 2011. You may complete the form electronically and email to the address below, or send the form through regular mail. If the form is sent by regular mail it must be postmarked no later than November 18, 2011. You will receive written notice of acceptance or declination no later than December 1, 2011.

Submit the completed form postmarked on or before **November 18, 2011** to:

**Daniel Simmons, NBCT
The Governor Morehead School for the Blind
2303 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-2303
Email: daniel.simmons@esdb.nc.gov
Work: 919-733-6192
Fax: 919-715-0474**

We want YOU and YOUR ARTICLES!!

What's new in your Board?? What amazing things are your students doing? Please share your good news stories, highlight the success of a student, share thoughts on a new piece of technology, ask questions in our Dot 5 Q corner or share upcoming PD sessions in our upcoming issues of Sharing Visions. All submissions should be directed to mary.e.cousineau@ontario.ca by February 13, 2012 for the February issue.