

VAVF NEWSLETTER

Visual Aid Volunteers of Florida, Inc.

BRAILLISTS

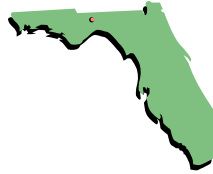
EDUCATORS

TRANSLATION TYPISTS

GRAPHIC ARTISTS

PROOFREADERS

RECORDING ARTISTS



VOLUNTEERS

Summer Edition

www.vavf.org

April-June 2014

"Dedication Makes the Difference"

MUSINGS FROM MARIANN

Well, everyone, it is that time again when I get to share my thoughts. Lucky for me, because my mind is always busy, but hopefully I can share some thoughts that you have also experienced. Lately, I have been thinking about all the changes we are experiencing in terms of braille transcription. In a way, it seems overwhelming and then again it really is not. Maybe that is because I have yet to delve into it as deeply as I would normally do. I still have a transcription class with twelve strong students keeping me very, very busy. They challenge me continuously and provide me with so much hope for the future of braille itself.

As our roles in braille are facing big changes—UEB (Unified English Braille), formatting, electronic transmissions, NUBS (Nemeth Unified Braille System) and other issues I may have missed, we must recognize that change is the name of the game. I know we voted not to accept UEB, but it is on the horizon and we will deal with it. We have to make some decision as our readers are dependent on us. We also

must look for the positive aspects as we realign ourselves.

In regard to formatting, thank goodness we needed many of these changes. I know from teaching how important this is to the reader. Clear formatting allows ease of reading and increases their speed and efficiency. Now that we have clearer guidelines on formatting we should take advantage of them so that those who depend on us will have it available. You would think that having been a teacher I would be a much better formatter. I depended on the texts created by transcribers to present formatting to my students. The braille that I created in that era was “quick and dirty” as I was constantly trying to get items to my students. Now, as the local instructor, I have really stressed formatting with my students and in doing so have increased my skills. I want to thank FIMC. They are willing to provide us with hard copies of the new formats and that will encourage all of us to update ourselves.

(Musings will continue on page 3.)

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OUR NEW EXECUTIVE BOARD!



Nancy Meinhardt, Vice-President Membership
Arlene Jensen, Treasurer
Audrey Shafer, Past-President
Mariann Witengier, New President
Dana Ross, President-Elect
Lynnette Taylor, Secretary

(Musings continues from page 1.)

I know we all appreciate electronic transmissions. They sure do make life easier and make us more efficient. It helps the braille reader get materials much more quickly. It also saves us so much embossing and binding time. Thus, we can spend more time on our art pages and our community responsibilities. I view that as a plus.

Then, we look at NUBS, maybe not all of us, but those of us focused on mathematics are surely assessing it. I am not a certified Nemeth braillist, but it is on my bucket list, and that list has existed for a long, long time. I remember my first day of teaching and the undelivered 8th grade math book. That night I was introduced to Nemeth math for the first time and for many weeks was totally responsible for having that book ready. One of my happiest days was when that Nemeth math book finally arrived. I looked over all the pages of interpoint before I gave the book to my student. Did I do it right? I am not going to tell you. I will tell you that over my decades of teaching I taught a lot of math to students using Nemeth. The more I worked with Nemeth, the more I wanted to go further with it and get certified. So, yes, I will get certified, either through Nemeth or NUBS or both, depending on the timeline.

I guess what I am trying to say is this. We must look at each issue individually. We must also realize we, as transcribers, are the connection to both braille and math literacy. We will adjust and we will thrive. We will thrive so our readers will thrive, be successful and achieve their personal dreams. So, now I will depart and end this musing. I hope all of you continue to feel fulfilled by accepting our braille responsibilities. Without us, there would be no literacy for many wonderful people.



HI, I'M KATHY K.

Hello everyone, my name is Kathryn "Kathy K." Krempleski. I have been hired to fill Donna Ross' position at Florida Instructional Materials Center for the Visually Impaired (FIMC-VI). Though no one can replace her, I am eager to do the best job I can.

To give you some of my background, I graduated with a Bachelor's degree in Visual Disabilities from Florida State University (FSU) in the Spring of 1996. I was hired by Hillsborough County Public School's Visually Impaired Program in the Fall of 1996 as an itinerant Teacher of the Visually Impaired. For the last 17 years, I have worked with students of all ages (infants to high school seniors) and abilities (students in regular education classes and students on special diploma). I have worked as an itinerant teacher and as a resource teacher at an elementary school, then a middle school and most recently at a high school. I have worked extensively with braille reading students of various ages (though mostly students from 3rd grade up). I am a fluent reader (by sight) and writer of Literary braille, Nemeth braille and Spanish braille. I have also taken one class (by Hadley) in Music braille and did my best to help my students through music classes they wanted to take.

I have had extensive experience with different technology for the visually impaired. I have helped students with devices such as: Braille-N-Speaks/Type-N-Speaks, Braille-Lites, external disc drives, PAC Mates, Braille-Notes, Book Port Plus

(both versions), Basic Talking Calculators, Talking Scientific Calculators, Talking Graphing Calculators, Electronic Talking Dictionaries, as well as many different hand-held and desktop video magnifiers. I have also assisted them with software such as JAWS, Zoomtext, and Open Books.

I am a Nationally Board Certified Teacher. I have had the opportunity to play a part in many wonderful programs for our visually impaired students including: The Braille Challenges, Cane Quest, Camp Rose summer camps, and Space Camp for Interested Visually Impaired Students (SCIVIS). I have had the privilege of being an adjunct professor for FSU's St. Petersburg satellite program in Visual Disabilities for the past eight years, teaching the Fall class Introduction to Visual Disabilities.

I love teaching, so it was a hard decision to leave the classroom and the students I care about for this new position. However, this new position offers the opportunity to work with the two things I enjoy the most, braille and technology. It gives me the challenge of learning new things and helping people around the state (including my former students) in a different capacity. I look forward to meeting and getting to know all of you.

Kathy K.

**UPDATE ON BRAILLE
ASSOCIATION OF MID-FLORIDA,
INC. RECRUITS
By MARIANN WITENGIER**

Well, believe it or not we still have a big crowd of potential braillists, fourteen strong! I have one teen who is not eligible for certification at this time, and two other class members that are not seeking certification this time. So, it looks like we should possibly have ten submit a manuscript. My fingers are crossed as it has been a long journey.

They are busy, busy indeed! They completed their instruction on June 25th. Most of them have selected their practice books and have narrowed down their choices of a book to use as their manuscript. They will begin working on their practice books next month and then on to the inevitable challenge—their manuscripts!

My students have also been busy with other things. For example, as I have mentioned before, they still are volunteering to make presentations in schools. One student has created several tactile books in grade one braille using Braillon and other materials for the three and four year old students in Princeton's preschool vision class. The teacher was excited to get them and was told that more were on the way. They also worked at the Braille Challenge doing every kind of job. They are about to embark as my aides for an introductory braille class for paraprofessionals, teachers and parents in a local public school. One of our last endeavors was a group visit to Princeton.

Boy, did that visit to Princeton open our eyes! Having taught at Princeton, I did not expect to be surprised. But, I was, also. I am just speechless over the difference between expectations of kids today and those expectations a decade ago when I taught. Not only in the presentation of braille and standards with typing but with technology.

Children in third and fourth grade up are using notetakers for many of their classes. If you are not familiar with notetakers they are the braille version of a laptop. They do not need monitors of course, so they often provide the user with a refreshable display. The user, in this case, a fifth grader was able to look at the refreshable display and move it back and forth to read what he had written in his text document. That part I knew, what I did not know was that the brailled text could be sent to a computer and a sighted person could monitor the material in text on the screen. I will have to go back and see what else is new. I always struggled when my

students used their notetakers. I am so visual and other than grabbing the refreshable display from them, I would have difficulty following the text as it was being read by that robotic voice. They can still use the robotic voice but (teachers no longer have to do so) so many of the braille readers prefer to read the braille on the display. It is so much easier for them to follow. At least that is what they tell me.

All in all, I feel that this new group of transcriber recruits are special and I am looking forward to working with them as a peer. The future for BAMF is looking brighter. Several of them are running for offices and for places on our board. Our election is in late September. The students have become very close and supportive of one another and I feel they will be that way about BAMF and VAVF. I know a bunch of them went to the conference. They were enthusiastic and open to new ideas. I can't wait for you to meet our newest BAMF members in future conferences.

TACTILE GUIDELINES AND YOU

By RUTH JEAN OSTLE

Many thanks to FIMC for hard copies of the new Guidelines and Standards for Tactile Graphics they made available at the latest VAVF Conference. This reference is a well-researched compilation of the many factors involved in creating tactile graphics. It should prove especially useful to newcomers to this fascinating and necessary skill. The publication acknowledges that it is not a "how to" book for teaching a transcriber to construct specific graphics. This is best learned by practice and experience. However, it contains information such as size, placement, editing print pictures, placement of graphics, and standards for labeling, key development, etc. The Guidelines include a useful index for locating answers to questions that may arise in planning a graphic, whether you are beginning to learn how to handle tactile graphics, or an experienced

transcriber with specific questions.

We have many members who have been creating tactile graphics over the years, and it is gratifying to learn that most of what we've been doing is recommended practice now. Importantly, the authors of the Guidelines acknowledge that every print illustration presents unique information. Your judgment as a transcriber is needed to determine what is included, and how it is presented. You will know from the context and the grade level of the print book what will be appropriate for a tactile graphic. For example, the size and included details of the structure of a water molecule would be quite different for a third grade science text and a high school chemistry text.

There are some very specific recommendations for such things as length of lines and size of points in the Guidelines. You will soon learn how to form these common parts of most graphics without measuring them so exactly. You will also learn by experience what shapes are most easily recognized and what textures can be confusing. Your own tactile sense will help you. If you can fit the tip of your finger between two lines or two points, you know they will be recognized as distinct from each other. If you cannot fit your finger between them, you know they will be interpreted as one point or line by the reader. No measuring is needed.

I was surprised to read that it is now recommended that labels on figures be placed directly on the structure named or as close to it as possible. They can be on either side of a diagram and at different levels. Every braille reader or teacher I have consulted agrees that this is a preferred format. It means that you will need to use a braillewriter or a slate to label your illustration before it is mounted on the master sheet. This can be rather difficult on complex structures or maps. No glued-on labels may be used. I'm still practicing doing this one well.

Other recommendations can be taken as suggestions only. For example,

the new Guidelines recommend using textured areas on the oceans and large bodies of water on maps. I choose to ignore this one. The readers and teachers I consulted say this makes the map extremely confusing and difficult to label. Again, your judgment is the final authority. Keep up your good work---you can be proud of it.

HEY! YOU!

If you're having a problem with your braille or graphic assignment, send it into me, Susie Coleman, (My contact info is on the next to the last page in this Newsletter.) and I'll get it to the right person(s) to help. Then, after we answer you, we'll put it into the *VAVF Newsletter* so that our other readers will know, too. Trust me. Others have, had, or will have the same questions.

Make sure you attach or mail a scan/copy of the problem material along with your question(s).

Heck. Your question may be about just about anything: the history of VAVF, UEB, FIMC/VI, PDQ ☺, using Word and Braille2000, tactile graphics, scanning, etc.

Membership from Where? By Nancy Meinhardt

While VAVF is based in Florida, we have several members from out of state. Here is a summary of where our members live. As you can see, you don't need to live in Florida to be a member of VAVF!

<u>STATE</u>	<u>MEMBERS</u>
Alaska	1
California	3
Colorado	3
Florida	83
Georgia	7
Kentucky	2
Michigan	1
Missouri	1
Nebraska	1
Nevada	1
New York	2
Rhode Island	1
Virginia	1
Washington	1

At the April 2014 VAVF Conference, three members were awarded 25-year membership pins: Susie Coleman, Rella Corris, and Lynnette Taylor.

If you would like to join VAVF, please complete the application in the newsletter. Membership is only \$15 a year!

NOTES WITH PRONUNCIATION

by Florence Mathiesen

fjmat@cox.net

I keep telling myself I HATE CHANGE—especially all the changes we face as braille transcribers today. But, some changes are for the better for both the transcriber and the reader.

As an example, think about a text that contains numbered footnotes with pronunciation. In earlier days we first had to identify the type of note, then we selected the appropriate note marker, and then we inserted the indented note on the next line of text which interrupted the reader. In a heavily annotated book, it was a big mess. Now, things are a lot simpler and they meet the Braille reader's perspective for formatting notes.

Braille Reader's Perspective

Providing a braille format for notes is difficult because two things are required:

- Notes must be easy to find when necessary
- Notes must be easy to skip for uninterrupted reading

Fundamentals for Formatting Notes

In FORMATS 2011, all types of notes are simply called *notes*. Notes give the reader additional information, pronunciation of a word, translation of a foreign word, etc.

For the purpose of this article, the print reference mark in our text is the superscripted number that indicates that there is an additional note to the matter being discussed.

One symbol ⠠⠠ (2356, 2356) is used as the base for all reference indicators. This is helpful because it immediately identifies the material as a note, and lets the reader decide whether to keep reading, or find the note at the end of the print page.

NOTE: Reference indicators must be placed on the Special Symbols page

Examples of Reference Indicators

⠠⠠⠠	asterisk
⠠⠠⠠⠠	blue
⠠⠠⠠⠠	bold
⠠⠠⠠⠠	dagger
⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	double dagger
⠠⠠⠠⠠	highlight
⠠⠠⠠⠠	hollow dot
⠠⠠⠠⠠	italic
⠠⠠⠠⠠	line-numbered
⠠⠠⠠⠠	question mark
⠠⠠⠠⠠	underline
⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	lettered
⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠	numbered

Print notes may be located:

At the foot of the print page, In the margin, Between lines of narrative text,
In columns facing the narrative text, On a page facing the narrative text, Immediately

Notes without a Reference Mark

- a. Some notes may appear in the margin, alongside the referenced text, without using font attributes or a print mark.
- b. The reference indicator is inserted at the end of the print line if the exact point of the reference within the text cannot be determined.
- c. The base reference indicator ⠠⠠ (2356, 2356) is used for unmarked notes.

Notes: Notes are placed at the end of the print page.

- a. Notes are separated from text by a note separation line
⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠⠠ (5, 25, 25, 25, 25, 25, 25) across seven cells. The separation line cannot be on the last line of the braille page.
- b. Insert a blank line before a note separation line *only* when the blank line is required by other formats, such as the end of a list.
- c. Notes are listed in the order in which they appear in the text. Do not group by symbol or font attribute.
- d. Notes may be separated by title/heading or a blank line when there are multiple titles with separate note references on one print page.
- e. Do not insert a blank line between a note separation line and title/headings.
- f. Notes are listed in 1-3, preceded by the same reference indicator used at the reference point. Additional paragraphs are in a 5-3.
- g. The entire width of the braille line is used for notes.
- h. Font attributes are retained, unless all notes using the same reference indicator are entirely emphasized. Do not retain font attributes for line numbers.
- i. To reinforce a change in context, insert a blank line after the page change indicator begins in the same cell as note runovers.
- j. Notes in tables are discussed in 16.6

Notes with Pronunciation

Do not add a second uncontracted spelling for words with pronunciation.

Sample Notes with Pronunciation

...

With a sense of high adventure, we swung HIC into the Molokai channel. Here the placid sea was filled with whitecaps. Art now had the tiller,¹⁰ but his face soon looked as green as the water. He was thoughtful enough to lean over the leeward¹¹ side. In ten minutes the wind lifted from fifteen to twenty-five knots and the jib ripped along its main seam. Jim tore away the strips and hoisted a second sail. For a while HIC bounced jauntily across the white caps, but when the wind continued to mount I ordered Jim to furl the mainsail.¹²

...

10. tiller (tĭl'ər) *n.*: A bar or handle for turning the rudder (the movable piece of wood or metal hinged to the rear of the boat and used to steer the ship).

11. leeward (lē'wərd) *adj.*: In the direction toward which the wind is blowing.

12. mainsail (mān'səl) *n.*: The principal sail of a vessel, usually the second sail from the bow (the forward part of the ship).

Braille representation of the text above, including the definitions and the main paragraph.



WHO TOOK THE PICTURES AT THE CONFERENCE?

While I was taking photographs at the VAVF Conference, I noticed another lady taking pictures.

If you are the mystery lady, would you please send me, Susie Coleman, copies either by snail- or e-mail for our records or possible inclusion in a future

VAVF Newsletter? Send them to 1826 Bartram Circle, West, Jacksonville, FL 32207-2294, e-mail: susierc1950@att.net. Thanks!

New Publication—*The ABCs of UEB*—Available on BANA Website

The Braille Authority of North America (BANA) is pleased to share a significant new publication—*The ABCs of UEB*—authored by Constance Risjord. This publication outlines the major differences between English Braille, American Edition (EBAE) and Unified English Braille (UEB). Although this is not a comprehensive instruction manual, it provides examples and practice exercises that allow people who already know EBAE to quickly build on their knowledge of braille to understand UEB. This is an extremely valuable resource that will help braille readers, transcribers, teachers, and families make the transition to UEB.

BANA sincerely appreciates the work of Constance Risjord who volunteered to design and create this valuable project. We recognize and thank her for the contribution of her time, energy, and expertise.

The ABCs of UEB is available in PDF, BRF, and HTML formats on the BANA website at <http://www.brailleauthority.org/ueb.html>.

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UEB THINGS I KNOW AND THINGS I THINK I KNOW By LYNETTE TAYLOR

I need to preface this by saying that I consulted with various people to make sure that I have the facts factual. Dr. Robert Stepp, Cindi Laurent, and Suzanne Dalton were kind enough to write back and correct some of the statements below.

Facts:

- BANA (Braille Authority of North America) has mandated that UEB (Unified English Braille) become the code to use in 2016. There will be a transition period of both codes being used but 2016 is supposed to be the year that it is more UEB than EBAE. BANA has a committee to look into ways and means of implementing the code into usage in the United States. BANA actually has no legal standing to set codes, it is a voluntary organization and its guidelines (rules) are accepted voluntarily by transcribers.
- Both Braille2000 v.2 and Duxbury are able to produce UEB materials either as six-key entry or from scanned material or files. Braille2000 v.2 needs a little tweaking on the translator line.
- Donna Ross, as VAVF President-Elect, Linda Jacobson as representative of the Florida Council of the Blind, and Suzanne Dalton are on a state committee to plan implementation for Florida.
- Canada has officially eliminated the Nemeth code in favor of UEB. CNB (Canadian Braille Authority) is the Canadian equivalent of BANA with the same lack of legal standing.
- The BANA Formats Committee (I am no longer a member) is developing a cheat sheet of differences to be inserted into each volume of braille.
- The NLS (National Library Service for the Blind), along with NFB (National Federation of the Blind), is working on an updated literary course for certification of new transcribers and recertification of current transcribers. This is supposed to be finished by the end of this year.

Differences in UEB:

- There are some differences in the contractions used between EBAE (English Braille American Edition) and UEB. Eight of EBAE's contractions have been eliminated: ally, ation, ble, com, dd, to, into, and by. There are also differences in where contractions may be used, for example the st in mistake may be used in UEB.
- The shortform word o'clock has been eliminated.
- A number of punctuation and other symbols have been changed.
- The cuddle words; a, and, for, of, the, and with are spaced in UEB.
- There are passage indicators for some things, such as capitalization and emphasis.

Things I think:

- The worst part of the implementation is that there is no good way to teach current braille readers the new code. The cheat sheet mentioned above is good; however we all know how many transcribers do not access all the latest information available. The user groups, the transcribers, the instructional media centers, and the commercial braille producers need to work together to get information to braille readers.
- Transcribers are encouraged to participate in FIMC-sponsored training tentatively scheduled on November 14, 2014, in Tampa and January 15-16, 2015, in Daytona Beach. Even though the training is designed for teachers, transcribers' experiences will provide valuable input to participants during the transition to UEB.
- UEB is readable, although it took me a minute to realize the r(ea)lly was the same as re(ally). Basic punctuation is the same; periods, questions marks, etc. but there are a number of other symbols that are different.
- Hopefully the manual mentioned above will be ready by the end of this year when we are supposed to be using UEB, I think that is questionable as manuals seem to take forever to become available. NBA (National Braille Association) has begun having training sessions and the presenter has been certified in Canada.
- We must work to keep Nemeth as the code to use for math. UEB does not do an adequate job for higher levels such as geometry and physics. I have been told that guidelines are being worked on for using Nemeth within UEB with beginning and ending indicators for the Nemeth.

Places to get information:

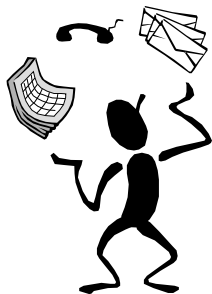
- <http://www.brailleauthority.org/>
There are links to multiple sites for general information.
- <http://www.iceb.org/ueb>
The current rule book of UEB
- <http://www.cnib.ca/en/living/braille/Pages/Transcribers-UEB-Course.aspx>
This link is to a self-directed, 15 lesson course. I haven't tried this one yet.
- www.svrc.vic.edu.au
This link is for a cheat sheet.
- <http://uebonline.org/getting-started/registration/>
This link is for a 31 lesson self-directed course. It has immediate feedback for errors. I have finished this course and found it helpful for basic information.

The most important thing is that we don't give up transcribing because we are forced to change codes. We are all transcribing because it is a job worth doing and worth doing well, not because we like EBAE and really enjoyed the months of training it took to learn it, but because we wanted something in our lives that makes us better people.

EXECUTIVE BOARD OF VAVF, INC.

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VAVF SKILLS CONSULTANTS



Computer (IBM):

* **BRaille2000 (Scanning):** *Janet Nullet has resigned so we're looking for a replacement.*

* **BRaille2000 (Direct Entry):**

Meg Wagner, 8444 35th Ave N, St. Petersburg 33710-1010, 727-347-9836, e-mail:

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* **COMPUTER ASSISTED TACTILES:**

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susierc1950@att.net

* **DUXBURY** *Karen Hollingsworth has resigned so we're looking for a replacement.*

* **ED-IT PC**

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Call us!



CONTRIBUTION (Memorial Scholarship Fund)

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Amount: \$ _____ payable to VAVF, Inc. In memory/honor of: _____

Send to: Arlene Jensen, Treasurer, 6425 Streamport Dr., Orlando, FL 32822-3066. If there is a special occasion, such as a birthday or anniversary, or if the contribution is in memory/honor of, please fill in the information below and a card will be sent to the family of/honoree, with your brief message.

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
Occasion/Brief Message: _____

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION OR RENEWAL

Membership in VAVF is based on the calendar year—January-December. If you wish to join the statewide organization, please fill in the categories shown below on the membership application form and send it to **Arlene Jensen, Treasurer, 6425 Streamport Dr., Orlando, FL 32822-3066.**

Name: _____
Address: _____
City/State/Zip: _____
E-mail: _____ Phone: _____

My specialties are: (Give Certification Year or just \checkmark if working in but not certified in each. ____)

BRAILLE: Literary: _____ Textbook: _____ Translation Typing: _____
Nemeth: _____ Music: _____ Foreign Language: _____
Formats: _____

GRAPHICS: _____ RECORDING: _____ LARGE TYPE: _____ OTHER: _____

I need: braille _____ large print _____.

FEES: \$15.00 Regular Membership _____
\$20.00 Booster Membership _____
\$5.00 Associate Membership (spouse or other family members who accompany
braillists/tapists/other media users to conferences) _____
\$150.00 Lifetime Membership (may be paid in installments over 3 years) _____

Indicate total amount paid: \$ _____ payable to VAVF, Inc.

NEW E-MAIL ADDRESS OR MOVING? If so, please notify your Membership Chairman, Nancy Meinhardt, 727-375-1368, or email: NANCYMEINHARDT@msn.com, so that you do not miss a single copy of the VAVF Newsletter. This publication can only be delivered as addressed. Bulk Mail cannot be forwarded.