



NCAERolina News September, 2008

President's Message

Kathy Davis

Greetings to our membership! I am truly honored and pleased to write to you as the new president of North Carolina's AER chapter. I hope to move our chapter forward in the next two years through a variety of ways: professional development workshops, news and information for our instructional folks, and using this newsletter as a continued forum for *your* input, your suggestions, and your contributions for publication. I know that last year's AERLift and this year's session focused on increasing membership of not only the national organization but also our local chapters. Folks often ask "What's the benefit of joining?", and I hope that I can provide a few answers to that question.

One of the ways I hope we can increase our membership is through specialized workshops for AER members only. We are planning our inaugural "members only" workshop in October on the campus of The Governor Morehead School for the Blind in Raleigh. Gary Ray, past president, has worked diligently over the summer to coordinate with Humanware to offer a workshop on digital media: options available to students and consumers, obtaining the media, and training in use of the new devices. In other words, it's not your same old NC Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped or Recordings for the Blind and Dyslexic. Yes, we *are* in the 21st century and in October we will learn how to move not only our students but also our adult patrons into this "brave, new world." Look for more information in this newsletter for the details of the October workshop.

I will, of course, let you know of other trainings and staff development opportunities as these events come across my desk. I am planning several more trainings and newsworthy events that will help you answer the question, "What's in it for me?"

Membership goes beyond tangibles like lanyards, polo shirts, and baseball caps. Yes, those items symbolize a collectivity but

"membership", according to Webster, means an "association, relationship, connection". I sincerely hope that membership means, to you, a connection with your peers and colleagues, a relationship that promotes collegiality and community, and connects you with professionals who, like you, commit themselves to teaching our students, working with our clients, and growing, sharing, learning together. You and I *are* AER.

I couldn't close this message without an enormous thank you to our past president, Gary Ray. Over the years that I've known and worked with Gary, he has been nothing but the consummate promoter of our organization and of the education of blind and visually impaired individuals. He has worked tirelessly (and continues to do so) to encourage, support, advance our organization and profession. I have never asked him to speak to our students, to share his experiences, to advocate for a professional need that he has not risen to the occasion in ways I had not expected. He leaves a legacy and huge shoes that I hope I can fill—if not entirely, at least adequately. Thank you, Gary, for all you have done and continue to do to support the organization, the field, and me.

REMEMBER!

March 19 – 21, 2009

**NCAER sponsors YOUR
2009 Conference on Visual Impairment and
Blindness
"Workin' for a Livin'"**

**Check www.ncaer.net for additional
information, details, registration!**

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News from NCCU

The Visual Impairment Training Program at North Carolina Central University is thrilled to announce that the new teleclassroom is up and operating. The room was moved and upgraded through collaboration with the Department of Health and Human Services. Be on the look out for an announcement regarding a ribbon cutting and reception.

This summer 11 students participated in a pilot study of our Fast Track program. Students stayed on the GMS campus, attended classes for two weeks and participated in evening activities such as blindness movie nights, simulation bowling, and a tour of the home of an independent and successful person with a visual impairment.

The feedback has been positive. Most of the students really felt like they had bonded with their classmates and would have professional resources when they leave. Students in the Fast Track program spend two weeks for two summers at GMS, take online courses for three semesters, and then complete their practicum.

The Fast Track program will be offered again this coming summer. Students interested in enrolling need to apply to NCCU by October 1st. Contact Julie Bardin for more details (919-530-5346 or jbardin@ncu.edu).

Want A Shirt?

Don't forget to order one of the new NCAER polo shirts. Order blank is included in the newsletter. Many thanks to Susan Purdy for handling this project!

Rachel Rawls Award

Once again we are sponsoring the Rachel Rawls Award for the 2009 Superconference. Please use the attached form to submit your entry. Rules for applicable candidates are attached with the nomination. Submissions should go to Gary Ray. Thanks for your input !

NC-APVI Support Group

NC-APVI is hosting a parent support group on October 11 from 10:30 – 12 noon on the GMS Campus, Currin Building. Please share with your families and students. The preschool families in particular are interested in meeting with families of older children. If you have questions please contact Chapter president Jennifer Strickland at JCar382600@aol.com.

Your Board Members

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All members please wish the Board's new officers and members the best of luck in shaping and growing our NC chapter to meet the needs of its members.

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Short-Term Does Deaf/Blind

What a wonderful opportunity! The inaugural session of Governor Morehead School's short-term session with students from Eastern NC School for the Deaf in Wilson and NC School for the Deaf in Morganton was a phenomenal success. Three students attended the week-long session where they learned about public transportation, use of assistive technologies, and had clinical low vision evaluations. This was a great example of collaboration between the three schools. Thanks to all the staffs who made this session look so easy to pull together.



What's Going on in the Legislature?

This past legislative year was an active one.....Early in June, a special provision was dropped on us in the NC Legislature. The special provision (SP) would have merged all rehabilitation agencies in NC into a super agency. There was also language in the SP that would have effectively moved the deaf and blind residential schools from the Department of Health and Human Services to the Department of Public Instruction. The SP threw

the organized blind movement into a tizzy. It came out of nowhere and we only had a few days to address it. The merger issue had always united the blind in NC, but in the past there was more time to react. Luckily, the blind are united in the belief that any kind of merger would be bad for the blind of our state. The SP was passed by the Senate, but was taken out of the budget during the conference committee deliberations.

There was not as much said about the part of the SP that dealt with the residential schools. The blind are not united on this issue. Had this move been put forward by itself, it is likely that we would not have stopped it. But in this case, the move was tied to an issue on which the blind were united so the hard work that defeated the merger part of the SP carried the move issue off into the sunset.

The blind of NC came together and made many calls and did much lobbying that led to the SP being removed from the budget. But the issue of what to do about the residential schools is not going away. The legislature would love to hear what the people want in this matter so we need to come together and decide what needs to be done. The legislature only sees the money that is spent and a pile of money is spent at the residential schools. We all need to tell them what we think and to keep in mind that the legislature is always looking at the money. They must balance the people side of the equation with the financial side.

We can't just sit around and do nothing about this issue or the Legislature will force a decision on us. So if you have views, give me a call or send me an email. Our hope is to be able to present a reasonable solution to the Legislature before the next session.

Training: AER Members Only !

Did you know that carrying a backpack that weighs more than 15% of a student's body weight can lead to serious back problems now and in the future? The availability of digital text has dramatically improved access to educational materials for students who are blind and visually impaired. Educators are faced with the challenges of locating these materials and teaching their students how to access them. This workshop will address what digital text is, where it can be found, and how it can be accessed with assistive technology. Objectives

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of the workshop will be reached through discussion, demonstration, and hands-on activities by all participants, using Victor Reader Streamer, BrailleNote, Victor Reader Soft, and computer screen access programs to access these materials and become aware of other tools used to access them.

October 23 and 24 are the dates and GMS campus is the location. We are proud to host this first AER "Members Only" training. Gary Ray and HumanWare will be "Moving Into the Digital Age", giving 15 lucky AER members the opportunity to learn about the new age of technology. The class runs on the 23rd from 1:00 – 4:30 p.m. and on Friday from 8:30 – 4:30. To register, contact Kathy at mary.k.davis@ncmail.net. Remember, this is open to AER members only !

AER International Conference, Chicago "My Kind of Conference" (William Tubilleja, President-Elect, NCAER)

As a first time attendee at the AER International Conference, the experience was more than I imagined it would be. And to be in Chicago on a cool July weekend was perhaps more than I could have expected. After pinching myself, I set about carrying out my volunteer duties for AER on the first full day of the conference. As an AER member I wanted to make sure that I was giving a little something back to this great gathering of VI professionals and I did so by answering questions and helping other attendees get to their destinations. I felt a little like the WalMart greeter, but it was all good. As part of the opening day of the conference, I was honored to carry the state flag of NC and march in a procession of peers who also carried their own state or province flag representing their chapter. The ceremonies concluded with a patriotic presentation of *Old Glory* as well as the flag of Canada, a country represented by a large number of AER members. From there, the conference was off and running with a cornucopia of session choices for its attendees.

A most notable highlight of the conference was the honoring of NCCU's very own Dr. Diane Wormsley. AER, through its nomination process, utilizing recommendations of AER member peers, recognized Dr. Wormsley with the Mary K. Bauman Award. This award honors an individual who has made significant and

outstanding contributions to the education of children and youth who are blind/visually impaired. Congratulations Dr. Wormsley!

While I could bore the reader with endless praise for the conference sessions and presenters, let's get to the fun stuff. Chicago! After a full day of sessions each of the 4 days I spent in Chicago, I was left with some time to enjoy the town. Some of the highlights include China Town and delicious noodles and fruit smoothie dessert, the ride back into downtown on the L-train(a little scary, but part of the flavor of the town), visiting the Millennium Park in the middle of downtown (a true jewel in an oasis of high rise buildings), shopping on the Miracle Mile (for my kids, really), and on my last night, an architectural boat tour on the Chicago River at dusk with a fireworks show to top off the visit. So while I appreciate the opportunity that AER International offered to learn and meet so many great professionals, I will always think most fondly of the town that hosted it. Thanks to the Illinois Chapter, AER, for putting on a great show.

AER Member Get-A-Member Campaign

Help AER achieve its goal of 1,000 new members in the coming year. Be part of the 2008 Chapter Get-A-Member campaign. You could win cash prizes. Go to <http://www.aerbvi.org/modules.php?name=News&file=article&sid=1462>

DPI News (Julie Kagy, DPI Consultant, VI, AT)

The Exceptional Children Division of NCDPI will be hosting its 58th Exceptional Children Conference in Greensboro on November 17 – 19. The event will be held at the Koury Center and the theme is "Creating Success One Child At a Time." The main conference is held on Monday, the 17th, and the morning of Tuesday, the 18th. There are many, many sessions of interest to all special educators.

The special news this year is that there will be a Vision Impairment Institute on the afternoon of Tuesday, the 18th, and all day on Wednesday, the 19th. This institute will be presented by staff members and product developers of the American Printing House. They will be bringing a wide assortment of materials. There will be in-depth presentations on many of their new products including the Math Builders Programs and the Tools for Assessment and Development

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of Visual Skills. The presentations will cover use of these materials with students in various educational models and you will be able to ask questions specific to your own students. There will be plenty of hands-on time with the materials. In addition, you will learn how APH chooses the materials they provide, how to submit ideas that you might have for products, and how to become part of future pilots. We will also have time to discuss how APH quota funds are administered in NC. You may register for the entire conference or just the VI Institute. Registration is online. After September 29th go to <http://www.ncpublicschools.org/ec/conference> Hope to see you there.

Experts Needed by NCLVI

The National Center for Leadership in Visual Impairment needs experts. One of the activities for the NCLVI Fellows is the participation in a two-week discussion with experts on various subjects. A different discussion takes place every month. The discussion board is accessible and is done asynchronously so you do not have to be on-line at any particular time. NCLVI asks participants to check the discussion board, post questions, pose scenarios, and answer the questions asked by the Fellows regularly during the 2 weeks. If you believe you have experience with a topic or topics and are willing to participate, please provide your full contact information: your name, position, email address and return to Kathleen M. Huebner, Co-Director, NCLVI, Salus University, fax 215-78-1357 or email kathyh@salus.edu. Topics include Highly Qualified Personnel and State Certification Requirements (November); The National Agenda & Collaboration with Parent & Consumer Organizations (December); Financing Special Education (January); Monitoring and Compliance (February); Role of State Vocational Rehabilitation and Transition (March); and Alternative Assessments (April).

From Mary Helen Pearsall, Friends of the NC Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

Dear Fellow NC AER Member: This fall one of the most important organizations serving the blind and physically disabled population of NC will celebrate its 50th birthday. The NC Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped

(NCLBPH) was established in 1958 to provide books for people who cannot use regular print because of their disability. Materials are provided in Braille, large print, VHS video tapes, and audio tapes. In the future, plans are to go to a system using digital recordings delivered on Flash memory cards and played on new playback equipment loaned to library patrons. The core services are free since the federal and state governments fund it. The Library could not provide the high quality of services it provides, if it were not for the Friends of the Library. I would like to invite you to join the Friends. This group is made up of blind, visually impaired, and other people in NC who want to help provide essential services to the library not covered by the current budget and to open more vistas of reading and information. One of the most popular programs solely funded by the Friends is the provision of descriptive movies. We also assist the library by funding the Tar Heel Talk quarterly newsletter. Also, we have provided large print books, Braille books, audio books, support for library volunteers, and much more. In life, friends need friends. This group of Friends needs you. With your membership, you will receive the benefit of helping others and become better informed about issues affecting the Library, its patrons, and services. A yearly individual membership costs \$10, a family membership is \$15, and an organization can join for \$50. There is a \$100 club for \$100 a year, a Plus club membership for \$300 a year and a Lifetime membership available for \$500. Attached to this newsletter is a membership application. Remember that all membership fees and donations to the Friends are fully tax deductible. Please consider joining us. We need you. I am a Friend, and I want you to be one, too!

2009 Conference on Visual Impairment and Blindness "Workin' for a Livin'"

www.ncaer.net

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What's Happening

October 16 – 18

Closing the Gap. www.closingthegap.com

October 23, 24

AER Members Only workshop. Crossing the Digital Divide. GMS, Raleigh. Mary.k.davis@ncmail.net

October 24

10th Annual Sowell Center Distinguished Lecture Series: Impact of Cochlear Implants on People with Deaf-Blindness, Deafness, or Those Who Are Hard-of-Hearing with Ella Taylor.

www.educ.ttu.edu/sowell2

October 26 – 29

Division for Early Childhood of the Council for Exceptional Children 2008 Conference. www.dec-sped.org

November 17 – 19

NC EC Conference, Greensboro, NC www.dpi.state.nc.us

November 21 – 22

World Congress on Disabilities Expo. www.wcdexpo.com/2008/fla/conference.cfm

December 4 – 5

NC Partnerships in Assistive Technology AT Expo. www.pat.org

January 22 – 24, 2009

Technology, Reading, and Learning Diversity 2009 Conference: "Opening Doors to Universal Learning."
www.trld.com

March 5 – 8

2009 AFB National Conference (Josephine Taylor Leadership Institute). www.afb.org

March 19 – 21

NC Superconference, "Workin' for a Livin'", Raleigh NC

April 1 – 4

Council for Exceptional Children Annual Convention and Exposition. www.cec.sped.org

April 17 – 19

Families Connecting with Families International Conference. napvi@perkins.org

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**NCAER Polo Shirt
Order Form**

Name (Mr., Mrs., or Ms):

Street or P.O. Box:

City/State/Zip Code:

Email Address and/or Phone Number:

Men's Size (XS-6XL; Tall LT-4XLT):

Lady's Size (XS-XXL; Plus 1X and 2X):

Shirts are \$25 each. How many would you like? _____

Check Amount: _____

Color: (Please Circle)

Khaki Heather, Navy, White, Black, Light Blue, Burgundy, Yellow, Purple,
Turquoise, Stone, Faded Blue, Red, Classic Navy, Sea Foam, Orange,
Blueberry, Pistachio, Sunset Red, Light Pink, Lilac, Oxford, Faded Olive,
Dark Green, Athletic Gold, Bark, Royal, Ivory, Steel Grey, Forest

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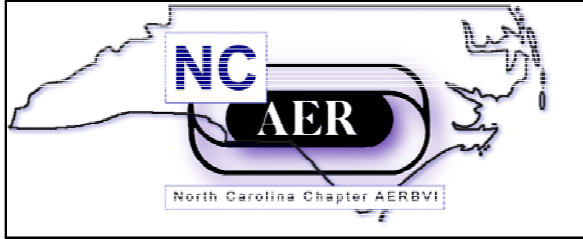
**Please send your check payable to NCAER and mail it to:**

**Mrs. Susan Purdy, 2 Sedgewood Road, Chapel Hill, NC 27514**

**Thank You for Your Order!**

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Gary H. Ray  
Past President  
18 Sandon Drive  
Asheville, NC 28804  
(828) 505-0338

September 2008

### 2009 Rachel Rawls Award Nomination Form

All nominations should be submitted either electronically or in print by March 1, 2009, to Gary Ray. The email address is [ghray@mindspring.com](mailto:ghray@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

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**2009 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 2009 Award. Pay particular attention to the criteria given above. Feel free to use additional pages for your answer.**

## **JOIN THE FRIENDS NOW! FNCLBPH Membership Categories**

\_\_\_ Individual (\$10)                      \_\_\_ Hundred Dollar Club (\$100)

\_\_\_ Family (\$15)                        \_\_\_ Plus Club (\$300)

\_\_\_ Organization/  
Professional (\$50)                      \_\_\_ Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ Life Membership (\$500)

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number with Area Code \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you receive materials from the NCLBPH?**

Yes \_\_\_

No \_\_\_

**Send information on ways to financially support the Friends** \_\_\_

**Make checks payable to FNCLBPH and mail with this form to:**

**FNCLBPH  
1811 Capital Boulevard  
Raleigh, NC 27635**

*Questions? Call us at (828) 505-0338 and ask for Gary Ray.*

**FNCLBPH Home Page:**

**[www.friendsnclbph.org](http://www.friendsnclbph.org) (under construction)**