A Letter from Helen Keller is an Unexpected Anniversary Treat!

In anticipation of our year-long 85th anniversary celebration, we looked through some historic files and found a wonderful letter to our founder, Francis Ierardi, written by Helen Keller which begins:

“This note is by way of shaking hands with you over “The Braille Weekly.” I congratulate you on such a lively magazine for the blind. I find it stimulating and well put together. It is crammed full of interesting and varied subjects. I am particularly glad to have the foreign news and the economic and political notes.”

Helen went on to say:

“Above all I am happy that these two periodicals are finding their way to an increasing number of the deaf-blind. They mean more to us who are doubly handicapped than to others who only lack sight. Their enlivening pages restore to us as it were the aspects, colors and voices of the light-filled world. They bear us over sea and land wherever we will, and we are free.”

From the days when NBP published a weekly braille paper and leased space for $1 per year, to today’s digital age when our hottest original publications are about mastering mainstream technology, NBP has played a special role in the lives of many. To read the letter from Helen Keller in its entirety and find out more about NBP’s 85th anniversary year, go to nbp.org.
We all love to eat and we all need to know how to prepare food – blind children are no exception!

Stir It Up! is a cookbook created by NBP especially for young blind children to get started in the kitchen. Staff members and friends of NBP tested and tasted dozens of recipes from popular children’s cookbooks and cooking blogs. They narrowed it down to the recipes found in this special cookbook and modified those recipes for young blind chefs. This cookbook not only contains recipes with simple instructions, but also information on safety and adaptive cooking techniques. Cooking is a multi-sensory experience involving taste, touch, smell, and hearing – all modes of perception that blind children can use to prepare food. The print/braille format allows everyone in the family to cook from the same book.

Stir It Up! Large print/braille book/illustrations $20
B2G at NFB and ACB Conventions

NBP is committed to creating a state-of-the-art refreshable braille display that is more affordable than devices currently on the market. It has been an exciting and challenging journey – if it was easy, wouldn’t everyone be doing it?

After months of hard work by NBP Board Member, Dean Blazie, and our volunteer team of experts, NBP expects to debut a prototype of NBP’s B2G (Braille to Go) at the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) and the American Council of the Blind (ACB) consumer conventions this summer. The B2G is a portable, Android-driven, 20 cell refreshable braille display, that has cell and data capability, GPS, Bluetooth, WiFi, a high speed processor, camera and many more features. Sign up for e-News on nbp.org for more information on B2G at the conventions.

Diane Croft to Receive Hands On! Award

NBP is thrilled to recognize Diane Croft, for her 30 years of service, at this fall’s gala, A Million Laughs for Literacy, on Friday, October 19th with the Hands On! Award.

As publisher at National Braille Press, and a gifted author herself, Diane has been instrumental in developing many of NBP’s original braille publications and has won numerous awards in the field of blindness. She is the founder of the Children’s Braille Book Club (CBBC), the first book club of its kind to offer print/braille books for parents to share with their young children.

Blindness-related publications by Diane Croft include:
- Stir it Up! Recipes and Techniques for Young Blind Cooks (publisher)
- Out-of-Sight Science Experiments (publisher)
- Louis Braille: A Touch of Genius (publisher)
- Sights Unseen: Traveling the World Without Sight (editor)
- Noah’s Animals Tactile Activity Set (author)
- Label It: Braille & Audio Strategies for Identifying Items at Home and Work (editor)
- Because Books Matter: Reading Braille Books with Young Blind Children (editor)
- Finding eBooks on the Internet (editor)
- Captured by the Net: An Internet Guide for Blind Users (editor)
- Solutions: Access Technologies for the Blind (co-author)
- Take Charge: A Strategic Guide for Blind Job Seekers (co-author)
- The CD-ROM Advantage for Blind Users (editor)
- Safe Without Sight: Crime Prevention and Self-Defense Strategies (editor)
Partners in Philanthropy

Lions Clubs International

Lions Clubs International shares NBP’s mission to promote braille literacy and assist people of all ages who are blind or visually impaired. The 48 clubs that make up the local District 33K have donated significant funding and volunteer time to support NBP’s programming for the last ten years.

Lions Club members frequently donate their time to collate print/braille versions of children’s books, which is a time-consuming process. Volunteers add braille labels to each page of a print book or collate books by alternating print with braille pages. The result is a print/braille book that blind children can read with sighted family members and friends. Most recently, the Lions have assembled: *Little Bear’s Visit; Hailstones and Halibut Bones;* and *Who Lives in an Alligator Hole?*

Key to the Lions-NBP collaboration are supporters such as Doreen Martel, Dawn Rice-Norton and Matthew Richardson who have championed our partnership for many years.

One of our most poignant collaborations with the Lions District 33K, celebrated the life of Lou Marotta, a former president and treasurer of the Hyde Park Lions. A Lions fundraising effort supported the production of the beloved children’s book *Corduroy.* NBP dedicated this book to Marotta, who was an ardent supporter of NBP and braille literacy for children. The memory of his commitment to the Lions and NBP will enrich our partnership for many years to come.

Please Join Us...

SAVE THE DATE!

NBP Annual Meeting  June 12
UMass Club, Boston

*A Million Laughs for Literacy* Gala  Oct. 19
Featuring comedian and TV host, Tom Papa
Westin Waterfront Hotel, Boston

Blindness Awareness Month  Oct.
Various States

*Touch of Genius Prize for Innovation*  Nov. 2
Application Submission Deadline