

Hawaii Association of the Blind

Quarterly Newsletter

April 1, 2022

“Together WAS Better” at the HAB ‘21 ThanksMas Party!

By Kyle Laconsay

A BIG mahalo to those who joined us for 2021's ThanksMas Party. It was a huge success.

President Art welcomed everyone, then the over 30-plus attendees were entertained by a fun-filled night. Songs were sung by our own HAB talent - Lance Kamaka, Deb Braiman and Maureen Sheedy & Jim Erhart. Funny jokes were shared by James Gonsalves. And, our auction was led by Terri Higashi, with the help from Erika Liashenko. Over 25+ items were bought by all, and we raised over \$1600 for the Hawai'i Foodbank. Even Santa came to bless our event at the end!

It really “takes a village” to make events like these happen. We are so THANKFUL for our dedicated team that worked so hard - Brian Huffman, Amy Monthei, Sharon Ige, Terri Higashi, Anthony Akamine and Stacie Phasouk.

Once again, mahalo from the HAB Events Committee! Let's do it again in 2022!

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The Hawaii association of the Blind Parents & Youths committee (PAY) hosted the “Back-To-School Shopping Spree”. The event was held on Saturday, January 15, 2022 at the Windward Mall. PAY identified three areas of need, which included orientation and mobility, social skills building, and daily living skills. These are vital skills that Blind youths need help with daily. To facilitate these areas of need, the proprietor of Functional Life Skills for the Blind, Amy Downard, along with the help of two other mobility instructors, taught the students some basic daily living skills. Some of those exercises included folding, counting, and identifying money. The youths also worked on orientation of Windward Mall. This mall was chosen specifically because of its smaller setting and also being indoors. The PAY committee thought it would be a great idea for some of these blind students to interact socially in an event to build their social skills. PAY also wanted to take the students to the next level by enhancing their basic money skills building by having each of them learn how to use a debit card. For this task the kids were given Visa cards and encouraged to buy new shoes from the Skechers shoe store. The reaction to this event has been positive. PAY is planning to continue their work with the youths during the rest of 2022.

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A Mahalo To Pay

By Mona Yamada

It was an enjoyable morning to see and join the youths and their parents attend the Back-to-school shopping group. Each youth accompanied with their parent was joined by Amy Downer and a few of her mobility instructors who then had a few activities which included mobility, and the changing of cane tips, just to mention a few of the activities. After all was done each one of the participants was awarded with a gift card to us in the mall. The youths had a wonderful time.

Special thanks to Roberta, Natalie, and Art for putting this event together. Also Justin, and Robert for running all over to pick up the odds and ends. Without leaders like this in our organization who cares about our youths there would be no future for them. It is so important that we can help support this group because they are the future. It doesn't matter weather or not you have a youth in this organization it is so important that we all take the time and get involved with them.

Aloha from the bottom of my heart.

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Reflections on PAY's Back-To-School Event

By Keao Wright

On January 15, 2022,

HAB members went to windward mall for a youth event held by the Parents of youth group.

There were 5 kids and several adults.

The first activities were with Amy Downard, Leah Neumann, and Chloe.

The activities included Human guide techniques, Money folding, and changing of cane tips.

The participants were supplied with a \$100.00 gift card shopping spree.

After that, we had lunch at Rubi Tuesdays.

I would like to thank Roberta Thomas, and her team for sponsoring this event and spreading awareness through out the community.

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The following is for informational purposes only.

Angela Eschenbach, a leading manufacturer of high quality magnification solutions.

Angela Low, Sales Manager of Eschenbach Optik of America, will visit Hawaii during the last week of April 2022. She plans to visit with folks within the blind/low vision communities to share and show the latest-greatest in low vision aids. Neighbor island visits are a possibility. Send an email message to ISG if you want to schedule time with guru Angela.

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When scam calls target your client or loved one

Calls from scammers are annoying and can cause a lot of trouble when you realize, too late, that they're scams. What's even worse? When they target a client or loved one you're caring for. So today, as part of National Family Caregivers Month, we're talking about how to spot and block scam calls.

Scammers might pretend to be with the government, a grandchild, tech support, or a potential love interest. Listen to this call from a scammer pretending to be with the Social Security Administration:

Transcript of audio file:

"This call is from the Department of Social Security Administration. The reason you have received this phone call from our department is to inform you that we just suspended your social security number because we found some suspicious activity. So if you want to know about this case just press one. thank you."

The real Social Security Administration won't threaten people or suspend their Social Security numbers and won't ask for payment this way. It's a scam.

Here are some steps you can take to help your loved one get fewer scam calls:

Look into call-blocking. There are technologies and devices that can stop a lot of scam calls and illegal robocalls before they reach you. Cell phones, home phones that make calls over the internet (VoIP), and landlines each have their own call-blocking options. Just know that call-blocking services could block some legitimate calls.

Sign up for the National Do Not Call registry to stop calls from real companies. But know that the registry can't stop calls from scammers.

If you answer one of these calls, hang up. If possible, tell the person you're caring for to do the same. If the call is a robocall, don't press any numbers or it could lead to more calls.

Warn your loved one about scams. If possible, talk to the person you care for about different types of scams that can happen over the phone.

Know when to report identity theft. If you find out the person you're caring for gave their personal information to a scammer, go to [IdentityTheft.gov](https://www.identitytheft.gov) to report it and find out what you can do next.

Learn more about unwanted calls at [ftc.gov/calls](https://www.ftc.gov/calls). And learn more about scams targeting older people at [ftc.gov/PassItOn](https://www.ftc.gov/PassItOn).

<https://www.consumer.ftc.gov/blog/2021/11/when-scam-calls-target-your-client-or-loved-one>

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What gives a dollar bill its value?

By Doug Levinson

The value of money is determined by how much (or how little) of it is in circulation. But who makes that decision, and how does their choice affect the economy at large? Doug Levinson takes a trip into the United States Federal Reserve, examining how the people who work there aim to balance the value of the dollar to prevent inflation or deflation.

Watch the full video at the following:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XNu5ppFZbHo>

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"Visually impaired Philadelphia" - Google News - Thursday, February 3, 2022 at 11:42 PM

App developed by professor to help visually impaired read comics expected to launch in June - Wichita State Sunflower

Jordan Plowman/ The Sunflower

Darren Defrain, Associate Professor and Director of the Writing Program, reads comic in his office during his down time on Feb, 1.

Professor Darren Defrain often gets asked why visually impaired people would want to read comics.

His response? Comic books are so engraved in our culture that even if someone hasn't read every comic, they still know the characters.

Defrain starts his graphic novels course by asking everyone what they know about Wonder Woman. Students go around the room sharing facts they know about the superhero, with every student saying at least one thing. When Defrain asks how many people actually read the comic book, very few people raise their hand.

"[Comics] are such an important to our culture," Defrain said.

That is why Defrain is in the middle of developing an app to assist visually impaired people in reading comics. Back in August, he was rewarded \$100,000 from the National Endowment for Humanities.

Now, five months later, the app is expected to launch in June.

"We're going to be doing a lot of testing between now and June," Defrain said. "We're working with two different visually impaired comic book artists, and they're going to have the first comics up on the site."

Darren Defrain, Associate Professor and Director of the Writing Program, reads comic in his office during his down time on Feb. 1. (Jordan Plowman/ The Sunflower)

Defrain said at the end of the day, what they really want is that the people who use the app feel their advice is being heard.

"We're not trying to prescribe to people who can't see, like, 'Oh, this is what's best for you,'" Defrain said. "But instead we're getting really strong input in the people we're testing with [to know] what works for [them]."

With the app expected to launch in a number of months, Defrain said that the team has been focusing on marketing and getting the word out. That's why graduate student Lara Law got involved.

"We drew Lara in so we could have someone to do that," Defrain said. "We had a website that was not meeting our threshold for accessibility and so forth, and so we took that completely down, and Lara's kind of helping with the redesign of that."

Law just started this semester and assisted in writing a grant proposal.

"We just finished that last weekend and that's been submitted and now it's just the waiting game," Law said.

Now, she's been focusing on ways to get the word out.

Law took Defrain's graphic novel class last semester and was intrigued by the conversations they had in that class.

"When we read comic books, we're not just reading the printed words, we're also reading the images," Law said. "How do we read through not just the words but the pictures? Which really intrigued me."

She said she was interested in the way the brain reacts to comic books and graphic novels, and wanted to be part of a project that could bring that to people who wanted it.

“I know there are people who would love to be able to read comic books who cannot, just in general there is a population of people who would love to interact with comic books in a way that they cannot currently,” Law said.

The app would be able to be used in classrooms as well.

This app will not start and end in Wichita. Defrain has already heard from people outside of Wichita who are interested in being involved.

“We actually had a big library in Philadelphia reach out to us, they have a huge collection of movie posters and they want to make sure all that stuff is fully accessible, we’re interested in working with them as well,” Defrain said.

“So it’s going in some other directions, and we’re pretty pumped about that too.”

<https://thesunflower.com/60438/news/app-developed-by-professor-to-help-visually-impaired-read-comics-expected-to-launch-in-june/>

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Tech Tip

Sighted iPhone users will find the following tip useful:

Learn the quickest way to switch between open apps on your iPhone.

Did you know you can quickly switch between apps without ever opening the App Switcher? In this tip, we'll show you how to use the Home bar on your iPhone to toggle between open apps.

Related: [How to Use App Switcher on iPhone](#)

Why You'll Love This Tip

Switch between open apps quickly and without having to open the App Switcher.

Finally find a use for that Home bar that hangs out at the bottom of your iPhone screen.

How to Switch between Apps without the App Switcher

Let's cover a simple way to swipe between open apps, even without opening the App Switcher. This shortcut is for iPhones without a Home button. For more tips and tricks for all iPhones, check out our Tip of the Day newsletter. Here's how to switch between apps on an iPhone X or later model:

For a visual cue, locate the Home bar at the very bottom of your screen.

Swipe from left to right over the bar to open your last-used app.

Swipe to last open app

You can continue to swipe along the bar in either direction, easily toggling between open apps.

Swipe to toggle

Now you can easily shift between open apps on your iPhone (even without a Home button).

<https://mailer.iphonelife.com/ga/webviews/4-3505316-5-8535-10645-63787-k673992ff7>

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Visually impaired teens from Lighthouse for the Blind support Fight for Air Climb.

By Melissa Eichman

PUBLISHED 4:08 PM ET Apr. 01, 2022

Sixteen-year-old Gavin Smith is one of eight teenagers from Lighthouse for the Blind who will be taking part in the American Lung Association's Fight for Air Climb.

What You Need To Know

- Gavin Smith is one of eight teenagers climbing for the American Lung Association
- Despite his setbacks, he's committed to helping fight lung disease
- This will be the second time he has participated in the Fight for Air Climb
- For more information on the event, visit the ALA's Fight for Air Climb website

Smith and the teens participating in the climb are all part of the Transition for Teens program at the Lighthouse for the Blind and Low Vision in Hillsborough County. The money the team raises in the American Lung Association's Fight for Air Climb will help in the fight to end lung disease and support the Lung Association's COVID-19 action initiative to protect against future respiratory virus pandemics.

The Armwood High School sophomore got juvenile arthritis as a baby and his vision was impaired by the time he was 2.

He said that everything he sees is blurry, but that isn't keeping him from taking part in the climb.

"Just to show no matter what's going on, no matter what the situation is, no matter what you may or may not be going through, as long as your passion is strong enough for something and you want to accomplish something so much," said Smith. "Disability or not, challenge or not, you can accomplish it as long as you believe in yourself that much."

Inspiration and independence are exactly what Gaven gets from the Transition for Teens program at Lighthouse.

Sue Glaser started the program 20 years ago to help visually impaired students prepare for life after high school.

Students learn about teamwork, timeliness, they get job training and are encouraged to contribute to their community.

"We feel like this is a great way for our organization, our students, to give back to the community, as well as have that expectation that they are members of society and perfectly capable of supporting the community and doing their part just like everybody else," said Glaser.

And just like every other teenager, Smith enjoys getting out.

"No matter if it's going out to eat or hanging out with my family or just getting some good exercise, you know?" he said.

He said the climb helps him do that. This 2022 climb will be his second time participating in the event.

Smith is exercising and has exceeded his training goal of climbing twenty flights of stairs

As for goals for his future, Smith wants to attend the University of South Florida and study psychology.

In the meantime, he's concentrating on climbing while inspiring others and supporting others.

The 18th Annual Fight for Air Climb will take place Sunday, May 1 at Raymond James Stadium and will start at 8 a.m. Same-day registration will be available.

For more information, call 1-800-LUNGUSA (1-800-586-4872), or visit the American Lung Association's Fight for Air Climb website.

<https://theportalist.com/16-fantasy-books-featuring-teens-with-magical-abilities>