

NO LIMITS



Newsletter for the Earle Baum Center

Serving the Blind and Visually Impaired

From the Center

Happy Holidays from all of us at the EBC. I am writing this in Atlanta, Georgia following a very productive meeting of the National Council of Private Agencies for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NCPABVI). The conference attendees, Executive Directors from around the United States, decided to expand the mission of the group to include advocacy. Collectively, the agencies serve tens of thousands of blind and visually impaired people of all ages who may not currently have their views and interests heard nationally. The agencies of NCPABVI employ what may be a majority of professional teachers and expert service providers in the US. Representing those they serve, the NCPABVI will promote the positions of the agencies to assure that the views of so many are heard. It is no longer the time to focus on our individual agency needs and allow policies to be determined without input and recommendations.

For me, the excitement of the conference culminates many of the exciting things happening at the EBC. On October 9, we celebrated our fifth anniversary with our Dogathon. We not only raised money, but more importantly, met new friends and made many people aware of the center. We began with a $\frac{3}{4}$ mile walk with more than twice the number of people as last year (many with dogs, others without) to the EBC, followed by a breakfast donated by the Montgomery Village Lions Club, dog games, kids play area, information booths of various organi-

WINTER 2004 VOLUME 5 ISSUE 3

zations, a big silent auction and much more. It seems like everyone had a great time.

Recently we got word that the Rehabilitation Teaching (for the blind) master degree program we have been working to establish with Florida State University had begun accepting applications. Those who have not done so yet are taking the Graduate Record Exam and submitting records to FSU, and decisions as to those accepted is close at hand. There is no such program offered in the western United States and the EBC has achieved something really special by becoming a limited satellite campus for this program.

Although I was in Georgia at the time, I heard that the Halloween party was a hit. Perhaps a bit ghoulish, most participants were not too scary. The EBC was visited by characters including a witch, Leprechaun, ghost and mermaid. And as you probably figure by now, no EBC gathering is without good food and laughter.

We are continuing to grow. Our newest employee is Canaan Richards, an Orientation and Mobility Specialist, who came onboard in September. Canaan started with the EBC as a contract employee while she worked with families and infants as a teacher with Blind Babies Foundation. We are pleased that Canaan chooses to work

Continued on Page 2

Continued from page 1

with us, focusing now on teaching seniors who are visually impaired. Though a big change, this new focus will also be very rewarding.

For several months, the EBC has been working under contract with the Veterans Administration providing training to blind and visually impaired veterans. We have had the honor of working with a number of really wonderful individuals and on top of it all, the Federal Government pays us with a credit card. We needed to establish a credit card account in order to benefit from this fast form of payment which is not all bad. Since establishing the service, we have taken donations, signed up Dog-a-thon registrants and received payments for silent auction items by credit card. Now that it is established, we hope to find lots of ways to use the service.

In September, Leslie Bailiff, one of our O&M Specialists whose background includes working in public transportation, and I, hosted the first meeting of the local transit systems to attempt to resolve some of the many issues faced by our blind and visually impaired community. The ongoing meetings will include the City of Santa Rosa Transit, MV Transportation, Sonoma County Transit and Volunteer Wheels paratransit. With dramatic funding cutbacks and loss of transportation or reduction of service affecting many of us, Leslie offered to share her extensive experience with the local transit providers. The first meeting was very useful and among other things, the EBC was asked to present a comprehensive complaint process that will assure all issues brought to the attention of the transit provider will be heard and followed by a response. We intend to present this at our upcoming meeting along with other ideas and offers of as-

sistance. If we can help the transit companies improve the way they serve our clientele, one of the biggest problems facing those of us who do not drive will be eased.

Finally, we are including in this newsletter the preliminary drawings of our new building. The architect, Ken Coker, is working with the County Planners and we are hoping to find a way to begin construction soon. We are proceeding as though we have the money in hand because somehow, it has to happen. We have outgrown our current facilities and hope to offer new opportunities and services with the additional space. It will include an art, craft and manual skill room, large gathering space, training kitchens, a low vision clinic (which does not exist in the region), etc. The building will be located at the north end of our quad.

And now, of course, my end of the year plea. We ask all of you to consider a financial contribution to the Earle Baum Center to help it all happen. We do not have a fundraising department or development director and are not slick in our appeals. We provide some of the best training someone blind and visually impaired can receive anywhere. All of our money goes directly into services and facilities. We can only do it with the support of our generous donors. We ask you to please donate to the Earle Baum Center.

Thank you and have a healthy and happy New Year.

Allan Brenner, Executive Director

Transportation Problems?

Do you want to become less dependent on Paratransit/MV? Do you want to learn to use the bus routes in the Santa Rosa surrounding area?

Call Earle Baum Center for more information at 707-523-3222.

Happy Holidays from the Staff



Top Row: Ashley Mattison-Shupnick, Denise Vancil, Pat Jefferson, Beryl Brown, Cathy Lawson, Allan Brenner & Fontina, Jeff Harrington & Charlie. Second Row: Susan Hirshfield, Barb Potts & Doug, Jennifer Frazier & Jam, Laurie Scardina. Inserts: Canaan Richards, Leslie Bailiff

A NEW DAY- A NEW WAY

The technology boom is creating changes almost on a daily basis. At a recent seminar at the VA in San Francisco, several EBC staff had an opportunity to view some of the newer items currently available.

Your handy Parrott is about to be replaced by the telephone. The new telephones now have computerized programs available for email, internet pictures, and GPS (global positioning).

If you are a CCTV, user you know how cumbersome it can be. There are now portable CCTV's that are small enough to carry with you, which is very helpful if you are teaching or taking classes.

My favorite new item is the I.D. Mate or bar code reader. This wonderful piece of equipment reads bar code labels on thousand of items that are programmed into its memory bank. If an item is not listed, you can record it into the unit. I have used it for my medicine labels, spices, and am currently in process of doing my tapes, CD's, and movies. Extra labels come with the machine; iron on labels for your clothes, stick on labels for your files, etc., as well as labels with rubber bands for medicines and food items. I have had mine for 6 months and already there is a newer version that is smaller and has much more information in its data base.

In the something for everyone category is the talking medicine labels. There is a small chip implanted in the label, and with the reader that you will need, all the information you need to know about your drugs - including number of refills remaining, is available. Ask your local pharmacy if they are going to have it available. It will be up to us to encourage pharmacy's to embrace this new technology.

We are planning to hold a Technology seminar at the Earle Baum Center in the spring so you will have an opportunity for a hands-on with this new equipment.

HELPFUL HOLIDAY HINTS

By: Denise Vancil, Rehabilitation Teacher and Jennifer Frazier, Adaptive Skills Specialist

With the holiday's quickly approaching, gift giving, finding just the right thing to wear, obtaining festive decorations and deciding what delicious goodies to have on hand are a concern. As a visually impaired person what techniques and assistance is available in carrying out these tasks? Where can I go? How do I get someone to assist me?

Solutions! Solutions! Solutions! There are department stores that routinely offer shopper assistance. It is easier to receive these services if you call ahead to make an appointment or shop during week days at non-peak hours. The following are just a few ideas to help you enjoy the holidays. Please call YOUR local store to verify the availability of suggested services. *May your holidays be stress free and enjoyable!!!*

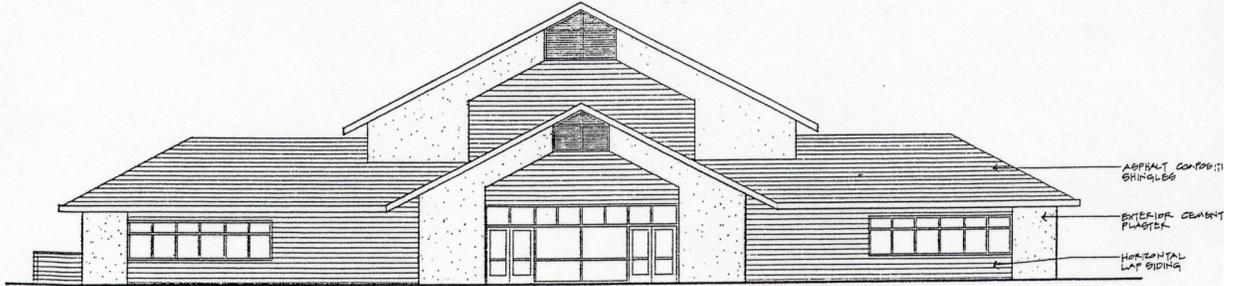
- Macy's by Appointment is a program that will assist customers to shop. Call your local store and ask for the "Shop by Appointment" representative; you can learn the details about the shopping program and gift wrapping service.
- Gottschalk's offers a senior (55 and over) shopping day, every Tuesday. Senior citizens receive 10 percent off most of the items in the store. Call Gottschalk's for an appointment and ask about gift wrapping.
- JCPenney's makes personal shopping assistants available. Call ahead or request assistance upon arrival.
- Target has a 10% senior discount and free deluxe breakfast, usually scheduled on Tuesday after Thanksgiving. For further information contact the Executive Team Leader of Guest Services.
- The Lighthouse of the Blind Adaptations Store in San Rafael or San Francisco offers gift certificates to help individuals who are visually impaired pick out helpful adaptive items to aid in independence. Minimum certificate \$10.

Braille Gift Idea's

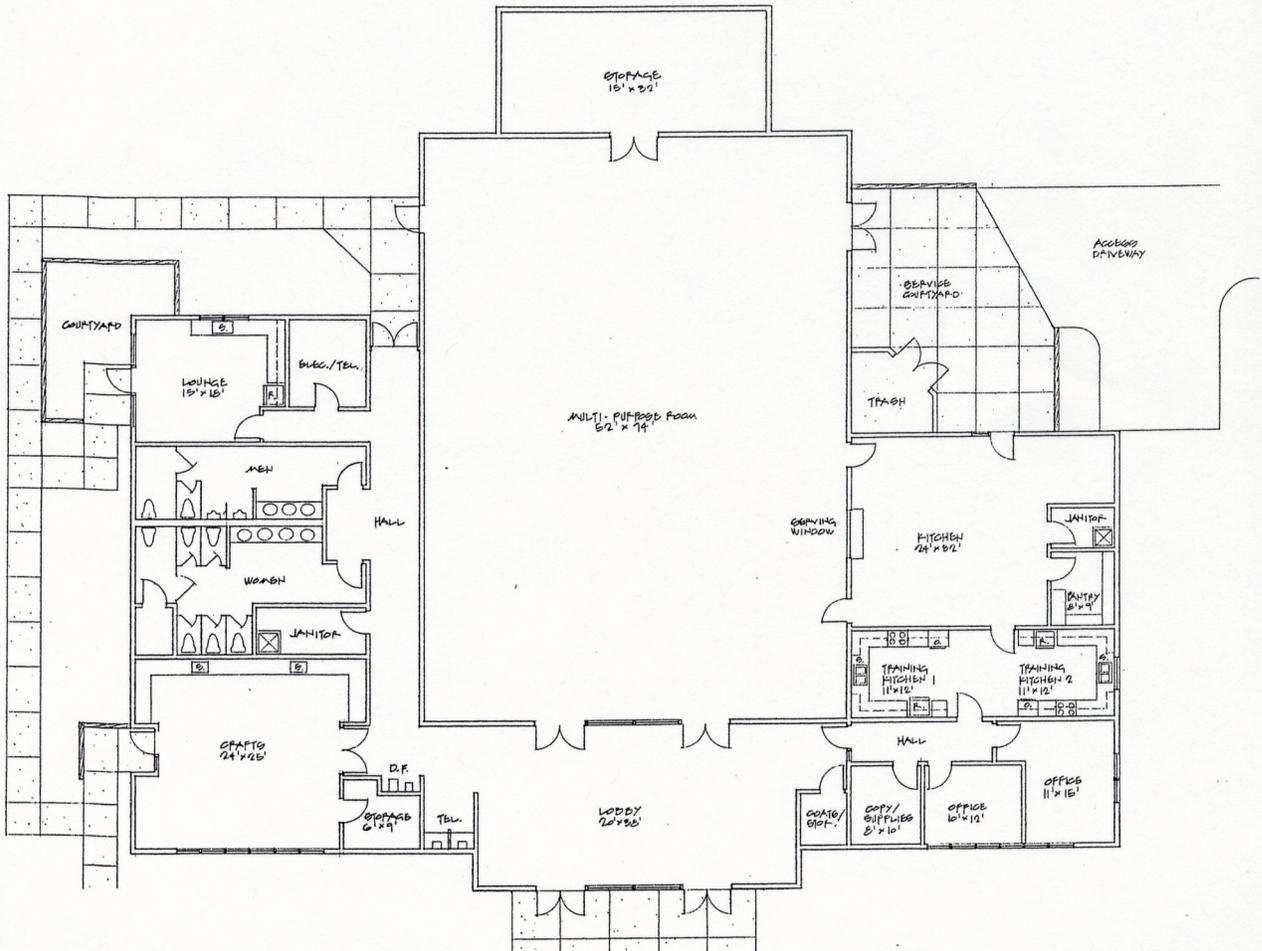
- L'occitane, a body care store, has products labeled with Braille. L'occitane is located in the San Francisco Center- (415) 856-0213 and Corta Madera Village Mall- (415) 934-7843 On-line WWW.usa.loccitane.com
- At First Sight Braille Jewelry: (800) 630-6650 Online: www.braillestone.com
- The Braille Bookstore Cards sells gifts such as, key chains; Braille books and more! They will browse through the catalog with you over the phone if you do not have access to the Internet. Phone: 1-800-987-DOTS Online: <http://www.braillebookstore.com>
- Living Skills Center sells Braille Holiday cards in packs of 10 and do not have a set price; a donation is requested. (510)234-4984
- Hallmark Creations sells large print and Braille greeting cards. For Santa Rosa Hallmark store, call (707) 566-9045
- California School for the Blind Braille sells Braille Fortune cookies. To order call Judith Lesner at (510) 794-3800 Ext. 300. www.csb-cde.ca.gov Lucky Touch fortune cookies
- M. Chapoutier, a French red Cotes-du-rhone wine, comes with a Braille label on the bottle. Available at wine stores including Santa Rosa Beverages and More at \$10.99. (707) 573-1544
- Carmela's Gourmet salad dressing comes with Braille labels. Available at some Safeway and Andronico stores.

Draft Plans for New Construction

The following are architectural drafts of the elevation and floor plans of our new building. When we successfully raise the funds to begin construction, the building will house a large meeting and activity room, a low vision clinic, a manual skills/arts and crafts room, two training kitchens and a commercial kitchen, a lunch room with vending machines and more. If everything can fall into place, we hope to begin construction in mid 2005.



SOUTH ELEVATION
1/8" = 1'-0"



FLOOR PLAN
1/8" = 1'-0"

ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY

Come one, and have some fun,
Come all, and have a ball,
Bring a dish, and some cheer
Celebrate the holidays, and the New Year!

There will be dancers and drummers for your
entertainment delight
Bring your songs and instruments so we can
do it up right
Friends sharing laughter, food and fun is
what it's all about
There will be a good time had by everyone,
there is no doubt.

WHEN: Thursday, December 9, 2004

WHERE: Earle Baum Center -Rms 3 and 4

TIME: 11.00 a.m. to 3.00 p.m.

Bring your favorite dish to share.

Please **RSVP** as there is limited space.

Congratulations!!

The **EBC and SAF** are proud to announce the following have sought and found gainful employment!

**Sheila White, Robert Thompson,
Jimilene Brown, Rosemary Ernster,
Angela Hernandez, Donna McRae,
Lisa Greenfield, Paul George, and
Linda Davis**

THANK YOU GAYE!

Many THANKS to Gaye Hogan for her dedication to our Audio Library! Gaye has generously donated three beautiful bookcases and an incredible amount of time and energy to the EBC. She and Steve have been working diligently to catalog all and make sure everything is in perfect order!

If you have the opportunity to visit, be sure to check out the Library in Room 4.

Out and About

By Laurie Scardina

Wow! Already the Fall season! It was just Halloween, and now we ready ourselves for the HOLIDAYS!! Also, this time of year we go to the second of two California Council of the Blind conventions held each year. The most recent was held in LA at the Marriott Hotel.

Our group from the Earle Baum Center took the Airport Express from Santa Rosa, then flew from Oakland Airport to LAX on Southwest Airlines.

I am pleased to dedicate this column to all the wonderful employees of Southwest Airlines. If you have ever traveled alone on an airline with a vision problem, there are many times you must ask for assistance. Whether to find where to check in, or a bathroom, you need sighted help. All airlines are required to supply aid in these and other areas, as pointed out in the Americans with Disabilities Act. Southwest however, went above and beyond in their service, in my opinion. I was not met with anything but smiles and graciousness while in their care, from curb side check in to the crew on the plane.

The persons seeing us through the security checkpoints were very helpful and surprisingly, knowledgeable about handling a person with vision impairment. They handed me from person to person (as apposed to leaving me standing with my bare face hanging out) in the x-ray place. I was met with very few "over there's...", and even though I take longer then most to move through the processes due to my lack of vision, I never felt rushed.

So, I must give a "hats off " to Southwest Airlines and say that I will fly with them every opportunity I can.

I will cover all the other fun things that go on at these conventions in another issue. In the meantime, **stay out and about in the community.**

Meetings and Activities at EBC

Thursday Thinkers – Everyone welcome to this drop-in, self-help/ mentoring support group. Thursday's, 9:00-11:00am

Veteran's Administration Support Group – Facilitated by the VIST Coordinator, Margie Donovan, open to veterans. 2nd and 4th Thursday, 11:15-12:30pm

Family and Friends Support Group – Open to **all** whose loved ones are visually impaired. 2nd and 4th Thursday, 12:45-2:00pm

Blinded Veterans Association Meeting – 2nd Thursday, 12:30-1:30pm September-June.

Sebastopol/Santa Rosa Macular Degeneration Support Group Open to all with macular degeneration. 2nd Sat. 1:00-2:00pm at EBC Room 3

Redwood Empire Chapter/California Council of the Blind Meeting – An affiliate of the American Council of the Blind, focusing on advocacy. 3rd Friday, 11:30-2:30pm Room 3

Drumming Group - Percussion and rhythm for everyone, led by Patricia Hatfield. Six Tuesday's 9:15-10:15am Beginners encouraged. \$\$

MEETINGS IN THE COMMUNITY

Petaluma Senior Center Low Vision Support Group – For visually impaired adults 55+. 4th Friday, 10:00-12:00 Valley Orchards 2100 E. Washington St., Petaluma

Oakmont Visually Impaired Support Group – Open to all visually impaired adults 55 and over. 3rd Tuesday, 1:15 – 2:45. Oakmont, West Recreation Center, 6470 Meadowridge Dr.

Calistoga Low Vision Support Group 3rd Tuesday, 1:30 – 3:30, Rancho de Calistoga,

Sonoma Low Vision Support Group Tues, 1:00 – 2:30, Vintage House, Sonoma

CLASSES at EBC

Adjusting to Vision Loss Class – Designed for people who have recently experienced sight loss or have not dealt with their loss. Twelve Wednesday's, 9:00-11:00am Call for next class start date, and to be placed on the list – 523-3222

Living with Vision Loss Class –(limited to Blind and Visually Impaired only) Developed to help people adjust to the emotions of losing their sight. Requires pre-approval. Twelve Wednesday's, 11:00-1:00pm Call for next session date – 523-3222

Technology Training – Learn adaptive techniques with computers and more.

Braille Instruction – Integral to independence, Braille is used for much more than reading. Learn labeling of many items including foods, files, clothes and games. Call 523-3222

Independent Living Skills Instruction – Learn adaptive skills for cooking, hygiene, financial management, shopping, cleaning, and more. Call 523-3222

Orientation & Mobility Training – Call for details – 523-3222

Tap Dance Class – Beg. Tap - Six Thursdays, 2:00-3:00 Call. \$\$

Art History through Touch and Sound–(1900-1940') Call for next series. \$

Craft Class – Ongoing, Mondays 10:00 – 12:00pm Open to all VI Adults. \$

Fitness Class – Stretching, strengthening. Mondays and Thursdays, 11:00am to 1:00pm.

FEET FIRST!

Step into the New Year with rhythm and fun. A new tap dance class Thursday, January 13 at 2PM. All comers welcome, even open to sighted dancers! Call instructor Denise for details and registration- 284-6973



Blood Bank of the Redwoods

Blood Drive
January 20, 2005
EBC—Room 3
9am—1pm

EBC Holiday Closure Dec. 20th—Jan 1st



The Earle Baum Center often has space available for Meetings, Activities, Trainings, and Social Gatherings.

If you are aware of a group or organization that may be looking for a place to gather, please call the EBC at 523-3222.

Contact information: www.earlebaum.org email: ebc@earlebaum.org

Tel: (707) 523-3222

Info line: (707) 636-2769

Fax: (707) 636-2768

FREE MATTER
FOR THE BLIND



EARLE BAUM CENTER
4539 Occidental Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

MISSION STATEMENT

The Earle Baum Center was conceived and established by the blind to provide facilities and foster programs in such areas as education, technology, rehabilitation, health, fitness and recreation, to improve the personal, social and economic condition of the blind and vision impaired.