

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

111 Sowers Street, Suite 310 State College,
PA 16801

slsg1@verizon.net www.slsg.org 814- 238- 0132

The OUTLOOK

September/October 2014

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

THE 2014/2015 AUDIO DESCRIPTION SEASON AT PENN STATE'S CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS

Aspen Santa Fe Ballet: Tuesday, October 14, 7:30 pm
Founded with a modern pioneer spirit in the western United States, the Aspen Santa Fe Ballet exudes a European aesthetic charged with American vigor. The dual-city company, based in the Rocky Mountains of Colorado and on the southwestern plateau of New Mexico, has developed a national reputation at a time when the divide between ballet and modern dance has steadily dissolved. Aspen Santa Fe's first appearance at Penn State features three dances commissioned by the company. *Over Glow* moves to music by Beethoven and Mendelssohn. *Square None*, includes music by Handel, Alva Noto and Ryuichi Sakamoto,

Michelle Ross, and Aphex Twin. *Beautiful Mistake*, features music by Ólafur Arnalds and Charles Wilson.

MAMMA MIA! Thursday, October 23, 7:30 pm

MAMMA MIA! is the ultimate feel-good show whose audiences come back again and again to relive the thrill. Have the time of your life at this smash-hit musical that combines ABBA's greatest hits, including "Dancing Queen", "S.O.S", "Super Trouper", and "Take a Chance on Me" with an enchanting tale of love, laughter, and friendship. See the show that has the whole world coming back for more—because every time feels like the first time at ***MAMMA MIA!***.

BASETRACK Wednesday, October 29, 7:30 pm

BASETRACK, produced by the innovative En Garde Arts, is a multimedia work of contemporary theater based on the words of modern-day members of the U.S. Marine Corps and their families. ***BASETRACK*** takes actual text from social media sites, which enabled military families to communicate with loved ones in Afghanistan, and pairs it with interviews of Marines filmed while they were deployed in the Middle East. The result is an educational, inspirational and moving theatrical work. ***BASETRACK*** raises awareness and focuses national attention on the issues facing returning veterans. In addition to *Artistic Viewpoints* at 6:30 pm, the ***BASETRACK*** presentation includes a conversation among the performers and audience members after the show.

BASETRACK includes the use of profanity and occasional depictions of violence. It is recommended for ages 14 and older; parental discretion is advised.

**A NEW OLLI CLASS:
An Introduction to Audio Description**

Audio description? Don't know what it is? Want to know more? Now there's an OLLI class entitled, *An Introduction to Audio Description of the Performing and Visual Arts*. The Osher Life-Long Learning Institute (OLLI) at Penn State, will sponsor an introductory course in audio description to be held Monday, October 13th, from 2:30 – 4:00 pm.

Audio description is a narration service that describes the visual details of arts performances and the visual arts to individuals with vision loss. Current audio describers who've been working in the Centre Region for the past 15 years will conduct the class, and a "consumer" of audio description will share her personal experiences with the service.

Interested individuals will be encouraged to attend audio described performances and shadow current describers as they work. The course will be held in the PSU Outreach Building, Room 119, 100 Innovation Boulevard, University Park. The fee is \$10. For additional information call 814-867-4278. Registration begins by mail or in person on August 25th, and by phone on August 26th. Course participants should stop at the OLLI office, (also, the PSU Outreach Building), Room 126, on the day of the course to pick up a parking permit.

**HAPPY 15th ANNIVERSARY TO
VIEW VIA HEADPHONES!**

In June, 1999 audio description was initiated by the Sight-Loss Support Group by Rana Arnold and Ermyrn King. Twelve potential describers auditioned and were accepted for training by Dr. Alan King of Ohio State University. The three-day seminar and practice session was held at the Penn State Conference Center,

Penn State's University Theatre and at the Boal Barn Playhouse.

Of the original 12 describers, only Nanette Anslinger, now the program's coordinator, remains active. Over the past 15 years four subsequent trainings have produced dozens more community-minded audio describers who have described hundreds of plays, musicals, dance performances, extravaganzas, art exhibits, garden tours, and visits to museums, historic homes and artists' studios.

Current describers, besides Nanette, include Cindy Shaler, David Flick, Eileen Rivoir, Susan Kennedy and Allison Hutchison. Congratulations, audio describers! Thank you for your dedicated efforts. Here's to many more years of making the "visual verbal" for vision-impaired persons in the Centre Region!

**PENN STATE'S CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS,
A PARTNER IN AUDIO DESCRIPTION**

Since 2004, Penn State's Center for the Performing Arts (CPA) at Eisenhower Auditorium has offered a free "Accessibilities Brochure" that includes information for people with vision loss, hearing impairment, or individuals requiring wheelchair assistance. In recognition of View Via Headphones's 15 year milestone, CPA's 2014/2015 accessibilities brochure features an article on the Sight-Loss Support Group's audio description outreach program. This season's brochure lists the CPA shows that will be audio described. Be sure to pick one up in the lobby when you attend a show at Eisenhower!

CLINICAL DEPRESSION AND VISION LOSS

Recently, National Public Radio (NPR) aired a story on a strategy to prevent depression in people with age-related macular degeneration (AMD). Approximately two million Americans over the age of 50 experience a deterioration of the macula (the center of the retina), impacting a person's crucial central vision. You can no longer recognize faces; you can't read; you can't cook. Many people get so depressed and so scared they don't leave their homes.

Dr. Barry Rovner, a geriatric psychiatrist at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia conducted a study to test a strategy to prevent depression and help patients get back on track. On August 11th NPR's Patti Neighmond interviewed Dr. Rovner about his findings. Excerpts from the interview follow.

ROVNER: If you can't see somebody's face you feel, well, disengaged and frightened because you don't know how other people are perceiving you. And you can't perceive other people, and so the consequence is that you withdraw – many people withdraw.

NEIGHMOND: One in four people with AMD in both eyes develop clinical depression. A few years ago, 84 year-old Marilyn Friedman was at risk.

MARILYN FRIEDMAN: My world was stopping. It was like, I can't do anything anymore, and reading books was a big part of my life. I couldn't do that anymore.

NEIGHMOND: And she couldn't do something she really loved – baking.

FRIEDMAN: If I can't read a recipe, I can't bake. That stopped me right there. I didn't do any more baking.

NEIGHMOND: But Friedman got lucky; she was recruited for Dr. Rovner's study....188 people took part. A therapist came to their home for one hour, six times over two months. Half the patients talked with therapists about their disability. The other half planned a sort of work around. For Friedman, that meant writing recipes in two inch letters with a single ingredient on each page. Pages were collated in a binder, one recipe per binder. She also got different colored measuring cups and spoons with Braille-like dots – small changes that made a big difference.

FRIEDMAN: I had a very big dinner not too long ago with the whole family, everything from the soup to nuts. I did it all.

NEIGHMOND: Others in the study improved lighting in their homes or bought magnifiers. Those who'd become isolated made specific dates with friends to get out of the house – crucial to the new plan, says Rovner, something of a "just do it" philosophy.

ROVNER: When they're thinking over and over about how life is not right for them, how they can't do this, I can't do that, to catch themselves, to be aware of that mental state and to say stop it, get up now, do something – don't follow the feeling, follow the plan.

NEIGHMOND: Patients who followed the plan reduced their risk of depression by up to 60 percent compared to those who received talk therapy alone. That not only benefits quality of life, it dramatically reduces the high price of treating depression.

LIVING WELL WITH SIGHT LOSS

Finding new ways of doing what you love and all the things that make your world go round - this always

has been and always will be a prime key to living well with vision loss. Making your world accessible is what it's all about. There is such an explosion of accessibility options these days that it's hard to keep up. A few new options are below.

KNFBReader iOS App: The highly anticipated iOS app that provides access to print on the go was unveiled recently at the 74th annual convention of the National Federation for the Blind. State of the art Apple hardware is coupled with the power of digital photography, making access to print materials much faster and more efficient than ever. The KNFBReader for iOS is a joint development effort of Senetoc nv and K-NFB Reading Technology. The new app costs \$99.

QuickBooks: At last, an accessible version of Intuit's QuickBooks 2014 is available for purchase and download! For the first time, people who are blind will be able to manage their personal finances or the finances of their small business or nonprofit with no assistance from others. For the first time, anyone who is visually impaired can pursue financial management careers previously closed to them. Accountants, bookkeepers and tax preparers acquiring blindness will have the choice to stay gainfully employed.

Talking Prescription Labels: Walgreens and CVS now offer Talking Prescription Labels for individuals with vision impairments, free of charge. Walgreens offers these labels in over 8,000 stores and through mail order. CVS provides ScripTalk talking prescription labels for prescriptions ordered through its online pharmacy. The lack of accessible prescription drug labels has put people with vision loss at serious risk of medication mishaps. Now they have the same access to label information as do sighted customers.

Window-Eyes Screen Reader is Now Free: GW Micro and Microsoft have partnered to make Window-Eyes available to users of Microsoft Office at no cost. Window-Eyes is a screen reader that provides full access to Windows PCs and makes the computer accessible via speech and/or Braille. Eligible

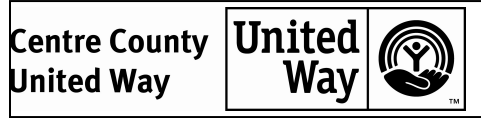


Sight-Loss Support Group
of Central PA, Inc.
111 Sowers Street, Suite 310
State College, PA 16801

Return Service Requested

Non-profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
State College, PA
Permit No. 97

*A Proud
Member
Agency of:*



customers using Microsoft Office 2010 or higher, can download a full version of Window-Eyes at www.WindowEyesforOffice.com. This is a global initiative on GW Micro and Microsoft's part; the screen reader is available in over 15 languages and reflects a commitment to reduce barriers for millions of people who are blind and visually impaired around the world.

Bookshare Continues to Grow: Bookshare is the largest online library of copyrighted content for individuals with print disabilities. It offers a wide range of books for adults and children. Bookshare now serves over 310,000 members and the collection tops over a quarter million titles. In less than five years, Bookshare has doubled the number of titles for education, employment and recreational reading.

September/October 2014