

Fall 2011

# SHARED VISIONS

## **Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired**

### **GOOGLE INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN A USABILITY STUDY**

Over the past few months, Google has partnered with Vista Center to connect with individuals who are blind or visually impaired to improve the accessibility of Google's products. Google is currently looking for blind and visually impaired people who would be interested in taking part in future research studies.

If selected for a study, you will be compensated for your time and will be helping to make Google products better for all blind and visually impaired users. Note that you must be over 18 years old to take part in the study. If interested, please fill out the following form: <http://goo.gl/5YbQF>. If you have difficulty in accessing the link noted above, please email [amcgrath@vistacenter.org](mailto:amcgrath@vistacenter.org), and your question or comment will be forwarded to the Google staff member in charge of the project.

When individuals who are blind or visually impaired are given the opportunity to provide feedback about accessibility of web sites or products, the end result is better for all. We encourage you, if you have the time and

meet the criteria, to provide your input and/or provide your contact information for feedback purposes.

**2012 NORTHERN CALIFORNIA BRAILLE CHALLENGE SET FOR SATURDAY, MARCH 3 – A NATIONAL PROGRAM OF BRAILLE INSTITUTE**

Vista Center will host the 2012 Braille Challenge in collaboration with California School for the Blind, LightHouse for the Blind, Society for the Blind, and Braille Institute of America.

**WHEN:                      Saturday, March 3, 2012  
                                    8:30AM - 4PM**

**WHERE:                     Santa Clara Valley Blind Center  
                                    101 North Bascom Avenue  
                                    San Jose, CA 95128**

We invite youth from Northern California in grades 1-12 to compete in a series of five skills contests demonstrating braille reading and comprehension, speed and accuracy, spelling, proofreading, and tactile graphics. Everyone who competes is recognized.

The event will also include workshops and fun Braille activities. It will be a great day for youth who read Braille to challenge themselves and enjoy the celebration of community. California School for the Blind and the agencies for the blind and visually impaired in the Northern California area are all coming together to offer a wonderful program and competition for all.

**EVENT CONTACT PERSON AND TO REGISTER:**

Alice McGrath - [amcgrath@vistacenter.org](mailto:amcgrath@vistacenter.org), Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, 650-858-0202 ext. 130

**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED:**

Teachers for the Visually Impaired, Transcribers and Braillists are needed to serve as Proctors and Scorers for this exciting event. Contact Alice McGrath.

**SPONSORS:**

- The Braille Institute Auxiliary
- Humanware – Victor Stream players
- National Braille Press – gift certificates for their catalog of Braille books and product
- Seedlings Braille Books for Children - gift certificates for a book or t-shirt from their catalog
- Perkins Products – gift certificates for a Braille Sudoku game
- Top Dot - game
- Santa Clara Valley Blind Center – venue host

**TALKING BOOK CLUB AT VISTA CENTER**

Come and join the Vista Center Talking Book Club in Palo Alto. The club meets at 2:00 p.m. on the fourth Thursday of each month at our Vista Center office in Palo Alto. The exceptions are November when we'll meet on the third Thursday, and we've cancelled the December meeting because of all our holiday activities.

At each meeting members talk about interesting books they've read recently, and one member leads an in-depth discussion of one book in particular. Laura Hillenbrand's

**Unbroken** was the featured September book, to be followed in October with David McCullough's **1776**. Fiction and non-fiction, history and detective/mysteries, biography and romance – we discuss them all.

To find out more about the Talking Book Club, please contact Ron at [ronmona47@yahoo.com](mailto:ronmona47@yahoo.com).

### **QUESTIONS? THE HEALTH LIBRARY IS HERE TO HELP!**

Do you have questions or need information about health? Did your doctor say you should have an "xyz" test? Has your uncle just had an attack of "pqw"? Call or email The Health Library at Vista Center. We will search for the answer and send the results to you by email, large print, braille or text CD. Or you may choose to keep up with the latest medical research on AMD, Macular Hole, RP, Glaucoma or Diabetes by signing up for one of our monthly email research lists.

We also have the 2011 BIRD [Blind Interest Resource Directory] available, which can be accessed on our Vista Center web site [www.vistacenter.org](http://www.vistacenter.org). The price is right - FREE. You can contact our professional visually impaired volunteer staff at 650-858-0202 ext. 132, 1-800-660-2009 (from any area code in CA), or email [thl@vistacenter.org](mailto:thl@vistacenter.org).

### **CHOICES AND CHANGES - LOW VISION EDUCATION CLASS**

Our Choices and Changes class is open to adults with visual impairment and their family members (if the client is enrolled) and is led by Vista Center's social services staff. It

introduces clients to services, equipment, and resources that are available, and increases awareness of the process of adjusting to vision loss.

The next Choices and Changes low vision education class series will be Thursdays, January 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> and February 2<sup>nd</sup> from 10:00 AM -12:30 PM. If you are interested, please contact Jo Jaros 650-858-0202 ext. 115 or Carolyn Dingman 650-858-0202 ext. 131.

### **WELCOME TO OUR NEW LOW VISION OPTOMETRIST IN SANTA CRUZ**

Dr. Theresa Lee-Yip is a graduate of Berkeley School of Optometry and completed a low vision residency at the Tucson, Arizona Southwestern Blind Rehabilitation Center in 2008. She will begin seeing clients at our Low Vision Clinic in Santa Cruz on Wednesdays. We are very excited to have her join our team. Welcome Dr. Lee-Yip!

### **HOLIDAYS ARE AROUND THE CORNER**

The Store at Vista Center is a great place to purchase accessible gifts for family and friends, or a gift for yourself. The PenFriend is a voice labeler audible recording device that is easy to use and has so many uses for marking and noting items. The staff at the Store will have wonderful suggestions to make your holiday shopping easy and well matched to the needs of the recipient.

The Store in Palo Alto is open Monday - Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. For information call 650-858-0202 at extension 135. The Store in Santa Cruz is open Monday - Friday from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. For information call 831-458-9766.

## **SAVE THE DATE – LOW VISION EXPO IN SAN JOSE**

**Vista Center and the Santa Clara Valley Blind Center will host the Low Vision Expo in San Jose! This event is designed to educate blind or visually impaired individuals, their families and friends about the resources, aids, latest technology, and services available to them through Vista Center, SCVBC, and other local organizations in the community. The program schedule will include a doctor presentation, technology segment, and plenty of time for the attendees to visit with exhibitors. We hope to see you there. This is an event not to be missed!**

**When: Saturday, May 12, 2012**

**Where: Santa Clara Valley Blind Center  
101 North Bascom Avenue  
San Jose, CA 95128-1805**

## **RESEARCH AT THE PALO ALTO VA**

**We are collaborating with a research team at the Palo Alto Veterans Administration to share some of their current research projects with our clients. They are still in need of participants. If one of these projects interests you, please contact the appropriate person listed at the end of the project's description. For general information about participant rights, call 1-866-680-2906.**

### **Non-24-Hour Sleep-Wake Disorder:**

**Are you blind with no light perception? Do you have problems sleeping at night or trouble with daytime sleepiness?**

**A local doctor is conducting research to evaluate a new investigational treatment for a condition called Non-24-Hour Sleep Wake Disorder. You may qualify if you are between 18 and 75 years of age, you are blind with no light perception, and you have trouble sleeping at night or experience daytime sleepiness. If you want to participate, call 650-849-1971 Monday - Friday 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM.**

**Small Visual Displays:**

**Dr. Ronald Schuchard is studying how well people with central vision loss can recognize characters on small visual displays, such as on cell phones, personal data assistants (PDAs), and home electronics such as (microwaves, phones, and thermostats). If you are 18 years of age or older and have any of the following eye conditions, you may qualify to participate in this study: Macular degeneration, diabetic retinopathy, or any eye condition in which you have central vision loss such as resolution and/or contrast.**

**This study requires one visit to the Palo Alto VA, and you will be compensated for your time and travel. For more information, please contact Dr. Ronald Schuchard or Ms. Lisa Mauney at 650-493-5000 ext. 64536.**

**Do you have AMD?**

**Researchers at the Palo Alto VA are studying how everyday activities like reading are affected in people with age-related macular degeneration (AMD). This study requires one 4-hour visit to the Palo Alto VA medical center with testing of vision and everyday visual tasks, followed by a telephone interview. You will be compensated for your participation and travel. For more information, please contact Dr. Claire Barnes at 650-493-5000 ext. 65073.**

## How to Contact Us

**Vista Center, Palo Alto**  
**2470 El Camino Real**  
**Suite 107**  
**Palo Alto, CA 94306**  
**650-858-0202**

**800-660-2009**

**Vista Center, Santa Cruz**  
**Ray Westman Branch**  
**413 Laurel Street**  
**Santa Cruz, CA 95060**  
**831-458-9766**

**Website:**  
**[www.vistacenter.org](http://www.vistacenter.org)**



for the blind and visually impaired

**2470 El Camino Real,**  
**Suite 107**  
**Palo Alto, CA 94306**  
**[www.vistacenter.org](http://www.vistacenter.org)**  
**ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

**FREE MATTER**  
**FOR THE BLIND**