



E-BUZZ

INSTITUTE FOR VISION REHABILITATION NEWSLETTER

March 2017 (10th Edition)

- **Scenting an opportunity for persons with vision loss**

Finding employment is always a challenge for persons with vision loss but there might be new hope with a company that's come up with a novel idea to train up those who cannot see. CPL Aromas, an international fragrance firm whose headquarters is in the UK, carried out a study in India where it found that persons with vision loss were better at identifying smells than the general population. It began to train them, teaching them industry names for different kinds of fragrances. Some of the trainees have been successfully placed in six fragrance companies as well. Matthew Menacherry, the company's business development head, says "they initially did it as charity, but now they see the business sense in the decision. These people can really contribute. They really have a superior sense of smell which even from a business perspective is very valuable to us because it's a rare commodity."

Source: http://www.bbc.com/news/business-38991808?ns_mchannel=social

- **A cap to guide persons with vision loss!**

With an eye to give mobility to persons with vision loss, students of Anna University have developed a cap that can act as a guide and help identify and read traffic and location signs that are otherwise are inscrutable to them. “We were set to make this work after watching one of our friends with vision loss struggle to navigate in public spaces,” says Sarika A G, co-creator and a third year student of Electronics and Communications Engineering (ECE). The cap has a tiny camera upfront and a button and processor on the side. It is easy to wear and has earphones attached for audio output, and it informs the user about what is ahead. On pressing the button affixed to the side, the cap will capture an image of the scene in front of the person using a camera mounted on the flap of the cap. This image, Sarika explains, is then isolated by a “segmentation” process to identify the text and convert it into audio output.

Source:<http://www.bytesofindia.com/OpenPage.aspx?URL=http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/chennai/anna-university-students-device-cap-to-guide-visually-challenged/articleshow/57216193.cms>

- **Bookshare members now have access to over 500,000 Ebooks**

On November 29, 2016, Bookshare hit a momentous milestone when it passed the mark of 500,000 titles in its collection. That means that people unable to read standard print now have access to 500,000

Ebooks in various formats to suit their individual needs. It wasn't that long ago that persons unable to read print had to rely on Braille, a limited number of human-narrated books, or having someone to read to them if they wanted to enjoy a book. Even just 15 years ago, Bookshare had a modest collection of 20,000 books. Fast forward to today where Bookshare boasts over 500,000 accessible Ebooks. Members now around the world can access books in 30 languages in over 70 countries.

Source: <http://www.benetech.org/2017/01/12/bookshare-members-now-have-access-to-over-500000-ebooks/>

- **Check out this calendar and book your dates for Planet Abled's upcoming accessible holidays**

Planet Abled has come out with a calendar of destination group tours which will be conducted in the coming months. All one has to do is pick one tour that excites you and start packing bags for an experience of a lifetime. The upcoming destinations are Udaipur, Jodhpur, Rishikesh, Jim Corbett, Nainital, Khajuraho and Golden Triangle. To know more, please contact

+91 9910042281 or mail at travel@planetabled.com

- **Horizon A3 scanner for persons with vision loss**

Horizon A3 scanner is a high speed scanner of A3 size capturing area with motion sensing technology. It has a 16 megapixel camera which is available only in the high end scanner like Readit Scholar. It guarantees images of the best resolution and thus provides best OCR

results for A3 size books. The software has been developed in such a way that a person with vision loss can scan the book independently without any difficulty.

Source: <http://www.sparshproducts.com/Horizon%20A3%20Scanner.htm>

- **UP Elections 2017- Braille ballot papers to be available at polling booths**

In a move that empowers persons with vision loss to exercise their franchise, the District Election Officer has ordered to print 3,560 Braille ballot papers to be attached with electronic voting machines (EVMS). Printed at Dehradun based Braille Press of National Institute for Visually Handicapped (NIVH), the ballots will be available at 3,239 polling booths in the district. Voters will be able to read the specially designed papers and then press the chosen buttons on the EVMS. Assistant district election officer, Abhijit Mukherji said, “A model Braille ballot paper will be pasted outside every polling station. Before entering the booth, voters with vision loss have to feel the Braille paper in order to get details of candidates and party symbols. At the voting unit, they can find the Braille-enabled ballot paper on the EVM machines and cast their votes.”

Source: <http://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/bareilly/braille-ballot-papers-to-be-available-at-every-polling-booth/articleshow/57047093.cms>

- **Intensive training course for girls with vision loss**

All India Confederation of the Blind (AICB) is conducting intensive training course for the benefit of girls with vision loss from 22nd May, 2017 to 30th June 2017. The participants will be imparted intensive practical training and theoretical instructions in home management, basic stitching, mobility, computer applications, self-defense techniques and leadership skills. Selected candidates shall get free boarding and lodging and training facilities. Their application forms should reach AICB office latest by 31st March 2017.

Source: <http://www.aicb.org.in/intensiveTrainingCourseForTheVisuallyImpairedWomen2017.html>

- **World's first Braille smartwatch to begin shipping soon**

Dot Smartwatch features a tactile watch face that lets users read messages, directions and more. Dot, developed by a South Korean start-up by the same name uses a unique tactile watch face that incorporates rising balls to display Braille characters on-screen, allowing wearers to read messages they receive on their smartphone. The watch needs to be synced to a mobile phone using Bluetooth and is capable of displaying four Braille characters at a time. Two side-mounted input buttons allow users to accept calls and reply quickly to messages with a third acting as a remote control for connected devices. It also features built-in accelerometer, gyroscope and navigation functions allowing wearers to follow directions from Google maps.

Source: <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/worlds-first-braille-smartwatch-blind-begin-shipping-next-month-1607985>

- **Here's how to use the accessibility features on the phone for users with low vision**

Whether vision loss is related to age or an eye condition, everyone wants to maximize the usefulness of the vision they have when working with mobile technology. As no two low-vision experiences are identical, it's important to understand all of the accessibility tools your phone provides, and how to create a visual environment that enhances productivity. To learn how to choose and activate the accessibility features on smartphones that use Apple's iOS, and Google's Android operating system, please visit

<http://www.afb.org/afbpress/pub.asp?DocID=aw180207>

For any comments, suggestions and queries, please contact:

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