

NDEAM DISABILITY HISTORY MONTH FACTS (2011 – 2014):

2011 Daily Facts:

Monday, October 3, 2011 – Justin Dart

There were two Texans onstage at the historic signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990. The first was President George H. W. Bush and the second was Justin Dart (1930-2002), a Texan advocate, known to many as the "Father of the ADA."

Dart helped to create this landmark legislation, sometimes called an emancipation proclamation for people with disabilities, after a successful career in business. He led Tupperware Japan, where he focused on empowering female employees and employees with disabilities. Dart used a wheelchair for most of his life due to the effects of polio. In 1981, President Reagan appointed Dart to be the vice-chair of the National Council on Disability. From 1980 to 1985, Justin Dart was a member and then Chair of the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities. In 1998, Dart received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor, from President Clinton.

To read more about Justin Dart: http://abilitymagazine.com/JustinDart_remembered.html

To watch a video of the ceremonial signing of the ADA: <http://www.ada.gov/videogallery.htm>

In the image of the signing of the ADA below, Justin Dart is on the right, in the cowboy hat.



Tuesday, October 4, 2011 – Erastus "Deaf" Smith

Texas owes its independence from Mexico to a person with a disability: Erastus "Deaf" Smith. He was a scout during the Texas Revolution and considered to be the "Bravest of the Brave" by Colonel William Travis, who in 1835 destroyed [Vince's Bridge](#) during the Battle of San Jacinto, which prevented the retreat of the Mexican army and helped pave the way for Texas' independence. Deaf Smith County is also named after Erastus Smith.

In the painting "Surrender of Santa Anna," by William Henry Huddle <http://www.tspb.state.tx.us/SPB/gallery/HisArt/02.htm>, Erastus can be seen with his hand cupped behind his ear. Artist William Henry Huddle painted the scene of the morning of April 22, 1836, the day after Texas' victory over Mexico at the Battle of San Jacinto. Mexican General Antonio López de Santa Anna, in the uniform of a private soldier, was brought before Texas General Sam Houston as a prisoner of war. Houston, wounded in the battle, rested on a pallet under the oak tree while arranging an armistice with Santa Anna. To the right, seated on a log, was Erastus "Deaf" Smith, famous Texas scout; the captured Mexican battle flags were leaning nearby against the tree. To the left and rear of Houston was his Secretary of War, Thomas Jefferson Rusk, who was standing next to Colonel Mirabeau B. Lamar. Over thirty other historical figures were depicted in this painting. It has been on display in the first floor south wing of the Capitol since February 1891.

For more information on Erastus "Deaf" Smith:
<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fsm10>

Wednesday, October 5, 2011 – Eight Texas Counties

Eight Texas counties are named in honor of distinguished Texans with disabilities.

Deaf Smith County - Named for Erastus "Deaf" Smith (1787-1837), a scout during the Texas Revolution. Considered to be "the Bravest of the Brave" by Colonel William Travis, Smith destroyed Vince's Bridge during the Battle of San Jacinto, which prevented the retreat of the Mexican army and helped pave the way for Texas independence.

Ector County - Named for General Matthew Duncan Ector (1822-1879), who had a below-the-knee amputation of his left leg at the Battle of Chickamauga in the Civil War. After the war, General Ector was elected to serve on the Texas Court of Appeals.

Erath County - Named for state Senator George Bernard Erath (1813-1891), a former Texas Ranger and surveyor who surveyed the towns of Waco and Stephenville. Senator Erath, who became blind late in life, dictated his memoirs, which still serve as a valuable resource for early Texas history.

Grayson County - Named for Peter Wagener Grayson (1788-1838), the first Attorney General of the Republic of Texas. Grayson, a person with mental illness, was a poet, diplomat, and a

candidate for President of the Republic of Texas in 1838.

Hood County - Named for General John Bell Hood (1831-1879), commander of the Texas Brigade. Hood lost the use of his left arm at the Battle of Gettysburg and had his right leg amputated later in the Civil War. Hood commanded the Army of Tennessee in the battles of Atlanta and Nashville. Fort Hood, a United States military post outside of Killeen, Texas, is named after him.

Jones County - Named for Anson Jones (1798-1858), the last president of the Republic of Texas. Jones led the way for Texas to be annexed to the United States in 1845. Jones was injured in 1849 and lost the use of his left arm. He may also have experienced depression that caused him to commit suicide in 1858.

Ward County - Named for Thomas William "Peg-Leg" Ward (1806-1872), who served as mayor of Austin and Commissioner of the General Land Office. Ward lost a leg to a cannonball during the Texas Revolution, and lost his right arm in 1841 when a cannon misfired at a San Jacinto Day celebration.

Williamson County - Named for state Senator Robert McAlpin Williamson (1804-1859), a prominent early Texas lawyer and legislator. Senator Williamson's right leg was drawn back at the knee due to a childhood illness. He wore a wooden leg below his knee, giving him the nickname of "Three-Legged Willie." He was a delegate to the Texas Constitutional Convention, participated in the Battle of San Jacinto, and served in the Senate in both the Republic and the State of Texas.

To read more about these remarkable Texans:

http://www.county.org/resources/library/county_mag/county/115/heroes.html

Thursday, October 6, 2011 – Barbara Jordan

In 1967, Barbara Jordan became the first African-American to serve in the Texas Senate since 1883, and in 1972 was elected President Pro Tempore. She coped routinely with the challenges presented by multiple sclerosis.

Jordan became known for her distinct diction and forceful delivery on a wide range of subjects. In 1973, she became the first African-American woman from a Southern state to serve in the U.S. House of Representatives. Jordan delivered the keynote addresses at the 1976 and 1992 Democratic Conventions, emphasizing unity, equality, accountability, and American ideals. Retiring from Congress in 1979, she became a professor at the LBJ School of Public Affairs and became known as an outstanding educator. She is in the National Women's Hall of Fame and received the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1994.

In 1982, the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities created the Barbara Jordan

Media Awards, a media relations program which includes a series of prestigious annual awards recognizing outstanding contributions by individuals and organizations of the communications media. In 1998, the Committee added a high school student subcategory to the competition in an effort to encourage and educate a new generation of journalists. Contributions are recognized for eliminating attitudinal, social, and physical barriers and encouraging accurate and progressive portrayals of people with disabilities.

The Barbara Jordan Media Awards recognize representatives of the communications media in the fields of print, radio, television, Internet, advertising, photojournalism, public relations, books, and special contributions for increasing public understanding of the abilities and potential of people with disabilities.

Barbara Jordan Media Awards:

http://governor.state.tx.us/disabilities/awards/barbara_jordan_media_awards/

Clips of Barbara Jordan can be seen in the "The Scoop on Reporting about People with Disabilities:" <http://governor.state.tx.us/disabilities/awards/scoop>

For more on Barbara Jordan: <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fjoas>

Friday, October 7, 2011 – Judge Criss Cole (Friday, October 7, 2011)

You may have heard of the Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center in Austin, but did you know that it was named for a Texas soldier who was blinded in World War II? Criss Cole (1918-1985) was injured by a grenade during battle and lost his sight, an injury for which he was later awarded a Purple Heart.

After his service in the war, Cole returned to Texas, where he completed his education, and became a lawyer and judge. He also became an influential legislator, helping to pass bills establishing Padre Island National Seashore and the University of Texas Institute of Texan Cultures at HemisFair in San Antonio. He was instrumental in passing a measure banning racial discrimination by state and local governments, and was involved with measures for redistricting, loan-company regulation, multiple use and pollution of Texas waters, and vocational rehabilitation.

A compelling sculpture in front of the Criss Cole Rehabilitation Center by Texas sculptor Eugenie Kamrath Mygdal salutes Cole's model leadership of courage, perseverance, and accomplishment.

To read more about Criss Cole: <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fcobm>

Monday, October 10, 2011 – Herman Hollerith

Modern data processing began with the inventions of American engineer, Herman Hollerith, a person with learning disabilities.

Can a mining engineer who received poor grades in bookkeeping find success in the data processing industry? Herman Hollerith did--he invented the industry. Herman Hollerith (1860-1929), a person with learning disabilities, was an American statistician who developed a mechanical tabulator based on punched cards to rapidly tabulate statistics from millions of pieces of data. In 1890 he devised a punch card system to help tabulate the U.S. Census. He went on to found the Tabulating Machine Company which later became known as International Business Machines or IBM.

For his tabulation machine he used the punch card invented in the early 1800s, by a French silk weaver called Joseph-Marie Jacquard. Jacquard invented a way of automatically controlling the warp and weft threads on a silk loom by recording patterns of holes in a string of cards. Hollerith's punch cards and tabulating machines were a step toward automated computation. His device could automatically read information which had been punched onto a card. Punch card technology was used in computers up until the late 1970s. Computer "punched cards" were read electronically; the cards moved between brass rods and the holes in the cards created an electric current where the rods would touch.

Herman Hollerith, IBM Archives: http://www-03.ibm.com/ibm/history/exhibits/builders/builders_hollerith.html

More information on Herman Hollerith: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Herman_Hollerith

Tuesday, October 11, 2011 – Vinton Cerf & Jack Kilby

Vinton Cerf (1943-present)

You can read this email because of Vinton Cerf, who created the first commercial email service to be connected to the Internet. Cerf, who is hearing impaired, has been called "one of the fathers of the Internet" for his pioneering work in computer science and information technology. He used early text messaging technologies to communicate with his wife, who is deaf. He said, "I have spent, as you can imagine, a fair chunk of my time trying to persuade people with hearing impairments to make use of electronic mail because I found it so powerful myself." Had it not been for Cerf's using text messaging to the extent he did, we may not have had integrated email as part of the functionality of the ARPAnet, the predecessor to the Internet.

To read more about Vinton Cerf: <http://www.icann.org/en/biog/cerf.htm>

Jack Kilby (1923-2005)

If you used a handheld calculator today, a thermal printer, or any device containing a microchip, you have Jack Kilby to thank. Kilby, a Texan, won the Nobel Prize for physics for helping to

lead the way into the digital age. Kilby had a hearing impairment and before the inventions that made him famous, he helped to develop the transistor-based hearing aid.

To read more about Jack Kilby: <http://www.ti.com/corp/docs/kilbyctr/jackbuilt.shtml>

Wednesday, October 12, 2011 – Thomas Edison

Thomas Alva Edison (1847-1931) was considered "slow" by his teachers due to learning disabilities and at age twelve was almost completely deafened by scarlet fever. Edison became an inventor, scientist, and businessman who developed many devices that greatly influenced life around the world, including the phonograph, the motion picture camera, and a long-lasting, practical electric light bulb. Dubbed "The Wizard of Menlo Park" by a newspaper reporter, he was one of the first inventors to apply the principles of mass production and large teamwork to the process of invention, and therefore is often credited with the creation of the first industrial research laboratory.

Edison is the third most prolific inventor in history, holding 1,093 US patents, as well as many patents in the United Kingdom, France, and Germany. He is credited with numerous inventions that contributed to mass communication and, in particular, telecommunications. These inventions include a stock ticker, a mechanical vote recorder, a battery for an electric car, electrical power, recorded music, and motion pictures. His advanced work in these fields was an outgrowth of his early career as a telegraph operator. Edison originated the concept and implementation of electric-power generation and distribution to homes, businesses, and factories - a crucial development in the modern industrialized world.

For more information on Thomas Edison: <http://www.thomasedison.org/> and http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Thomas_Edison

Thursday, October 13, 2011 – Ray Kurzweil

Raymond "Ray" Kurzweil (1948-present) is an American author and inventor. His inventions and predictions about the future have both challenged and inspired. His technological contributions to the disability community include creating early "reading machines" that combined the advances in flat-bed scanning with text-to-speech synthesizers to create machines that could read content aloud to people with visual impairments. This invention led to a life-long friendship with musician Stevie Wonder.

To read more about Kurzweil: <http://www.kurzweiltech.com/aboutray.html>

Friday, October 14, 2011 – Stephen Hopkins

Stephen Hopkins (1707-1785) a person with cerebral palsy, was an American political leader from Rhode Island who signed the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Many medical historians believe his signature on the Declaration - second in size only to that of John Hancock - is evidence that he had a disabling condition believed to be cerebral palsy. Hopkins is known for saying, "my hands may tremble, my heart does not." He served as the Chief Justice and Governor of the English Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations and was a Delegate to the Colonial Congress in Albany in 1754 and to the Continental Congress from 1774 to 1776. Hopkins was also the first chancellor of the College in the English Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations (predecessor to Brown University) in conjunction with the presidency of the Baptist Reverend James Manning.

More information on Stephen Hopkins
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephen_Hopkins_\(politician\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stephen_Hopkins_(politician))

Monday, October 17, 2011 – Franklin Delano Roosevelt

Franklin Delano Roosevelt (1882-1945), also known by his initials of FDR, was elected President of the United States four times. He is credited with helping to pull the country out of the Great Depression and leading the nation during World War II. While vacationing at Campobello Island, New Brunswick in the summer of 1921, Roosevelt contracted poliomyelitis (polio). Despite courageous efforts to overcome his illness, he never regained the use of his legs. In time, he established a foundation at Warm Springs, Georgia to help other people affected by polio, and inspired, as well as directed, the March of Dimes program that eventually funded an effective vaccine. For most of his public life, he was unable to move from the waist down. Roosevelt projected an image of power, security, and optimism during his time in the White House, famously declaring in his inaugural address: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

To read more about Roosevelt:
http://www.fdrlibrary.marist.edu/education/resources/bio_fdr.html

Tuesday, October 18, 2011 – Helen Keller

Helen Keller (1880-1968) worked for the American Foundation for the Blind for more than 40 years. Keller played a leading role in most of the significant political, social, and cultural movements of the 20th century. Throughout her lifetime she worked unceasingly to improve the lives of people with disabilities.

The story of Helen Keller is the story of a child who suddenly lost her hearing and vision and at the age of 19 months, and who, with a great deal of persistence, grew into a highly intelligent and sensitive woman who wrote, spoke, and labored incessantly for the betterment of others. So powerful a symbol of triumph over adversity did she become that she has a definite place in the history of our time and of times to come.

During her lifetime, Helen Keller received awards of great distinction too numerous to recount fully here. An entire room, called the Helen Keller Archives at the American Foundation for the Blind in New York City, is devoted to their preservation. These awards include Brazil's Order of the Southern Cross; Japan's Sacred Treasure; the Philippines' Golden Heart; Lebanon's Gold Medal of Merit; and her own country's highest honor, the Presidential Medal of Freedom. Most of these awards were bestowed on her in recognition of the stimulation her example and presence gave to work for people who were blind in those countries. In 1933 she was elected a member of the National Institute of Arts and Letters. During the Louis Braille Centennial Commemoration in 1952, Ms. Keller was made a Chevalier of the French Legion of Honor at a ceremony in the Sorbonne. In 1964 she received the Presidential Medal of Freedom from Lyndon Johnson. In 1965, she was one of 20 elected to the Women's Hall of Fame at the New York World's Fair.

- For more information, photos and writings of Helen Keller, visit the American Foundation for the Blind <http://www.afb.org/section.asp?sectionID=1>
- Helen Keller Kids Museum <http://www.afb.org/braillebug/hkmuseum.asp>
- Video with Opera Singer Gladys Swarthout
<http://www.afb.org/braillebug/hkmediaviewer.asp?frameid=61>
- Video of Helen Keller Visiting Japan at request of U.S. government
<http://www.afb.org/braillebug/hkmediaviewer.asp?frameid=42>
- Video of Helen Keller testing communication device
<http://www.afb.org/braillebug/hkgallery.asp?tpid=4>
- Video of Anne Sullivan explaining how Helen learned to talk
<http://www.afb.org/braillebug/hkgallery.asp?tpid=3>

Wednesday, October 19, 2011 – Sam Houston

Samuel "Sam" Houston (1793-1863) is one of the most illustrious figures in Texas history. He was a leader of the Texas Revolution and served as the first and third President of the Republic of Texas. After Texas became part of the United States, Houston served as Governor. He is the only person in United States history to have served as the Governor of two states (Texas and Tennessee). Houston experienced bouts of depression throughout his life. Today the city of Houston bears his name.

To read more about Sam Houston: <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fho73>

Thursday, October 20, 2011 - Lemon Jefferson

Lemon Jefferson (1893-1929) was a Texas blues singer and guitarist who was blind. He was one of the most popular blues singers of the 1920s and has been called "Father of the Texas Blues." Lemon Jefferson was born near Couthman, Texas in Freestone County, near present-day Wortham, Texas.

Jefferson's singing and self-accompaniment were distinctive as a result of his high-pitched voice and originality on the guitar. Blues and rock and roll musicians attempted to imitate both his songs and his musical style. His recordings would later influence such legends as B.B. King, T-Bone Walker, Lightnin' Hopkins, Canned Heat, Son House, and Robert Johnson. By the early 1910s, Jefferson began traveling frequently to Dallas, where he met and played with fellow blues musician Leadbelly. Jefferson was one of the earliest and most prominent figures in the blues movement that developed in the Deep Ellum area of Dallas. He was a founder of the Texas blues sound and an important influence on other blues singers and guitarists for generations to come.

For more information on Lemon Jefferson:

<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fje01>

Friday, October 21, 2011 - Team Everest

In April 2003, a group of Texans reached the base camp of Mount Everest. The team was comprised of people with diverse disabilities, including those with quadriplegia, paraplegia, and mobility, visual, and hearing impairments. The team made a 3-week trek to the 17,500 foot base camp of the world's highest peak, thus challenging misperceptions of people with disabilities as not capable. Later, Austin climber and expedition leader, Gary Guller, became the first man with one arm to reach Everest's peak.

To read more about Team Everest: <http://www.teameverest03.com/index.html>

Monday, October 24, 2011 - Stephen Hawking

Stephen William Hawking (1942-present) is a British theoretical physicist and cosmologist, whose scientific books and public appearances have made him an academic celebrity. He is considered one of the great minds of all time. Today he is almost completely paralyzed due to a motor neuron disease that is related to amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

Hawking's key scientific works to date have included providing, with Roger Penrose, theorems regarding gravitational singularities in the framework of general relativity, and the theoretical prediction that black holes should emit radiation, which is today known as Hawking radiation (or sometimes as Bekenstein-Hawking radiation). He has also achieved success with works of popular science in which he discusses his own theories and cosmology in general; these include the runaway bestseller *A Brief History of Time*, which stayed on the British Sunday Times Bestseller List for a record-breaking 237 weeks.

Hawking is an Honorary Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, a lifetime member of the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, and in 2009 was awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award in the United States.

Hawking was the Lucasian Professor of Mathematics at the University of Cambridge for 30 years, taking up the post in 1979 and retiring in October of 2009. He is now Director of Research at the Centre for Theoretical Cosmology in the Department of Applied Mathematics and Theoretical Physics at the University of Cambridge.

Learn more about Dr. Hawking: <http://www.hawking.org.uk/index.php/about-stephen>

Tuesday, October 25, 2011 - Lou Gehrig

Henry Louis "Lou" Gehrig (1903 - 1941) is remembered as a record-breaking professional baseball player who said a poignant farewell to the sport when he was diagnosed with a fatal illness. Gehrig played for the New York Yankees in a record-breaking 2,130 consecutive games, a record that stood for 56 years. He still holds the record for most career grand-slams. Gehrig was diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, today known as Lou Gehrig's disease, at the age of 36. Unable to continue to play due to his deteriorating condition, Gehrig said a heartfelt farewell to his fans and fellow players. On July 4, 1939, Lou Gehrig told a stadium of almost 62,000 fans, "Today I consider myself the luckiest guy on the face of the earth."

To read more about Gehrig: <http://www.lougehrig.com/about/bio.htm>

Wednesday, October 26, 2011 - Lex Frieden

Professor Lex Frieden is one of America's preeminent disability rights activists. Frieden became a quadriplegic after experiencing a spinal cord injury as a young man. Many universities were not open-minded about admitting students with disabilities at that time and Frieden faced architectural and attitudinal barriers. Still, he applied his natural aptitude for learning and excelled. He is now a Distinguished Alumnus of the University of Tulsa and holds a master's degree from the University of Houston. In 2004, he was awarded an honorary doctorate in law (LL.D.) by the National University of Ireland.

After graduation, Professor Frieden became a leader of the independent living movement. He held many distinguished positions, including serving as the Executive Director of the National Council on Disability. In this position, Professor Frieden was instrumental in conceiving and drafting the Americans with Disabilities Act, the landmark civil rights legislation prohibiting discrimination against people with disabilities. Professor Frieden has received two Presidential Citations, commending his work in the field of disability rights, and has provided advice on the international stage, serving on a panel of experts for the United Nations.

Today, Professor Frieden is Professor of Biomedical Informatics and Professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at the University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston, and he is Adjunct Professor of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation at Baylor College of Medicine. Frieden also directs the ILRU - Independent Living Research Utilization Program at TIRR

Memorial Hermann Hospital in Houston, Texas. ILRU is a research, training and technical assistance program on independent living for people with disabilities and seniors. TIRR is a comprehensive medical rehabilitation center which provides clinical, educational, and research programs pertaining to spinal cord and brain injuries and other disabling conditions. Professor Frieden continues to write, research, and teach.

In April of 2011, the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities named its annual [Employment Awards](#) after Professor Frieden for his advocacy work regarding the employment of people with disabilities around the world.

Professor Frieden has called Texas home for most of his adult life.

For more information on Professor Frieden: <http://home.comcast.net/~lfrieden/lex1.htm>

Thursday, October 27, 2011 - Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet

Thomas Hopkins Gallaudet (1787-1851) was a brilliant, Yale-educated minister and businessman. The course of his life changed when he met an 8-year-old girl, the child of a friend, who was deaf. He became deeply interested in the education of people with hearing impairments. He traveled to Europe to learn European educational techniques. Back in the United States, he founded a school known today as the American School for the Deaf, the first permanent school for people who were deaf in the United States. Gallaudet also brought the concept of today's American Sign Language back to the United States from Europe.

To read more about Gallaudet:

[http://www.gallaudet.edu/About Gallaudet/History of the University/The Legacy Begins.html](http://www.gallaudet.edu/About_Gallaudet/History_of_the_University/The_Legacy_Begins.html)

Friday, October 28, 2011 - Temple Grandin Innovator, Activist, Author, Animal Scientist with Autism.

Dr. Grandin (1947-present) is a designer of livestock handling facilities and a Professor of Animal Science at Colorado State University. Facilities she has designed are located in the United States, Canada, Europe, Mexico, Australia, New Zealand, and other countries. Almost half of all cattle handled in North America are handled in a center track restrainer system that she designed for meat plants. Curved chute and race systems she has designed for cattle are used worldwide and her writings on the flight zone and other principles of grazing animal behavior have helped many people to reduce stress on their animals during handling.

Dr. Grandin obtained her B.A. at Franklin Pierce College and her M.S. in Animal Science at Arizona State University. Dr. Grandin received her Ph.D in Animal Science from the University of Illinois in 1989. Today she teaches courses on livestock behavior and facility design at

Colorado State University and consults with the livestock industry on facility design, livestock handling, and animal welfare. She has appeared on television shows such as 20/20, 48 Hours, CNN Larry King Live, PrimeTime Live, the Today Show, and many shows in other countries. She has been featured in People Magazine, the New York Times, Forbes, U.S. News and World Report, Time Magazine, the New York Times book review, and Discover magazine. In 2010, Time Magazine named her one of the 100 most influential people. Interviews with Dr. Grandin have been broadcast on National Public Radio. She has also authored over 400 articles in both scientific journals and livestock periodicals on animal handling, welfare, and facility design. She is the author of "Thinking in Pictures," "Livestock Handling and Transport," "Genetics and the Behavior of Domestic Animals," and "Humane Livestock Handling." Her books "Animals in Translation" and "Animals Make Us Human" were both on the New York Times best seller list. "Animals Make Us Human" was also on the Canadian best seller list. Her life story has also been made into an HBO movie titled "Temple Grandin" and starring Claire Danes. The movie shows her life as a teenager and how she started her career.

HBO Movie Trailer for the movie "Temple Grandin," which won multiple Emmy Awards, a Golden Globe Award, and a Screen Actors Guild Award and was filmed in Texas:

<http://www.hbo.com/movies>

Monday, October 31, 2011 – Stevie Wonder

Stevie Wonder (1950-present) is the stage name of Stevland Hardaway Morris, an American singer-songwriter, musician, producer, and activist. Wonder signed with a Motown record label at the age of eleven and continues to perform and record to this day. He became blind shortly after his birth.

Wonder has recorded more than thirty U.S. top ten hits and has won twenty-two Grammy Awards, the most ever won by a male solo artist. He is also known for his work as an activist for political and social causes, including a campaign in 1980 to make Martin Luther King, Jr.'s birthday a national holiday. In 2008, Wonder was listed at number five on Billboard magazine's list of the Hot 100 All-Time Top Artists.

For more information on Stevie Wonder: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stevie_Wonder

2012 Daily Facts:

10/01/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: Steven Spielberg, a Hollywood director with dyslexia, wins his first Academy Award in 1994

DISABILITY HISTORY & AWARENESS MONTH: STEVEN SPIELBERG, A HOLLYWOOD DIRECTOR WITH DYSLEXIA, WINS HIS FIRST ACADEMY AWARD IN 1994

As many as 15 percent of the world's population exhibits some of the symptoms of dyslexia, according to the [International Dyslexia Association](#), and not surprisingly, a great number of them are famous. Steven Spielberg is the latest celebrity to come forward with his struggle with the learning disability.

"It's extremely inspiring for youngsters who struggle with dyslexia to see people like Steven Spielberg, who not only succeed but succeed well," Dr. Stefani Hines, an expert in the disorder at Beaumont Hospitals in Royal Oaks, Mich. Dyslexia is a language-based learning disability that makes it difficult to turn printed words into sound, Hines said. It primarily shows up in reading, and includes slow or inaccurate reading as well as trouble with pronunciation and comprehension. It has nothing to do with intelligence, however. A lot of (people with dyslexia, like Apple founder Steve Jobs, are highly intelligent, even gifted. *"We're learning that individuals with dyslexia tend to have strengths in other areas, in creativity and imagination. They think outside the box,"* Hines said. Spielberg dealt with his dyslexia, which he says was not diagnosed until five years ago, by making movies.

"Making movies was my great escape, it was how I could get away from all that," he says in a video for the website Friends of Quinn. *"Movies really helped me, kind of saved me from shame, from guilt, from putting it on myself...when it wasn't my burden."*

Spielberg, who grew up in the 1950s before dyslexia was even a diagnosis, was mislabeled by teachers as "lazy." As a child growing up in the 1950s, he was a slow reader, which resulted in his being bullied by other kids to the point where he dreaded going to school. *"In my case I was unable to read for at least two years. I was two years behind the rest of my class,"* Spielberg recalled. *"I was embarrassed to stand up in front of the class and read."* Not surprisingly, the bullying and the friendships in junior high he formed with other outcasts whom he called the "Goon Squad" inspired 1985's *The Goonies*, for which he came up with the story and executive produced. The Oscar winner added that his dyslexia still affects him. For instance, it takes him longer to read a script that most people can read rather quickly.

But no one could tell either him or his parents what the problem was, as very little research on dyslexia had been done at the time. So the E.T.

mastermind said he "dealt with it by making movies." Today, there's more awareness and more help for people with dyslexia, including oral readers, books on CD and voice recognition software, to help people manage the lifelong condition more effectively. He is also one of the co-founders of [DreamWorks movie studio](#).

Spielberg won the Academy Award for Best Director for [Schindler's List](#) (1993) and [Saving Private Ryan](#) (1998). Three of Spielberg's films—[Jaws](#) (1975), E.T. the [Extra-Terrestrial](#) (1982), and [Jurassic Park](#) (1993)—achieved box office records, each becoming the highest-grossing film made at the time. To date, the unadjusted gross of all Spielberg-directed films exceeds \$8.5 billion worldwide.

Footnotes:

- Luchina Fisher, Stephen Spielberg Escaped his Dyslexia through Filmmaking, Sept. 28m 2012, ABC News
- E-online, Sept. 26, 2012, Steven Spielberg Opens Up about Dyslexia Battle, Josh Grossberg
- Stephen Spielberg Wikipedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Steven_Spielberg

October is Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month in Texas. Each workday in October 2012, the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities will post a daily Disability History Fact highlighting the accomplishments of people with disabilities or important dates and events related to the history of people with disabilities. These daily history facts will be presented to celebrate "Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month" in Texas.

10/02/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: Christine Ha, a chef who is blind, wins "MasterChef" in 2012

DISABILITY HISTORY AND AWARENESS MONTH: CHRISTINE HA, A CHEF WHO IS BLIND, WINS "MASTERCHEF" IN 2012

Christine Ha of Houston, Texas, is an accomplished amateur chef and was recently propelled to national acclaim. Ha won the third season of Fox's reality cooking competition series "MasterChef" in September 2012. She defeated over 100 other chefs to earn the \$250,000 prize, the title of "MasterChef," and a cookbook deal. Throughout the competition, Ha had to overcome time pressure and the scrutiny of judge and celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay, who is notorious for his scathing criticism.

Ha lost some of her vision in 1999 and by 2007 was completely blind. She relies on her senses of taste, touch, and smell to guide her in the kitchen. She believes her blindness contributed to her win on "MasterChef:" "I couldn't see what anyone else was doing, I was solely focused on myself, and I think that helped me. It gave me an advantage."

Things weren't always easy for Ha, who reports that the first time she tried to make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich after losing her vision, the experience was so frustrating that it left her in tears. Still, Ha loved food and cooking too much to give up. "I just want people to realize that they have it in themselves if they really want to," she said. "If they have that passion, that fire, that drive, that desire... you can overcome any obstacle and any challenges to really achieve what you want and prove yourself to the world. Everyone is very capable. Much more capable than they think they are."

Sources: <http://abcnews.go.com/Entertainment/masterchef-finale-blind-chef-christine-ha-wins-season/story?id=17210282>;
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christine_Ha

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10/03/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: The American School for the Deaf is founded in Hartford, Connecticut in 1817

DISABILITY HISTORY AND AWARENESS MONTH: THE AMERICAN SCHOOL FOR THE DEAF IS FOUNDED IN HARTFORD, CONNECTICUT IN 1817

The American School for the Deaf was founded in Hartford, Connecticut in 1817. This groundbreaking school represented many "firsts," not just in deaf education, but in American education as a whole. It is said to be the first school for children with disabilities in the Western Hemisphere. It was also the first recipient of state aid to education; in 1819 the Connecticut General Assembly awarded the school its first annual grant. A year later, the school enjoyed the first instance of federal aid to elementary and secondary special education in the United States when the United States Congress awarded the school a land grant.

The founding of the school also illustrates changing attitudes towards the education of people with disabilities in the nineteenth century. Where once it was believed that people who were deaf were incapable of learning to communicate, the founders of the school believed that people who were deaf could learn and deserved an equal chance at self-reliance through education. Public support for the school at the time demonstrated that the founders were not alone in recognizing the abilities of people with disabilities.

Today the American School for the Deaf is still open. It has graduated around 4,000 students since its inception. The campus includes a museum containing numerous rare items from the school's long and proud history.

Sources:

- American School for the Deaf History Museum;
<http://www.asd1817.org/page.cfm?p=431>
- A Brief History of ASD; <http://www.asd-1817.org/page.cfm?p=429>

*October is Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month in Texas. Each workday in October 2012, the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities will post a daily Disability History Fact highlighting the accomplishments of people with disabilities or important dates and events related to the history of people with disabilities. These daily history facts will be presented to celebrate "**Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month**" in Texas. Learn more about disability history: http://governor.state.tx.us/disabilities/resources/disability_history/*

10/04/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: Louis Braille Invents "Braille" Writing System in 1824

DISABILITY HISTORY AND AWARENESS MONTH: LOUIS BRAILLE INVENTS "BRAILLE" WRITING SYSTEM IN 1824

Louis Braille (1809-1852), a young Frenchman living in the early nineteenth century, was the inventor of the system of reading and writing which bears his name, commonly used by people who are blind or visually impaired. Braille became blind after an accident as a young child. When he was a teenager, he encountered a system of writing called "night writing," used by the French military. Night writing involved a system of dots and dashes drawn into thick paper that could be read through the sense of touch, allowing soldiers to read important communications on the battlefield even in the dark of night.

Louis Braille improved upon and simplified night writing. By the time he was just fifteen years old in 1824, Braille had largely completed his system of raised dots that we know today simply as "braille." He later extended the braille writing system to include musical notation.

Today, braille is used all over the world. This young inventor's insight into the importance of communication may well have changed millions of lives: "Access to communication in the widest sense is access to knowledge, and that is vitally important for us [...] We must be treated as equals – and communication is the way this can be brought about."

Sources:

- Louis Braille, Wikipedia http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Louis_Braille#The_braille_system
- Braille, Wikipedia <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Braille>

*October is Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month in Texas. Each workday in October 2012, the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities will post a daily Disability History Fact highlighting the accomplishments of people with disabilities or important dates and events related to the history of people with disabilities. These daily history facts will be presented to celebrate "**Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month**" in Texas. Learn more about disability history: http://governor.state.tx.us/disabilities/resources/disability_history/*

10/05/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: Dorothea Dix begins to advocate for social reforms in 1841

DISABILITY HISTORY AND AWARENESS MONTH: DOROTHEA DIX BEGINS TO ADVOCATE FOR SOCIAL REFORMS IN 1841

From the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

Dorothea Dix (1802-1887) was an American schoolteacher who found a new calling as a pioneering social reformer at the age of thirty-nine. After years of teaching younger students, Dix volunteered to teach a Sunday School class inside of a jail in 1841. The treatment that she witnessed inside the jail, especially the treatment of prisoners with disabilities, changed the course of Dix's life– and part of America's history-- forever.

Dix became an advocate for reforming the treatment of people with mental illness and intellectual disabilities. She toured facilities across the United

States and documented instances of abuse and neglect. She then tirelessly advocated for legislation that would improve living conditions and treatment of people with disabilities, not only in jails and prisons, but in hospitals and other facilities. Dix played a major role in founding 32 mental hospitals, 15 schools for people with intellectual disabilities, and many training facilities for nurses.

When we look back at all that Dix accomplished in the second half of her life, it is remarkable to consider that her efforts toward reform were interrupted for several years by the outbreak of the American Civil War. Dix was appointed Superintendent of Army Nurses by the Union Army and is remembered today for her even-handed treatment of wounded soldiers from the Union and Confederate armies. As soon as the war was over, Dix returned to her work as a social reformer, first touring hospitals and facilities that had been damaged during the war.

Dix avoided attention and accolades during her lifetime, refusing to put her name on most of her publications and declining the honor of having any hospitals named after her. Despite Dix's reluctance for acknowledgment in her own time, history remembers her contribution.

Sources:

- Jen Bumb, "Dorothea Dix" available at: <http://www.webster.edu/~woolfm/dorotheadix.html>
- Wikipedia, Dorothea Dix, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dorothea_Dix

*October is Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month in Texas. Each workday in October 2012, the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities will post a daily Disability History Fact highlighting the accomplishments of people with disabilities or important dates and events related to the history of people with disabilities. These daily history facts will be presented to celebrate **"Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month"** in Texas. Learn more about disability history: http://governor.state.tx.us/disabilities/resources/disability_history/*

10/08/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: The Invention of the Wheelchair

DISABILITY HISTORY AND AWARENESS MONTH: THE INVENTION OF THE WHEELCHAIR

Some of the earliest known references to wheelchairs date back to a Sixth Century sarcophagus engraving from China, featuring a picture of a man in a three-wheeled chair. But the first wheelchair to be commonly used by a

person with a mobility disability was called the Bath wheelchair, invented in 1783 and named for the town of Bath, England, where it was introduced. But the Bath chair was little more than a wooden chair with three wheels attached to the bottom, clumsy and uncomfortable.

In 1896, the first patent was issued in the United States for a wheelchair design with a wicker-backed chair with two large rear wheels, situated so that the user could wheel the chair forward, and two smaller front wheels, offering the basic design that is still in use today for most manual wheelchairs. Its design also made mass production easier, leading to wider availability and more innovations to improve the design.

In 1933, Herbert Everest broke his back in an accident, and he partnered with Harry Jennings, who was a mechanical engineer, to design a more sophisticated version of the wheelchair. They invented the first folding wheelchair, constructed out of steel tubes. Their business, Everest and Jennings, is one of the leading wheelchair manufacturers today.

Sources:

- Doctor's Review: Medicine on the Move, February 2007:
http://www.doctorsreview.com/history/feb07-history_medicine/
- About.com/Inventors:
<http://inventors.about.com/od/wstartinventions/a/wheelchair.htm>
- Article One Partners:
<http://info.articleonepartners.com/blog/bid/60023/Historical-Patents-The-Wheelchair>

*October is Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month in Texas. Each workday in October 2012, the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities will post a daily Disability History Fact highlighting the accomplishments of people with disabilities or important dates and events related to the history of people with disabilities. These daily history facts will be presented to celebrate "**Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month**" in Texas. Learn more about disability history:*
http://governor.state.tx.us/disabilities/resources/disability_history/

10/9/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: Goodwill Industries is founded in 1902

DISABILITY HISTORY & AWARENESS MONTH: GOODWILL INDUSTRIES IS FOUNDED IN 1902

From the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

Goodwill Industries was founded in 1902 by Rev. Edgar James Helms, a Methodist minister in Boston, who was seeking ways to help residents in the city's impoverished South End. Helms collected used household goods and clothing in wealthier areas of the city, and then trained and hired people who were poor and immigrants to repair the used goods. The donations were then resold, or were given to the people who repaired them. The system worked, and the Goodwill philosophy of "a hand up, not a hand out" was born. The organization was formally incorporated in 1910. Known at the time as Morgan Memorial Cooperative Industries and Stores, Inc. (a reflection of its headquarters in Boston's Morgan Memorial Chapel), it provided job skills training programs, and even a rudimentary placement service. The name Goodwill Industries was later adopted after a Brooklyn, NY workshop coined the phrase.

During the challenges of the Great Depression, Goodwill narrowed the focus of its services, from serving unemployed people generally, to a more manageable sector of the population that had long been neglected: America's citizens with disabilities. Since then, Goodwill's mission has grown into an international movement, improving the quality of life for people with disabilities everywhere. Today, Goodwill Industries has 208 autonomous member organizations in the U.S. and Canada, and 22 other countries. (175 of them are in the United States and Canada.) Today Goodwill has become a \$4 billion non-profit organization.

From: "Goodwill's Founder Edgar Helms," available at:
<http://www.goodwillnne.org/about/goodwills-founder-edgar-helms/>

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http://governor.state.tx.us/disabilities/resources/disability_history/

10/10/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: American Foundation for the Blind is founded, 1921

DISABILITY HISTORY & AWARENESS MONTH: THE AMERICAN FOUNDATION FOR THE BLIND IS FOUNDED, 1921

From the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

The American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) was formed in 1921 to provide a national clearinghouse for information on vision loss. With the support and leadership of M.C. Migel, a philanthropist who sought resources and help for veterans blinded in World War I, AFB was officially created at the convention of the American Association of Workers for the Blind in Vinton, Iowa. Its mission from the beginning has been to provide accurate information about vision loss, to create a forum for professionals who interact with people who are blind or visually impaired, to generate new directions for research, and to represent the needs of people with vision loss in the creation of public policy.

Since its creation, AFB has been active in many ways, including standardizing the English Braille code and publishing the *Directory of Services for Blind and Visually Impaired Persons*, a comprehensive and reliable source of information. Helen Keller, the world-famous author, activist and advocate helped raise AFB's profile when she began working with the organization in 1924. She made speeches and appearances around the world on behalf of AFB and served as the organization's counselor on national and international relations, changing the world's perception of what it means to be blind or deaf.

AFB's first direct service to people who are blind was the distribution of radios to American citizens who were blind in 1928, giving them firsthand access to breaking news. In 1932, AFB established Talking Books and Talking Books machines.

Today, AFB has spent nearly a century ensuring that individuals who are blind or visually impaired have access to the information, technology, education, and legal resources they need to live independent and productive lives.

Sources:

- American Foundation for the Blind: <http://www.afb.org/default.aspx>
- Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/American_Foundation_for_the_Blind

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http://governor.state.tx.us/disabilities/resources/disability_history/

10/11/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: America's first dog guide school, The Seeing Eye, is founded in 1929

DISABILITY HISTORY AND AWARENESS MONTH: AMERICA'S FIRST DOG GUIDE SCHOOL, THE SEEING EYE, IS FOUNDED IN 1929

From the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

The first guide dog training schools were established in Germany during World War I to enhance the mobility of returning veterans who were blinded in combat. The United States followed suit in 1929 with The Seeing Eye in Nashville, Tennessee (relocated in 1931 to Morristown, New Jersey). One of the founders of The Seeing Eye was America's first guide dog owner, Nashville resident Morris Frank. Frank was trained with Buddy, a German Shepherd, in Switzerland in 1928.

The Seeing Eye, Inc. (TSE) was the first guide dog school in the U.S. The dogs are trained to assist their owners and provide them with a means to be independent and to be able to get about as pedestrians in their communities without other assistance. While living in Switzerland, an American dog trainer, Dorothy Harrison Eustis, was experimenting with the inclination and ability of German Shepherds to be used as working dogs. Eventually, she visited a school that was training German Shepherds to lead blinded World War I veterans.

Fascinated by what she had seen, she wrote an article entitled, "The All Seeing Eye," about the school, which appeared in the November 5, 1927, edition of *The Saturday Evening Post*. Shortly thereafter she was contacted by Morris Frank, a Tennessean who was blind, who then enlisted her to train a dog for his use.

This effort eventually evolved into the Seeing Eye organization in Switzerland and America. After 80 years of providing independence and dignity, The Seeing Eye remains one of the best known guide dog schools in the world.

Most Seeing Eye dogs come from a breeding center located in nearby Chester, New Jersey. Primarily, they are German Shepherds, Labrador Retrievers, Golden Retrievers, or Labrador-Golden Retriever crosses. Some dogs are donated to the organization. Occasionally, The Seeing Eye also will train Boxers, or other breeds and mixes. Puppies are raised by volunteers, primarily 4-H members, who are responsible for the basic obedience training and socialization of the dogs until they are 18 months old. This partnership between the Seeing Eye and 4-H began in 1942 and allows youth to learn about the dogs and serve their communities.

Formal training at the Seeing Eye campus lasts four months. This is where the dogs learn advanced obedience and skills such as pulling in harness, stopping at curbs, and "intelligent disobedience" to keep themselves and their handler safe from danger. After completing this training, the dogs spend up to a month training with their future human partners, before they

are formally released. Most of the training with the future owner takes place in the community.

From:

The Seeing Eye, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Seeing_Eye

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10/12/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: Disability advocates stage a sit-in in New York City in 1935

DISABILITY HISTORY AND AWARENESS MONTH: DISABILITY ADVOCATES STAGE A SIT-IN IN NEW YORK CITY IN 1935

From the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

In 1935, the United States was in the midst of the Great Depression. Jobs were scarce for everyone, but in particular for people with disabilities who sometimes faced discrimination in the hiring process. Some government policies meant to put Americans back to work labeled people with disabilities as "unemployable."

A small group of six people with physical disabilities requested a meeting with a public official in New York City in 1935. The plan was to discuss government policies that prevented people with disabilities from securing employment in public works projects. Little did these six advocates know that this simple request would grow into a much larger political demonstration. When the government official initially declined to meet with the advocates, the simple meeting transformed into a sit-in, which attracted public attention and wider support.

The group of six grew into a league of hundreds who demonstrated both in New York City and in Washington, D.C., eventually winning audiences with policy makers in both cities. Members of the league raised awareness of disability rights issues in employment by speaking to labor unions and

progressive organizations. Although the league was ultimately unsuccessful in changing the specific policies that they protested against, today the league is considered a precursor to the disability rights movement that emerged in full force in the 1960s and 1970s.

Sources:

- Disability Militancy – the 1930s, available at: <http://www.disabilityhistory.org/militanc.html>
- The League of the Physically Handicapped & Independent Living in 1935, available at: http://www.disabilityworld.org/10-12_00/il/league.htm

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10/15/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: America's Greatest Documentary Photographer

DISABILITY HISTORY & AWARENESS MONTH: DOROTHEA LANGE: AMERICA'S GREATEST DOCUMENTARY PHOTOGRAPHER

From the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

Dorothea Lange (1895-1965) has been called the greatest American documentary photographer. She is best known for her chronicles of the Great Depression and for her photographs of migratory farm workers. Lange's photographs humanized the consequences of the Great Depression and influenced the development of documentary photography. She contracted polio at age seven, which left her with a weakened right leg and a permanent limp. "It formed me, guided me, instructed me, helped me and humiliated me," Lange once said of her altered gait. "I've never gotten over it, and I am aware of the force and power of it." The insightful and compassionate photographs of Dorothea Lange have exerted a profound influence on the development of modern documentary photography. Lange's concern for people, her appreciation of the ordinary, and the striking empathy she showed for her subjects made her unique among

photographers of her day. In 1935, Lange began her landmark work for the California and Federal Resettlement Administrations (later the Farm Security Administration).

Collaborating with her second husband, labor economist Paul Schuster Taylor, she documented the troubled exodus of farm families escaping the dust bowl as they migrated West in search of work. Lange's documentary style achieved its fullest expression in these years, with photographs such as "Migrant Mother" becoming instantly recognized symbols of the migrant experience.

Although the coming of World War II brought an end to Lange's Farm Security Administration work, the war opened a new chapter in her life as a photographer. During the War, Lange documented the forced relocation of Japanese American citizens to internment camps, recorded the efforts of women and minority workers in wartime industries at California shipyards, and covered the founding of the United Nations in San Francisco.

- From: Oakland Museum of California:
http://museumca.org/global/art/collections_dorothea_lange.html

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10/16/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: First National Wheelchair Basketball Tournament played in 1949

DISABILITY HISTORY AND AWARENESS MONTH: FIRST NATIONAL WHEELCHAIR BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT PLAYED IN 1949

From the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

The first National Wheelchair Basketball tournament was played in 1949 in Galesburg, Illinois. Wheelchair basketball had been steadily gaining in popularity for years. It had begun as a sport mainly played by veterans of World War II, who had returned to the United States with injuries and who were eager to participate in competitive, physical activities. At first,

wheelchair basketball was only found in hospitals administered by the Veterans' Administration, but as its popularity grew, it was played in local communities. By 1949, there were enough teams in existence in the United States to stage a full-fledged national tournament.

The rules of wheelchair basketball closely resemble the rules of standard basketball, including prohibitions on "traveling" with the ball. Wheelchair basketball is played on a regulation basketball court with the rim of the basket placed 10-feet in the air -- the same height used by National Basketball Association (NBA) teams.

Today, wheelchair basketball is played by an estimated 100,000 athletes. The game has expanded to include women's and children's leagues and now supports international and worldwide tournaments. The men's world championship, held every four years beginning in 1973, has been won 6 times by the United States. The women's world championship, held every four years beginning in 1990, has been won twice by the United States.

Sources:

History of the National Wheelchair Basketball Association, available at http://www.nwba.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=13&Itemid=120

Wikipedia, Wheelchair Basketball, available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wheelchair_basketball

Wikipedia, Wheelchair Basketball World Championships, available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wheelchair_Basketball_World_Championship

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10/17/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: First Paralympic Games Held in 1960

DISABILITY HISTORY & AWARENESS MONTH: FIRST PARALYMPIC GAMES HELD IN 1960

From the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

The summer of 1960 marked the first International Paralympic Games, a multi-sport competition for athletes with disabilities from around the world. The Games were held in Rome, from September 18th to 25th, 1960, following the 1960 Summer Olympics. The theme was "Friendship, Unity and Sportsmanship." There were about 400 athletes from 23 countries.

The Paralympic Games were modeled after the Stoke Mandeville Wheelchair Games, which were born in the United Kingdom shortly after World War II. A German neurologist, Sir Ludwig Guttman, organized a sporting competition involving World War II veterans with spinal cord injuries at the Stoke Mandeville Hospital rehabilitation facility in Stoke Mandeville, England. These Games took place concurrently with the first post-war Summer Olympics in London.

The Paralympics derive their name from the Greek word "para," meaning "beside" or "alongside." The name refers to the Paralympics traditionally being held alongside the Olympics. In 2012, the United States sent 227 team members to the London Paralympic Games. A future Disability History and Awareness Month fact will feature the athletes of the 2012 games.

See video of the 1960 Paralympic Games at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t7JUeen5Mpo&feature=youtu.be>. (Video Description: A 48 second black and white film without words and only music features video footage of hundreds of athletes using wheelchairs at the opening ceremony.)

Sources:

- Wikipedia, Paralympic Games, available at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paralympic_Games
- 2012 Paralympic Team Announced, available at <http://www.teamusa.org/US-Paralympics/Features/2012/August/06/2012-US-Paralympic-Team-announced.aspx>

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10/18/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: The Architectural Barriers Act passes in 1968

DISABILITY HISTORY & AWARENESS MONTH: THE ARCHITECTURAL BARRIERS ACT PASSES IN 1968

From the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

In the 1960s, thanks to the hard work of disability rights advocates, the federal government was becoming aware of the barriers to access that many Americans were facing. Congress created a commission to examine the extent to which architectural barriers – barriers in the way that facilities are built and maintained – prevented access to public places.

In 1968, Congress enacted the Architectural Barriers Act (ABA) in response to the recommendations of the commission. The ABA had the distinction of passing in the Senate unanimously. The ABA was designed to increase access to federal facilities. Congress also expected the ABA to set a standard for state and local governments and private enterprises.

One of the driving forces behind the enactment of the ABA was Hugh Gallagher, a legislative aide to Senator Bartlett of Alaska. Gallagher, who used a wheelchair after a bout of polio at 19, had worked in Washington, D.C. for years and had experienced the indignities of inaccessible federal buildings. Gallagher later said of the ABA: "I wanted it to be simple. I wanted accessibility to be one of the items on the checklist of designers and builders."

The ABA's scope was limited to facilities that were constructed with federal funds and designed, built, leased, or altered after 1969. The ABA was not a sweeping reform, but it was a step in the right direction. In the years that followed, the ABA was joined by the Americans with Disabilities Act, state laws, and model building codes that continue to move our country's building standards toward universal access. Still, Hugh Gallagher's contribution to America's legal landscape represents a watershed moment. As U.S. Senator Bob Dole wrote, "Hugh's most outstanding contribution to the quality of life of people with disabilities was to successfully place disability on the agenda of the Congress for the first time."

Sources:

- History of the Access Board, available at <http://www.access-board.gov/about/history.htm>
- Wikipedia, Hugh Gallagher (advocate), available at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugh_Gallagher_\(advocate\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hugh_Gallagher_(advocate))

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10/19/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: Founding of the Independent Living Movement

DISABILITY HISTORY & AWARENESS MONTH: FOUNDING OF THE INDEPENDENT LIVING MOVEMENT

From the Governor's Office on People with Disabilities

Exactly when the Independent Living movement began depends on the definition of "Independent Living." As far back as the mid-1700s, schools and job training facilities were set up in the U.S. to promote independence of people who were deaf or blind, and, in the early 20th Century, for veterans who had been injured in wars. About the time of World War I, national laws were passed to create vocational rehabilitation programs for people with disabilities.

In 1946, the National Mental Health Foundation, founded by people who worked in state mental institutions, began a movement to promote the idea of de-institutionalization.

Many consider Ed Roberts to be the Father of the Independent Living Movement, but acknowledgment also belongs to Mary Switzer, whose philosophy helped shape the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1954; Gini Laurie, who, in 1958, started the Rehabilitation Gazette (originally titled the Toomie J. Gazette) as a forum for international information exchange promoting independent living; Judy Heumann, who in the 1970s pursued legal actions to ensure equal education opportunities for people with disabilities; Justin Dart, a former Chair of the Texas Governor's Committee

on People with Disabilities and advocate of Independent Living whom President George H.W. Bush introduced as “the ADA man”; and many others who sought to change attitudes and opportunities for people with disabilities to lead productive, independent lives.

Ed Roberts, due to his determination and drive, was finally accepted to attend the University of California at Berkeley in 1962, despite resistance and pessimism by the University admissions office. Roberts used his leadership skills to organize a group called The Rolling Quads, which advocated for more accessible sites on campus and support services for students to use to be able to live independently on campus. By the early 1970s, Roberts’ ideas for independent living had spread throughout the community and, in time, throughout the U.S., leading to the establishment of Independent Living Council.

A video of a speech by Ed Roberts can be viewed on this page through the Minnesota Governor’s Council on Developmental Disabilities:

<http://www.mnddc.org/ed-roberts/discover.html>

Sources:

- World Institute on Disability timeline:
<http://wid.org/international/timeline-of-the-international-independent-living-movement-1/timeline-of-the-international-independent-living-movement>
- Independent Living Institute:
<http://www.independentliving.org/docs5/ILhistory.html>
- Independent Living USA:
http://www.ilusa.com/links/022301ed_roberts.htm
- Disability Social History Project:
http://www.disabilityhistory.org/people_dart.html

*October is Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month in Texas. Each workday in October 2012, the Governor’s Committee on People with Disabilities will post a daily Disability History Fact highlighting the accomplishments of people with disabilities or important dates and events related to the history of people with disabilities. These daily history facts will be presented to celebrate “**Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month**” in Texas. Learn more about disability history:*
http://governor.state.tx.us/disabilities/resources/disability_history/

10/22/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: The Houston Cooperative Living Residential Project is established.

DISABILITY HISTORY & AWARENESS MONTH: HOUSTON COOPERATIVE LIVING RESIDENTIAL PROJECT ESTABLISHED

From the Governor's Office on People with Disabilities

In 1972, Cooperative Living was established in Houston and four years later the Independent Living Research Utilization program was created there, marking the beginning of an annual national conference on Independent Living, attended by advocates across the U.S. By 1982, the National Council on Independent Living was established and actively promoting the concept and creating opportunities.

A video of a speech by Ed Roberts can be viewed on this page through the Minnesota Governor's Council on Developmental Disabilities:

<http://www.mnddc.org/ed-roberts/discover.html>

Sources:

- World Institute on Disability timeline:
<http://wid.org/international/timeline-of-the-international-independent-living-movement-1/timeline-of-the-international-independent-living-movement>
- Independent Living Institute:
<http://www.independentliving.org/docs5/ILhistory.html>
- Independent Living USA:
http://www.ilusa.com/links/022301ed_roberts.htm
- Disability Social History Project:
http://www.disabilityhistory.org/people_dart.html

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http://governor.state.tx.us/disabilities/resources/disability_history/

10/23/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: Texans with Disabilities and Gary Guller Reach Mt. Everest in 2003

DISABILITY HISTORY & AWARENESS MONTH: TEXANS WITH DISABILITIES AND GARY GULLER REACH MT. EVEREST IN 2003

From the Governor's Office on People with Disabilities

In 2003, Gary Guller was leader of the largest ever cross-disability group to reach Mount Everest Base Camp at 17,500 feet. After setting this record, he went on to scale the peak, reaching the summit on May 23, 2003, and becoming the first person with one arm to summit Mount Everest. Later the next year, Gary lead an expedition to the summit of the world's sixth highest mountain, Mt. Cho Oyu, located in Tibet.

Dennis Borel and the Coalition of Texans with Disabilities (CTD) provided U.S. logistical coordination, sponsorship, and marketing support to the expedition. Among other projects, Dennis is the founder of the successful Cinema Touching Disability Film festival. The 18-month Mount Everest campaign began in Austin, Texas in January 2002 and culminated in the Spring 2003 expedition to the world's highest peak. CTD's mission is to better serve individuals with disabilities and raise funding and awareness for disability-related issues. Team Everest '03 was one of the most important events in the disability community, radically changing the way individuals with disabilities are perceived. The year 2003 marked the 50th anniversary of the first summit of Everest by Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay. Team Everest '03 represented 50 years of progress of people with disabilities and challenged the myth that having a disability equates to a lack of capability and potential.

Team Everest: A Himalayan Journey documentary chronicles the remarkable group of trekkers on an expedition to the world's highest mountain. The team was the largest group of people with disabilities ever to reach Mount Everest Base Camp.

From:

Gary Guller Website <http://www.garyguller.com/>

Team Everest: A Himalaya Journey film site
<http://www.teameverestthemovie.com/>

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be presented to celebrate **"Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month"** in Texas. Learn more about disability history: http://governor.state.tx.us/disabilities/resources/disability_history/

10/24/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: The "Spirit of Goodwill" band plays for the U.S. Conference of Mayors in 2008

DISABILITY HISTORY & AWARENESS MONTH: THE "SPIRIT OF GOODWILL" BAND PLAYS FOR THE U.S. CONFERENCE OF MAYORS IN 2008

From the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

"The Spirit of Goodwill" band was originally created in 1981 at Goodwill South Florida to facilitate the improvement of social and recreational skills, community integration, and personal adjustment for people with disabilities. The program was initiated as a group of vocalists only, no instruments, and it became a tradition for the band to sing at the holiday party and at the annual business meeting of Goodwill. In 1996, Javier Peña joined Goodwill as the new music program director. Early on, Mr. Peña recognized the natural talent some of the band members had for playing instruments, and he ran with the idea to develop their talents.

After a lengthy process, fed by determination by Mr. Peña and by the musicians themselves, the band evolved into a talented group of musicians with disabilities, gifted in a repertoire of diverse music styles. In 1998, the band performed at the annual talent show held by the City of Miami Parks and Recreation Program for Persons with Disabilities. This was their first public performance, and they were awarded First Prize.

In 2008, "The Spirit of Goodwill" band had achieved such recognition that it was invited to perform at the U.S Conference of Mayors, playing to an audience of about 440 mayors along with family and friends. The band opened with "For Once in My Life" by Stevie Wonder; at the end, the entire audience stood in roaring applause and cheers. The band continued with "I Feel Good," a lively song by James Brown that had the entire audience dancing in their seats, and other musical selections from various genres.

PBS aired a documentary on the band, its performance at the conference, and the profoundly positive effect it has had on the band members, as well as on the audiences who hear their music and know the story of the band. Goodwill South Florida won the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities' Barbara Jordan Media Award in 2011 for the TV Documentary

category. The DVD of the documentary and the music from "The Spirit of Goodwill" band is available for purchase from the Goodwill South Florida website at

http://www.goodwillsouthflorida.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=eCommerceCatalog.products&productGroup_id=6&

Sources:

- Goodwill South Florida:
<http://www.goodwillsouthflorida.org/TheSpiritofGoodwillBandGoodwill>
- Industries South Florida correspondence:
<http://cache.trustedpartner.com/docs/library/GoodwillIndustriesSouthFlorida2009/Content/BandUpdate.pdf>
- Public Broadcasting Service (PBS):
<http://www.pbs.org/independentlens/for-once-in-my-life/>

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10/25/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: Bethany Hamilton wins national surfing championship

DISABILITY HISTORY & AWARENESS MONTH: BETHANY HAMILTON WINS NATIONAL SURFING CHAMPIONSHIP

From the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

Bethany Meilani Hamilton is an American professional surfer. She is known for surviving a shark attack in which she lost her left arm and for overcoming the injury to ultimately return to professional surfing. She wrote about her experience in the 2004 autobiography *Soul Surfer: A True Story of Faith, Family, and Fighting to Get Back on the Board*. In April 2011, the feature film *Soul Surfer* was released, based on the book and additional interviews. She has appeared on many television shows since the loss of her arm.

Bethany Hamilton has become a source of inspiration to millions through her story of faith, determination, and hope. Born into a family of surfers on February 8, 1990, on the island of Kauai, Hawaii, Bethany began surfing at a young age. At the age of eight, Bethany entered her first surf competition, the Rell Sun Menehune event on Oahu, where she won both the short and long board divisions. This sparked a love for surf competition within her spirit.

At the age of thirteen, on October 31, 2003, Bethany was attacked by a 14-foot tiger shark while surfing off Kauai's North Shore. The attack left Bethany with a severed left arm. After losing over 60% of her blood, and making it through several surgeries without infection, Bethany was on her way to recovery with an unbelievably positive attitude. Lifeguards and doctors believe her strong water sense and faith in God helped get her through the traumatic ordeal.

Miraculously, just one month after the attack, Bethany returned to the water to continue pursuing her goal to become a professional surfer. In January of 2004, Bethany made her return to surf competition, placing 5th in the Open Women's division. With no intention of stopping, Bethany continued to enter and to excel in competition. Just over a year after the attack, she took First Place in the Explorer Women's division of the 2005 NSSA National Championships, winning her first national title.

In 2007, Bethany realized her dream and turned pro. Bethany has since participated in numerous ASP and World Tour Events with her major highlight being a second place finish in the ASP 2009 World Junior Championships.

From: Bethany Hamilton website at <http://bethanyhamilton.com/about/bio/>

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10/26/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: Judy Scott, Texas Women's Hall of Fame

DISABILITY HISTORY & AWARENESS MONTH: JUDY SCOTT, TEXAS WOMEN'S HALL OF FAME

From the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

The Governor's Commission for Women established the Texas Women's Hall of Fame in 1984 to honor the State's most accomplished women, including first ladies, astronauts, athletes and others who stand as examples of success in various fields. In March of 2003, the Commission established the permanent Texas Women's Hall of Fame exhibit featuring the biographies and photographs of the recipients. The exhibit is located inside Hubbard Hall on the campus of Texas Woman's University in Denton, Texas.

In 2010, Judy Castle Scott, Director of American Foundation for the Blind Center on Vision Loss in Dallas, was inducted into the Texas Women's Hall of Fame.

Scott, blind since childhood, attributes her strong values and can-do attitude to growing up on an East Texas farm with a loving family and strong community. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in psychology and sociology and a Master's Degree in counseling and guidance/aging. Her deep passion for improving and expanding possibilities for people with vision loss led her to a career with more than forty years' experience: first, with the Texas Commission for the Blind where she helped establish the first Independent Living Program for older Texans who were visually impaired, which became a national model; and then with the American Foundation for the Blind, where she was a leader in launching the National Agenda on Aging and Vision Loss, and promoted a successful national effort to increase federal funding for Independent Living Programs. She was also instrumental in working with designers of the Dallas/Fort Worth International Airport, the Dallas Cowboys Stadium, the American Airlines Center and other public structures to ensure full access for all people with disabilities.

In 1996, Scott was appointed to the Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities and became the Chair of the Committee in 2007. Her profile on the Texas Women's Hall of Fame website states that "Judy Castle Scott's legacy – both within Texas and beyond our borders – is as an inspiration, motivation and leader for others to ensure access and opportunity for all people."

Sources:

- American Foundation for the blind:
<http://www.afb.org/section.aspx?FolderID=3&SectionID=52&DocumentID=2383>
- Texas Women's University: <http://www.twu.edu/twhf/tw-jscott.asp>
- Texas Women's Hall of Fame: <http://www.twu.edu/twhf/>

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10/29/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: Texas Talking Book Program: "That All May Read"

DISABILITY HISTORY & AWARENESS MONTH: TEXAS TALKING BOOK PROGRAM: "THAT ALL MAY READ"

From the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

For over 80 years, the Texas Talking Book Program (TBP) has loaned recorded and Braille books and magazines and specially designed playback equipment—free of charge—to Texas residents who are unable to read or use standard print materials because of visual or physical impairment. The service dates back to 1918 when the Texas Legislature appropriated \$1,000 for the State Library to purchase raised-lettering books.

On March 3, 1931, the Pratt-Smoot Act, establishing what would become the National Library Service for the Blind and Physically Handicapped (NLS/BPH), became law. From the beginning, preference has been given to veterans who are blind and who have been honorably discharged. That same year, the Library of Congress selected the Texas State Library—one of 18 libraries chosen—to participate in a regional network established to provide service nationwide to adults who were blind. The Texas Talking Book Program was born.

In 1952, the Pratt-Smoot Act was amended to open service to children who were blind. In 1966, Texans with physical disabilities which prevent them from holding a book or turning pages, were included. Service was expanded again in 1974 to include individuals with some learning disabilities.

In 1978, TBP founded its Volunteer Recording Studios in Austin and Midland to record Texas materials for the network. Volunteers record Texas books and magazines, including *Texas Highways*, *Texas Parks & Wildlife*, and *Texas Monthly*. More than 10 books are completed each month. In 2011 the Talking Book Program celebrated 80 years of service and in June 2012, it was given the Library of the Year Award from the National Library Service.

Currently, TBP serves approximately 14,000 patrons of all ages across the state. However, it is estimated that over 300,000 people could be eligible for the free service.

"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much." — Helen Keller

Sources:

- "About the National Library Service,"
<http://www.loc.gov/nls/aboutnls.html>
- "Texas Talking Book Program,"
<https://www.tsl.state.tx.us/tbp/abouttbp.html>

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10/30/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: Woody Guthrie, the Original Folk Hero

DISABILITY HISTORY & AWARENESS MONTH: WOODY GUTHRIE, THE ORIGINAL FOLK HERO

From the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

Woodrow Wilson "Woody" Guthrie, who lived most of his youth in the late 1920s and early 1930s in the Panhandle town of Pampa, is known as the "Original Folk Hero." In the 1930s he used his musical talent and songwriting skills as a vehicle for social protest and, in doing so, transformed the genre for decades to come. Best known for such classics as "This Land Is Your Land" and "So Long, It's Been Good to Know You," Guthrie wrote hundreds of songs and traveled all over the country performing them; later musicians

such as Bob Dylan and Bruce Springsteen recorded many of his works. By the late 1940s, Guthrie's health was deteriorating. He continued to travel and perform, but by the mid-1950s he was hospitalized and diagnosed with Huntington's Disease, a neurodegenerative disease that affects muscle coordination. His second wife, Marjorie Mazia, helped found the Huntington Disease Society of America.

Sources:

- Wikipedia, Woody Guthrie:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Woody_Guthrie
- Musician Guide:
<http://www.musicianguide.com/biographies/1608001791/Woody-Guthrie.html>
- Texas Music Office, Office of the Governor:
<http://governor.state.tx.us/music/tour/pioneers>

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10/31/2012: Disability History & Awareness Month: U.S. Paralympic Team competes in London

DISABILITY HISTORY & AWARENESS MONTH: U.S. PARALYMPIC TEAM COMPETES IN LONDON

From the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities

In 1948, a hospital outside London witnessed the birth of the Paralympic movement, as a Jewish doctor who had fled Nazi Germany sought to change the lives of patients with spinal injuries and inspire new hope in them through sport. The first "Stoke Mandeville Games" were organized in 1948 to coincide with the London Olympics, the second to be held in Britain. Named for the hospital in Buckinghamshire where Prof. Ludwig Guttmann's pioneering spinal injuries unit was based, the competitors in those initial Games – 14 men and two women – took part in a wheelchair archery contest. Many were military veterans injured on the battlefields of World War II. Just a year later, six teams competed at Stoke Mandeville in a sport called wheelchair netball, a forerunner of wheelchair basketball, as sport became a central part of a rehabilitation process that had been revolutionized by Guttmann. In 1956, a "statement of intent" was unveiled for the

Games, which were by this time international, according to the Mandeville Legacy website run by the local authority.

It read: "The aim of the Stoke Mandeville Games is to unite paralyzed men and women from all parts of the world in an international sports movement, and your spirit of true sportsmanship today will give hope and inspiration to thousands of paralyzed people." Four years later, inspired by Guttman's vision, the first official Paralympic Games were held in Rome in tandem with the Olympics. And five decades on, some 4,280 Paralympians from 165 countries – the largest number ever – recently returned to Britain to compete in what is now the premier international sporting event for those born with disabilities, or disabled by injury or illness. In an echo of those first Stoke Mandeville Games, a number of those competing are military veterans, this time wounded in action in Iraq and Afghanistan.

2012

The United States Olympic Committee announced the 2012 U.S. Paralympic Team that competed in the London 2012 Paralympic Games on Aug. 29-Sept. 9. The 227-member team, which included six guides for athletes who were visually impaired, was comprised of 133 men and 94 women. *"When the 2012 London Olympic Games come to a close on Sunday, the eyes of the world will turn to the Paralympic Games and the more than 4,000 athletes competing. Each of the 227 Americans named to the 2012 U.S. Paralympic Team today are ready to captivate the world, on and off the field of play, just as our Olympians have,"* USOC Chief Executive Officer Scott Blackmun said. *"Our Paralympians embody what it means to be an American. They will compete with the pride and honor that is inherent in representing the United States of America, inspiring Americans young and old with their stories of triumph."*

American athletes competed in 19 sports throughout the 11 days of competition, including archery, boccia, cycling, equestrian, goalball, judo, powerlifting, rowing, sailing, shooting, sitting volleyball, soccer seven-a-side, swimming, table tennis, track and field, wheelchair basketball, wheelchair rugby, wheelchair fencing and wheelchair tennis.

Among the members of the 2012 U.S. Paralympic Team were 19 athletes who won multiple medals at the last Games including swimmer Jessica Long (Baltimore, Md.), who co-led the U.S. Paralympic Team with six medals in Beijing, and wheelchair racer Jessica Galli (Hillsborough Township, N.J.), who captured five medals. Long claimed four of her career seven gold medals in 2008 while Galli claimed the women's 400-meter (T53) title.

The team also included 20 U.S. military veterans and active duty service members, some of whom were wounded in Iraq and Afghanistan. Navy Lieutenant Bradley Snyder, who lost his vision in September 2011 while serving in Afghanistan, was among the American athletes with military ties. Snyder competed in swimming on the one year anniversary of his injury.

The London 2012 Paralympic Games was the largest edition of the Games yet, with an estimated 4,200 participating athletes, up from the 3,951 who competed in Beijing. Athletes from 165 countries competed in London, which includes representation from 19 more nations than in Beijing.

2012 U.S. Paralympic Team Notes

- Forty-two states and Washington D.C. had representatives on the 2012 U.S. Paralympic Team. California had the most representation with 23 athletes followed by Colorado with 13.
- Swimmer Colleen Young (St. Louis, Mo.), who turned 14 in June, was the youngest member of the 2012 U.S. Paralympic Team. The oldest member of the team was 57-year-old fencer Gary Van Der Wege (Kyle, Texas) but archer Jerry Shields (Jacksonville, Fla.) and sailor Jean-Paul Creignou (St. Petersburg, Fla.) were also 57.
- In the track and field competition at the London 2012 Paralympic Games, the United States was represented by 58 athletes, including four guide athletes, making it the largest sport delegation for Team USA.
- Three athletes set world records at the 2012 U.S. Paralympic Trials – Track and Field in Indianapolis en route to spots on the 2012 U.S. Paralympic Team. Raymond Martin (Jersey City, N.J.) set the 30.18 world mark in the men's 200m (T52) while Galli set a new world mark in the women's 200m (T53) with a time of 28.93. In the women's shot put (F56), Angela Madsen (Long Beach, Calif.), a former Paralympic rower and Marine Corps veteran, threw a 9.30m. Blake Leeper (Kingston, Tenn.) tied the world record in the men's 100m (T43) while competing in Canada.
- Tatyana McFadden (Clarksville, Md.), a wheelchair racer who won four medals at the Beijing 2008 Paralympic Games, was joined on the 2012 U.S. Paralympic Team by her sister younger Hannah, who made her Games debut. It was the first time sisters have raced against each other for Team USA.
- At the 2012 U.S. Paralympic Swimming Trials, a total of 99 American, 37 Pan American and 12 world records were set at the Bismarck State College Aquatic and Wellness Center; Long set four of the world records achieved in Bismarck.
- After representing the U.S. in table tennis at the 1984 Stoke Mandeville Paralympic Games, both Pamela Fontaine (North Brunswick, N.J.) and Tara Profit (Berlin, Conn.) retired from the sport. After being apart for about 20 years, the team reunited in December 2008, and returned to the Paralympic Games in London.

- Rrower Dorian Weber (Brighton, Mass.) had a homecoming of sorts when he made his debut at the London 2012 Paralympic Games. Born in Manhasset, N.Y., he grew up an hour outside of London in Henley-on-Thames, United Kingdom, but now lives in Massachusetts.
- Aimee Mullins served as the Chef de Mission for the U.S. Paralympic Team at the London 2012 Paralympic Games. President of the Women's Sports Foundation from 2007-08 and a current trustee for the organization, Mullins made a groundbreaking achievement at Georgetown University where she competed as the first-ever amputee on an NCAA Division I track team. A member of the 1996 U.S. Paralympic Team, she set world records in the 100 meters, 200m and long jump during her career.

Texas honors its nine 2012 Paralympians:

- Jim Bob Bizzell, Odessa, Texas, Track and Field
- Jeremy Campbell, Perryton, Texas, Track and Field
- Tobi Fawehinmi, Arlington, Texas, Track and Field
- Kristen Messer, Austin, Texas, Track and Field
- Jordan Mouton, Houston, Texas, Judo
- Jennifer Schuble, Houston, Texas, Cycling
- Gary Van Der Wege, Kyle, Texas, Fencing
- Stephen Welch, Southlake, Texas, Wheelchair Tennis
- Jonathan Wentz, Richardson, Texas, Equestrian

From:

History turns full circle at London 2012 Paralympic Games, Laura Smith-Spark, CNN, August 29, 2012

<http://edition.cnn.com/2012/08/29/sport/paralympics-history-veterans/index.html>

Team USA website [http://www.teamusa.org/US-](http://www.teamusa.org/US-Paralympics/Features/2012/August/06/2012-US-Paralympic-Team-announced.aspx)

[Paralympics/Features/2012/August/06/2012-US-Paralympic-Team-announced.aspx](http://www.teamusa.org/US-Paralympics/Features/2012/August/06/2012-US-Paralympic-Team-announced.aspx)

Team USA Homepage <http://www.teamusa.org/US-Paralympics.aspx>

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2013 Daily Facts:

Tuesday, October 1, 2013 – Texas Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month

Welcome to the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities' celebration of Texas Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month! Each business day during the month of October, the Governor's Committee will distribute a fact related to disability history. This year we will be focusing on historical Texans with disabilities. We hope you enjoy this journey through Texas's rich history.

Governor Perry designated October 2013 as Texas Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month in a proclamation. The text of this proclamation appears below and is attached:

STATE OF TEXAS

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

Throughout our state's history, Texans with disabilities have played an important role in making Texas the greatest state in our nation to work and raise a family. Demonstrating the remarkable qualities of the Texas spirit – courage, independence and ingenuity – they have filled some of our highest offices, fought in historic battles and contributed to the art and culture of our state.

Each year, October is designated Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month in Texas. Not only do we celebrate the many Texans with disabilities who have influenced our history, we also recognize the endeavor toward full civil rights and equal opportunity for all.

At this time, I encourage all Texans to learn more about the achievements of people with disabilities who have contributed so much to our society and about the disability rights movement as it takes its rightful place as part of the story of Texas. I am proud of the activities across our state commemorating this month and the motivating principle behind our celebrations: the recognition that Texas' finest resource is the people who call it home.

Therefore, I, Rick Perry, Governor of Texas, do hereby proclaim October 2013 to be

Persons with Disabilities History and Awareness Month

in Texas, and urge the appropriate

recognition whereof.

In official recognition whereof,

I hereby affix my signature this the

18th day of September, 2013.

Rick Perry

Governor of Texas

- [Dis History Proc 2013 TEXT.doc](#)

Wednesday, October 2, 2013 – The McGinty Club

The McGinty Club, a men's fun-making group that also contributed to civic development in the bustling frontier town of El Paso in the 1890s, was created by a Texan with a disability. Almost every historian of El Paso in that era has dealt favorably with the McGinty Club.

The McGinty Club began with a convivial group of El Paso men who loved to gather and sing. One of the most popular songs with this group was "Down Went McGinty." One day one of the members, "**Peg**" **Grandover** (so called because of his prosthetic leg, at the time referred to as a "peg leg") arrived driving a wagon adorned with signs reading "barbecued burro meat," "ice water" and, most important, "Hunting for McGinty." This was in answer to the expected question, "Where are you going?" and referred to a well-remembered phrase of the McGinty song, "Down went McGinty to the bottom of the sea. He must be very wet, for they haven't found him yet."

From this beginning, the McGinty Club soon sprang into full being. Peg Grandover was involved in everything the club did. Without any firm rules and with a constitution that was largely a joke, it nevertheless drew to its membership lawyers, three mayors, three prominent bankers, several judges, the manager of Myar's Opera House, a tax assessor, two physicians, and "almost everybody who was anybody." The club had more than 300 members.

Adapted from: Conrey Bryson, "MCGINTY CLUB," *Handbook of Texas Online* (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/vqm01>), accessed September 23, 2013.
Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

Thursday, October 3, 2013 – George McCormick

George McCormick (1841-1905) enlisted in the Confederate Army in Galveston in 1861; later he was wounded, captured, and had one of his legs amputated. After returning to Colorado County in 1865, he studied law, obtained his license, and joined the prominent legal firm of Cook and Collier. In 1870 the county commissioners' court appointed McCormick Colorado County attorney and he represented Colorado and Lavaca counties in the Constitutional

Convention of 1875, where he advocated direct taxation for support of public education. In 1876 Governor Richard Coke appointed him to a term as assistant attorney general. McCormick was overwhelmingly elected state attorney general under Governor Oran M. Roberts in 1878. In 1882 he was one of sixty-nine lawyers from across the state who met in Galveston to form the Texas Bar Association, today known as the State Bar of Texas.

Adapted from:

"MCCORMICK, GEORGE," *Handbook of Texas Online*

(<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fmc26>), accessed September 23, 2013.

Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

Friday, October 4, 2013 – Charles Victor Roman

Charles Victor Roman (1864 – 1934), African-American physician, professor, author, and civil rights leader, lost his right leg to an amputation as a child. He went on to earn a medical degree and practice medicine for several years in Dallas. Roman also became one of the first high-profile advocates for civil rights for African-Americans, authoring several books on the topic. He brought much attention to the issue with his widely recognized speech before the Southern Sociological Congress in Atlanta in 1913, speaking on “Racial Self-Respect and Racial Antagonism.”

Adapted from:

Paul M. Lucko, "ROMAN, CHARLES VICTOR," *Handbook of Texas Online*

(<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/frost>), accessed September 23, 2013.

Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

Monday, October 7, 2013 – Hope Therapy

Hope Therapy at Moody Gardens, Galveston is a facility that provides an innovative rehabilitative treatment program for children and adults. Hope Therapy is part of Moody Gardens, a 140-acre complex consisting of a convention center, an animal park, a water-recreation area, an enclosed rain forest, and an IMAX theater. Hope Arena, as it was called originally, was established after a nineteen-year-old member of the Moody family experienced serious head injuries in a 1980 automobile accident. The young Moody emerged from six months in a coma in need of extensive therapy and rehabilitation. Today, clients include individuals with a wide range of disabilities, including spinal cord injuries, amputation, strokes, cerebral palsy, intellectual disabilities, mental illness, and vision or hearing disabilities. Rehabilitative therapies include horseback riding, animal-assisted therapy, and horticultural therapy. Hope Arena was designed to provide therapeutic horseback riding (“hippotherapy”) for those with neurological disabilities. The horticultural therapy utilizes the five greenhouses of Moody Gardens to allow clients to nurture, raise, and harvest plants. Hope Therapy is administrated by Moody Gardens and supported by grants from the Moody Foundation and other charitable foundations, private donations, fund raising events, and client fees.

Adapted from:

Megan Seaholm and Cheryl Ellis Vaiani, "HOPE THERAPY AT MOODY GARDENS,"

Handbook of Texas Online (<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/sbh10>), accessed September 23, 2013. Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

Tuesday, October 8, 2013 – The Football Huddle

The Football Huddle was invented at a college for the deaf—Gallaudet University in Washington DC—as a means of hiding signals from other deaf teams.

"When Gallaudet played nondeaf clubs or schools, [quarterback Paul] Hubbard merely used hand signals—American Sign Language—to call a play at the line of scrimmage, imitating what was done in football from Harvard to Michigan. Both teams approached the line of scrimmage. The signal caller—whether it was the left halfback or quarterback—barked out the plays at the line of scrimmage. Nothing was hidden from the defense. There was no huddle.

"Hand signals against nondeaf schools gave Gallaudet an advantage. But other deaf schools could read Hubbard's sign language. So, beginning in 1894, Hubbard came up with a plan. He decided to conceal the signals by gathering his offensive players in a huddle prior to the snap of the ball. ... Hubbard's innovation in 1894 worked brilliantly. 'From that point on, the huddle became a habit during regular season games,' states a school history of the football program. ...

"In 1896, the huddle started showing up on other college campuses, particularly the University of Georgia and the University of Chicago. At Chicago, it was Amos Alonzo Stagg, the man credited with nurturing American football into the modern age and barnstorming across the country to sell the game, who popularized the use of the huddle and made the best case for it. ...

"At the time, coaches were not permitted to send in plays from the sideline. So, while Stagg clearly understood the benefit of concealing the signals from the opposition, he was more interested in the huddle as a way of introducing far more reaching reforms to the game.

"Stagg viewed the huddle as a vital aspect of helping to teach sportsmanship. He viewed the huddle as a kind of religious congregation on the field, a place where the players could, if you will, minister to each other, make a plan, and promise to keep faith in that plan and one another." Quotes from *How Football Explains America* by Sal Paolantonio, published by Triumph Books, 2008

Wednesday, October 9, 2013 – Olin Teague

Olin Teague (1910 – 1981) took part in the Allied landing at Normandy in 1944 and became, after fellow Texan Audie Murphy, the most decorated U.S. combat soldier of World War II. He was discharged from the army in 1946 with the rank of colonel and won a special election to fill the vacant seat for the Sixth Congressional District. In Congress, Teague became noted for his championship of veterans' issues. He had undergone the amputation of part of his left leg as a result of injuries suffered during the war. In 1980 the VA hospital in Temple was renamed for him.

Thursday, October 10, 2013 – John Bell Hood

John Bell Hood (1831 – 1879) served as a major general in the Civil War and was severely wounded twice in battle: at the Battle of Gettysburg, Hood received a severe wound to his left arm that left it incapacitated for the rest of his life; and in the Battle of Chickamauga, Hood was shot in the upper right thigh, a wound that necessitated the amputation of his leg. After some months of recuperation, Hood was promoted and continued to serve in the military. Strapped to his saddle, he would lead his men into battle. At one point, the retreating Army of Tennessee sang to the tune of “The Yellow Rose of Texas” these lyrics: “You can talk about your Beauregard and sing of General Lee, but the gallant Hood of Texas played Hell in Tennessee.” Hood County is named in his honor, as is Fort Hood in Bell County.

Friday, October 11, 2013 – The Oval Office

The Oval Office: The Most Famous Room in the World

Franklin D. Roosevelt, President of the United States from 1933 – 1945, was the first U.S. President to use a wheelchair while in office. For enhanced mobility around the White House, Roosevelt was responsible for the design of perhaps the most famous room in the world – the Oval Office.

"There hadn't even been an oval-shaped office in the White House until 1909, when one was built as part of William Howard Taft's expansion of the West Wing, and that one had been in a different part of the building. The room into which [President Lyndon] Johnson walked on Tuesday morning [in 1963] had been created only twenty-nine years earlier by Franklin Roosevelt, who in 1934 had the President's office moved to the West Wing's southeast corner, from which it was easier to roll in his wheelchair to his living quarters in the Mansion, and who, working with the architect Eric Gugler, designed the room himself. ...

" The room was gracious and serene, the four doors leading out of it to other parts of the White House set flush into the walls, so that, closed, they didn't interrupt the walls' long, graceful curves, which were broken otherwise only by bookshelves set into them and topped by graceful seashell designs. Through the French doors one could glimpse a garden with a row of rosebushes along one side. Yet despite the restraint in its decoration, there was something about the room that made it seem special, somehow larger and more imposing than its dimensions, something dramatic, memorable -- unforgettable, in fact.

“But the room seemed special mostly because of what had happened in it. History had happened in it. Franklin Roosevelt had sat at that desk in front of the flags and windows bantering with reporters as he guided a nation through a great depression and a great war; hidden below the desk, his paralyzed legs.”

Quotes from *The Passage of Power: The Years of Lyndon Johnson* by Robert A. Caro, published by Alfred A. Knopf, 2012

Monday, October 14, 2013 – John Jefferson Mansfield

Joseph Jefferson Mansfield (1861 – 1947), for whom Mansfield Dam at Lake Travis is named, moved to Texas as a young man. After working on a farm, in a nursery, and on the railroad, he studied law and was admitted to the bar in 1886. He began practice in Eagle Lake, where he was city attorney, mayor, editor of the first newspaper, and county attorney of Colorado County until 1896. He then served as county judge until 1916, when he was elected to represent the Ninth Texas Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives. In 1921, Mansfield became very ill with an unspecified illness which left him paralyzed. He used a wheelchair and continued to serve in Congress until 1947. In the early 1930s, Mansfield became chair of the House's Rivers and Harbors Committee and worked closely with the people who created and managed the Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA). He was a strong advocate for funding for the Colorado River dam which was originally called Marshall Ford Dam. In 1941, the dam was re-named Mansfield Dam in his honor.

Tuesday, October 15, 2013 – Leon Roger Payne

Leon Roger Payne (1917 – 1969) was born in Alba, Texas; he was born blind in one eye and lost the sight of the other in a childhood accident. He attended the Texas School for the Blind and then began his singing and composing career at a radio station in Palestine, Texas. He played the guitar and several other stringed instruments. In 1938 he joined Bob Wills and the Texas Playboys for a time. He joined Jack Rhodes and His Rhythm Boys in 1948. That same year, his composition *Lifetime to Regret* established his reputation as a composer, and in 1949 he composed *I Love You Because* (a song inspired by his wife), which became a top hit and a standard in country music. By that time he had formed his own group, the Lone Star Buddies. One of his most famous songs, *You've Still Got a Place in My Heart*, was first recorded in 1951, but its greatest success came in the 1960s, when Dean Martin and many others recorded it. Payne made many appearances in the Grand Ole Opry in Nashville. Other well-known singers who recorded Payne's songs were Elvis Presley, Glen Campbell, Don Gibson, Jim Reeves, and George Jones.

Wednesday, October 16, 2013 – Cyd Charisse

Cyd Charisse (1922 – 2008), the famous dancer and actress, was born **Tula Ellice Finklea** in Amarillo, Texas. As a child she had polio and at age six, she began dancing lessons to help her overcome the weakness in her legs. Her father took an interest in Cyd's developing ballet talent and, when she was fourteen, he sent her to a professional school in California on the advice of her dance instructor. She eventually became involved in Hollywood films, with her roles usually focused on her abilities as a dancer. She starred in movies with Fred Astaire and Gene Kelly; her films include *Singing in the Rain*, *The Band Wagon*, and *Silk Stockings*. She was awarded the National Medal of the Arts and Humanities in 2006.

[NOTE: Attributions include Texas State Historical Association and Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cyd_Charisse]

Thursday, October 17, 2013 – Patsy L. Smith Moore

Patsy L. Smith Moore (1924 – 1975) was born near Lorenzo, Texas; at age four she contracted polio and for the rest of her life wore leg braces and used a cane for walking. She applied for admission to Southern Methodist University law school in 1946 and was refused admittance because she was a woman. Undaunted, she enrolled in the evening school and, on the basis of her academic record, was permitted to transfer to the day school after one semester. She received her degree in 1949 and passed the bar examination shortly afterward. She joined a Lubbock law firm and was the city's first woman attorney. She served as co-chair of the Texas Bar Association State Legal Aid Commission and helped establish the Lubbock County Legal Aid Commission. In 1953 she became the first woman president of the Lubbock County Bar Association, and four years later she was elected judge of Lubbock County Court at Law Number Two. In 1968 she was elected the first woman judge of the Seventy-Second District Court. Judge Moore was committed to civic work for the underprivileged and helped establish a clinic in Lubbock for people with developmental disabilities. She was named Woman of the Year by the Lubbock Altrusa Club in 1965, and in 1972 she received the Southern Methodist University Woman of Achievement Award.

Friday, October 18, 2013 – History of Guide Dogs

History of Guide Dogs

Many people associate the use of trained guide dogs, particularly by people who are blind or visually impaired, with the story of Morris Frank, a young man from Nashville who was blind. In the late 1920s, Frank agreed to start a guide dog training program in the United States in gratitude for receiving his first guide dog from Dorothy Eustis, a wealthy American who was training and breeding dogs for the customs service, army and police in Switzerland. However, the history of trained dogs to assist people who are blind goes much deeper into history.

There is convincing evidence that people with vision loss have been working with canine companions, protectors and guides for centuries. The ruins of the Roman city of Herculaneum, which was buried in volcanic ash in AD 79, contain a mural showing a blind person being guided by a dog. There are also pictures from the Middle Ages showing people who appear to be blind walking with a dog on a leash.

The first verified attempt to train guide dogs happened at a hospital people who were blind in Paris in 1780; by the early 19th century, a textbook describing techniques for training guide dogs was published in Vienna by Johann Wilhelm Klein.

Today, guide dogs are commonly used across the globe by people who are blind or visually impaired, but also by people with a variety of other disabilities. Currently, about 10,000 people use trained guide dogs in the U.S. and Canada.

Attributions:

The Extraordinary History of Guide Dogs: <http://mymagicdog.com/the-extraordinary-history-of-guide-dogs/>

CNIB: A History of Guide Dogs: <http://www.cnib.ca/en/living/safe-travel/Pages/history-dogs-0807.aspx>

Monday, October 21, 2013 – Dale Evans

Dale Evans (1912 – 2001), actress, singer and wife of Roy Rogers, was born Frances Octavia Smith in Uvalde, Texas. She and Roy Rogers had several children from previous marriages and from adoptions, but had only one biological child together – Robin, who was born in 1950 with Down syndrome and heart conditions. At the time, parents were encouraged to place babies with developmental disabilities in institutions, but Dale and Roy refused to do so and embraced their daughter with love and attention. Robin died just before her second birthday. Being a parent to a child with Down syndrome inspired Dale Evans to write her first, and perhaps most well-known, of many inspirational books, titled *Angel Unaware*. The book and Evans' advocacy were influential in changing the public's perception of children with developmental disabilities. Dale Evans has a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame.

Tuesday, October 22, 2013 – Charles Sanford Eskridge, Jr

Charles Sanford Eskridge, Jr (1937 – 1984) was an early activist in Texas in the field of disability issues. Born in Wink, Texas, Eskridge earned a degree in journalism and worked as a public information consultant for the Texas Education Agency, Texas MHMR, and other state agencies, as well as the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Center for a Barrier Free Environment and other organizations. In Austin in the mid-1970s, Eskridge helped establish a city-owned and operated transportation system for people with disabilities. He helped draft the Employment Rights Protection Act and helped write and pass numerous bills for the benefit of people with disabilities in Texas, including the expansion of the Architectural Barriers Act. Eskridge was a compliance consultant to many organizations for the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In 1980 he was cofounder of MIGHT (Mobility Impaired Grappling Hurdles Together), a statewide organization dedicated to addressing various problems of people with disabilities. In 1980 the Austin City Council named February 21 Charles S. Eskridge Day and passed a resolution of appreciation for his work.

Wednesday, October 23, 2013 – Ralph Alexander (“Andy”) Anderson, Sr

Ralph Alexander (“Andy”) Anderson, Sr. (1890 – 1956) was a sports writer for the *Houston Post* and then the *Houston Press*, where he regularly wrote a column on hunting and fishing along the Gulf Coast. During World War II, Anderson began rehabilitation work with returning

war veterans with disabilities, with his focus on social and recreational activities, particularly outdoors. He invented attachments for sports equipment to permit persons with various disabilities to participate. Under his direction, annual wild-game dinners were instituted in several veterans' hospitals in South Texas, and Anderson visited almost 200 other Veterans Administration hospitals over the U.S. as volunteer-at-large to entertain and instruct the veterans in recreational pursuits. Through his efforts, the idea of adaptive sports became more high-profile. A park for veterans with disabilities was established on the east shore of Lake Houston and was named Andy Anderson Park in his honor.

Thursday, October 24, 2013 – Johann Michael Jahn

Johann Michael Jahn (1816 – 1883), one of the founders of the town of New Braunfels, was a noted cabinetmaker and furniture craftsman. Jahn was serving an apprenticeship as a youth in Prague when his master became angry and threw a tool at him, injuring Jahn's hip and leaving him with a permanent mobility disability. Jahn immigrated to the U.S. in 1844; a few years later he established his furniture shop in New Braunfels and helped to build the community there. He was elected an alderman in the town's first municipal elections. His furniture business prospered throughout his lifetime; he used native woods to create all types of distinctive and collectible furniture. Only a few of the existing pieces of his work have his initials carved into them, but those are considered valuable collectibles. In his later years, Jahn focused his efforts on cultivating native mustang grapes and making wine to serve customers who visited his shop.

Friday, October 25, 2013 – Helen Jane Rehbein Farabee

Helen Jane Rehbein Farabee (1934 – 1988) has long been recognized as a passionate advocate for people with mental and developmental disabilities. Born and raised in Wisconsin, she met her husband, Ray Farabee of Wichita Falls, Texas, through her student government work. During her husband's time in the military and his work on his law degree, Ms. Farabee served as assistant dean of women at the University of Texas and worked with the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health. When the couple moved to Wichita Falls, she became active in the local MHMR board and the Wichita Falls State Hospital. By 1965, she had broadened her activities to a statewide focus and worked with future lieutenant governor William P. Hobby, Jr., in encouraging the state legislature to establish the state agency known today as the Texas Department of State Health Services. She later served as president of the Texas Mental Health Association and director-at-large of the National Association of Mental Health. She also was appointed to the Public Committee on Mental Health by First Lady Rosalyn Carter. She chaired the State Mental Health Code Task Force which culminated its work in the revision of the Texas mental health code. The revised code was signed by Governor Mark White and became effective in 1983. Ms. Farabee was inducted into the Texas Women's Hall of Fame in 1985. After her death in 1988, several special memorials were established, including the Helen Farabee Patient Education Scholarship at the Austin State Hospital; the Helen J. Farabee Public Policy Fellowships for graduate

students, offered by the Texas Mental Health Association; and the Helen Farabee Award of the United Way.

Monday, October 28, 2013 – Pearl S. Buck

Pearl S. Buck and the Vineland Training School

The American Pulitzer Prize-winning novelist Pearl S. Buck, best known as the author of *The Good Earth*, also helped to raise awareness of the challenges faced by people with intellectual disabilities. It was her experiences with her own daughter that led Buck down a path that helped shape the future for people with intellectual disabilities.

Buck's daughter, Carol, was born with a metabolic disorder called phenylketonuria, or PKU. Left untreated, the blood stream of children with PKU accrues high levels of unsynthesized phenylalanine, an amino acid resulting in, among other symptoms, cognitive disability as a function of neural damage.

In 1932, Buck donated \$50,000 to the Vineland Training School in New Jersey, where Carol was a resident, for the construction and maintenance of a cottage, called Carol's Cottage, on the campus. She was also long-time member of the board of directors for the Training School and, even after her death in 1973, her contribution to the school was carried on by her other daughter, Janice, who became Carol's guardian and an active member of the Vineland board of directors.

As important as Pearl Buck was to the Vineland Training School, it was her impact on other parents of children with intellectual and developmental disabilities for which she is most remembered by disability advocates. In an article in the *Ladies Home Journal* in May, 1950, titled "The Child Who Never Grew," Buck told the story of her daughter. Later that year, the article was reprinted as a book by John Day Publishing, and it was condensed for inclusion in the September 1950 issue of *The Reader's Digest*.

<http://archive.brookespublishing.com/documents/the-story-of-intellectual-disability.pdf>

Tuesday, October 29, 2013 – Famous Guide Dogs

Some Famous Guide Dogs

Millions of people in the United Kingdom were introduced to the idea of guide dogs in 1965, when a guide dog named "Honey" became the subject of a popular BBC children's television show. Viewers followed Honey through her training and collected donations of aluminum foil to fundraise for the dog's education.

American horror and suspense novelist Dean Koontz owns a retired guide dog named "Trixie Koontz." The bestselling author even published one of his books, *Life is Good: Lessons in Joyful Living*, using Trixie Koontz as a pseudonym in 2004.

Two heroic dogs worked with their handlers to reach safety after hijacked airplanes struck the World Trade Center on September 11, despite working in the noisiest, most dangerous and chaotic conditions imaginable. Omar Rivera and his yellow Labrador retriever Salty climbed down 70 stories just before Tower One collapsed. Rivera even tried to release Salty so the dog could have a better chance at survival, but found the dog would not leave his side. Another dog, Roselle, and her handler, Michael Hingston, walked down 78 stories together in the same building.

Endal, a service dog in England, is considered by some to be “the most decorated dog in the world” (including “Dog of the Millennium” and the Gold Medal for Animal Gallantry and Devotion to Duty from the PDSA, the UK’s leading veterinary charity), and is also the first dog to ride on the London Eye (a giant Ferris wheel in London), the first dog known to work a ‘chip and pin’ ATM card, and the first dog to place a human being in the recovery position without training following a blackout. More than three hundred camera crews from several countries have filmed Endal. Endal passed away in 2009.

One part service dog, one part best friend, Ruger the yellow Lab not only helped his owner Kevin Coughlin navigate the streets of Manhattan, but he became an unofficial mascot for guide-dog rights. Ruger carved out his place in history when he served as Exhibit A in a series of court cases in which Kevin fought (and won) discrimination suits against businesses that refused to allow his service dog through their doors. Terms like “trailblazer” and “pioneer” are rarely bestowed upon members of the canine family, but in Ruger’s case, they seem quite fitting. After winning high-profile case after high-profile case, Ruger became a darling of the news media and was recognized by strangers who would reportedly stop and introduce themselves on the street.

Attributions:

CNIB website: <http://www.cnib.ca/en/living/safe-travel/Pages/history-dogs-0807.aspx>

Wikipedia - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_Labrador_Retrievers

PawNation – <http://www.pawnation.com/2010/05/21/famous-nyc-guide-dog-and-champion-for-guide-dog-rights-dies-at/>

Wednesday, October 30, 2013 – Ima Hogg

Ima Hogg (1882 – 1975) was eight years old when her father was elected Governor of Texas. After attending the University of Texas, she studied music in New York and abroad for many years, winding up in Houston where she helped found the Houston Symphony Orchestra. She became ill in late 1918 and spent the next two years in Philadelphia under the care of a specialist in mental and nervous disorders.

Perhaps because of her own experience, she became an active advocate for people with mental illness. In 1940, she established the Hogg Foundation for Mental Hygiene, which later became the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health at the University of Texas. In its early years the Hogg Foundation for Mental Health concentrated on educating the people of Texas about mental health.

One of the main concerns of the donors was that the knowledge of human behavior and mental health available through the intellectual resources of a university campus should be disseminated

throughout the country. During the 1940s the Hogg Foundation's small staff traveled to hundreds of small Texas towns and rural communities to talk to professional and civic groups about the new ideas in mental health.

By 1954 the Foundation's annual income had grown sufficiently to allow the development of a major research program. A Hogg Foundation program was established to award grants in support of meritorious projects throughout the state. In addition, the Foundation became involved in programs for the education and training of professional mental-health workers; the expansion of state and community services; the extension of mental-health education by the large-scale use of pamphlets and by using other media such as books, radio, and television; and the strengthening of cooperative efforts with other foundations in the Southwest.

The 1960s brought increasing concern at the Hogg Foundation for the larger problems of society. Emphasis focused on campus mental health and on intervention with special population groups. Adapted from:

Virginia Bernhard, "HOGG, IMA," *Handbook of Texas Online*

(<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fho16>), accessed September 30, 2013.

Published by the Texas State Historical Association.

Thursday, October 31, 2013 – Hugh “Hackberry Slim” Johnson II

Hugh “Hackberry Slim” Johnson II (1888 – 1979), from Belton, was one of the first cowboys to put together a Buffalo Rodeo, which included buffalo stampede shows, buffalo chariot races, and even Junior Rodeo events where children could ride on baby buffaloes. Johnson came to be known as Hackberry Slim as a teenager, when an accident resulted in the amputation of one of his legs. Johnson used a limb from a hackberry tree to carve himself a prosthetic leg; he loved it when people began to call him by the nickname, thereafter always introducing himself as Hackberry Slim. Johnson was known for being quite a storyteller; speaking to reporter Rick Smith at the Sherman *Democrat* newspaper in an interview he told him:

“Now that leg, that was to my advantage sometimes. Pecos Pate taught me this trick, see. When I was about to ride a bronc, I’d loosen the leg. I’d start yellin’ about halfway through the ride. Yell that I was gettin’ bucked to pieces. Then I’d let the leg fly off. Strong men would scream and women’d faint. The tent’d be half empty by the time I clambered down.”

In 1979, at the age of 91, Johnson played a bit part in Willie Nelson’s classic movie *Honeysuckle Rose*. One evening after the filming in Austin, Willie and other musicians performed at a party for the cast and crew. At one point, the band dedicated a song to Johnson. The audience applauded and Johnson got up, grabbed the hand of a young woman and danced animatedly, then went back to sit down, put his head on the table and died.

Friends said he always claimed he wanted to “go out of this life with his boots on,” but that he would be satisfied to go with just the one boot on.

Attributions: Rick Smith, Sherman *Democrat*, 1978

October 2014 Disability History Month Facts:

Wednesday, October 1, 2014:

NATIONAL DISABILITY EMPLOYMENT AWARENESS MONTH

NDEAM's roots go back to 1945, when Congress enacted a law declaring the first week in October each year "National Employ the Physically Handicapped Week." In 1962, the word "physically" was removed to acknowledge the employment needs and contributions of individuals with all types of disabilities. In 1988, Congress expanded the week to a month and changed the name to "National Disability Employment Awareness Month." Upon its establishment in 2001, the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) assumed responsibility for NDEAM and has worked to expand its reach and scope ever since.

Each year, ODEP creates a theme to promote full inclusion in the workplace and designs a poster featuring the current year's selection. For 2014, the theme is "Expect. Employ. Empower." The theme was the outcome of a collaborative process including a national online dialogue in which the public were invited to submit ideas.

Texas uses the national ODEP theme to design its own NDEAM Poster each year. The Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities hosts an art competition, open to any Texas artist with a disability. The winner of the competition, selected by a team of judges which includes people with disabilities, artists, and professionals in the field of disabilities, donates the winning art piece to the Governor's Office. The Texas NDEAM poster design is donated by Jane Thomas of Apple Specialty Advertising. The posters are distributed free of charge throughout the state and nationally. The 2014 Texas NDEAM poster features art by Grant Manier of Spring, Texas; information on how to request a copy of the poster is available on the GCPD website at http://governor.state.tx.us/disabilities/ndeam/ndeam_poster/.

Attributions:

U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy:

<http://www.dol.gov/odep/topics/ndeam/index-2014.htm>

Texas Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities NDEAM Poster:

http://governor.state.tx.us/disabilities/ndeam/ndeam_poster/

Thursday, October 2, 2014:

RALPH TEETOR: Inventor of Cruise Control

Ralph Teetor (1890 – 1982) was a noted engineer and inventor, best known for his invention of Cruise Control for automobiles. An accident at the age of five left him totally blind, and he developed a keen sense of touch. In 1912, Teetor graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a degree in mechanical engineering. In 1936, Teetor was elected as president of the Society of Automotive Engineers. He was also made a Fellow of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, and the planetarium and one of the residence houses at Earlham College are named in Teetor's honor. One of the Society of Automotive Engineers' most prestigious awards is named

in Teetor's honor. His career as an engineer, manufacturing executive and entrepreneur led to the invention of many helpful products, including an early version of the powered lawn mower, lock mechanisms and holders for fishing rods.

But Teetor is best known for his invention of Cruise Control for automobiles, which he was inspired to invent one day while riding with his lawyer. The lawyer would slow down while talking and speed up while listening. The rocking motion so annoyed Teetor that he was determined to invent a speed control device. In 1945, after ten years of tinkering, Ralph Teetor received his first patent on a speed control device. Early names for his invention included "Controlmatic," "Touchomatic," "Pressomatic" and "Speedostat." The name finally chosen was "Cruise Control." The device wasn't used commercially until Chrysler introduced it in 1958.

In 1988, Teetor was posthumously inducted into the Automotive Hall of Fame in Dearborn, Michigan, for his numerous contributions to the automotive industry.

Attributions:

Hemming's Classic Car: http://www.hemmings.com/hcc/stories/2009/07/01/hmn_feature13.html

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ralph_Teetor

Pat's Tapestry: <http://patstapestry.wordpress.com/2013/07/13/series-invention-intentions-intro-riddle-1/>

Friday, October 3, 2014:

LEROY COLOMBO: Champion Swimmer and Record-Breaking Lifeguard

LeRoy Colombo (1905 – 1974) was mentioned in the Guinness Book of World Records for having saved 907 confirmed lives during his 40-year career as a lifeguard, breaking all records at the time; some reports suggest that he saved more than a thousand lives. Colombo was diagnosed with spinal meningitis at the age of 7, resulting in a complete loss of hearing and paralysis in his legs. His family encouraged him to learn to swim to strengthen his legs, and within a year he was able to walk again.

His love for swimming shaped his destiny. Colombo became involved in long-distance swimming and was accepted into the Toboggan Club in Galveston – a feat that mandated an entry test of three straight hours of swimming without pause – and swam across the Gulf of Mexico in eleven hours. At the age of 18, he became a lifeguard along the beach at Galveston, although by that time he had already saved several lives in an unofficial capacity, beginning with a rescue at the age of twelve. Some were unsure that, with his hearing loss, Colombo could serve as an efficient lifeguard, but his service soon proved that he was more than up to the task. Jean F. Andrews, a professor in the Department of Deaf Studies at Lamar University recently published a book on Colombo's life titled *High Tides, Low Tides*.

After Colombo's death in 1974, a plaque was erected along the seawall in Galveston, recognizing his accomplishments.

Attributions:

Start ASL: <http://www.start-american-sign-language.com/leroy-colombo.html>

VC Interpreting: <http://www.vcinterpreting.com/bloggin-about-community/overcoming-the-odds-leroy-colombo/>

If My Hands Could Speak blog: <http://ifmyhandscouldspeak.wordpress.com/2009/12/01/leroy-colombo-life-saver/>

Lamar University Press: <http://www.lamaruniversitypress.org/nonfiction.php>

Monday, October 6, 2014:

ANNIE JUMP CANNON: Noted Astronomer (1863 – 1941)

Annie Jump Cannon was an American astronomer whose cataloging work was instrumental in the development of contemporary classification of stars. Along with noted astronomer Edward C. Pickering, she is credited with the creation of the Harvard Classification Scheme, which was the first serious attempt to organize and classify stars based on their temperatures.

As a child, Cannon became fascinated with the night sky and its constellations; her mother encouraged her to pursue studies in math, chemistry and biology at Wellesley College. In 1892, Cannon travelled to Europe to take photos of a solar eclipse; soon after, she was infected with scarlet fever, which left her almost completely deaf.

She began work on astronomy as one of “Pickering’s Women” at Harvard University in 1896 and shortly thereafter she discovered SS Cygni, a dwarf nova (a star that suddenly becomes thousands of times brighter, then gradually fades to its original brightness). As her work continued, she was the primary researcher in creating the Harvard Classification Scheme, a significant and necessary element to astronomical studies still today. Cannon went on to classify more stars in her lifetime than anyone else, male or female, with a total of around 500,000 stars, as well as to discover over 300 variable stars, five nova, and one spectroscopic binary.

On May 9, 1922, the International Astronomical Union passed the resolution to formally adopt Cannon's stellar classification system, and with only minor changes, it is still being used for classification today. The annual Annie Jump Cannon Award presented by the American Astronomical Society for a female astronomer was named for her.

Attributions:

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Annie_Jump_Cannon

Cosmos TV Show featuring Annie Cannon: <http://devoutnone.com/cosmos-episode-8/>

American Astronomical Society: <http://aas.org/about/grants-and-prizes/annie-j-cannon-award-astronomy>

Tuesday, October 7, 2014:

LEWIS CARROLL: Author of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland (1832 – 1898)

Charles Lutwidge Dodgson, who wrote under the pen name Lewis Carroll, was an Oxford mathematician, logician, Anglican deacon and photographer who had been fascinated with numbers and wordplay from the time he was a young child and loved making up games. As a young child, he lost most of his hearing in one ear; he had an unidentified stiffness in his legs that caused mobility issues for him, and as an adult had frequent migraine headaches. He also had a severe stutter and was often teased and ridiculed as a child, although, as an adult, he claimed that he only had a stutter around adults, never around children.

When he was 30 years old, Dodgson went on a picnic with a young girl named Alice Liddell and her two sisters, all children of one of Dodgson's colleagues at Oxford. After the picnic, he wrote a story about a little girl named Alice who fell down a rabbit hole, and sent the story as a Christmas gift to Alice, who loved it. He eventually published the book under the name Lewis Carroll and titled it *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, and later wrote and published its sequel, *Through the Looking Glass*, both classic children's (and adult's) literature now.

Dodgson also loved creative thinking, and is credited with many inventions, including an early version of the game of Scrabble, word ladder games (in which one word is changed into another by changing one letter at a time, creating a legitimate new word at each step), a postal money order, several mathematical rules, a double-sided tape used to close envelopes, and many other creative devices.

Attributions:

History.com: <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/alice-in-wonderland-manuscript-is-sent-as-a-christmas-present>

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lewis_Carroll

Wednesday, October 8, 2014:

POST, WILEY HARDEMAN: Famous Aviator (1898 – 1935)

Wiley Hardeman Post, a native Texan, was one of the best known aviators in the world. In addition, he was known for his pioneer work in high altitude flight, particularly his role in developing an early pressure suit. His achievements in early aviation, more than two decades before the establishment of a United States space program, earned him a reputation as a pioneer in space flight. The airplane in which he made such contributions is today displayed at the National Air and Space Museum in Washington, D.C., along with his pressure suit.

As an adult, Post turned to oilfield work in Oklahoma and began to dabble in "barnstorming" soon after the end of World War I, first as a parachute-jumper and later, after a few lessons, as a pilot. Thus began a career that would later carry him into the annals of aviation history. Eager to acquire his own airplane, Post returned to oilfield work to earn the necessary funds, but he was injured while working. He lost his left eye in the accident. Still, he was able to acquire a pilot's license and gained fame for his round-the-world flights, a flight up into the stratosphere, his invention of a pressure suit for high altitude flight, and his discovery of jet streams.

Post's first venture into high visibility aviation came in 1930 when he won the air derby between Los Angeles and Chicago, a special event of the 1930 National Air Races. His next famous flight would bring even more accolades: a flight around the world in eight days, fifteen hours, and fifty-one minutes – a superlative achievement. Then, in 1933, he broke that record, spanning the route in less than eight days, beating his earlier time by more than twenty-one hours, and becoming the first solo flyer to circle the earth.

Wiley Post and humorist Will Rogers were killed in 1935 when Post's airplane crashed in Alaska.

Attributions:

Texas State Historical Association: <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fpo27>

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wiley_Post

Thursday, October 9, 2014:

BOB WOODRUFF (1961 – present)

Robert Warren “Bob” Woodruff is an American television journalist, known best for succeeding Peter Jennings as co-anchor of ABC News' weekday news broadcast, *World News Tonight* in 2005. In January 2006, while on assignment in Iraq imbedded with the U.S. Fourth Infantry Division, Woodruff was critically wounded by a roadside bomb, leaving him with a traumatic brain injury (TBI); a portion of his skull had to be removed to prevent further damage from brain swelling.

Woodruff made a surprisingly quick recovery from his injuries, although the TBI often affected his ability to recall words. In 2007, he and others put together a documentary titled “To Iraq and Back: Bob Woodruff Reports,” exploring the consequences of TBI in soldiers and others, highlighting the difficulties veterans with TBI often experience in finding treatment. Woodruff continues to report for ABC News, often covering stories which involve veterans and the Veterans’ Administration system and hospitals. He and his wife Lee wrote and published a book on the topic, titled *In an Instant: A Family’s Journey of Love and Healing*.

Bob and Lee Woodruff also created the Bob Woodruff Foundation, whose mission it is to ensure that injured veterans and their families are thriving long after they return home. The organizations helps to find and fund innovative programs in communities where veterans, their families and caregivers live and work.

Attributions:

The Bob Woodruff Foundation: <http://bobwoodrufffoundation.org/>

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bob_Woodruff

Friday, October 10, 2014:

ANNE CORN: Researcher in the field of visual disabilities

Dr. Anne Corn is an innovative researcher, educator and advocate in the field of disabilities, and is considered a visionary within the field of visual disabilities. She herself is legally blind, but her own experiences have led her to re-think many of the traditional approaches to services and education for those who are blind or visually impaired, reconsidering methods that have long been considered the norm. When Corn was 18, her counselor pushed her to learn to use a cane, but she refused, preferring instead to use combined visual and auditory methods for accomplishing tasks. Her personal experience led her to research alternative procedures and techniques to navigating the world with various degrees of visual impairment.

Corn came to the University of Texas in Austin in 1980 and joined the Special Education Department. During her tenure there, she mobilized a team of specialists and educators to deliver low-vision services to sparsely populated areas; helped the Texas Department of Motor Vehicles analyze accidents involving low-vision drivers using bioptic telescopic systems; studied functional vision and literacy; and developed a theory of how visually impaired people use their functional vision – a theory now taught worldwide. Corn has served as a board member for Prevent Blindness Texas, Austin's Urban Transportation Committee, and the Board of Trustees for the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

Corn accepted a position at Vanderbilt University in 1992; one of her most notable achievements there was in founding Providing Access to the Visual Environment (PAVE), now a comprehensive model for delivering low-vision services to children. She returned to Texas as Professor Emerita at Vanderbilt, and continues her research and publishing to increase awareness and provide alternative options for those with visual disabilities.

Dr. Anne Corn was inducted into the Texas Women's Hall of Fame in 2012.

Attributions:

TWU Texas Women's Hall of Fame: <http://www.twu.edu/twhf/tw-corn.asp>

Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired: <http://www.tsbvi.edu/low-vision/80-low-vision-without-blindfolding>

Monday, October 13, 2014:

DISABLED AMERICAN VETERANS (DAV): Texas Chapter

The Disabled American Veterans organization (originally named Disabled American Veterans, World War) was created in Cincinnati in 1920 by Robert S. Marks, who became its first national commander. In 1921 the first Texas local chapter, Harwood Davis Chapter Number One, was formed in Fort Worth. Within the year, there were more than twenty-five chapters throughout Texas, and in 1923 the Department of Texas Disabled American Veterans was organized in Kerrville. Congress granted the organization a federal charter in 1932. This charter was amended in 1942 by the deletion of the words "World War."

The purpose of the organization is to advance the interests of "all wounded, gassed, injured, and disabled veterans of all wars." Today there are 71 active chapters of the DAV in various towns

throughout the state of Texas. The Mission Statement of the Department of Texas DAV is “We are dedicated to a single purpose: empowering veterans to lead high-quality lives with respect and dignity. We accomplish this by ensuring that veterans and their families can access the full range of benefits available to them; fighting for the interests of America's injured heroes on Capitol Hill; and educating the public about the great sacrifices and needs of veterans transitioning back to civilian life.”

The current National Commander of DVA is Ronald F. Hope, a Vietnam War veteran; the current Texas Chapter Commander is Timothy W. Lindsey.

Attributions:

Department of Texas DAV: <http://www.davmembersportal.org/tx/default.aspx>

Texas State Historical Association: <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/vod01>

DAV Texas Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/davtexas>

Tuesday, October 14, 2014:

JAMES “DEAF” BURKE (1809 – 1845)

James “Deaf” Burke was a famous early 19th century bare-knuckles boxer in England who was reportedly completely deaf from birth; he was the British heavyweight champion from 1833 to 1839. Burke’s parents died when he was young and he scrambled to survive, living on the streets, seeking work where he could find it; it was a local pub owner who introduced Burke to boxing.

In 1833, in a particularly brutal fight for the English heavyweight championship that lasted 3 hours and 6 minutes, Burke defeated Simon Byrne, the Irish champion. Byrne died three days later from his injuries from the fight. Burke was arrested and tried for Byrne's murder, but was acquitted and subsequently freed. But because of the stigma against him, Burke decided to leave England and come to the U.S. to pursue his boxing career, where he introduced Prize Ring boxing to America.

After a brief but stellar record in the U.S., Burke returned to England, where the rules for boxing had been made stricter and more specific, including the introduction of the 10-Count Rule to determine whether a contestant has been knocked out. Before one of Burke’s big matches, the referee was worried about Burke not able to hear the shouted 10-Count Rule, so the referee used his arms to show Burke each count. Boxing competitions across the world continue to use the gesturing along with the counting today.

In 1992, Burke was inducted into the International Boxing Hall of Fame.

Attributions:

International Boxing Hall of Fame:

<http://www.ibhof.com/pages/about/inductees/pioneer/burke.html>

DeafDigest: <http://deafdigest.net/mid-week-news/20140708/>

British Sign Language Zone: <http://www.bslzone.co.uk/watch/deaf-history/deaf-history-james-burke/>

UBO Boxing: <http://www.uboboxing.com/rules.htm>

Wednesday, October 15, 2014:

WHITE CANE SAFETY DAY: October 15

White Cane Safety Day has been celebrated around the world on October 15 of each year since its formal declaration in the United States in 1964. The date is set aside to celebrate the achievements of people who are blind or visually impaired and the important symbol of blindness and its tool of independence, the white cane.

Even before the first formal declaration of White Cane Safety Day, the first local law regarding the right of people who are blind to travel independently with the white cane was passed in 1930 in Peoria, IL. In 1966, Dr. Jacobus tenBroek, the founder of the National Federation of the Blind, drafted the model White Cane Law, which came to be known as the Civil Rights Bill for the Blind, the Disabled, and the Otherwise Physically Handicapped. The original wording of his law contained a provision designating October 15 as White Cane Safety Day. Today there is a variant of the White Cane Law on the statute books of every state in the U.S.

In 1963, the National Federation of the Blind assembled in convention and voted to encourage governors of all fifty states to proclaim October 15 as White Cane Safety Day. In response, a joint resolution of the U.S. Congress (H.R. 753), authorizing the President of the United States to proclaim October 15 of each year as White Cane Safety Day, was signed into law the next year. Almost immediately, President Lyndon B. Johnson officially proclaimed the first White Cane Safety Day in 1964, commending those who were blind for their growing spirit of independence and their increased determination to be self-reliant. The Proclamation has continued every year since. In 2011, White Cane Safety Day was also named Blind Americans Equality Day by President Barack Obama.

The State of Texas also recognizes White Cane Safety Day each year on October 15 with a formal Proclamation signed by the Governor. Local committees and organizations across the state hold celebrations, festivals, and awareness-raising events.

Attributions:

National Federation of the Blind: <https://nfb.org/white-cane-safety-day>

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_Cane_Safety_Day

American Council of the Blind: http://www.acb.org/tennessee/white_cane_history.html

Thursday, October 16, 2014:

GREEN, EDWARD HOWLAND ROBINSON: Railroad Capitalist (1868–1936)

Edward Green, who lost a leg when he was a teenager, was born in England, educated in the U.S., and moved to Texas in 1892 at his mother's request to represent her in several developing railroad deals. It was often suggested that the amputation of his leg in 1887 resulted from his mother's neglect of an injury to his knee as a teenager, although Green attributed his artificial limb to a handcar accident; some accounts say that both versions may be true.

Green began his business career in Texas as president and general manager of the Texas-Midland Railroad. He set up his headquarters in Terrell and quickly moved to improve the railroad through both better equipment and expansion, turning it into a model railroad with the first electrical lighting in the state. Green also was known for his passion for owning some of the largest collections of postage stamps and coins.

Green was credited with many "firsts" in Texas, including establishing an experimental diversified farm in Kaufman County, bringing the first automobile to Texas (as well as being in the first reported car accident in the state), and giving jobs on the railroad to members of a traveling semiprofessional baseball team. Green was a close friend of President William McKinley; he chaired the Texas State Republican executive committee for three terms, from 1896 to 1902. He was selected several times as a delegate to the Republican national conventions. There also was speculation that Green might become the Republican candidate for governor in the early 1900s, although he did not. After supporting Oscar B. Colquitt for governor in 1910, Green was appointed an honorary colonel on the new governor's staff and was subsequently known as Colonel Green.

As a final twist to his colorful life, his wife fulfilled his last request by having his amputated leg exhumed and rejoined to his body before his burial.

Attributions:

Texas State Historical Association: <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fgr33>

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Edward_Howland_Robinson_Green

Friday, October 17, 2014:

EDWIN EUGENE (BUZZ) ALDRIN: Astronaut (1930 – present)

Buzz Aldrin is best known as the second human ever to set foot upon the moon on July 20, 1969 (after Neil Armstrong), but he has also been recognized for other accomplishments: he graduated third in his class at West Point with a degree in mechanical engineering and went on to eventually earn a PhD; he served as a jet fighter pilot during the Korean War; he was selected as one of the third group of astronauts by NASA in 1963; he devised docking and rendezvous techniques for spacecraft in Earth and lunar orbit; he pioneered underwater training techniques for astronauts; he performed the world's first successful spacewalk; and he was the lunar module pilot on Apollo 11, the first manned lunar landing. Upon his return to Earth after the moon landing, Aldrin received the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest American peacetime award. An asteroid and a crater on the moon are named for him.

Aldrin's two published memoirs – *Return to Earth* and *Magnificent Desolation* – document his experiences with clinical depression in the years after his NASA career. He openly speaks about seeking treatment for his depression, and he has continued his interest and pursuit of innovative engineering for future space exploration. Since retiring from NASA, he has continued to promote space exploration, including producing a computer strategy game called *Buzz Aldrin's Race Into Space* (1993). To further promote space exploration, and to commemorate the 40th anniversary of the first lunar landing, Aldrin teamed up with Snoop Dogg, Quincy Jones, Talib Kweli, and Soulja Boy to create the rap single and video, "Rocket Experience," with proceeds from video and song sales to benefit Aldrin's non-profit foundation, ShareSpace, a non-profit focused on sharing the wonders of space with children of all ages.

[An interesting bit of trivia: Buzz Aldrin's mother's maiden name was "Moon."]

Attributions:

Buzz Aldrin website: <http://buzzaldrin.com/the-man/biography/>

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Buzz_Aldrin

Psychology Today: <http://www.psychologytoday.com/articles/200105/buzz-aldrin-down-earth>

ShareSpace Foundation: <http://buzzaldrin.com/space-vision/sharespace-foundation/>

Monday, October 20, 2014:

ABRAHAM NEMETH: Creator of Braille Code for Math (1918 – 2013)

Abraham Nemeth was blind since he was an infant and learned to use braille at an early age, especially to enhance his love of learning to play the piano. As a child, Nemeth became fascinated with mathematics, but frustrated that there were many aspects of the learning that proved to be difficult or impossible by using braille. He complained that it was easy to confuse letters and numbers in certain situations; the more complicated math became, the more limited was the use of braille.

Although his college advisors tried to steer him in other directions, reminding him about the difficulty of using braille in math, Nemeth was determined to figure a solution. He did shift his studies at Columbia University to psychology and graduated with a Master's Degree in 1942, but his love of math persisted and he began to tinker with the braille code, trying to find a solution to his dilemma. He eventually came up with a pattern, using the six-dot cell that is the foundation of braille, creating symbols for the basics of addition and subtraction but also for the complexities of differential calculus. He even made a Braille slide rule.

In 1950, he presented his model to the American Joint Uniform Braille Committee. By the mid-1950s, the Nemeth Code had been adopted by national groups and incorporated into textbooks, providing him with a new career and current and future students who were blind an option to pursue their passion in math, science, technology and engineering.

Attributions:

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Abraham_Nemeth

Wikipedia (Nemeth Code): http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nemeth_Braille

The Telegraph: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/10509066/Abraham-Nemeth-obituary.html>

Tuesday, October 21, 2014:

DRENNAN, LILLIE ELIZABETH MCGEE: Truck Driver (1897 – 1974)

Lillie Drennan was the first licensed female truck driver and trucking-firm owner in Texas (and the U.S.). It was not an easy road getting there, though; Drennan had almost completely lost her hearing by the time she was in her early 20s, probably the result of scarlet fever a few years before. She and her husband started a trucking business in 1928 in response to the oil boom near Hempstead. When the couple divorced a year later, she took over the company.

Drennan received her commercial truck-driver's license in 1929 after the Railroad Commission began supervising the motor-freight business in the state. Commission examiners appeared reluctant to grant her a license, contending that her hearing impairment would make her a safety risk. But she effectively argued her case, based on her driving record: "If any man can beat my record I'll just get out of here," she told them.

In her career as a truck driver and owner, she was known for having the best safety record of any truck driver. She received awards from the Railroad Commission and the Texas Motor Transportation Association. She also demonstrated her driving skills as a guest participant on a Texas Motor Transport Association "Roadeo" obstacle course at the state fairgrounds in Dallas in 1950. During World War II, the U.S. Army praised Drennan's success in its recruiting campaign to attract women truck drivers for the quartermaster corps.

Drennan also achieved national fame for her colorful personality. Attired in her khaki pants and shirt, laced work boots, and a ten-gallon hat, she placed a loaded revolver by her side when she drove, although she never used it. In 1943 she visited Hollywood, where the Los Angeles *Times* hailed her as a "dry land Tugboat Annie." Although she entered into negotiations for a movie based upon her life, the production apparently never occurred. The city of Hempstead honored her with a banquet on Six-Shooter Junction Day in 1946; such luminaries as Texas Department of Public Safety director Homer Garrison and future governor Beauford Jester attended.

Attributions:

Texas State Historical Association: <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fdr15>

BubbaJunk: <http://www.bubbajunk.com/article/541>

Wednesday, October 22, 2014:

JOHN WESLEY POWELL: Powell Geographic Expedition (1834 – 1902)

John Wesley Powell is best known for the 1869 Powell Geographic Expedition, a three-month river trip down the Green and Colorado rivers, including the first known passage through the Grand Canyon. But his famed career as a geologist, explorer of the American West and acclaimed researcher expands beyond that.

Powell served in the Union Army during the Civil War, and at the Battle of Shiloh he lost most of his right arm. After recuperation, he continued to serve on the battleground and spent much of his time while in the trenches studying the rocks and formations, his true passion. After leaving the army, Powell became a professor of geology at Illinois Wesleyan University.

Beginning in 1867, Powell led a series of expeditions into the Rocky Mountains and around the Green and Colorado rivers. In 1869, he set out to explore the Colorado River and the Grand Canyon. Gathering nine men, four boats and food for 10 months, he set out from Green River, Wyoming. Passing through dangerous rapids, the group passed down the Green River to its confluence with the Colorado River, traveling through canyons in Utah, and completed the journey on August 13, 1869. Powell retraced the route in 1871–1872 with another expedition, resulting in photographs, an accurate map and various papers.

Later, Powell hosted intellectual gatherings in his home which came to be known as the Cosmos Club, which continues today with members elected to the club for their contributions to scholarship and civic activism. Powell was known as a champion of land preservation and conservation. In 1881, Powell was appointed the second director of the US Geological Survey, a post he held until 1894. He was also the director of the Bureau of Ethnology at the Smithsonian Institution until his death. Under his leadership, the Smithsonian published an influential classification of North American Indian languages.

Attributions:

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Wesley_Powell

Powell Museum: http://www.powellmuseum.org/museum_powell.php

Cosmos Club: <https://www.cosmosclub.org/>

Thursday, October 23, 2014:

DAN AYKROYD: Actor, Comedian, Singer (1952 – present)

Dan Aykroyd, a Canadian-born actor, comedian and singer, is best known for his role in the movie *Ghostbusters* and his collaboration with John Belushi to form the famous blues band, The Blues Brothers. Aykroyd was also one of the original “Not Ready for Prime Time Players” on the *Saturday Night Live* TV series, where he earned fame for his humorous impersonations of celebrities. He has been nominated for several Emmy and Oscar Awards.

In recent radio and print interviews, Aykroyd has acknowledged that he has mild Tourette's syndrome and high-functioning Asperger's. He talked about how therapy helped ease his Tourette's symptoms by his mid-teens, and how he had learned to channel his Asperger's into creativity for his acting and singing career. His symptoms, he has said, include an obsession with ghosts and with law enforcement. At one point, he explains, that obsession led to his study of the real-life ghost hunter Hans Holzer, which led to the idea for the film *Ghostbusters*.

Attributions:

Biography: <http://www.biography.com/people/dan-aykroyd-9193409#synopsis>

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dan_Aykroyd

Daily Mail Online: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-2521032/Dan-Aykroyd-I-Aspergers--symptoms-included-obsessed-ghosts.html>

Friday, October 24, 2014:

YOSEMITE NATIONAL PARK: 35TH Anniversary of the Deaf Services Program

The Deaf Services Program in Yosemite National Park in California was established in 1979 with its first American Sign Language (ASL) interpreter, Maureen Fitzgerald, and has been steadily growing since. Yosemite is considered to be the only National Park that offers a full Deaf Services Program, which involves more than simply having a sign language interpreter on hand for tours; it involves social activities, a Junior Ranger program, special nature walks, etc.

According to Yosemite ranger Jessica Cole, Yosemite was also the first National Park to have a public video phone (VP) installed. Because cell reception can be spotty, pay phones are provided around the park for hearing people. Since videophones have become one of the standard methods of communication in the deaf community, the park rangers considered having a VP in Yosemite as necessary to ensure equal access to communication.

The celebration of the program's 35th Anniversary will be held October 24th through the 26th in the Yosemite Valley area of the park. There will be special programs presented in ASL and volunteer interpreters ready to interpret any of the regularly scheduled park programs. The weekend's programming will include an ASL Social in Curry Village, an ASL Junior Rangers Program, and other activities, including a formal Yosemite Deaf Services 35th Anniversary ceremony.

The event is open to the public. For more information, visit the Yosemite National Park website at <http://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/deafservices.htm>

Attributions:

Sorenson VPS website: http://www.sorensonvrs.com/september_2014_deaf_events_in_yosemite

ASL and captioned video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ySfwUvy2bU4&feature=youtu.be>

Monday, October 27, 2014:

JAMES EARL JONES: Actor (1931 – present)

The voice of James Earl Jones is probably one of the most recognizable ever. He has starred in many movies, including *The Great White Hope*, *Field of Dreams* and *The Hunt for Red October*, as well as stage plays such as *Othello*, *Driving Miss Daisy* and *Much Ado About Nothing*. But it is his distinctive voice for which he is best known – his was the voice of Darth Vader in the original *Star Wars* trilogy, of Mufasa in *The Lion King*, of the CNN tagline, and many other voice-overs. Jones has been called one of the greatest actors and greatest voices in U.S. history.

To create such a career was a challenge for Jones. As a child, he developed a severe stutter and became almost non-verbal for many years. He refused to speak in school until a high school teacher, speaking to him about a poem Jones had written, convinced him to read it in front of the class. Jones did so successfully, without stuttering, and that increased confidence inspired him to go on to study drama at Michigan University.

Certain consonants, Jones said in an interview with the Daily Mail, set off a stutter (such as the sound of “M”) so he avoids them. But that can be a great advantage for people who stutter, he added, as they tend to encourage people with a stutter to develop a greater vocabulary because they have to have more choices of words at their disposal.

Jones’s career led to two Emmy awards, several Tony awards, a Golden Globe award and numerous nominations in various fields. In 1985, he was inducted into the American Theater Hall of Fame. In 2008, he was presented the Screen Actors Guild Life Achievement Award, and in 2011, the Academy Honorary Award. He also received the Monte Cristo Award in 2011 from The Stuttering Foundation in recognition of his inspiration to all who have a stutter, and is featured in The Stuttering Foundation’s widely distributed brochure.

Attributions:

The Stuttering Foundation: <http://www.stutteringhelp.org/content/james-earl-jones-honored>

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/James_Earl_Jones

The Daily Mail Online: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/health/article-1255955/James-Earl-Jones-My-stutter-bad-I-barely-spoke-years.html>

Tuesday, October 28, 2014:

JIM ABBOTT: Major League Baseball Player (1967 – present)

James Anthony Abbot was born without a right hand, but he went on to be known as one of the most notable, award-winning Major League Baseball players in history.

Abbott showed interest in sports at an early age, and his parents encouraged him to try soccer, which didn’t depend on the use of his hands. But Abbott didn’t care for soccer. Instead, he

practiced over and over throwing a rubber ball against a brick wall and catching it when it bounced back. He learned to do a hand-glove switch so that he could throw and catch with the same hand. At the age of 11, he joined a Little League team and threw a no-hitter in the first game he pitched. His batting average was notable, too; in high school, he hit seven homers and had a batting average of .427.

Abbott was recruited by the California Angels in his last year in college, despite skeptics who thought his disability would keep him from playing on a professional level. He went on to have a successful career with the New York Yankees, Chicago White Sox, and Milwaukee Brewers. In 1993, while pitching for the Yankees, Abbott pitched a no-hitter against the Cleveland Indians.

In 2007, Abbott was elected to the College Baseball Hall of Fame for his performance at the University of Michigan. He also received the U.S. Sports Academy's Courage Award, the Golden Spikes Award, and the Boston Red Sox Tony Conigliaro Award, given to a player who overcomes an obstacle and adversity.

Abbott retired from baseball in 1999. Today he works with the U.S. Department of Labor Office of Disability Employment Policy (ODEP) on initiatives to hire people with disabilities, as well as being a Guest Pitching Instructor during Spring Training for the Los Angeles Angels and accepting invitations as a motivational speaker.

Attributions:

Jim Abbott's website: <http://www.jimabbott.net/biography.html?submenuheader=0>

Society for American Baseball Research: <http://sabr.org/bioproj/person/635e3a93>

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jim_Abbott

Wednesday, October 29, 2014:

ELIZABETH STHRESHLEY TOWNSEND: Braille Typewriter (? – 1919)

Elizabeth Sthreshley Townsend was born in Vicksburg, Mississippi and her family moved to Texas when she was a small child. She graduated from Sam Houston Normal Institute in 1886 and accepted a position in Austin in the literary department of the Texas Institute for the Blind, later named the Texas School for the Blind. While working there in 1890, she received a patent for her invention of the punctograph, a braille typewriter.

She married George F. Townsend in 1894, stopped teaching at the Institute for the Blind, and worked for a time in her husband's photography studio on Congress Avenue. When her husband began working with X-ray equipment, Mrs. Townsend learned to use it, too. Later, she worked for several years as an assistant at the Torbett Sanatorium in Marlin.

Attributions:

Wikipedia: <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ftokp>

American Printing House for the Blind:

http://www.aph.org/museum/virtual_exhibit/exhibit2/e20001a.htm

Thursday, October 30, 2014:

ITZHAK PERLMAN (1945 – present)

Itzhak Perlman is one of the most notable violinists in the world, mostly recognized for his solo performances of classical music, along with his charm and charisma on stage. Perlman was born in Israel and trained at the Academy of Music in Tel Aviv. He gave his first recital in Tel Aviv at the age of ten, and later came to New York where he appeared on the Ed Sullivan Show in 1958 at the age of 13, propelling his talent and fame worldwide.

Perlman had polio when he was just four years old which left his legs completely paralyzed. He uses crutches or an electric wheelchair, and he plays seated.

In January 2009, Perlman took part in the Inauguration ceremony for President Obama, performing a piece written specifically for the occasion. In 2003, he received the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts Honor, celebrating his contributions to the cultural and educational life of our nation. In 2007, he performed at the State Dinner for Her Majesty The Queen and His Royal Highness The Duke of Edinburgh, hosted by President George W. Bush at the White House.

Perlman has also performed as a conductor with the New York Philharmonic, Chicago Symphony, Berlin Philharmonic, and dozens of others across the world. He has received four Emmy awards, most recently for the PBS documentary titled *Fiddling for the Future*, a film about the Perlman Music Program. In 2008, he was honored with a Grammy Lifetime Achievement Award for excellence in the recording arts. In 2000, President Bill Clinton awarded him the National Medal of Arts. Recently, he has become very active in educational activities, teaching full time at the Perlman Music Program each summer.

Attributions:

Itzhak Perlman website: <http://www.itzhakperlman.com/about/>

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Itzhak_Perlman

Biography.com: <http://www.biography.com/people/itzhak-perlman-9437933#synopsis>

Friday, October 31, 2014:

JULIETTE GORDON LOW: Girl Scout Founder's Day (1860 – 1927)

Juliette Gordon Low was the founder of the Girl Scouts of the USA; because her birthday is October 31, this date is celebrated each year as Girl Scouts Founder's Day.

For much of her life, Low had multiple chronic ear infections and lost most of her hearing in one ear because of improper treatment. At her wedding, when she was 26, she lost hearing in her

other ear after a grain of good-luck rice thrown at the event lodged in her ear, puncturing the eardrum and resulting in an infection and total loss of hearing in that ear.

Low was living in Scotland when she became friends with Robert Baden-Powell, who had started the Boy Scout movement. Because Low loved exploring, learning, writing, sports and arts, and because she also loved sharing skills, she decided to form a similar movement for girls in the U.S. She created the first chapter formation in Savannah, Georgia in 1912, with 18 girls signed up. Girl Scouts now have about 3.7 million members and is the largest educational organization for girls in the world. Girl Scouts have various levels for different ages; Low's nickname as a child was "Daisy," and so the younger groups of Girl Scouts took on that name.

During her life, and after her death in 1927, Low received many recognitions and honors, including induction into the National Women's Hall of Fame; a federal building in her name in Savannah; at least two schools named for her (in Savannah and Anaheim, CA); a postage stamp in her name in 1948; a bust sculpture of Low which sits in the state capitol of Georgia; a wax sculpture in the traveling exhibit, The Deaf World in Wax; a medallion honoring her life in the Extra Miles Point of Light Volunteer Walkway in Washington, DC; and, in 2012, the posthumous award of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian award in the U.S., presented to her by President Obama.

Attributions:

Girl Scouts: http://www.girlscouts.org/who_we_are/history/low_biography/

Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Juliette_Gordon_Low

October 2014 Disability History Month Facts:

Thursday, October 1, 2015:

ECHO: Service Animal to John Bramblitt (Texan), inducted into the TVMF Hall of Fame



Painting of Echo by John Bramblitt

Last year, the Texas Veterinary Medical Foundation (TVMF) announced that Echo, a loyal companion and guide dog to John Bramblitt of Denton, was to be inducted into the 2014 Texas Animal Hall of Fame.

John Bramblitt, an artist who is blind, was selected as the winner of the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities' [2013 Texas NDEAM Poster Art](#) contest; his winning piece, *Cowboy Sunset*, was used in the design of that year's Texas NDEAM Poster. John is also the author of the book *Shouting in the Dark*, his story of

losing his sight and about his pursuit of art, which received the [2013 Barbara Jordan Media Award](#).

Echo, his guide dog, was inducted into TVMF as the 2014 winner in the Professional category, which recognizes a remarkable specially-trained assistance animal. Echo was trained at Guide Dogs of Texas, the only guide dog school in the state, which provides guide dogs for Texans who are visually impaired to increase their freedom, mobility and independence. Echo's temperament, TVMF reported, is beautifully suited for guide work; she is willing, calm, confident and smart. She was the first guide dog to know the difference between men's and women's restrooms, which is quickly becoming standard training for guide dogs. Whether it's navigating crowds at a busy airport or on the streets of a new city, Echo's ability to figure out complex problems has given John the confidence to travel stress-free.

Echo and John have been an unstoppable team since 2009. Echo has given a visual artist who is blind the ability to share his vision with the world. She has given John the freedom to travel and navigate the world in a way that would have been impossible in the past and has impacted John in ways in which he will be forever grateful.

Attributions:

TVMF Article: <https://tvma.azurewebsites.net/Affiliates/TVMF/Our-Voice/TVMF-Latest-News>

John Bramblitt website: <http://bramblitt.myshopify.com/>

Friday, October 2, 2015:

ADAM KISSIAH: NASA Engineer, invented the Cochlear Implant (1947 – present)

In the 1960s, Adam Kissiah, an engineer for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), began to experience hearing loss. After several surgeries that provided no improvement, Kissiah put his engineering skills in electronics to work to invent what is now known as the Cochlear Implant, a surgically implantable device that provides hearing sensation for people with severe or profound hearing loss who receive little or no benefit from hearing aids.

Kissiah, while working for NASA, spent his lunch breaks and evenings in the Kennedy Space Center's library for about three years, studying various electronic approaches to what he hoped to create – a device that would not just amplify sound, but rather would select speech signal information and produce a pattern of electrical impulses in the ear, where a microphone would pick up the signals and transmit them to a speech processor that would convert them into digital signals.

In 1977, NASA helped Kissiah obtain a patent for his invention, which came to be known as the Cochlear Implant; soon after, he sold the rights to a company for commercial development. In 2002, Kissiah received the Space Act Award for his engineering ingenuity in the invention of the device; in 2003, he was inducted into the Space Foundation's U.S. Space Technology Hall of Fame.

Attributions:

SpinOff NASA: http://spinoff.nasa.gov/spinoff2003/hm_3.html

Hear Again cochlear implant: http://hearagain.org/implantable_hearing_device.htm

Hear Again Bio: http://hearagain.org/adam_kissiah_biography.htm

Hear Again History: http://hearagain.org/cochlear_implant_history.htm

Monday, October 5, 2015:

HISTORY OF SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Special Olympics, now a global movement which has grown to more than 4.4 million athletes in 170 countries, began in the 1950s and early 1960s as a summer day camp for young people with disabilities, held in Eunice Kennedy Shriver's own backyard. Officially founded in 1968 with the first International Special Olympics Summer Games in Chicago, the overall goal of Special Olympics has been to unleash the human spirit through the transformative power and joy of sports, empowering people with intellectual disabilities to become accepted and valued members of their communities, which leads to a more respectful and inclusive society for all. Using sports as the catalyst and programming around health and education, Special Olympics is fighting inactivity, injustice and intolerance.



Forever Stamp

This year, in July 2015, the Special Olympics World Games were held in Los Angeles, featuring competitions in aquatics, gymnastics, track and field, basketball, soccer, and various other sports involving more than 6,500 athletes with intellectual disabilities from 165 nations around the world. In May, 2015, the U.S. Postal Service celebrated the Special Olympics World Games by issuing a Forever Stamp commemorating the event, featuring the LA World Games logo and showcasing the colors of the flags of all the countries participating.

Special Olympics Texas (SOTX), which began in 1969, hosted 18 of the Special Olympics Summer Games beginning in 1974. SOTX was established as a separate, non-profit organization in 1978, and now hosts six statewide events annually: Summer Games, Equestrian, Sailing/Kayaking, Fall Classic, Winter Games and Flag Football. Statewide competition locations vary approximately every three years. **Today**, with more than 40,000 athletes and offering 22 sports at more than 300 competitions, Special Olympics Texas is one of the largest Special Olympics programs in the world.

Attributions:

Special Olympics History: <http://www.specialolympics.org/history.aspx>

Special Olympics World Games: <http://www.specialolympics.org/los-angeles-2015.aspx>

SO World Games Forever Stamp:

https://store.usps.com/store/browse/productDetailSingleSku.jsp?productId=S_472804

SOTX History: <http://www.sotx.org/about/history.html>

Tuesday, October 6, 2015:

WAYLON JENNINGS: Singer, Songwriter, Musician, Actor (1937 – 2002)

Waylon Jennings, famous country singer, was born in Littlefield, Texas, and got hooked on music at a young age; he began playing guitar at age 8 and had his first public performance at age 12. Noted for his distinct singing voice with a rough edge and his musical talent, he quickly became a sought-after performer, DJ, and, eventually, recording artist. Jennings performed with many well-known musicians, including Buddy Holly, Willie Nelson, Kris Kristofferson, Johnny Cash, and others. Troubled by the insider culture of country singers in Nashville, Jennings was one of the founders and promoters of a musical movement that came to be known as “Outlaw Country.”

Jennings also appeared on TV (*The Dukes of Hazzard*) and in movies (*Maverick* and *Stagecoach*), but was best known for his music with such tunes as *Jole Blon*; *Don't Think Twice*; *Brown-Eyed Handsome Man*; *Mamas, Don't Let Your Babies Grow Up to Be Cowboys*; and many other classics. Although most of Jennings' work was done on his own, he had many hits and performances by partnering with others, such as The Highwaymen (Johnny Cash, Willie Nelson, and Kris Kristofferson), The Old Dogs (Jerry Reed, Mel Tillis, Bobbie Bare) and The Outlaws (Willie Nelson, Jessi Colter, Tompall Glasser). During his career, Waylon Jennings received many awards, including Male Vocalist of the Year in 1975, Album of the Year in 1976, and a Grammy Award in 1979. He was inducted into the Country Music Hall of Fame in 2001.

In the early 1990s, Jennings was diagnosed with diabetes. In 2001, he had a foot amputated due to complications from the diabetes. He continued to travel and perform until his death in 2002.

Attributions:

Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Waylon_Jennings

Biography.com: <http://www.biography.com/people/waylon-jennings-9354063#country-star>

Waylon Jennings website: <http://waylonjennings.com/>

Wednesday, October 7, 2015:

DR. OLIVER SACKS: Neurologist, Author (1933 – 2015)

Oliver Sacks, known as the “Poet Laureate of Contemporary Medicine,” was a neurologist, best-selling author (*The Man Who Mistook His Wife for a Hat*; *Musicophilia*; *Hallucinations*; others), and professor at the NYU School of Medicine. He was highly regarded in the newly emerging field of neuroscience, where he investigated and helped interpret dozens of neurological disorders, such as Tourette’s syndrome, autism, schizophrenia, Alzheimer’s disease, epilepsy, Parkinson’s disease, and many others. He investigated the world of Deaf people and sign language in his book titled *Seeing Voices*, people who have color blindness in his book titled *The Island of the Colorblind*, and Temple Grandin’s autism in his book titled *An Anthropologist on Mars*.

Sacks himself had disabilities that often fed his curiosity to investigate possible causes. He experienced severe migraines, which led him to study the condition and write the book *Migraine*. A serious encounter with a bull on a desolate mountain in Norway left Sacks with a devastating leg injury that led to serious neurological aftereffects, as chronicled in his book, *A Leg to Stand On*. Sacks also had a visual impairment caused by a uveal melanoma and the loss of his stereoscopic vision due to the radiation therapy. And he had prosopagnosia, known as “face blindness,” in which the ability to recognize faces is impaired.

Attributions:

Oliver Sacks website: <http://www.oliversacks.com/about-oliver-sacks/>

Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Oliver_Sacks

Biography.com: <http://www.biography.com/people/oliver-sacks-9468963>

Thursday, October 8, 2015:

ALICE WALKER: Author of *The Color Purple* (1944 – present)

Alice Walker, author of the famed Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *The Color Purple*, is an African-American woman who grew up on a sharecropper farm in Georgia under strict Jim Crow laws. Inspired by tales from her storytelling grandfather, Walker started writing at the age of 8; her parents were strong advocates of education and started her in school when she was just four years old.

When Walker was a child, she was injured in one eye from a BB gun shot fired by her brother. Because her parents had no car, it was a week before they could get her to a doctor, and by that time she had completely lost vision in that eye. Because of the scar tissue that had grown over her eye, Walker felt self-conscious and shy and chose to spend most of her time alone. That solitude, she says, is what led her to discover writing as her passion.

Upon graduation from high school, Walker received a college scholarship and became actively involved in the growing Civil Rights movement. Her first book, a collection of poetry titled *Once*, was published in 1968, and her first novel, *The Third Life of Grange Copeland*, was published in 1970. *The Color Purple*, published in 1982, received both the Pulitzer Prize and the American Book Award and in 1985 was made into a movie directed by Steven Spielberg; the movie received 11 Academy Award nominations.

Attributions:

Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alice_Walker

World Biography: <http://www.notablebiographies.com/Tu-We/Walker-Alice.html>

Poem Hunter: <http://www.poemhunter.com/alice-walker/biography/>

Friday, October 9, 2015:

WORLD MENTAL HEALTH DAY

The World Federation for Mental Health (WFMH) has designated October 10 each year to be World Mental Health Day. The intent is to help raise awareness within communities, businesses, educational establishments, media, and all other aspects of society in regards to many of the misconceptions about mental illness and behavioral disorders, and to promote a more open attitude and approach to treatment.

The theme for this year's World Mental Health Day is "Dignity in Mental Health." WFMH chose the theme based on its commitment to public education at all levels of society. In their annual report, they stated that they knew that the word "dignity" could be difficult to define precisely, but felt that the overall message was aimed at various cultures and situations, to be defined according to local circumstances and needs. The report, available on the WFMH website, notes that "a concern for dignity counters the discrimination and bias that are all too often encountered by people with mental illness."

The World Federation for Mental Health was founded in 1948, the same year as the United Nations and the World Health Organization. WFMH has a long history of advocacy for improving mental health care, promoting mental health, and educating the public about mental illnesses. Over the years, their involvement and oversight has shown that one in four adults will experience mental health issues at some point in their lives. Too often, people with mental illness frequently face hurdles in obtaining the help that they need.

World Mental Health Day is meant as an outreach tool to all members of society: to people with mental health issues to encourage them to stick with their hopes and dreams and to pursue appropriate paths to support, treatment and success; to government officials worldwide to ensure that their legislation regarding mental health issues are consistent with the 1948 U.N. Declaration of Human Rights; and to society in general to remind each of us that our moral values are measured by how we treat all people.

Attributions:

WFMH website: <http://wfmh.com/>

World Health Organization: http://www.who.int/mental_health/world-mental-health-day/en/

Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Mental_Health_Day

Monday, October 12, 2015:

DR. HENRY VISCARDI, JR: Namesake of Viscardi Center (1912 – 2004)

Henry Viscardi, Jr. was born with short legs that ended mid-thigh and he spent most of his first few years of life in the hospital. Doctors finally were able to fit his legs with padded boots which enabled him to walk. By the time Viscardi was in his 20s, though, the padded boots were no longer useful and his legs were swollen. His family physician, Dr. Robert Yanover, found prosthetic legs that Viscardi was able to use; the doctor refused payment for them, simply telling Viscardi to “bring to others what I brought to you, and I’ll be well repaid.”

And so he did. Viscardi served as field officer for Red Cross right after the Pearl Harbor attack and was assigned to Walter Reed Army Hospital in Washington to work with amputees from World War II. In 1949, he was recruited to take over an organization called JOB (Just One Break), a program to integrate people with disabilities, especially veterans, into the workplace. A few years later, Viscardi started Abilities, Inc., a non-profit enterprise to find private jobs for people with disabilities. His namesake, the Viscardi Center in New York, was established in 1952 as a coalition of Abilities, Inc and other resources to help educate, employ and empower people with disabilities.

Viscardi served as a disability advisor to eight presidents, from Franklin D. Roosevelt to Jimmy Carter, and he established an accredited private school for children with severe physical disabilities. His efforts toward inclusive education inspired various legislation, including the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1975 and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. The Viscardi Center received the New Freedom Initiative Award in 2003.

Attributions:

Viscardi Center: <http://www.viscardicenter.org/about/history/history.html>

Britannica: <http://www.britannica.com/biography/Henry-Viscardi-Jr>

U.S. ODEP: <https://usodep.blogs.govdelivery.com/2015/08/31/one-mans-promise-the-road-to-awards-recognizing-leaders-with-disabilities/>

NY Times: <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/04/16/nyregion/henry-viscardi-jr-a-voice-for-the-disabled-dies-at-91.html>

Boston Globe:

http://www.boston.com/news/globe/obituaries/articles/2004/04/16/henry_viscardi_jr_at_age_91_leading_advocate_for_disabled/?page=full

Tuesday, October 13, 2015:

ADA LOVELACE: First Computer Programmer (1815 – 1852)

October 13, 2015, is celebrated internationally as Ada Lovelace Day, in honor of the achievements of women in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM).

Augusta Ada King, Countess of Lovelace, the daughter of the famous poet Lord Byron, was an English mathematician and writer, chiefly known for her work on Charles Babbage's early mechanical general-purpose computer, the Analytical Engine (Babbage is an icon in the computer field, known for his innovative concept of a programmable computer). Lovelace's notes on the engine include what is recognized as the first algorithm intended to be carried out by a machine. Because of this, she is often regarded as the first computer programmer. Also, due to her research and writing meant to explain the concept of computer programming, she discovered a glitch in one of Babbage's equations – what we now refer to as a “bug” – making her possibly the world's first “debugger.”

Lovelace's approach to the novel idea of computer programming came from what she referred to as her mindset of “poetical science,” examining how individuals and society related to technology. She had an ongoing fascination with how the brain works, in part to her concern about her father's, and possibly her own, mental illness, and worked on a mathematical model for how the brain gives rise to thoughts and nerves to feelings. Although that project was never successful, Lovelace continued to explore related subjects, such as the role of magnetism in brain functions. Babbage was impressed by Lovelace's intellect and analytical skills, and came to call her The Enchantress of Numbers.

Ada Lovelace had many illnesses in her youth, leading to a visual impairment and to loss of the use of her legs from a bout with measles; she used crutches for most of her life. She died at the age of 36 from uterine cancer, shortly after the publication of her work, “Sketch of the Analytical Engine, with Notes from the Translator.” The Analytical Engine remained a vision until Lovelace's notes became one of the critical documents to inspire Alan Turing's work on the first modern computers in the 1940s.

The computer language known as “Ada,” created for the U.S. Department of Defense was named for Lovelace. Each year the British Computer Society issues a medal in her name. The Ada Initiative, founded in 2011, is a non-profit organization to encourage women's participation in open source technology.

Attributions:

Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ada_Lovelace

Finding Ada: <http://findingada.com/>

Ada Initiative: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ada_Initiative

Wednesday, October 14, 2015:

HISTORY OF WHITE CANE SAFETY DAY

On October 6, 1964, a joint resolution of the U.S. Congress (HR 753) was signed into law, authorizing the President of the United States to proclaim October 15 of each year as White Cane Safety Day. Within a few hours of the passage of the resolution, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the first official White Cane Safety Day Proclamation, emphasizing the significance of the use of the white cane as both a tool and as a visible symbol.

James Biggs of England claims to have invented the white cane in 1921. Prior to that, canes were used by people who were blind, but the idea of painting the cane white was to help ensure that other pedestrians and especially vehicles were more likely to see the cane and to be aware that it was a person who was blind using the cane to navigate, not just as a walking stick.

In the U.S., introduction of the white cane in 1930 has been attributed to George Bonham, a member of the Lions Club, when he spotted a man using a black cane to navigate. He realized that drivers probably didn't see the cane and were unaware that the man was blind, putting him at more risk of being hit. Lions Club International started a movement promoting the use of white canes held diagonally as identification of a person who is blind. Soon after, many state and city governments passed laws allowing users of white canes protections and right-of-way.

The Texas law regarding the use of white canes states that no one other than a person who is blind can carry a white cane on the streets, and that the driver of a vehicle approaching an intersection or crosswalk where a pedestrian guided by an assistance animal or carrying a white cane is crossing or attempting to cross shall take necessary precautions to avoid injuring or endangering the pedestrian. The driver shall bring the vehicle to a full stop if injury or danger can be avoided only by that action.

White Cane Safety Day is celebrated in cities and towns all over Texas and the U.S. on October 15 (or other dates in October), hoping to raise awareness and ensure safe navigation for people who are blind.

Attributions:

American Council of the Blind: http://www.acb.org/tennessee/white_cane_history.html

National Federation of the Blind: <https://nfb.org/white-cane-safety-day>

Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/White_Cane_Safety_Day

White Cane Day Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/whitecaneday>

Thursday, October 15, 2015:

STELLA YOUNG: Comedian, Disability Advocate (1982 – 2014)

Stella Jane Young was born in Australia with osteogenesis imperfecta (OI), a congenital bone disorder characterized by brittle bones and defective connective tissue. She used a wheelchair for most of her life, and became a passionate advocate for people with disabilities at a young age. When she was 14 years old, she started auditing shops in her hometown for accessibility.

Young earned degrees in journalism, public relations, and education. For a while she worked as a secondary school teacher, as an educator in public programs at Melbourne Museum, and as editor for a disability website, *Ramp Up*. She hosted eight seasons of *No Limits*, a disability culture program on community television, and made her festival debut with a comedy performance at the 2014 Melbourne International Comedy Festival, where she won the award for Best Newcomer.

Her comedy routines gained strong followings because of her sometimes biting critiques of what she called “disability porn,” claiming that many public portrayals of people with disabilities objectified them rather than respected them. Although she kept her typical sense of humor, her approach was to encourage a more inclusive and accepting perception of all people with disabilities. She gained worldwide fame for her TED Talk in April, 2014, titled “I’m Not Your Inspiration, Thank You Very Much.”

Young passed away unexpectedly in December, 2014.

Attributions:

TED Talks:

http://www.ted.com/talks/stella_young_i_m_not_your_inspiration_thank_you_very_much?language=en

BBC News: <http://www.bbc.com/news/blogs-ouch-30385421>

Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stella_Young

Friday, October 16, 2015:

THE CAIRO TOE: First Known Prosthesis

Made of wood and leather, an artificial toe was found on the mummified body of an ancient Egyptian noblewoman in a tomb near Luxor; researchers believe the toe to have been created about 950 B.C., making it the oldest known prosthesis.



Wooden Prosthetic toe

The Cairo Toe, as it came to be known, is made mostly of stained wood with the parts held together by leather thread. Because of its specific design, with the shape of the toe and the carefully carved toenail, the toe is believed to have been a true prosthesis, not just a cosmetic trinket sometimes used as a ritualistic aspect of burials or simply for appearances. Researchers asked volunteers who were missing their big toe to try walking with the Cairo Toe and all found that it made balance and mobility much easier. The prosthetic toe also was found to not cause any high-pressure points for the wearers, attesting to the thoughtful design.

Attributions:

Live Science: <http://www.livescience.com/23642-prosthetic-toes-egypt.html>

The Atlantic: <http://www.theatlantic.com/technology/archive/2013/11/the-perfect-3-000-year-old-toe-a-brief-history-of-prosthetic-limbs/281653/>

Monday, October 19, 2015:

RICHARD BRANSON: Virgin Groups (1950 – Present)

Richard Branson is an entrepreneur and the owner of Virgin Groups, a business that includes more than 100 companies in over 50 countries, including Virgin Galactic, the first commercial spaceline. Branson is known worldwide for his adventurous spirit and sporting achievements, including crossing oceans in a hot air balloon.

Branson, born in England, nearly failed out of his school as a child due to his dyslexia. Having a hard time keeping up with the structured education at the time, Branson dropped out of school at the age of 16 and started his own business – a youth-culture magazine titled *Student*. Shortly after, he opened a record company called Virgin Records to help raise money for distribution of his magazine; the record company was highly successful, eventually involving well-known artists such as the Rolling Stones and Genesis, making Virgin one of the top six record companies in the world. That accomplishment started Branson on his path to being a successful and innovative entrepreneur, establishing businesses as diverse as a train company, a luxury game preserve, a mobile phone company, and many other endeavors. He was knighted in 1999 for his contribution to entrepreneurship.

In his 2012 book, *Like a Virgin: Secrets They Won't Teach You at Business School*, Branson talks about how his dyslexia actually helped him think more creatively. While some may consider dyslexia to be a weakness, he said, he considers it to be one of his greatest strengths. In a magazine interview about his dyslexia, Branson said, "I need things to be simple for myself. Therefore Virgin, I think, when we launch a financial service company or a bank, we do not use jargon. Everything is very clear-cut, very simple. I think people have an affinity to the Virgin brand because we don't talk above them or talk down to them." Branson keeps a blog that focuses on dyslexia, and he uses that platform to connect with and encourage others with dyslexia to see the advantage of "different thinking."

Attributions:

Virgin biography website: <http://www.virgin.com/richard-branson/biography>

Virgin blog website: <http://www.virgin.com/richard-branson/my-advice-for-dyslexics>

Biography website: <http://www.biography.com/people/richard-branson-9224520#business-expansion>

Business Insider: <http://www.businessinsider.com/richard-branson-dyslexia-as-advantage-2015-4>

Being Dyslexic: <http://www.beingdyslexic.co.uk/pages/information/dyslexia-inspiration/famous-dyslexics/richard-branson.php>

Tuesday, October 20, 2015:

HISTORY OF BEEP BASEBALL

Beep Baseball has evolved from its initial beginnings in the 1960s to become a notable sport for players who are blind, competing in a way that keeps the sport challenging but without the traditional focus on the visual part of the game. The ball, the pitcher, the bases, and the fielders all participate within specific rules that allow the players' hearing and touch to guide the sport.

The original Beep Baseball – a softball with an audio tone – was developed by Charlie Fairbanks, a telephone engineer for Mountain Bell (now Qwest), at the request of the principal of the Colorado Springs School for the Blind. The intent then was to allow students who were blind to play catch and keep-away. The original ball was simply a softball with a beeping device inserted into it. Soon after, the students asked for a similar version that they could hit with a bat without damaging it, and Vern Grimes designed a ball with the sound mechanism embedded in a latex-rubber compound.

Various versions of the Beep Baseball game quickly began to evolve, tweaking the rules and field layout to facilitate competitive games. Ralph Rock of Telephone Pioneers of America came up with rules and field design to accommodate players who were blind, and built a small scale model of the of the baseball diamond to help familiarize players with the layout; a site in San Francisco Golden Gate Park was set aside for the field, and the first beep baseball game was played there in April 1972. John Ross of Minnesota added more specifics to the game in the mid-1970s, getting rid of the hitter playing off a tee and the common practice of walking to the base.

After an early game was televised throughout the United States, Hank Ketchum, the creator of the comic strip “Dennis the Menace,” published a segment with Dennis playing the game. Circulation of approximately one million copies of Dennis the Menace's game helped make the public aware of the game of beep baseball. In 1973, a beep ball, a model playing field, and a recorded message about the game were placed in the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown, New York.

The rules of Beep Baseball today deem that the pitcher and the batter are on the same team (the pitcher does a count-down so the batter is prepared for the pitch); that all batters and fielders wear black-out eyewear to avoid giving an advantage to those who may have limited vision but are considered legally blind; that pitchers, catchers, and umpires, as well as one or two field spotters, have unimpaired vision; that there are only two bases, each fitted with a sound unit that buzzes; that the batter is allowed four strikes; and other rules that match the accommodations for the players, while keeping the sport highly competitive. The National Beep Baseball Association (NBBA) was founded in 1975 and held its first World Series games the next year.

Attributions:

NBBA website: <http://www.nbba.org/index.htm>

NCHPAD: <http://www.nchpad.org/1178/5782/Beep~Baseball>

SB Nation: <http://www.sbnation.com/longform/2013/2/14/3985868/blind-beep-baseball-profile-world-series>

Wednesday, October 21, 2015:

JOHN FORBES NASH, JR: Nobel Laureate Mathematician (1928 – 2015)

John Forbes Nash, Jr., was recognized as one of the most creative and innovative mathematicians in our time. He is best known for his fundamental contributions to game theory, differential geometry and partial differential equations, all of which are used in economics, computer science, military theory, evolutionary biology, and many other fields.

Most people recognize Nash's name from the Oscar-winning movie made of his life, *A Beautiful Mind*, based on the biography written by Sylvia Nasar and starring Russell Crowe, which followed the relationship between Nash's genius and his mental illness. But those in the field of mathematics remember him as a mathematical genius whose creative mind led to theories that significantly deepened our understanding of life.

Nash's teachers recognized his genius at an early age; he was offered scholarships at various top-tier universities, but chose to go to Princeton, where he began his work on what came to be known as the Nash equilibrium theory. He joined the faculty at MIT in 1951. In his late 20s, Nash began to show signs of paranoid schizophrenia and over the next few years spent a significant amount of his time in psychiatric hospitals. In between the hospital stays, when he felt more stable, he continued his research and studies. He received many honorable awards for his work, including the Nobel Memorial Prize in Economic Sciences, the Double Helix Medal, and the Able Prize for his work in mathematics. Nash was killed in a car accident in May, 2015.

Attributions:

Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Forbes_Nash,_Jr.

PBS website: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/nash/peopleevents/p_jnash.html

University of St Andrews Biography: <http://www-history.mcs.st-and.ac.uk/Biographies/Nash.html>

IMDB: <http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0268978/>

Thursday, October 22, 2015:

NASA: Accessible Technology Spinoff Program

Technology transfer has been a mandate for NASA since the agency was established by the National Aeronautics and Space Act of 1958. The act requires that NASA provide the widest practicable and appropriate dissemination of information concerning its activities and results. The term “spinoff” was invented to describe specific technologies developed by NASA for its missions that are transferred for commercial use or some other beneficial application. Thus far, NASA has documented more than 1,500 spinoff success stories, many of which have improved the lives of people with disabilities. Here are just a few examples:

1977: Voice-Controlled Wheelchair: Developed in conjunction with the V.A., the voice-controlled wheelchair can recognize the user’s voice and respond to commands to control motion of the wheelchair.

1977: Paper Money Identifier: Based on NASA’s optical-electronic scanning, the device emits an infrared light that reacts to the colors on the bill and generates an audible signal.

1982: Portable Medical Cooling Systems: Astronauts working on the lunar surface wore liquid-cooled garments; adaptations led to cooling systems for multiple sclerosis, spinal injuries and sports injuries.

1990: Computer Reader: Optacon II can convert printed information into a tactile image, or can be connected to a personal computer, reading not just text but graphic images as well.

1993: Advanced Keyboard: Originally designed for use by astronauts to allow quick interaction with space centers, the advanced keyboard, based on chordic input technology, has proven to be a useful tool for people who have only one functional hand.

1995: LVIS: Technology for computer processing of satellite images led to an adaptation known as LVIS (Low Vision Enhancement System), a headset that allowed people with extremely low vision to be able to accurately view their surroundings.

2002: Eyegaze Communication System improvements: NASA research miniaturized the eye-tracking computer software system, making it more effective for people with multiple sclerosis, spinal cord injuries, and other mobility disabilities.

2007: Planning and Executive Assistant and Trainer (PEAT): Designed to help people with brain injury or cognitive disorder to keep track of schedules and planning, the pocket-sized device has a graphical display, touchscreen, and other tools to cue users to start or stop scheduled activities.

2015: Vision Trainer: Based on work to increase hand-eye coordination and response times, the Zone-Trac was released as a personal home device for people with visual focusing disabilities.

Attributions:

NASA Spinoff: <http://spinoff.nasa.gov/>

NASA Spinoff database: <http://spinoff.nasa.gov/spinoff/database/>

NASA Magazine: http://www.nasa.gov/50th/50th_magazine/benefits.html

Friday, October 23, 2015:

JOHN HENRY FAULK: Texas Folklorist (1913 – 1990)

John Henry Faulk, under the guidance of J. Frank Dobie, Walter Prescott Webb and Roy Bedichek during his years at the University of Texas in Austin, developed his notable talent as a folklorist and storyteller. Faulk's Master's Degree thesis was based on ten African-American sermons he recorded from churches along the Brazos River, leading him to a deep understanding of the racial prejudices and civil rights limitations of the black community and inspiring his life-long focus on equality for all. In the early 1940s, Faulk taught an English course at UT, using his unique storytelling style to highlight the best and worst of Texas culture, keeping his students both entertained and informed.

Faulk was nearly blind in one eye, keeping him from serving in the Army during World War II, but he eventually was allowed to join the U.S. Merchant Marines and then the Red Cross for a tour in Egypt. He served the rest of the war as a medic at Camp Swift.

After the war, Faulk became a well-known voice on the radio, spinning tales and entertaining audiences across the country. His radio career was ended, though, in 1957, when he was called a Communist and placed on the notorious Black List by Senator Joseph McCarthy. After five years of lawsuits, a jury awarded Faulk the largest libel judgement in history to that date; Faulk's efforts were a significant factor in ending the practice of blacklisting.

Faulk returned to Texas and took back up with his radio and TV presence, appearing in the TV comedy series *Hee-Haw* and onstage in various roles, many from his own plays. During the 1980s, he traveled across the nation urging university students to be ever vigilant of their constitutional rights and to take advantage of the freedoms guaranteed by the First Amendment. The Center for American History at the University of Texas at Austin sponsors the John Henry Faulk Conference on the First Amendment. The Central Austin Public Library is named in his honor.

Attributions:

TSHA Online: <https://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/ffa36>

Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Henry_Faulk

Austin Public Library: <http://library.austintexas.gov/basic-page/john-henry-faulk-biography>

Austin Chronicle: <http://www.austinchronicle.com/arts/2014-06-27/faulk-hero/>

Monday, October 26, 2015:

MARTHA'S VINEYARD DEAF COMMUNITY

Martha's Vineyard is an island just south of Cape Cod in Massachusetts, now primarily known as an affluent summer get-away place. In its earlier days, however, the island played a significant role in the Deaf community and in the formation of American Sign Language. It was often referred to as a Deaf Utopia.

The first non-native colony was settled on the island in 1602, founded by Bartholomew Gosnold, who named it Martha's Vineyard after a family member and all the grapevines on the island. Near the end of that century, a settler named Jonathan Lambert was the first known deaf person to inhabit the island. In the years that followed, a genetic trait in many members of the community led to a high ratio of residents who were deaf. The ancestry of most of those have been traced to an area in south England known as the Weald.

A version of sign language that was common in Weald began to be used on Martha's Vineyard by all residents, both hearing and deaf. The large percentage of people who were deaf were not considered to have a disability; sign language was a primary source of communication, even among the hearing, and residents simply considered themselves to be bilingual. Over the years, the common form of sign language on the island combined various versions, brought to the island by immigrants, to create what was known as Martha's Vineyard Sign Language (MVSL).

In the early 1800s, as formal education came to be a significant factor in the American culture, many residents on the island migrated to the mainland to the country's first school for the deaf in Hartford, Connecticut, now known as the American School for the Deaf. Because students were coming from all over the country to that school and bringing with them their own native versions of sign language, MVSL and other versions merged to form what is now known as American Sign Language, or ASL.

Attributions:

Handspeak: <http://www.handspeak.com/study/index.php?id=63>

Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martha%27s_Vineyard_Sign_Language

About website: <http://deafness.about.com/cs/featurearticles/a/marthasvineyard.htm>

Lifepoint: <http://www.lifepoint.com/ASL101/topics/marthas-vineyard-2.htm>

Tuesday, October 27, 2015:

HISTORY OF THE PARALYMPIC GAMES

In 1944, in response to the growing number of World War II injured veterans, Dr. Ludwig Guttmann opened a Spinal Injuries Center at the Stoke Mandeville Hospital in Great Britain. As part of the rehabilitation exercise, patients began participating in competitive sports.

In July, 1948, the day of the Opening Ceremony of the London Olympic Games, Dr. Guttmann organized a competition for wheelchair athletes, which he named the Stoke Mandeville Games; sixteen injured service men and women participated in one sport – archery. The wheelchair games later became the Paralympic Games, which first took place in Rome in 1960, featuring 400 athletes from 23 countries. In 1976, the first Winter Paralympic Games took place in Sweden; in that same year, other disability groups (athletes who were blind or deaf, amputees, those with intellectual disabilities, etc) began participation in the Games, leading to an increased participation of 1,600 athletes from 40 countries.

Since the Summer Games of Seoul, Korea in 1988 and the Winter Games in Albertville, France in 1992, the Paralympic Games have taken part in the same cities and venues as the Olympics due to an agreement between the International Paralympic Committee (IPC) and the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

The term Paralympic initially referred to the combination of “paraplegic” and “Olympic,” but with the addition of many other disabilities, the word “Paralympic” is now described as coming from the Greek word “para,” meaning “alongside,” and thus refers to the competition held in parallel with the Olympic Games.



“Spirit in Motion” is the motto for the Paralympic movement. The symbol for Paralympics uses the colors red, blue, and green, to include all the colors of the flags of participating countries, and the symbol itself is in the shape of an “Agito,” which in Latin means “I move.”

Attributions:

Paralympic website: <http://www.paralympic.org/the-ipc/history-of-the-movement>

PBS: <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/medal-quest/past-games/>

Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paralympic_Games

Olympic website: <http://www.olympic.org/content/olympic-games/paralympic-games/>

Paralympic Games Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/ParalympicGames>

Wednesday, October 28, 2015:

LARRY GENE STEWART: Advocate for the Deaf with Mental Illness (1937 – 1992)

Dr. Larry Gene Stewart, a Texan, was a professor of clinical psychology at Gallaudet University and was known nationally as a passionate advocate for education and for appropriate care and resources for people with mental illness who are deaf.

Stewart became deaf as a child as the result of pneumonia. He attended Texas School for the Deaf at the age of 14 and graduated from there just one year later. Stewart went on to graduate from Gallaudet University, and then later received a Master's degree in rehabilitation counseling from the University of Missouri. He received his Ph.D. in rehabilitation psychology from the University of Arizona in Tucson, the first deaf person to receive a doctorate in that field.

Stewart held many career positions, including a private psychology practice, Executive Director of the Texas Commission for the Deaf, superintendent of the Texas Gulf Coast Regional School for the Deaf, clinical director of Mental Health Services in California, and faculty member of Gallaudet University. Because of his professional training and his expertise in issues pertaining to people who are deaf, he served on various committees and task forces, primarily those with a focus on education, rehabilitation and mental illness issues. The latter became the field for which Dr. Stewart was best known and on which he had a significant impact.

Stewart wrote many books and articles on resources for people who are deaf, and helped secure federal and state funding for several programs aimed at helping those with additional disabilities. He contributed significantly to the field of mental health services for people who are deaf, most notably in the area of policy development and as an expert in forensic psychology in numerous court cases.

Several national awards are given in Stewart's name, including one from the American Psychological Association, given biennially to an individual whose career has exemplified the ideals and values of the profession and whose contributions are in line with Dr. Stewart's example of the common psychology and humanity of all people.

Attributions:

Texas School for the Deaf (*The Deaf Texan*, Fall 2014): <http://www.tsd.state.tx.us/>

Washington Post: <http://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/1992/12/04/gallaudet-professor-larry-g-stewart-dies/12eeb8cd-ddba-4551-b7c7-a7346151d6f1/>

Google Groups: <https://groups.google.com/forum/#!topic/misc.handicap/Nm5O9McU9mo>

Thursday, October 29, 2015:

EDDIE TIMANUS: *Jeopardy!* Champion (1968 – Present)

Eddie Timanus, a *USA Today* sports writer from Virginia, is now best known as a record-breaking winner on the TV game show, *Jeopardy!* Timanus was the first blind person in the history of the game show.

Timanus lost his vision due to retinoblastoma when he was a toddler. His father was a play-by-play sports announcer, and Timanus began attending the sports events with his father as a child, keeping statistics on the games. He graduated college with a degree in economics (and a minor in music; he plays piano) and used his statistical skills to land his current job as sportswriter, compiling statistics and poll results.

In October 1999, Timanus was selected to be a contestant on the TV game show *Jeopardy!* The producers allowed some accommodations: he received a card with the category names in braille; he was provided with a braille keyboard to type out his name and wagers; video clues were not allowed during his participation. Timanus won five consecutive games in his first appearance, winning almost \$70,000 and two new cars.

According to the rules then, he was no longer allowed to compete, so he retired undefeated. However, he was invited back for the *Jeopardy!* 2000 Tournament of Champions in Atlanta, where he reached the semifinals. Later he went on to compete in the 2002 Million Dollars Masters Tournament, the 2005 Ultimate Tournament of Champions (where another accommodation was an audible tone in sync with the game board's lights), and the 2014 Battle of the Decades. His story became a media sensation; Alex Trebek, host of the game show, received an access award from the American Foundation for the Blind for his role in providing accommodations for Timanus.

Timanus went on to also compete in another TV game show, *Who Wants to Be a Millionaire*, where he won \$50,000.

Attributions:

USA Today: <http://ftw.usatoday.com/2014/03/eddie-timanus-jeopardy-battle-of-the-decades>

Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eddie_Timanus

Game Shows Wikia: http://gameshows.wikia.com/wiki/Eddie_Timanus

Washington Post: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/local/wp/2014/03/06/oak-hills-eddie-timanus-first-blind-jeopardy-contestant-returns-for-champions-tournament/>

Friday, October 30, 2015:

ED BOSSON: Father of Video Relay Service (VRS) (1945 – Present)

Roy “Ed” Edward Bosson is commonly known as the Father of Video Relay Service (VRS), a form of telecommunication that enables people with hearing disabilities who use American Sign Language (ASL) to communicate with voice telephone users through video equipment, rather than through typed text.

Ed Bosson, who became deaf as a young child, earned a degree in psychology from Gallaudet University. After a diverse career in various positions, he eventually became the first chairman of the Texas Public Utility Commission’s (PUC) Relay Texas Advisory Committee, where he used the opportunity to introduce many new features to the Texas Relay Service, including VRS. Texas became a national leader in this innovative feature. PUC Commissioners authorized him to manage the first video relay service trials, conducted by Sprint, which eventually led to statewide, and then nationwide, use of VRS.

Bosson has received numerous national and state awards for his advocacy, including an honorary doctorate from Gallaudet University and recognition from Telecommunications for the Deaf, Inc (TDI) as a person who has produced the greatest impact on telecommunications accessibility for the deaf and hard of hearing citizens.

Attributions:

Gallaudet Clerc Award: [https://www.gallaudet.edu/institutional-advancement/alumni-relations/alumni-association-\(guaa\)/awards/clerc-award.html](https://www.gallaudet.edu/institutional-advancement/alumni-relations/alumni-association-(guaa)/awards/clerc-award.html)

DeafPeople: http://www.deafpeople.com/dp_of_month/ed_bosson.html

Wikipedia: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ed_Bosson

Convo: <https://www.convorelay.com/company.html>

FCC: <https://www.fcc.gov/guides/video-relay-services>