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# VISIONS

Canadian  
Council of  
the Blind  
Newsletter

February 2019

“A lack of sight is  
not a lack of vision”





*1 Louise Gillis - CCB National President*

## President's Message++

### In Memory of John Remple++

Sad news is not a good way to start this message but in this case it is important to honour a very important person who touched the lives of many in The Canadian Council of the Blind. One of our Past Presidents', John Rempel, passed away in January. CCB extends our sincere sympathy to Selma and his family. John's dedication and belief in the council assisted and encouraged the members to work together for the benefit of the community.

John had been involved in the Canadian Council of The Blind since 1975 and became even more involved after his retirement. He started with the local Saskatoon White Cane Club, serving as president for seven years. From there, he served in the CCB Saskatchewan Division for six years (the last two as division president), and in 1998 he became national president of the CCB. In this role he worked both to strengthen the organization itself as well as to advocate on behalf of visually impaired people throughout Canada and around the world, with various levels of government, from issues such as accessibility on public transportation to what your currency looks like (think about the brighter colours and bigger numbers) and what it feels like. In 2004, the CCB recognized John's outstanding services to the blind with an Award of Merit. Louise Gillis, president of the CCB and Jim Prowse, CCB director, characterized John as follows:



*2 John Remple*

“John always put the Council first before his own interests. He maintained a great interest even after his retirement.... From 1998 when he became President and Past-President until 2010, and even beyond, he worked

through his times of pain to keep this organization alive so we could one day be the beneficiaries of his unselfish efforts and his work ethic, which taught us the true value of always reaching for more. John was a soft-spoken man of great wisdom and when needed, he sure got his point across for the betterment of the Council.”

## White Cane Week

Fabulous February from the “frosty” Nation’s Capital! In January, Ottawa was the coldest capital city in the world for a day! The ice at the Ottawa Curling Club was in fine shape for our 16th annual Vision Impaired Curling Championship!

The past month has been very busy preparing for White Cane Week in many areas and chapters. Sometimes because of our climate many activities are held at a more weather friendly time of year, but the message is the same regardless of the conditions. Members are out on awareness campaigns, education and demonstrating our abilities. This is the Year of Accessibility, which is where our focus is on. Working with agencies and committees under federal jurisdiction, to ensure our built environment becomes fully accessible to all people with disabilities including both temporary and permanent issues.



CCB Toronto Visionaries held their Experience Expo on Feb. 2nd which was even bigger and better than in previous years. AMI Canadian Vision Impaired Curling Championships were held all week, with AMI interviewing for both live and recorded episodes, including describing the final game on the afternoon of Friday the 8<sup>th</sup>.

Wednesday Feb. 6th was our White Cane Dinner, where we honored several people and sponsors for their contributions to CCB. The guest speaker for the evening was to be Hon. Minister Carla Qualtrough, for which we were very honoured. Ms. Qualtrough has made some very major contributions to society and the disability community during her ministry for all persons with disabilities. Sadly Ms. Qualtrough had a last minute family emergency and we were joined by Kate Young, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Public Services and Procurement and Accessibility, who gave a wonderful speech.



CCB is proud of all we have done to improve the quality of persons living with sight loss and in the prevention of blindness over the past 75 years. We have come a long way and will continue into the future, with improvements to many areas of life.



4 The Sault Ste. Marie White Cane Week Display

I hope all chapters had a happy white cane week, and enjoyed all your activities. While White Can Week was a great time to recruit new members, we should continue with our membership drives so more members of our communities can enjoy some of the many activities that current CCB members have the pleasure of doing.

Members receive this exciting newsletter, are informed of new drugs and technology available, peer assistance to use technology, support from the organization for special activities undertaken by chapters, insurance coverage for events, (but contact the office more than 2 weeks before the event, please!) and rebates when chapter membership is paid during membership season (Fall). These are just some of the perks of

membership, so if you have not paid your membership or received the little sticker for your card, contact the office soon.

Happy 75th Anniversary!

Louise Gillis, National President



# Announcements

## THE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF THE BLIND BESTOWS ITS 2019 PRESIDENT'S AWARD TO VIA RAIL CANADA++

February 5, 2019 – Ottawa, ON – This year, during White Cane Week and on its 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the National Office of the Canadian Council of the Blind (CCB) is pleased to present its 8<sup>th</sup> Annual President's Award to VIA Rail Canada. White Cane Week is an annual public awareness campaign hosted by the CCB that takes place during the first full week of February and that broadens the understanding of vision loss and its impact on all Canadians. There's no better time to recognize and celebrate a company that is leading the way in accessibility and making strides towards a barrier-free Canada.

As Canada's national rail passenger service, VIA Rail and its employees are mandated to provide safe, efficient, and economical



transportation to approximately 4.8 million passengers annually. The company has distinguished itself in its efforts to improve the accessibility of its services.

Last year, VIA Rail collaborated with the International Union of Railways (IUC) on a proof of concept at its Ottawa station, to enable blind and partially-sighted passengers to navigate the station from entrance to platform autonomously. The effort included the participation of the CCB and other organizations representing people with disabilities. Through this innovative and collaborative approach, and the adoption of leading-edge technologies, the proof of concept aims to meet international accessibility standards.



VIA Rail has also taken several other steps towards improved accessibility, including creating more accessible spaces onboard its trains, establishing a user-friendly online reservation system, and integrating more people with disabilities into its workforce.

“We are working hard to ensure that VIA Rail remains the most accessible intercity mode of transportation in Canada, serving all Canadians,” says Yves Desjardins-Siciliano, VIA Rail’s President and CEO. “We partnered with the CCB and other organizations representing people with disabilities from the very beginning, seeking their input to any potential solution. It is the only way to ensure that their needs are met fully, adequately, and safely,” he continues. “It gave us better insight from day one. For us, it is a matter of inclusion of all Canadians in an active and participative Canada.”

In bestowing this year’s President’s Award, the CCB commends VIA Rail Canada and in particular Desjardins-Siciliano, whose vision and leadership raise the bar and set a standard in the industry. Desjardins-Siciliano’s

commitment to providing accessibility, including VIA Rail's support for a national effort to achieve the eventual seamless transfer from one mode of transport to another, should be an inspiration to Canada's transportation industry, and it has laid a path that implores all to follow.

To learn more, check out this year's issue of *White Cane Magazine* at [www.ccbnational.net](http://www.ccbnational.net).

## Canadian Vision Impaired Curling Championship 2019++

This was the year of surprises! There was tough competition for the entire week, and I'd like to congratulate all of the teams. Team Saskatchewan, after losing every game dominated the Consolation round, and handily won. Team Nova Scotia beat the favourites for gold Team Ontario in the finals, moving the award for the first time ever east of Ontario. Thank you to all the teams, and we're ever working to make next year even better.



6 Larry the Lobster in the CVICC trophy

## Blind Golf++

Blind Golf Canada and our members are excited to now be a part of the CCB by becoming a Chapter (BGC-Blind Golf Chapter). Therefore, we would like to share with all our fellow CCB members across Canada what Blind Golf Canada is all about and what we do.

At Blind Golf Canada, it is our mission to develop and promote blind golf along with true sportsmanship among Canada's blind and partially-sighted golfers wishing to play at a national and/or international level.

For those of you who don't know, blind golf is played by golfers who are totally blind or partially sighted (with an acuity of 20/200 or less). The rules

are the same; the only difference being that blind golfers may ground their club in a hazard. We use the aid of a sighted guide and its game on!

Canada is a member country within the International Blind Golf Association, and along with thirteen other member and five associate-member countries, we host and partake in tournaments held in Canada and around the world! Our own Canadian Open Blind Golf Championship has been hosted since 1997, is an annual event and is always a prominent stop on the IBGA tour. Canada has hosted two of the most successful World Championship events held to date; Winnipeg in 2002 and in Truro, Nova Scotia in 2012!



We would like to welcome you to Blind Golf Canada! Our motto is You Can Still Play! It is our hope that as someone who is blind or partially-sighted, you will come out and join us. If you are a sighted individual, get involved as a guide or a score keeper at a tournament in your local area, or just come out and watch us! You will be amazed!

## Blind Golf Canada National Campaign 2019

Support Blind Golf Canada in our efforts to support our blind golfers to swing into action in 2019!

All our members will have the opportunity to golf in three great events in Western Canada in BC this coming July.

The events are as follows:

- 2019 BC Provincial Invitational Blind Golf Championships (July 7th-July 6th) Creston Golf Club, Creston, BC
- 2019 Western Canadian Open Blind Golf Championships (July 8th-July 10th) Bootleg Gap Golf- Kimberley, BC

- 2019 ISPS HANDA Canadian Open Blind Golf Championships (July 11th-July 13th) St. Eugene Mission Golf Resort-Cranbrook, BC
- Our members will also have the opportunity to attend the 2019 Brian Macleod Memorial Nova Scotia Open August 18th-20th in Truro, Nova Scotia.

Having mentioned our events, we must also mention that hosting blind golf tournaments are expensive! We look at these tournaments as being an investment in the life and the well-being of a blind or partially-sighted person. Like the spotlight performance opportunities of a



PGA tour event, they represent a pinnacle of identity for the golfer to aspire to. It provides the golfer with a powerful image beyond the label of being blind or partially sighted.

With our message we are always looking to increase our membership, and thus, helping people rise above circumstance and adversity while playing and competing at an elite level. With your help we may offer tournament golf to a group of disabled persons with limited financial resources.

Every donation is greatly appreciated and accepted no matter the amount. Please feel free to give whatever amount you feel comfortable giving and if you wish to become one of our corporate partners, we would love to speak with you. 100% of all funds received are used for Blind Golf Canada programs, tournaments, member recruitment and any public relations required to further our cause!

Blind Golf Canada is a not for profit organization led by volunteers who work toward fulfilling our purpose. In so that we may continue to provide the same quality opportunities to our members, we will need to engage

businesses/corporations, and individuals who will assist us with financial support.

From a business or corporate perspective, the benefits of sponsoring Blind Golf Canada include recognition and visibility at all events and activities including acknowledgement on the official Blind Golf Canada website. Customized sponsorship packages can be designed to achieve an organization's marketing, PR, and community involvement objectives. If you would like to help us and make a donation, you can visit [www.blindgolf.ca](http://www.blindgolf.ca)



You can click on the PayPal link where you can make a donation with your credit card or you can mail a cheque or money order made payable to Blind Golf Canada at Blind Golf Canada c/o Director of Finance, 451 Highway 336, Upper Musquodoboit, Nova Scotia, B0N 2M0

Please note, we regret we are unable to offer a tax receipt of any type for your donation or sponsorship.

With your donation, you have invested in and provided an opportunity for a person with limited eye sight whom might otherwise, never have had the chance to play and discover the competition, camaraderie and friendship that golf has to offer.

Blind Golf Canada thanks you for your support!  
Facebook Users? Visit us: @blindgolf

CCB Toronto Ski Hawks Ski Club First Annual  
Fundraiser Dinner++

Mark your calendars and brace yourselves for the very first Toronto Ski Hawks Dining in the Dark Fundraiser at O'Noir Restaurant! At O'Noir, located a quick walk away from Yonge and Bloor, you are escorted into a completely dark room by a blind or low vision server, for a thrilling, three-course dining in the dark experience.

Pick the food you want - or choose to surprise your taste buds!

**Date:** Sunday, April 7

**Time:** 6:30pm

**Location:** O'Noir Dining in the Dark Restaurant - 620 Church St, Toronto

**Cost:** \$59 for three courses (drinks not included)

Parking is available near the restaurant

Get your tickets on-line at [www.torontoskihawks.org](http://www.torontoskihawks.org)

For any further questions, please contact Vice-President of Toronto Ski Hawks, Ramya Amuthan, at [ramya@torontoskihawks.org](mailto:ramya@torontoskihawks.org)



## What's new this tax-filing season++

This tax-filing season, many important changes and improvements were made to services, benefits, and credits for Canadians. Here's what you need to know:



*7 Guide dogs Tulia and Impreza take a well-deserved break*

### New and improved credits

The Medical expense tax credit has been expanded to allow expenses related to service animals who are specially trained. Eligible expenses paid in 2018 include the cost of the animal, the care and maintenance of the animal (food and veterinary care), reasonable travel expenses paid for the patient to attend a school, institution, or other facility that trains in the handling of these animals, and reasonable board and lodging

expenses paid for the patient's full-time attendance at a school, institution, or other facility.

## Braille Literacy Canada announces the 2019 Edie Moure Scholarship++

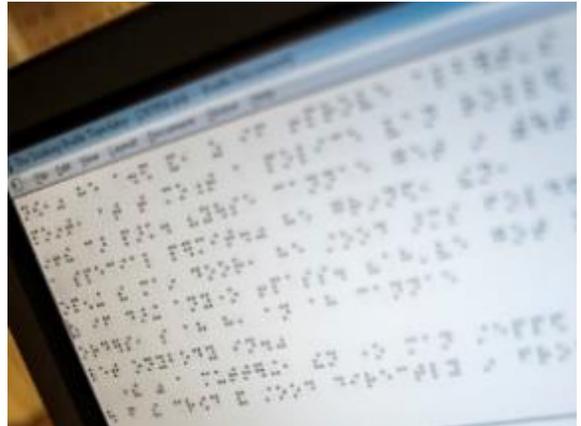
Braille Literacy Canada is thrilled to announce the launch of the 2019 Edie Moure scholarship! The application period begins today and will remain open until March 31st, 2019. This scholarship provides funding to those pursuing training to become a braille transcriber, proofreader or educator in Canada.

Those pursuing braille courses in either English or French to learn or update their braille code skills are encouraged to apply. The eligibility criteria as well as the application form can be found both attached to this message, and by visiting our website

at <http://www.brailleliteracycanada.ca/en/professional-development/edie-mourre-scholarship>.

We are also happy to share that thanks to the generous contributions of many, BLC has established a permanent endowment, and will be able to grant a scholarship to one deserving recipient each year!

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us at [info@blc-lbc.ca](mailto:info@blc-lbc.ca).



We encourage you to share this with others!

Very best wishes, and good luck!

Sincerely,

The Braille Literacy Canada board

## Market Segmentation Study by AMI++

Accessible Media needs our help! Our sponsor and partner, Accessible Media Inc. (AMI), is embarking on a Market Segmentation Study among blind and partially sighted Canadians. The purpose of this study is to identify, size and understand the different segments of people that exist



within the broad blind and partially sighted community. This research will help AMI better understand the unique behaviours, attitudes and needs of each segment so that they can develop programming and communications that address the needs and interests of these specific audiences. In appreciation of the CCB's collaboration, AMI will share a

summary report highlighting the key findings with us. We encourage you to support our partner in this endeavour. Kindly click on the link below to

confirm your participation. Once the survey is completed, your name will be entered into a draw to win \$100!

Thank you, in advance, for your cooperation. If you have any questions, kindly email [panel@ami.ca](mailto:panel@ami.ca).

<http://amiresearchregistration.com/>

## CNIB launches “Know Your Rights” project++

This year, CNIB was awarded a grant by the Law Foundation of Ontario to launch the Know Your Rights project. Running from now until June 2019, the project will develop plain language legal information resources that will help Ontarians who are blind, partially sighted or Deafblind to better understand their legal rights and challenge discrimination. The project will also train CNIB staff on how to connect clients with legal resources and train legal professionals on how to better accommodate and serve our community members.

To date, we have recruited a diverse, talented team of volunteer lawyers and community advocates – the Know Your Rights “Working Group” – to help guide the project and develop the resources.

At CNIB, the project is led by Avery Au, a lawyer who is excited to share his passion for making legal information more user-friendly and accessible. He is coordinating the efforts of the Working Group and building our network of collaborators, which already includes Community Legal Education Ontario, Ontario Justice Education Network, ARCH Disability Law Clinic and the Human Rights Legal Support Centre.



Throughout the project, we will be reaching out to Ontarians with sight loss and the broader community to receive feedback on our content and learn more. Stay tuned for further project updates!

We are still recruiting volunteers with diverse skills and backgrounds to join our volunteer Working Group. To learn more, please email Avery at [avery.au@cnib.ca](mailto:avery.au@cnib.ca)

## In Memory of Jean Lydia Poortvliet++

Jean Lydia Poortvliet was a special member of the Canadian Council of the Blind Waterloo Regional Club. Jean joined our club in February 2016 and was an active member always willing to try new things.

Jean Lydia enjoyed live theatre and joined the CCB Waterloo Regional Club members on the trips to all the Drayton Entertainment shows. We will miss her laughter during the shows and her presence at the after show dinners. Jean Lydia loved cooking. When she developed vision problems she had to put cooking school on hold. Jean Lydia was a Food Demonstrator in the Zehrs grocery store. When sharing new products she researched carefully so she could promote the new food to the customers to the best of her ability.

In 2017 Jean Lydia participated in the AMI Menu Match-Up. Jean travelled from Kitchener to Toronto for the interview and then the taping of the contest show. Jean Lydia's Episode 106 was called "Blender Blunder" and aired November 28, 2017 on AMI. In this competition home cook Jean Lydia



*8 Jean Lydia on AMI Menu Match-Up*

and Chef Stephanie Tucci competed against home cook Kristina and Chef Russell Auckbaraullee. The two teams were presented with seven ingredients for the meal. Judges were Kyla Zanardi, Murray Gregga and Afrim Pristin. When Jean Lydia's team won this episode she received a two nights and three days trip to Niagara-on-the Lake. It was a wonderful holiday getaway.

Jean Lydia was getting back on track with cooking school when she unfortunately had a pedestrian-car accident. She was struck while in a crosswalk with the audio signal. Cooking school was again put on the back burner. While recovering from her accident Jean Lydia discovered the joys of audio books to fill her recovering time. She also took up the art of knitting, creating squares for Kitchener's CNIB office.

Jean Lydia was a member and secretary for the Kitchener Lions Foundation. She received her beautiful black guide dog Urban through the Lions Foundation.

Members of CCB Waterloo Regional Club extend their sympathies to Jean Lydia's mom and brothers.

#### Obituary for Jean Lydia Poortvliet (Hofer)



Poortvliet, Jean Lydia (nee Hofer)

Passed away peacefully after a short illness at St. Mary's Hospital on Wednesday, January 30, 2019 at the age of 60. Beloved daughter of Elfriede Hofer (Fred Koehlmann) and the late Rudy Hofer. Dear sister of Rudy (Annette), Andreas (Jennifer) and Roland. Sadly missed by her 4 legged companion Urban.

Jean's family will receive relatives and friends from 12:30-1:15 p.m. on Saturday, February 9. As expressions of sympathy, donations to the CNIB or St. Mary's Hospital Foundation - ICU would be appreciated by the family (cards available at the funeral home). Visit [www.henrywalsers.com](http://www.henrywalsers.com) for Jean's memorial.

Beating my Frustration and More++

My name is Debby. I have been a member of the current Peterborough chapter of CCB (The Canadian Council of the Blind) for the last 3 years. Shortly before that, I lost most of my sight.

The support and encouragement CCB has given me has been a guiding light. By example, I was shown that life goes on. When one door closes you do have the ability to open new doors. Helping others and learning together gives you strength. However I was full of frustration.



Needing a way to manage this frustration I took a big chance. I contacted a gentleman named Kerry Hendren at the Scrap Yard Boxing Club in Peterborough ON., explaining to him my circumstances and what I was looking for. He directed me to a coach named Joe Dawson.

Together we have developed a program to help manage my frustration. I had never enjoyed exercise before nor had I ever boxed. I knew I never wanted to actually fight but punching a bag could be an answer. It definitely worked. With Joe's time, care and insight I have gained so much more. Boxing involves foot work. With Joe's guidance and patience we have developed some routines that have given me increased balance. I am building speed in movement in all directions. Practicing the boxing stance is improving my posture. It is also working muscles from my toes to the top of my head. The drills in foot work and punching combinations are developing quick thinking. This is a complete package.

The training works every part of me from my toes, legs, core, shoulders, arms and brain. The foot combinations and punch combos make me think fast. I have some sight but the heavy bag does not move. I do not have to see what I am punching. It has more to do with muscle memory. I am confident now that I can defend myself if necessary. All of these skills are giving me more confidence.

There are many advantages to using a white cane, but it can make us appear like we are easy targets. Lack of vision can put us at the disadvantage of not knowing who is near. I can now move quickly wherever I might need to. At close range I can duck, tuck and surprise with quick wit and strength. Joe keeps teaching me to box even though I am not ever going into a boxing ring. He takes my strengths and works to improve them. My weaknesses are noticed and built on or filled with new skills to fill those spaces.

I have found something new that I love.

I have taken on new challenges and though they may not remain a big part of my life forever, I have gained strength and a sense of adventure I never knew I had in me. Moving in crowds is not as scary. If I am jostled, I can steady myself more easily. If I trip in a hole, on a crack or root, I am not likely to twist, fall or break anything.

I have taken up boxing as an exercise. I am being trained by an amazing trainer. He teaches to my abilities. We are learning together what I am capable of. He also teaches people with muscular dystrophy. He would like to try to train wheel chair boxers. He has experience in many other disciplines.

Don't be afraid of new challenges. Don't assume you can't. Don't be ashamed to say you need help and to lean on others. That's how to make you and others better.

Thank you to  
Kerry Hendren,  
The Scrap Yard Boxing Club  
311 George St N



Peterborough, on  
705-878-7608  
Joe Dawson  
Personal coach/trainer  
705-931-5633



# Assistive Technology

## Albert Ruel's Must Have Blindness Related Assistive Tech Podcasts++

To stay in touch with the blind world of accessible and assistive technology I refer frequently to the following list of podcasters.

Some I go to just to hear what's new, what's coming, what does or doesn't work, and some I go to when I want to learn how to do a task, set-up a device or how to use an app. Either way, these are my go-to podcasts for your consideration. Please don't think that you have to agree, and if you have others I haven't included in this list please share them and I'll be happy to see whether or not they fit in my life and/or learning style. The list is alphabetical and not by importance.

- \* Accessibility Moving Forwards Podcast, for interesting interviews and assistive technology presentations.
- \* Airacast with Jonathan Mosen, for interviews, Agent and Explorer features and news about Aira.
- \* AMI Audio Live, for blindness related radio programs on AMI Audio.
- \* AppleVis, for learning how to, and for the news related to all things Apple.
- \* AT Banter Podcast by Canadian Assistive Technology, which consists of interviews with interesting people in the blind and multi-disabled assistive tech worlds.

\* Blind Abilities, for learning how to, and for the news related to all things assistive tech.

\* Blind Bargains Audio, for learning how to, and for the news related to all things assistive tech.

\* CNIB, Blind Wide Open Podcast, for presentations and interviews about blindness. Kim Kilpatrick was featured on January 8, 2019 talking about GTT.

\* CNIB, Venture Zone Podcast, which seems to be interviews with blind entrepreneurs

\* Comments On, Blind Vet Tech Quick Guides, for learning how to use all manner of apps and devices.

\* Cool Blind Tech, it has over 400 episodes available, and appears to not have added anything new since August 2018.

\* Double Tap, an AMI Audio Show dedicated to blindness assistive tech interviews.

\* iHabilitation by Tom Dekker, which is an iOS training podcast offering paid training sessions along with some free episodes.

\* Kelly and Company, an AMI Audio program that features some assistive tech segments, local reporting and other blindness related interviews.

\* Main Menu, ACB Radio, for the news related to all things assistive tech and blindness.

\* Mystic Access, for free tutorials, helpful hints and news about the online and home-study courses they sometimes offer.

\* Parallel, Relay FM, an interview podcast featuring many experts and innovators in the blind/tech world by Shelly Brisban. She is the author of the series of books titled, iOS Access for All, and is herself vision impaired.

\* RNIB Tek Talk, for news on the blind assistive tech world.

\* Seminars at Hadley, for hour long presentations, discussions and interviews related to assistive tech.



\* TedTalks, consisting of several separate podcasts related to Education, Health, News and Politics, Society and Culture, and Technology, which all must be searched for and subscribed to individually.



\* The Canadian Council of the Blind Podcast, just because I have a couple of episodes on there, and the CCB Health and Fitness program has many more than that.

\* The Tech Doctor Blog and Podcast, which posts new episodes infrequently, and that is very good, all-be-it completely Apple ecosystem

based.

\* Victor Reader Stream Information, which is infrequently updated with new material.

\* Woodbridge, David, iSee - Using various technologies from a blind person's perspective, for learning how to use many apps and devices.

## CCB Tech Articles, Donna's Low Tech Tips, Privacy Protection++

We are constantly striving to protect ourselves from scams and scammers, but most of all we need to ensure that our privacy, confidentiality, and independence are kept safe from prying eyes and those who thrive on destroying our right to these precious commodities.

When paying at the supermarket or at any type of store there are usually there are three methods of payment, and you should probably choose the one that best suits you.

\* Via cash: Make sure that when you open your wallet that you do not open it up too wide so that prying eyes could see or read what you have in it.

\* Via credit card: Here is where you need to ensure that when you enter your pin number that you do it yourself.

Chances are that the helpful cashier or sales person would be willing to help but better be safe than sorry. Make sure to ensure that you cover the screen or the keypad so that no one can see what you are entering.

\* Using your debit card. This is probably the most risky of the three methods in that you would need to enter more info than in option 2.

Not just your pin number, but the type of account that you are withdrawing from.



Chances are that the cashier or sales rep could be counted on to keep your info private but if you are concerned then it is probably best to take a trusted person along with you when you go shopping. Be sure to destroy all of your receipts when you arrive home so that they do not get into the wrong hands. To contact me, send me an email at [info@sterlingcreations.ca](mailto:info@sterlingcreations.ca)

## The Smart Reader Is Now Even Smarter! ++

Redesigned and smarter than ever!

The Smart Reader HD is a lightweight, portable reader/scanner with large built-in user friendly tactile control buttons.

A fully integrated solution, the Smart Reader HD offers the advantage of a built-in HD camera and OCR (optical character recognition).

Smart Reader HD enables individuals with low vision to retain the pleasure of reading by listening along or by attaching a monitor to view the text. Users are able to view in color, enhanced high-contrast positive or negative

modes, allowing for higher contrasts and easier viewing. With easy-to-use buttons and dials, customers can enlarge or reduce the text in seconds and change viewing options for easier visibility.

#### Smart Reader HD Features:

- Position document and in seconds Smart Reader begins reading aloud
- Ideal for reading magazines, books, newspapers, etc.
- Built-in speaker offers premium audio quality
  - Over 20 languages available with high-quality natural male or female voices
  - Large tactile control buttons
  - Built-in 8 hour rechargeable battery
  - Attach headphone for privacy
  - Connect to any desktop monitor or TV (HDMI and DVI) to enlarge image and follow along
  - Optimize contrast and brightness with over 30 color modes available
- Easy image scan, save and recall
- Import/Export document feature through USB port



The Smart Reader HD comes with Canadian Assistive Technology's 30 Day Money Back Return Guarantee.

Order yours and if you aren't completely satisfied, return it in its original packaging for a FULL REFUND.

1 Hour Free Training with the purchase of the Smart Reader HD (or any of our products), you'll also get an hour of free remote training to ensure that your new device is set up and you're able to use its basic functions.

Call us at 1-844-795-8324 or visit us online

[www.canasstech.com](http://www.canasstech.com)



Doro 824

Doro 824C

# Designed with accessibility in mind.

Get the Doro 824 or 824C exclusively on Bell, Canada's best national network<sup>1</sup> and enjoy access to:

- Alternate document and bill formats
- A dedicated accessibility call centre
- Monthly bill credits
- No charges for directory and operator assistance
- Additional 2 GB of data per month for eligible customers<sup>2</sup>

**Doro 824**

**\$0<sup>3</sup>**  
2-yr. Voice plan.

**Doro 824C**

**\$249<sup>994</sup>**  
2-yr. Smartphone plan with data.

One-time connection charge (\$35) applies.

Visit [bell.ca/accessibility](http://bell.ca/accessibility) or call 1 800 268-9243.

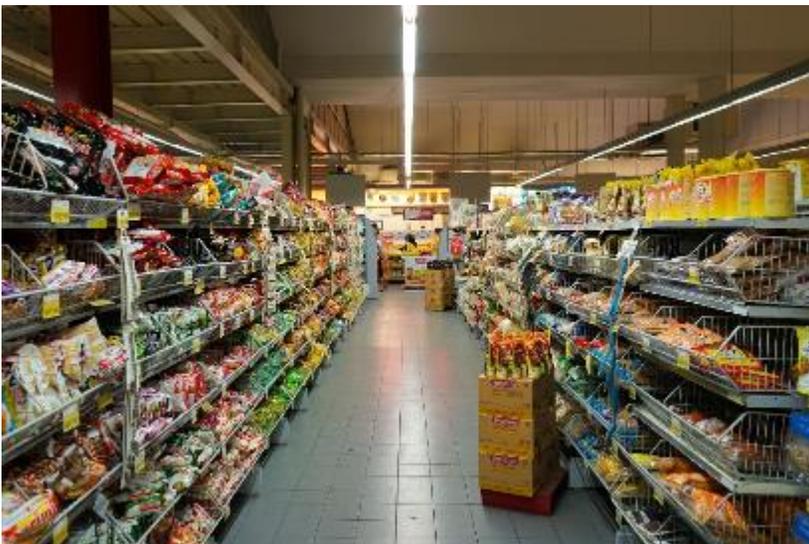
**Bell** connecting just got better

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# In the News

## Wegmans adds a 'game-changer' for visually impaired shopping ++

Grocery shopping can be very stressful. Navigating crowded aisles in a store full of people is frustrating, but if you're blind, like Kim Charlson, then grocery shopping can be almost impossible.



A new tool, however, could revolutionize shopping for people who can't see. It's an app that helps the visually impaired navigate the world and does it by using the eyes in your smartphone.

"You come into a grocery store and you're just bombarded with everything all around you,"

Charlson explained. "It's just not the place a blind person can get around independently without some kind of support." She says, though, she now has the support she needs. Hanging around her neck, using the camera in her iPhone is an operator walking her through the aisles and pointing her to where she needs to go. That operator works for the company Aira, a San Diego-based tech company that helps blind people navigate the world. This week, Aira launched its free program for Wegmans shoppers in Boston.

"Hi, Emily, this is Kim. I'm in Wegmans in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts,"

Charlton said into her phone as she demonstrated the app's functionality for Boston 25 News. We followed her as she used Aira to shop for her groceries.

"Does this look like a good batch [of tomatoes]?" she asked her assistant, Emily. We watched her communicate with the agent to find her everything she needed, including treats for her guide dog, Dolly. The system is not flawless. At times, Dolly got confused on where they were going. At one point,



the Aira agent told Charlson to go to an aisle that didn't exist -- but they eventually found their way together. Charlson, who has been blind since she was 12 years old, is excited about the possibilities.

"It's really been an amazing service and something I call a real game-changer," she said.

Boston 25 News spoke with Amy Bernal, Aira's Vice President of Customer Experience, about whether there were challenges guiding somebody around using a smartphone camera.

"I would say Aira agents work together with the explorer to move the camera where they need to get the information," Bernal said. "So think of it as a partnership. It really is an agent and an explorer working together to get the point of view and the information they need to be efficient."

Aira is a free service at all the Wegmans stores in New England. The company would like to expand the program into more grocery chains and retailers.

## “People think you can't be blind and use a phone” ++

A photo of a woman using a cane while looking at a mobile phone has been widely shared online with many social media users suggesting the woman is faking her visual impairment. The image was posted on Facebook earlier this month with the caption, "If you can see what's wrong say I see it", and has since been shared more than 33,000 times.



9 The picture in question from the BBC website

It has led to a number of people explaining that mobiles and other technology can be used by visually impaired people, and, in some cases, can be a lifeline. Three people with visual impairments have spoken to the BBC about when they have been targeted for using technology. Dr Amy

Kavanagh is a visually impaired activist. The 29-year-old said the Facebook post left her feeling "disappointed and angry".

"I was deeply hurt that a visually impaired person like me had been photographed without their consent and mocked for just going about their business," she said. Dr Kavanagh explained that "not all blind people are totally blind" and mobile phone technology is extremely accessible.

"My phone is my lifeline. I use a range of accessible functions and apps to magnify and zoom on my phone. I can order taxis with it, use GPS to plan a route and call my partner when I'm lost or stuck." The London-based activist said she often experienced people tutting and pointing - and has even been accused of faking her blindness while using her phone.

Veronica Lewis, 22, is a student living in Fairfax, Virginia, who has low vision and uses a cane full-time. Ms Lewis said she thought the Facebook post was a "gross invasion of privacy" but added she would not be surprised if someone had taken a picture of her in a similar manner. The college student was diagnosed with an eye condition when she was three and her sight deteriorated. She also has a brain condition which causes low vision.

"My phone helps me to adapt," Ms Lewis said. "I use a smart glasses service which uses the camera on my phone to see through. I also use a volunteer-based app which connects me with a sighted person for help and assistance. I'll often use my phone while I'm on the bus to make sure I'm going the right way and people will question how I'm using a cane and looking at my phone."

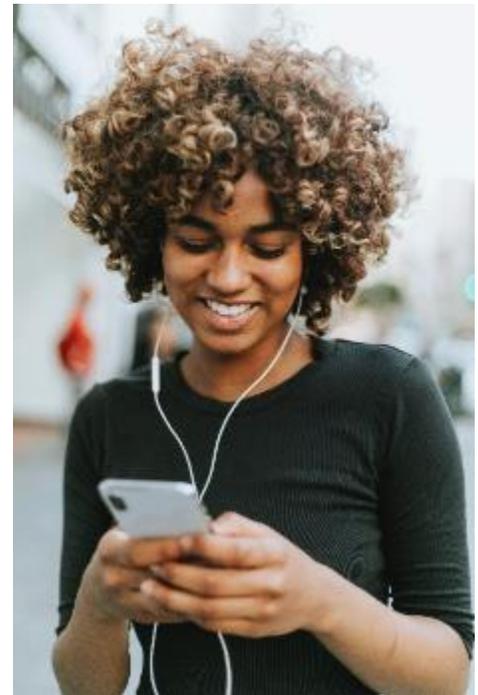
Ellen Fraser-Barbour, from Adelaide, Australia, is visually impaired and also hard of hearing. Ms Barbour said she has experienced people accusing her of faking or exaggerating her disability "for extra privileges".

"I get people making comments like, 'Are you really legally blind if you can read your phone?'" she said. The PhD student said the use of technology has changed her life.

"Before smart phones I was constantly dislocated and lost as I can't see landmarks, and being deaf, I find it really hard to ask for directions. With a smart phone I can track every movement by following myself on my map app. It tells me exactly where I'm going. It's given me such incredible independence."

'Blind people use phones'

The Royal National Institute of Blind People (RNIB) said it often hears of people facing prejudice and discrimination for just going about their daily





10 Kim from GTT shows Shelley how to use an app on an iPhone

life. Director of services at the UK-based charity, David Clarke, said: "The reality is that blind people use phones, read Kindles and watch TV in a variety of different ways.

"These include through the use of any residual vision they might have, synthetic voice, digital Braille technology and audio description amongst

others. We need to educate social media users and wider society as a whole as to the harm that posts like this can cause - ill-informed stories and ignorant reactions to them can really dent the self-confidence of blind and partially sighted people. At RNIB, we urge everyone to see the person, not the sight loss."

By Sarah Jenkins, BBC News



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