



The Sight-Loss Support Group of Central Pennsylvania, Inc.

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The OUTLOOK

OCTOBER 2013

Official Newsletter of the Sight-Loss
Support Group of Central PA, Inc.

BOAL MANSION AND COLUMBUS CHAPEL TOUR: An Historic Gem in Our Own Backyard

**Tour of Boal Mansion and Columbus Chapel: Sunday,
October 27, 1:30 pm**

Several audio-describers are busily preparing a special tour of the world-renowned Columbus Chapel and Boal Mansion Museum, specially designed for those with sight loss. Who would want to miss the cultural, personal, and political stories from Spain, France, Egypt, and other countries blended with those from the emerging U.S. in this remarkable family estate in the historic village of Boalsburg? All that centered around a series of perfectly normal-well, sometimes a bit unusual!-family members: the Scots-Irishman who escaped his homeland in a blanket chest; the Centre County judge who implored the state to create what became Penn State; the officer who

gave his life fighting in the Civil War; the widow who left her ancient Spanish family's chapel to an American family; the architect who married into the Columbus family; Virginia patriot Richard Henry Lee; a mother who swam her way to award after award; Governor Blair Lee III of Maryland; and many more.

One visitor to the museum said, "...you will not see in the United States a more important or older landmark than the family chapel of America's discoverer, Christopher Columbus. This should have been federally funded for the last century. The Lee family has blessed us with both preserving and sharing this special piece of history." Lucinda Lambton of BBC-TV reported, after filming scenes for a series on American history, "There could be no more extraordinary an example of the cross-cultivation of the Old World and the New than the Columbus Chapel in Boalsburg, PA. It's a glorious example of how the tradition of old Europe survives in America."

If you would like to learn more about the museum before you go, the website is www.boalmuseum.com. We'll meet at the museum office, which is inside the main house just off the driveway. Come with a companion or call the SLSG office if you need a ride. Either way, please let us know by Tuesday, October 22nd, how many of you will be joining us that Sunday afternoon. The price of admission is \$8.00.

THE LUNCH BUNCH

The Lunch Bunch: Thursday, October 17, Mount Nittany Residences

The Lunch Bunch always shares a simple lunch and excellent conversation. All are welcome; just bring a sandwich – drinks are "on the house." Mount Nittany

Residences is located at 301 Rolling Ridge Drive behind Hills Plaza.

SPAMALOT

Spamalot: Wednesday, October 16, 7:30 pm, State College Community Theatre, Mount Nittany Middle School

You don't want to miss Spamalot, the musical comedy performed by the State College Community Theatre players. It will be audio described FREE on October 16th for patrons with sight loss including Sight-Loss Support Group clients, their families and friends.

Please plan to arrive in the lobby shortly after 7:00 pm in time to pick up audio description equipment and to hear the pre-show notes which begin in the auditorium at 7:15 pm.

Spamalot is "lovingly ripped off from" the 1975 film "Monty Python and the Holy Grail". Like the film, it's a highly irreverent parody of the "Legend of King Arthur", but it differs from the film in many ways. Spamalot retells the legend of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round Table, and features a bevy of beautiful show girls, not to mention cows, killer rabbits, and French people. (Did we mention the bevy of beautiful show girls?)

At the beginning of the show, the narrator, a medieval historian, shows up to give a brief overview of medieval England. But, in a serious miscommunication between actors and narrator, a Scandinavian village appears instead - complete with Finnish villagers and the Mayor - singing the "Fisch Schlapping Song"!

The original 2005 Broadway production, directed by Mike Nichols, received 14 Tony Award nominations, and won three Tony Awards, including Best Musical.

Put Spamalot on your fall calendar and join the audio describers for a hilarious evening!

**GOING BLIND: COMING OUT OF THE DARK
ABOUT VISION LOSS (a documentary)**

On October 14th a screening of the documentary film Going Blind: Coming Out of the Darkness About Vision Loss will be held on the Penn State campus as part of Penn State's Disability Awareness Month celebration. The film is being presented by the Sight-Loss Support Group and the Happy Valley Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind. The screening will be held at 7:00 pm in the West Halls Study Lounge.

In Going Blind, independent filmmaker Joseph Lovett, documents his own experience of gradual loss of vision through glaucoma. The film also features the stories of individuals who have experienced vision loss as a result of a variety of diseases and injuries. While quite candid about the grief, fear, and anxiety that can accompany vision loss, Going Blind is an inspiring film. It shows how medical, technological, and rehabilitation training advances have given new hope and new tools to those with vision loss. Most inspiring, however, is the positive spirit of the people in the film, who speak of not only coping with vision loss, but also of how they continue to thrive. This is not your only chance to see the film. Another showing of Going Blind is planned for a community venue in the spring of 2014.

MARK YOUR NOVEMBER CALENDARS

Listen up VIPs - State College is the place to be in November! Two important events are listed below; details will be in the November newsletter.

PaTTAN Assistive Technology EXPO 2013: Wednesday, November 6, Ramada Inn, State College

National Federation of the Blind of PA 2013 State Convention: Friday, November 8 - Sunday, November 10, Atherton Hotel, State College. For details visit the NFB of PA website: www.nfbp.org. On-line registration is now available.

PAM'S CORNER

Keeping prescription medications straight for many visually impaired persons (VIPs) is a task that often requires sighted assistance, terrific memory, and organization skills; especially when multiple medications are prescribed. If you wish to have access to the information on the prescription label - the prescription number, the name of the medication and dosage, how much and when to take it, the number of refills, when the prescription expires, warnings and contraindications, pharmacy information, and more - consider the ScripTalk Station from En-Vision America, available on loan for FREE when working through a participating pharmacy. A participating pharmacy purchases software that allows the pharmacists to program prescription medication information from their computer system. A Talking Label is created and securely affixed to the prescription medication container. At home, the patient uses a ScripTalk Station, a table top or wall mounted reader. Turn the unit on with a thumbwheel and three buttons above the thumbwheel allow you to navigate to "Read", "Previous", and "Next". Once turned on, hear 3 beeps and a voice announcement - "ScripTalk Station ready" - followed by 2 beeps. The prescription container with the Talking Label is placed on the unit. Press the "Read" button and the unit speaks the label information. The unit is portable, has an earphone

jack for privacy, has adjustable voice speed and volume, and works in many languages. Instructions are available in braille, large print, and audio CD. A fully accessible PDF copy of the manual can also be downloaded from the company's website.

The only way to get this service and the free (on loan) ScripTalk Station is to have your pharmacy participate. A participating pharmacy purchases the materials and the software to produce the labels. Then the pharmacy can send in the request for you to have the free ScripTalk Station sent directly to you. The pharmacy fills your prescription with the label that you can read with your ScripTalk Station. This is a great project for a group of you to take on since most pharmacy managers don't even know that this technology exists. Currently, there are only four participating pharmacies in Pennsylvania. Why not State College pharmacies? Consider inviting the local pharmacy representatives to a meeting to discuss your needs for accessible medication information and then refer them to the En-Vision America website to get information about ScripTalk. The website: www.envisionamerica.com, is where you and the pharmacy representative can visit for more information or simply call (800) 890-1180 to talk to an En-Vision America representative. "ScripTalk Station is the only audible prescription reading device to meet all federal requirements listed under the Federal Drug and Cosmetic Act (FDCA), Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Health Information Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA)." For a current review of the product, see AFB Access World Magazine, June 2013 issue, "An In-Depth Look at the ScripTalk Station from En-Vision America" at www.afb.org

A MAORI PERSPECTIVE ON VISUAL IMPAIRMENT

The September/October 2013 issue of the Journal of Visual Impairment & Blindness reports on research that investigated the life experience of persons who are visually impaired and Maori, the indigenous people of New Zealand. Research on the cultural implications of visual impairment is relatively scarce. The study identified the general, educational, and cultural barriers faced by the study participants and their suggestions for how these barriers may be overcome.

Many of the barriers are familiar ones related to a greater need for accommodations: challenges regarding mobility and transportation, struggles with activities of daily living, reading difficulties, and financial and employment barriers. Some barriers were specific to the Maori people. Participants strongly identified with their Maori heritage and wanted knowledge of their culture to be an integral part of their education and the delivery of services. "Being visually impaired should not mean that they must also be culturally impaired..... Are people being denied access to community and cultural activities and experiences because of their visual impairment?"

Other concerns of the participants strike a universal chord. Raising people's awareness and understanding of visual impairment was a major theme that emerged throughout all aspects of the study. "With greater awareness, understanding, and visibility, the participants hoped that attitudes toward people who are visually impaired would become more realistic, accepting, inclusive, responsive, and helpful."

Many barriers that impede visually impaired people are a reflection of cultural norms that limit society's expectations for blind people. These subliminal



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cultural messages mold the mindset of the sighted and non-sighted alike. Regarding the underestimation of visually impaired people's ability to perform tasks one participant stated, "They are handicapping me; I am not the problem, they are."

There is a common thread here, no matter what culture you hail from, no matter how much you see or don't see. We must shift the current paradigm of limitation and disability to a new paradigm of expanding possibilities; a cultural paradigm that takes for granted that society will invest in visually impaired individuals who will surely make significant contributions to their families, places of work, and communities.

The Outlook, November 2013