



December, 2009

President's Message
Kathy Davis

Holiday greetings to all of you....It's been an interesting few months since last we corresponded. Your chapter has been moving forward on planning with other organizations its annual conference on visual impairment and blindness. Please remember to check out the event at www.ncaer.net or contact either William Tubilleja (William.tubilleja@dhhs.nc.gov) or myself (mary.k.davis@dhhs.nc.gov) for details and information. If you are interested in presenting, the website has the Call for Papers form that you will need to submit for review to determine the appropriateness of your presentation for our conference. The 2010 conference theme is assistive technology across the life span, or "Assistive Technology: It's Where It's AT." We welcome you to the campus of the Governor Morehead School for the Blind in Raleigh on March 25 and 26, 2010.

The world of vision continues to move forward with lots of contributions from your fellow AER'ers and articles about events in which AER members participated. It's encouraging to see so many of you contributing not only to your own professional development but also offering opportunities for the development of your colleagues and beginners in the field. None of us can be experts in any one area; however, with support and encouragement we can build a resource network that promotes our field, our professionalism, and most of all, helps our students, irrespective of their ages.

So I will give you the remainder of the December newsletter and with it, best wishes for a peaceful and blessed holiday season. If you travel this season, be safe in those travels. If you remain home with family and friends, cherish the time with them. We often see far too little of those people and places who mean the most to us. 'Tis the season to celebrate in whatever way we choose.

Braille Literacy: A Functional Approach Designed for Non-Traditional Learners
(Amy Campbell)

In the fall of 2008, a professional staff development class was offered to the GMS staff by Dr. Diane Wormsley (NCCU). The purpose of the eight day workshop was to increase literacy in students at GMS thru the use of functional (individualized, meaning-centered) approach to teaching Braille reading. One of your AER members, Amy Campbell, Braille teacher at GMS, took the challenge to heart and utilized the knowledge acquired through this workshop to develop a single-subject design with one of our GMS students. The story of this student's increasing Braille literacy skills traveled to the national Getting in Touch With Literacy Conference in Costa Mesa, CA, in November, 2009. Ms. Campbell and Dr. Wormsley presented the study to several noted professional in our VI field. Dr. Jane Erin approached our presenters to discuss possible future publication of the research. Please attend the NCCVIB conference and you, too, can learn what the GITWLC participants learned.

NCAER NCCU Outstanding Student Award
(Diane Wormsley)

The VI faculty at North Carolina Central put their heads together and came up with the NCCU Outstanding Student Award which will have its inaugural presentation at the 2010 NCCVIB. This award goes to a student in the final stages of completion of his/her program of studies who has shown exemplary commitment to working with children or adult who are blind or visually impaired, who has at least a 3.5 average, and has the unanimous support of the faculty at NCCU in the VITP. NCAER will provide the student with a certificate and a Louis Braille Centennial Coin.

New NC-APVI Organizing in Charlotte!
(Joy Fleming)

Several parents in the Charlotte area had expressed a wish to connect with other parents of visually impaired children. So, the Governor Morehead Preschool (GMP) teachers in the area--Karen Huffman, Barbara Halton-Bailey, Joy

Fleming, Bonnie Galarde and Rhonda Cooley--invited Jennifer Strickland from the Raleigh NC-APVI to speak to interested parents and families. NC-APVI is the North Carolina - Association of Parents of Visually Impaired children and is a national organization. NC-APVI is a support group that will provide information and support to families of visually impaired children. The GMP teachers contacted the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools' VI teachers to invite school age families to participate and they received permission from Metrolina Association of the Blind to use their building. The meeting date and time was set for Saturday, October 3rd at 10 a.m. The Gov. Morehead Preschool teachers volunteered to take care of childcare for VI children and their siblings and provide refreshments. Maria Cobeo, the Gov. Morehead Preschool Spanish Translator, came down from Raleigh to translate for our Hispanic families. Twelve area families of preschoolers and school age children attended this meeting. It was an emotional time for parents as they shared their children's stories. A survey was taken to determine what future meetings and/or discussions would be most helpful for the families. Two of the parents agreed to work with the NC-APVI to officially organize a group here: Deyne Munavalli and Darlene Humphries. A directory list of the parents who attended and contact information was compiled including parents who were unable to attend on October 3rd but would like to be involved. If you have any questions or have families interested in speaking to the new and upcoming Charlotte NCAPVI, please e-mail Deyne Munavalli at deynemunavalli@yahoo.com .

Interested in a NOAH group in the Charlotte Area?
(Joy Fleming)

Deyne Munavalli, whose son has ocular albinism, wishes to look into possibly beginning a NOAH (the National Organization for Albinism and Hypopigmentation) chapter in the Charlotte region. She contacted some other parents of children with albinism and they met in Monroe, NC on October 17th for a bar-b-q. Anyone who has any form of albinism and is interested in participating in NOAH, please

contact Deyne Munavalli at deynemunavalli@yahoo.com .

Thanks to Joy Fleming !
(Kathy Davis)

A special thanks to Joy Fleming for her years of service as the NCAER secretary. Like most of us, Joy wears many hats and has found time limitations keep her from continuing in this role. We appreciate all you have done for us, Joy !

Welcome, Claire Hakin!
(Kathy Davis)

A special thanks now to Claire Hakin who has agreed to finish Joy's unexpired term as our NCAER secretary. Claire teaches orientation and mobility at the Governor Morehead School, and we welcome her to the NCAER Board.

Rachel Rawls Award
(Gary Ray)

Please remember to cast your vote for the Rachel Rawls Award recipient. As usual, the award will be given out at the 2010 conference. The guidelines for nomination and the form are included in this newsletter.

More News from an NCAER Member...A Little Christmas Cheer
(Rod Poole)

Each year, the Governor Morehead School Student Council raises money in a fundraiser so that they can give back to the community. This year, for the 15th consecutive year, they donated to Wake County Human Services so that needy families could have a Christmas. The donation of \$250 will go a long way toward helping here in the community. Also, the Student Council donated a \$100 check to a representative of the Leukemia/Lymphoma Society of North Carolina. Congratulations to an AER member for his leadership and work with the students.

Condolences to Mr. William Apple, current AER member and longtime organizer of our annual statewide conference, and former principal of the adult program on the GMS campus in the loss of his mother, Evelyn, on December 18, 2009.

News from Cary, North Carolina, among other towns...

(Kathy Davis)

This article recently appeared in the Cary News, and I wanted to pass it along as it has potentially far-reaching implications for the visually impaired community.

"Signals Have a New Hue"

Drivers don't always know that green doesn't always mean go.

In the left-turn lane, sometimes, they get their signals mixed.

That's why Cary is joining other NC cities in an effort to reduce left-turn crashes with a new traffic signal that features a flashing yellow arrow.

It's pretty clear for left-turn drivers that the green arrow signal means: Turn now. You have the right of way. Everybody else must wait for you.

The misunderstanding comes with the solid green ball signal. In the left-turn lane it's supposed to mean: Turns are allowed—but first you must yield to pedestrians and other cars.

Crashes happen when left-turners confuse a green ball with a green arrow. The green ball doesn't give them the right of way, but they somehow think it does.

So they turn into oncoming traffic, or they hit somebody walking across the street.

"Studies have shown that some drivers felt a circular green meant they had the right of way," said Kumar Neppalli, Chapel Hill's traffic engineer. "People were confused, and accidents were happening because of that."

The same national studies found that a flashing yellow arrow appears to make left-turn drivers more cautious. So they are less likely to cause crashes.

Chapel Hill installed flashing yellow arrows this summer in left-turn lanes at three intersections, and more will follow as the town overhauls its signal network over the next couple of years. Charlotte and Wilmington have some of the new signals, too.

Last week, Cary began removing green ball signals from left-turn lanes at

five intersections that have seen a number of crashes and will replace them with flashing yellow arrows. "If they go well here, we'll be putting them at more locations," said David Spencer, Cary's traffic engineer.

The Federal Highway Administration has given North Carolina permission to experiment with the flashing yellow arrows while the FHA considers a change in guidelines that would make the alternative signal more common across the nation.

Mike Kennon, Raleigh's traffic engineer, said the city will wait for the federal agency's decision before it considers making the switch. Mike J. Fox of Moncure was puzzled at first, a couple of years ago, when the state Department of Transportation installed flashing yellow arrows at intersections on U.S.64 west of Apex.

"You have to look closely, because it's not the pattern you're used to," said Fox, 44. "When you're sitting at a red light and you see a flashing arrow, it seems like you register the arrow before you register the color - and you go.

"But I've gotten used to them. They don't bug me anymore," Fox said.

Technology News

(Kathy Davis)

EAP: This new acronym (which stands for electroactive polymer materials) is important to Braille readers because of the potential to improve refreshable Braille displays. Yoseph Bar-Cohen, a senior researcher at NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, wrote about the idea of tiny "artificial" muscles that may yield a full-page active Braille system, and scientists and engineers around the world have used his ideas to develop prototypes. The Center for Braille Innovation at National Braille Press contacted Bar-Cohen about collaborating with researchers to accelerate the development of EAP-actuated Braille displays.

www.popsci.com/scitech/article/2009-008/iphones-blind or www.spie.org

6Dot Labeler: Designed by MIT students, the 6Dot is a portable device that embosses Braille onto commercially available adhesive labeling tape. The

major difference in this device from previous label makers is the standard Braille keyboard and the fact that it uses a built-in microprocessor that can store up to 16 characters. A provisional patent has been filed, and two companies have expressed interest in manufacturing and distributing the 6Dot.

www.braillelabeler.net/about.html

Tactility Phone, the Braille Phone, the Universal Phone, and the iPhone:
Accessibility of cell phones, especially touch screen models, is an important issue for users who are blind or visually impaired. The gadget blog, *Ubergizmo*, found several designs being developed for cell phones with tactile access. Korean designer Seon-Keun Park uses EAP to raise part of its

surface in Braille so the user can retrieve text messages. Another designer, Siwei Liu used current technology to produce a phone with a simple three-dimensional Braille face to make dialing easier for users who are blind.

DeafBlind Communicator:
Washington State's Office of Deaf and Hard of Hearing conceived the idea for a two-piece portable device for individuals who are deaf-blind to independently communicate with a non-signing person. The system developed by HumanWare features a Braille note-taker, a cell phone, and software to translate text messages between the two devices.
www.humanware.com to see more about the testing of this device.

REMEMBER: NCCVIB, March 25 - 26, 2010, The Governor Morehead School for the Blind, Raleigh, NC
www.ncaer.net for more information

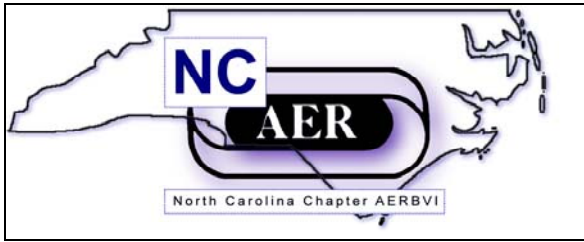
Upcoming Events

January 27 - 30, 2010: Orlando, FL, Assistive Technology Industry Association (ATIA 2010). Contact 877-687-2842 or www.atia.org

March 22 - 27, 2010: San Diego, CA. CSUN Annual International Technology and Persons with Disabilities Conference. www.csunconference.org

April 21 - 24, 2010: Nashville, TN. Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) Annual Convention and Exposition. www.cec.sped.org

April 23 - 25, 2010: Los Angeles, CA. Annual Conference of the California Transcribers and Educators for the Blind and Visually Impaired (CTEBVI). www.ctebvi.org



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Past President
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(828) 505-0338

December 2009

2010 Rachel Rawls Award Nomination Form

All Nominations should be submitted by March 1, 2010. All nominations should be sent to Gary Ray, either electronically or in print. The email address is ggray@mindspring.com. The mailing address is 18 Sandon Drive, Asheville, NC 28804.

The Rachel Rawls Award was established by the NC AER in 1989 to honor Dr. Rawls and to recognize achievement in the field of work with the blind and visually impaired.

The Ground Rules:

- **The person making the nomination must be a member of NC AER.**
- **The person being nominated does not have to be an NC AER member.**
- **Current NC AER Board members are NOT eligible for nomination.**
- **The Board of the NC AER grants the Rawls Award.**
- **The NC AER Board need not give the Rawls Award every year.**
- **Only one Rawls Award may be given each year.**
- **Each nomination must be made using the form provided and must be accompanied by at least two (2) letters of support from persons who have personal knowledge of the nominee and his/her achievement. Each letter of support must contain contact information for the author.**

Award criteria

- **A person whose unique achievements have benefited North Carolina citizens who are visually impaired**
- **A person whose achievements have exceeded the expectations of their particular job description**
- **A person who has been innovative in the field of education, rehabilitation or human services**
- **A person who has had an impact on the field that extends beyond current or former job placement**
- **A person who has positively altered attitudes toward visual impairment or the manner in which services are delivered to individuals who are visually impaired**
- **A person who has demonstrated extensive collaborations with other disciplines or organizations working with people who are visually impaired (including but not limited to the NCAER, Lions Clubs in North Carolina, the Division of Services for the Blind, the Governor Morehead School, the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped, the NC Council of the Blind, the National Federation of the Blind of NC) in order to enhance the overall quality of life for individuals who are visually impaired**

2010 Rachel Rawls Award Nomination

**Name of Person Nominating:
(MUST BE AN NCAER MEMBER)**

Address, including City, State, and Zip:

Phone number, including Area Code:

Email:

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Name of Nominee:

Address, including City, State, and Zip:

Phone number, including Area Code:

Email:

Please explain why this person should receive the 2007 Award. Pay particular attention to the criteria given above. Feel free to use additional pages for your answer.