

**Insight: The Voice of  
The American Council of the Blind of New York, Inc.**

<http://www.acbny.info/>

**Spring/Summer 2018**

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The American Council of the Blind of New York is the largest consumer advocacy and support organization of blind and visually impaired people in the state. Your financial contributions help ACB NY's work to promote the educational, vocational and social advancement of blind and visually impaired people in New York. Send your tax-deductible donations to ACB NY, 104 Tilrose Ave., Malverne, NY 11565.

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##

From the Desk of the President – Lori Scharff [president@acbny.info](mailto:president@acbny.info)

Here I sit in early June awaiting the warmth of spring and the heat of summer, both of which seem to be delayed in some other part of the world.

I want to thank the group of folks who attended the Legislative Seminar in Albany the last weekend in April. The Legislative Committee is co-chaired by Ian Foley and Mike Godino. In accordance with our founding documents, each chapter of ACBNY should be appointing a representative to the Legislative Committee. The committee worked hard this year and was able to get their work done in an organized manner.

It was nice to meet and get to know two first-time legislative weekend attendees. Everyone worked collectively while in the Legislative Office Building and the Capital to help one another.

Our state convention will be in Rochester from October 4 through noon on the 7<sup>th</sup>.

Thursday evening at 5:00 pm we will be having a Board and Leadership Seminar. All ACBNY executive board, board of directors and 1 additional representative from each chapter should attend. Individuals representing their chapter should have their name submitted to me via email by September 1, 2018. My phone number is 516-887-1336.

Looking forward to seeing many of you in St. Louis for the American Council of the Blind National Conference and Convention.

##

Editor's Message – Annie Chiappetta [editor@acbny.info](mailto:editor@acbny.info)

Hello ACBNY members, friends, and supporters, welcome to another issue of our flagship magazine.

The snow and cold is gone and warm winds and summer fun is upon us. I sure hope those of us going to St. Louis for the National conference and convention have a great time and your travels are uneventful.

The articles in this issue are a little different in that there are more informational submissions and less of the literary kind. It just happened to turn out this way; I hope our winter issue has more fiction, prose and maybe even a few poems.

I also asked the NYSCB to contribute articles to promote a more complementary balance to these pages. The first article is making its debut. I hope Susan Loeb and her colleagues can keep them coming, and my thanks to Susan for getting it in on time and to Brian Daniels for helping the idea along.

As always, this newsletter could not continue without your support and submissions, so please keep them coming.

Bailey and I are looking forward to meeting you all this year for the ACBNY State convention in Rochester this coming October. Until then, enjoy the sun and fun!

Cheers,

Annie Chiappetta

Insight Editor and Publicity Chair

##

## Award Nominations Sought

The Awards Committee is seeking nominations for the Elizabeth O'Toole, Senator John Flynn, and Paul J. Sauerland Braille Literacy awards to be presented at the 2018 American Council of the Blind of New York State Annual Convention this coming October 4 - 7. Please read the criteria for each award listed below and carefully consider nominating worthy candidates. Nominations MUST be emailed to Jean Mann, no later than August 6, 2018. Late nominations will NOT be considered. Jean's email address is [jmann40@nycap.rr.com](mailto:jmann40@nycap.rr.com).

### Criteria for Elizabeth O'Toole Award

1. Nominees for this award must be or have been a member in good standing of the American Council of the Blind of New York.
2. Nominees must have a long-standing record of service with ACBNY or any of its special interest affiliates.
3. A brief essay on why nominee is worthy of this award must be submitted to the Awards Committee showing examples of outstanding service to the organization and/or highlighting accomplishments which enhance the quality of life of and for the blind.
4. Nominations for the Elizabeth O'Toole Award must be submitted 60 days prior to the state convention or legislative weekend at which the award is to be presented.

### Criteria for Senator Flynn Award

1. Nominee may not be, nor have been, a member of the American Council of the Blind of New York, or any of its special interest affiliates.

2. Nominee shall have made a strong impact on the lives of blind or visually impaired persons in technology, information or environmental access, legislation; provided services which greatly improve the lives of blind individuals through employment or volunteer activities; or supported the American Council of the Blind of New York in a significant manner.
3. A short essay must be submitted to the Awards Committee highlighting nominee's accomplishments.
4. Preference will be given to New York State residents; however, nominees outside of the state will be considered if their actions have made a significant impact on the lives of blind New Yorkers.
5. Nominations for this award must be submitted no later than 60 days prior to the date of the state convention or legislative weekend at which the award is to be presented.

#### Paul J. Sauerland Braille Literacy Award

1. The Paul J. Sauerland Braille Literacy Award is a memorial honor bestowed annually upon a member of ACBNY or a person of national prominence who is a braille student, or a student training to become a professional braille instructor, or a professional residing or working in New York State whose career or volunteer endeavors have significantly promoted the cause of braille literacy among the public or within the educational or blindness rehabilitation systems.
2. The recipient of this prestigious award must have learned braille, or improved the lives of persons who are blind or visually impaired within New York State or nationally through effort or example by encouraging non-braille-readers to learn and use braille, or through administration of or direct instruction in the skills of reading and/or writing braille, or through transcription of braille reading material, or through the development of the braille code itself or of technology used to read, write, transcribe, produce or distribute braille, or is actively enrolled in an educational program which will lead to becoming a professional who will provide braille instruction.
3. Nominations of candidates for the Paul J. Sauerland Braille Literacy Award may be made by ACBNY members in good standing, members of the committee administering the award, administrators or professionals in the

field of education or rehabilitation, parents or guardians of students who are learning braille, or recent students of braille instruction professionals. Nominations will not be accepted from parents or students for their current braille teachers, nor from braille teachers for their current students. Parents and students are encouraged to nominate their former braille teachers and vice versa.

4. Nominations for this award must be submitted no later than 60 days prior to the date of the state convention or legislative weekend at which the award is to be presented.

##

## Chapter Round-Up

### News from the Capital District – Kathy Farina

The Capital District chapter of ACBNY participated in the New York State Assembly's Disability Awareness Day on May 30, 2018. We had a table displaying ACBNY's banner and brochures and provided information to those who stopped by about what the state and local chapters do. There were speeches by various assembly people, a poster contest for elementary school students and tours of the Capitol and the legislative chamber. Capital District ACB will have its annual summer picnic on July 21 at the home of Bill and Nancy Murray. Everyone always enjoys this opportunity to relax, swim in the pool, eat picnic food and socialize. We are planning to host Dinner in The Dark in March, 2019. We usually do this in the fall, but we decided to move it to spring so that we can concentrate on assisting with our state convention in Rochester this fall. One of our longer-term goals is to bring audio description to our local community theaters. Our goal is to train some local folks to describe live community theater productions.

##

### News from Westchester by Maria Samuels, WCB President

WESTCHESTER COUNCIL OF THE BLIND- LOOKING BACK, LOOKING FORWARD  
So far 2018 has meant a lot of new things for WCB: new officers, new board members, new members, new by-laws written, new committees formed, new

meeting space found, and a new budget hammered out. Whew! And we're only half way through the year.

Yet with all this newness we remain constant in one thing – to make our mission statement a reality. At present our top two 2018 projects are 1) working with the Board of Elections to launch a campaign to markedly increase the number of people using the BMD machines in this year's November election, and 2) begin planning for the first county wide emergency preparedness training for people with disabilities. We take it very seriously when we say we are "Helping to improve the lives of blind and visually impaired persons."

But Whoa! It's not all serious. We have been writing haiku submissions for an upcoming contest we are determined to win. And if that is not enough of a challenge, we are planning on having our first picnic. This July event will give us an opportunity to meet al fresco and invite friends and family. We are lucky to have members who are singers and guitar players, ready to entertain, plus we will have food, friends and fun.

If only we could combine all our meetings with picnics.

##

## News from Guide Dog Users of the Empire State (GDUES)

GDUES was glad to have been able to participate in the Legislative Weekend and have our voice heard. We are currently collecting our comments for the recommendations submitted to the Department of Transportation rulemaking commentary deadline on July 9, updating and aligning the Air Carrier Access Act (ACAA) rules pertaining to traveling with service, psychiatric and emotional support animals. We hope the Air Carrier Access Act makes the much-needed proposed changes and aligns the policy based on current ADA standards. The hope is for governmental policy makers to acknowledge, adopt and update the policies to better protect service dogs and handlers, the general public and hold the individuals accountable who pose pets as service dogs to avoid paying liability damages or pet fees imposed by the airline industry.

We hope to have a great program this year at the convention in Rochester and can't wait to reunite with other handlers and their dogs. If you are a new guide dog handler, why not find out how to join GDUES by emailing President Annie Chiappetta at [president@gdues.org](mailto:president@gdues.org) or call 914-295-0450.

##

## The Games Booklet by Ralph Smitherman

The Braille Revival League has a fundraising project. A booklet, consisting of nine games has been developed. All the games are in braille. As a tribute to baseball, each game is listed as an inning. All of us know that a normal baseball game has nine innings. Each game has nine clues. Each game has a corresponding answer sheet. There are nine separate games-no duplicates! In one game, see what you know about authors, in another game find what is common. There is also a numbers game. Are you knowledgeable about coffee? Well, find out in the coffee game. There is a notification page in this booklet with instructions for each inning. The cost for each booklet is \$10; with all proceeds directed to the Braille Revival League. As previously mentioned all booklets are in braille only. We hope you will enjoy the games and have fun! It's easy to purchase a booklet; if you want to pay by credit card, just call our BRL Treasurer, Jane Carona at: 301-598-2131, if you would like to pay with PayPal money may be sent to [treasurer@braillevivalleague.org](mailto:treasurer@braillevivalleague.org), alternatively, checks may be sent to:

JANE CARONA

3511 FOREST EDGE DRIVE

APARTMENT 1G

SILVER SPRING MD 20906-1518

If you write a check, pay to the order of, BRL and in the memo, section write games booklet. Thank you for supporting the Braille Revival League!

##

Editor's Note: Please disregard any events mentioned in this article with dates that have already passed; our deadlines are not in line with those chosen at NLS. We recommend each person contact the NYS TBBL personally to request the NLS newsletter.

SPRING 2018

Volume 1 Issue 1

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Observance Dates, We Will Be Closed

### The New York State Library: 200 Years of Knowledge, Heritage and History

In 1818, a newly elected Governor DeWitt Clinton urged the creation of a state library at the seat of government. Although the idea had scarcely gained a foothold in this new nation, knowledge of such institutions dated back to ancient Assyria. New York, being only the third state to create such a library, acknowledged the importance of having a mechanism through which to share, store and make accessible state and federal documents and a public library for general use.

At the centennial celebration in 1918, the New York State Library held a monumental event, marked by a convocation and nationwide recognitions. Dignitaries from across the nation and around the world visited Albany to applaud the survival of a library that had recently been called one of the most remarkable in the world. The celebration commemorated the longevity of the library, its phoenix-like rebirth after a devastating fire in 1911 and its relocation to the newly built New York State Education Building in 1912.

The bicentennial will celebrate the Library's longevity and its impact on libraries and library science in New York and around the world. Events planned for the April celebration will highlight the many facets of the library through history and the future of the library in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Please see [www.nysl.nysed.gov](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov) for further information about the bicentennial, including these upcoming events.

- Speakers Forum on Libraries in the 21st Century  
James G. Neal, President of the American Library Association (ALA)

Wednesday, April 25, 2018, 6:30PM Cultural Education Center, Huxley Theater (First Floor)

- To register, call 518-474-2274 or email [nysltrn@nysed.gov](mailto:nysltrn@nysed.gov)

#### Newsline Adds TBBL Local Channel

<https://nfb.org/nfbnewsline>

Are you unable to read the newspaper? Would you like to hear TBBL News, the Upstate Update and our welcome packet over the phone?

It's as easy as dialing a phone! And it's FREE!

NFB-NEWSLINE is a free service available to anyone who is blind, visually impaired or print-disabled. Funded by state sponsors, NFB-NEWSLINE provides access to over 400 publications including, ten national newspapers, 16 breaking news sources, 14 international newspapers, and countless state newspapers. Some titles include: Financial Times, Vancouver Sun, Family Circle, Time, Consumer Reports, Jet, Guideposts, Smithsonian and many more! For a full list of participating publications, visit this link: Participating Newspapers and Magazines. <http://www.nfbnewsline-ky.org/publications.php>

NFB-NEWSLINE also offers emergency weather alerts, seven-day forecasts, job listings, TV listings, retail ads and more. Newsline is accessible through a variety of methods and devices including touch-tone telephone, a free mobile app for iPhone, iPad and iPod, on demand emails, a secure website, and a variety of portable players, including the NLS Talking Book player and Victor Reader Stream New Generation.

To subscribe call (866) 504-7300 or visit:

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#### NFB-NEWSLINE over the Phone

- If you can dial the phone, you can use NFB-NEWSLINE.
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- Unparalleled access to create your own Favorites list, skip articles or sections, repeat items you wish to re-read. Continuous reading mode that allows you

to start, stop and skip articles, read the newspaper all the way through or just the items you choose.

- Alter the reading voice: change the volume, speed or pitch.

### RISE Radio

RISE is WMHT's 24-hour radio information service for people who are blind or print disabled in New York's Capital Region and the Hudson Valley. Each week, a dedicated team of RISE volunteers reads articles from local and national newspapers, popular periodicals and books to audiences who would otherwise be unable to access such information.

If you can receive WMHT-FM on your radio at home, you are likely within range of RISE broadcasts. To sign up for RISE, simply call their office as 518-880-3436. RISE will mail you the special receiver you will need to receive their broadcasts. In addition to the receiver, RISE is also available as online streaming audio. For additional information visit <http://www.wmht.org/radio/rise/>

To Request a Free RISE Receiver: Applicants must be registered with the New York State Commission for the Blind or the Library of Congress Talking Books Program (TBBL) OR have a visual or physical condition which impedes access to printed material as certified by a medical professional, social worker, librarian or rehabilitation counselor. Request your receiver here:

<http://www.wmht.org/radio/rise/request-a-receiver/>. For radio reading services in all areas of New York State, see <http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/tbbl/rise.htm>

### Using Talking Book Topics

Talking Book Topics lists audio books and magazines added to the NLS collection within the last two months. It also carries news of developments in services to people who are blind, visually impaired, or cannot read regular print material because of an organic physical disability. NLS publishes Talking Book Topics bimonthly in digital cartridge, large print, HTML and accessible PDF formats and distributes it free of charge to patrons.

When possible, annotations include links to the Braille and Audio Reading Download pages <https://nlsbard.loc.gov/> from which the books can be downloaded to a digital cartridge or USB flash drive. The free BARD Mobile app is

available for Android, Apple and Kindle Fire. The app can be downloaded from the Apple App Store, Google Play and Amazon's App store for reading books on a personal smartphone or tablet. NLS has also introduced BARD Express, a Windows-based software that simplifies searching for, downloading, and transferring audio titles from BARD to a digital cartridge using a personal computer. For more information about BARD, BARD Mobile, or BARD Express, contact TBBL at 1-800-342-3688 or email [tbbl@nysed.gov](mailto:tbbl@nysed.gov)

### Using the Bookshelf Feature

This function allows you to play more than one book on your digital player.

PLEASE NOTE: When you first put in the cartridge it will announce how many books are available on the cartridge.

#### Bookshelf Mode

The Digital Talking Book Machine contains software that allows it to read more than one book or magazine stored on a USB flash drive (also called a thumb drive) or digital cartridge. This is known as Bookshelf mode.

- To enter Bookshelf mode, hold down the green, square Play/Stop button at the front of your digital machine.
- After about five seconds you will hear a beep and the machine will announce "Bookshelf."
- Then it will announce the name of the book or magazine that was most recently played.
- To move to another book or magazine, press either the rewind (RW) or fast-forward (FF) buttons. (These are the triangular white buttons on either side of the Play/Stop button.) The player always announces the titles of the books.
- For example, if there are five books stored on the flash drive or cartridge, and the last book played was in the second position:
  - press FF to move forward to the third book, or
  - press RW to move back to the first book.

### Patron Book Reviews

Compiled by Mike and Tasha

TBBL patrons sometimes write up some interesting short book reviews and send them to TBBL along with their "thank you" for our service. We always really enjoy reading them! Here are a few examples:

- About Last Hope Island DB 88310 by Lynne Olson.  
"I lived thru WW II, have read many books and have seen many films and television shows about the war. But I still learned new things reading this book. Anybody who feels that they know it all should read this book."
- About Emma: A Modern Re-Telling DB 81464 by Alexander McCall-Smith.  
"...it was a hoot! I laughed all the way through it and enjoyed it more than the original Jane Austin tale."
- About Gods and Kings DB 88008 by Lynn N. Austin.  
"This old testament story about prophets and politicians, good kings and bad kings, and mis-used women, has proven that the "good old days" weren't so good. Strong voices acted out the dialogue and made this entertaining and easy to read."
- About Gil Yates: Private Investigator DB 84217 by Alistair Boyle.  
"This was a great book! Great detective story, full of mystery, romance, twists and turns. Great characters and interesting parts of the countries of the world. It even had its share of humor, normal everyday simple little mishaps that make it seem so real. Loved it and it ended too soon. Almost makes me want to be a private eye!"
- About Avalanche and The Kidnapping of Roseta Uvaldo DB 47659 by Zane Grey.  
"Two great stories, full of adventure and excellent descriptions of scenery and surrounding areas of the countryside. Reminds you of how beautiful this country we live in really is. Zane Grey is a fabulous writer!"

About Last Hope Island DB 88310 by Lynne Olson.

"I lived thru WW II, have read many books and have seen many films and television shows about the war. But I still learned new things reading this book. Anybody who feels that they know it all should read this book."

About Emma: A Modern Re-Telling DB 81464 by Alexander McCall-Smith.

"...it was a hoot! I laughed all the way through it, and enjoyed it more than the original Jane Austin tale."

About Gods and Kings DB 88008 by Lynn N. Austin.

“This old testament story about prophets and politicians, good kings and bad kings, and mis-used women, has proven that the “good old days” weren’t so good. Strong voices acted out the dialogue and made this entertaining and easy to read.”

About Gil Yates: Private Investigator DB 84217 by Alistair Boyle.

“This was a great book! Great detective story, full of mystery, romance, twists and turns. Great characters and interesting parts of the countries of the world. It even had its share of humor, normal everyday simple little mishaps that make it seem so real. Loved it and it ended too soon. Almost makes me want to be a private eye!”

About Avalanche and The Kidnapping of Roseta Uvaldo DB 47659 by Zane Grey.

“Two great stories, full of adventure and excellent descriptions of scenery and surrounding areas of the countryside. Reminds you of how beautiful this country we live in really is. Zane Grey is a fabulous writer!”

### Authors Who Passed Away in 2017

Researched by Kim

We are sad when our beloved authors pass away. But their works live on in our library collection! Below is a list of authors who passed away in 2017, including some of their most popular books.

Robert Pirsig DB 49089 Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance

William Blatty DB 12688, BR 11946 Exorcist

Sam Shepard BR 10301 Seven Plays,  
DB 87435 The One Inside: A Novel

Michael Bond BRA15178, DB 26425 A Bear Called Paddington  
BR 06348, DB 31829 Monsieur Pamplemousse (Bk1)

Colin Dexter BR 09289, DB 36892 The Way Through the Woods (Inspector Morse Book 10)

Sue Grafton BR 05589, DB 35089 A is for Alibi

Spencer Johnson DB 49513 Who Moved My Cheese

TBBL FAQ -Frequently Asked Questions

Does Talking Book Topics come in different formats?

- Yes. It is available as a bimonthly subscription, in both audio cartridge and large print. It is also online, including back issues, at <https://www.loc.gov/nls/braille-audio-reading-materials/new-braille-audio-books/talking-book-topics-bimonthly-magazine/>

Are there Braille Talking Book Topics?

- No. TBBL offers the Braille Book Review as a bimonthly subscription in braille and large print. <https://www.loc.gov/nls/braille-audio-reading-materials/new-braille-audio-books/braille-book-review-bimonthly-magazine/>

Do I have to pay postage to return TBBL items?

- No. Any library material that we send you free matter for the blind can be sent back to us as free matter for the blind. Common examples are cartridges without cases, Talking Book players and book requests.

Do you have digital talking books and braille for younger readers?

- Yes. TBBL has an extensive “print braille” collection for younger readers. TBBL provides braille and digital talking books to readers of all ages. Contact us for information on using our superb younger readers collection. 1-800-342-3688 or [tbbl@nysed.gov](mailto:tbbl@nysed.gov)

## NLS Offers Breath Switch

The USB breath switch permits patrons to use Sip-and-Puff actions to control the Digital Talking Book Machine (DTBM). Using their breath, patrons may operate all buttons and functions, with the exception of the red Power on/off button. This unit is intended for patrons who are unable to use the buttons on the DTBM. For functions of the breath switch, see [https://nlsbardpractice.loc.gov/LOC\\_02/LOC\\_02\\_USB\\_BreathSwitchDTBM.html](https://nlsbardpractice.loc.gov/LOC_02/LOC_02_USB_BreathSwitchDTBM.html).

To download the application see [https://mn.gov/deed/assets/breath-switch-application\\_tcm1045-310283.pdf](https://mn.gov/deed/assets/breath-switch-application_tcm1045-310283.pdf)

Please request and complete the application and submit it to TBBL, who will email it to NLS. Upon approval of the application, NLS/BPH will mail the device directly to you.

## Feedback and Facebook

We value your feedback. If you have suggestions that you think would improve library services email [tbbl@nysed.gov](mailto:tbbl@nysed.gov) or phone 1-800-342-3688. You can also interact with us on our TBBL Facebook

page: <https://www.facebook.com/NYSLtbbl/>

Like us, read about current events, learn about services for people with disabilities and read about the TBBL book collection.

## List Only or Nightly Automatic Selection

- If you are set up as a list only patron, we will only send books that are on your request list. There may be books on your request list that are not currently available on our shelves. You will not receive books unless you have provided us with the subjects, titles and authors that you enjoy reading.
- If you are set up as an automatic subject selection patron, books will automatically be sent to you based on your preferences. If the maximum number of books you want at a time is 6 and your shipment number is 2,



then you will receive 2 books at a time until you reach 6. Once you reach your maximum quota, in this case 6, you will not receive books again until you send some back and we receive them.

- PLEASE NOTE: If there are books on your request list that have no copies available, those books will stay on your list until a copy becomes available.
- PLEASE NOTE: There is at least a week lag between the time books are returned by a patron and we receive them at the library. This is due to the time the US Post Office takes to sort them and get the books to their proper destination.

### Please Return Your Overdue Books

Your Talking Book and Braille Library is a lending library. You are permitted to borrow books for one to two months and then return them. We expect our books to be returned within this time frame. If you have reached or exceeded your quota, we will NOT send you more books until we receive some books back. It is unfair for patrons to retain books while other patrons wait, in some cases years, to receive their requested books. We do understand that books are sometimes lost in the mail. We appreciate the courtesy of patrons being considerate of other patrons' needs.

### Update Your Information with Us!

It is very important to keep all of your contact information updated. This includes your address, phone number, email address and alternate contact. This information is necessary for continuity of service.

### Observance Dates. We Will Be Closed.

Monday, May 28, 2018 - Memorial Day

Wednesday, July 4, 2018 - Independence Day

Monday, September 3, 2018 - Labor Day

New York State Talking Book and Braille Library  
Talking Book & Braille Library  
Cultural Education Center  
Albany, NY 12230  
800-342-3688

E-mail: [tbbl@nysed.gov](mailto:tbbl@nysed.gov)

Website: [www.nysl.nysed.gov/tbbl](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/tbbl)

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/NYSLtbbl>

#### HOURS:

Monday – Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

#### Eligibility

Persons unable to read or use materials due to temporary or permanent visual or physical limitations may receive services.

Editor: Senior Librarian Shawn Lemieux.

Other contributors include Senior Librarian Michael Whitney, Talking Book and Braille Library staff and New York State Library staff. To contact the editor or contributors, please call 1-800-342-3688 or email [tbbl@nysed.gov](mailto:tbbl@nysed.gov) to their attention.

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Downloading is the easiest and best way to obtain your digital books.

Talking Book & Braille Library

Cultural Education Center

222 Madison Ave.

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[www.nysl.nysed.gov/tbbl](http://www.nysl.nysed.gov/tbbl)

##

## New York State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB) From Another Perspective

Most of you that are reading this article already know about the New York State Commission for the Blind (NYSCB) and the services it provides. What you probably don't know is what it's like to help legally blind New Yorkers from an NYSCB counselor's personal perspective, so for this article, I asked two very experienced vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselors why they love their work and how it inspires them. The first story is from Paul Geraci, a children's counselor at NYSCB and the second from Paula Frank, one of NYSCB's longest serving adult VR counselors.

### Story 1, Paul Geraci, Children's Counselor, NYSCB

I've been working with legally blind New Yorkers at NYSCB for over 30 years, and for the past 24 years, I've had the pleasure of working with legally blind children and their families. When children are born blind, I find that the child will be fine, as services are provided to aid with their development. It's the parents I worry about because it is their feelings that are most affected.

Parents carry guilt and anger and need to overcome those feelings to support their children and help them grow. Assisting families through the grieving process, showing them that it's not their fault and watching them realize that their children have a bright future is the part of the job I love. Watching parents change and grow with their children is what inspires me the most. Of course, giving children glasses so they can see better or prepare their own meals always puts a smile on my face, but nothing is more satisfying than meeting a former client and seeing the impact of my work in their achievements.

As an example, I was recently at the Lighthouse-Guild, one of our partner agencies, and met a former consumer who thanked me for helping him when he was seven years old. After losing his vision in a military explosion in his home country of Iraq, he was brought to the United States for emergency medical treatment through an agency called Global Relief. After his treatment was concluded, he returned home and while traveling in Iraq from the airport, he was in a terrible car accident where he lost his right arm and his brother was killed. He then returned to America for additional treatment and sought permanent residence. That's when I first met him. He spoke no English and was not independent, but with NYSCB's help he received orientation and mobility training, instruction in activities of daily living and attended a family camp program at Visions, another of our partner agencies, with his father, where they took part in immersive programs designed to facilitate learning through vision rehab therapy, mobility, occupational therapy and various therapeutic recreational activities.

Today, this young man is 20 years old and is working as an interpreter. He is also attending the Lighthouse Guild music school where he plays the trumpet. He thanked me for all the help and guidance that I gave him, and that is truly rewarding for me.

Story 2, Paula Frank, VR Counselor, NYSCB

The work I do as a counselor influences my life in many ways. As a helping professional, I provide counseling assistance to my clients to enable them to develop realistic vocational goals and to gain the skills needed to reach their potentials. In return, I benefit from seeing the growth of those I counsel. This motivates me to forward the mission of the NYSCB: "to enhance employability, to maximize independence and to assist in the development of the capacities and strengths of people who are legally blind."

An example is my work with students who are exploring the idea of going to college. It is helping them to choose the right school to enable them to grow and to motivate them to study to reach their goals. It is helping them gain work experience in their field of study and ultimately to help them to get employment. One of my students overcame extreme health issues, in addition to legal blindness, to secure an administrative position that enabled her to provide ideas that influenced educational policies. Another student, who was out of school for

over 30, gained the confidence to return to college and get his degree. He is now in the process of seeking employment. It is their hope for a better life and the efforts they make to achieve one that provides me with the motivation to help all my clients to achieve their goals and inspires me to help other people in my personal life to reach their potential.

I hope these stories provide a snapshot of how it feels from the other side of the desk!

For further information about NYSCB, find us at [visionloss.ny.gov](http://visionloss.ny.gov) or call us at 866-871-3000.

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Stories compiled by Susan Loeb  
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NYSCB

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Affiliate Or Chapter: Which Do I Belong To?  
By Lori Scharff

During the board meeting in Albany, I explained the structure of the American Council of the Blind as well as the American Council of the Blind of New York. At that time, I said I would be putting together a newsletter article for everyone to read.

It is my hope that you have a better understanding of how the organization functions from the national level down to your local chapter. As always, feel free to reach out to me if you have any questions.

The American Council of the Blind is the umbrella organization on the national level. They have an all-volunteer executive board and board of directors. They have 2 offices, one in Alexandria, VA where the ACB Braille Forum is edited, legislative and advocacy issues are handled and the executive director works

from. The Brooklyn Center, MN office handles the finances and management of ACB Enterprises and Services which is the ACB thrift stores.

The thrift stores provide funding to ACB national to work on needed projects.

ACB national then consists of close to 70 state and special interest affiliates. These are groups associated with a specific state, or “segment” of people who are blind or sighted who believe in the mission and goals of the organization.

Currently, the special interest affiliates on the national level are:

- [Alliance on Aging and Vision Loss](#)
- [American Association of Blind Teachers](#)
- [American Association of Visually Impaired Attorneys](#)
- [ACB Diabetics in Action](#)
- [ACB Families](#)
- [ACB Government Employees](#)
- [ACB Human Service Professionals](#)
- [American Council of Blind Lions](#)
- [ACB Radio Amateurs](#)
- [ACB Students](#)
- [Blind Information Technology Specialists](#)
- [Blind LGBT Pride International](#)
- [Braille Revival League](#)
- [Council of Citizens with Low Vision International](#)
- [Friends in Art of ACB, Inc.](#)
- [Guide Dog Users, Inc.](#)
- [Independent Visually Impaired Enterprisers](#)
- [Library Users of America](#)

Each affiliate pays dues to the American Council of the Blind National based on the total number of members belonging to a specific affiliate. In turn, each affiliate receives a vote for each 25 people or a fraction thereof. Each member also has an individual vote at national convention if they attend in person.

The American Council of the Blind of New York is an affiliate of ACB. ACBNY has chapters that cover most geographic areas in New York State as well as 2 special interest groups, one for guide dog users and the other for low vision.

The American Council of the Blind is a grassroots organization that functions with various affiliates who in some cases have chapters.

ACBNY has an executive board elected by the members at the annual state convention business meeting. Each chapter has a board of officers and directors to represent the interest of the chapter or special interest group.

Each chapter has their own elected board. This board and its members handle issues directly associated with that chapter. The chapter has their own governing documents separate from ACBNY.

To help members who do not live in an area in New York with a chapter, ACBNY also hosts a members-at-large group. This is often because there is no chapter in a person's geographic area or they are not interested in guide dog issues or low vision. Members-at-large can join ACBNY and by joining will also become a member of ACB and ACBNY.

The ACBNY board of directors also appoints a members-at-large representative. This individual is afforded the same voting and organizational responsibilities as the other board directors.

##

## The Seven Laws of Writing

from: *Anyone Can Write* by Roberta Jean Bryant

1. To write is an active verb. Thinking is not writing. Writing is words on paper.
2. Write passionately. Everyone has loves and hates; even quiet people lead passionate lives. Creativity follows passion.
3. Write honestly. Risk nakedness. Originality equals vulnerability.
4. Write for fun, for personal value. If you don't enjoy it, why should anyone else? Pleasure precedes profit.
5. Write anyway. Ignore discouraging words, internal and external.

Persistence pays off.

6. Write a lot. Use everything. Learning comes from your own struggles with words on paper.

7. Write out of commitment to your ideas, commitment to yourself as a writer. Trust yourself.

##

### Travel Tips From TSA

On behalf of the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), I am writing to share some important tips to help you better prepare for security screening and to help TSA keep wait times to a minimum at our Nation's airport screening checkpoints for the 2018 summer travel season. Here are a few things you can do:

- Arrive early to get through security screening—two hours early for domestic and three hours early for international flights. Check with your airline and airport to determine wait times during peak periods. The [MyTSA App](https://www.tsa.gov/mobile) (<https://www.tsa.gov/mobile>) is also a great resource to help figure out when you should get to the airport.
- Consider checking your bag: more people and more bags may lead to longer wait times.
- For your carry-on bag - make sure it's well organized. It takes time for TSA officers to make sure a cluttered or overstuffed bag is safe.
- Examples of personal electronic items that would be scanned separately include laptops and electronics larger than a cell phone. This includes tablets, e-readers, and cameras. Additionally, TSA may provide instructions to remove items from your bag such as foods, powders, and any materials that can clutter bags and obstruct X-ray images.
- Know the 3-1-1 rule: TSA's 3-1-1 is shorthand for the liquids rule. Basically, limit your liquids, gels, aerosols and pastes to no more than 3.4 ounces, or 100 milliliters, in 1 bag that's no bigger than 1 quart. Medically-necessary liquids may exceed this limit but must be declared prior to commencement of




screening. All liquids, including liquids declared as medically-necessary, must be screened.

- If you must travel with it, know how to safely pack your gun in checked baggage—and NEVER bring it to the TSA checkpoint: [Transporting Firearms \(https://www.tsa.gov/travel/transporting-firearms-and-ammunition\)](https://www.tsa.gov/travel/transporting-firearms-and-ammunition).
- Get through the line faster with [TSA Precheck \(https://www.tsa.gov/precheck\)](https://www.tsa.gov/precheck), which lets you leave your shoes, belt, and light jacket on while you go through security. You can also leave your laptop and your liquids in your bag. It costs \$85 for five years.
- TSA Cares is a helpline for travelers who want to prepare for the screening process prior to flying. TSA Cares is toll free at 1-855-787-2227 or Federal Relay 711. Travelers may also request the assistance of a [Passenger Support Specialist \(https://www.tsa.gov/travel/passenger-support\)](https://www.tsa.gov/travel/passenger-support) for security screening at TSA Cares.
- The [TSA Disability Notification Card \(https://www.tsa.gov/sites/default/files/disability\\_notification\\_card\\_508.pdf\)](https://www.tsa.gov/sites/default/files/disability_notification_card_508.pdf) can be used to discreetly notify TSA Officers at security screening of a disability or medical condition and request an accommodation.
- For general inquiries and questions, visit [TSA.gov \(https://www.tsa.gov/\)](https://www.tsa.gov/) or contact us through the [TSA Contact Center \(TCC\) \(https://www.tsa.gov/contact#\)](https://www.tsa.gov/contact#) at [TSA-ContactCenter@tsa.dhs.gov](mailto:TSA-ContactCenter@tsa.dhs.gov), or by phone at 866-289-9673 or Federal Relay 711. For additional travel tips, read TSA's [5 Essential Summer Travel Tips \(https://www.tsa.gov/blog/2018/05/16/tsas-5-essential-summer-travel-tips\)](https://www.tsa.gov/blog/2018/05/16/tsas-5-essential-summer-travel-tips) and follow @Asks and @TSA on Twitter and Facebook.

TSA works hard every day to ensure that you and your loved ones arrive at your destinations safely. TSA remains committed to ensuring that all travelers are treated with respect, dignity and courtesy. Have a great summer!

Sincerely,

  
Christine Griggs  
Acting Assistant Administrator

##

## How to Convey Dance to Those Without Sight? All Hands On

Article Link: <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/17/arts/dance/mina-hashimoto-dance-for-the-visually-impaired.html>

It was neither awkward nor sensual — more like a group of mechanics huddled over an engine, discussing its capabilities and how it works. In this analogy, Mana Hashimoto, a blind professional dancer and choreographer, was the head mechanic, and her body was the engine.

At a workshop on a recent Saturday, [Ms. Hashimoto](#) was surrounded by four students from the Filomena M. D’Agostino Greenberg Music School, a community school for the blind and visually impaired that’s near Lincoln Center. They followed her movements with their hands: One touched her belly. Another had a hand on Ms. Hashimoto’s head, and still another ran finger along Ms. Hashimoto’s outstretched arm as she began a long, low backbend.

“How are your feet? Is one in front of the other?” asked Andrew Zhang, 22, who lost his sight completely in a childhood accident.

“You can feel it,” Ms. Hashimoto said, grabbing one of his hands and placing it on her shin. “They are like in a natural position.”

“Ah-ha,” “wow” and “ohhhhh” were the chorused responses from the hands-on participants, as the combination of touch and verbal descriptions inspired small revelations.

Ms. Hashimoto was performing “Bridge Over Troubled Water,” a contemporary dance choreographed to the [Simon and Garfunkel song](#), that she will present on Friday at the Metropolitan Museum of Art as part of the museum’s [annual collaboration with the Lighthouse Guild](#) (the music school’s nonprofit parent organization). In the past, the event has focused on helping the visually impaired experience visual art through music and poetry.

This is the first year that dance will be featured, and Ms. Hashimoto’s hands-on workshop was preparation. The walk-through was meant to enable the students — about two dozen took part in two separate workshops — to recall the action onstage while they sit in the audience for the performance, or to sing in the a cappella ensemble that will accompany Ms. Hashimoto.

Showcasing dance, without the audience’s necessarily seeing it, is Ms.

Hashimoto’s life’s work. Her performances and workshops bring dance, a medium with a strong visual component, to those without sight while also providing a new experience for a sighted audience.

“I create moments of stillness and darkness to start to be aware of the rest of the senses available,” said Ms. Hashimoto, who connects touch, sound and sometimes scent with a performance space and the movements that fill it.

Born in Japan with full vision, Ms. Hashimoto trained as a classical ballet dancer into her teenage years, when her sight began deteriorating because of optic nerve atrophy. Doctors assured her that her vision wouldn’t go completely, and she moved to New York City to continue studying dance about 20 years ago. Within 12 months, her sight had disappeared completely.

For a moment, she said, she thought she would have to give up dance. How would she see the instructors? Know the position of other dancers? Critique herself in a mirrored studio?

A friend suggested that they take a dance class together, so that Ms. Hashimoto could memorize and refine the movements through touch and verbal cues. When a teacher was moved to tears watching the two interact as one — something of a performance in itself — Ms. Hashimoto said that she understood that she had something distinctive to offer the art form.

Now, she needs remarkably little to perform: a cane to feel her way onto the stage and either a cross made in tape or a small sheet of carpet to define her dance space and direction. Her performances are mostly solos, partly to avoid colliding with other performers.

In a workshop that she runs a few times each year, “Dance Without Sight,” Ms. Hashimoto brings the sighted and the visually impaired into her world.

Participants — those who have vision close their eyes or use blindfolds — explore Ms. Hashimoto’s dance space, taking note of how sound reverberates off walls, while feeling textures and the layout.

Time is spent touching the material of Ms. Hashimoto’s costume, as she describes its color, shape and how it moves with her. Then her body becomes the focus, as participants follow her movement with their hands.

“We would touch the lower back — you can actually feel what her limbs are doing, the full movement of the body that way,” said Fred Hat, a visual artist who took Ms. Hashimoto’s workshop. During the final performance, spectators can hear the sound of the dance and feel the rush of air as she transforms her space. Since the early 1980s, film and TV shows, theaters and museums have steadily increased accessibility to the visually impaired, said Joel Snyder, a pioneer in audio description services. But dance lags behind. “People have found it challenging to describe something that is somewhat amorphous,” Mr. Snyder

said. “In a museum, it is one thing to describe a landscape, and something else to describe a Jackson Pollock. I liken it to that.”

[Offering a visual description of dance](#) can be a heavy lift. Mr. Snyder and his wife, Esther Geiger, a [certified movement analyst](#), will watch videos of the choreography and attend rehearsals to write a script. But they are always prepared to improvise their descriptions — not unlike calling a sports game — during the performance. “We want to let the other sounds be there as well,” Mr. Snyder said of the balancing act.

He said he knew of only a handful of dance troupes in the United States, like [AXIS Dance Company](#) in Oakland, Calif., that regularly provide audio descriptions. (Beginning this summer, a majority of Broadway shows in New York will have at least a prerecorded audio description.)

For Ms. Hashimoto, touch adds another layer to verbal descriptions. At the music school’s workshop, Madeline Mau, 11, who sees light, shadows and bright colors with her limited vision, molded her own movements to imitate those she felt through Ms. Hashimoto. She said that she was grateful that Ms. Hashimoto allowed her such intimate access to her body and personal space.

“I’ve been able to translate dance into something I understand, not just a visual medium,” Madeline said. “There was just so much emotion — loneliness, happiness, love.”

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American Council of the Blind, Inc.

Announcement list and subscription instructions

The name of the list is ACBNYStateAnnounce

The purpose of the list is to act as the electronic publicity arm of ACBNY. The list actions are set as “do not reply, making it a one-way list.” Official documents related to ACBNY, activities and advocacy information will be released through this email list upon approval by the Electronic Resources Committee (ERC) who acts as the email list administrator.

The list will be set to accept attachments.

Chapters are encouraged to seek out individuals, organizations, companies, and media contacts to subscribe to the list.

To submit email addresses to be added to the list, please contact the Electronic Resources Committee: [erc@acbny.info](mailto:erc@acbny.info)

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## Officers and Chapter Representatives

American Council of the Blind  
Board of Directors Contact List  
June 2018

The following is the most up to date list of members of the ACB NY Board of Directors. If there are any errors, please notify Lori Scharff at [president@acbny.info](mailto:president@acbny.info) and your newsletter editor, Annie Chiappetta at [editor@acbny.info](mailto:editor@acbny.info)

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