

E-CONNECTOR



BULLETIN BOARD

Notes and Notices from Colorado Parents of Blind Children (CO-POBC)



REFLECTIONS ON WHAT IT MEANS TO BE BLIND

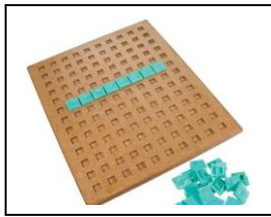
Gary Wunder is the editor of the [Braille Monitor](#), the monthly magazine published by the National Federation of the Blind. In the July, 2015 edition Gary wrote a preface to an article titled "Helping Those I Meet Look Beyond My Differences or Conditions". His words should be taken to heart as we come to recognize that blindness is not a tragedy, just a different way of seeing the world. Here's what Gary said:

"How many of us can relate to the frustration generated when people talk with us about our blindness and yet will not name it, calling it our condition or situation or our challenge. It can be difficult when they imply that it is a shame that we can't visually observe something

beautiful or that we are blessed because we do not have to look at something terrible. It is difficult to explain that we too have things to appreciate in a sunrise or sunset, the beauty of a stream, the flapping of a flag, and the wonderful feeling that comes after a rain, whether or not we see the rainbow. Whether we see the horror of the war on our television screen or witness the picture of the starving child halfway across the world, we know these things exist, grieve about them, and search in our souls for a way to change them. How do we get people to understand in their hearts and in their minds that blindness means the loss of physical sight but need not make radical changes to who we are and does not alter our innate humanity? It is one of our characteristics but by no means the most important."

Dear Reader:

Please contact us if you have an announcement you would like to tack up on our bulletin board, or if you would like to add a friend or family member to the e-mail list. Direct all communications to: copobc.newsletter@gmail.com, attention Julie Hunter, editor.



BRaille WORD BOARD

Here's a great way for Moms and Dads to share the learning of Braille with their kids. Or, use this board to spell out brief messages in Braille and print, and to play word games. The Masonite board measures approximately 9 by 12 inches and has depressions to hold the letters in place. The square letter tiles feature a print and Braille letter with a locator notch at the top to help the blind person orient the tile in the correct direction. There are 98 letter tiles included. Available from the NFB [Independence Market](#). AIG91B; \$15.00.



QUESTION:

How many legally blind kids are in the Colorado public schools?

ANSWER:

There are 350 children ages 3-21 whose primary label is blindness. There are 1,065 children ages 3-21 with blindness and additional disabilities.



FREE SCREEN READER SOFTWARE

This message from Serotek Corporation:

"We'd like to remind you of our Keys to K-12 program. It's a means for students elementary through high school to have ready access to a fully functional screen reader at no charge. The cost for a screen reading solution with technical support remains out of reach of the average family bank account, and with budget cuts everywhere, school districts equally struggle to outfit one computer station with a screen reader, let alone several. Keys for K-12 is a free license to carry the System Access Mobile capabilities on a portable thumb drive. With the SA Mobile Software, your student can plug his or her flash drive into any computer, anywhere, and have instant access -- through text-to-speech and/or magnification -- to all Windows-based applications already there. At school, the library, Grandma's house or a sleepover, a blind child can access the same information on the computer as any sighted student who can see the screen. A licensed copy of System Access Mobile sells for

\$499.00, and now students K-12 can have it for free."

SA Mobile Software, free for students through 18 years of age. To get started with Keys for K12, please go to: <http://www.serotek.com/kk12student>



GETTING FIT

Face it...exercise videos and fitness classes at the local YMCA just don't work very well for blind and visually impaired people. For those frustrated by a lack of accessible exercise instruction, WE Fit Wellness and the NFB of Colorado Sports and Recreation Division have developed a fitness and exercise guide for blind people. The "Total Fitness Pack" includes:

- 35 described exercises
- 5 workouts (workouts are made up of the 35 described exercises and include 2 interval cardio workouts, upper body, core, and lower body).
- a cookbook with over 60 healthy recipes
- a guide to eating fast food on the go
- a guide to maintaining exercise

Total Fit Packs are available on SD cards and thumb drives for purchase at \$20 each. To purchase a Total Fit Pack please contact Jessica Beecham at jessica@wefitwellness.com.



ONKYO BRAILLE ESSAY CONTEST

The Onkyo Corporation is again sponsoring a Braille essay contest for people of all ages, including the "Junior Group", ages 25 and under. Contest winners receive cash prizes valued from \$500 to \$2,000. Essays must be received by September 13.

For more information and contest rules visit <http://www.nfb.org/onkyo-braille-essay-contest>.



THE FUTURE OF BRAILLE DISPLAYS

There is exciting work going on in revolutionizing the computer Braille display. Currently Braille display devices provide one line of Braille at a time. In development at the University of Michigan is a new technology allowing a full page of Braille to be viewed. This technology is based on the science of fluidics wherein pressurized fluid routed under a thin elastic membrane would push up pins to create bubbles

on the surface. This technology would allow Braille and tactile images to be created on the same page. In addition, tactile images could move to allow for dynamic animations. How exciting! See a video on the future of Braille displays using micro-fluidic technology by [clicking here](#).



AUDIO COMIC BOOKS FOR THE BLIND

[Comics Empower](#) is the online comic book shop that makes comics for the visually impaired! Specializing in science fiction tales in serial comic book style, every month 22-24 pages of comics are translated into 30-35 minutes of audio recordings.

Here's what the creator, Guy Hasson, has to say about *Aurora*, a comic for kids ages 9 and up: "*Aurora* is a comic book with a blind hero. Daniel Price was blinded in battle. Yet he is the only man who can save Earth by activating an ancient robot fighting machine, called *Aurora*. He can no longer fly it properly, since he can't see. And he can't aim properly for the same reason so Daniel will just have to find a way to be a hero." Hasson promises three things that will always be

true about the story line: " 1.) The good guys will win. That's how empowerment works; 2) Daniel will never ever regain his sight. Blind kids can't, and neither can he.; 3) Daniel will never ever develop a kind of sixth sense that will allow him to magically 'see' what's going on around him. Nope. Daniel is blind. And he will have to deal as a blind person. And he will find a way to be a hero. *Aurora* is here to lift your child up and teach him or her that s/he can be a hero, too!"

Every month, a new issue of *Aurora* appears at the Comics Empower store. Subscriptions available for \$3.00 per month. See details by [clicking here](#).



SEPTEMBER CALENDAR

****SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 19

FAST Saturday

12:30 a.m.- 5:00 p.m.

FAST Saturday (Fun Activities and Skills Training) Teens will join the Yoga Body Workshop being held today. More than an opportunity to exercise, participants will leave with nutrition advice, new workouts, and more.

WHERE:

Colorado Center for the Blind
2233 West Shepperd Ave.
Littleton, CO 80120