

SHARED VISIONS

Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired

SUMMER AND RECREATION

When the summer months begin, our thoughts drift to our favorite types of recreation. Taking time for recreation is an essential part of our lives and it varies based on our interests and what brings us joy. For some it means pursuing outdoor activities, others it means enjoying a great book under a shady tree, mastering a new game or hobby or simply enjoying nature at its best. The desire to keep our life balanced with the pursuit of recreational activities does not diminish with vision loss.

So what are your interests and how do you continue to pursue them with the onset of vision loss?

The Bay Area is rich with opportunities to pursue our own interests and discover new recreational activities with others. Summarized below are several ideas to tap into your own “play” button.

Games:

Modified versions of many popular board games are available at The Store at Vista Center, including Monopoly,

Scrabble for Low Vision and Braille, checkers, playing cards, large print crossword puzzle books and more. If you have memories of great days of playing games with family and friends, plan a game day or evening in the near future.

Hobbies and Outdoor Activities:

What are your hobbies? Do you enjoy outdoor activities?

Here are a few of the activities blind and visually impaired people are involved in: arts and crafts, amateur radio, computer and internet, weight lifting, judo, water skiing, cross country skiing, skating, swimming, fishing, track and field, bowling, baseball, cycling, hiking, sailing, camping, golf, scuba diving, horseback riding, and many more.

Vista Center's Blind Interest Resource Guide (B.I.R.D) provides contact information for many types of leisure activities and traveling services for the blind and visually impaired. B.I.R.D. is available through The Health Library at Vista Center and is posted on our web site, www.vistacenter.org/bird.html. It has a comprehensive listing of recreational and leisure resources. Here are some examples:

Audio – Computer Games:

- **7-128 Software Games, 978-745-0160, www.7128.com**
- **Driftwood – evilding@gmail.com
www.blind-games.com**

Audio Description - Live Theatre:

- **AudioVision, CA 408 265-2203, katiemags@aol.com,
www.audiovision.org**
- **Narrative Television Network, 800 801-8184
www.narrativetv.com**

- Tabard Theater CA 408 979-0231, www.tabardtheatre.org
- TheatreWorks CA 650 463-1950, www.theatreworks.org

Bay Area Outreach and Recreation Program- BORP:

www.borp.org

3075 Adeline Street, Suite 155

Berkeley CA 94703

510-849-4663, Fax: 510-849-4616

info@borp.org

Provides a variety of outdoor activities and events, including tandem bicycle riding.

Environmental Traveling Companions:

www.etctrips.org

Fort Mason Center

Landmark Bldg. C

San Francisco CA 94123

415-474-766, Fax: 415-474-3919

info@etctrips.org

Provides white water rafting, sea kayaking, and skiing for people who have a variety of disabilities. Group trips can be arranged.

Bay Area Association of Disabled Sailors:

www.baads.org

Pier 40, The Embarcadero,

San Francisco, CA 94107

Sail Mail at 415-281-0212

boardmembers@baads.org

Teaching sailing, cruising, racing, and developing engineering designs for adaptive equipment to benefit people with diverse abilities.

We are unique and our choice for leisure activities varies, however choices are abundant. We hope this list will create a spark for you to discover a new pursuit or reclaim one you thought you may have lost, and enjoy your summer months!

A WORLD OF NEW VISION: AN OVERVIEW OF TECHNOLOGY

World of New Vision in Palo Alto is a series of classes that presents an overview of many devices and tools making everyday tasks and information accessible to those who are visually impaired. Each student receives handouts and resource information during the classes. The instructor and guest speakers discuss, demonstrate and provide hands-on experience with many of today's new aids and cutting-edge products. This exposure to products allows students to learn about the range of available aids and to experience equipment before making expensive purchases. If you would like to learn more about this upcoming class, please contact Jan McKinley at 650-858-0202 ext 185.

CHOICES AND CHANGES

The next Choices and Changes low vision education class series will be Thursdays September 15th, 22nd, October 6th, 13th 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.

DID YOU KNOW

- Choice Magazine Listening (CML) is a bimonthly anthology of audio magazine articles for the visually and physically impaired. Some of the anthology's

articles are taken from The New Yorker, The Iowa Review, Gourmet, National Geographic, Atlantic Monthly, Smithsonian, New York Times Style Magazine, and many more magazines. The articles cover a wide spectrum of topics and this is perfect reading for a summer day under a tree.

For more information about CML, contact Paul Rabin at 516-503-0271. CML is available on audio cassette through the Talking Book Library or via download from the BARD website.

- **Senior Center Without Walls, winner of a 2008 MindAlert Award from the American Society on Aging and MetLife Foundation, and a 2009 Citation of Honor from the International Association of Homes and Services for the Aging, offers activities, friendly conversation, and an assortment of classes and support groups to elders who find it difficult to go to a community senior center. From the comfort of your home, you connect to their activities using your own telephone.**

If you are interested in registering, call toll-free: 1- 877-797-7299. You will receive information and instructions in the mail. There is no cost to register—the groups are completely free!

- **Vista Center's website currently has a variety of instructional videos (sponsored by Cisco) with topics including: Caltrain Audible Ticket Vending Machine, Fall Prevention, Money Identification, iBill Talking Banknote Money Identifier, and the Pen Friend Voice Audio Labeler System.**

- **You can enjoy gardening by learning a few tips. Don't let vision impairment spoil your enjoyment of gardening. With some planning, care, and a readiness to ask for help when you need it, you can have a garden that appeals to all of your senses**

Learn great tips for how to plan and maintain a garden by adapting tools, selecting a variety of plants and working safely and in an organized manner. View the tips in detail on our web site www.vistacenter.org under "What's New" or contact Alice McGrath at 650-858-0202 ext 130 for a copy of the article.

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. 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**
- **you have trouble sleeping at night or experience daytime sleepiness**

Qualified participants will receive study medication and study-related medical evaluation at no cost. 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**
- **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
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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



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