

The Inside Track

News & Events from the Santa Barbara Unit of Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic

2007 Record-A-Thon Sets New Records

This was our best Record-A-Thon ever! We had 285 people read for us, in addition to almost 200 regular volunteers who helped make it happen. We raised \$54,000, including \$10,001 from our volunteers for new equipment.

We had 16 students and parents come and tell their stories of using our recorded textbooks. There were so many poignant moments: the mother who was so frustrated with her son's reading problems that she threw a book at him, only to discover that he had dyslexia and wasn't being lazy; the young woman who used our books and got an 'A' in a class she would otherwise have dropped; the blind man who listens to his beloved theology books; the woman who lost her sight in middle age who is now earning a doctorate at UCSB, using books we're recording for her. It's wonderful to hear how the books we record make a difference in so many lives.

The success of this year's Record-A-Thon was the direct result of a great team of workers

With all these volunteers, we finished seven new books for our audio library in Princeton, NJ, including: *The Measure of A Man* by Sidney Poitier; *Andrew Carnegie* by David Nasaw; *Justice For All* by Jim Newton; *Walt Disney* by Neal Gabler; *In An Instant* by Bob Woodruff; *Silver Tongue* by Steve Crandell; *My California* by various authors;

and *Field Notes From A Catastrophe* by Elizabeth Kolbert. We're very grateful to everyone who participated: it was a very exciting week.



A busy day at the ranch during the 11th annual Record-A-Thon.



Clockwise from top: The SB Unit's youngest volunteer, Esther Tran-Le (back row, under the "D"), organized a reading event with her fellow high school students and four of the authors from the book "My California." Borrower Marisa Mariani talks about using audio books; Santa Barbara Mayor Marty Blum proclaims Record-A-Thon week for all of Santa Barbara; RFB&D member Jean Adamson (seated) chats with Hollywood producer Lowell Blank (left) and director Andy Davis; local icon, sculptor and author Bud Bottoms reads his book, "Kid Ethics," for local children.

REACHING MORE STUDENTS

By Tim Owens, Executive Director

“Reaching more students than ever before!”

That has been the Santa Barbara Unit’s mantra since the beginning of 2007 and it will continue to be so in the months and years ahead. I am pleased to announce that through the generosity of the Orfalea Fund and the Weingart Foundation, RFB&D/Santa Barbara has launched a new Educational Outreach Program

that will help us double the number of students we serve – individually or through schools – with audio textbooks.

The grants are multi-faceted, enabling us to conduct an awareness campaign with students, parents, teachers, school counselors and administrators,

doctors, therapists and other influencers. We want to let them know about the life-changing benefits of RFB&D’s “Learning Through Listening” service for people who struggle with reading the printed word because of dyslexia, a visual impairment

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Photos: Steve Crise, Allison Silberberg, Eric Isaacs, Muffet Kaufman, Tim Owens

Editor: Kathy Wertheim



or other physical disability. The grants will allow us to work more effectively with Santa Barbara’s Dyslexia Awareness Resource Center (DARC), the Santa Barbara County school system’s Instructional Media Service, and Computers for Families in partnerships that are mutually beneficial and supportive. Included in the new Educational Outreach Program is an “Adopt-A-School” component that will encourage corporations, small businesses and community organizations to sponsor RFB&D’s service in a classroom.

Leading the Unit’s new Educational Outreach Program will be its new director, **Kristen Reed**. Kristen is a Santa Barbara native and a product of its school system. She was introduced to RFB&D’s audio book service in the sixth grade by Grace Willson, a visual impairment specialist. As a result of cerebral palsy, Kristen has dyslexia and other visual processing issues that made learning difficult. Using RFB&D’s books, she excelled through grade school and went on to obtain a BA from Westmont College and a Masters in Human Development from Pacific Oaks College in Pasadena. Most recently, Kristen was a director of the Isla Vista Youth Projects School-Age Program.

By taking this new position with

RFB&D, Kristen looks forward to giving back. “I simply wouldn’t be where I am today if it wasn’t for RFB&D,” says the confident Reed. “Everywhere I go and everywhere I speak, I want to share my own story of success with others so that they can see that they, too, can be successful if given the right learning tools.”

Kristen’s success has been one of true grit and determination. She was always seen as different from the other kids because of her disabilities. “I want them to know that being different doesn’t have to be an obstacle for growth and achievement,” she says.

An estimated 7,500 students in the Santa Barbara Unit’s coverage area have reading difficulties and could benefit from RFB&D. Without proper learning accommodations, it is likely that more than one-third will drop out of high school and more than 30% will get in trouble with the law 3-5 years out of high school. Unfortunately we have not had adequate resources to reach out and serve these students.

In fact, we have been serving only 500 of those 7,500 students – either individually or through schools. That’s just one out of fifteen students who might be helped by RFB&D. We need to close that gap. The Orfalea Fund and Weingart Foundation will help jumpstart us to that end. Our challenge will be to sustain this new program over time, so it may truly have a lasting impact. With your help and the help of others, I think we can do it. I would love to say three to five years down the line that we are giving ALL individuals equal access to the printed word.

Without help, 35% of students with learning disabilities will drop out and 31% will get in trouble with the law within 3-5 years of leaving high school.



We’re proud to have Vons as one of our corporate sponsors

Adopt-A-Text Sponsors

Our Adopt-A-Text Sponsors have graciously agreed to underwrite the production costs of our audio textbooks, at a cost of \$1,200 a book. We’re grateful to each one.

FIVE BOOKS:

Medtronic
The Mosher Foundation
Vons Companies Charitable Foundation, Inc.

FOUR BOOKS:

The Ann Jackson Family Foundation
Fredric E. Steck Family Foundation & Kelly LeBrock
Rotary Club of Santa Barbara
Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians

THREE BOOKS:

Pacific Capital Bank
Venoco, Inc.

TWO BOOKS:

Students and Parents of Laguna Blanca School, Santa Barbara, California
Mid-State Bank
The Towbes Foundation

ONE BOOK:

Business First Bank
Citrix OnLine
French & Associates
Inamed
Peebles Sheen Charitable Foundation
QAD
Dr. & Mrs. William Radasky
Reicker, Pfau, Pyle & McRoy, LLP
St. Andrew’s Presbyterian Church, Santa Barbara, California
Starbuck, Tisdale
Quang & Pauline C. Tran-Le
Ventura Developers
Vetronix
Village Properties
Kathy Wertheim
Yardi Systems

For more information about our Adopt-A-Text Program, please call 805-681-0531.

Record-A-Thon Committee

Our thanks to those who worked so hard to make the 11th annual Record-A-Thon a success, plus all our staff:

Muffet Kaufman
Fred Klein
Irene Macias

Molly McDonough
Mo McFadden
Margarita Moreno
Victoria Pointer

Patti Richards
Bob Shapiro
Dorothea Smith

Record-A-Thon Sponsors

Our special thanks to our Record-A-Thon sponsors:

RFB&D Volunteers; The RORD Foundation; Fredric E. Steck Family Foundation & Kelly LeBrock; The Anne Jackson Family Foundation; students and parents of Laguna Blanca School; Santa Barbara Bank & Trust; Venoco, Inc.; Mid-State Bank & Trust; Village Properties; Peeble Sheen Charitable Foundation; Reicker, Pfau, Pyle & McRoy, LLP; Kiwanis Club of Santa Barbara Suburban; Santa Barbara Independent; and KCLU Radio.

FOR PARENTS AND BORROWERS



A Note from Kristen Reed Educational Outreach Director

I would like to put together an advisory committee of borrowers and parents of borrowers to help us with our outreach campaign. You know first-hand what RFB&D’s services have done for you or for someone you love. Your voice is powerful in this campaign. If you would like to help or if you know someone who could benefit from RFB&D please have them contact me at 805-722-5761 or kreed@rfd.org. Reaching the goal of serving more people with RFB&D’s technology will occur: one student, one teacher, one administrator, one community leader at a time. Please help us reach out to others. We need your help to make this happen.

Volunteer Appreciation & Awards Event

The Santa Barbara Unit of Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) honored its volunteers with our annual Volunteer Appreciation & Awards Event on Sunday, December 3, 2006 at the Red Cross building in Santa Barbara. Over 125 of the organization's volunteers attended.

During the party, many of the unit's volunteers were presented with special certificates marking the total number of hours they have contributed to the organization. Nineteen volunteers were presented with a certificate and RFB&D pin for reaching the 100-hour mark. Seven volunteers attained 500 hours each; six achieved 1000 hours each. Celia Book and Christine Dora made it to



Staff Members Ethan Saxton and Dave Hardin with Volunteer of the Year Patti Richards

the 1,500 hour mark; Helga Carden and Hope Smith completed 2000 hours; and June Kelley and John Mathison topped the 6,000 hour mark. Patti Richards was awarded the RFB&D staff's Volunteer-of-the-Year Award. Harry Chanson led a raffle of a variety of donated items including dinner certificates to Chuck's, the Paradise Café, the Harbor Restaurant, El Paseo Restaurant, and Tee-Off Restaurant. The party was put on by the organization's Board of Directors and staff. Board Secretary Eileen Yardi served as committee chair for the event.

Volunteer Awards

Congratulations to our wonderful volunteers who achieved new milestones of service. We feel blessed by each one of you.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 6,000 HOURS June Kelley John Mathison | 100 HOURS Sarah Battersby Jason Becker Mariama Cole Tammy Frazier Reet Glass Bobby Hall Pamela Harris Betty Johnson Terry Keramaris Jean Martinis Meredith McMinn Paul Nay Loretta Redd Patti Richards David Rivette Don Sillings Esther Tran-Le Bob Ward Jennifer Willis |
| 2,000 HOURS Helga Carden Hope Smith | |
| 1,500 HOURS Celia Book Christine Dora | |
| 1,000 HOURS Heather Adams Eleanore Alexander Pat Breyman Frank Diani Kristin McCallister Jack Rutten | |
| 500 HOURS Jerry Byrd Mary Cunningham Judy Gainor Dick Jones Cliff Kearsley Bob Miller Bruce Schumikowski | |



Peggy Stolz and daughter Kallie

May Luncheon Raises \$87,700

It was a beautiful day outside and inside as RFB&D held its second annual Learning Through Listening Fundraising Luncheon at Fess Parker's Doubletree Resort on May 22, 2007. 145 people attended the one-hour luncheon to hear about our efforts assisting students who have difficulty reading printed materials. Ultimately, \$87,700 in cash gifts and five-year pledges was raised for our work.

Nineteen-year old Kallie Stolz spoke movingly about having two cerebral hemorrhages. She told the audience – made up of volunteers, donors and those new to our services – about how the hemorrhages and the operations to save her life robbed her of her ability to read, stole her sight on her right side, and left her epileptic as well.

Kallie's mother, Peggy Stolz, talked about the moment she realized her daughter, once a strong reader, could no longer read. They were coming home to Lompoc from UCLA after Kallie's second

operation. Kallie pointed to a billboard and asked, "What does that say?" Peggy, shocked, said, "You mean you can't read that?" Even the doctors were surprised: to save her life they had removed the part of Kallie's brain that allowed her to read. Kallie could still write, but she couldn't even read back her own words.

Today, while Kallie sometimes uses a white cane to navigate busy places like airports, she is slowly regaining her abilities. Using RFB&D's audio books for schoolwork has helped her as she tries to keep up with her peers.

If this luncheon sounds like an interesting event, we'll be having another like it in Santa Barbara on November 14. You're welcome to join us and bring a friend or colleague. There is no cost and no required commitment. Please call the office at 805-681-0531 to RSVP. We expect a capacity crowd, so please RSVP now while you're thinking of it.

Special Thanks...

To our May Luncheon sponsor, Wells Fargo, which underwrote our costs so that donors would know that their entire gift was going to RFB&D.

Save the Date

Our next luncheon is November 14!

Welcome New Dreambuilders!

A Dreambuilder is someone who makes a pledge of \$1,000 a year or more to underwrite our work with students for five years. Welcome to our new Dreambuilders who have come to us in 2007:

Independence Builder (\$5,000 a year for five years)

Jim Roehrig

Confidence Builder

Linda Armstrong
Bonni Auerbach
Elaine Dine
Kelly Hale
Stan Roden

Thanks to Our Table Captains

Our thanks to our table captains, who brought their friends and colleagues to our May Luncheon:

Eileen Barish
Jocelyne Bublitz
Scott Eschbach
Donna Eyman
Spencer Fischer
Gene Geller
Kelly Hale
Marty Jenkins
Gerry Nettleton
Dale Nissenson
Mike Nissenson
Tim Owens
Ken Pettit
Roy Prinz
Dr. Dan Secord
Bob Shapiro
Cynder Sinclair

And a special thanks to our outstanding volunteer graphic designer, Molly McDonough, for her work on the luncheon, the Record-A-Thon, and throughout the year.



12th Annual "Vision and the Task" Conference

Saturday, January 26th, 2008

8:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Dr. Daniel G. Amen, M.D.

Presenting
"Change Your Brain, Change Your Life"

Name: _____ Phone #: (_____) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

E-mail: _____

_____ VISA _____ Master Charge: # _____

Expiration Date: ____/____/____ Amount: \$ _____

Signature: _____

Cost: \$100.00 (Conference, Material, Morning Coffee, Danish, Refreshments & Luncheon)

Place: Santa Barbara City College, Garvin Theatre, 721 Cliff Drive, Santa Barbara, California

Registration Online: www.dyslexiacenter.org

Registrations by Fax: 805-963-6581 (For credit card only)

Registrations by Mail: Send \$100 check made out to:

Vision & Task Conference
C/o Dyslexia Awareness and Resource Center
928 Carpinteria Street, Suite 2
Santa Barbara, CA 93103

Old Life Insurance Policies Could Benefit RFB&D

By Brent Anderson, RFB&D reader/volunteer

Do you have an old life insurance policy that you no longer need and could donate to RFB&D? Many donors may have old policies, perhaps even left over from military service, that while meaningful, are no longer significant to the donor's estate plans. An old \$15,000 or \$20,000 life insurance policy, for example, might be paid up and have substantial current cash value. If a donor were to sign it over to RFB&D, our organization could realize a benefit equal to the cash value, or might want to hold onto the policy until the donor's demise, and then use the death benefit to create an endowment in perpetuity for our work. The \$15,000 or \$20,000 policy could be relatively insignificant compared to the remainder of the legacy assets for the donor's heirs, but it would make a big difference to RFB&D.

For example, if that old policy had a current cash value of \$10,000, a donor who wanted to contribute it to us could receive a current tax deduction for the full \$10,000 of cash surrender value. This tax deduction could be used to offset

the taxation of current income. In a 40% tax bracket, for example, this could save the donor \$4,000 in taxes that otherwise would be paid. The giving of an old life insurance policy, while significant and important to us, could be relatively painless to the donor as compared to donations that detract from current income.

If you would like more information or to discuss the possibility of this kind of donation to make a significant and meaningful gift to RFB&D and help to further our mission in the community and in the world, please contact Executive Director Tim Owens.

Brent R. Anderson, CLU, ChFC, is a local financial advisor, a 35+ year veteran of the industry and a frequent contributor to the charitable efforts of the community. His practice includes estate, financial and charitable planning, and he acts as an advisor to us, donating significant portions of his time to help our cause. He can be reached at 805-569-7666.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Learning Through Listening Free Fundraising Luncheon

On November 14 we'll have our **Learning Through Listening Free Fundraising Luncheon** in Santa Barbara from 12-1 p.m. We will feature people who have benefited from our work and it is free to attend, but we will be asking for money. There's no minimum or maximum gift requested. Please call 805-681-0531 to RSVP or to request more details.

Upcoming Learning Through Listening Dates

We host regular one-hour presentations so people can visit our studios, learn more about us and meet the students we help. Upcoming dates are October 16, October 25, November 7 and December 11 from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Please come and give us feedback, and bring a friend or colleague.

Volunteer Appreciation and Awards Event

Our Volunteer Appreciation Dinner and Awards Event will be held on Sunday, December 2 from 5-7 p.m.

Record-A-Thon

The 12th annual Record-A-Thon will be held April 21-26, 2008.



2007 RFB&D Scholarship Recipients Kendall Crombie, Kate Pincus-Whitney, Harrison Lane and Connor McDonald

Scholarship Barbecue

On August 25, 2007, RFB&D held a BBQ, sponsored by the Elks, at the Goleta Community Center to honor our ten scholarship recipients. These students, chosen with the help of their schools, each won a four-year scholarship to RFB&D's services and a Victor Reader so they can play our special audio CDs. Our special thanks to the RORD Foundation for underwriting these ten scholarships, worth \$1,000 each. Current borrowers Ann Tesar and Amanda Howard spoke movingly about how much they have been helped by audio books from RFB&D. Many thanks to everyone who helped and congratulations to our scholarship winners.

2007 RFB&D Scholarship Recipients

Kate Pincus-Whitney
Harrison Lane
Tawni Smith
Connor McDonald
Max Holihan
Daniel Marler
Jose Luis Alvarado
Alexis Hulsebos
Kendell Crombie



Top Ten Reasons for Volunteering at RFB&D

By Volunteer Bob Shapiro

1. Helping Students Succeed
2. Volunteers are Truly Appreciated
3. Flexible Hours to Participate
4. Little or No Pressure
5. Increase Skills – Become Better at Reading & Operating Equipment
6. Great Camaraderie Among Fellow Volunteers
7. Seeing Tangible Results Every Volunteer Session
8. Learning New Things Every Time You Read
9. Eligibility for Community Service
10. Public Loves RFB&D: We're On the Side of the Angels

How to Volunteer for RFB&D

Would you like to volunteer for RFB&D or do you know someone who would? Come to a Learning Through Listening Hour (upcoming ones are listed on opposite page). That way, you can learn about all the things we do, from recording books to reaching out to potential audio book borrowers. You'll also have the opportunity to meet someone who uses our audio books and hear for yourself how RFB&D's services can be life-changing. After that, we'll talk to you about your interests: you might want to read for us, or you might want to help spread the word about our work. About 200 people volunteer for us in any particular week, but we always need more!



Nicholas Palonen

By Kathy Wertheim

Nicholas Palonen says that he knew he had a problem very early, "By first grade, I had difficulty reading and I was falling behind in my assignments. I also had difficulty with writing... I was seeing words backwards." Like many boys, he was diagnosed with both dyslexia and Attention Deficit Disorder, but he was able to get help by sixth grade, because his mother was one of our volunteers and knew about our services! He says, "I would play the CDs and take notes as I would listen to them. It would help me to be active at the same time.... The auditory aspect really helped a lot for my memory."

He says that life today is much different because of RFB&D's audio textbooks, "My life is a lot better. I look forward to reading now. It's so much easier to grasp." Today, Nicholas is attending Antioch University. He hopes to become a psychologist and to work with high school students. He says that RFB&D "helped me a great deal. I would definitely recommend them for any students who are struggling with reading." We are proud to feature Nicholas in this newsletter, and hope he will go on to encourage young people who need help to use our services and *Learn Through Listening*.

Focus on Dyslexia

Continued from back cover

ing the reader's tone or voice quality. Students can also stop a recording and replay it until they understand. Many parents don't have the patience to repeat sentences continually. Our special CD players allow students to "bookmark" pages so they can quickly move back and forth among sections. This is helpful, for example, when a math book has answers at the end of the book.

Today, 70% of the people who use RFB&D have dyslexia or other learning disabilities rather than blindness or visual impairment. Yet, we're not reaching all the students who need us. Studies

estimate that 5-10% of students have dyslexia or learning disabilities. We need to extend our work to 7,000 students who need our help, especially the low-income students who can't afford equipment to listen to the books.

Students with dyslexia and other learning disabilities can take comfort, however, in the many successful

people who struggled in school and went on to triumph in life, including singing sensation Cher, stock brokerage founder Charles Schwab, Kinko's founder Paul Orfalea, pitcher Nolan Ryan, and actor Tom Cruise.

If you know someone who struggles in school, or the parent of a struggling student, please show them this article and have them call us at 805-681-0531 to get help.

Kathy Wertheim grew up in Santa Barbara and was a 20-year volunteer with the Washington DC unit of RFB&D. She now serves as our development consultant.

We're not reaching 7,000 students in our area who could use our services immediately



Focus on Dyslexia

By Kathy Wertheim

I remember when Recording for the Blind added the words, “and Dyslexic” to its name. I thought, “Did they run out of blind people?” I’ve since learned a lot about dyslexia and I’d like to share it with you.

Dyslexia is really a basket of different conditions grouped under one title. For some people with dyslexia, letters

and numbers seem to jump around, switch places and turn in different directions. A small ‘p’ can look like ‘q’ or ‘m’ can look like ‘w.’ For others, the page appears too bright and difficult to focus on. Many struggle with bad handwriting as well.

Those with dyslexia can improve their reading through using different ways of learning, called ‘multi-modal learning.’ For exam-

ple, for people with learning disabilities, it can take so long to get from one end of the sentence to the other that they

forget what the sentence is about. If they put on a pair of headphones and have an RFB&D volunteer reading aloud as they follow along, they can make sense of the sentence.

Audio learning has been proven to work. Studies show that students who listen to books as they read along can improve their comprehension by 38%.

But why can’t students just get their parents to help? This works well through elementary school, and many parents do it. However, when a student gets to junior high, parents often struggle to help their children with subjects like biology, algebra or geometry, even if they’re college graduates. This is when many parents turn to the schools or to RFB&D to help.

It’s inefficient to have one person read a book to one other person. Instead, by having recorded textbooks in our national library, many students can listen to each book our volunteers read. The students like this, too, because they can listen at a faster speed than most people can read. For example, a person can read aloud at 175 words a minute, but can listen to 350 words a minute. Our CDs can play faster without chang-

Continued on preceding page

Studies show that students who listen to books as they read along can improve their comprehension by 38%



Recording for the Blind & Dyslexic

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www.rfbd.org/sb

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