

NO LIMITS



Newsletter for the Earle Baum Center

Serving the Blind and Visually Impaired

From the Center

Spring at the Earle Baum Center is beautiful. The grass is green and growing, trees are bursting with new leaves and birds and jackrabbits are everywhere. We have egrets that hang out on our athletic field throughout the winter since it is more like a marsh than a playground and as it dries, they fly on. With spring come new and exciting additions to the EBC.

First of all, I want to introduce everyone to yet another new member of the EBC Staff, Lisa Gerhardt. As our Bookkeeper and Administrative Assistant, Lisa brings a joyful personality, laughter and fun stories to the office. Between Cathy and Lisa, not to mention Sean in the reception area and all the instructors with desks in Earle Baum's old living room, the energy of our office nicely mirrors the energy of spring.

In May, Florida State University will begin the master degree program in Rehabilitation Teaching through the EBC. People from all over the West will come to the EBC for short durations to learn how to teach independent living to people who are blind and visually impaired. Impacting future services throughout the State by hosting the program to teach the teachers feels very good.

The EBC is working with Abrams Consulting to assist on our building expansion capital campaign. Thus far, we have raised about 10% of our goal of 2.5 million dollars to build the facility that will include a low vision clinic, training kitchens, all purpose room,

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manual skills/ crafts room, etc. In the course of their work, if the Abrams contact you for ideas or assistance, we hope that you will extend your cooperation.

We are also trying to fund new and upgraded equipment for training in both the technology department and other teaching programs. Here too, we can use help. The demands on our services are rapidly growing and it is a challenge to keep up. Adaptive equipment is changing on a daily basis and to remain cutting edge, we must have use of the latest whenever possible.

Finally, I once again welcome you to come to the EBC to visit, receive services or get involved. Unless you have been here, you will not appreciate why we feel truly fortunate.

Allan Brenner, Executive Director

Board Presidents Message

Greetings. With this issue of your newsletter, I am please to inaugurate quarterly messages from the President. Hopefully, they will be sufficiently interesting and informative that I'll be asked to keep on writing!

Boards of Directors are responsible for making sure their Centers continue to exist and prosper into the distant future. The life of the Center, so to speak, is entrusted to the members of the Board.

As President, my job is to facilitate the work of the Board and, to provide guidance to the Executive Director. Yes, technically, Allan Brenner has a boss!

In keeping with its responsibilities, the Board works hand in hand with Allan and the staff to make sure the Center continues to grow and flourish. We are interested in the programs and services offered at the Center, financial matters, staffing and compensation, fund raising, and more.

Now, for a brief profile of the members of the Board of Directors.

Tony Candela, President, is an employment specialist with the American Foundation for the Blind in San Francisco and resides in Berkeley.

Beryl Brown, Vice President, is a retired nurse, chapter president of the California Council of the Blind, and EBC Volunteer Coordinator.

Shannon Pakes, Treasurer, is a Certified Public Accountant working for Moss Adams. She also assists with monitoring the Center's everyday financial transactions.

Eric Smiley, Secretary, is a tutor and avid tandem cyclist.

Elizabeth Cooley, PhD is a Psychologist and founder of the Wright Institute.

Aerial Gilbert is Director of Volunteers at Guide Dogs for the Blind and a world champion blind rower.

Patrick Caskey is a renowned ophthalmologist and retinal specialist connects the EBC to the medical community.

Allan Compton is a practicing Psychiatrist with the VA and a former Colonel in the United States Army.

Ann Haden is a retired municipal attorney and former member of Albany City Council.

In future issues I will outline some of the things the Center hopes to accomplish in the upcoming years. In the meantime, congratulations to all of you, staff and clients, for making the Center the wonderful place that it is.

Anthony R. Candela, President
February 15, 2005

Did you know?

There are a number of specialty groups that meet at the Earle Baum Center that serve not only the visually impaired, but other disabilities as well. They include veteran groups, Santa Rosa MS Support Group, Christopher Reeve's Spinal Injury Support Group and more.

The EBC hosts three Veteran groups. The **VIST (Visual Impairment Services Team)** which is a **Veteran's only** support group meets the 2nd and 4th Thursday of the month from 11:15-12:30. It is led by VIST Coordinator Margie Donovan from the San Francisco VA Medical Center. At 12:45 pm on those days, the Coordinator meets with family/spouses of any visually impaired person.

The 2nd Thursday of the month at 12:30pm, the **Blinded Veterans Association (BVA)** meets. This is a Veterans Advocacy Group and is open to Veterans, family members, and caregivers. Local contact for these groups is Beryl Brown, 545-7642

Equipment loan program

The Earle Baum Center has an equipment loan program. If you have equipment (CCTV, computers, magnifiers) that you would like to donate, we will pass it on to another. Please contact us for more details.

One stop at a time...

Have you ever tried to take the public bus in your area and discovered that the bus stop was too far away or the sidewalk to get there was not accessible?

This recently happened to a client with whom I was working. So we decided to contact Sonoma County Transit and requested them to install a public bus stop at a location where it was needed.

After eagerly waiting and watching, they gladly installed the bus stops, both east and west bound, and appreciated our input. Now my client gets to the EBC or other destinations with ease, avoiding the need for paratransit or private rides.

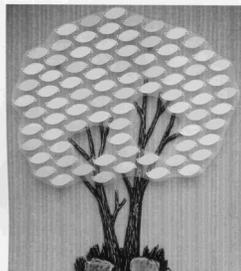
So, if the only thing that stops you from riding the public bus is a convenient stop, call and request one to help you get out enjoying the wonderful area in which we live. When we make efforts to improve the public bus system we are not only helping ourselves but we are also helping countless others. We all need to work on improving the bus system so that we can use them as our major form of transportation.

Leslie Bailiff- Orientation and Mobility Specialist

Tree of Life

The EBC has just installed a beautiful perpetual plaque, the **Tree of Life**, in Room 3. The cast bronze tree trunk with brass leaves is a way to both celebrate the living and remember those who have passed away.

For a minimum donation of \$100, a name will be engraved on a leaf for all to see, while providing support for the Earle Baum Center. Please call for more information.



Getting Involved with the Earle Baum Center

By Bill Gillespie

It was in the fall of 2002 when I began coming to the Earle Baum Center and I was very nervous because I did not know anyone very well. But the weeks and months went by and now it is going on three years that I have been attending classes and activities the center.

What I am trying to say in this article is that it is important that the blind people in the area have a place to come and receive training and support.

At first, when I went totally blind I didn't have a place like EBC for support. It is important that blind or visually impaired people have somewhere that they can turn for support in addition to training. I know when I am feeling down and I come to the center, my batteries are recharged!

What I would like to say to someone who has a blind or visually impaired family member; don't hold them back from trying anything that he or she would like to try for the first time. I myself tried something for the first time two years ago. I went cross country skiing for the first time. I had such a great time that I am planning on doing it again this ski season. Sometimes we only have short time to experience things in life. If there is something new for me to try and I learn to like it, my life will be enriched. We, as blind people, need to be given a chance to enjoy all the same things that others experience while feeling the trust of those who care for us.

I want to thank the staff at the Earle Baum Center for all the many hours of hard work that they put in to keep it going. I know that I will do all that I can to help. Just come out and see what the EBC has for you.

Volunteers Needed

We are looking for 2 to 4 hearty volunteers to drive our lawn mower and keep the fields under control.

We have a good sit down mower, but don't have the crew to drive it.

We need two to four hour blocks of time on a regular basis. If you can help out, please give us a call.

The Earle Baum Center has many opportunities for you to Volunteer. Contact Beryl Brown, or Laurie Scardina for an application.

Rose Parade Time

The Earle Baum Center will be participating again this year in the Rose Parade and Festival on Saturday May 21, 2005. The theme this year is Reels And Roses (as in film) - so put on your thinking caps and let us know what your ideas are for our float. We need this input immediately!

Bring the family and join us in the walk.

We will also have a booth in Julliard Park following the parade. Sign up now to be a volunteer for this very successful activity. Call us for more information.

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**FREE MATTER
FOR THE BLIND**



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MISSION STATEMENT

The Earle Baum Center was conceived and established by the blind to provide facilities and foster programs in such areas as education, technology, rehabilitation, health, fitness and recreation, to improve the personal, social and economic condition of the blind and vision impaired.