



Eyes On the Center August 2021 Newsletter



A Message from our Executive Director CB Brady

The flowers are blooming, the fish are running, and the sun is shining. Is there really any place better than Alaska on a perfect summer day? I hope you're having as great of a summer as we are here at the Center. It's been delightful since reopening our doors to staff and clients. To watch people transform from the care and support that our team provides reminds me how thankful I am to be in this position. While we suffered on a global scale the past year, our community has bounced back, and we're changing lives every day. To see the Center booming with life brings a

smile to my face, much like the midnight sun. I wish you all a happy summer.

[VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)

**Seeing With Our Hearts
Friday Evening 6pm, October 1, 2021
at the Lakefront Hotel in Anchorage**

Seeing with Our Hearts is Back!

**Join us at The Lakefront Hotel for cocktail hour, dinner,
silent auction and a great program.
Seating is limited and we are selling tickets and tables fast.
Sponsorships, tables and individual tickets available.**

**Please call Caren Ailleo at 907-771-4311 or email
cailleo@alaskabvi.org for information.**



**An Update on our Rural
Outreach Program from
Elijah Haines**

The past few months were a
flurry of activity in the Rural



**A Message from Nate
Kile, Program Director**

As I reflect on another
summer of being here at the

Outreach program, where we provide low vision and rehabilitation services throughout Alaska. Among other communities, I visited Nome, Fairbanks, Seward, Kenai, and Homer. Other than meeting elders at the Nome Senior Center, seeing the muskox herd was certainly a highlight of that visit! In Homer I had the opportunity to visit a woman living on a homestead in the original house her family built many years ago. These days, she is learning about the accessibility features of her smartphone, so times have certainly changed on the homestead. Our great partners around the state are the key to our rural services. From eye doctors, to senior center staff, to advocates at independent living centers, we couldn't have the reach we have without them. Something I love about Alaska is the generosity and hospitality of clients, their families, and professionals we are lucky to work with. I see examples of

Center, I can't help but to swell with gratitude. Our staff continues to embody our mission, and it shows each and every month. As clients walk through the door each day, it never fails to move me, the tone of optimism, hope, joy and warmth. It is all reciprocal, whenever warmth is shown by a staff or client, it is quickly recycled and redistributed into the Center to other clients and staff. The growth and healing that continues to mark our interactions here at the Center, make me think of the amazing processes that take place during healing. When bones are broken, it is usually due to a violent trauma, and the initial feeling is one of pain, fear and confusion. That is what losing one's vision can often be like, but similar to having a broken bone, given the proper care, protection and time to heal, the bone often grows stronger and a new level of strength and resiliency now reside in the appendage.

close cooperation and a welcoming spirit on every trip. It makes bad weather and bears worth putting up with!

For information about future trips or to request one in your area, please see our website at www.alaskabvi.org or call us at 248-7770.



Sharing Information by Bonnie Lucas

The most challenging thing about writing an article for our

Here at the Center, lives are being healed. They are being healed through authentic words of encouragement, sincere empathy, small successes, laughter, life changing instruction and the all too important bond of positive caring relationships.

Thank all of those who have continued to support our mission over the years. It takes many hands to make the work light.



Tony Gebhard, AT Instructor and Youth Program Coordinator

Center Newsletter is which of the many possible topics should I write about! Since our support group has taken a break for July, I will focus on sharing information about some resources and events that have been occurring in the Blind Community. I hope that you and those you know will find this information useful as you look for ways to help loved ones access more useful data for empowerment and enrichment in their lives!

SUMMER READING

Braille and Audio Reading Download (BARD) is a federal program available to anyone with a print disability. If you've heard someone talk about the Talking Book program, this is what they are referring to. Patrons may read a book with a digital player that uses a thumb drive incased in a plastic cartridge. BARD can also be downloaded to a thumb drive and played in the digital player. Another way to access books is through the Mobile App using an iPhone or

On June 23rd, 6 of our students from different parts of Anchorage and rural Alaska, had come together to experience an opportunity to up their game with compensatory skills in various areas.

Cooking with Bonnie and Emily in the kitchen, writing resumes with Nate and I, and taking a bus trip downtown to walk around 5th Avenue Mall. The atmosphere and dynamic grew from the first day when students arrived. Empathy has always been an essential component in these programs. Relaying the best version of ourselves to these students when they first discover our agency.

Elijah Haines, our skilled and valued orientation and mobility instructor, lead the group on such an adventure to the mall on the last day.

Students were encouraged to wear sleep-shades and use a white cane during these exercises. Primarily for the low-vision students,

Android. Books are free and are recorded with excellent quality.

BookShare

Another download system for reading. A person must either be a student, K-12, college, or taking an online course. There are more books to choose from, including many textbooks but they are not recorded. These books are read with Text-to-Speech or TTS. Nowadays, there are many great sounding voices, male and female, and a variety of accents which are the reader's choice.

HADLEY ONLINE LEARNING

Hadley, previously known as Hadley School for the Blind has a variety of discussion groups available. Groups include cooking, crafting, a book club, technology and more.

AUGUST SUPPORT GROUPS

By way of reminder, we meet on Zoom on the 2nd, third and fourth Wednesdays at 1:00pm.

leadership took precedence immediately.

We here at the center are proud. Growing more confident each day as we get to share these experiences with our youth. Becoming stronger blind people, better advocates, and skilled future employees in the work world.

Thank You to The Rasmuson Foundation

We would like to thank The Rasmuson Foundation for awarding the Center a Tier 1 Grant for \$24,206 for the replacement and upgrades to our IT equipment,

Donate to the Alaska Center for the Blind

It's easy to donate to the Center. You can set up your own donor account, make a re-occurring donation or a one time donation easily. Just click on:

[Donate Now](#)

August will be slightly different as we will be having a special guest, Patrick Curtis who is the the Program Director at the Anchorage Senior Center. He will provide information about food programs and other daily offerings at the Center. Unlike our general schedule, this will occur on August 4 due to the importance of this topic. The following Support topics include:

August 11: Deborah Kendrick, award winning blind author will discuss her latest book, "When Your Ears Can't Help Your Eyes See."

August 18: Back to the kitchen, gadgets, ideas and more. (Hopefully we will be able to meet in person and include the Zoomers!

August 25: The benefits of Humor presented by Bonnie Lucas and Kevin Whitley. If you know Kevin, you know he tells more jokes than almost anyone! Come find out just what science has shown about the importance of humor.

ONE FINAL NOTE



A Message from Emily Stevenson, AT and Activities of Daily Living Instructor.

My name is Emily. I am the new ADL instructor. A little about me. I love working in the kitchen, both with savory and sweet foods. I just moved up to Alaska from Washington State where I practiced kickboxing for the last three years. I am passionate about showing other individuals that they can lead an active and productive life after losing some or all of their vision.

So, what does ADL stand for? And what does the client learn? ADL stands for Activities of Daily Living. The client will experience

We recently welcomed Daniel Jenkins from the Lutheran Braille Works, who shared information with us about the wonderful work being done by this organization. Anyone with vision loss may receive, free of charge, bibles and other Christian devotionals and literature in English and other languages. Publications are available in Braille and talking book discs. Information by phone is at 800-925-6092.



how to move through their day of activities safely, but productively. These activities include, but are not limited to, cooking in the kitchen, cleaning up after their selves, budgeting, and other household chores. I will make sure to make safety a priority, but also encourage creativity to come through.

We have already had successful classes where the individuals either came up with their own dish to serve the rest of the staff, or followed a recipe to the letter and produced amazing results. I can't wait to see where my clients take me on this journey.

Now here is a recipe that I hope all of you enjoy.

Perfect Chocolate Chip Cookies

Ingredients

- 1 stick of butter
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cups brown sugar (must be brown sugar)
- 1 large egg
- 1 tsp vanilla
- $\frac{1}{4}$ tsp salt

Manual Skills with Kevin Whitley and our Client Fay.

Pick Click Give 2021

Thank you to all who have donated so far this year. You can continue to make your gift until August 31st. Give a donation to the Center so that we may continue our services for all blind and visually impaired Alaskans.

[Permanent Fund Website](#)

1 and ¼ cups flour

1 cup chocolate chips

Directions

Preheat oven to 350°

Cream together butter and brown sugar in a mixing bowl

Mix in Vanilla and egg

Stir in salt and flour (not too much, or it gets too dense)

Gently fold in the chocolate chips with either a spatula, or your very clean hands

Roll two table spoons in to a ball

Place on an ungreased cookie sheet and cook for 11 to 15 minutes

You want the edges to look brown, but the center will look raw

Let them sit on the cookie sheet for another five minutes, to cook a little bit more

These cookies don't flatten out much, but they are quite chewy.

Thanks for Joining Us this Month!

For more information about the
Center, call 907-771-4311 and
like us on Facebook at [Follow
Us On Facebook](#)



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