“A lack of sight is not a lack of vision”
President’s Message++

Welcome to summer! I hope all members are getting to spend some relaxing time with family and friends. Many places are experiencing extreme heat so remember to drink lots of fluids to keep yourself hydrated.

As President of the CCB, it is a pleasure to inform you, about the proposed Accessible Canada Act. We want to thank Minister Duncan for introducing the act, as well as Minister Qualtrough for the initial steps in the process. This Act has been through the first reading and tabled until fall sitting.

Thank you to all of you who attended the consultations held in your communities over the past two years. We as an organization have had representation in meetings with the Ministry of Disabilities, Sports and Science on this act as well. We are pleased with the bill once passed, and any amendments that may come, will ensure that our shared spaces will be more accessible to all, job opportunities will increase and transportation improved.

Please read the letter from Government of Canada below for further details.

Minister Duncan introduces the proposed Accessible Canada Act.
Most significant progress for people with disabilities in over 30 years
June 20, 2018
Gatineau, Quebec
Employment and Social Development Canada
Today, following the most inclusive and accessible consultation with Canadians with disabilities and with the disability community, the Honourable Kirsty Duncan, Minister of Science and Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities, introduced the proposed Accessible Canada Act to Parliament. This historic legislation would enable the Government of Canada to take a proactive approach to end systemic discrimination of people with disabilities.

The goal of the legislation is to benefit all Canadians, especially Canadians with disabilities, through the progressive realization of a barrier-free Canada. The act would establish a model to eliminate accessibility barriers and lead to more consistent accessibility in areas under federal jurisdiction across Canada. The bill outlines how the Government of Canada will require organizations under federal jurisdiction to identify, remove and prevent barriers to accessibility, including in: the built environment (buildings and public spaces); employment (job opportunities and employment policies and practices); information and communication technologies (digital content and technologies used to access it); the procurement of goods and services; the delivery of programs and services; and transportation (by air as well as by rail, ferry and bus carriers that operate across provincial, territorial or international borders).

The Government of Canada is providing funding of approximately $290 million over six years that will further the objectives of the new legislation.

The act would strengthen the existing rights and protections for people with disabilities, under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the
Canadian Human Rights Act and Canada’s approval of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It will do this through the development, implementation and enforcement of accessibility standards, as well as the monitoring of outcomes in priority areas. These requirements will be enforced by the new powers and enforcement measures needed to ensure compliance, and overall implementation will be monitored. No longer will Canadians with disabilities be expected to fix the system through human rights complaints, instead, new proactive compliance measures will ensure that organizations under federal jurisdiction are held accountable to ensuring accessible practices.

As the Government of Canada moves forward with the implementation of the proposed act, continued and meaningful participation by Canadians with disabilities will be crucial towards realizing a barrier-free Canada.

The Canadian Accessibility Standards Development Organization (CASDO) will be Canada’s first-ever standards development organization exclusively dedicated to accessibility issues and will be led by persons with disabilities.

In keeping with the objectives of the bill and respecting the Government’s approach to historic and modern treaties, we will also support the work of First Nations leaders and communities to improve accessibility on reserve.

While this legislation is a significant first step in ensuring a barrier-free Canada for all Canadians, the Government of Canada will work collaboratively with partners in both the public and private sectors to create opportunities for full participation by people
with disabilities in their communities and workplaces, and to help change the way society thinks, talks and acts about disability and accessibility.

“Society benefits when all Canadians can fully participate. The proposed accessible Canada act represents the most important federal legislative advancement of disability rights in Canada in over 30 years. Thank you to the many community leaders and advocates who have worked for years and decades to make this happen. With the proposed act now in Parliament, we are one step closer to our goal: to have a truly inclusive and accessible Canada.”
– The Honourable Kirsty Duncan, Minister of Science and Minister of Sport and Persons with Disabilities

"Today's announcement marks a significant milestone in improving accessibility for all Canadians. As a life-long advocate for disability rights and a person living with a disability myself, I am proud to lead a portfolio tasked with enhancing accessibility in federal buildings and establishing an accessible procurement resource centre. This important work will help ensure the goods and services purchased and offered by the Government of Canada are more accessible for all Canadians."
– The Honourable Carla Qualtrough, Minister of Public Services and Procurement

There will be some very interesting items in this newsletter for everyone to enjoy. Keep safe and enjoy the summer. If anyone is hiking, walking or doing other forms of physical activity over the summer you can submit your experiences to Ryan at CCB Health and Fitness at ccb.healthandfitness@gmail.com.

Happy summer
Louise Gillis, National President
Canadian Council of the Blind (CCB)
Announcements

Chapter News: CCB Access & Awareness NS Chapter++
Halifax, Nova Scotia

On Wednesday, June 6, our Chapter held its’ third annual “White Cane and Dog Guide Walk & Reception”. While not as warm and humid as last year’s weather, this year was fairly cool and many chilly hands and paws arrived at City Hall following the walk through some of the main streets of downtown Halifax.

The purpose of the walk is to demonstrate to the public the independence, freedom, accessibility and inclusion that our white canes and dog guides provide to us during our daily activities and while travelling throughout our communities. Refreshments were provided following the walk at Halifax City Hall and music was provided by renowned Halifax musician, Maria Alley, whose dulcet tones were the perfect background to our reception. It was the perfect opportunity to reconnect with old friends and make new ones. A great time was had by all!

Submitted by Pat Gates, Chair, CCB Access & Awareness NS Chapter
Greyhound is turning off the ignition in Western Canada and leaving persons with disabilities on the recent announcement by Greyhound bus lines that they are closing their services to Western Canadians should be of concern to all Canadians and is most concerning to those of us who rely on that service for transportation to and from our daily activities. This includes those of us who live with vision loss, those of us with various disabilities and those of us who cannot afford our own form of transportation. Reliable transportation is vital to our well-being, in getting from Point A to Point B, for medical appointments, for purchasing the necessities of life as well as for social activities and staying connected with family. We need to let our voices be heard on this issue so that governments will know just how vital this service is to us.

Your CCB National Advocacy Committee has this issue on its’ radar and will be discussing what we as blind, partially sighted and deaf/blind Canadians can do to ensure that this important item does not fall to the roadside – pardon the pun!

Pat Gates the side of the road, by Albert Ruel

This is not good news for persons with disabilities and those who opt to function without a Driver's License. Below are 3 articles related to the Greyhound Bus closure topic found on CBC News since September 2017.
I have been an intercity bus passenger, mostly on Vancouver Island and the BC Interior since August 3, 1978 when I had to relinquish my BC Driver's License due to failing vision. Other than periodic flights to some destinations, riding with others who happen to be heading my way, or sometimes recruiting people to facilitate my getting to a chosen destination, I have long relied on Greyhound to get there. Yes, we have other options now on Vancouver Island, however neither of those other two options offer wheelchair accessible vehicles, nor their schedules often require me to spend additional nights in Hotels due to poor rural service.

I live in Parksville and when work keeps me in Victoria beyond 3:00 PM I am not able to get all the way home, necessitating a night in a Hotel. Also, the earliest I can arrive in Victoria is 12:00 Noon because the first bus out of Parksville doesn't leave until shortly after 9:00 AM. I remember in the late 1970's and throughout the 1980's riding on Greyhound busses that were full or nearly full most of the time, and their schedules made sense. I could leave for Victoria on the 6:30 or 7:00 AM bus, and I could leave Victoria on the 7:45 PM bus and get home to Parksville, and to Port Alberni where I lived then.

It's been my experience that when Greyhound started to cut back on schedules years ago the ridership went down accordingly, to the point that they have become irrelevant to me and many passengers over time. Also, the cost of a ticket has gone up to the point where many who live on limited incomes find it difficult to take the bus today.
I don't know what the answer is, however it should be well understood that not everyone has a car in the driveway, and our ability to connect with family and our chosen communities has just been curtailed beyond reason for a country as rich and diverse as Canada. I hope that Provincial and Federal Governments work with affected Canadians to work out solutions that will work for passengers, and that will allow Intercity and transit operators to provide transportation under profitable and sustainable models.


CCB Chatham-Kent Chapter, in the News++

The new Chatham-Kent chapter of the Canadian Council of the Blind is getting out in the community to let people know what they have to offer for folks who have visual impairments. The group set up a booth recently at Retrofest in Chatham and welcome new members to meetings the first Monday of each month.

Run by co-chairs Dave Maxwell and David Lachance, the local chapter meets the first Monday of every month from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. at the United Way office on 425 Grand Ave. W. in Chatham.

Based on a belief in ability, not disability, the local CCB chapter offers a variety of social and recreational activities based on the interest of its members.

The organization also works to improve the quality of life for persons with vision loss through awareness, peer mentoring, socializing, sports, advocacy, health promotion and illness prevention.

Locally, the chapter offers a Getting Together with Technology session the second Wednesday of each month at the United Way office from 1:30 p.m. to 3 p.m. The sessions help the blind and people with low vision explore access to new devices such as phones, e-readers, computer software and digital recorders with help from Matt Dierckens, a certified technology instructor.

“Our most important focus is the social aspect within the chapter, meaning we are there for support, social gatherings, and just all around socializing
within the Chatham-Kent region,” chapter chair Dave Maxwell said in a release. “This may include field trips, barbecues, and our meetings to discuss multiple subjects. The CCB Chatham-Kent chapter is a great place for all those that may be dealing with vision loss or have been visually impaired or blind their whole life, and are looking to get out and meet some new great friends that share the same experiences in life.”

The local CCB chapter has a Facebook page under CCB – Chatham-Kent or for questions about the group or becoming a member, contact Maxwell by phone at 519-674-0141 or by e-mail at dmaxwell53@gmail.com.

Bowling++

If you enjoy Lawn Bowling and want to know more about Blind Bowls Association of Canada, go to: www.bbacin.ca

A Message from Coach Nitro++

Just wanted to touch base to let you know that our very own British Columbia Blind Golfer from Langley, B.C. George Thirkill Won the Overall championship at the Western Canadian Blind Golf Championships in Winnipeg last week July 9th to 12th. There were 21 players from all over Canada. The championship consisted of 2 rounds Stableford matches with 4 divisions. B1 –B2 - B3 & Seniors. The weather was some sun with winds on both days and some rain. The course was very challenging for a Blind golfer but they managed to get some assistance from their guides on some of the tricky holes. By the way, I was George’s Coach and guide. George shot a 91 on the first day and a score of 85 on the
second day, due to some excellent putting to win by 2 strokes. The junior winner B3 Keifer Jones 24yrs old from Calgary shot a 75 & 76 to take the Junior division. Keifer is the top blind golfer in the world. George represents Blind Golf British Columbia and at age 79 is the Top senior golfer in the world. George along with our other top golfer from British Columbia Darren Douma (member of CCB VIBE Creston Chapter) from Creston, B.C will be heading to Rome, Italy this year to compete in the World Blind matches and Team play competition representing Canada.

Gerry Nelson, President of Blind Golf Canada said we are always looking for people that are visually impaired or Blind or Disabled to come out and learn how to golf. We have a Blind Training facility at the National Golf Academy in Langley at the Tall Timbers Golf Course and can be reached at Nitrogolf@shaw.ca. There is No Cost for the blind or disabled.

Thank you,
Coach Nitro

CCB Membership Reminder++

On behalf of the CCB National Membership committee we would like to remind all chapters to make sure they have updated CCB national office of any Chapter member changes in Address's, emails and phone numbers. Please send in the changes so that it can be updated in the system.

This will ensure that all CCB chapter members are receiving all the newsletters and information send out from the National office.

Thank you,
CCB National Membership Committee.
Hi Everyone! Becky from the office here. I thought I would give you the heads up about the upcoming Membership Season dates. Membership packages will be sent out by the end of August, so Chapter Contacts should be watching for them. Here are the other dates that are listed in the package.

- Early Bird Draw – November 2, 2018
- Chapter Rebate Deadline – December 7, 2018
- All 2019 Memberships Due – December 28, 2018
- White Cane Week Orders Due – January 4, 2019
- WCW Insurance Requests Due – January 4, 2019

Enjoy the rest of your summer!

Congratulations and Happy Birthday!++
HARRY ARPANE, a member of the CCB Windsor/Essex Low Vision Social and Support Group, WILL CELEBRATE HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY ON JULY 22ND. 2018. Happy Birthday!
Submitted by Helen Medel - President, CCB Windsor/Essex Low Vision Social and Support Group

Braille Literacy Canada Honours Darleen Bogart with the BLC President’s Award++

(OTTAWA, ON, June 5, 2018) --- Outgoing president Jen Goulden presented the Braille Literacy Canada President’s Award to Darleen Bogart at the BLC Annual General Meeting on May 26th, 2018. Established this year, the award acknowledges individuals who have made a significant contribution to braille literacy. Darleen Bogart is the first recipient of this award.

Darleen was instrumental in the founding of Braille Literacy Canada (then known as the Canadian Braille Authority) and served as its first president. She is also the longest-standing member of the board of the Braille Authority of North America (BANA) and she represented Canada on the International Council on English Braille
Darleen played an active role in the development of Unified English Braille (UEB) and has served on numerous braille-related committees and initiatives, both in Canada and around the world. Darleen received the BANA Braille Excellence Award in 2015 and was appointed an Officer of the Order of Canada in June of 2017 to honour her many years of continued leadership and dedication to the braille community.
While her list of accomplishments is lengthy, her most enduring contribution to braille is her unswerving dedication to both the code and to braille readers. Braille Literacy Canada applauds Darleen Bogart for her outstanding contribution to braille both in Canada and internationally.

Assistive Technology

Get Together with Technology Update++
GTT continues to thrive and grow. New groups are starting up across the country and more blind and vision impaired people are learning how to use technology and discover new devices to support their independence.

For more information on GTT, or how to get involved, please contact Kim Kilpatrick at gtt@ccbnational.net

CCB Tech Articles: Donna’s Low Tech Tips, Talking Thermometer++
Hi there! It's Donna and today I'd like to talk about the talking thermometer. Meet the talking thermometer. There used to be a time when dreaming of having a talking thermometer was just that; just a dream! No more! This nifty device has been on the market now for several years and you can find them as either stand-alone units or folded into other gadgets.

As an example, you may find talking thermometers that also tell you the time. Mine tells me the time as well as both the indoor and outdoor temperatures. It tells the time on the hour.

Again, it is the best of both worlds. The advantage of a stand-alone unit may be that there are no other add-ons to it; clock, alarm, time, and so on. The advantage of having it as part of another gadget is that you get other things with it but if that main gadget breaks or stops working then there goes the thermometer along with it.
Almost all talking thermometers will give you the temperature in both Fahrenheit and Celsius versions.

So go out there and make friends with the talking thermometer.

Want some contact info? Here are a few places for you to contact if you are interested to learn more.

CNIB - toll free = 1800 563 2642
Frontier Computing - toll free = 1-888-480-0000
Or visit http://www.futureaids.ca
You can also call them at 1-800-987-1231

There is also no harm in checking out http://www.independentlivingaids.com and http://www.maxiaids.com

Email Suggestions, Share from KeyWord, Find and replace, Insert a page break and much more.++
July 5, 2018 — HumanWare announces the immediate availability of BrailleNote Touch July update. Among many of the features and enhancements included in this free Update, users will immediately enjoy:

The ability to request for email suggestions, a more natural way to write your emails without having to remember the email address and a new efficient way to share your documents to the cloud.

The Touch July app updates are now available to download and brings incredible new features and enhancements.

In the News

How This Visually Impaired Runner and Guide Dog Find Their Way++

"Win, come. Come. Come close. Good girl," said Ken Fernald, 52, as he called his guide dog, Winnie, while sitting on his deck in Binghamton, New York. "She's outside finding the flowers and biting them. I promised my wife I'd keep a close eye on her while I'm out here so [Winnie] doesn't destroy all the flowers."

Fernald has been legally blind since he was 8 years old, but he has also been active for most of his life. For many years, he enjoyed road cycling
until his vision slowly deteriorated, so he had to adjust by riding with others and avoiding the main roads. Later, the list of safety issues grew, and Fernald switched from biking to running about 12 years ago.

As his vision worsened, he transitioned from running solo, to running alongside someone, to then being physically tethered to another runner. Fernald could manage training on a track fairly well, but he grew tired of running in loops. So he did what he had to do: train a guide dog.

That's how Fernald came upon Winnie, a 2-and-a-half-year-old yellow lab. The two were paired in the Guiding Eyes for the Blind program, a guide dog nonprofit based out of New York. Winnie was specifically trained to be a runner, and Fernald said Guiding Eyes is the only guide dog school that offers a program for dogs and owners who want to run together. The cost of breeding, training, and matching a guide dog with their owner equates to $50,000, which is all funded through donations at no cost to people with visual disabilities.

Fernald lived at the school for three weeks so the Guiding Eyes team could teach the duo how to live and work together. Fernald and Winnie finally graduated from the program in October last year.

Not every dog is cut out to be a running guide dog, but if there's one quality Winnie has, its drive.

"[Winnie] is just an exceptional dog," Fernald told Runner's World over the phone. "Very bright and very energetic. She basically does everything a guide dog does in a working environment, but just does it a lot faster."
Fernald currently serves as the CEO of the Association for Vision Rehabilitation and Employment (AVRE). Even during his long, back-to-back board and committee meetings, Winnie rests by his side. During breaks, Fernald will take her to an unused office space and throw a ball with her for 30 minutes a day, just to keep her active.

"She's very competitive," Fernald said. "If there's someone in front of us, she wants to pass them. If we're walking with another guide dog, God forbid, she wants to be the first dog."

Fernald and Winnie ran part of the Binghamton Bridge Run Half Marathon on May 6. It was Fernald's fifth time running the race, but the duo's first chance running an event together. For the first 10 miles, Fernald ran alongside his future daughter-in-law, Carly (who will marry his son, Michael, in July). When he reached the crest of a hill, close to the 10-mile marker, Winnie was at the top waiting for him with his wife.

"You have to put yourself out there and take the risk. Don't be afraid."

It was Winnie's first event, so amid all the crowd excitement, she took off, Fernald almost unable to keep up with her (though eventually they slowed into a comfortable pace). As they neared the finish line, Winnie sensed the communal adrenaline and picked up speed. Fernald, Carly, and Winnie completed the race in 2:14:07.

Fernald said many people have misconceptions about those with impaired vision, one of which being that guide dogs always know how to get to their destination, and the owner is just along for the ride. Fernald clarified that he
knows where he's going, knows when it's safe to cross the street, and so forth, but Winnie is the one who guides him around people and obstacles to get there safely.

Next on Fernald's list is to do part of a 10-miler or another half with Winnie in the fall. He's completed the Army Ten Miler several times over the years, but because of the swell of participants (last year saw almost 26,000 runners), Fernald's not sure Winnie would be able to handle the crowd. In the meantime, the two pals are just going to keep running. Visually impaired or not, runner or not, Fernald just wants people to pursue a healthy lifestyle.

"If someone is visually impaired specifically, and they want to become active, it can be challenging," Fernald said. "You just can't curl up on a couch and fear life. You have to put yourself out there and take the risk. Don't be afraid."

By McGee Nall
Blind community says bike lanes put their lives at risk. Visually impaired Victorians say the City knew of problems, built bike lanes anyway ++

Members of Victoria’s visually-impaired community have come forward with safety concerns about the Pandora bike lanes. The biggest problem surrounds the bus stops along Pandora Avenue, which are stationed on meridians across from the bike lanes. While raised crosswalks are in place, there is no way for those with visual impairment to know when they can cross.

“I was standing on the bus stop island, waiting and waiting and thought ‘OK, it must be alright to go’ and I stepped out and a bike passed right in front of me,” said Linda Bartram, chair of the City of Victoria’s Accessibility Working Group, a volunteer group that aims to make policies, services, infrastructure and facilities more accessible.

“I don’t hear the bikes until they’re literally in front of me.” Bartram, who is visually impaired, was using the crosswalk as part of a demonstration to Brad Dellebuur, manager of transportation and infrastructure design at the City of Victoria. During the demonstration, Bartram and a partially sighted friend tried crossing both directions, and used both a guide dog and a white cane to test how people would react. Bartram said with her dog, she waited long enough that she could hear her bus passing.
“If I had actually wanted to catch it, I would have missed it,” she said. When she used her cane, she eventually heard a cyclist joke that they were “at a standoff,” because he had stopped but didn’t know to tell her to go. Bartram said the demonstration came into fruition after the lanes were already being constructed, because the Accessibility Working Group wasn’t formed until after planning decisions for the Pandora bike lanes had been made. “We were only asked to comment on the bike lane accessibility to the bus stops, and as a blind person I couldn’t ascertain that it would be in the middle of the road,” she said. “We’ve been told it’s too late to do much about it in terms of changing things; but obviously this group feels something does need to be done.”

Brad Dellabuur said that after he saw the demonstration, he realized there was a problem. “We came to the conclusion that we need to put some additional markings, which we’ve incorporated in Fort Street at mid-block crosswalks,” he said. “It’s just some additional information for cyclists that there is a legal requirement to stop.”

The additional “crossing ahead” signs are intended to warn cyclists that pedestrians may be ahead, and while they have been incorporated onto Fort Street, they have yet to be placed on Pandora Avenue.

Bartram said the additional signage would help, but that an ideal solution would be some kind of auditory signal that the visually impaired could use.
The difficulty spurred the Canadian Federation of the Blind to come forward with a complaint against the City with the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal. Oriano Belusic, vice-president of the federation, said the City’s actions have put blind peoples’ lives in danger. “It’s like playing Russian roulette,” Belusic said. “Without eye contact, you really don’t know if you’re gonna get whacked by a bike.” Belusic said his friend had his cane run over several times, and that he had personally encountered many near-misses. “If you have a close call experience with a guide dog it could easily ruin their confidence to work, if they survive.”

In their claim, the Canadian Federation of the Blind is asking that the city tear up the floating bus islands, and allow buses to pick up riders from the safety of the sidewalk, noting that more signage does not do enough. “In order for it to be safe, both parties need to be active in that safety,” Belusic said. “If I put my safety solely in the cyclist’s hands, that’s not good enough, it puts my life and my dog’s life at risk.”

By NICOLE CRESCENZI

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