



The AERial View



Newsletter of the Northern California Chapter,
Association for the
Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind
and Visually Impaired

Volume 14, No. 3

September 2003

Pat Leader, Editor

From the President's Desk . . .

I hope you all had a fun, restful and peaceful summer. Your Northern California AER (NCAER) Board of Directors met in mid-August to review past activities and to set some goals for the '03-04 year. We look forward to another year of serving you, our members. Please contact us with your ideas and suggestions for how we can help you meet your professional goals. You'll find contact information for each Board member listed in the pages of this newsletter.

Our membership overwhelmingly approved the proposed changes to our bylaws. In this newsletter, you'll find a message from our Bylaws Chair, Tony Candela, summarizing the adopted changes. Thank you for your support of these revisions that will help to modernize and streamline our organization practices.

We continue to strive to assist our members in their goals for continuing education. With that in mind, we are sponsoring a one-day event at San Francisco State on Cortical Visual Impairment, on November 14th. Details will follow in this newsletter and through other communication means. We encourage you to join us and expand your knowledge, as well as network with the Board and your colleagues.

This is an election year, as well as an awards year for NCAER. Consider joining our Board, and/or nominating a colleague in recognition of their outstanding service. More information will follow.

As you can see this will be a busy and productive year for NCAER. As you serve your clients and we work together, think of the words of Will Rogers, ***"If you want to be successful, it's just this simple. Know what you are doing. Love what you are doing. And believe in what you are doing."***

Stuart Wittenstein, Ed.D.

NCAER President, 2002-2004

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**Open Board Position
Your Name Here!
Volunteer TODAY!**

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Student Representative: Open Position - Will You Join Us?

Spotlight on Excellence

The “Buzz in the Capitol”: *Sacramento Society for the Blind*

While the *Sacramento BEE* fixes its attention on politics and the ramifications of a gubernatorial recall, Brian Bashin, a former journalist, and Executive Director of the Sacramento Society for the Blind, works with focused determination to make sure the news coming out of their agency is all good. The programs offered by the ‘Sac Society’ encompass the philosophy of the National Federation of the Blind (to which Mr. Bashin adheres) emphasizing full-immersion into the adjustment and training process and promoting the use of non-visual techniques to foster efficiency in performing everyday life tasks.

The ‘Society’ has provided services to persons with visual impairment in Northern California since 1954. A quote from its web site says it all:

“At the Society for the Blind we have assembled the largest team of experts in positive solutions to blindness and visual impairment. We don't just talk the talk. Our teachers themselves are users of blind and low-vision technology, Braille, and all the other modern alternative techniques developed in recent years.”

The agency maintains a Low-vision facility staffed by UC-Berkeley trained optometrists and equipped with “Northern California's largest collection of advanced optical and electronic aids.” Its adaptive products store hosts “more than 500 clever devices including Braille watches, talking book players, white canes, and talking tape measures, just to name a few.” Products may be purchased in-person or by mail order.

The Sacramento Society for the Blind’s mobility, daily living skills, technology, career counseling, and job placement services form the heart of one of the strongest rehabilitation programs in the Central Valley. Building upon this solid foundation, the ‘Society’ recently established two “boot camps,” one for youths and the other for older persons experiencing vision loss. The youth program takes place at a camp north of Sacramento and helps participants hone not only their blindness and social skills, but also their sense of themselves as complete and worthy people. The ‘Senior Intensive Retreat’ takes place in a 5-bedroom rented house in Elk Grove, and assists older blind persons to learn to live with blindness. This 10-day program opened its doors last February, according to the *Sacramento Bee*.

If you wish further information regarding the exciting and innovative programs offered by the Sacramento Society for the Blind, contact them using the address or telephone numbers below, or visit their website.

Society for the Blind
2750 24th Street
Sacramento, CA 95818
Tel: (916) 452-8271
Fax: (916) 452-2622
Web: <http://www.societyfortheblind.org/HomePage.htm>

-A Special Workshop on Cortical Visual Impairment- with Lea Hyvarinen, MD, PhD

Friday, November 14, 2003

The Cantina of Mary Ward Hall, San Francisco State University

Registration and Continental Breakfast 8:30am-9:30am

Program ends 4:45pm

Cost of workshop is \$30 for AER members, \$35 for non-members

Campus parking: \$5; to be paid when parking

1 CE Unit available from SFSU; participants can sign up for CEU credit during morning registration
(1 CE Unit will be \$75, payable on the day of event)

A continental breakfast will be provided; lunch can be purchased on the SFSU Campus

Space is limited, so register early!

Sponsored by: Northern California AER
San Francisco State University
Blind Babies Foundation

For SFSU Campus Map, visit: www.sfsu.edu/faq/map.htm

For SFSU Parking Info: www.sfsu.edu/prospect/visiting.htm

--Please complete and return the registration form below; postmarked by October 22, 2003

-A Special Workshop on Cortical Visual Impairment- with Lea Hyvarinen, MD, PhD

Friday, November 14, 2003

8:30am - 4:45pm

Registration deadline: Postmarked by October 22, 2003

Name:

Phone:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip:

For confirmation of registration, please provide e-mail address:

—Workshop registration is \$30 for AER members and \$35 for non-members—

Are you a member of AER? Yes No 1 CE unit available from SFSU; \$75, payable on day of event only
(do not include CEU fee in Workshop Registration)

Please make your check payable to: **NCAER**

(Sorry, we are unable to process credit cards for the registration fee; checks only, please)

Return your completed registration form to:

Michael McFarland, Program Associate

Blind Babies Foundation

5016 Mission Street

San Francisco, CA 94112

--If you have additional questions regarding this

workshop, please call Blind Babies

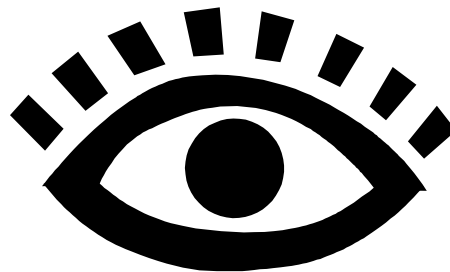
Foundation: 415.586.6140,

or email bbfinfo@blindbabies.org

Lea Hyvarinen, MD, a Finnish ophthalmologist, has been interested in psychophysics of vision and in the development of visually impaired children for over 30 years. She shares her expertise lecturing throughout the world and through the publication of over 200 articles.

Dr. Hyvarinen is best known for her work with infants and children with multiple disabilities, the development of vision assessment tools (Lea Test System), and playthings for stimulation of young children with visual impairment. Her assessment materials were originally sold under the "LH" name; now all her materials are called Lea Materials. They are manufactured by Precision Vision in the U.S. and are available for teachers through Vision Associates.

Dr. Hyvarinen began her research in experimental fluorescein angiography at the University of Helsinki, Finland and continued in the field of clinical research at Wilmer Eye Institute at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore MD from 1967-70. Most of her research on contrast sensitivity and on the development of visually impaired infants was completed in Helsinki in the 1970's and 80's. In 1987, she spent a sabbatical year at Smith Kettlewell Eye Research Institute of San Francisco writing a book; "Assessment of Vision and Hearing of Deaf-Blind Persons". Currently, much of her time is spent preparing information for her website, www.lea-test.fi, in five languages.



NCAER Chapter Bylaws Revised

The Chapter By-Laws have been revised in accordance with the vote of the membership, and approved by the Board of Directors. Anyone wishing a copy of the updated By-Laws may request it from the Chapter Secretary, Pat Leader at plleader@earthlink.net.

The most significant revisions establish a Chapter budget and Reserve Fund for the continued financial security of the Chapter. Other changes include allowances for Board members to meet by teleconference when necessary and to more effectively include representation from geographically distant parts of Northern California.

Anthony R. Candela, chair
Bylaws Committee

Time To Celebrate

I'm pleased to announce our Awards Banquet and Installation Dinner will be held on May 21, 2004. The date is set, but a committee is needed to plan a suitable event to honor newly elected officers and award recipients, and to wave goodbye to those of us leaving the Board.

First, mark your calendars now and plan to attend. Then, contact me with your ideas for the celebration and your commitment to join committees to manage the election, conduct the search for and determine award recipients, and plan a very professional party.

Nominations are needed for:

President Elect

Secretary

Treasurer

Board Members

Awards may be given in the following categories:

Teacher of the Year

Paraprofessional of the Year

Parent of the Year

Student Scholarship

All of us who were at the last Banquet remember the good feelings and wonderful time we had honoring Jack Hazekamp. Let's strive to equal and surpass the fun we had last time.

Please contact me to become a co-conspirator in these activities.

Stephen A. Goodman, NCAER Past President

California School for the Blind

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Sgoodman@csb-cde.ca.gov

Calendar Of Events

September

25 – 28 Guide Dogs for the Blind **FREE** Seminar for O & M Specialists, in San Rafael, CA. Contact Leslie Edmonds at 800- 295-4050; ledmonds@guidedogs.com.

October

4 – JAC Meeting to be held at the COA headquarters in Sacramento, from 10:30 – 4:30 PM. Further details to be provided. Contact Jane Vogel, jrvogel@earthlink.net.

15 – 19 CCB Fall 2003 Convention to be held at the Crowne Plaza Los Angeles Airport Hotel, 5085 West Century Blvd., Los Angeles For Reservations call 310-642-7500 or 888-315-3700.

3 – 5 Foundation for the Junior Blind (FJB) Davidson Program for Independence Family Camp Weekend at Camp Bloomfield in Malibu. For information contact Shirley Manning 323-295-4555 x286.

16 – 18 21st Annual Closing the Gap Conference in Bloomington, MN. Contact **Closing the Gap at 507-248-3810 or www.closingthegap.com**.

17 – 19 Southern California Network Family Camp at Camp Bloomfield, Malibu. For information contact Kathy Goodspeed at 714-573-8888.

30 & 31 – Window-Eyes (screen reader) Training sponsored by GW Micro, at the Earl Baum Center for the Blind in Santa Rosa, for beginning and intermediate users. For information or to register go to:

www.gwmicro.com/training and select the training registration link.

November

CAOMS Annual Statewide Conference to be held in Northern California. Further information can be obtained from David Torgersrud dtorgers@tcde.tehama.k12.ca.us

14 – CVI Workshop with Dr. Lea Hyvarinen; co-sponsored by NCAER, Blind Babies, and SFSU. See flier and registration information within this newsletter.

15 – 18 Annual American Academy of Ophthalmology meeting, in Anaheim, CA. Contact AAO, 415-561-8500 x320 or www.aao.org

16 – 20 American Academy of Ophthalmology Annual Meeting, to be held in Anaheim, California. Contacts information: phone 415-561-8500; meetings@aaao.org; <ww.aao.org>

16 - Foundation for the Junior Blind's first annual Vision Ride. Motorcycle enthusiasts will participate to raise funds supporting FJB. Further information can be found online <www.visionride.org>, or call 323-295-4555, x220.

December

4 – 7 Getting in Touch with Literacy 2003 to be held in Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada. Contact Cay Holbrook cay.holbrook@ubc.ca or Linda Evans 604-431-2121. <www.gettingintouchwithliteracy.org>

13 – 16 AERBVI's National Orientation and Mobility Conference in New Orleans, LA. Contact George Tully at 225-342-4754 or gtully@lwol.com.

2004

March

12 – 14 CTEVH 45th Annual Conference, "Going Strong at 45: Keeping Literacy Alive," to be held at the LAX Marriott in Southern California. Contact CTEVH 323-666-2211, or <registrar@ctevh.org>

July

13 – 19 AER International Conference to be held in Orlando, Florida at the Hilton, Walt Disney World. Contact AER, toll free 877-492-2708.

Announcements

AERBVI International has moved its offices to a new location. Please contact your organization at 1703 N. Beauregard Street, Suite 440, Alexandria, VA 22311 Toll free number has remained the same: 877-492-2708. Feel free to call and offer your best wishes on their new location!

Position opening: Blind Babies Foundation has posted a position for a full time counselor in the Central Valley region of California. Qualifications include BA or BS, experience and/or training in home-based intervention with VI children from 0-6, strong interpersonal communication skills, reliable transportation and auto insurance. Additional desirable qualifications are Spanish language proficiency, credential in VI, O & M, SH, or ECE with Special Education emphasis, experience with VI children and other disabilities, knowledge of local early intervention services. Address inquiries and send resumes to Julie Bernas-Pierce, Blind Babies Foundation, Mission Street, 5016 San Francisco, CA 94112; 415-586-6140/ FAX 415-586-6279; <juliebp@blindbabies.org>.

Braille Note Club announced! If you have a Braille Note or Voice Note user between the ages of 7 and 17, sign them up to interact with other users. Members of this exclusive club receive a free BN Club Members Pack and can e-mail other users to share tips, swap information and favorite web sites, contribute stories/essays/poems. To join, fill out the membership form at www.pulsedata.org/BNClub.asp.

Solutions for Success, A Training Manual for Working with Older People Who Are Visually Impaired: This is an easy to use program to help older clients deal with vision loss, learn to carry out daily activities safely and gain independence. A 34-minute companion video is also available, presenting a positive and helpful view of how people who have lost their vision can learn to live independent and satisfying lives. For availability, contact AFB at <www.afb.org>.