



New Vision News

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Check us out on the web at www.n-v-i.org



"Vision Impairment Services In Our Neighborhood"

Lake-Sumter Community College

9501 US Hwy 441

Leesburg, FL 34788

Happy 200th Birthday to Louis Braille!

Louis Braille (1809-1852)

Six dots. Six bumps. Six bumps in different patterns, like constellations, spreading out over the page. What are they? Numbers, letters, words. Who made this code? None other than Louis Braille, a French 12-year-old, who was also blind. And his work changed the world of reading and writing, forever.

Louis was from a small town called Coupvray, near Paris—he was born on January 4 in 1809. Louis became blind by accident, when he was 3 years old. Deep in his Dad's harness workshop, Louis tried to be like his Dad, but it went very wrong; he grabbed an awl, a sharp tool for making holes, and the tool slid and hurt his eye. The wound got infected, and the infection spread, and soon, Louis was blind in both eyes.

All of a sudden, Louis needed a new way to learn. He stayed at his old school for two more years, but he

couldn't learn everything just by listening. Things were looking up when Louis got a scholarship to the Royal Institution for Blind Youth in Paris, when he was 10. But even there, most of the teachers just talked at the students. The library had 14 huge books with raised letters that were very hard to read. Louis was impatient.

Then in 1821, a former soldier named Charles Barbier visited the school. Barbier shared his invention called "night writing," a code of 12 raised dots that let soldiers share top-secret information on the battlefield without even having to speak. Unfortunately, the code was too hard for the soldiers, but not for 12-year-old Louis!

Louis trimmed Barbier's 12 dots into 6, ironed out the system by the time he was 15, then published the first-ever braille book in 1829. But did he stop there? No way! In 1837, he added symbols for math and music. But since the public was skeptical, blind students

had to study braille on their own. Even at the Royal Institution, where Louis taught after he graduated, braille wasn't taught until after his death. Braille began to spread worldwide in 1868, when a group of British men, now known as the Royal National Institute for the Blind, took up the cause.

Now practically every country in the world uses braille. Braille books have double-sided pages, which saves a lot of space. Braille signs help blind people get around in public spaces. And, most important, blind people can communicate independently, without needing print.

Braille Louis proved that if you have the motivation, you can do incredible things.

Taken from American Foundation for the Blind website. www.afb.org

United Way Days of Caring

Do you need a handrail installed at the steps outside your home? Maybe you need a safety grip installed at your bathtub. Do you need some tree branches cleared off your driveway or roof? Or maybe your front door is too hard to close or lock. Have bushes grown over your sidewalk? Do you need a yellow line painted at the edge of the front step so that you can see it better? If you have any special needs such as these, and you are unable to take care of them yourself, we may be able to help you. United Way offers Days of Caring, when volunteers help by completing these types of chores. If you think you have a project for a Day of Caring, please call New Vision and we will make the arrangements

New Vision for Independence Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting was held Janu-

ary 20th. The election of Board members and officers was held. Current Board members and offices are
President: Colleen Kollmann
Vice President: Ellen Miller
Secretary: Don Faehn

Treasurer: Pat Blair
Members at large: Otis Maxson, Dave Fuller, Matt Gravat, Mickey Staub, and Dr. Ramchander. Our sincere thanks to retiring members Harold Miller and Tyva Russell.

Did you know?

SafeLink Wireless is a government program designed to provide cell phones and limited monthly minutes to people who qualify. Eligibility requirements can be found at <https://www.safelinkwireless.com/EnrollmentPublic/Home.aspx>

There is a **Property tax exemption** for legally blind homeowners. For more information call the Property appraiser's office—in Lake County 343-9748 or in Sumter County 793-0210

Lifeline/Link-Up Telephone Assistance are federal programs that help income-eligible consumers afford local telephone service. Your local telephone company has more information.

Disabled Parking Permits are available to individuals who are legally blind.

If you would like additional information about any of the above, call New Vision at 352-435-5040.

VIP Support Groups

Clermont

4th Friday each month at 1 pm
Meets at Asbury House, 949 7th St, Clermont. Call Florence 429-3030

Hawthorne—residents only

1st Thursday each month at 10 am
Meets at the Recreation Center. Call Bob or Betty 326-3903

Lake Port Square—Leesburg

2nd Wednesday each month at 12 pm. Meets in the Auxiliary Dining Room, East Bldg. Public is welcome, call Ruth at 315-0362 to reserve a seat.

Lake View Terrace—Altoona

Public welcome. Meeting times vary. Call Chris 669-2133 x 257

Triangle Group

1st Wednesday each month at 1 pm
Meets at Sandpiper Mobile Home Park Clubhouse. Call Ursula 589-1209

Mount Dora

1st Wednesday each month at 6:30

pm. Meets at St. Edward's at 5th and Grandview. Sponsored by the Mount Dora Lions Club. Call Sandy at 455-9300

Items for Sale:

Large Print Greeting Cards 12/\$10.00

2008 New Vision Walk for Independence T-shirt: \$15 (size Large only)

Used Video Eye: call to see and for the price.

2009 Walk for Independence

Volunteers are needed to assist with the planning of the Walk scheduled for October. Meetings are held during the day at the Leesburg campus of Lake-Sumter. Call if interested for the time and date of the next planning meeting.



Resources

Low Vision Specialist:

Sonya Braudway, O. D.
14244 State Rd 50
Clermont, FL 34711
352-394-7137

Sarah Brostko, O.D.
Sumter Commons Pro. Center
1814 W. CR 48
Bushnell, FL 33513
352-568-0600

Low Vision Products:

Carolyn's Catalog (800) 648-2266
Freedom Scientific (800) 444-4446
ila (800) 537-2118
LowVision.com (866) 999-9188
LS&S (800) 468-4789
Magnifying Aids (800)
Magnifying America (800) 364-1610
MaxiAids (800)522-6294

Electronic Magnifiers:

www.bierley.com

Deaf & Hearing Services:

(352) 323-0757

YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

In these tough economic times non-profit organizations are also facing drastic cuts in budgets. No non-profit is secure from funding losses. If you are fortunate enough to be in a position to offer financial assistance, here are some ways you can help make a positive difference:

Send a donation today. To send a contribution of any type or amount, please use the following mailing address: New Vision for Independence, 9501 US Highway 441, Leesburg, FL 34788.

Make an Honor or Memorial gift. Honor a friend, relative, or even a pet (in honor of dog guides for the blind) – we will send cards of celebration or sympathy in your name.

Take Advantage of IRA Rollover Before End of Year. If you are age 70 ½ or older, new legislation now allows you to make cash gifts totaling up to \$100,000 a year from your IRA to qualified charities like New Vision without incurring income tax on the withdrawal. The provision is effective for tax years 2008 and 2009 only.

Remember New Vision in your estate planning. Make a lasting commitment by naming New Vision in your will. You would have a legacy of providing independence for individuals with low vision or blindness.