



Audio & Braille Literacy Enhancement, Inc.

Providing alternative ways for people with print disabilities to read

Fall 2017

Central Library Building 803 W. Wells St. Milwaukee, WI 53233
(414) 286-3039 www.ablenow.org

ABLE Sound Center Going Great!

On September 29, 2015, we cut the ribbon for our new state-of-the-art ABLE Sound Center. Two years later we are going strong! Over fifty books recorded at ABLE were uploaded to the Library of Congress website, making the books available to almost 550,000 blind and physically handicapped patrons nationwide. By the end of 2016, over 2,600 people had accessed these books. This relationship with the National Library Service and the Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library expanded our reach exponentially throughout the nation.

Blind people desire the same access to a wide range of written materials that most people who are sighted take for granted. Of the estimated 175,000 books published in the U.S. each year, the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped produces only 3,000 titles. ABLE's Sound Center allows us to record books of a quality that meets the digital recording standards of the National Library Service. We're proud of this achievement, and grateful to all who were and are involved!



Volunteer Carlee Ihde recording in the ABLE Sound Center. Editing will occur at the same time in an adjacent room.

It's All Because of You!

*Matt Scholtes,
Tactile and
Production
Manager, proudly
displaying our
state-of-the-art
high speed braille
embosser.*



In July we put out a special plea for your help in funding our much needed high speed embosser and our new tactile embosser, and you rose to the occasion. Our heartfelt thanks to the sixty individuals, the ConocoPhillips Corporation, the L.E. Phillips Family Foundation, Inc. and the Forest County Potawatomi Foundation, for your generosity, which allows us to continue this essential aspect of our services.

Braille embossers are the final step in the braille production process. They are, essentially, printers that turn the hard work of our staff and volunteers into the formats that are used by our blind recipients, both adults and children. Our new high speed embosser produces hard copy braille eight times faster than our previous embossers! And our new tactile embosser allows us to produce materials such as maps, mathematical graphs, molecular structures, and other technical depictions much more quickly.



*Matt Scholtes,
sporting a big
smile as he
demonstrates the
new tactile
embosser.*

Save the Date!

ABLE Annual Luncheon

When? **Tuesday, May 1, 2018**

11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

Where? Italian Conference Center, Milwaukee



*ABLE's 2017 Annual Luncheon, enjoyed by many!
Please join us on Tuesday, May 1st, 2018.*

Well, yes, winter hasn't arrived yet. But spring will be right behind it and we all know how fast time flies! We're already preparing for our 2018 Annual Luncheon. We don't want you to miss it, so please save the date!



Some of our extraordinary, award-winning braille volunteers at the 2017 luncheon.



IRA Rollover Opportunity

If you are 70 ½ or older, you may roll up to \$100,000 from your IRA to ABLE.

- * Your gift will count toward your required minimum distribution for the year.
- * Your taxable income will be reduced, even if you do not itemize deductions.
- * You will not be subject to the 50% limitation of charitable gifts.

To make an IRA rollover gift, simply contact your IRA custodian and request that an amount be transferred to ABLE by wire or check. Gifts for the 2017 tax year must be made by December 31, 2017. Checks must be payable to Audio & Braille Literacy Enhancement, Inc. and sent to the following address:

Audio & Braille Literacy Enhancement, Inc.
Attn: Cheryl Orgas
Central Library Building
803 West Wells Street
Milwaukee, WI 53233

Thank you for considering this special way of donating! Feel free to contact Cheryl if you have any questions: (414) 286-3026.



Cheryl Orgas, ABLE's Executive Director, recruited volunteers and interns at Marquette University's Service Fair on a lovely summer day.

Celebrating Another High-Spirited White Cane Day!

Dozens of students from Milwaukee Public Schools and other area schools joined community members from the Milwaukee area at the Milwaukee County Courthouse in October to celebrate White Cane Safety Day. Also known as Blind Americans Equality Day, October 15th was officially designated White Cane Safety Day by President Lyndon Johnson in 1964. Each year in October we celebrate the accomplishments of people with visual impairments and remind people of the White Cane Law, which requires drivers to yield the right-of-way to pedestrians carrying white canes or using guide dogs.



Folks got in the swing of White Cane Day, joining in the dance at the Milwaukee County Courthouse.

At this year's event, participants gave out bookmarks with the braille alphabet on one side and the state's White Cane Law on the reverse. At noon there was a flash mob dance. This year's theme was "We're on a Mission," inspired by the movie "The Blues Brothers." The flash mob danced to "Shake Your Tail Feather," a song featured in the movie. Participants wore t-shirts featuring a design inspired by the Blues Brothers.

What's Cooking?

Many people who are blind or visually impaired love to cook, and ABLE can help make the process a little easier. We are happy to emboss braille labels for appliances, or to use our braille embossing equipment creatively to make other helpful aids for the kitchen (or anywhere else in the home). Let us know how we can help!



Photo above: Cheri McGrath, past Board President of ABLE, reading a braille measurement chart on the door of her pantry.

Photo left: ABLE's Board Vice-President Don Natzke using his oven at home with labels brailled by ABLE.

Not up for cooking tonight?

Eating out can be a pleasurable alternative! If you're blind or visually impaired, though, perusing a menu can be challenging. It may require asking your dining companions or the restaurant wait staff to describe the offerings, but there is another alternative. A number of Milwaukee-area restaurants have had ABLE transcribe their menu into braille. For a small fee we will gladly provide this service to other restaurants. Feel free to suggest this next time you go out to eat; just ask the manager to give us a call. In addition to providing a braille menu, we will include a link to the restaurant's website on ABLE's website!

Please patronize these area restaurants that currently provide braille menus, and offer a word of thanks:

Angelina's Ristorante in Delafield

Balistreri's Bluemound Inn

Beans & Barley Market & Café

The Brick Pub & Grill

Elsa's on the Park

Pfister Hotel

R Café @ the Central Library Building

Rupps Downtown Sheboygan

Saz's State House Restaurant

Topper's Pizza



Sarah Zellmer reading the braille menu at R Café in the Central Library of Milwaukee Public Library System.

Thank You!



ABLE Executive Director Cheryl Orgas receiving a donation check from representatives of the Gordon Flesch Charitable Foundation.

Many thanks to the employees of the Gordon Flesch Company for nominating ABLE to be a recipient of a generous donation through their Charitable Foundation.

The mission of the Gordon Flesch Charitable Foundation is, "Enriching lives through local community organizations that assist people of all age levels with disabilities, illness, hardship, or disasters." Their website further notes that "Gordon Flesch understood businesses could only thrive if the communities that surround them were also thriving. That spirit of charitable giving carries on in the form of annual contributions to non-profits located in the communities where our customers live, work and play." Their Foundation is managed entirely by company associates. We are so very grateful!

We're excited to announce the launch of our newly redesigned website! We expect it to be up and running by Thanksgiving.

Please check it out!

www.ablenow.org