

NE/AER NEWSLETTER

Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired

website: www.neaer.umb.edu

The Northeast Chapter Newsletter is published 3 times a year by NE/AER; Nancy Milczanowski, Editor; Marybeth Dean, Printing and E-mail Distribution; Cindy Reed-Brown, Stamping and Mailing Print Copies.

President's Message Sherryl Glinsky

Oh no, my two years are up already! Where has the time flown? I know we have weathered a lot these past two years with the economy, changes in the workplace, earthquakes, floods, a hurricane, power outages, tornados and last but not least, an earthquake! But, like I always say, we are a strong people, strong profession and a strong chapter. We are definitely here for each other!

For the future, we have a lot of great things to look forward to. For instance, please mark on your calendars for November 14-16, 2012. This is when Rhode Island will be hosting the 2012 NE/AER Conference at the Hyatt Resort in Newport, Rhode Island. Information has already gone out for the Call for Papers, so put your thinking caps on and come up with a great topic to share, during a session, with the rest of the profession.

I know I have said time and time again that we are a very strong chapter and we are there for each other! But you know we can even be stronger if you encourage all of your colleagues and friends to become members of AER! Even if your friends were former AER members, please encourage them to reinstate their membership. As the quote states, "Many hands makes light work"!

It has been an absolute pleasure working with all of you and I will treasure my memories as your Chapter President. I leave you though in great hands

with Kelli Jarosz and I know more and more wonderful things are in the future for the North East Chapter of AER!

Officers and Board of Directors May, 2012

President: Sherryl Glinsky, (Sheryl.glinsky@va.gov)

President-elect: Kelli Jarosz, (Kelli.jarosz@va.gov)

Past President: Nancy Druke, (ndruke@sightcenter.org)

Secretary: Yvonne Locke, (Yvonne.locke@ct.gov)

Treasurer: Faith Horter, (Faith.horter@ct.gov)

Board Members at Large:

Laurie Anderson

Paul Barber

Kathy Clarrage

Rishi Connelly

Tim Hindman

Michelle Mason

John Reilly

Jeffrey Schroeder

Susan Sherry

Linda Skibski

District 4 Representative:

Laura Bozeman, UMass Boston

Committees:

Awards: Donna Mitchell

Bylaws: Cammy Holway-Moraros

Cont. Education: Kimberly Stumph

Legislative: Claudia Pattison

Membership: Nancy Druke

Newsletter: Nancy Milczanowski

Nominations: Cindy Reed-Brown

Recruitment, Training, Retention: Nancy Moskowicz

2012 Conference: Adele Geringer, Clare Irwin

Divisions:

Administration: Vacant

Deaf/Blind, MH, Infant, Todd, Preschool:

Tina Gutierrez and Gail Johnson

Education and Itinerant Personnel:

Catherine Summ and Cheryl Brown

Information and Technology: Kim Stumph

LowVision: Mimi Flanary, Donna LeBlanc

Orientation and Mobility: Claudia Libis

Personnel Prep: Laura Bozeman

Psychosocial Services: Lisa Rosene

VR, Employment & BEP: Tim Hindman

VRT and Aging: Kim Stumph

Membership Committee Report

Nancy Druke, Chair ndruke@sightcenter.org

As of April 26, 2012, NE/AER has 385 active members in the chapter. We also have 134 lapsed members of the chapter. I won't name names, but if you know anyone, or if your membership has lapsed, please think about renewing! While we remain the largest chapter of AER, we need each and every one of you to keep our chapter and AER going strong! There are several reasons why you should keep/renew your membership, one of them being the availability of grants and scholarships... read on to learn more!

Grants and Scholarships

Margaret E. Cleary Scholarship – this scholarship is given to an NE/AER member who will be presenting at the NE/AER Annual Conference as a tribute to the multiple presentations that Margaret has given over the course of her career.

Grants – to support NE/AER members to attend NE/AER or AER sponsored events.

The application for both of these opportunities is located on the NE/AER website: <http://www.neaer.umb.edu/index.php>. Applications are due at least one month prior to the registration deadline set forth by the event. So if you are thinking of attending the AER International Conference in Bellevue, WA, or the Fall NE/AER Conference in Newport, RI, or any other

NE/AER or AER sponsored event, and could use a little financial assistance in attending... think about submitting an application for a grant or the MEC Scholarship!

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Report of Board of Directors Meetings
Yvonne Locke, Secretary, NE/AER
March 2, 2012

The Board of Directors met on March 2, 2012. The 2012 NE/AER Conference Committee updated the board on the progress of planning the conference. It will be held in Newport, RI. More information will be forthcoming as it is made available. The BOD continued the discussion about a microphone to help make teleconferencing more accessible. The bylaws were discussed and division and committee reports reviewed.

Legislative Committee Report
Claudia Pattison, Chair

National Legislation introduced 2/28/2012

Prescription Drug Labeling Promotion Act of 2012, HR 4087. Introduced by Congressman Edward J. Markey (D.Mass.). This bill is to ensure that people who are blind or visually impaired have full access to the information included on their prescription drug labels. This legislation convenes a working group of pharmacy representatives, patient and consumer advocates, and federal regulators to develop guidance for pharmacists for comprehensive access to prescription drug information for the visually impaired. The guidelines will provide pharmacies a range of options, taking into account the challenges faced by smaller pharmacies.

Pending National legislation

Optometric Equity in Medicaid Act, H.R. 121 A bill to amend Title XIX of the Social Security Act to require Medicaid coverage of optometrists. This bill is in the Energy and Commerce Committee and the Health Committee. Introduced 3/29/2011.

The Fair Wages for Workers with Disabilities Act of 2011, HR 3086 A bill to phase out special wage certificates under the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938 under which individuals with disabilities may be employed at sub-

minimum wages. Introduced 10/4/2011, it was referred to the Subcommittee on Workforce Protections.

New Hampshire : submitted by Kathleen Turner, Sight Center, Concord, NH.

An Act establishing a commission relative to Medicaid managed care, House bill 652-FN This bill establishes a commission to develop a managed care model for administering the Medicaid program and its enrollees to provide for managed care services for all Medicaid populations throughout New Hampshire consistent with the provision of 42 U.S.C. 1396u-2. The commission shall issue a request for proposals to enter into contracts with vendors of models. Once the model is selected by the commission and the contract is signed and approved by the governor and council, the department of health and human services shall implement the contract.

NE/AER Board of Directors meeting

May 11, 2012

NHAB, Concord, NH

By **Faith Horter** and **Cindy Reed-Brown**

Secretary's report – presented and approved with minor changes

Treasurer's report – presented and approved. Tax issues have been taken to GAB Financial Services in Wethersfield, CT. Discussion of investment and different types of funds; should we change the investment? Gail Johnson, John Reilly (chair), Faith Horter will investigate.

International requested that all committee members be members as well and asked chapters to update bylaws to include that. Since we cover such a wide geographical area this change could greatly hamper getting a committee together. AER is concerned about finances. However, when we put on a conference we are serving AER and non members pay more. Faith moved that we leave the bylaws alone but encourage membership. Jeff seconded. Motion passed.

Sherryl thanked everyone as this is her last meeting as current president.

Conference Report 2012: Rhode Island, Host State (**Clare Irwin, Adele Geringer**), Massachusetts, Program Committee (**Bob McCulley, Darick Wright**) November 14-16 at Hyatt Regency in Newport, RI. Much of the hotel has been remodeled since last conference.

\$50 pre-registration fee reduction for members.

Preconferences

Itinerant: speaker has a conflict that week so looking to do division workshop instead.

Currently MIVI only preconference--Rick Guidoitti opening speaker regarding genetic diversity.

Possibility of VRT/aging preconference

Conference board meeting 11/13 at 5:00.

OLD BUSINESS

1. Discussion of Microphone- Nancy Druke purchased a 'snowball' microphone. Remote users are pleased. Name of person who takes it will be recorded in the minutes.

2. Video conferencing & Teleconferencing options for BOD meetings Group pleased with mic and Nancy was able to engage "hands free" on the computer. Video options: Skype would cost. Question about screen so we could see the typed responses? Will table discussion until next meeting.

3. Newsletter Changes: **Marybeth** stepping down. **John Reilly** and **Lisa Pruner** will be taking over the dissemination of the electronic and paper copies.

4. Canada and Conferences – Letter from an agency in Canada (Montreal). They will no longer support a conference in their area. So need to look for another agency or area. Quebec hoping to host 2015 Mobility Conference.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Bylaws - **Cammy Moraros** Asking membership to vote at conference...logistics tba

Membership - **Nancy Druke** Current 382, lapsed 142. Working with Lori for exchange of information and on set up for the scholarships and link to apply.

Newsletter - **Nancy Milczanowski** will be going to press this next week.

Nominations - **Cindy Reed-Brown** Ballot will be out soon via Survey Monkey

Legislative - **Claudia Pattison**, MA, has proposed legislation to address the shortage in O&M/Vision Rehab personnel. Asking DOE to fund these prep programs. Passed in MA, Specialist teacher endorsement in transition services.

Student – **Nalida Besson**: working on student enrollment.

DIVISIONS:

DB/MH, Infant Toddler, Preschool - **Tina Gutierrez, Gail Johnson**: Tina will be stepping down, looking for another co-chair; moving forward for preconference.

Low Vision - **Mimi Flanary, Donna LeBlanc**: planning workshop in spring at Carroll Center on iPad and apps.

Orientation and Mobility – **Claudia Libis**: Spring workshop on Friday 5/18 on hearing aids. Possibility of pre-conference.

Education/Itinerant Personnel – **Catherine Summ, Cheryl Brown**: Division mtg at conference. Looking for workshop in spring, also on tech with younger students, Donna Brosteck Lee

Vocational Rehabilitation Counseling, Employment and BEP – **Tim Hindman**; Will have a poster session at conference.

Other Business **Claudia Pattison** retiring, so in search of another chair for legislative committee.

LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE REPORT

Claudia Pattison, Chair

May 11, 2012

Passed state legislation:

Massachusetts

Chapter 51 An act relative to students with disabilities in post-secondary education, employment, and independent living. The board shall provide a specialist teacher endorsement in transition services which shall include both coursework and field experience for previously licensed special education teachers and rehabilitation counselors to develop the competence necessary to service as transition coordinators to facilitate provision of a coordinated set of activities to adequately prepare students with disabilities to achieve successful transition to post-school activities, including further education, competitive employment and independent living. The rules and regulations shall be promulgated on or before September 1, 2012. Employed transition teachers who demonstrate competencies can receive a specialist teacher endorsement for 1 year after the promulgation of the rules and regulations.

By-Laws Committee

Cammy Holway-Moraros, Chair

Cheryl Gannon, Committee Member

Nancy Druke, Committee Member

Well, as many of you know, this committee has been working to update our By-Laws. These are Board Approved Recommendations for Amendment. We coordinated with AER central office to send out an email blast to our membership. This has occurred twice. If you did not receive the email survey blast from AER Central office, PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE, contact them to provide your current contact/email information. NE/AER and AER, in efforts to provide information quickly and cost effectively, are utilizing email as a method to contact our members.

Some of you have had an opportunity to vote twice on these important By-Laws changes and updates. Some of you have not voted at all. You will all have another opportunity to vote on the By-Law changes at the business meeting during the conference in RI. We need a quorum and have not yet achieved that. If you have taken the time to vote – Thank you!

Please review the By-Laws and be prepared to vote. The By-Laws are posted on our website: <http://www.neaer.umb.edu/>

We appreciate your assistance and patience as we work to move this process forward.

Camp Inter-Actions Georges Mills, NH

A summer camp experience for boys and girls ages 8-15, from the northeast region, who are blind or visually impaired.

Through challenging and rewarding experiences the campers will make new friends, learn new skills, gain self-confidence, and develop independence. All program activities are designed in a safe and fun environment for children who are blind or visually impaired.

Inter-Actions is located on 150 acres with secluded shorefront on a crystal clear lake. Camp Inter-Actions is an ideal setting for a traditional summer camp experience.

Activities include; music, swimming, boating, fishing, adapted sports and games, arts and crafts, pottery, woodworking, camping, nature activities, leadership skills, and daily living skills.

Camp Inter-Actions 2012 Camp Sessions

One-Week Session: July 22-July 28, 2012

Tuition: \$575

Two-Week Session: July 29-August 11, 2012

Tuition: \$ 950
Both Sessions: July 22-August 11, 2012
Tuition: \$1,425
Scholarship information available upon request.

For a registration form and additional information please contact:

Debbie Gross

campinfo@inter-actions.org

603-228-2803

www.inter-actions.org

***Division 9 - Orientation and Mobility
Claudia Libis, Chair, O&M Division***

By the time you get this, we probably will have just had our Spring workshop: "Living in the Real World With Hearing Aids". Despite the hazards of scheduling in May, which gained us some attendees and lost us others, Mobility people and others throughout New England will be resplendent in their knowledge of and empathy for their Hearing Impaired clients who have hearing aids.

We are considering a pre-conference at the November NE/AER conference in Rhode Island. Anyone with a good topic or speaker, please contact Claudia Libis clibis@sightcenter.org. It should happen soon, as the conference program committee needs to know our intentions.

***SAVE THE DATE!
NE/AER 2012 Conference
November 14th, 15th and 16th***

***Hyatt Regency Hotel
1 Goat Island
Newport, Rhode Island***

Clare Irwin and Adele Geringer, Co-chairs

**NE/AER 2012 Conference
November 14th, 15th and 16th**

Come experience the fresh air and breathe in the sights at the spectacular waterfront Hyatt Regency Hotel and Spa in beautiful Newport, Rhode Island. Home to spectacular scenery, awe-inspiring architecture, rich history, a thriving downtown waterfront and legendary hospitality, Newport, Rhode Island is considered by many to be the shining gem in the coastal crown of New England.

Our Hotel amenities include complimentary overnight self-parking and high-speed guest room internet service, bottled water refreshed in guest rooms each evening and free access to the fitness center, yoga classes and heated pool. In addition, a free shuttle service will transport you to the center of Newport for an exciting shopping or restaurant excursion. All of these services are inclusive of the nightly room rate of \$139.00 plus tax. Visit the website at <http://newport.hyatt.com> for further inspiration.

The Newport Hyatt offers us the perfect venue to refresh and re-energize. The economic crisis across the globe has affected everyone. We as professionals know that a slow economy always impacts low incidence populations the hardest. Now there is a greater need than ever to advance our services and step up our advocacy and supports. Presentations and workshops will help us stay up to date with latest technologies, best practices in placement, creating work opportunities and skills to increase employment opportunities, inform us on medical advancements, share effective teaching strategies that demonstrate collaboration and creativity and support us as we pay particular attention to our students and clients with the greatest needs.

"The power of effecting changes for the better is within ourselves, not in the favorableness of circumstances." Helen Keller

Join us as we celebrate our partnerships, networks, friendships and dedication as professionals who provide education and rehabilitation services to people with visual impairments.

The latest conference information can be found at www.nercve.org or by using the direct link <http://www.neaer.umb.edu/?page=conference>. The Call for Papers is out and registration forms will be available soon. Watch for details

about an exciting one-time only pre-registration incentive for current NE/AER members!

NE/AER AWARDS ANNOUNCEMENT

It's never too early to start thinking about nominating someone for an NEAER award. This year's awards reception will be held at the NEAER conference in November in beautiful Newport, RI. Awards and descriptions are as follows:

NE/AER Award of Excellence for Direct Service to Children with Visual Impairment

The recipient of this award shall be an individual whose dedicated service and innovative approach have been outstanding in the field of education of children with visual impairments. The recipient must be a current AER member, be engaged in direct service to children with visual impairment and be directly involved in activities which substantially benefit or significantly contribute to the independence of children with visual impairment.

NE/AER Award of Excellence for Direct Service to Adults with Visual Impairment

The recipient of this award shall be an individual whose dedicated service and innovative approach have been outstanding in the field of vision rehabilitation. The recipient must be a current AER member, be engaged in direct service to adults with vision impairment and be involved in activities which substantially benefit or significantly contribute to the independence of adults with visual impairment.

NE/AER Team Award

This award recognizes the work of teams of NE/AER members which substantially benefit blind and visually impaired individuals in the Northeast area. The NE/AER Team Award pays tribute to members who work together to collaborate on significant professional projects. Teams can be as small as two individuals up to any number. To qualify for nomination, either the leadership or a majority of the members of the team must be AER members. Nominations may be made by any NE/AER member, including anyone on the team being nominated. It is the responsibility of the nominator to identify (and correctly spell the name) of each team member.

Distinguished Service Award

This award recognizes contributions of an individual or a group affiliated with, but not primarily involved in the education or rehabilitation of individuals with visual impairment. NE/AER offers this award to acknowledge the critical role that affiliated services, resource individuals and support systems play in the education and rehabilitation process. Emphasis is placed upon the recipient's history of working meaningfully in collaboration and mutual support of service providers and organizations for individuals with visual impairments.

Father Carroll Award

This award recognizes exemplary performance where efforts of the individual have had a significant impact on the lives of people with visual impairment. The recipient may be a professional or volunteer with a minimum of ten years of service. The recipient must be known as outstanding and have a reputation as an innovator, a mover, a shaker, and have a positive impact on the lives of people with visual impairment. Recipient must be current AER member. (Awarded in even numbered years.)

James J. Acton Memorial Award

The James J. Acton Memorial NE/AER Board Member Award, acknowledges the contributions of members of NE/AER who, through the years, have demonstrated fierce loyalty and dedication to the NE/AER mission. Nominees to receive the award must meet the following criteria: 1) Be currently active or retired member of NE/AER. 2) Have held membership in AER for at least fifteen years, ten of which were in NE/AER. 3) Served on the NE/AER Board as either an elected or nonvoting member. 4) Significantly inspired other members by actions such as presentations, writings, committee work and example. 5) Promoted the values of our international organization AERBVI.

Nomination information will soon be available at www.neaer.umb.edu.

Just follow the conference link.

For more information, please contact Donna Mitchell, Awards Chair

dmitchell@ric.edu or by phone at 401-456-2760