

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 3

Greater Concord Chamber of Commerce Business Showcase. Fee, Grappone Conference Center, Concord
4:30 till 7:30 p.m.
NHAB display booth.

April 20–22

Lions Vision 2007 Weekend
Newport, ME.
In NH, contact Joan Cirnigilaro, 668-8863 to register early.
Space is limited.

May 12

Boomers and Seniors Expo. Fee.
Everett Arena in Concord
NHAB display booth.
10:00 a.m. till 4:00 p.m.

May 9, 2007

An Arts Exhibit
Local Clients' Work
Portsmouth Public Library,
175 Parrott Avenue
3:00–5:00 p.m.

June 2

4th Annual Blind Awareness Walk.
Starts at McGreal Sight Center in Concord
Registration begins at 10:00 a.m.

October 27

Spooky Silent Auction.
Grappone Conference Center, Concord
Doors open at 8:30 a.m.

November 23

Jose Feliciano in Concert.
Palace Theatre, Manchester
Show starts at 7:00 p.m.

Exec brings personal perspective to working with visually impaired

By Traci Stone, *NH Business Review*



His visual impairment as well as his four decades of work in the field have given Guy Woodland, Senior Vice President of the New Hampshire Association for the Blind, a special understanding of the challenges facing clients.

Guy Woodland, newly appointed Senior Vice President of the New Hampshire Association for the Blind in Concord, begins each day at the office by checking his voice mail messages. It's rare that there isn't at least one request for help from an individual learning to live with blindness or visual impairment.

"There's a loss of self-esteem that goes along with being visually impaired," Woodland said. "Friends don't come to see you, you can no longer drive, you begin to feel as though you're losing your independence. It can be very difficult."

Each year the Association provides assistance to 1,600 blind or visually impaired New Hampshire residents — only a fraction of the 40,000 actually residing in the state.

Like many company executives, Woodland spends his workweek overseeing day-to-day operations, managing existing programs, initiating new ones, answering e-mails and returning phone calls. His work takes him from his office at the McGreal Sight Center on Walker Street to the nearby State House and to the schools, businesses and homes of association clients scattered throughout the state.

Unlike many executives who perform similar duties, however, the new Senior Vice President of the state's leading blind services organization is legally blind himself.

Complications at birth left Woodland without sight in his left eye. A detached retina 20 years later robbed him of 98 percent of the vision in his right eye. In the years since, Woodland has become a prime example of the fortitude and ability of individuals living with physical challenges.

"You have to be a very determined person," said Woodland, 59. "Being considered for a job should be about a person's education and experience, but unfortunately that's not always the case."

A role model

While his visual impairment has given Woodland a more intimate level of understanding the challenges facing the Association's clients, it is his nearly four decades of experience in advocating for the blind and visually impaired that have armed him with the knowledge and compassion he has used to nearly triple the number of pro-

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grams offered at the Association since joining its staff as supervisor for program services eight years ago.

“Our ability to serve people has more than doubled in the last five years,” Woodland said, adding that growing demand makes maintaining the Association’s annual \$2 million budget — funded through grants, donations and trusts — a top priority.

Thanks in part to Woodland’s direction, the New Hampshire Association for the Blind now offers everything from counseling, support groups and referrals through its social service department to rehabilitation teaching, mobility instruction, educational and technology services, public education, transcription services and volunteer programs.

“Guy is an enormously effective leader,” said George Theriault, President and CEO of the Association. “He is an able, experienced, hard-working person who has gotten where he is because of his ability. He is a wonderful role model, proving it’s more about attitude than anything else.”

In addition to the exemplary job Woodland has done and continues to do for the association, Woodland is living testimony to the wealth of resources in New Hampshire’s blind and visually impaired workforce.

According to Woodland, only 30 percent of visually impaired people ever work. The reasons, said Woodland, are many.

Fear and uncertainty often exist on the part of the employer, proving a formidable challenge for visually impaired would-be workers. Woodland learned this nearly two decades ago, when he secured only one interview after sending out 100 resumes. The lone interview resulted from the only resume on which Woodland had omitted the fact that he was blind.

“That told me employers see blindness first,” said Woodland, who eventually went on to spend nearly 28 years working for the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the world’s largest nonprofit organization dedicated to serving the visually impaired. Woodland had risen to the position of executive director before accepting a job with the New Hampshire Association for the Blind.

Sadly, said Woodland, employers’ attitudes towards blindness and other disabilities have changed little since his informal experiment.

“Employers think, ‘What’s it going to cost me to hire this person?’” Woodland said, noting that 90 percent of visually impaired individuals are, like him, at least partially sighted. “They also worry about being able to terminate employment should things not work out — for any reason.”

Educating employers

Woodland’s office is a prime example of the minimal adaptations that can be introduced to accommodate someone with a visual impairment.

The L-shaped desk in Woodland’s office resembles that of any company executive — phone, computer, some files and letters. A screen reader and hand-held magnifier are the only visible differences. An additional software program enables Woodland to utilize his computer just as any sighted person would. The total cost to accommodate Woodland? About \$2,500 — a small investment in someone with Woodland’s expertise, said Theriault.

“The expense was so low. Today access to information and communication are so readily available it seems absurd not to hire someone because they’re visually impaired,” he said. “It should be about their ability, not a disability.”

And, as for legal concerns, Woodland and Theriault both agree — the frequency of such problems is very low.

“Employers get a better employee because they are going to be grateful for the opportunity,” Woodland said.

In addition to securing loyal, capable employees, there are tax incentives for employers of visually impaired individuals. (Interested employers can learn about these incentives by contacting the state Department of Education’s Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation 800-581-6881.)

“There are a variety of tax incentives out there for employers,” said Bill Finn, Administrator of Services for the Blind and Visually Impaired at the Bureau of Vocational Rehabilitation. “But the best reason to hire is because the company gets a qualified capable worker.”

But despite the incentives, seven of 10 visually impaired people living in New Hampshire are currently unemployed — a difficult statistic, considering New Hampshire’s unemployment rate hovers around 3 percent.

The employment picture can be changed, said Woodland, by educating employers and continuing to address the needs of New Hampshire’s blind and visually impaired population.

“We’re pleased to talk with employers about this untapped resource,” Woodland said. “We’re happy to do anything we can to breakdown these barriers.”

For information on services offered at the New Hampshire Association for the Blind, call 224-4039 or visit sightcenter.org. ■



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for the Blind**

**Current newsletters and Annual
Reports are available in Braille, on disk, and on
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Association at 1-800-464-3075.**

**603-224-4039 or 1-800-464-3075 (in NH)
Seacoast Office 603-431-9401**



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Two strangers become friends Ed Nolan and Chuck Hildreth

Chuck Hildreth, from Milford, became a volunteer for the New Hampshire Association for the Blind during the summer of 2006. Having just retired from a 36 year career as a division manager for Friendly's, Chuck was looking for a way to fill some of his time while helping someone else. Chuck met Lynne Saltonstall (Volunteer Administrator) and told her that he would like to become a volunteer and work with someone in the Milford area. Soon after Chuck's volunteer training was complete he was introduced to Ed Nolan, an 84 year old man from Milford. This introduction was just the beginning of a friendship that will last a lifetime.

After meeting Ed, the two began spending lots of time together, anywhere from 3 hours to 12 hours weekly. Sometimes the time is spent all at once and sometimes it is spread out over two to three days depending upon Ed's needs. Chuck helps Ed with his grocery shopping, banking, doctors appointments and brings Ed anywhere he needs or wants to go. Chuck says, "At this point Ed knows very well what he needs to do and how to do it. My function is as a driver, carrier, a helpful set of eyes and a friend. Ed directs me as to what he needs for help, and that's what I try to do. We make a great team!"

Over the last several months Chuck's relationship with Ed has developed into a "meaningful friendship". Chuck has learned a lot about his friend Ed. He learned that Ed is from South Boston and after graduating from high school he served in World War II as a bomber mechanic. Ed graduated from college and became an electrical engineer working at Honeywell and Raytheon. Ed lost his wife in 1978 and has been alone ever since.

About 3 years ago Ed began to lose his sight. Although he can still see somewhat, his vision continues



to deteriorate. On his birthday this year, Ed went to the Registry of Motor Vehicles to surrender his driver's license. Shortly after that, he sold his car.

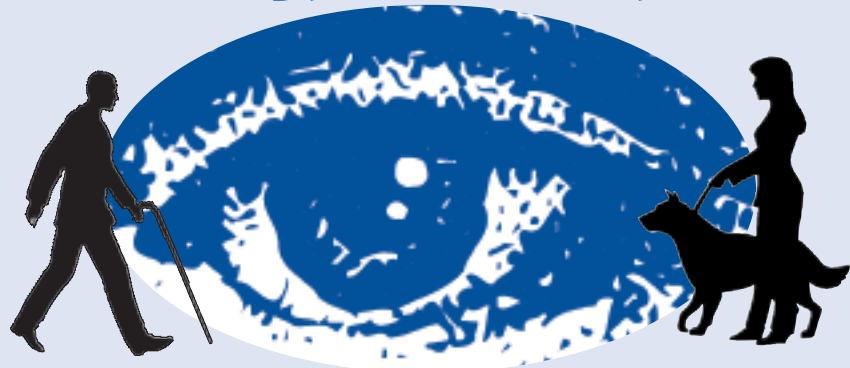
Many people know just what Ed is going through. Losing your eyesight is devastating. Chuck says that Ed feels that many sighted people don't understand the prob-

lems of visually impaired people and so don't help as much as they could and should.

Ed and Chuck, two strangers from Milford who became friends, believe that the Association for the Blind should continue to do as much as possible to educate sighted people to interface more positively with those with vision problems.

We are grateful to Chuck Hildreth and all of our volunteers who really make a difference in people's lives. If you are interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities at the New Hampshire Association for the Blind please contact Lynne Saltonstall at 224-4039 or email lsaltonstall@sightcenter.com. ■

4th Annual Blind Awareness Walk — Saturday, June 2, 2007



Mark your calendars! Help support the New Hampshire Association for the Blind's low vision rehabilitation programs. Come to the **4th Annual Blind Awareness Walk on Saturday, June 2, 2007**. You won't want to miss the fun this year! In addition to the two mile walk through Concord's historic North End and around the State House, there will be lots of door prizes, raffles, children's activities, live entertainment and plenty of good food!

Many volunteers and area businesses have pledged their renewed support for the 4th Annual Walk. The New Hampshire-based radio station **FM 93.3 THE WOLF** will provide extensive pre-event on-air promotion and DJ Matty Jeff will again serve as the Master of Ceremonies. The **Outback Steakhouse** has generously offered to provide lunch for all participants. The **Lions Sight & Hearing Foundation of New Hampshire** is once again a Gold Sponsor, as are the **Exeter and Rye Lions Clubs**.

For "Individual" and "Team" walk registration and other information regarding the 4th Annual Blind Awareness Walk, see enclosed brochure or contact Nancy Burgess, Development Associate at nburgess@sightcenter.com. ■

WWW.SIGHTCENTER.ORG

Five business leaders join NHAB Board of Directors



The New Hampshire Association for the Blind recently named 5 new members to its Board of Directors. They are pictured at left, in order.

- Roger Bouchard — Manchester
- Susan Manchester — Amherst
- Frank Spain — Swanzey
- Gayle Yarnall — Salisbury, MA
- John Holm — Manchester



Roger Bouchard is the owner and manager of Foxwood Homes of Bedford. Susan Manchester is a real estate attorney for Sheehan, Finney, Bass and Green in Manchester. Frank is an Assistant Deacon for the First Congregational Church in Swanzey and Peer Support Coordinator for NHAB. Gayle Yarnall owns and manages Adaptive Technology Consultants in Amesbury, MA. John Holm is the owner of Holm Insurance Company in Manchester. The new Board members join Robert Cholette — Chair, Joyce Meisel — Vice Chair, Carroll Winch — Immediate Past Chair, Amy Nichols — Treasurer, Michael Hill — Secretary, Jo Adcock, Michelle Arruda, Lori Chandonnais, Richard Cunningham, Sharon Fernandez, Michael Hill, Donald Kaplan, Peter Labombarde, Guy Lessard, Stella Scamman, and Phil Spurr.



Many thanks to the following outgoing board members for their years of service: Richard Chevrefils, Bill Leber, and Jerry Vaccaro. ■

Bob Cholette named Chairman of NHAB Board of Directors



Robert “Bob” Cholette, below, of Laconia was elected Chairman of the Board for the New Hampshire Association for the Blind at the Association’s Annual Meeting. Cholette has been a member of the Association’s Board of Directors since 1999.

Bob began his career at the New Hampshire Association for the Blind in the early 60’s and was recognized for developing the first sensory training and mobility program in the state. In 1965 Cholette was hired as Executive Director for Easter Seal Rehabilitation Center in Manchester. At the time, he was the youngest executive director in the country. He remained at Easter Seals until 1988 and was instrumental in transforming the small agency into a multi-organizational entity.

Bob served as Chief Executive Officer for Catholic Medical Center during the late 80’s and helped with the design and development of the Hillcrest Terrace retirement community in Manchester in 1990.

In addition to serving on the New Hampshire Association for the Blind’s Board of Directors, Cholette has been active in the Rotary, Kiwanis and Lions clubs as well as the Chamber of Commerce. ■

Annual Report Corrections:

By mail, many of you may have received a copy of our 2006 Annual Report. In an effort to be as accurate as possible, the following corrections have been made and are reflected in the web posting of the Report.

The corrections include:

President’s Council

\$2,500–4,999

Lions Sight & Hearing Foundation of NH

\$1,000–2,499

Celia and George Theriault
Carroll E. Winch

Patrons

\$500–999

Autodesk*

Professionals

Mr. C. Russell Shillaber,
Esquire

A good deed for your NH neighbors... while doing good for yourself!

IRA Charitable Rollover

During 2006 and 2007, the newly enacted IRA rollover provision permits individuals age 70½ and above to make charitable donations of up to \$100,000 from Individual Retirement Accounts (IRAs) and Roth IRAs without having to count the distributions as taxable income. The IRA Charitable Rollover is intended to benefit donors of all incomes, as well as big and small nonprofits alike. **Now is your opportunity** — as a donor to **take advantage** of this valuable incentive.

Current Law

President Bush signed the IRA Charitable Rollover into law on August 17, 2006, as part of the Pension Protection Act of 2006. The Pension Protection Act also included a series of other important charitable giving incentives and safeguards.

■ **How does the IRA Rollover work?** Taxpayers age 70½ and older are required to make annual distributions from their IRAs. The distributions are

included in the taxpayers' adjusted gross income, and taxpayers pay taxes on them. The IRA Charitable Rollover permits taxpayers to make donations directly to charitable organizations from their IRAs without counting them as part of their AGI and, consequently, without paying taxes on them.

- **Give Now.** Only contributions made between January 1, 2006 and December 31, 2007, are eligible for the enhanced tax benefit.
- **Age Requirement.** Donors must be 70½ years old or older when the distribution is made.
- **Donation Limit.** A donor's total combined charitable IRA rollover contributions cannot exceed \$100,000 in any one year.
- **Eligible Charities.** Charitable contributions from an IRA must go directly to a public charity. Contributions to supporting organizations, donor-advised funds, and private foundations,

except in narrow circumstances, do not qualify for the tax-free treatment.

- **Eligible Retirement Accounts.** Distributions can only be made from traditional Individual Retirement Accounts or Roth IRAs. Charitable donations from 403(b) plans, 401(k) plans, pension plans, and other retirement plans are ineligible for the tax-free treatment.
- **Directly to the Charity.** Distributions must be made directly from the IRA trustee payable to the public charity.
- **No Gifts in Return.** Donors cannot receive any goods or services in return for charitable IRA rollover contributions in order to qualify for tax-free treatment.
- **Written Receipt.** In order to benefit from the tax-free treatment, donors must obtain written substantiation of each IRA rollover contribution from each recipient charity. ■

Sample Rates for a \$10,000 Charitable Gift Annuity*

| Age | Rate of Return | Annual Income | Tax Deduction |
|-----|----------------|---------------|---------------|
| 65 | 6.0% | \$600 | \$3,979 |
| 70 | 6.5% | \$650 | \$4,316 |
| 75 | 7.1% | \$710 | \$4,736 |
| 80 | 8.0% | \$800 | \$5,154 |

Create at age 60 and wait until

| | | | |
|----|------|-------|---------|
| 65 | 7.3% | \$730 | \$4,718 |
| 70 | 9.9% | \$990 | \$5,327 |

Create with a second person

| | | | |
|-------|------|-------|---------|
| 65/70 | 5.7% | \$570 | \$3,406 |
| 70/75 | 6.1% | \$610 | \$3,756 |
| 75/80 | 6.6% | \$660 | \$4,201 |

*Actual returns may vary slightly depending on a number of factors.

If you are able to provide for the long-term financial stability of the Association through a gift annuity, bequest or other contribution, please accept our invitation to join the William & Elizabeth Yates McGreal Society.

- Please send me more information on making a gift and keeping an income for life.
- Use the following information to send me a personal and confidential illustration: For a gift of \$10,000 \$25,000 Other amount \$_____. For one person or two people With these dates of birth ____/____/____ and ____/____/____.
- Please send me information on including the Association in my will or estate plan.
- I have included the Association in my will or estate plan.

Name _____
 Street _____
 Town _____ State/Zip _____
 Telephone _____ Best time to call _____

For more information on how you can help, in complete confidence, please contact: **Shelley Proulx, Vice President for Development, New Hampshire Association for the Blind, McGreal Sight Center, 25 Walker Street, Concord, NH 03301. (603) 224-4039 or 1-800-464-3075 (toll free in NH). sproulx@sight-center.com**

Memorial and Tribute Gifts

These thoughtful gifts are in memory of a loved one or honor special occasions or individuals. They represent another important way to support the mission of the Association and essential vision rehabilitation services. Tributes to the following individuals were received from May 1, 2006 to December 31, 2006, and we extend warmest thanks to all donors.

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Cash charitable donations now require receipt

Starting January 1, 2007 individual taxpayers must have a written receipt for all "cash" donations to charitable organizations, regardless of amount if they wish to deduct those donations on their tax return. This change is one of the provisions buried in the Pension Protection Act passed into law last August.

The New Hampshire Association for the Blind is happy to provide receipts for cash donations as long as the donor's name and address are provided at the time of the donation. ■

Pedestrian. Continued from page 8

ally impaired population, and (3) build confidence among blind pedestrians when traveling on roads and parking lots.

In addition to Jo Adcock, current members of the Advocacy Committee include: Amy Nichols, Leigh Fredericks, Carol Holmes, Joan Nelson and NHAB staff members Glenn Gunn, Jean Jaworski, Claudia Libis, George Theriault and Guy Woodland.

In January, House Bill 211 (HB 211) was presented at a Transportation Committee hearing. Sponsored by legislative representatives Stephen Shurtleff, Robert Williams, Candace Bouchard, James MacKay and Phyllis Katsakiores, HB 211 will require all new drivers to know and be tested on their responsibility to stop and give right of way to blind pedestrians. In addition, the use of new and correct language to be used in the State Drivers Manual when reprinted has been sent to the Department of Safety.

To further promote blind pedestrian safety, the Advocacy Committee has developed a placard to be used as an educational tool to help drivers first identify the symbols of blindness; the white cane and dog guide. It states the requirement to come to a full stop for a blind pedestrian, and describes what drivers should and should not do. This placard is intended to be provided to all students taking Drivers Education and hopefully will be placed in vehicles sold in New Hampshire over a period of years. The Committee plans to distribute the placard and other information to the Chiefs of Police to educate law enforcement personnel as well.

The Advocacy Committee is appreciative of the efforts of the New Hampshire legislators that sponsored the bill and a special thank you to Evans Printing and graphic designer and artist Kyeong Kim for generously donating the printing and design of the blind pedestrian placard. ■

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Advocacy Committee leads effort for blind pedestrian safety

In 2004, an Advocacy Committee was formed to create an extended public awareness campaign to promote pedestrian safety for people who are blind and visually impaired. This followed several discussions among clients which revealed the alarming fact that many of them had experienced very close calls with automobiles at street crossings. The question was raised **“what can be done to educate drivers about their responsibilities under the law when encountering a blind pedestrian?”**


Through the research efforts of the Advocacy Committee and representatives from NH Dept. of Transportation, NH Dept. of Safety, Department of Education and NH Legislators it was discovered that the New Hampshire statute regarding driver responsibility to stop for blind pedestrians is outdated. In addition, the Committee learned that blind pedestrian rights, and ways to identify blind pedestrians was not being taught as part of regular driver education training and was not included in the license test.

The Advocacy Committee, chaired by Jo Adcock, is now seeking to make three important changes in support of blind pedestrian safety. These changes would: (1) require drivers of all ages to become aware of the


SYMBOLS OF BLINDNESS



"The White Cane and Dog Guide are tools that assist in locating barriers, potential hazards and in gathering information about surroundings."




"The person who is blind listens to hear that the vehicle has stopped moving before proceeding."



"A great majority of persons with visual impairments have remaining vision, which can be quite helpful in travel."

DRIVERS & BLINDNESS



The Law says,
"Come to a complete
STOP!"

- A recommended distance is 10 feet, 1/2 a car length.
- Visually Impaired persons count on traffic sounds and other auditory information.
- Right on Red, STOP!
- It is NOT helpful to honk at or yell at a person who is visually impaired... EVER!!
- Ask if assistance is needed.

Produced by New Hampshire Association for the Blind
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Designed by Kyeong Kim

law and their responsibility to recognize and stop for blind pedestrians, (2) reduce or eliminate injuries or fatalities involving automobiles and the blind and visu-

Pedestrians. Continued on page 7

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Save the Date!!!!


2nd Annual SPOOKY SILENT AUCTION

Saturday, October 27th

9 - Noon

At the Courtyard Marriott Concord

Bidding starts at 9:00 AM!!!



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