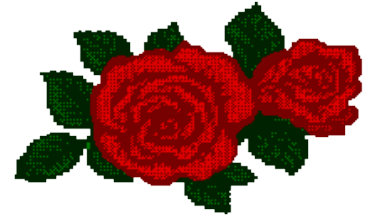




May 2009



Happy Mother's Day

Empowering Independent Living for the Visually Impaired

Upcoming Events

Bike MS – June 27 & 28

Bike MS is a two-day inspirational ride held by National Multiple Sclerosis Society chapters across the nation each year to raise funds that support programs to enhance the lives of people living with MS as well as vital research to help create a world free of MS. More than 3,000 cyclists, 600 volunteers, and countless supporters will enjoy majestic Colorado scenery while riding from Front Range Community College in Westminster to Colorado State University in Fort Collins and back, collectively logging over 400,000 miles!

For more info, call 303-698-7400 or email coloradobikems@nmss.org

State Games of America - July 28 to August 2

The USABA (United States Association of Blind Athletes) is searching for 15 OIF/OEF veterans who are blind and visually impaired to participate and compete in the State Games of America in Colorado Springs July 28 through August 2. The State Games of America is the country's largest Olympic-style multi-sport festival for amateur athletes of all ages and skill levels. More than 10,000 athletes will compete in the 2009 State Games of America offering competition in 31 sports.

Contact Rich Cardillo at: military@usaba.org.

For more information on the State Games we encourage you to visit the website at: [http://www.thesportscorp.org/html/sportsCorp/State Games of America2009/index.html](http://www.thesportscorp.org/html/sportsCorp/State%20Games%20of%20America2009/index.html).

By Joyce Render Cohen

Whether you consider shopping a pleasure or a pain, low vision can impact the way you do it. I know, because my vision loss has changed my strategy. I have to budget my energy as well as my money, so I do my homework first. I use the Internet and the telephone to find where I can get what I want for the best price. Sometimes it's easiest to buy on the Internet or the phone. Sales clerks are usually very helpful when they learn I have a disability. Even discount stores have offered to check inventory and sizes for me. The best way for me to shop in stores is to take someone with me to be my eyes. While it's difficult being dependent on someone else, it can be fun to shop together. Here are my tips for making shopping easier.

For All Shopping:

- Take a shopping list, and a magnifier and flashlight to read price tags and labels.
- Go to stores where you know the layout. Shelves and racks can be like a maze and it's easy to get disoriented with decreased vision.
- Patronize locally owned stores for personalized service and a more manageable selection.
- Try a pair of sports glasses, binoculars or a mini-telescope for spotting and reading signs at a distance.
- Wear colored glasses to reduce glare or improve contrast. (Try out light amber, medium yellow, light plum, or other tints to see what works best for you.)

For Groceries:

- Make a shopping list of generally purchased items at specific stores. Photocopy it and simply check off items as they need to be refilled.
- Ask for help. Many grocery stores provide assistance for people with disabilities.
- Shop during off-peak hours. It's easier to get around and get help if needed.
- In the summer, frequent the farmers' market, which has a great selection of produce and daylight to see it by.
- In other seasons, get to know people in the meat and produce departments who can help you make your selections.
- Let family or friends shop for you. Make out a complete list including alternate selections, desired sizes and quantities.
- Investigate local food delivery services; in many areas, you can buy groceries online.

For Clothes Shopping:

- Look for things that can be worn all year long.
- Choose easy care, washable fabrics in subtle prints and patterns to help disguise stains.
- Choose pieces to mix and match so that they can be used to make several outfits.
- To match colors, use a high-tech solution—a hand-held color matching machine—or natural daylight, or ask for help!

For Appliances:

- Consult **Consumer Reports** for ratings and energy use. (It's available online as well as at your newsstand.)
- Look for high contrast, bold or large print on appliance controls. Choose ones with controls that don't have a lot of visual clutter and can be marked with raised paint or stick-on bumps as needed.
- Choose a stove with oven controls in the front so you never have to reach over a hot burner.
- Avoid controls with digital readouts or complicated functions you won't use.

Simple is better. Don't let vision loss deprive you of the enjoyment of exploring stores, shopping malls, boutiques, factory outlets ... make plans and get going!

Products

Desktop Video Magnifiers

Desktop Video Magnifiers have helped thousands of people regain the ability to read a newspaper, book, or browse through a magazine. With several viewing modes, adjustable magnification, and screens that pivot up & down and side to side, one can easily see color photographs, do crossword puzzles, read letters, write checks, sign important documents, and even thread a needle. And some are computer compatible with additional hardware. Models come in choice of 17", 19", and 22" LCD monitors. With a desktop video magnifier, you can regain your independence at home, school, or at the office!

Available through Enight Skills Center.



Enightful People

Kathy Martinez



Internationally recognized disability-rights leader Kathy Martinez was nominated for assistant secretary for the Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) by President Barack Obama on March 20. Martinez, who has been blind since birth, specializes in employment, asset building, independent living, international development, and diversity and gender issues from her work as executive director of the World Institute on Disability (WID). Her impressive résumé includes Proyecto Visión, WID's National Technical Assistance Center to increase employment opportunities for Latinos with disabilities in the United States, and Access to Assets, an asset-building project to help reduce poverty among people with disabilities.

She was also responsible for leading the team that produced the acclaimed international webzine Disability World (www.disabilityworld.org) in both English and Spanish.

"As a Latina who is blind, I have first-person experience with the low expectations and assumptions of the majority culture," Martinez says. "I have seen many disabled Latinos live down to these diminished expectations. They become overwhelmed by isolation, are disconnected from the service-delivery system and don't have disabled Latino professionals to look up to or network with. Unfortunately, even those who do access resources often are not receiving appropriate service."

Latinos are the fastest-growing ethnic group in the United States, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. At the same time, Latinos have lower levels of educational attainment and higher dropout rates than other groups. Also more likely to be living in poverty, Latinos' health issues often go unchecked because of a lack of access to health/medical insurance. According to Proyecto Visión's web site, unabated health concerns, vocational injury and disability caused by violence all contribute to Latinos acquiring disabilities at elevated rates.

No stranger to the White House, Martinez was appointed by former President George W. Bush in 2002 as one of 15 members of the National Council on Disability, an independent federal agency advising the president and Congress on disability policy.

Martinez did not face diminished expectations even though she and a sister, Peggy, both are blind. In a radio interview, Martinez said, "My mom did not want [us] to go away from the family to go to the school for the blind. So Peggy and I were [two] of the first disabled kids to go to our public school, and we had teachers that expected a lot of us. And they were tough. One of the biggest battles that disabled children and young people face is low expectations. If you expect someone to do well, very often, they will."

Support Groups

Aurora Senior Center

30 Del Mar Circle
Aurora, CO 80011

Barbara Meyer

303-831-0117

2nd Monday--1pm

Dayton Place

2000 S. Dayton Place
Denver, CO 80247

George Beard

303-831-0117

2nd Thursday--2pm

Eye Spy Support Group

Christian Living Center
2479 S. Clermont St.
Denver, CO

Marilyn Wytulka

720-974-3908

1st Thursday--1pm

Oakhurst Towers

8030 E. Girard Avenue
Denver, CO 80231

Sue Fenniman

303-831-0117

2nd Monday-10:30am

The mission of Enight Skills Center is to provide low-vision clients with the opportunity to enhance their life skills, increase their levels of confidence and independence, and enrich their lives through adaptive training and technology.

Enight is a non-profit organization that relies on funding from grants, fundraising, and donations. These funds allow us to keep our doors open and provide the best possible care to our patients.

Please consider helping!

If you would like to make a donation, please call us at 303-757-4500. We are an IRS 501(c)3 non-profit corporation and all donations are tax deductible. Thank you for your support!

Please let us know if you would like to share a personal Enight Skills Center experience; we'd love to publish it in the newsletter!

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