

#hab

#hab-newsletter

# HAB Newsletter September 2024

## Important Notice: New Location for Monthly Meetings

Starting September 7, 2024, the Hawaii Association of the Blind will hold its general monthly meetings at the Library for the Blind and Print Disabled. These meetings will continue to take place on the first Saturday of each month from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. The move is designed to accommodate members who wish to attend the LBPD Book Club. For any questions regarding our monthly meetings, please contact us at 808-521-7648.

## Save the Date: 58th Annual Convention

Mark your calendars! The Hawaii Association of the Blind will hold its 58th Annual Convention on **March 7th and 8th, 2025**. The event will be held at the **Ala Moana Hotel, 1420 Atkinson Drive, Honolulu, Hawaii**. More details to follow—stay tuned!

## Upcoming Events for September 2024

Stay connected with the Hawaii Association of the Blind by participating in our events. This month, we offer a mix of special events and our regularly scheduled gatherings. Be sure to mark your calendars and join us in these community activities!

# Special Events

This month, we have some exciting special events planned that are designed to bring our community together and provide enriching experiences. We hope you can join us for these unique opportunities!

## Learn About the Rail: Happy Rail Time

Join us on September 14, 2024, for an exciting and educational ride on the Skyline, also known as The Rail. This special event, hosted by the Hawaii Association of the Blind and the Parent and Youth (PAY) Committee, will help you become familiar with using the rail system.

- **Date & Time:** September 14, 2024, from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM
- **Holo Card:** Get one at the auditory-accessible Holo card machine if you don't have one.
- **Parking:** Plenty of free parking available at Halawa Station.
- **Route:** Ride the Rail to West Oahu and walk on the pedestrian bridge over Kualakai Parkway.
- **Lunch:** Stop and eat at the Don Quijote food court.
- **RSVP:**
  - By Email: [habpay808@gmail.com](mailto:habpay808@gmail.com)
  - By Phone (Leah): (619) 770-8856
  - By Phone (Sherri): (808) 561-5968

*Liability Disclaimer: All participants are responsible for their own safety throughout the event. The Hawaii Association of the Blind shall not assume any liability resulting in injury or death.*

## Iolani Palace Tour

Join the Hawaii Association of the Blind on September 21, 2024, for an enriching tour of Iolani Palace. This audio-guided experience will provide a deep dive into the history of the Hawaiian Kingdom during a tumultuous time. Highlights of the tour include exploring tactile representations of royal apparel and drapes, climbing the famous koa stairway, using apps for detailed descriptions of artifacts, and utilizing a tactile map to understand the palace layout. You'll also learn about the surrounding palace grounds, including the Kawaiaha'o Church, King Kamehameha Statue, and historic Honolulu buildings. After the tour, members can enjoy bentos and drinks together.

- **Date & Time:** September 21, 2024, from 11:00 AM to 1:30 PM
- **Handivan Drop-off & Pick-up:** Richards Street entrance
- **RSVP:** Contact Nancy Parker at (808) 291-5390. Spaces are limited, so please reply as soon as possible. Also, let Nancy know if you will be bringing additional guests and if they have purchased their tickets.

*Liability Disclaimer: All participants are responsible for their own safety throughout the event. The Hawaii Association of the Blind shall not assume any liability resulting in injury or death.*

## **Dole Plantation Adventure: Navigate the World's Largest Outdoor Maze**

Join the Hawaii Association of the Blind on October 26, 2024, for a fun and educational day at Dole Plantation. This special event will challenge your orientation and mobility skills as you navigate the world's largest outdoor maze and enjoy a train ride that teaches you

about the history of Dole Plantation and the pineapple industry. Braille menus will be available to enhance your experience.

- **Date & Time:** October 26, 2024, from 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM
- **Location:** Dole Plantation, 64-1550 Kamehameha Hwy, Wahiawa, HI 96786
- **Admission:**
  - \$5.25 per child
  - \$8.25 per adult

*Liability Disclaimer: All participants are responsible for their own safety throughout the event. The Hawaii Association of the Blind shall not assume any liability resulting in injury or death.*

## Regularly Scheduled Events

Stay engaged with our community through these regularly scheduled events.

### Monthly Book Club at the Hawaii State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled (LBPD)

Join us for our monthly book club and social time.

- **Date & Time:** September 7, 2024, from 2:00 PM to 3:30 PM
- **Location:** Hawaii State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled, 402 Kapahulu Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96815
- **RSVP**
  - **Call:** 808-733-8444
  - **Email:** [olbcirc@librarieshawaii.org](mailto:olbcirc@librarieshawaii.org)

# The Hawaii Association of the Blind General Monthly Meeting

Attend our general monthly meetings to stay informed and involved with our community.

- **Date & Time:** September 7, 2024, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM
- **Location:** Hawaii State Library for the Blind and Print Disabled, 402 Kapahulu Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96815
- **Contact:** Call **808-521-7648** for inquiries about the meetings.

## Walking Club

Join our walking clubs to stay active and enjoy the community.

### Waipio Walking Club:\*\*

- **Date & Time:**
  - September 2, 2024, from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM
  - September 9, 2024, from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM
  - September 16, 2024, from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM
  - September 23, 2024, from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM
  - September 30, 2024, from 4:00 PM to 6:00 PM
- **Location:** Patsy Mink Park, 8007 Fort Weaver Road, Honolulu, HI 96819 (Parking lot on the Waipio Uka or Jack in the Box side)

### Pearlridge Walking Club:

- **Date & Time:**
  - September 3, 2024, at 2:15 PM

- September 10, 2024, at 2:15 PM
- September 17, 2024, at 2:15 PM
- September 24, 2024, at 2:15 PM
- **Location:** Pearlridge Mall, 91-1001 Moanalua Road, Aiea, HI 96701 (By the food court on the Uptown or Macy's side)

## **HAB News**

### **The Passing of Julia Toyama**

It is with a heavy heart we share with members that Julia Toyama passed away on August 29, 2024. She was one of our founding members, a mother, aunty, grandmother, friend, and mentor to so many of us. There are so many wonderful memories of Warren and Julia, and how they have touched our lives. They are now reunited. Please keep Julia's ohana in your thoughts and prayers at this difficult time. As of right now, no other information is given, and the members will be notified of services when that information is made available.

### **No be Scared, Lets Prepare: Emergency Preparedness Workshop Recap:**

On August 17th, 2024, The Hawaii Association of the Blind Parent and Youth (PAY) committee in collaboration with the HAB events committee held an emergency preparedness workshop at the Library for the Blind and Print Disabled (LBPD.)

It was quite well attended as there was 34 attendees. Our speaker Danny Tengan provided a very engaging and informative

presentation that helped us prepare for a natural disaster.

Danny Tengan is retired from the State Civil Defense, is a Red Cross volunteer since 2001, Started Aina Haina community preparedness group, CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) Senior instructor, United Church of Christ Disaster Ministries Response Coordinator, HAM radio operator, Volunteer at Angel Network Charities food pantry, and Pickleball instructor for the Parks Department.

Danny shared many important facts and stories. Some of the highlights covered were having a support team, doing a personal needs assessment, and ideas for creating a GO bag. There was also time for questions and give aways. Some of the giveaways included emergency preparedness items.

The PAY committee and HAB events committee is grateful to those who came out to the emergency preparedness event as everyone took a nugget or two of wisdom home with them to prepare. Thank you to the Library for the Blind and Print Disabled for providing a venue and having an audio recording of the Hawaiian Electric Emergency Preparedness handbook available. Thank you to our MC Lorenzo who assisted in introductions and all those who helped by greeting folks and passing out refreshments. Stay tuned for our future community adventures.

If anyone wants to know more about PAY and how to get involved, please contact Anthony Akamine at (808)372-2225 or [alohaakamine@gmail.com](mailto:alohaakamine@gmail.com).

## **Participant Feedback**

Hi. I want to say I really enjoyed the presentation on Emergency Preparedness. It inspired me to learn more and check into getting CERT (?) certified so I can be better prepared and able to be a support to others in need. The giveaways were great and I got the extra bonus of finding a great resource at the Library for the Blind. Mahalo HAB and PAY. - Rebecca Estes

## **An Amazing Karaoke Event**

By Terri-Lynn Higashi

My earliest memories of karaoke were that we used to rent small rooms, had loud music and a bit too much food and beverages. As we got older, we could afford the bigger rooms and reserved it for our birthday parties or celebrations. There would always be a few of us that would monopolize the singing because it was the perfect opportunity to sing all our favorite songs in one place. Some friends had their favorite songs too, but they wanted us to sing it. It was quite hilarious that each person had unspoken roles to play at karaoke. The setup/break down crew would be the first to come set up and last to leave break down. The greeters who would go around talk story with everybody making sure no one is left out. The host who would put out the food and make sure everybody had drinks. The song imputer who would have the books and put in everybody songs. The singers all waiting for the songs to come up, so that everybody can hear how good they sound. The cheer leading section all those who clapped loud after every song. Those were the best times.

On June 8th, we had a karaoke event with the PAY participants and HAB members. For me personally, it was a wonderful time as families



could come together and make new friends. As tradition in Hawaii, we had an abundance of food from chicken to sandwich to drinks.

My favorite part of the event was to observe how the families helped their kids' input songs, sang with their kids, even giving their kids a bit of encouragement to sing at least one song. The roles were still there, but it was intertwined together to make it even a better event. I look forward to the next one.

## **Other News**

### **Hawai'i Department of Taxation Warns Taxpayers About Ongoing Tax Enforcement Scam**

August 14, 2024

HONOLULU – Scammers are persisting in their attempt to impersonate the Hawai'i Department of Taxation (DOTAX) by sending letters to unsuspecting taxpayers, claiming to seek collection of an overdue debt. DOTAX is again cautioning residents about this recurring tax-related scam in light of recent complaints that have come to our attention. DOTAX issued a prior News Alert March 18 of this year, detailing and warning about the same scam.

Some Hawai'i taxpayers continue to report receiving letters asking them to call a phone number regarding an overdue debt that had not been paid. It is written to intimidate, using words such as “final demand” or “seize this property.” The actual letter is provided below and is not an official letter from the state of Hawai'i Department of Taxation.

Taxpayers should not reply to any correspondence from the “Tax Processing Unit” or “Internal Processing Service.” They have no association with DOTAX. Confidential information such as financial or personal data, or social security numbers should not be shared during unsolicited calls or emails. In this situation, you should hang up and then call the appropriate tax agency at a phone number obtained from a verified source such as an official website.

If anyone has questions or would like to confirm the legitimacy of any state tax notice, they should contact DOTAX directly using the contact information listed on its website: <https://tax.hawaii.gov/contact/>

## **Barbie Introduces First Blind Barbie Fashionista Doll**

EL SEGUNDO, Calif., July 23, 2024 — Mattel, Inc. (NASDAQ: MAT) announced today the addition of a blind Barbie doll and a Black Barbie doll with Down syndrome, created to allow even more children to find a doll that represents them and inspire all children to tell more stories through play.

Barbie partnered with the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB), an organization dedicated to creating a world of endless possibilities for individuals with blindness and low vision, to ensure details of the blind Barbie doll, including face sculpt, fashion, accessories, packaging experience, and e-commerce communication, accurately depict individuals with blindness or low vision.

Counseled by AFB, Barbie was committed to represent individuals with blindness and low vision throughout all stages of the design process, from the doll’s sculpt to the dress pattern:

- **Accessories:** The doll comes with a white and red cane with an identifiable marshmallow tip and includes stylish and functional sunglasses. With some blind or low-vision individuals sensitive to light, the lens provides additional eye protection.
- **Elbow Articulations:** The blind Barbie doll includes elbow articulations to ensure comfortable cane use.
- **Textured and Vibrant Fabrics:** Barbie conducted testing with blind and low-vision children to ensure that the doll provided an accessible and satisfying play experience for kids with blindness or low vision. With AFB's guidance, Barbie designed the doll's fashion to include a satiny pink blouse with a textured ruffle skirt for tactile interest. Additional details include a brightly colored high-contrast hook and loop fasteners for closure on the back of the doll's top, as well as an elastic skirt waistband to make swapping outfits easier.
- **Packaging and Design:** Barbie worked with AFB to create accessible packaging for the doll, including the placement and writing of 'Barbie' in braille on the package.
- **Eye Gaze:** The doll is designed with an eye gaze facing slightly up and out to accurately reflect the sometimes-distinct eye gaze of a blind individual.

The 2024 Fashionistas dolls, including the blind Barbie doll and Black Barbie doll with Down syndrome, are available online now and in store this summer at major retailers.

## **Blind Information Technology Specialists**

Are you feeling a bit dismayed,

in the tech world lost and waylaid?

Worry not, for here's a course

to guide you with a friendly force!

Blind Information Technology Specialists (BITS) is here,

A whimsical course to make things clear!

With accessibility in mind, we'll show you the way,

To master Microsoft Office, come what may!

Windows Basics starts our tour,

Navigating with ease, you'll want for nothing more!

Word will be your canvas, for stories and notes,

Creating documents that truly float!

Outlook Classic will keep your emails in line,

Organizing your messages, oh so fine!

Excel makes numbers a joy to behold,

With formulas and functions, you'll be bold!

And let's not forget our favorite gem,

Pivot Tables — yes, they're in the mix, and then,

Sorting and summarizing with just a few accessible wits,

Transforming your data with powerful tricks!

PowerPoint wraps up the show,

Creating presentations with a brilliant glow!

So grab your seat, don't miss this chance,  
To master Office apps and make your skills dance!  
Join us now, let's start this quest,  
With BITS at the helm, you'll be your best!  
Enroll today and let your tech skills soar,  
With BITS, you'll conquer Microsoft Office and more!  
Learn more and sign up at <http://www.joinbits.org/office>.

You must be a BITS member to participate. The annual fee for BITS is \$20.

- The deadline to enroll is September 4, 2024.
- You need not attend the course live. You can enroll, use the class recordings and attend office hours to get your questions answered.
- All teaching resources will be made available free of charge for download on the BITS web site using your member profile.

If you have further questions, please do not hesitate to reach out by emailing [president@bits-acb.org](mailto:president@bits-acb.org).

To join BITS, use this link: <http://www.joinbits.org/join>

## **New Colorado law will increase accessibility to medication for the visually impaired**

A Colorado law requiring labels in new forms for the visually impaired

By Cameron Dean

Published: Aug. 13, 2024

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. (KKTV) - A new Colorado law was passed that now requires pharmacies in the state to offer prescription drug labels in braille, audio devices, or other requested formats.

Many who are visually impaired have had to rely on other people or special phone apps to read their medication. A braille teacher at the Colorado School for the Deaf and Blind said that she often worries she could be given the wrong medication, as someone who is blind herself.

Braille Instructor Marty Rahn said, "I have a friend who overdosed actually a couple of years ago and it wasn't even her fault. They gave her the wrong medication and they gave her the wrong milligram dosage, even when she thought the tablets felt different. She called and said to the pharmacist 'Do I have the right meds' and they were like 'Yeah we just changed the tablets' which happens all the time. But as a result of that, she's dealing with all kinds of medical issues so it really is a very serious thing."

Previously, to get these accommodations some pharmacies had to refer to larger regional stores for people to get the proper equipment.

"One store in every kind of geographic region would refer patients that have this special equipment. Just kinda get it on demand, if they had somebody who requested this they go out and get it. Some pharmacies have gone decades without anyone ever requesting it," said Pharmacist, Ky Davis, with Harris Pharmacy.

State Representative Mary Young was a sponsor of this bill and said she wanted to ensure those with a visual disability could always have

the resources they need.

“This is 30 years after the Americans with Disabilities Act where we committed to people that we would provide them access, so they could live independently in communities. For me, this was a critical issue that needed to be addressed,” said Rep. Young.

For smaller pharmacies that may not have the budget to make all these formats of labels, they will be given a grant paid over 2 years to fund these requests.

For other formats a pharmacy may not have, they will be given 28 days to make that accommodation.

The law will officially take effect in 2025.