**Dots and Dashes**

**August 28, 2023**

# **Passing of Oral Miller**

Oral O. Miller, fourth president and former national representative/executive director of the American Council of the Blind, passed away August 6, 2023. He was 90. Read the full obituary at [**https://www.acb.org/memoriam-oral-o-miller**](https://www.acb.org/memoriam-oral-o-miller). If you have memories or reminiscences you’d like to share, send them to **slovering@acb.org**.

Miller was best known for his advocacy, his love of sports, and his habit of giving everyone a nickname. A Celebration of Life service will be held in the D.C. area at a date to be determined.

The ACB Angels Program is a powerful and personal way for ACB members and friends to honor departed loved ones and guide dogs who have been integral to the American Council of the Blind, its affiliates, and its members. If you wish to contribute toward making Oral an ACB Angel, please send an email to Kolby Garrison at **kgarrison@acb.org**.

# **Vote for Amarillo Store!**

The American Council of the Blind Thrift Store in Amarillo, Texas has been nominated for best Thrift Store and Best Second Hand Clothing & Consignment Store for CommunityVotes Amarillo 2023! We need your vote to help us win.

You can vote by sending an email to **vote@communityvotes.com** with the message “I would like to vote for the American Council of the Blind Thrift Store for best Thrift Store and Best Second Hand Clothing & Consignment Store for CommunityVotes Amarillo 2023.”

Voting ends on September 17. We greatly appreciate anyone who takes the time to vote for us!

# **Flying with Service Animals**

A Washington Post article published today discusses the difficulties people with disabilities face when taking service animals onto flights since new rules from the Department of Transportation took effect in January 2021. The regulations were an effort to crack down on a rise in passengers passing off untrained pets as service or emotional support animals. Airlines can require passengers to complete forms about their service dog’s training at least 48 hours before their flight.Airlines also must make a reasonable effort to allow all passengers with service dogs to fly, even if they do not submit their forms in time. But disability advocates say airlines seem to be interpreting the regulations differently, enforcing varying rules for submitting documents or rejecting forms from other airlines’ websites. Some passengers say their dogs have been rejected for simple paperwork mistakes.The required forms also have been difficult to fill out, blind travelers say, because they are often not accessible. Organizations including the American Council of the Blind and Guide Dog Users Inc have been meeting with Department of Transportation staffers and pushing for the forms to be eliminated or changed. Read the full article: [**Airlines tried to stop fake service animals. It kept blind people off flights.**](https://www.washingtonpost.com/wellness/2023/08/28/airline-regulations-service-animals/)

# **12 Conditions Added to Compassionate Allowance**

Social Security recently announced 12 new Compassionate Allowances conditions: 1p36 Deletion Syndrome, Anaplastic Ependymoma, Calciphylaxis, Cholangiocarcinoma, FOXG1 Syndrome, Leber Congenital Amaurosis, Metastatic Endometrial Adenocarcinoma, Paraneoplastic Cerebellar Degeneration, Pineoblastoma – Childhood, Primary Omental Cancer, Sarcomatoid Carcinoma of the Lung – Stages II-IV, and Trisomy 9.

The definition for Supplemental Security Income and Social Security Disability Insurance are the same for LCA. There are now over 200 conditions which automatically will qualify someone for SSI and SSDI. Read the full press release at [**https://www.ssa.gov/news/press/releases/2023/#8-2023-1**](https://www.ssa.gov/news/press/releases/2023/#8-2023-1).

# **Bookshare Subscription Award**

Ashley Tapparo was a bright young woman, talented artist, and beloved daughter, sister, and friend who dreamed of attending college and studying marine biology. In spite of Ashley’s best efforts, she was unable to fulfill all of her dreams due to her passing last June at the age of 18 after a long battle with cancer. In the course of her treatment, Ashley utilized Bookshare’s accessible ebook library to obtain books for her classes and for pleasure reading.

To honor Ashley’s legacy, Benetech is awarding up to 10 annual Bookshare subscriptions in her name. Apply by August 31 at [**https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7382917/2023-Ashley-Memorial-Campaign**](https://survey.alchemer.com/s3/7382917/2023-Ashley-Memorial-Campaign).

# **NRTC Webinar on Employment**

Join us on Thursday, September 7 at 2:00 pm CST for our next Employment Insights webinar, “Leveraging Your Disability to Find a Job: How to Make Your Blindness or Low Vision a Strength When Job Seeking.” You’ll hear from Jonathan Lucus with NSITE, Ross Barchacky with inclusively, and Kristin Smedley, author of “Thriving Blind: Stories Real People Succeeding Without Sight.”

To register, go to [**tinyurl.com/nrtcwebinar**](https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYld-utrTssGNf4NZSWgWDFEMOTMYlFsqfO?fbclid=IwAR3UF-v4i0Hpir_5FOrzuRpaXBhFI8ZAZcPlQ8ld6EQtg31yt1dQEsWJOyQ#/registration).

# **Many Faces of BARD**

The topic for the September 14, 2023, Many Faces of BARD program will be Using Your Braille Display to Read Braille BARD Books on Your iPhone. The program will begin at 7:00 p.m. Eastern time and last for one hour. This program will be recorded.

For this session, Judy Dixon will demonstrate how to access BARD braille books located on your iPhone and read them with your braille display. Note that information in this session will apply to any braille display including the NLS Braille eReaders. After the demonstration, Judy and the rest of the NLS staff will take questions about the demonstration or anything else relating to BARD.

To join the session, go to [**https://loc.zoomgov.com/j/1609390773?pwd=bWtTcmhyNlplcm9ndnRrd0xOZFFRQT09**](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https%3A/loc.zoomgov.com/j/1609390773?pwd=bWtTcmhyNlplcm9ndnRrd0xOZFFRQT09__;!!EDx7F7x-0XSOB8YS_BQ!aqUpFcFpkIt4p05SQRNZ4ECjcaasvS1z3Th_gH2jG5KgI1MsLd_3_1hrmq2Tq4vd3AEzTCFkI-8TyWbgp3dgKJueWaz9CxTbb0feDQ$)**.**

# **Graphic Design Student Needs Your Help**

Yasmeen Coan, a graphic design graduate student at Falmouth University in the UK, is working on a skincare line adapted for visually impaired people. I would love to speak to a few women who are blind or visually impaired, and get their feedback on whether this is something that, as designed now, would make a difference for them and make skincare more accessible.

To participate, contact Yasmeen via email, **yasmeengcoan@gmail.com**, or phone (757) 561-9216.

# **Be My Eyes Researcher Needs Your Feedback**

Nico Nosal, a researcher partnered with Be My Eyes, is conducting a study on how blind and low-vision individuals use accessibility tools. He would like to receive feedback on the following questions:

* 1. How did you start using assistive technologies such as screen readers, image readers or tools like BME? I.e. Did you learn them yourself, go to a class, had a family member or a friend help you set things up?
	2. What were the biggest challenges and obstacles during the process of learning how to use assistive technologies?
	3. How are you staying up to date with the newest developments in assistive software and hardware? What communities, news or organizations do you follow - if any?

You may email Nico your response at **nico@bemyeyes.com**, or ask to schedule a 30 minute conversation to discuss your feedback in greater detail.

# **LEGO® Braille Bricks**

Building with Lego bricks has stayed a formative and important practice for kids around the world, partly because it’s so easily enjoyed by anyone, regardless of location, language, or ability. Now the company has made its Braille Bricks, a learning toy for children with visual impairments (or who just want to learn the script) available for purchase by anyone who wants them. [**Learn more in this TechCrunch article**](https://techcrunch.com/2023/08/24/you-can-finally-buy-legos-braille-bricks/).

# **Call to Book an Uber Ride**

You can now ride with Uber without using the app. Just dial 1-833-USE-UBER (1-833-873-8237) to book a trip on demand or pre-book up to 30 days in advance. Learn more at[**https://www.uber.com/blog/1-833-use-uber/**](https://www.uber.com/blog/1-833-use-uber/).