



Newsletter for the Earle Baum Center

Serving the Blind and Visually Impaired

From the Center

Spring 2007. It is hard to believe how fast time passes. The clocks have “sprung” forward, days are getting longer and warmer and the grasses, plants and flowers are shooting up at the EBC. Many new and exciting things are going on.

I have one change in my personal life. I have begun working with a successor guide dog, Delta, a female German shepherd. Working with a very young and energetic dog reminds me of how fast time passes. It seems like yesterday that I was being dragged down the street by Fontina, my first guide. I was conveniently able to forget how much work it takes until a young guide dog and I become a seamless team. Above all, some EBC staff thinks it is pay-back time for all the teasing they heard when they went through the same thing.

The training programs at the EBC are going well. To improve the chances of successful outcomes, we are putting a great deal of focus on social and recreational activities to help motivate with fun, camaraderie and sharing. Some of the activities are new, some re-invented. Fortunately, we have some excellent people forging the way and overseeing the activities.

Until recently, when a great employment opportunity drew her away, Jeannie Martin led the exercise program. The good news is that Jeannie will remain active at the

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EBC Staff Profile

Jennifer Frazier is an Assistive Technology Specialist in our Technology Services Dept.



Jennifer has earned an A.S. Degree from SRJC, a B.A. in Liberal Studies from SSU and will receive her M.A. from San Jose State this May. Jennifer was born in San Francisco and grew up in Northern California. She and her husband Dan have two children, a 16 year old daughter and a five year old son. In her 3 and 1/2 years at the EBC, Jennifer has earned high praise from her clients and has won the appreciation of the staff and volunteers for her dedication to improving people's lives both at the EBC and in the community.

Talking Books Go Online

Ordering cassettes or Braille editions of your favorite book can now be done on-line through the California Braille and Talking Book Library. First, call the Library at 1-800-952-5666 and request your unique user ID and password. Once signed on, you can not only order a book on line, but also check on the last book you ordered, how many books you have checked out, what you have on reserve and much more.

From Page 1:

EBC. Tammy Meyer has taken on the exercise classes as well as agreeing to help coordinate recreational activities of the EBC. Utilizing her background, Tammy will not only encourage participation but will always find a way to bring a smile to your face.

Elizabeth Cooley has offered to re-establish the gardening club. With the help and generosity of others, the vegetable garden is taking shape. Located along the walking path close to the athletic field and guide dog play yard, the garden will soon produce a cornucopia of fresh treats.

Tandem bike season has begun. One of our many active captains, Steven Cozza, made us proud in the Amgen Tour of California race. Steve is in the early years of what promises to be a great professional career. Our many other volunteers including those from Santa Rosa Cycling Club have made the program very special. Tandem riding is both wonderful exercise and fun. Please join in.

The Technology Department held its' first Tech Club meeting. About 25 people attended the meeting to share ideas, new technologies and help one another. We also are putting together a singing club and a variety of social outings.

Since opening the EBC, we are known as a training and community center for people who are blind and visually impaired. Watching the organizational growth and successes is a joy. Witnessing the unmet needs in the greater community is frustrating and sad. The "system" is not taking good care of many people. Some feel they have nowhere to turn. It is our intention to find a way to fund services for people who feel lost and alone and may not qualify for government funding. We need help if we are to achieve our goals.

There are several ways to partner with the EBC. First, if you have any great ideas as to how we can raise the money to pay for activi-

ties and programs, please let us know. We need many thousands of dollars. Second, if you are able to help build an endowment, please consider doing so. Third, if you include us in your planned giving, our future will be more secure. As a small organization, all funds have a big impact. Your donations will help us secure these programs for many of our friends and neighbors, today and into the future. Finally, pass on any information to others who may be able to help the EBC.

Enjoy the spring. It is easy to do at the EBC.

Allan Brenner, Executive Director

Hints and Helps

When scheduling a ride home from an EBC class or event, schedule the pickup time for 15 minutes after the class or event ends. This will prevent early arriving drivers from creating an interruption.

Two new Jitterbug phones have hit the market. Designed for ease of use, the "one touch" model has only 3 large buttons for direct dialing, including one that connects you with a 24/7 operator who will put your call through to anyone on your list. The "dial" model has a numeric keypad with extra large buttons. Service plans range from \$10 to \$40 per month. For more information, contact Independent Living Aids at 1-800-537-2118 or www.independentliving.com.

Hybrid Alert - Use Extra Caution

The National Federation of the Blind has warned that cars with hybrid engines using electricity and fuel are dangerously too quiet for pedestrians. The group said it conducted tests with blind people and had the car drive by in different situations, to see whether or not people could hear it and use the sound of the car to safely cross the street, and they could not.

CCTV and You

Closed Circuit Television Systems, also known as magnifying reading machines, have a long and successful history of assistance to persons who are visually impaired. Unfortunately for many, the cost of purchasing is prohibitive. Others may not wish to purchase a device that may only serve them for a short period of time.

To overcome these challenges, the Earle Baum Center began a CCTV loaner program in 2003. Today, there are 46 CCTVs in our system. Once potential users fill out an information contact form, their name is placed on the waiting list. Wait times vary, but in most cases, a machine is available within one to three months. This program is supported by private donations of cash or CCTV systems that are no longer being used. Although no one is refused because of the inability to pay, donations are requested to help ensure the future of the program. There is no time limit as long as the equipment is being used. All clients who receive a loaner will be given proper instruction and training to assure that the client is confident in its use. There are many types and models, with most of the ones we have on loan being desk top models. Demonstration models are available at the EBC and can be shown by appointment.

What is Low Vision?

Normal vision is the ability to see comfortably what is around us, whether far away or near, with or without glasses. This is vision between 20/20 and 20/30. Almost everyone can continue to manage their activities when changes in vision are small, which is vision between 20/30 and 20/60.

Normal vision is known as "20/20". This simply means that the eye being tested is able to see an object at 20 feet as well as any eye with very good vision. If you have 20/60 vision, this means you can see at 20 feet

what a person with good vision can see at 60 feet.

As changes in vision become larger, most people experience more and more difficulty in their efforts to continue their usual visual activities, even with the best possible glasses or contact lenses. If this is a change in vision between 20/60 and 20/190, it is called being partially sighted or having low vision. If the change in vision is to 20/200 or worse, the person will still keep some vision but will be classified as "blind" (some people may be classified as blind if their field of vision, or the area that they can see, is less than 20° across--even if their vision is better than 20/200).

Low vision can occur at any age, but by far the greatest number of people who are partially sighted are the elderly. Low vision is most often due to a change in central vision. Occasionally it is associated with loss of side (peripheral) vision when it is close to center. In a few cases it is associated with loss of color vision or difficulty adapting to changes in brightness within the field of vision.

Trippin' with Chuck

On February 15, a group of students from the EBC took a tour of the Charles Schultz Museum in Santa Rosa. The Activities Group, comprised of the students in the Introduction to Vision Loss and the Living with Vision Loss classes will be participating in an outing or activity monthly.

As the first outing, the Charles Schultz Museum proved to be a trip well worth making. The museum was fun, and fascinating. Mr. Schultz's life's work is so eloquently illustrated in Peanuts memorabilia and impressive exhibits that you go away feeling a personal relationship with this legendary and hugely influential artist.

Good News is Good News

The Earle Baum Center is pleased to announce the receipt of a generous grant from the Claire Giannini Fund. The Fund was created by A.P. Giannini, founder of the Bank of America, and his daughter Claire Giannini Hoffman. The EBC is honored to be counted among the worthiest charities in the Bay Area.

Through the generosity and hard work of Mr. Terry Zmrhal, the EBC is the proud owner of a brand new Co-Motion tandem bike. This lightweight, premium bicycle has quick height adjustment features giving it the flexibility for use by a wide range of individuals. Thanks also to Steve Cozza and Eastside Cycles in Petaluma for assembling the bike.

Window of Opportunity

For the first time, retirees have the opportunity to make tax-free charitable contributions from their retirement accounts without penalties or fees. Donors who are 70.5 or older can contribute up to \$100,000 until the end of 2007. If you are charity minded and want to avoid taxes on a later withdrawal, an IRA can be the perfect asset to donate. What better time to secure your legacy than now and what better organization than the Earle Baum Center.

We thank our recent contributors

Bruce & Carol Abramson	Spirito & Josephine Falco	Phyllis Leveen	Anneliese Riedel
Erna Alfau	Dick & Joanne Farah	Sid & Gerry Lipton	Joe & Kathy Riedel
Tamae Baugh	June Farrahy	Charles & Jo Lupsha	Charles Robinson
Stephen Bogel	Marion Felder	Stuart Manley	Sidney Rogers
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Clayton & Miriam Englar	Phyllis Kowalski	Linda Poverny	Robert Zie
Nancy Evans	Charles & Juanita Lagace	Raymond & Sigrid Pregent	Terry Zmrhal
	Shirley LeBlond	Rose Marie Raymond	John & Marilyn Zuryk

Jeff Cadle's Words to Live By

My goal is to find the middle road - in work, home and social life.

I will pay attention to my level of stress and strive to take deep breaths and center myself.

I will develop the ability to recover from setbacks and validate my self-worth in areas of true relaxation.

I will continue to notice when I am disappearing and remind myself of the comforts of my home, family and friends.

I will balance my needs for alone time and time with others.

Live your dreams. Take time to smell the flowers. Remember you are only visiting.

Be good to your fellow humans (and animals too).

Be there for your family and friends.

Be above pettiness.

Live below your means. Be prepared for the inevitable rainy day.

No excuses! Take responsibility for your own life.

Be honest and loyal.

Don't take everything so seriously (especially yourself) Have some fun!

Grow things! Enjoy nature and be aware of the simple pleasures of life.

There is more to life than success, work and money. There are many

more important non-material considerations.

Use your own noggin. Trust your instincts.

Think before you act.

A guilty conscience is not worth the effort. Just don't do it!

You reap what you sow, but sometimes your crops will die.

Try to find the good in people and understand the bad.

Look upon everyone you meet as a holy person (for they are).

For every rule there exists a valid exception. Use rules properly. Many rules are stupid.

Plow a field.

J. Cadle

Jeff was a visually impaired client of the EBC until his untimely death at the age of 41 in 2006. Knowing that he had a brutal, terminal disease did not change his attitude towards life, one of the most positive and optimistic we have ever witnessed. Jeff seemed to only see the good in everything, even as he was served by hospice care for the last months of his life. His words are more meaningful understanding that they not only came from his heart and soul but were shared with us after he passed on. He left a greener pasture.

Event Horizon

Not one but two exciting community events are now on our calendar for 2007. First up is the annual Luther Burbank Rose Parade and Festival on May 19. As always, the EBC will be marching and waving to all our friends and neighbors. Don't miss this fun event, culminating in a community celebration at the Sonoma County fairgrounds. Call the office today for information on location and time.

The Santa Rosa Downtown Market kicks off its summer run on May 16. Every Wednesday evening from 5 to 8:30PM, downtown streets are filled with food vendors, music, a farmers market, tons of booths and lots of camaraderie. If you would like to join our booth and share in the excitement, call our volunteer office at 636-0082.

Low Vision = Low Mood

Living with low vision requires accepting new limitations and having the patience and confidence to relearn what were once basic tasks. Vision loss can also isolate people from friends and change family relationships as caregiving responsibilities grow and change. Thus, it is not surprising that many people with low vision suffer from depression. And, in turn, depression can hinder rehabilitation efforts.

Signs of depression include:

Difficulty concentrating, irritability and restlessness;

Fatigue and decreased energy;

Persistent sadness or anxiety;

Feelings of hopelessness, guilt or worthlessness;

Changes in sleep or appetite; and

Recurring thoughts of death or suicide.

People with low vision who think they might be depressed should talk to their eye doctor, who may know of mental health specialists with experience treating low vision patients.

*From the Johns Hopkins Medical Letter
March 2007*

Notes on Our Roots

The Baum family presence in California began back in Ohio in 1848. Loren Hastings employed John Baum (Earle's grandfather) as a wagon driver on his trek to Oregon. John left the Hastings family at The Dalles as the family made a boat of the wagon box and floated down to Oregon City. John traveled to French Prairie, north of Salem, Oregon before going down to California to try his luck in the gold fields. He then returned to Oregon where he married Phoebe Teeeters. They traveled to California in 1856, buying a small farm for \$2.00 an acre. In addition to farming, John was an accomplished carpenter and is credited with helping to build the west county's first school, the Wright District School.

Local Hero

Steve Cozza, an EBC tandem pilot, professional cyclist and all around good guy, finished a spectacular 64th in the **2007 Amgen Tour of California**. Steve was also ranked 10th Best Overall Young Rider and is currently riding professionally in Europe. **Congratulations and best wishes to Steve for the upcoming season.**

In related news, spring is almost upon us and that means that it's time for the EBC Tandem Bicycling Club to mount up and hit the road. Sign ups are now underway. We are looking for "Pilots" and "Stokers" of any age or skill level. There is no better (or quieter) way to enjoy the beauty of the Sonoma County countryside.

Join the Club

On Monday March 5th, the EBC hosted a meeting of past and present clients as well as other interested persons, discussing technology as it relates to persons who are visually impaired or blind. This is the first of what we hope will be many meetings to come. The group is calling itself the **EBC Tech Club** and will be meeting on the first Monday of each month from 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM. All interested persons are welcome with the next meeting scheduled for Monday April 2nd.

The first meeting saw a large turnout of about 25 persons. It was great to see so many students who had received services in the past return to the EBC and join the Tech Club. The main topic of this first meeting was the recently released Windows Vista Operating System and how it works with assistive technologies. The meeting was facilitated by the EBC Tech Department. In future meetings we will be able to draw on other members as there is vast knowledge and experience throughout the group. The main topic of the April meeting will be the Freedom Box. Several of the members are subscribers to this service, so it should make for a lively discussion. Hope to see you all there. Reservations are not required.

INSPIRATION IS ALIVE IN ME—THANKS TO E.B.C!

By Tom Patton

Hello everyone! About 2 years ago I decided to consider myself visually impaired and I needed training and instruction to make my life better. I was put in contact with the Earle Baum Center and a few days later went down for an appointment. Director Allan Brenner explained the EBC in a kind and friendly manner and also pointed out to my wife and me that I should have come in a long time ago. Allan sent me across the courtyard to meet Jennifer Frazier who at warp speed introduced me to some computer technology. By now I was sweating bullets. Jennifer got me on the computer right away to calm me down. I wrestled with the dreaded “Talking Typer” for a while and before I knew it she had the information she needed. She introduced me to Jaws, a screen reading program, and explained how it would enable me to work with computers and surf the Web as well as send and receive Email. She turned me over to Jeff Harrington, who was so positive and upbeat that I could feel the energy in the air. He demonstrated more aids and devices to not only improve my life but my family’s as well. I shortly found out that I was in for some more earth shaking changes as I began Orientation and Mobility training with the EBC’s newest instructor Leslie Bailiff. This wonderful lady came to my door and before I knew it she had me out walking, not only in my neighborhood but all over town, as well as riding busses down to Santa Rosa. It was scary at first but with her expert help I slowly started to improve and my confidence grew. An inspirational flame was starting to burn inside me. I started computer training in Lake County with Colleen Alexander. With her help, I enrolled in an open lab class for the

Microsoft Office Specialist Certification Program through the Lake County Office of Education. At Colleen’s urging, I started with Excel and slowly but surely passed my test. I was ready for a break but she tightened the screws and talked me in to starting Word. With her expert help and patience, I passed the Word test as well. I really needed a rest but Colleen said “I would like to work on Microsoft Access so how about working together”? She brushed up on Jaws and we worked hard and we both took the test and passed. Little did I know that she and I were both thinking that we would like to help others to learn what we had. Colleen contacted the EBC and we both received training in teaching methods from Jeff, Jennifer and Jacques Law.

Motivated to teach others we came up with a plan to be a team teaching duo, Colleen teaching technology, hardware and some software applications and I would fill in the blanks teaching screen-reading programs such as Jaws. We both live in Lake County, quite a ways from EBC, so it was our idea to bring a piece of the EBC to Lake and Mendocino Counties. It has been a long time since I had been able to reach out to help people and I am thankful to all of those great folks at the EBC for showing me that life with vision loss can still be very useful and helpful. I encourage everyone to visit the EBC and I guarantee that you will feel the energy. Perhaps you too will come away as inspired as I have been.

I look forward to being part of the EBC and I will strive to pass on what they have taught me!



EARLE BAUM CENTER
4539 Occidental Road
Santa Rosa, CA 95401

FREE MATTER
FOR THE BLIND

MISSION STATEMENT

To provide opportunities for people who are blind or visually impaired to improve and enrich their personal, social and economic lives.

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

Tel: (707) 523-3222 Info line: (707) 636-2769 Fax: (707) 636-2768

COME GROW WITH US

Attention Hoers, Weeders, Planters and Waterers

**The EBC Garden Club Starts Soon
Join by calling 523-3222**

**Join the NEW TECH CLUB
And learn what's new!
Next Meeting April 2, 2007
Details inside**

**Join us for the
Luther Burbank
Rose Parade & Festival
May 19th**

Low Vision Support Groups

**Sebastopol—Santa Rosa
Macular Degeneration
2nd Saturday 1-2pm @ EBC**

**Sonoma Low Vision Group
Tuesdays 1-2:30pm
Vintage House**

**Oakmont Gardens
2nd Wed 9:30-10:30**

**Petaluma Senior Center
Low Vision Support
4th Friday 10-12**

**Fort Bragg Senior Center
2nd Wed 10:30-11:30**