

News You Can Use - June 2016 Edition

Welcome to our third addition of News You Can Use from The Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind

I'm Blake Lindsay the manager of communications. Thank you for your encouraging feedback on our new info source. Being a longtime broadcaster and author, I especially appreciate this opportunity to share news that matters every month. Assistive technology and educational events are important in supporting all of us with visual impairment. We gain inspiration through success stories with one another. I'm happy to observe that people who are sighted as well find value on these topics. Our newsletter will continue to identify these subjects, along with Dallas Lighthouse expansions in our services. Finally we will inform you about special activities which include you. Thank you for spreading **News You Can Use** to your families and friends.

A One of a Kind Treat You Won't Want To Miss – Come one, Come All to BAT Improv Night at the Dallas Lighthouse, Friday, June 24th

Please make plans to join us at the Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind for BAT Improv Night on Friday June 24th, 2016 from 7:00 PM to 8:30 PM. During this evening, the Dallas Lighthouse will be transformed into an entertaining theater. Two terrific teams from Match Box Studios will be performing at no charge. These professional actors are performing completely in the dark, hence why it is called "BAT" Improv. Whether you do or don't have sight, they are enthusiastic about pleasing both audiences with their unique performance. Please encourage them through your attendance as they customize their acts for our maximum entertainment. This engaging event is brand new and we hope to have as a reoccurring event at the Dallas Lighthouse.

A little bit about the improve troupes:

Midnight Passion is a troupe of up to eight people, who performs regularly at The Dallas Comedy House. Their fast-paced, high-energy show is completely made up and different each night, so you never know what to expect, and neither do they.

Just the Cutest Thing is a troupe made up of seven diverse performers. They have been together a little over a year and also perform regularly at the Dallas Comedy House.

Improvisation and the BAT format -

An improvisation show, means that nothing is scripted, all dialogue is made up on the spot without any planning. The BAT format takes exception in that it is performed in the dark, without eye contact or movement. All action is strictly verbal. There are no visual or movement cues made by the performers, who have to rely upon listening skills alone to create a show.

We are delighted to host this lively memory making event. Feel free to share this wonderful treat with your family and friends by inviting them to join you. Please RSVP ASAP, to assure sufficient seating is available. Call Blake Lindsay, at (214) 420-9419, or email Blake.lindsay@dallaslighthouse.org.

Thank you to Match Box Studio for their generosity with this special unique presentation.

Community Donates Device to Help Blind Woman See

Sarah Bullington has been blind since suffering a brain tumor at age 3. Now that this 21-year-old owns a revolutionary piece of technology, everything has changed. She has a lot of catching up to do. "I'm so happy and so grateful to everybody that helped me get this device so fast" Bullington told us when we visited her on her last day of training at Akron Children's Hospital. "I have to take baby steps with learning it and then once I master it I can put it into my life. For instance getting a job and who knows what else, she said smiling."

Bullington was one of the first to take part in clinical trials with what's called the BrainPort. It's made up of a pair of camera-equipped glasses, which electronically transmit images through a special paddle to her tongue and onto her brain. It's such simple things that mean so much to her, like being able to identify a baseball on a table, actually knowing where to reach to pick it up, and then drop it in a bowl nearby. While technicians watch her, they can also watch a computer screen, which shows what she is seeing. Bullington is also learning to walk with the device, finally free from the need of a cane or anyone's arm.

Her mom, Kelly Dudas, is thrilled. "She's going to be busy. She's not going to be sitting there. She's going to be chasing the dogs around," said Dudas. Even the doctor who introduced her to it, Dr. Richard Hertle, is amazed, as he closes his eyes and lets her guide him on a walk through her practice obstacle course. "It's always nice to be a part of that jump from the laboratory to the street, to see patients being able to use it," said Hertle. He and Bullington shared an emotional embrace before she left the hospital with her own BrainPort, provided by the giving hearts of northeast Ohioans. Many people gave to her through a GoFundMe account and a couple of fundraisers, to which she says she and her family could not be more grateful. Her story is an opportunity to spread the word that this device is available. You can bet she'll be an advocate for years to come.

Improvements in Progress

The Dallas Lighthouse has introduced a total facility re-engineering program while introducing LEAN manufacturing principles and tools such as 5s, FMEA, Value Stream Mapping. Approx. \$700k in factory equipment automation upgrades has been invested thus far YTD. This improvement process is driving efficiency gains as well as increased blind technician opportunities. Additional investments are planned to introduce robotics during the next 6 months that will open higher technology work processes to blind technicians in a safe manner.

- A new Client Services Center is in construction at the Dallas Lighthouse that will feature Adaptive Technology Lab, Successful Living Lab, Orientation & Mobility and Senior Services (SOS).

We have doubled the size of our call center (2016 vs. 2015) with an expanded contract from VPay. Other new business applied service ventures with Comerica Bank, IRS and Social Security are on course for continued growth through the year with additional contract opportunities.

DC Trip

Each year, my wife Jennifer and I fly to Washington DC for a productive two day Public Policy forum representing the Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind, and the National Industries for the Blind (NIB). Our event occurred May 24th and 25th. We headed to Capitol Hill, to propose solutions for a few challenges concerning employment facing those who are blind. While I have been blessed to be employed all of my adult life, there are 7 out of 10 people with sight impairment who don't have that fortune. Occasionally, it may be because someone doesn't have an open mind to accept an offer that isn't their preferred career.

More often however, these people simply aren't able to secure work for any number of reasons. I can honestly express my gratitude to The Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind and NIB for making great strides, in improving employment and educational situations by providing good jobs and excellent training along with motivation. I want to thank our friends Congressman Pete Sessions, Congress Woman Eddie Bernice Johnson, Senator John Cornyn and Senator Ted Cruz, for considering our proposals for improving specific legislation, which will enhance employment opportunities for those without sight. In addition, Congressman Pete Sessions has since visited the Lighthouse on 06-01. He donated 6 computers which are in fine condition and will be made good use of.

Our Brand New Friend

I am pleased to introduce Gouzia Sidarajah. She is 13 years old and recently graduated from Maus Middle school in Frisco TX. Gouzia is remarkably helpful and considerate. She demonstrates this trait by putting action into life improving solutions for people with unique challenges. This school year, Gouzia became proactive by developing her inspired idea for a science fair competition. She explains her exclusive encounter, which was ultimately her inspiration. "Last summer, I observed a person who was blind at the park. I didn't realize they were blind until I noticed them using a white cane. Later on, I saw them again getting stuck in a bush. I couldn't stop thinking about the situation. I then did some research on something my brother uses called an Arduino which is a micro controller."

Lately, she visited with the Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind team. Gouzia had two inspirational motives in mind. Since her current passion is to minimize mobility obstacles for people with low or no vision, she desired to observe some typical daily routines specifically occurring with those, facing sight loss. Gouzia was also eager to test her persuasive invention which had earned first place in a science fair competition, followed by regionals, and finally was 2nd place in a huge statewide competition. She has applied for an upcoming Nationals competition.

Our team was impressed with her demonstration of the sensors which can be worn on our arms. They may also be attached to the white cane, feasibly enhancing the cane's capabilities. "Helping to enhance solutions for those with distinctive challenges is more of a hobby as I want to become a doctor. Preferably a Cardio Vascular surgeon" Gouzia

confidently stated. Gouzia is investing some of her summer time, by volunteering at the lighthouse. Primarily the technology lab where computer competencies are taught to students ranging from college age, to those retired.

Hugh McElroy, CEO, Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind affirms “we are very fortunate to know Gouzia who is extremely bright, intuitive and focused on objectives that make a difference in the lives of others. Her intellect coupled with her charitable heart drives her to achieve things in the service of others. Her desire to become a specialized physician is a further indication of her nature to serve and improve the quality of life well beyond her immediate environment. I have no doubt that Gouzia will have a brilliant career as an adult and before then in her teenage years will form broad achievements as both her mind and her heart are prepare her for what is sure to be a stellar and extremely productive life. Gouzia has given a wonderful gift of her mind and ingenuity that it is capable of producing.”

Ever wonder what life would be like without those special people who focus their ideas, inventions, adaptations and talents on helping others who face unique challenges like blindness? Let’s be happy we don’t have to find out.

A Fresh Useful Resource

Dear Blake Linsey,

I have my own company called Insightful Publications. Creating State Resource Handbooks specifically designed for use by the blind and visually impaired in the United States. I am a visually impaired individual solely creating these screen reader-friendly resource handbooks.

These handbooks include the many organizations for the blind and visually impaired covering areas such as employment, housing, transportation, and contact information on the local, regional, and national level. I’m continuously trying to ensure the books are as up to date as possible at time of printing.

There are a total of 14 state resource handbooks available for purchase including Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Hawaii, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oregon, and Texas.

For more information on pricing and formats please contact Insightful Publications by email at insightfulpub@gmail.com or by phone at (808) 747-1006. Visit their website at insightful.com/orderpage.html for information and order form.

Christine Chaikin, President and CEO Insightful Publications

Training/Apprenticeship Opportunity Awaits You

A New training and apprenticeship opportunity is now available in the Sewing Department at the Dallas Lighthouse. We will train individuals for new jobs which are planned to start in the next few weeks. If you are flexible, have fine finger and hand dexterity, eager to learn new things, and want a valuable skill to jumpstart your career this is a wonderful opportunity. No prior sewing experience is needed. We prefer individuals with a high school education. Individuals who are blind or visually impaired are encouraged to apply quickly.

You may send a résumé or request an application by calling: Kathy Goodin-Mitchell at 214.420.6573 or send an email to kathy.goodin-mitchell@dallaslighthouse.org

Please don't delay. More than one opening is available.

Blindfold Survey from Marty Schultz

In April, I conducted a survey amongst people blind and visually impaired who play my games. Every day, I receive an email from someone suggesting a game for me to create. Usually, I have no idea how popular that game will be, and sometimes I query the dozens of blind game testers to hear their opinions. This time, though, I decided to ask everyone what games they want next.

About 500 people answered the survey, and the two most requested games were Baseball and Monopoly; both of which were suggested by over 10%. Jeopardy, Basketball and Golf came in next at 5% each. Football, the board game Life, Who Wants to Be a Millionaire, Family Feud, Tennis and Chess were suggested by about 3% of the audience. Backgammon, Pool, Slots, Trivial Pursuit and any type of shooting game were suggested by about 2% of the audience.

Games with at least 1% of the people responding include Pac Man, Scrabble, Crossword Puzzles, Poker, Connect 4, Fishing, Space Invaders, Sports Management, Tic Tac Toe, Battleship, Darts, Go Fish, Cooking Games, Hockey, Mahjong, Oregon Trail, Parcheesi, Wrestling and Bridge.

I had several requests for games I've already built, such as Wildcard (similar to Uno) and the card game War. In my next blog, I'll discuss what else I learned.

Posted in [Blindfold Games](#)

Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind's 85th Anniversary Celebration!

Imagine a festive evening this fall; when we will invite you to celebrate our major milestone event. And performing at our big bash will be a top artist whose tunes you know and love. This entertainer has

written and performed number one hit music, in both country and pop charts. He is a tall man with a great personality and a ton of talent. He just happens to be blind. Can you guess who's headlining our 85th anniversary party?

Stay tuned for the exciting details which include you, in July's Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind News You Can Use.

Topnotch Technology Training for the Blind and Visually Impaired

There are 4 State Approved Instructors, teaching assistive technology at the Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind. Whether you are learning computers for the first time, or you want to improve your technology skills, our experts are equipped to get you there. Your instructor will be blind or visually impaired, enabling them to relate with your vision impairment. The DLB technology instructors can also teach you to be competent IOS users with Apple products utilizing voice over feature.

Call Brad Snyder, at (214) 420-9439 to learn more. Get set to grow your technology skills.

Careers to Consider with the Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind

We have an opening for one assembler, in the vinyl department.

If interested, please reach Melissa Hildebrand, HR Director. Email

Melissa.hildebrand@dallaslighthouse.org

Come Have Fun

Join your friends at Dallas Lighthouse for the Blind, for Bingo night, Friday, June 17th. Food, prizes, and best of all fellowship. Bingo is on the third Friday evening of each month from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM. We'll look forward to hearing and seeing you soon.

Helpful Quotes on Happiness

1. **People are just as happy as they make up their minds to be. *Abraham Lincoln***
2. **You cannot protect yourself from sadness without protecting yourself from happiness. *Jonathan Safran Foer***
3. **I'd far rather be happy than right any day. *Douglas Adams***
4. **I think and think and think, I've thought myself out of happiness one million times, but never once into it. *Jonathan Safran Foer***
5. **Learn to value yourself, which means: fight for your happiness. *Ayn Rand***
6. **The happiness of your life depends upon the quality of your thoughts. *Marcus Aurelius***

7. **The more you praise and celebrate your life, the more there is in life to celebrate.**
Oprah Winfrey
8. **Each morning when I open my eyes I say to myself: I, not events, have the power to make me happy or unhappy today. I can choose which it shall be. Yesterday is dead, tomorrow hasn't arrived yet. I have just one day, today, and I'm going to be happy in it.** *Groucho Marx*
9. **Happiness depends upon ourselves.** *Aristotle*
10. **Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony.** *Mahatma Gandhi*

You're Input...

Do you have an upcoming event you want our readers to know? Email or call me with the info we'll spread the news. What are your favorite topics? If you have a personal story to share, please email or call me to mention a convenient time for an interview. Make your comments and suggestions by emailing info@dallaslighthouse.org
Call me, at (214) 420-9419.

Stay tuned for more **news you can use**, for the blind, visually impaired, and beyond.
Blake Lindsay

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