



REACHING OUT

NORTH DAKOTA VISION SERVICES/SCHOOL FOR THE BLIND

#90

Jan. 2019

Sandra Brandt: Region 4 Coordinator/Braille Instructor

I have moved into Cindy William’s old position as Region IV Coordinator and am totally enjoying the transition. My undergraduate degree is from University of North Dakota with majors in Elementary, Early Childhood and Special Education. I received my master’s degree at George Peabody for Teachers/Vanderbilt University with specialties in Educational Diagnostics, Vision and Deaf/ Blind Education. I later added my Orientation and Mobility certification from University of Northern Colorado. I have an additional master’s degree in counselling from University of North Dakota and worked for several years in the social services field and have some experience teaching at the university level.

For over 30 years my passion remains in serving children with special needs, their families and the teams who support them. I enjoy the challenge that each child brings and working together to find solutions to help bring them to the next level.

I have lived in Grand Forks most of my adult life, I have an adult son and two grand cats. I am an avid lighthouse enthusiast and photographer. I am grateful for opportunities to spend time with family/ friends, read a great book, travel or quilt.



Upcoming Events:

- JAN. 13-17**
ELEMENTARY LITERACY (1ST-5TH)
- FEB. 3-8**
MIDDLE SCHOOL/TEEN STP(7TH-12TH)
- FEB. 9**
GOAL BALL EVENT
- MAR 3-7**
MIDDLE SCHOOL STP(6TH-8TH)
- MAR. 17-22**
ADULT STP
- MAR. 22-23**
FAMILY WEEKEND
- MAR.31-APRIL 5**
TEEN STP/CAREERS(9TH-12TH)
- APRIL 5-6**
SD GOAL BALL TRIP
- APRIL 10-12**
DAKOTAS CHAPTER AER IN GF
- APRIL 28-MAY 2**
ELEMENTARY STP(1ST-5TH)
- MAY 12-17**
ADULT STP

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REACHING OUT

NDVS/SB Winter JAM

Our students ventured to Annie's House at Bottineau Winter Park and enjoyed a few days filled with wonderful learning opportunities and experiences. Students enjoyed tubing, adaptive skiing, snow-shoeing, and one student even rocked the hills on a snowboard!

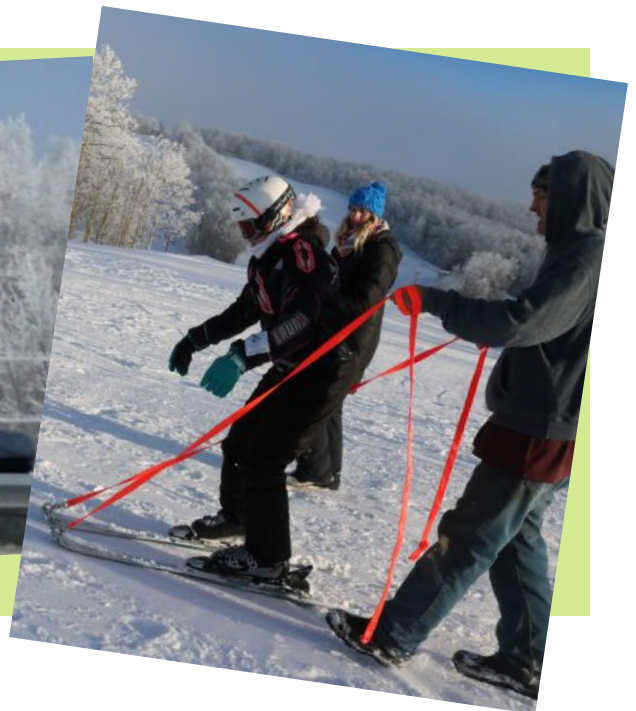
During this adventure, we also worked on the Expanded Core Curriculum (ECC) while participating in outdoor activities in North Dakota's scenic Turtle Mountains. Students received instruction in O&M as they navigated around our lodging at Metigoshe Ministries and took the "magic carpet" up the mountain. Social Skills were enhanced and covered while meeting new people, partaking in new experiences together, and playing *Apples to Apples*. Independent Living Skills were used while making "Puppy Chow," dishing up buffet style meals, washing dishes, and stripping and making beds. And of course, Recreation



and Leisure was covered during our entire adventure!

Thank you for allowing your child/student to learn and discover new experiences and independence while attending our Winter JAM!

Submitted by Cindy Williams



New Year, New Resources: Updates from the Vision Resource Center

Happy New Year! 2019 looks quite a bit different from last year in the Vision Resource Center at NDVS/SB. We had two VRC staff members retire in 2018: Elaine Legg, who managed the Talking Book machines, retired in April, and Lori Foley, APH Coordinator, retired in September. These two women left big shoes to fill and had a lot of passion for their jobs. They are greatly missed by clients, students, and staff. Their retirements have led to other changes as well. The State Library in Bismarck now manages the distribution of the Talking Book machines. The State Library has always been in charge of the actual books for the Talking Book machines, but now they oversee the entire Talking Book program for the state. Machines that are accidentally mailed here are forwarded on to the State Library. Like before, we are in close contact with the staff in the Talking Book Department, as we share many of the same patrons.

Lilly Mankie was recently hired to fill Lori's APH duties, among other administrative tasks. She is learning quickly and is excited to support our teachers and students across North Dakota. You can contact Lilly or Emily with APH needs or questions.

Our shelves also hold new things. Our staff, always looking to stay current, have requested many new professional resources. Braille books that are provided by the National Library Service, National Braille Press, the Braille Institute, and the American Action Fund have kept our collection of leisure reading materials current for our students. Here is

a list of a few of our new resources.

The Big Book of Braille Puzzles: 50 Searches, Anagrams, and Ladders to Help You Master Braille <http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/BRL-PUZZ-SET.html> (we have both the LP and BR version of this)

Amazing Mazes <http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/AMAZINGMAZES.html> (Tactile/print/braille)

Nemeth at a Glance from TSBVI

Enhancing Independence with a Low Vision Focus: A guide to techniques, adaptations and resources from Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired

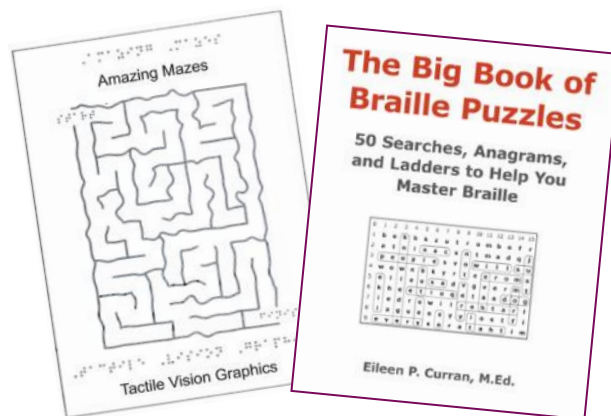
50 Dangerous Things (You Should Let Your Children Do) by Gever Tulley

Making Life Livable: Simple adaptations for living at home after vision loss by Maureen A. Duffy

The Tactile Book of Dinosaurs from Tactile Vision Graphics <http://www.nbp.org/ic/nbp/COLOR-DINO.html>

If you would like to check out any of these materials, please contact Emily by phone, 701-795-2709, or email estenber@nd.gov.

Submitted by Emily Stenberg



REACHING OUT

Superintendent's Scoop

As we enter the new year I have found myself reflecting on the distant past. I am a history buff and find most everything in our past interesting. We do have a number of major milestones and hundreds of important stories of former students, staff and people who have been supporters of our school. I think the personal stories which include both success and failure are the most compelling part of our history. The expectations, the technology and the landscape have all changed but the hope of helping every student in some way along their life-journey remains what is most important.

I thought I knew the history of the North Dakota School for the Blind fairly well but I found out recently that I had not read about our earliest days as closely as I had thought. There was much work and an original appropriation of about \$25,000 to build and ready the school for students in Bathgate (Pembina County) in 1908. I had read a few accounts from the early years and had seen many pictures. I had even visited the old school many times in the 90s when it was a rest home for the elderly. My grandmother had lived there for a time. What I did not know were a few of the stories surrounding the first day of school on February 18th, 1908. I recently read about Sina Fladeland who rode the train with her father that day to drop her off and how lonely she was at first. I read about the eleven students who were pulled out of school and were transported back to North Dakota from the South Dakota School for the Blind. I can only imagine that this practi-

cal decision by the governor was also scary and disruptive for those children. This shocked and disturbed me at first. We can look back and judge this as good or bad, but I choose now to take the positive perspective that the citizens of ND were now showing their determination to take care of their own.

In the early days and at several stages along the way from a residential school to an outreach service with short-term program weeks, there have so many former students that have testified about how we have impacted their lives in a positive manner. I mentioned Sina Fladeland previously. She graduated in 1917 and went on to get a graduate degree in speech pathology and worked at the most prestigious school for the blind in the world—Perkins in Watertown Massachusetts. Not only did she have a distinguished career; she married the Director of Perkins, Dr. Edward Waterhouse, who is a revered historical figure in our field. She is in some ways one of our stars and I didn't even know her name until recently.

We just will never know exactly the impact we or previous generations of staff at NDVS/SB have had or will have on a student. Our mark of success can only be measured by their words and the opportunities they take in life. Most want desperately to be productive and lead happy lives in



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Superintendent's Scoop (Continued)

their communities. I hope that we help current students have exciting lives like Sina or whatever life they choose to live. It is just an honor to be a part of their journey. Quoting my friend, Todd Reeves, President of the Overbrook School for the Blind, “each minute and each day in the lives of our students matter.”

One last thought I want to share is perhaps a bit arrogant but I will stand by it completely. We may be one of the smaller schools for the blind, but our staff are THE BEST! I cannot think of a better trained and more dedicated staff anywhere in the country and I am in a position to know.

Have a great new year in 2019.

Sincerely,

Paul Olson--Superintendent

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