



SHARED VISIONS

FALL 2016

VISTA CENTER IN SANTA CRUZ HAS MOVED!

Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Santa Cruz is thrilled to announce that we have moved to 3315 Mission Drive, Suite B, Santa Cruz 95065. The nearest cross street is Soquel Avenue. Our phone number 831- 458-9766 and fax number 831- 426-6233 remain unchanged.

We are very happy with our new location which is near to Dominican Hospital and more centrally located within Santa Cruz County. We continue to offer the same services: Support Groups, Counseling, Low Vision Evaluations, Technology Training, Orientation & Mobility and Adaptive Daily Living Skills Training and The Store.

Our hours of operations are:

Office Hours: 9AM - 4PM, Monday-Wednesday

Store Hours: 9AM - 3PM, Monday-Wednesday

Clinic Hours: 9AM - 4PM, 2nd/4th Tuesday Monthly

Closed Thursday - Sunday and Holidays

If you are in our area, please stop by and see our new office. We hope you like it as much as we do!

LOW VISION EXPO IN SANTA CRUZ OFFERS INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION

On a beautiful day in late September over 150 attendees gathered at the Loudon Nelson Community Center along with 14 vendors and community agencies, highly qualified speakers from the medical field, access technology and blind community members, and many volunteers to participate in Vista Center's Low Vision Expo in Santa Cruz. The Low Vision Expo has been a long held tradition for the team in Santa Cruz and the information presented was timely, informative and, in many cases, inspirational. In this article, we want to share several highlights with you. If you want to listen to the three presentations, the audio files are available on our web site, www.vistacenter.org in the Events section.

The presenters were outstanding and addressed different aspects of what individuals who are blind or have low vision need to know. We began with a comprehensive presentation titled Update on Age-related Macular Degeneration and Other Eye Disease by Dr. Steven Sanislo, Retinal Specialist, Byers Eye Institute at Stanford. We have been very fortunate to have Dr. Sanislo serve on the Board of Vista Center for many years, including as past President, and his cutting edge information about current and future diagnostic tools and treatments for retinal eye diseases helped us all understand treatment options. If you are currently being treated by a retinal specialist, we encourage you to listen to Dr. Sanislo's presentation on our web site. In addition, he provides a succinct description of the mechanics of the eye which will help anyone understand vision and eye diseases.

Our second presentation, offered by Professor Roberto Manduchi, Computer Engineering Department at UC Santa Cruz, was titled Making Computers Work for You. His talk was a succinct update about options available to us through various forms of access technology. He explained the current trends and options in access technology, including the pros and cons of each option. You will enjoy listening to the audio recording of his presentation on our web site under the Events section.

The last presentation was a panel discussion titled Adventures in Low Vision- Living Each Day to the Fullest. The panelists were all visually impaired and each spoke about a specific aspect of living a full life as a visually impaired adult. We want to highlight some of the content discussed by the panelists as this was such a well-received topic.

Lynda Johnson, Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and a contractor with Vista Center, talked about the coping process for adjusting to significant vision loss. She highlighted the stages of adjustment and how each stage is part of the journey to acceptance. Lynda shared her personal story of vision loss and how these stages are stepping stones to getting to the point of high self-esteem as related to living life as a visually impaired or blind adult.

Next we heard from John Glass, Access Technology Resource Manager at Vista Center. John, who has been blind since birth, discussed low tech to high tech options for getting information and communicating with others via

technology. His tips and practical examples are a great starting point for someone learning about accessible

Page 4 SHARED VISIONS

technology options available to people who are blind or visually impaired.

Patrice McGinnis is a retired Professor of Voice in the music department at UC Santa Cruz, and also a member of the volunteer Tech Team at our Vista Center Santa Cruz office. Patrice, along with her volunteer colleagues, works with Vista Center staff member Jan McKinley to offer classes and instruction on all Apple IOS devices and other technology tools and programs. Patrice provided a summary of what is new in technology training at the Santa Cruz office and how to get involved.

The second part of Patrice's talk was about living the lifestyle of partnering with a guide dog. Patrice has had several guide dogs in her life, and she enjoys the freedom and mobility that working with a guide dog provides to her. She shared her experiences of moving freely with a guide and also offered examples as shared by other guide dog teams.

Susan Glass, a retired Professor of English at Saratoga Community College, has also been blind since birth. Susan, who serves on the Board of Directors of Vista Center, shared her recreational passions. She offered how she has become an accomplished birder, and how she identifies birds by listening to their calls. Susan also loves hiking and playing music as well as writing. She emphasized that vision loss does not mean that you are now limited in your recreational pursuits, but rather how to pursue these as a blind or visually impaired individual.

The audience had great comments for our panelists and you can listen to this presentation on our web site under the Events section.

In addition, the Expo included a wide range of exhibitors. Many of the best technology companies were represented so that attendees could try out new devices or applications. Community agencies and California Department of Rehabilitation were also in the exhibit hall to explain services specifically designed for the low vision and blind community. A list of all of the exhibitors and their contact info is also available on our web site, www.vistacenter.org, under Events/Past Events/2016 Low Vision Expo.

The day's events flew by and, based on comments from the participants, the program and shared feeling of community was appreciated by all who attended.

ACCESS TECH UPDATE FOR SANTA CRUZ

The Tech Team at Vista Center Santa Cruz is planning a beginning and intermediate level VoiceOver class, Mac Users Classes, and a monthly Tech Users Group starting in January 2017. They are also launching the beginning of a Tech Lab where people can make appointments with Access Technology Specialists to explore and learn more about a wide variety of adaptive technology devices. Specific starting dates and times will be announced soon. If you have any questions about our upcoming tech activities at Vista Center Santa Cruz, please contact Patrice Maginnis

by email at pmaginnis.vistacenter@gmail.com or Stacie Grijalva at sgrijalva.vistacenter@gmail.com. You can also call Vista Center at 831- 458-9766 for more information.

Page 6 SHARED VISIONS

NEWS FROM OUR ACCESS TECH TEAM IN PALO ALTO

We want to welcome a new staff member to our Access Tech Team in Palo Alto. Todd Teixeira, Access Technology Specialist, has over 20 years of experience with mainstream and assistive technology including 9 years at Sensory Access Foundation. Todd is an active user of various assistive technology devices and is familiar with challenges faced by individuals who are blind or visually impaired, through shared experiences.

Vista Center's Access Technology Services in Palo Alto include:

- Tech Lab on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month – come see the amazing world of assistive technology hardware/software for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, and see how certain solutions can assist you in performing a variety of tasks
- Individualized training on assistive technology products – learn how to use your device to assist you in performing specific tasks
- Troubleshooting and technical support – if you are experiencing a challenge with your assistive technology hardware/software, contact the Access Technology Team for assistance

If you are into iDevices (iPhone, iPad, or iPod Touch), portable audiobook/podcast/music players, GPS navigation devices, screen readers, screen magnifiers, Android devices, etc., then Vista Center's Access Technology Team

is who you want to contact. We are here to serve your assistive technology needs! Call Todd Teixeira, Access Technology Specialist at 650-858-0202 extension 180 to

schedule a visit, get additional information, or to ask your questions.

NEW WORKING AGE SUPPORT GROUP AT VISTA CENTER PALO ALTO

Vista Center in Palo Alto has started a new Working Age Support Group for people 65 years and younger. We meet the second Monday of every month. Clients discuss strategies for managing sight loss, exchange information about resources, and discuss the feelings that often accompany loss of sight. Clients in support groups build a community, become more positive about their loss of vision, and are more likely to resume activities and accept other rehabilitation services. If you are interested in learning about or attending a support group, please contact Hannah Bisgyer, ASW at 650-858-0202 extension 131.

NEWS FROM THE HEALTH LIBRARY

Remember, if you have access to e-mail, you can ask us to add you or a family member to the free monthly Research Updates: AMD-Retina, Diabetes or Glaucoma. Now, here is a tip from Vision Aware: Know the Difference between a Vision Screening and a Comprehensive Eye Examination. A vision screening is a relatively short exam that can indicate the presence of a vision problem or a potential vision problem. A vision screening cannot diagnose exactly what is wrong with your eyes. Instead, it can indicate that you

should make an appointment with an ophthalmologist or optometrist for a more comprehensive dilated eye examination. A comprehensive dilated eye examination generally lasts 30 - 60 minutes and is performed by an

Page 8 SHARED VISIONS

ophthalmologist or optometrist. It should always include (a) a health and medication history, (b) a vision history, (c) an eye health evaluation, (d) a refraction, or visual acuity testing, (e) visual field testing, and (f) a clear report and summary of your examination results. [From VisionAware 8/8/2016].

\$1000 GRANT AVAILABLE THROUGH THE BARBARA RHODES ADAPTIVE TECHNOLOGY FUND

Silicon Valley Council of the Blind, a chapter of the California Council of the Blind, is now accepting applications for the Barbara Rhodes Adaptive Technology Grant. Launched in 2010, this program annually awards a grant of up to \$1000 to a blind or visually impaired person, age 16 or older, living in Santa Clara, San Mateo, Santa Cruz or San Benito Counties, who can best demonstrate the need for adaptive technology that will improve his/her quality of life or advance his/her educational and/or employment opportunities.

Examples of items that the grant might fund include, but are not limited to: hearing aids and audiologist fees, mobility aids (like white canes) and payment for mobility instructors, adapted mobile devices, adapted computers, repair of adapted computers, magnifying systems, medical aids, and bar code readers.

For more info about the Barbara Rhodes Technology Grant, call 888-652-5333 or email svcb@onebox.com. You may

download an application form by visiting the web site www.svcb.cc. All applications must be postmarked by Tuesday, January 31, 2017 to be considered by the committee.

THE STORE AT VISTA CENTER – A GREAT PLACE FOR HOLIDAY SHOPPING

Come visit The Store at Vista Center to learn about and try a wide variety of products for low vision and blind consumers. Our staff will assist you in selecting the perfect gift for a loved one.

Just to name a few, we have talking key chains, talking clocks, a talking scale, dome magnifiers, hand held magnifiers, pocket lighted magnifiers, kitchen aids, mobility aids and organizational aids, which are all very useful gifts. If you are unsure of what to buy, we also have gift certificates available in any denomination you choose.

If that special someone is into technology, our Store in Palo Alto also has a wide range of portable video magnifiers to choose from that have a variety of screen sizes and magnification levels. They are light weight and easy to take with you wherever you go. Come in and try them for yourself. Let the holiday shopping begin!

The Store in our Palo Alto office is open Monday-Friday from 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM. For more information call 650-858-0202 extension 135. The Store in our Santa Cruz office is open Monday-Wednesday from 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM. For more information call 831- 458-9766.

SANTA CLARA VALLEY BLIND CENTER RECREATIONAL AND EDUCATIONAL CLASSES

SCVBC provides a wide spectrum of recreational, social, and therapeutic activities that encourage socialization, independence, and increased quality of life for clients.

Page 10 SHARED VISIONS

Activities include exercise, outings, luncheons, quilting and sewing, ceramics, pottery, accessible gardening and more!

Wednesday is Client Day at the Center, where clients enjoy camaraderie, make new friends, become mentors, and socialize. Speakers are scheduled who provide information on available community services, public announcements, introduce new technology and discuss advocacy issues.

For classes, registration is due by the first class. Classes require sign-ups and occur quarterly. Classes offered include:

Mondays

Get Fit Walk, 9AM-10AM (No fee)

Ceramics 1 (Handbuilding), 9:30AM-12PM (Fee \$30./Qtr)

Beginner Yoga, 11AM-12PM (Fee \$5./Qtr)

Tuesdays

Mall Walking, 9AM-10:30AM (No fee)

Basic Sewing Skills, 10:00AM-11:30AM (Fee \$5./Qtr)

Wing Chun Kung Fu, 10:30AM-12PM (Fee \$10./Qtr)

Cooking Without Looking, 12:30PM-2PM, (Fee \$35./session)

Wednesday

Weekly Client Community Meeting, 10AM-11AM (No fee)

Exercise Class, 11AM-11:30AM, (No fee)

Adjustment to Vision Loss Support Group, 11AM-12PM (No fee)

Significant Others Support Group (by arrangement)

I-Do-It Class, 11:15AM-11:45AM (No fee)

Senior Nutrition Program Lunch 12PM-12:30PM (A nutritious lunch is provided for clients over 60 years old and their

SHARED VISIONS Page 11

spouses. Suggested donation is \$3.00 per lunch. For those under 60, the cost is \$6.00 for a lunch. Orders must be placed to extension 204 by the preceding Monday.)

Accessible Bingo, 12:30PM-1:30PM

Living with Vision Loss, 12:45PM-1:45PM (No fee)

Board Game Groups (Scrabble and other board games)

Smoking Cessation Assistance

Thursday

Social Outings (2nd Thursday of the month). Please see our Monthly Activities Calendar on our web site for each listing.

Monthly Outings (4th Thursday of the month). Please see our Monthly Activities Calendar on our web site for each listing.

Birthday Celebration, 12PM-12:30PM (last Wednesday of each quarter)

Another Slice of APple Pie is a free monthly seminar on accessible technology. Our next seminar is on Friday, December 16 from 19AM-12PM. Please RSVP to Ernie Molina the Wednesday before the session at 408-295- 4016. Movies Out of Sight is a social movie event with descriptive audio. Sign-up in advance. \$5. fee for refreshments.

Santa Clara Valley Blind Center's office hours are Monday-Thursday, 9AM-3PM. For more information about our activities and classes please refer to their web site

www.visionbeyondsight.org or call them at 408-295- 4016 extension 204. Come and join the fun!

OFFICE CLOSURES

Vista Center will be closed for the holidays November 24th - 25th, 2016 and December 25th - January 1st, 2017.



for the blind and visually impaired

**FREE MATTER
FOR THE BLIND**

**3200 Hillview Avenue,
Suite 120
Palo Alto, CA 94304
www.vistacenter.org
ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED**

How to Contact Us

**Vista Center, Palo Alto
3200 Hillview Avenue
Suite 120
Palo Alto, CA 94304
650-858-0202**

**Vista Center, Santa Cruz
Ray Westman Branch
3315 Mission Drive
Suite B
Santa Cruz, CA 95065
831- 458-9766**

800-660-2009

Website:
www.vistacenter.org