

# **Welcome to the Association of Visual Rehabilitation Therapists (AVRT) Newsletter**

**We are a professional organization primarily made up of Visual Rehabilitation Therapists across the nation. We have an annual conference where one can earn credits toward re-certification through ACVREP.**

**The 2019 conference will be in Jacksonville, Florida on December 5, 6, 7. More information can be found in the pages of this newsletter or at [www.avrt.org](http://www.avrt.org).**

**Pam Holloway, CVRT  
Newsletter editor**



# AVRT



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*Association of Vision  
Rehabilitation Therapists*

*Fall 2019 Edition*      *November 4, 2019*

*Association of Vision Rehabilitation Therapists*

*Newsletter*

*Fall 2019*

*Visit our Website at [www.avrt.org](http://www.avrt.org)*

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## **Editor's Note**

**Dear Fellow Professionals,**

**Fall is finally here, if only for a short time. We jokingly say here in Oklahoma there are two seasons, summer and winter. Here we are at the beginning of November and it is hard to believe that in a little over a month we will be in Jacksonville enjoying another wonderful AVRT Conference. Again this year we have an awesome slate of presenters. Every year I learn new techniques and meet new professionals. This newsletter is featuring an article about one of our new members under the title of "Meet a Member." Sue Dalton writes this wonderful article in each edition and I always look forward to reading it. This is a way of being introduced to members we may not know and learning about them. Then we can look them up at the conference and get to know them better. Thanks, Sue, for all the time you spend interviewing and writing this article!**

**Remember that all of you can contribute to the newsletter by writing articles. It is nice to have different professionals such as yourselves share your creativity by writing. You can earn continuing education units toward re-certification.**

**The deadline for the winter newsletter is January 15, 2020.  
See you in Jacksonville!**

**Pam Holloway, CVRT  
Newsletter Editor**

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## **President's Message**

### **“Stay In the Game”**

**Greetings! I hope you are enjoying the beauty of autumn, and that the cooler temperatures are providing a much-needed break from the hot summer weather.**

**This is a great time of year if you are a sports fan. We are well into football season, the baseball season has recently ended, and basketball season has just begun. If you work with high school students or have high school students of your own, volleyball and other sports may be prevalent right now as well. Whatever your pleasure, there are many ways to stay active both as a participant and as a spectator.**

**Being able to enjoy sports can sometimes be challenging for our clients who are blind or visually impaired. Whether it is identifying adaptations to allow clients to continue to play sports, figuring out transportation to get to a game or figuring out how to keep track of what is happening on the court/field, we can share many tips and strategies to help them stay in the game. We can encourage the social aspect of having people over to watch a game or the significance of being present at their grandchild's sporting event. I remember the great pride a former student expressed when he was going to "watch" his granddaughter's figure skating competition even though he is blind.**

**As I thought about all that it takes to stay in the game when you are visually impaired, it seemed to come down to finding new ways to enjoy activities. Isn't this the basis of vision rehabilitation therapy? How are you helping your clients stay in the game? It doesn't have to have anything to do with sports, either. How are you helping them not only make adaptations to how they do**

**things, but also how are you helping them feel comfortable with doing things in new ways. How do you help them understand that "different" isn't "bad" and that they can still enjoy and participate in all life has to offer?**

**It's also important for you to stay in the game as a professional. Expand your knowledge, skills, and professional connections through your membership in professional organizations like AVRT. Develop your writing and research skills to help further the profession. And, our annual Professional Development Conference is another excellent way to help you stay up-to-date. I hope you will join us in Jacksonville, FL December 5-7. We will have fabulous presentations on a variety of VRT-related topics from knitting to assistive technology, maximizing visual functioning to adjusting to visual impairment, and from braille to self-defense along with many others. We also look forward to presenting our AVRT awards, scholarship, and other financial stipends at the conference. Learn more later in this newsletter.**

**I also wanted to take time to wish you and your family all the best for the upcoming holiday season. May the season be filled with much joy and happiness!**

**Sincerely,  
Jennifer Ottowitz, AVRT President**

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## **Unlocking the Future to Independence**

**2019 AVRT Professional Development Conference  
Downtown Doubletree Jacksonville  
Jacksonville, FL  
December 5-6-7, 2019**

**Get ready to unlock the future of independence for your students and consumers at the 2019 AVRT Professional Development Conference in December!**

**Our conference this year is going to be full of informative, educational and entertaining content. The conference will not disappoint, as you will leave Jacksonville with tools that you can put to use the day you get back to work! This year we will start each day off with an inspiring, motivational, educational and informative session to set the tone for your day. Please take a few minutes to review the Agenda at a Glance to see what is in store for you and your colleagues. We hope you get as excited as we are!**

### **Conference Registration is Open!**

**You can register for the conference starting now! We have special rates this year for early bird, AVRT Member rates, and student and retiree rates. We are doing all we can to make this an affordable educational experience for our attendees. Conference registration includes two meals!**

**Go to [www.avrt.org](http://www.avrt.org) to register now!**

### **Hotel Reservation Information**

**Lodging for this year's conference has been secured at the Doubletree Jacksonville Riverfront, 1201 Riverplace Boulevard, Jacksonville, Florida 32207.**

### Room Rates:

\$129/night single/double occupancy plus tax

\$149/night triple occupancy plus tax

\$169/night quad occupancy plus tax

### To Make Reservations:

By phone (available 24 hours a day) to 1-800-222-8733 (and be sure to ask for “AVRT Assoc. Vision Rehabilitation” or Group Code AVR).

By Internet—Copy and paste the Booking Link below into your preferred browser:

[https://secure3.hilton.com/en\\_US/dt/reservation/book.htm?inputModule=HOTEL&ctyhocn=JAXJRDT&spec\\_plan=CDTAVR&arrival=20191203&departure=20191208&cid=OM,WW,HILTONLINK,EN,DirectLink&fromId=HILTONLINKDIRECT](https://secure3.hilton.com/en_US/dt/reservation/book.htm?inputModule=HOTEL&ctyhocn=JAXJRDT&spec_plan=CDTAVR&arrival=20191203&departure=20191208&cid=OM,WW,HILTONLINK,EN,DirectLink&fromId=HILTONLINKDIRECT)

***\*\*Be sure to copy and paste the entire link (it may be multiple lines long) in order for it to work properly\*\****

Reservation Cut-off Date – Reservations must be made before midnight on 11/4/2019 to get special conference rates.

For more information about this hotel, please visit

[www.doubletreejax.com](http://www.doubletreejax.com).

### Hotel Highlights

- Riverfront hotel in downtown Jacksonville, near shops, dining and historic attractions
- Beautiful guest rooms and suites with walk-out balconies offering exceptional views
- Two restaurants and a lounge, including [Ruth's Chris Steak House](#)
- 24-hour fitness center, outdoor swimming pool and terrace with loungers and tables

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# Association of Vision Rehabilitation Therapists

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**Association of Vision Rehabilitation Therapists (AVRT)**

## **AGENDA AT A GLANCE**

### **Wednesday, December 4, 2019**

**6:00 PM – 9:00 PM**                      **AVRT Board Meeting  
(AVRT Board Members Only)**

### **Thursday, December 5, 2019**

**8:00 AM – 3:00 PM**                      **Registration Open**

**8:30 AM – 9:00 AM**                      **Welcome**

**9:00 AM – 10:30 AM**                      **Keynote Address: Resources  
+Knowledge = Independence,  
Joy Bieder and Sue Dalton**

**10:45 AM – 11:45 PM**                      **Break Out Sessions (3)**  
**VRT and Low Vision “What you Need to Know,” Amy  
Katherine Wolff**  
**Functional Barriers Associated with Hand and Upper  
Extremity Conditions, Margaret Beckley**  
**Alexa the VRT, Steven Kelley**

**12:00 PM – 1:15 PM**                      **Lunch – Business Meeting  
AER Town Hall – Janie Blome**

- 1:30 PM – 2:30 PM** **Break Out Sessions (2)**  
**One Touch Self-Defense Training for the Blind and VI, Annette Jakse**  
**Adjustment to Blindness, Carolyn Harris**
- 2:45 PM – 3:45 PM** **Break Out Sessions (2)**  
**Hadley 2.0, Jennifer Ottowitz and Marc Arneson**  
**How Contrast , Lighting and Filters can Help in the Learning Environment, Justine Taylor**
- 4:00 PM – 4:50 PM** **General Session**  
**Predictors of Employment of Adults with Deaf Blindness, Ian Shadrick**
- 5:00 PM – 6:00 PM** **Presidents Reception**

**Friday, December 6, 2019**

- 8:00 AM** **Exhibits Open**
- 8:30 AM – 9:15 AM** **Morning Updates**  
**Exhibit Reviews**
- 9:30 AM – 10:30 AM** **University Programs Update and Offerings Moderator, Lachelle Smith**
- 10:45 AM – 11:45 AM** **Exhibit Visits**
- 12:00 PM – 1:30 PM** **Lunch Awards Banquet**
- 1:45 PM – 2:15 PM** **Exhibit Visits and Review, Linda Fugate**

**2:30 PM – 3:30 PM** **Break Out Sessions (2)**  
**BrailleBlaster: A FREE Braille Translation Software for All,**  
**Dawn Eadens**  
**Knitting: It's Not Just for Grandmas, Elyse Connors**

**3:45 PM – 4:45 PM** **Break Out Session (2)**  
**"I can't see...how can I...?" Dr. Linda Fugate**  
**Cooking, Moving and Growing at Alphapointe, Kansas City,**  
**Helen Hahn**

**Saturday, December 7, 2019**

**8:00 AM – 8:15 AM** **Morning Updates**

**8:15 AM - 9:15 AM** **General Session**  
**Building for the Future: Implications of WIOA on Quality**  
**Rehabilitation Professionals, Ian Shadrick and John McMahon**

**9:30 AM – 10:30 AM** **Break Out Sessions (2)**  
**Assessment : Vocational or Otherwise, Jack Harrison**  
**The Sweet Spot for Magnification: Refraction and its**  
**Impact on Magnification, Karen Shane Cote**

**10:45 AM – 11:45 AM** **Break Out Sessions (2)**  
**NRTC Products to Support Transition, Kendra Farrow**  
**Stop the Scrubbing! Try a Different Instructional Approach**  
**with Braille, Polly Abbott**

**11:50 AM – 12:15 AM** **Closing General Session**  
**Jennifer Ottowitz**

**Each year this conference gets better and better. We work hard to bring the field of rehabilitation solid, usable information and training. We hope you will take advantage of this professional development opportunity—which is also a perfect way to obtain**

**continuing education credits! We encourage you to share this information with your colleagues. Please feel free to contact me with any questions. We look forward to seeing you in Florida!**

**For more information, please contact:**

**Jane E. Thompson, VP**

**AVRT Conference Coordinator**

**800-223-1839 Ext. 370 / [jthompson@aph.org](mailto:jthompson@aph.org)**

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**AFB Helen Keller Archive**  
**Submitted by Jane Thompson**

**After two years of negotiation, the American Printing House for the Blind and the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) are collaborating to bring the AFB Helen Keller Archive out of storage and onto public view. Powerhouse author and activist Helen Keller and her teacher, Anne Sullivan Macy, both donated their papers after their deaths, Macy in 1936 and Keller in 1968. The pair started working for AFB in 1924, and promoted the work of AFB all over the world.**

**The archive contains thousands of letters, speeches, scrapbooks, and manuscripts by both women that document their impact on the way disability is understood around the world. It contains photographs and artifacts that illustrate their world travels. It contains artworks and media that illuminate their fame and celebrity. Anne Sullivan became the most famous teacher in the world. At first, her student Helen was a child prodigy, a marvel, but she grew up to become a force in her own right, a champion for the rights of women, of people of color, of labor, and of the disabled. The archive documents all this in incredible day-to-day detail.**

**Our agreement with AFB has several components. First, we are preparing modern storage. Second, we will be transporting the collection from its current location to Louisville. Our eventual goal is to create a facility where the AFB Helen Keller Archive can be visited, studied, and enjoyed by generations of students, teachers, scholars, and the public.**

**We have been collecting at a rapid pace over the last twenty-five years. We have large archival collections from the AER, the Carroll Center for the Blind, and the Braille Authority of North America, in addition to our significant Printing House**

materials. While Helen Keller is a huge name, and will bring much needed attention to our efforts, the AFB Archive is so much more. Most of Keller's materials are available online at <https://www.afb.org/HelenKellerArchive>. But, the Archive also contains all of the papers of AFB too! Buried in over largely un-inventoried boxes is the history of blindness in the twentieth century though the work of legends like Robert Irwin, Gene Apple, Eleanor Faye, Kay Gruber, Berthold Lowenfeld, M.C. Migel, and Susan Spungin, as well as the countless other legends who worked with AFB if not for AFB. Stay tuned...

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**Meet an AVRT Member...Sara Heatherly**  
***By Susan M. Dalton, CVRT***

In past “Meet a Member” articles we’ve met some individuals who have been in the Vision Rehabilitation profession for several years. At the recommendation of our newsletter editor, for this edition, we would like to introduce you to someone who is new to the field. Let’s offer a warm welcome to a recent graduate of Northern Illinois University and Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist, Miss Sara Heatherly.



**Some Background:**

Sara tells an interesting story of her life before venturing into the vision field:

“For my undergrad, I attended Shimer College in Waukegan, IL, for their early entrant program, meaning I dropped out of high school before my senior year to start college and I double majored in Humanities and Social Sciences. After graduation, I moved to Texas and began teaching at the Houston Outdoor Learning Academy as the Language Arts Instructor. Since the school only had approximately 12 students enrolled, I also was in charge of curriculum management for each student as they worked at their own pace and grade level. In addition to their regular academics, students were exposed to outdoor activities such as camping and wilderness survival, and international travel. I had the opportunity to travel with my students to Guatemala, Belize, Italy, Greece, India, and Nepal.

“Due to a lack of enrollment, the Houston Outdoor Learning Academy had to close its doors. Once the school closed, I had enrolled in an alternative teaching certification program and while I

**was completing the coursework, I became an Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Therapist. I ended up enjoying the ABA field and spent almost three years as a Level II therapist for an ABA clinic in Spring, TX, overseeing two class rooms for children ages 18 months to 8 years old on the Autism Spectrum and other multiple Disabilities.”**

**After some time, Sara was thinking about returning to college to obtain teaching certification. While discussing her plans with a cousin who attended NIU (to become a Teacher of Visually Impaired) she became interested in the graduate programs in Visual Disabilities that were available there. Although her initial intent was to go into the TVI program, Sara’s attention was drawn to Vision Rehabilitation Therapy, which would allow her to use her previous ABA experience teaching living skills and apply it to working with adults.**

**Sara proceeded to delve into the Vision Program full force at NIU and earned graduate degrees in Orientation and Mobility as well as Vision Rehabilitation Therapy. She was fortunate to partake in her internship program at the Western Blind Rehabilitation Center (WBRC) in Menlo Park, California, and has since graduated in May 2019.**

**Here’s a funny story Sara shares about her experience as an intern at WBRC:**

**“While completing a microwave use assessment with my first assigned Veteran, we decided he would make a simple bowl of oatmeal using the microwave. There were directions on how to prepare a bowl of oatmeal using the microwave on the package and the Veteran did very well measuring the oatmeal and amount of water required. I demonstrated to the Veteran how to use puff paint and bump dots to mark his microwave for easier use at home. The Veteran correctly input the cooking time and he began to clean up his prep area. When it was time to remove the bowl of**

oatmeal from the microwave, the Veteran placed oven gloves on his hands and opened the microwave door. To make a long story short, the oatmeal had bubbled over the dish and it was a mess to clean up. This occurred in front of my internship supervisor, but it was a good learning experience for me. The lesson still served its purpose for me to assess the Veteran's use of a microwave and the Veteran learned how he could mark his microwave at home. We also had the additional lesson of how to safely and effectively clean up messes. At the end of the lesson, we all had a good laugh and the Veteran would always tell me that was one of his favorite lessons from our time together."

### **Hobbies and Interests**

When not working or studying, Sara enjoys outdoor recreation activities such as kayaking and cycling. In addition, she likes to go to music venues to see live shows, and she LOVES to travel!

### **Goals for the Future**

Sara's plans don't end here. She's full of ambition, energy, and talent!

For the next five years, she plans to work for the Veterans Health Administration as a Blind Rehabilitation Specialist and would like to potentially pursue a Blind Rehabilitation Outpatient Specialist Position with the VA. She adds, "Ten years from now, I want to pursue a PhD in either Public Health Administration or Rehabilitation Science and potentially work with legislation to make it possible for CVRTs, COMS, and CLVTs to be reimbursed by Medicare or medical insurance for providing services."

Sara recently began working as a Blind Rehabilitation Specialist at the Central Blind Rehabilitation Center at the Hines VA Hospital just outside of Chicago.

"While I am still relatively new to the profession, it has been great meeting and working with other professionals in the field and

**learning various techniques and methods to accomplish teaching the same goal.**

**“With the internet and social media, it is much easier to correspond and reach out to other professionals to gain insight and keep up to date about what is occurring in the field. Also, with new technology being created and/or updated that individuals with visual impairments can use, it would be great to create additional information on listservs or other informational websites geared towards our profession to keep everyone up to date about what is available to our consumers.”**

**I’m sure that Sara will continue to be an asset to our profession as she works at the VA and becomes more involved in vision rehabilitation organizations. We’re looking forward to hopefully seeing her at future professional development conferences and learning more about her efforts to secure and maintain valuable services to our clients.**

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## Beauty Is Designing Packaging for the Visually Impaired

By [Arabelle Sicardi](#)

Here is an interesting article from Vogue Business magazine (July 2019):

Packaging that's designed for the 1.3 billion people who are visually impaired isn't particularly expensive and can find broader appeal.

### Key Takeaways

- Only a handful of beauty brands have invested in packaging that's accessible for the visually impaired.
- Braille packaging can be technically challenging and costly to implement. But there are alternatives, including square-shaped packaging and tactile symbols.
- Intuitive designs like click-and-close caps and magnetic closures are also proving popular, both aiding the visually impaired and finding favour among a wider customer base.

One of Too Faced's best-selling products is its [Chocolate Bar Eyeshadow Palette](#), a cosmetics kit that comes with a distinctive smell thanks to an infusion of cocoa powder. It's also highly popular with visually impaired beauty customers who use their sense of smell to identify products.

Even as beauty brands invest in creating sustainable products, packaging that's accessible for the visually challenged is rare. Only a handful of brands — [Dr. Jart](#), [Whamisa](#) and [Bioderma](#) — directly address blind consumers with tools such as braille on their outer packaging. (Some companies have been accused of treating visual accessibility as a fashion statement, with one UK soap label [criticised](#) for using braille packaging that wasn't actually tactile.)

Yet, there is a significant market to tap: about [1.3 billion](#) people live with some level of vision impairment, 36 million of whom are blind. A [video](#) of blind beauty YouTuber Molly Burke doing up makeup artist and fellow YouTuber James Charles, in which she describes her life as a beauty lover who can't see what she puts on, resulted in more than 12 million views.

### The Cost of Accessibility

One brand that has been successfully incorporating braille into its packaging is French beauty company [L'Occitane](#). In the 1990s, founder Olivier Baussan noticed a blind customer in a store feeling the bottles in an attempt to get familiar with the product. He started putting braille on the company's packaging in 1997.

About 70 per cent of L'Occitane products now come with braille labelling, but technical constraints limit full deployment. The brand has found it particularly challenging to include such lettering on smaller products like soaps and tubes. Research and implementation led to an additive cost of about 25 percent, "but we're willing to pay this because this is so meaningful", says a spokesperson for the [L'Occitane Foundation](#).

70 percent of L'Occitane products come with braille labelling.

But not all visually challenged people read braille, which can take years to learn, says inclusive designer Sam Latif, who overhauled P&G's [Herbal Essences Bio:Renew](#) line. Blind herself, Latif simply included raised stripes on shampoo bottles and dots on conditioners. A simple code like this is better than using braille since shapes are accessible to more people, she says. "This can and will become the standard for the beauty industry."

Such tactile symbols suggest that inclusivity in beauty doesn't need to be highly unusual or expensive. There are other simple hacks, including using square-shaped packaging, since round packages tend to roll away if dropped and are thus hard for the visually impaired to find. Latif also suggests rethinking how

instructions are written. “Imagine a pack with tightly squeezed 100 words with small font, and another with larger and fewer words grouped in sections,” she says. “Both will cost the same to produce, but one will be easier to read than the other both from a vision and cognition perspective.”

Beauty can also draw from investment made by other industries. The food-tech startup [Mimica](#), for instance, creates labels that degrade and go bumpy once the ingredients pass their expiration date. This label lets customers know when to throw away products and is something that visually able customers can also use.

Submitted by Debra Mendez, MA

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**Tool or Target, Perspectives of Using a White Cane**  
**By Kendra Farrow, CVRT**

**My name is Kendra and I have chosen to use a white cane to maximize my independence. On the visual spectrum, I have some usable vision and use it to complete some tasks. However, I have chosen to make the white cane a regular part of my life. Others, in similar situations, are concerned about the white cane making them a target for crimes. In fact, the exact opposite has been my experience. Random people are kind, sometimes too kind, and I want to thank each one of them for their thoughtfulness, but sometimes I don't need their help or the kind of help they want to give. It is challenging to react in ways that benefit both the blind community and me.**

**Over the past six years, I have traveled extensively: through airports, in cabs and Uber, on trains and subways, and even riding in a car with my husband and coworkers. These experiences have taken me through more than 20 different states and in each place, I go I have very similar challenges in interacting with the public.**

**With blindness being a low incidence disability, I try to remind myself that I may be the first and sometimes only person with a vision impairment that people meet, so I want to make a good impression. A mentor, who was vision impaired, once told me that I was a role model. At that time, I was working directly with individuals losing their vision, so that made sense. Periodically my mentor's statement comes to mind and I realize that just my being out in the world makes me a model of blindness to everyone I meet. I can for instance, remember each person I have met who is over 100 years of age. There are just a handful, but what I know about people who are more than 100 years old is directly related to these interactions. In the same way, people who are blind stand out, we can't help it and people go out of their way to be helpful. What constitutes helpfulness is somewhat different for each**

individual who is offering assistance and also specific to the individual who is blind. The final factor is the actual situation that is happening. I personally do not want to take the risk of giving a stranger the impression that people who are blind are rude. The goal of these helpful individuals is to be supportive. I don't believe that any of them say "Let me make that blind person's day more difficult." No, they are only thinking that person can't see and if that was me, I would need help. I hear others who are blind or vision impaired tell about their experiences with individuals incorrectly attempting to be helpful and cringe. The helpfulness sometimes throws us off, causing frustration, but how does that reaction come across to the stranger who is honestly trying to help? It seems that it could be interpreted as rude, angry, or arrogant.

I get it. It is hard being a rock star every day. The white cane is not just a symbol of blindness, but apparently a sign that says come, touch my shoulder, push me, grab my arm, etc. The only thing they don't do is ask for my autograph or to take a selfie with me. How can I advocate for my independence and be respectful, educating those around me to respect and be helpful to others they meet who may be blind?

Here are some things I try to do to be a good ambassador to all those well intentioned, but not always helpful, strangers.

1. When possible I try to take time to answer people's questions. "What is that device you are using? Are you texting with it? To a young child who is looking at me curiously, I know because my husband or coworker tells me. I try to answer their questions. I tell them a little about braille and how it helps me. For the young girl in Starbucks, I give her my business card because it has braille on it. I may even allow a young child to hold my cane or look through my magnifier. Sometimes these children tell me how they studied Helen Keller in school and I point out that she had a teacher that

helped her learn. I also point out that there is a special kind of teacher today who works with blind children.

2. For adults who tell me how wonderful it is that I can do this thing or that, I explain that everyone has challenges in their life. My challenges are just more obvious than theirs are. I can't tell if they have financial difficulties, pain in their body, family relationship issues, learning disabilities, etc. Every one of us has challenges in life and we each live our lives as best we can within those circumstances.
3. For those people who insist on pushing me, I explain that it would be easier for me if I could hold their arm and walk behind them. Even if I don't necessarily need guiding, I often allow them to guide me so they can learn the proper technique. It is usually just a few steps to the objective, they feel that they have done something helpful, and I have taught another person how to properly guide someone who is blind.
4. I like to keep it light hearted. When people want me to sit in a wheelchair or use the elevator instead of the escalator, I tell them my legs work well, it's just my eyes that don't work. Sometimes I talk about how my cane can part the crowds or how I can get special privileges. The other day, my flight was about to start boarding and I was behind a big crowd. I thought I might get forgotten by the gate agent. So, I stood up and said to the crowd around me, "who wants to get on the plane first?" Of course I got a taker and a sighted guide to get me past the crowd.

**5. I like to shock people, but I get them to ask me the question so it doesn't look like a big deal. When interacting with the person who just sat down in the seat beside me on the plane, "Where are you going today? Is it for work or a fun trip?" They will almost always reciprocate the question which gives me a chance to tell them I am traveling related to my job. I can tell this shocks some people because they want to know what kind of work I do. This is a wonderful opportunity to plant a seed that people who are blind can work and be successful. I never know who that person is and if they may someday interview and hire a blind applicant because I planted that seed of awareness. I also like to ask how much people travel. This gives me an opportunity to tell them how much I travel, again planting seeds of how persons who are blind can be independent.**

**Just because I shared these ideas does not mean that I am always successful at using them. Sometimes I don't have time to stop and explain what might be helpful for that person to know. I have found that when I use my husband or coworker as a sighted guide, I can avoid much of the unwanted attention. Keeping my white cane out alerts people and they give us a little more space, but they see I have assistance and are not constantly intruding.**

**How often have I benefited from using my white cane? In addition to avoiding numerous obstacles and properly judging steps, curbs, etc., I have received many helpful offers of assistance. In the grocery store, other shoppers offer to find an item on the shelf, read size or price tags, or flag down a store employee for me. At church, social event, or conference, people are more likely to tell me their names. And, when I am actually lost, people have guided me back to a familiar path. Despite all the extra attention attracted by use of the white cane, many of these interactions do accomplish a helpful result.**

**In conclusion, I would like to thank everyone who has offered me assistance. I am grateful for your well-intentioned offers, and even if I declined your assistance, I am grateful because next time, I might just need your assistance.**

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**From the Editor's Kitchen**

**Old-Fashioned Soft Pumpkin Cookies**

**--from Very Best Baking by Nestle**

**Submitted by Debra Mendez, MA**

**Prep time: 10 minutes**

**Cooking time: 18 minutes**

**Skill level: easy**

**Makes 36 cookies**

**Ingredients:**

**2 ½ cups all-purpose flour**

**1 tsp baking soda**

**1 tsp baking powder**

**1 tsp ground cinnamon**

**½ tsp ground nutmeg**

**½ tsp salt**

**1 ½ cups granulated sugar**

**½ cup butter (1 stick), softened**

**1 cup 100% pure pumpkin**

**1 large egg**

**1 tsp vanilla extract**

**Glaze (recipe below)**

**Instructions:**

**Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease baking sheets.**

**Combine flour, baking soda, baking powder, cinnamon, nutmeg and salt in medium bowl. Beat sugar and butter in large mixer bowl until well blended. Beat in pumpkin, egg and vanilla extract**

until smooth. Gradually beat in flour mixture. Drop by rounded tablespoon onto prepared baking sheets.

Bake for 15 to 18 minutes or until edges are firm. Cool on baking sheets for 2 minutes; remove to wire racks to cool completely. Drizzle glaze over cookies.

For glaze, combine 2 cups sifted powdered sugar, 3 tablespoons milk, 1 tablespoon melted butter and 1 teaspoon vanilla extract in small bowl until smooth.

[www.verybestbaking.com/recipes/32364/old-fashioned-soft-pumpkin-cookies](http://www.verybestbaking.com/recipes/32364/old-fashioned-soft-pumpkin-cookies)

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## **Pumpkin Carmel Cream Cheese Poke Cake**

**Submitted by Elyse Connor, CVRT**

**From Elyse: For October themed recipes, the pumpkin makes this cake very dense. Less is more if you are not a super huge fan of pumpkin flavor. I love the homemade frosting and add extra caramel sauce for serving!**

### **Ingredients**

- 1 box, spice cake mix
- 1 c. canned, pumpkin puree
- 1 c. water
- 3 eggs
- 1/2 c. vegetable oil
- 3/4 c. caramel ice cream topping, divided
- 1 (8 oz.) pkg, cream cheese, room temperature
- 2 Tbsp. milk
- 1 c. powdered sugar
- 1 1/2 c. whipped topping (like Cool Whip)

### **Instructions**

- 1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Lightly spray a 9x13 pan with baking spray, set aside.**
- 2. With a hand or stand mixer, mix together the cake mix, pumpkin, water, eggs and oil stopping to scrape down the sides of the bowl. Mix until smooth. Pour batter into the prepared pan, and bake at 350 for 30-33 minutes, or until**

toothpick inserted into the cake comes out clean, and crumb free.

3. As soon as the cake comes out of the oven, while it is still hot, poke holes into the cake with the end of a wooden spoon. In a microwave safe bowl, heat up a 1/2 cup of the caramel sauce for about 20-30 seconds, just to warm (making it easier to pour over the cake). Pour the warm caramel sauce over the top of the hot cake, making sure to get the majority of the sauce into the holes of the cake. Let the cake cool completely.

4. Once the cake is cool, prepare the cream cheese frosting. With a hand or stand mixer, cream together the cream cheese, powdered sugar and milk until smooth and creamy. Add the whipped topping, and fold into the cream cheese mixture. Spread the frosting over the top of the cake, gently pressing the frosting into the holes of the cake. Smooth out evenly.

5. Drizzle the top of the cake with the remaining 1/4 cup of caramel sauce. For a decorative effect, drag a toothpick through the opposite lines of the caramel sauce in the opposite direction to make a herringbone design. Refrigerate any leftovers. Enjoy!

[https://delightfulemade.com/2015/09/27/pumpkin-caramel-cream-cheese-poke-cake/?fbclid=IwAR2oQgbel98jcE9z2\\_uKCWPLUxX\\_PkNt0N8HnTIZ9JFOwyuLb-Yw\\_5LLJg0](https://delightfulemade.com/2015/09/27/pumpkin-caramel-cream-cheese-poke-cake/?fbclid=IwAR2oQgbel98jcE9z2_uKCWPLUxX_PkNt0N8HnTIZ9JFOwyuLb-Yw_5LLJg0)

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***Diabetic Friendly Thanksgiving Dinner Meal  
Submitted by Jane Thompson***

***Editor's Note: This is the third year that I have put this diabetic friendly Thanksgiving meal in the newsletter. My thought is that many of our clients are not able to eat traditional holiday meals and this may give them an alternative. I want to thank Jane Thompson for sending this to me three years ago to put in the newsletter. It is a winner!***

**Herb-Roasted Turkey**

***Looking for the perfect turkey recipe to use on Thanksgiving Day?  
Look no further!***

**Prep Time: 25 minutes; Cook Time: At least 1 hour and 20 minutes/ This Recipe Serves 12**

**Serving Size: 3 ounces (skinless)**

**Calories 165**

**Carbohydrate 0 g**

**Protein 33 g**

**Fat 2.5 g**

**Saturated Fat 1.4 g**

**Dietary Fiber 0 g**

**Cholesterol 95 mg**

**Sodium 75 mg**

**Ingredients:**

**5 teaspoons unsalted butter, softened**

**3 teaspoons fresh minced sage, divided**

**3 teaspoons fresh minced thyme, divided**

**3 teaspoons fresh minced rosemary, divided**  
**Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste**  
**1 ½ cups low-fat, reduced-sodium chicken broth**  
**1 cup dry white wine**  
**1 (5-pound) turkey breast, skin on, washed and patted dry**

**Instructions:**

**Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Line a large roasting pan with foil. Set a rack inside the roasting pan and coat it with cooking spray. Set aside.**

**In a small bowl, combine the butter with 2 teaspoons each of the sage, thyme, and rosemary, plus salt and pepper. Reserve the remaining 1 teaspoon of each of the herbs. In a small saucepan, combine the chicken broth and wine, and bring to a gentle boil. Add the reserved herbs and lower to a simmer.**

**With your hands, separate the turkey breast skin from the breast meat, creating a pocket without removing the skin. Rub the butter herb mixture all over the breast meat. Place the skin back down on the breast.**

**Set the turkey on the prepared rack in the pan. (You can also add veggies like peeled carrots, peeled parsnips, onions, or small potatoes to the pan; they will cook along with the turkey.) Roast the turkey for about 1 hour, 20 minutes to 1 hour, 40 minutes until the internal temperature reaches 170 degrees F and the juices run clear. Baste every 15-20 minutes with the mixture of chicken broth and white wine. Remove the turkey from the oven, cover loosely with foil, and let stand for 15 minutes before slicing. Discard the skin and serve.**

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## Sage Stuffing

*Here's a stuffing recipe that's on the healthier side but will still thrill your guests!*

**Prep time: 15 min.**

**Cook time: 1 hour**

**Serves 12**

**Calories 190 per cup**

**Carbohydrate 28 g**

**Protein 8 g**

**Fat 6 g**

**Saturated Fat 0.9 g**

**Dietary Fiber 5 g**

**Cholesterol 20 mg**

**Sodium 385 mg**

### Ingredients:

**30 slices (1-ounce each) day-old whole-grain bread, crusts removed, cut into small cubes**

**1 tablespoon olive oil**

**1 large onion, chopped**

**3 large celery stalks, chopped**

**1/3 cup coarsely chopped walnuts**

**1/2 bunch fresh sage, stems removed, coarsely chopped**

**3 cups hot low-fat, reduced-sodium chicken broth**

**1 egg, lightly beaten**

**1/2 cup dried cranberries or dried cherries, coarsely chopped**

**Kosher salt and fresh-ground black pepper to taste**

**Paprika**

## **Instructions:**

**Preheat the oven to 375° F. Add the bread to a large bowl. Heat the olive oil in a large skillet over medium heat. Add the onions and celery, and sauté for 3 minutes. Add the walnuts and sauté for 2 minutes. Add in the sage and cook for 1 minute. Add the onion-sage mixture to the bread. Pour the hot chicken broth and egg over the onion-sage, and mix well (until moist). Add in the cranberries or cherries. Season well with salt and pepper. Add the mixture to a large casserole dish, and sprinkle with paprika. Bake for about 40-45 minutes, or until the top is browned and crusty.**

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## Creamy Cheesy Cauliflower

*Cauliflower like you've never had it before! This recipe makes a great Thanksgiving Day side dish. It's better for you than those cheesy potatoes or traditional green bean casserole – with just as much flavor!*

**Prep Time: 25 minutes; Cook Time: 25 minutes/ This Recipe Serves 16**

**Serving Size: 1/3 cup**

**Calories 90**

**Carbohydrate 12 g**

**Protein 6 g**

**Fat 2.5 g**

**Saturated Fat 1.4 g**

**Dietary Fiber 2 g**

**Cholesterol 10 mg**

**Sodium 80 mg**

### Ingredients:

**10 cups coarsely chopped cauliflower, about 2 heads**

**2 teaspoons butter**

**2 large onions, chopped**

**3 garlic cloves, minced**

**½ cup all-purpose flour**

**3 ½ cups 1% milk**

**Salt and pepper to taste**

**¾ cup freshly grated Parmesan cheese**

**3 tablespoons finely minced parsley**

## **Instructions:**

**Add 4 quarts of water to a 6-quart saucepan. Bring the water to a boil. Add the cauliflower, and cook for about 10 to 12 minutes or until tender. Drain. Set aside.**

**In a large skillet, melt the butter over medium-high heat. Add the onions and garlic, and sauté for 6 to 7 minutes until soft, making sure the onions and garlic do not turn brown. Combine the flour and milk, and whisk until very smooth. Add to the onions and garlic, bring to a simmer, and cook for 2 minutes. Season with salt and pepper. Whisk in the cheese, and fold in the cauliflower. Garnish with parsley.**

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## Healthy Homemade Green Bean Casserole

*This is a delicious lower-calorie version of traditional green bean casserole.*

**Prep Time: 25 minutes/ This Recipe Serves 7**

**Serving Size: 1/2 cup**

**Calories 115**

**Carbohydrate 11 g**

**Protein 4 g**

**Fat 6 g**

**Saturated Fat 1.5 g**

**Dietary Fiber 2 g**

**Cholesterol 0 mg**

**Sodium 225 mg**

### Ingredients:

#### ***Casserole:***

**Cooking spray**

**4 Laughing Cow, LIGHT French Onion cheese wedges**

**1 tablespoon canola oil**

**½ onion, finely diced**

**1 teaspoon Smart Balance margarine**

**8 ounces sliced mushrooms, diced**

**¼ teaspoon salt (optional)**

**¼ teaspoon ground black pepper**

**½ cup fat-free, reduced-sodium chicken broth**

**2 teaspoons corn starch**

**2 teaspoons cold water**

**1/4 cup 1% milk**

**2 -14.5 cans no-salt added, cut green beans, drained**

### ***Corn Flake Topping:***

**1 cup corn flakes, crushed**

**1 2/3 tablespoons Smart Balance margarine, melted**

### **Instructions:**

**Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Spray a 1.5 quart baking dish with cooking spray.**

**Heat Laughing Cow cheese wedges in microwave for 30 seconds, stir. Set aside.**

**In a large sauté pan heat oil over medium heat. Add onions and sauté 2-3 minutes.**

**Add margarine to pan and melt. Add mushrooms, salt and pepper and cook for 4-5 minutes. Pour chicken broth into pan and simmer for 1 minute.**

**In a small bowl, mix together cornstarch and water; add to chicken broth and stir for 1 minute.**

**Add melted Laughing Cow cheese to pan and mix well. Add milk to pan; stir to incorporate. Cook additional 2-3 minutes until thick. Remove from heat and stir in green beans. Pour green bean mixture into baking dish. In a small bowl prepare corn flake topping by, mixing together corn flakes and margarine. Spread corn flake mixture on top of green beans. Bake 15-20 minutes.**

**MAKE IT GLUTEN-FREE: If you need this recipe to be gluten-free, make sure to use gluten-free chicken broth and gluten-free corn flakes.**

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## Pumpkin Pie

*Here's the traditional holiday recipe with less calories, thanks to Equal – no one will ever miss them!*

*This recipe is sponsored by Equal Sweetener*

***Yield 8 servings***

### Ingredients:

**Pastry for single-crust 9-inch pie**

**1 can (16 ounces) pumpkin**

**1 can (12 ounces) evaporated nonfat milk**

**3 eggs**

**18 packets Equal sweetener\***

**1 teaspoon vanilla extract**

**1 teaspoon ground cinnamon**

**1/4 teaspoon ground ginger**

**1/4 teaspoon ground nutmeg**

**1/4 teaspoon salt**

**Lite whipped topping, optional**

**Fresh mint, optional**

**\*Substitute 3/4 cup Equal Spoonful for the packets.**

### Instructions:

**1. Preheat oven to 400°F.**

**2. Roll pastry on floured surface into circle 1 inch larger than inverted 9-inch pie plate. Ease pastry into plate; trim and flute edge.**

3. Beat pumpkin, evaporated milk and eggs in a mixing bowl on medium speed of mixer until well combined. Blend in remaining ingredients.

4. Pour over pastry shell. Bake 35 to 40 minutes or until knife inserted into center comes out clean. Cool on wire rack. Serve warm or at room temperature. Garnish each slice with whipped topping and fresh mint, if desired.

### **Nutritional Information**

**Calories: 195**

**Total Fat: 9 g**

**Saturated Fat: 3 g**

**Cholesterol: 74 mg**

**Sodium: 286 mg**

**Potassium: 190 mg**

**Total Carbohydrate: 23 g**

**Dietary Fiber: 2 g**

**Protein: 8 g**

**Phosphorous: 131 mg**

**Food Exchanges: 1 Starch, 1 Fat**

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