

The AT Messenger...bringing technology to you

Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative (DATI) • Volume 16, No. 2 • Spring 2008

Loaner FM Equipment Donated to DATI

Kathleen Riley, MS, CCC-A, FAAA
Educational Audiologist

Hearing aid technology has changed dramatically in the past five years with the inclusion of digital technology. More people with hearing loss have better, more beneficial access to the sounds around them. Multiple microphone arrays and noise suppression algorithms to hear better in noisy backgrounds are included in most mid-level and high-end hearing aids. However, these strategies have not yet conquered the difficult task of separating “noise” (unwanted or unimportant sounds) from the “signal” (speech that you are trying to understand). FM assistive technology remains the most effective way to gain access to speech in a noisy environment.

FM systems are comprised of a transmitter and microphone that are worn by the primary speaker and a receiver that is worn independently or coupled to the listener’s hearing aid. The signal (speech) is sent from the transmitter to the receiver via an FM radio signal. The FCC has assigned and protected certain frequencies for the sole use of FM assistive listening devices.

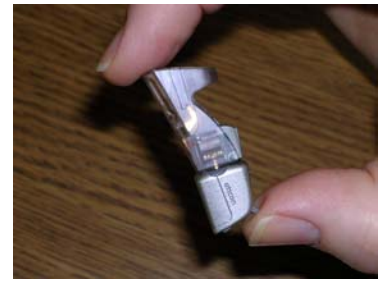
FM systems are used by adults in work settings, church assemblies and other group meetings, but the majority of FM systems in use today are used by children in the classroom. Soundfield FM systems use a transmitter worn by the teacher and a speaker on the wall that lets everyone in the classroom hear the amplified voice. Studies have shown these systems to improve attention and academic performance for a large number of students with and without hearing loss. Some students use a desktop receiver, which is about the size of a small lunchbox and is placed on or near the student’s desk. Other students use a personal receiver. That receiver can take the form of a headset, earbud, neckloop with a telecoil, or small “boot” that attaches to the hearing aid. Each configuration has its benefits and drawbacks, depending on the needs of the student and the classroom configuration.

DATI recently received two loaner FM systems from HLADE (Hearing Loss Association of Delaware). HLADE is a support group for persons with

hearing loss with ties to the national organization, Hearing Loss Association of America. These systems are available for trial use before purchase by an individual, family, workplace or school system.

Audiologists are the trained professionals with expertise in coupling FM systems to existing hearing aids. At this time, DATI does not employ a full-time audiologist, but is working in conjunction with most local audiologists. Persons who are borrowing the loaner systems should contact their private audiologist to verify compatibility and configuration.

Families with children ages 0-21 can also contact the itinerant teacher of deaf and hard-of-hearing students in their local school district to assist with understanding and using the system optimally. Additionally, families or school systems can contact the Statewide Coordinator of Services for Deaf and Hard-of-Hearing Students for support. These new loaner FM systems are manufactured by a leader in amplification, Oticon Corporation. The regional representative is also available for assistance as needed. ■



Places to Go & Things to Do In & Around Delaware

Eileen M. Mapes

DATI Information and Outreach Coordinator

Well, it seems that summer is just around the corner, and many of us will be looking for places to go and things to do. I've put together a list of groups, organizations, and websites that you may find helpful in your quest for ideas in and around our First State. Now, I didn't focus all of my attention on disability specific sites, which means you may need to take a bit of time making sure that your destination will meet all your needs. I also need to tell you that these resources are not presented in any particular order and their inclusion should not be interpreted as an endorsement. In other words, please make sure to do your own investigation into the services, products, and information presented below.



The Delaware Division of Parks and Recreation (www.destateparks.com) is a great resource for finding "places to go," "things to do," and "things to know" in and around our state. If you don't have a computer you

can call 302-739-9200 to ask about parks near your home or planned destination. Most state parks are accessible, but it is a good idea to check before visiting to make sure you have a truly enjoyable outing.



Visit Delaware (www.visitdelaware.com or toll free: 866-284-7483) is a source of information for the entire state. A paper copy of the Visitor Guide can be downloaded from the website or

requested by phone. The website provides access to an events calendar, as well as information regarding many areas of interest—arts and culture, history and heritage, sports and gaming, outdoor recreation, and shopping and leisure.

The Rehoboth Beach-Dewey Beach Chamber of Commerce site (www.beach-fun.com, toll free: 800-441-1329, or email: rehoboth@beach-fun.com) covers the gamut when it comes to the area—accommodations, real estate, services, dining, shopping, events, activities, and attractions.



Curious Parents: Local Resources for Inspired Parents (www.curiousparents.com, toll free: 877-370-8800, or email: Info@CuriousParents.com) provides Get Up & Go—activities, places to go,

events, and a wide range of family-centered information—all focused in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, and Delaware.

Bay Weekly (www.bayweekly.com or toll free: 800-579-0304), the Chesapeake's Independent Newspaper, is your access to things going on in and around the Chesapeake Bay. Make sure to search out the article titled 101 Ways to Have Fun on the Bay. In addition, I suggest searching for past editions of the article, as each has wonderful ideas for fun on the bay.



The Sunny Day Guide (<http://www.sunnydayguide.com/rehoboth/index.php>) focuses on the Delaware Coast. This resource offers access to a calendar of events, area maps, coupons, weather information, and much more.



Holiday Junction (<http://holidayjunction.com/state/delaware>) offers links to Chamber of Commerce websites throughout the state. You'll need to scroll to the bottom of the page and click on Tourism Resources to access the information. Most of the other links take you to lists of lodgings—hotels,

motels, inns, and bed-and-breakfast sites. Once you get to the list of Chambers of Commerce, you can access area-specific information in the location of your choice—events calendars, visitor information, and much more. I didn't find a toll free number for Holiday Junction, and their office is located in Ontario, Canada. But, just in case you prefer to call them, their number is 613-729-5002.

The Philly Fun Guide (www.phillyfunguide.com, email: site_admin@phillyfunguide.com, or 215-557-7811) covers a seemingly endless array of events—outdoors, sports, and kid-friendly, to name just a few—in the Philadelphia region. What really got my attention on this site was the link titled Accessible Events where you can find out about “upcoming arts and cultural events open to the general public that are accessible to people with disabilities and economic disadvantages.” Clicking on this link will take you to the Online Arts Accessibility Guide (http://www.art-reach.org/ARR_AccGu.html, 215-568-2115, or email: info@art-reach.org), then you'll need to click on the Online Accessibility Guide link. This link will take you to a page where you can search events by the type of venue, accessibility feature, and location that meets your needs.



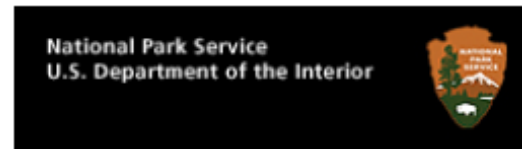
Emerging Horizons: Accessible Travel News (www.emerginghorizons.com, 209-599-9409, or e-mail: horizons@EmergingHorizons.com) is a subscription based website, \$16.95 per year, though it offers some information online at no charge. The resources found there are focused on people with mobility limitations—wheelers and slow walkers, as they put it. You can also order several travel publications that could prepare you for and/or enhance your travels. There isn't any travel information about Delaware, or the tri-state area for that matter, but you'll find information about travel in 16 other states as well as international destinations.



Wilderness Inquiry (www.wildernessinquiry.org, toll free at 800-728-0719, email: info@wildernessinquiry.org) is a non-profit organization that makes adventure travel accessible to everyone, regardless of age, background, or ability. There don't seem to be any trips in Delaware or the surrounding states, but there are many opportunities around the country and abroad.



The National Park Service (https://pwrCMS.nps.gov/pwr/fees_passes.htm or 202-208-4747) offers a variety of passes. Two passes that may be of particular interest are the Access Pass and the Senior Pass. The Access Pass is free when purchased in a park office by a person with a disability and with qualifying documentation: statement by a licensed physician; document issued by a Federal agency such as the Veteran's Administration, Social Security Disability Income or Supplemental Security Income; or document issued by a State agency such as a vocational rehabilitation agency. The Senior Pass is available for \$10 to people 62 years of age and older.



Lastly, I'd like to expand my list and would appreciate your help. Please email me at mapes@asel.udel.edu if you have a contribution you would like to share with me and our readers. Stories about your travel are also welcome!

Thanks, and happy trails! ■

The AT Bargain Basement

Marvin Williams, AT Specialist
New Castle County ATRC

Friends! Delawareans! Countrymen! Welcome to another installment of the AT Bargain Basement, your home for assistive technology bargains. I am Marvin Williams, your guide through this world of bargains. To those of you 'Basement regulars, welcome back! For those of you who are new to our little party, welcome and what took you so long? Since not everyone knows just what assistive technology, or AT, is, let's start there. Assistive technology is anything that helps folks improve or maintain their functionality. It can be made, purchased, or customized. Also, it doesn't have to be just one thing. It can be a system of devices that help someone. So now that we know that, just what makes something an AT Bargain or "Basement worthy?" Well, it's a piece of AT that can be purchased for \$100 or less. I suggest that you check the prices because they are subject to change. Sometimes the bargains can be found in local stores, but in the interest of finding as many bargains as I can, I also include deals from the Internet. So now that the rules of engagement are in place, let's go to the bargains!

Our first bargain comes from Sussex County AT Specialist, Dan Fendler, and it is a doozie. Dan told me about a great little website loaded with AT bargains for those with vision loss. The site is called Blind Bargains, and it is a treasure trove. The web address is www.blindbargains.com. The site

has a lot of features including browsing by merchant, active searches of the bargains in their database, portals to low vision bargains on Amazon.com, and the “Ask Bargain Bob” feature which allows you to access their guru of low-vision bargains. Some of their listings include the VOX 3000 talking kitchen/office scale for \$39.50, Dragon Naturally Speaking Standard v.9.0 for \$39.99 (shipping included), a GeoSafari Talking Globe for \$70.48, and a Hamilton Beach Talking Microwave for \$89.96. Now, the products don’t come from Blind Bargains. They come from various places. Blind Bargains has just set up a neat and easy approach to finding them.

The next bargain on tap is the One Touch Jar Opener. You may have seen the commercials for this nifty little gadget. This product is unlike other automatic jar openers that may be constrained to a particular jar size for operation. Because this unit does not have a chamber into which the jar is placed, it is not limited by the size of the jar. To use it, all you do is place the One Touch on top of the jar you want to open, press the start button, and it opens the jar by itself. Now, you can buy the One



Touch from the manufacturer’s website (www.onetouchjar.com) for \$19.95 + shipping. I also found it listed at Wal-Mart’s web site for \$18.44 with free ship-to-store delivery (the product gets shipped to your local Wal-Mart where you pick it up). However, the best deal I found was through a company called AmeriMark. I found it there for \$11.99 with \$1.95 shipping and handling. So ordering it through AmeriMark, you can get it for \$13.98! You can reach AmeriMark on the Internet at www.amerimark.com, or by phone at 877-268-9594. I was recently made aware that Happy Harry’s has the One Touch for \$14.00; however, do note that not all stores share the same pricing, and not all stores will have the same availability. For the price, that’s a heck of a bargain, and soon, the One Touch Jar Opener will be available to try out free-of-charge in our ATRC’s.

The next bargain is actually a hint from a Basement regular who wished to remain anonymous. Her tip was for making house hallways a little easier to navigate for folks with a balance or mobility problem. Her simple tip was to add a hand rail to both sides of the hallway. Having handrails down both sides of the hall takes a pretty wide hallway since the minimum distance between handrails is supposed to be 36 inches. So you may only be able to put up handrails on one side of the hall. Still, for those folks who have difficulty navigating a long hallway, handrails can be a godsend. If you are a do-it-yourselfer or you know one, this simple project can be completed for

less than \$100, depending on how fancy you want to get with your handrails. Now, handrails, like most everything else in a house or building, have design and building specifications that must be followed. Those can be found online, at your local library, or by contacting your county regarding specifications for handrails. As with any home modification or improvement project, never proceed unassisted if you do not know what you are doing.

My last bargain is the Olympus VN-4100 digital voice recorder. It's a great little digital recorder for the price. It features 144 hours of recording time, timer recording, fast and slow playback, 4 folders for storing recordings, and 4 variable speed and quality playback modes. The unit is a nice piece of technology. It's very compact and light weight. The buttons are very streamlined, which may or may not be a problem for a user with visual difficulties. We have these available in our inventory for a free two-week trial, and it is available through our BOLD program for our low-vision consumers. While our unit cost is \$61, I have seen them for \$40.99 at Circuit City and, for those of you willing to order via the Internet or telephone, you can get it for as little as \$32 from Newegg.com online or 800-390-1119.



And thus we come to the end of another AT Bargain Basement. I would like to thank Dan and the other folks who have sent in their ideas. If you have an idea or bargain you would like to share with the group, don't hesitate to send them to me and I'll make sure your contribution is preserved in Bargain Basement history! So until next time, remember: just because it's a bargain doesn't mean it's cheap! ■

The First State AIMS for Student Achievement

Beth Mineo

DATI Director

Children cannot learn if they cannot access the curriculum. Most schools depend heavily on print materials such as textbooks, leaving many students—such as those with vision loss, dyslexia, language learning disabilities, attention difficulties, or motor limitations—at a disadvantage. Federal special education law (the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004) now mandates that students with print disabilities must have alternative ways to access the information contained in textbooks and other print materials.

There are essentially two approaches to overcoming print barriers: delivery of content in entirely different formats, or modifying the delivery of print to

increase students' ability to access the information it contains. Using the first approach, we might convert print content into audio files or Braille documents. In the second approach, we might alter the appearance of the print to enhance its uptake: make it larger; change the font; increase the "white space" between lines or in the margins; or decrease the distractions on the page that compete for student attention. We might provide an audio supplement to the text so that the students have access to the information in two complementary modes. We might deliver print content with the support of a text reader such as Kurzweil or Read: OutLoud so that students have additional supports such as highlighting, supported horizontal tracking, and embedded content assists such as word definitions and comprehension prompts.

The key to efficient production of print access alternatives and supports is having the content available in digital format. Once content exists in a digital file, it can be easily transformed: enlarged, enhanced, converted to audio files, and so on. Enhancements are also digital, so they are easily saved for use by other educators or with new students in subsequent years.

As most instructional materials in today's classrooms are print-based (textbooks, workbooks, worksheets, trade books), how are educators supposed to get their hands on digital content? In many cases, they—or people working on their behalf—will have to convert print materials to digital materials by typing them or scanning them into a computer. There are some sources of no-cost digital text in repositories on the web. And some publishers either routinely sell CD versions of their textbooks or are willing to provide textbook content in digital form upon request to accommodate a student with print disabilities.

There are also organizations that make content in alternate formats available for a fee. Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic (RFB&D) offers over 43,000 titles in its AudioCD format that, combined with a specially-designed player, allow students to navigate audio content as they would print content. Bookshare.org is a subscription service that offers books in digital format; a recent federal award enables Bookshare.org to make its services available to all U.S. schools and any qualifying student with a print disability at no cost!

Finally, IDEA 2004 established a new mechanism by which publishers of core instructional materials may submit those materials in a standardized digital format (the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Standard, or NIMAS) to a centralized repository (the National Instructional Materials Accessibility Center, or NIMAC). Ideally, schools eventually will have one-

stop access to core instructional materials in digital format if they are not able to purchase them directly from publishers.

With so much focus on the Response to Intervention (RTI) and discipline provisions in IDEA 2004, the very enabling “print access” component of the new legislation often gets overlooked. Recent conversations with a group of school principals revealed that more information is needed in order for everyone to understand the new print access provisions. There is no question, however, that accessible instructional materials will level the educational playing field and make it possible for more students to achieve.

While it is easy to understand the benefits of accessible instructional materials, it is not always easy to ensure access to them. Right now Delaware does not have an infrastructure in place to help schools get efficient access to materials in a variety of formats, so each school is on its own. But this will soon change. Delaware was recently awarded federal funding to support its involvement in the Accessible Instructional Materials (AIM) Consortium, an initiative to facilitate availability of accessible instructional materials for K-12 students in the Consortium states. The U.S. Department of Education awarded funding to CAST (Center for Applied Special Technology) in Massachusetts for the leadership of the AIM Consortium, and CAST in turn contracted with 15 states committed to furthering curricular access for students with print disabilities. Leading Delaware’s effort are Karen Jones from the Delaware Department of Education (kjones@doe.k12.de.us) and Beth Mineo from the DATI (mineo@asel.udel.edu).

Delaware’s AIM project has three major goals. The first is to ensure that all stakeholders—students, families, teachers, and administrators—are aware of their rights and responsibilities relative to print access. In addition to offering training throughout the state for these constituencies, the project will establish a Print Access Cadre, which will serve as the primary implementation workgroup. We plan to invite all districts to participate in the Cadre. Some of the benefits of participation will include access to a wide range of supports, including training, technical assistance, technology, materials, and the services of the statewide print access center once it becomes operational. The other project goals relate to the establishment of the infrastructure: determining data management and tracking systems, securing the ability to transform print into a variety of formats, and creating and implementing processes and procedures for the identification of students with print access disabilities and the appropriate accommodation of their needs.

To learn more about options for accommodating print disabilities, the AIM Consortium, or for demonstrations of useful print access technologies, contact the DATI at 800-870-DATI (3284), 302-651-6790, or www.dati.org. The DATI Assistive Technology Resource Centers in each county can provide demonstrations, arrange training, and lend equipment for trial-use periods. ■



Chris Pennington, MS
Research Coordinator
AgoraNet, Inc.

James Polikoff, MS
Senior Research Associate
Speech Research Laboratory
Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children

The ModelTalker Speech Synthesis System is a revolutionary software package designed to benefit people who are losing or who have already lost their ability to speak. It allows people with ALS (Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis) or other conditions to create a synthetic version of their own voice for communication, or to choose a voice best suited to represent them. The system uses representative segments of recorded speech (either from an individual who is losing the ability to speak or from a person chosen by someone who can no longer speak) to create a unique personalized synthetic voice. This synthetic voice is virtually unlimited, meaning it can be used to express almost anything, including words and phrases not previously recorded. The voice “banking” process is guided by computer-assisted voice recording software called InvTool. Once this process is finished, an individual will be able to create a synthetic voice by uploading their recordings to a voice generation site. The voice, when combined with the ModelTalker speech engine, can then be used with any communication system that is SAPI 5.0 compatible.

The ModelTalker project is a collaborative effort between AgoraNet, Inc. and the Nemours Speech Research Laboratory. AgoraNet, Inc. is a custom software and web development company located in Newark, Delaware. Established in 1996, they have been significantly involved with numerous assistive technology and multimedia development projects. In addition, their staff has expertise in the areas of augmentative communication, human-computer interfaces, natural language processing, and accessibility issues. The Speech Research Laboratory is one of the laboratories within the Nemours Center for Pediatric Auditory and Speech Sciences (CPASS)

at the Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children in Wilmington, Delaware. The Speech Research Laboratory conducts research to develop, evaluate and refine speech analysis, synthesis, and recognition technology for children and others with speech and hearing disorders.

Currently, the complete ModelTalker System is in the early stages of commercial development and the developers are actively seeking beta testers both in and outside of the ALS and AAC communities—anyone can be a beta tester. Beta testing software is a great way to experience and help shape the development of new software programs. It often gives you access to tools you may need months before they are available to the general public, and it gives you a way to influence the development of that software by having direct access to the developers during the creation process. With this opportunity, however, comes some responsibilities. First, you must remember that this software is under development. The software is stable, but there is the possibility that not all functionality is intact and that it may even crash. The developers don't think so, but that is where they need your input, ideas, and the diversity of your experience and equipment. Second, you must realize that there is no telephone technical support for these products. Once the products are commercially released, of course, full support services will become available. If you would like to be a beta tester, the software can be downloaded for free from www.modeltalker.com. There you can learn more about a short inventory of about 14 words and phrases for review. The InvTool program and accompanying tutorial guide you through the entire process. Once the test speech files are uploaded, personnel at the speech lab will look them over and possibly make additional suggestions for creating better recordings. If all is well, the lab will send you a full inventory of 1650 words and phrases to record. You should expect that recording the full inventory will take at least 8 to 10 hours distributed over 3 or 4 days; for some people it can take a lot longer. When all of the phrases are recorded, you will upload the speech files to the speech lab for conversion to a synthetic voice. You will receive a web link to download your voice once it has been created.

For more information, please visit www.modeltalker.com. ■

Assistive Technology Services via DVR and DVI

Lexie S. McFassel, Esq.
Disabilities Law Program
Community Legal Aid Society, Inc.



The Division of Vocational Rehabilitation (DVR) provides assistive technology services as part of its vocational program and its independent living program. First, looking at DVR's vocational program, eligibility criteria require that the individual have a significant disability that is a barrier to employment, the individual must want to seek employment, and must be of working age. The disability must be a substantial impediment to employability, 39 U.S.C. §705(20)(A), and any adult receiving SSI or SSDI is presumptively eligible for VR services, provided they are looking toward an employment goal, 29 U.S.C. §722(a)(3). Vocational Rehabilitation services are those necessary to assist an individual with a disability in preparing for, securing, or regaining employment, 29 U.S.C. §723(a). Currently, all eligible applicants for DVR's vocational program receive services as there is no waiting list or order of selection for services.

The Independent Living Program administered by DVR does not require an employment goal, but provides assistive technology and other independent living services to individuals who have a significant disability that interferes with their ability to live independently. This program has a financial needs test applied for eligibility, and recipients of Social Security's SSI and SSDI automatically meet this test. The Independent Living Program currently has a waiting list for services, and service requests, including those for assistive technology, are processed in the order in which they are received.

The Delaware Division for the Visually Impaired provides assistive technology to people with visual impairments, and is required to provide items to individuals who are legally blind. This agency operates in a manner similar to DVR, providing vocational rehabilitation and independent living assistance.

Assistive technology services are exempt from the comparable services and benefits test of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1992. Comparable services and benefits are services which are provided or paid for, in whole or in part, by other federal, state, or local public agencies, by health insurance, or by employee benefits which are available to an individual with a disability. Exemption from the "comparable benefits test" means that individuals do not have to exhaust all of these other potential

funding options before DVR/DVI will consider paying for the AT device and/or service.

Both DVR and DVI provide consumers with a wide range of assistive technology including, but not limited to, the following items: screen readers, magnifiers, Braille embossers, ramps, computers, hearing and listening devices, prosthetics, vehicle modifications, home and bathroom modifications, wheelchairs, transfer boards, and door openers. Almost any assistive technology need would be considered for purchase by DVR or DVI as long as the item maintains independent living in the community and/or supports a work goal. Once the equipment is purchased for the individual, it becomes the individual's personal property. The individual is responsible for the maintenance and repair of the equipment as needed and recommended by the manufacturer, unless the agreement between the agency and the individual specifies something different.

In conclusion, the Division for the Visually Impaired and the Division of Vocational Rehabilitation both provide very important services to individuals with disabilities who want to work or who want to maintain or improve their independence in the community. Assistive technology is often an integral part of the services they provide. For more information about DVR or DVI, contact your local office or check out their websites at <http://www.dhss.delaware.gov/dhss/dvi/index.html> and <http://www.delawareworks.com/dvr/welcome.shtml>. ■

Coast to Coast: Readers Share Tips to Make Home Life Easier

When you have vision loss, or live with someone who does, there are adjustments for everyone involved. Following are ideas shared by Sharing Solutions readers regarding changes they made to feel more secure and comfortable in their homes.

Getting—And Staying—Organized

The key is getting rid of clutter. And it's often easier said than done. If you need help, ask a family member or friend. Start by going through your closets, cabinets and drawers to remove items you no longer use or need. Once that's done, it's a lot easier to organize what you have. And whatever system you choose, keep it simple so you can find an item when you need it—"a place for everything, and everything in its place." Make sure to share your plan with family members, housekeepers or house guests.

Here are some things you suggested:

- Designate pantry and refrigerator shelves for specific items by using raised markings or large-print labels

- Differentiate canned goods by using magnetic reusable labels or rubber bands
- Find items more easily by storing them on rotating tiered shelving
- Separate socks, jewelry or paperwork in plastic sealable bags or containers

Using All Your Senses

Don't forget to use your other senses to identify items. For example, jewelry often can be differentiated by feel—shape, stones (smooth vs. faceted), length, etc. Use tactile raised bumps or dots to mark appliance settings. And take advantage of talking products. Other ideas include:

- Place wind chimes or a radio on your patio/porch to keep you oriented outside
- Turn prescription bottles upside down after you've taken your daily dose

Color and Contrast

Many people improve visibility by enhancing color and/or contrast. For example, dining is more comfortable when place settings contrast with tablecloths. And you're less likely to knock over colored glasses than clear ones. Here are some additional tips:

- Outline the plug area of switch plates with a bold marker
- Set off furniture against a contrasting carpet or wall, or make it stand out with contrasting pillows
- Highlight doors by painting frames to contrast with the wall
- Distinguish your keys with the help of different colored nail polish or key covers

Safety

Safety is a top priority for everyone. We received a great deal of feedback regarding throw rugs—some people feel they're a hazard and have discarded them; others find them helpful as landmarks and secure them with tape. Stairways are another hot spot. Readers mark the edges of the top and bottom steps, install handrails and ensure sufficient lighting. One woman feels a lot safer after alternating two different contrasting carpets on her stairway steps. For additional safety tips, order our free "Living Better at Home" kit, by calling 212-821-9200 ext. 551 or emailing bbendl@lighthouse.org.

Popular Products

Readers shared a variety of adaptive products and electronic devices that they find useful:

- Large-print calendar

- CCTV to magnify reading material
- Large-button telephone
- Computer with adaptive software
- Talking caller ID and answering machine
- Voice-activated cell phone
- Large-screen TV
- Talking appliances

This article was reprinted with permission from Lighthouse International (www.lighthouse.org) and appeared in the Spring 2007 issue of their Sharing Solutions newsletter. The contents of this article are based on feedback from Sharing Solutions readers from around the country. The Spring 2007 issue is available in its entirety at <http://www.lighthouse.org/aboutus/newsletters/>. You may also receive the free newsletter on a regular basis by emailing sharingsolutions@lighthouse.org. The newsletter is available in multiple formats—large print, Braille, audiocassette, and online. ■

21st Century Communications & Video Accessibility Act

Jenifer Simpson, Senior Director

Telecommunications and Technology Policy Initiatives

American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)

In December 2007, the U.S. House of Representatives released a draft bill, the “Twenty-first Century Communications and Video Accessibility Act.” Publication of this draft legislation kicked off much action by the Coalition of Organizations for Accessible Technology (COAT), the disability coalition behind the agenda in this draft bill. As a comprehensive proposal covering telephone services—wireline, wireless, and Internet—as well as television distributed over the Internet, in addition to some universal service funds initiatives, the provisions have elicited considerable interest by industry and consumer stakeholders.



Since the draft bill was published, COAT's steering committee has met with numerous industry representatives who would be affected by the legislation, were it enacted. The intent of these meetings was to brief the companies on the intent of the legislation and to uncover concerns and issues any companies might have on specific provisions. These were not negotiation meetings. These industry groups included: AT&T, Verizon, the

Consumer Electronics Association (CEA), the Cellular Telecommunications and Internet Association (CTIA), the Information Technology Industry Council (ITI), and the U.S. Telecommunications Association (USTelecom). Upcoming meetings will include the Telecommunications Industry Association (TIA) and likely the National Cable & Television Association (NCTA) as well as other entities impacted by the video programming provisions in the proposal. Along the way COAT has garnished the support of the National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners for the overall legislation and, specifically, a resolution supporting the provisions that would impact the Universal Service Funds. See their resolution at <http://www.aapd.com/News/tech/downloads/NARUCres.doc>.

Also, since December, member representatives of COAT have met with congressional representatives to brief them on the proposal and to ask for their support of the measure. COAT encourages concerned individuals with disabilities to contact members of the House Subcommittee on Telecommunications and the Internet to ask them for support of the measure and to co-sponsor it when introduced. We expect to have a hearing on the issues and a bill later this spring.

For further information, please contact Jenifer Simpson at AAPD, email aapdjenifer@aol.com. AAPD is a founding and steering committee member of the COAT coalition. ■



Delaware Assistive Technology Exchange

To learn more about an item listed on the AT Exchange, or to post a listing, contact Sandy Walls at the Sussex County ATRC. You can reach her at 302-856-7946, or toll-free at 800-870-DATI (3284). The toll-free number uses an automated system to direct your call. To reach Sandy, press 1 after the first prompt and 6 after the next prompt. Please be

ready to share your contact information, as well as the item ID of any item in which you are interested, with Sandy.

If you have internet access, you do not have to go through Sandy to get the latest listings or to post your own listings. Simply go to the AT Exchange on the DATI website (www.dati.org/exchange/index.php). You will click on the “Register Now” button, unless you already have an AT Exchange account, and complete the online form. All prices of items listed on the AT Exchange are negotiable if the listed price includes “BO” meaning “best offer.”

Items Available

Daily Living

3-in-one commode, Invacare, never used, \$100, Item ID 816

Bedside commodes (2), adj height, one extra wide, one standard, excel cond, \$25 each, Item ID 793

Book Maid, aluminum, clear, free, Item ID 502

Blue Wave bath/positioning chair, Rifton, large size (tall child/young teen), all straps for safe positioning, infinite range of angles, stores flat, very good cond, \$60 or BO, Item ID 858

Cervical support exerciser, Pronex, pump exercises neck, helps reduce pain, excel cond, \$10 or BO, Item ID 791

Commode, stand-alone w/back and arms, excel cond, \$30 or BO, Item ID 694

Commode, back & arms, use w/bucket or toilet, very good cond, \$30 or BO, Item ID 909

Commode, back & arms, can be used over toilet, \$30 or BO, Item ID 911

Commode, back & arms, use w/bucket or toilet, adj legs, never used, \$60 or BO, Item ID 910

Commode, Invacare, gray w/armrests, used one month, excel cond, \$75 or BO, Item ID 872

Commodes, shower chairs, usually loaned or given, donations welcome, Item ID 641

Ergostand, BHM, sling, sit to stand elec lift, 11 features, brochure, never used, \$1,750, Item ID 626

Mobile shower chair, Invacare/model 6358, for safe transport to and from shower, flexible nylon backrest, never used, \$100 or BO, Item ID 779

Portable commodes (2), standard, free, Item ID 904-905

Posey bed restraint system, keeps patient secured in bed, free, Item ID 772

Shower chair, Invacare, w/back, adj legs, rated for 400 lbs, good cond, \$20 or BO, Item ID 672

Shower chair, Invacare, backless, adj legs, rubber seat, very good cond, \$20 or BO, Item ID 671

Environmental Adaptations

Folding ramp, EZ Access, folds into 4 sections, carry bag, easy to store & carry, very good cond, \$400 or BO, Item ID 613

Grab bar, silver, 16", excel cond, \$10, Item ID 873

Lift chair, Golden Regal, charcoal, both arms open up w/storage, movable tray, excel cond, \$850, Item ID 869

Lift chair, small, very good cond, \$100, Item ID 901

Lift chair, large, very good cond, \$100, Item ID 899

Shower grip bars, white, one-16", one-9", will sell as set, excel cond, \$20 or BO, Item ID 874

Stair lift, leather, 6 step, \$600 or BO, Item ID 453

Stair lift, Excel, 11 steps, w/call-send button, electric, battery back-up, BO, Item ID 908

Wheelchair accessible condo, Pike Creek area, 1st floor, go to:
<http://www.yesucanusa.com/condo/> for all the details, excel cond,
\$167,000, Item ID 961

Hearing

Stereo headphones, Radio Shack, wireless w/batteries, never used, \$40, Item ID 790

Mobility, Seating & Positioning

Armrest, padded, right side, free, Item IDs 932-934

Cane, adj, gold w/black handle, \$10, Item ID 871

Canes, crutches, walkers, for personal use, loaned or given, Item ID 640

Canes, walkers, commodes, etc., loaned or given, Item ID 371

Craftmatic bed, twin, adj w/corded remote, vibrating massage control, very good cond, \$400 or BO, Item ID 924

Craftmatic bed, full size, vibrates, adj to different positions, excel cond, \$400 or BO, Item ID 755

Craftmatic bed, single, head and foot control, vibrator, heating pad, hand control, wireless, excel cond, \$1,500 or BO, Item ID 820

Feeder seat & adj floor table, Tumble Forms/Sammons Preston, medium size w/wedge for use as floor sitter, custom made quilted flannel seat cover, very good cond, \$200 or BO, Item ID 857

Floor sitter, Tumble Forms, blue and red seat, good, free, Item ID 959

Hospital bed, Invacare, rails, electric w/remote, very good cond, \$500 or BO, Item ID 867

Hospital bed, Invacare/Bariatric, rated for 400 lbs, mattress, remote control, half rails, very good cond, \$200 or BO, Item ID 814

Hospital bed, Invacare, mattress, adj, excel cond, free, Item ID 943

Hoyer lift, electric, sling, charger needs repair, very good cond, free, Item ID 822

Hoyer lift, Linak, remote control, sling, excel cond, \$1,000 or BO, Item ID 866

Legrests, 3 sets, padded, free, Item IDs 935-937

Pediatric Tripp Trapp chair, Stokke, adj position and height, provides additional support, very good cond, \$125 or BO, Item ID 948

Pediatric walker, Kaye Posterior, four wheels w/swivel or fixed front, for ages 8-12, good cond, \$75 or BO, Item ID 954

Pediatric walker, Kaye Posterior, two wheels, for ages 6-9, good cond, \$75 or BO, Item ID 947

Pediatric walker, Otto Bock Buggy Postural, hip stabilizer, swivel front wheels, medium size, grip height 22" to 30", for ages 7-11, never used, \$199 or BO, Item ID 946

Power wheelchair, Quickie 110, right hand joystick, 2 gel-cell batteries, \$300 or BO, Item ID 82

Power wheelchair, Jazzy 1115, gray and blue, right joystick, footrests, excel cond, free, Item ID 841

Power wheelchair, Jazzy, red, rated for over 300 lbs, \$2,000 or BO, Item ID 896

Power wheelchair, Invacare/Rumba, 3 yrs old, needs battery, excel cond, \$800 or BO, Item ID 455

Power wheelchair, Invacare/Pronto M51 Sure Step, gray, excel cond, \$1,000 or BO, Item ID 855

Power wheelchair, Jet 2 HD, right hand joystick, elevating leg rests, red w/gray seat, rated for 350 lbs, 3 yrs. old, excel cond, \$1,000, Item ID 742

Power wheelchair, Invacare Ranger II Rear Wheel Drive, blue, seat 20"W x 18"D, 2 gel-cell batteries, frame folds, very good cond, \$1,000, Item ID 783

Power wheelchair, EverMed, almost new batteries and battery charger, used twice, must pick up, excel cond, BO, Item ID 679

Power wheelchair, Quickie, battery and charger, excel cond, \$500 or BO, Item ID 611

Power wheelchair, Hoveround MPV4, gray, \$1,000 or BO, Item ID 655

Power wheelchair, Pride Jet 3 Ultra, maroon w/black leather seats, batteries kept fully charged, never used, \$3,000 or BO, Item ID 682

Power wheelchair, Quickie V-121, black, two sets of foot rests—stationary and adjustable, battery charger, covered gel cushion, \$300, Item ID 906

Power wheelchair, Guardian Aspire, red high-back, head rest, gray van-style seat and belt, adj tilt, solid flip up foot plate, on-board charger unit w/cord, excel cond, \$900 or BO, Item ID 859

Power wheelchair, Action Power 9000 Storm Series, 2 MK/M-22NF gel batteries, slightly used charger, \$800 or BO, Item ID 738

Power wheelchair, Jazzy 1122, cobalt blue, tilt seat, excel cond, \$1,000 or BO, Item ID 865

Power wheelchair, Hoveround, heavy duty charger, gray, good cond, \$500 or BO, Item ID 957

Scooter, Pride Mobility/Sundancer, blue, 14 months old, excel cond, \$650 or BO, Item ID 718

Scooter, Shop Rider/Sovereign B4, mid-sized, 4 wheels, heavy duty, \$800, Item ID 850

Scooter, PaceSaver II, used once since computer replaced, new batteries w/charger, inflatable tires, simple to disassemble for transport, rated for 300 lbs, \$500 or BO, Item ID 654

Scooter, Rascal/AutoGo, red, light on front, folds up, adj handlebars, swivel seat, very good cond, \$800 or BO, Item ID 888

Scooter, Trecker HS-890, heavy duty, 4 wheels, large and comfortable seating, front basket, never used, \$2,400 or BO, Item ID 753

Stroller, Convaid/Easy Rider, 14"W, rated for 100 lbs & vehicle use, foot plate, 5-point harness, teal, arm rests, shoulder extender, anti-tip bars, heavy canvas, very good cond, \$650 or BO, Item ID 885

Stroller, Convoid Cruiser CX-13, tie downs, teal, folds like umbrella stroller, for ages 4-10, very good cond, \$299 or BO, Item ID 945

Stroller, Convoid/Easy Rider, blue, heavy canvas, foot plates & straps, arm rests, adj seat, wheels lock, 5-point harness, anti-tip bars, rated for up to 150 lb, 16"W, light weight, very good cond, \$700 or BO, Item ID 886

Travel chair, Invacare Tracer Transport, black, 16", \$100 or BO, Item ID 811

Walker, rollator, three wheel, hand brakes, built-in pouch, very good cond, BO, Item ID 804

Walker, standard, free, Item ID 903

Walker, DMI, blue, seat, brakes, shopping basket, tray, \$80, Item ID 915

Walker, wheeled, collapsible, very good cond, \$30 or BO, Item ID 812

Walker, standard, free, Item ID 902

Wheelchair, Invacare Solara Tilt, tilt angle indicator, telescoping front end, all wheel sizes fit, 43 lbs, wide seat, excel cond, \$1,000 or BO, Item ID 782

Wheelchair, Tuffcare, silver and black, footrests, excel cond, \$75 or BO, Item ID 870

Wheelchair, Invacare A4 Titanium, adj seat angle, black, used 2 yrs, rated for 300 lb, lightweight, disassembles to fit in car, manual, purchased '04, \$400 or BO, Item ID 849

Wheelchair, manual, loaned or given, Item ID 642

Wheelchair, Invacare Tracer DLX, lightweight, portable, footrest, navy blue, excel cond, \$150 or BO, Item ID 713

Wheelchair, Invacare/9000XT, leg supports, very good cond, \$100 or BO, Item ID 914

Recreation, Sports, and Leisure

All terrain beach wheelchair, De-Bug, four wheel fixed frame, very good cond, free, Item ID 928

Ready racer, Tumble Form, pediatric mobility aid, needs new inner tubes, free, Item ID 929

Resistance chair/exercise system, Continuing Sickness, Inc., green, DVD, never used, \$80 or BO, Item ID 913

Small hand-driven tricycle, Rifton, red, designed to provide exercise & mobility, free, Item ID 930

Swing, outdoor, good, free, Item ID 958

Speech Communication

Link Plus, Assistive Technology, Inc., case, AC adapter, telephone cable, user's and reference guide, excel cond, \$1,250 or BO, Item ID 784

Optical headpointer, PRC, for Liberator, DeltaTalker, AlphaTalker, AlphaTalker II, Light Talker, and IntroTalker, never used, free, Item ID 374

Vehicle Modification/Transportation

Car, Saturn SL2, 1993, Braun cartop carrier for folding wheelchair, hand control accelerator and brakes, AC, CD changer, power windows, \$2,500 or BO, Item ID 861

Easy Reach power lift seat, Access Unlimited, for Chevy Express van, allows easy transfers directly from wheelchair into van seat, excel cond, \$300 or BO, Item ID 868

Scooter/wheelchair lift, Harmar AL 3000, rated for 350 lbs, transport scooter or power wheelchair, swing away bar allows stowing in car, excel cond, \$800 or BO, Item ID 730

Scooter lift, Bruno VMI XL 200, for SUV, used 9 months, excel cond, \$500 or BO, Item ID 840

Trunk/Van lift for scooter, Electric Mobility Trunk Lift, lifts scooter into vehicle, easily disassembled to accommodate use in car trunk, excel cond, \$450 or BO, Item ID 809

Turny seat system, Bruno, totally electric, lowers to w/c level, 350 lb capacity, never used, \$4,500 or BO, Item ID 926

Van, Dodge Grand Caravan, dark gray, 2000 Sports Model, power side entry ramp, wheelchair tie down, anti-lock, dual a/c, 63K miles, excel cond, \$18,000 or BO, Item ID 781

Van, Ford Econoline 150, 2000, black/silver, signature series pkg, high top, leather, 2 TVs, bed, 2 sound sys, dual AC, remote start, security sys, wheelchair Super Arm 2000, 41K miles, 1 owner, excel cond, \$22,750 or BO, Item ID 785

Van, 2002 Dodge Ram 1500, full-size conversion, fully equipped, w/Braun w/c lift, 21K miles, under warranty, excel cond, \$15,000 or BO, Item ID 916

Van, 2003 Ford Liberty E250 Conversion, w/c lock system, under vehicle lift, fully loaded, 58K, tan, excel cond, \$25,000 or BO, Item ID 953

Van, Dodge Ram 2500 Conversion, 1996, wheelchair lift, tie downs, ezlock system (not installed), 77K miles, good, \$6,500 or BO, Item ID 962

Vision

ClearView video magnifier, Optelec, color, black and white, excel cond, \$2,500 or BO, Item ID 633

Magnicam, Innoventions, Inc., cable attached to handheld magnifier w/light, screen can have black or white lettering, attaches to any TV set, manuals, very good cond, \$100, Item ID 860

Screen reader, Window Eyes, 5.0 ver, excel cond, \$200, Item ID 544

Items being Sought

Computers and Related

Computer, needs to be in excel cond w/updated operating system, Item ID 851

Laptop computer, for personal use, Item ID 56

Computer, donation, will accept laptop, Item ID 956

Environmental Adaptations

Hi/Lo treatment table, electric, willing to pay reasonable price, Item ID 944

Lift chair, willing to pay \$100 or less, Item ID 798

Lift chair, for larger adult, willing to pay reasonable price, Item ID 846

Lift chair, for smaller adult, willing to pay reasonable price, Item ID 847

Lift chair, for small person, willing to pay reasonable price, Item ID 912

Stair lift, needs to go up 11 steps, Item ID 845

Stair lift, needs to go up 13 steps, Item ID 927

Vertical lift, needs to go up 3', willing to pay reasonable price, Item ID 955

Mobility, Seating & Positioning

Gait trainer, for 30-year-old, willing to pay reasonable price, Item ID 712

Low flow air mattress, willing to pay reasonable price, Item ID 939
Scooter, willing to pay reasonable price and/or donation, Item ID 800
Scooter, would like donation, Item ID 938
Stroller, special needs, for child 4' 5", Item ID 736
Wheelchair, small, lightweight for a 14 yr old, 14-16" wide, push handle, Item ID 949
Wheelchair, extra wide, willing to pay reasonable price, Item ID 854
Wheelchair seat cushion, Roho, willing to pay reasonable price, Item ID 940

Other

Digital finger oximeter, auto on/off, Item ID 887
Vehicle Modification/Transportation
Adapted vehicle, for 17-year-old son who is a paraplegic, for doctor and therapy visits, Item ID 882
Entervan, searching for one that I can drive from my wheelchair, Item ID 751
Van, needs to be 3-4 door, Item ID 852

Vision

CCTV, donation only, Item ID 862 ■

Note: If you are looking for items not on the list, contact the DATI's Sussex County ATRC at 302-856-7946 or 800-870-DATI (3284). If you call the 800 number, you will interact with an automated system. In order to reach the Sussex ATRC, press 1 after the first prompt, and 6 after the next prompt.

New items are added regularly. If there has been no activity or interaction with the contributor to the list within six months, items are automatically removed from the list.

Note on liability: The DATI does not warrant the condition or terms of sale of any device offered for reutilization by an existing owner or borrower under the AT Program. The DATI shall not be liable for any claims, liabilities, damages, losses, costs, expenses (including but not limited to settlements, judgments, court costs and reasonable attorney's fees), fines

and penalties, arising out of any actual or alleged injury, loss or damage of any nature whatsoever in connection with the sale or use of any device purchased or sold under the AT Program. It shall be the responsibility of the seller to provide accurate and detailed information about the device's specifications and condition to any buyer. The DATI functions solely as an information-sharing communication channel.■

DATI Equipment Loan Policy

DATI has a wide variety of equipment at the Assistive Technology Resource Centers for the primary purpose of demonstration and short-term loan. The policy for equipment loans is as follows:

The standard loan period is two weeks, defined as the day borrowed (e.g., Monday the 10th) to the same day two weeks later (e.g., Monday the 24th). Loans may be extended providing there are no names on the waiting list and/or that an extension will not interfere with an existing reservation. The maximum loan period is four weeks.

A maximum of four devices may be borrowed during any single loan period. However, combinations of devices may be treated as a single device if the components are interdependent—either operationally, or because one component is required for the user to access another. Equipment loans across state lines are not permitted. Equipment must also remain in Delaware throughout the loan period.■

Please Keep Us Posted!

Has your address changed? Are you receiving duplicates? Would you prefer to receive the newsletter via email?

If the address we have for you is incorrect, please type or print your correct address on the form below and forward it to DATI along with your current mailing label or the first page of your electronic newsletter. If you no longer wish to receive this newsletter, visit www.dati.org/news/unsubscribe.html or contact our central office.

Do you know a friend or family member who would be interested in receiving the newsletter? Please provide him/her with the subscription form below.

Let us know if you like to receive the newsletter in a different format (audio tape, Braille, or large print), or if you would like to stop your subscription.

Please feel free to call us at 1-800-870-3284 to take care of any of this business. You may also email us at dati@asel.udel.edu.

To Contact DATI's Central Site office or the ATRC closest to you, call 1-800-870-DATI (3284)

Press

#1 for English or

#2 for Spanish,

then press

#3 for the Central Site office

#4 for the New Castle County ATRC

#5 for the Kent County ATRC

#6 for the Sussex County ATRC

TDD callers: Do not press #1 or #2 and your call will be answered on a TDD line at the Central Site office.

DATI RESOURCE CENTERS THROUGHOUT THE STATE...

1-800-870-DATI (3284)

dati@asel.udel.edu

New Castle County ATRC

Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children

203 Administration & Research Bldg.

1600 Rockland Rd.

Wilmington, DE 19899

302-651-6790;

302-651-6794 (TDD);

302-651-6793 (fax)

Kent County ATRC

Easter Seals Kent County Center

100 Enterprise Place, Suite 1

Dover, DE 19904-8200

302-739-6885

302-739-6886 (TDD)

302-739-6887 (fax)

Sussex County ATRC
20161 Office Circle, Suite C
Georgetown, DE 19947
302-856-7946
302-856-6714 (voice or TDD)
302-856-6990 (fax)

The AT Messenger is published quarterly by the Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative (DATI). Dissemination of this newsletter to other people, association newsletters, and electronic mailing lists is encouraged. Information contained in this publication may be reprinted without permission, although attribution to the author and DATI is required.

Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative
Center for Applied Science & Engineering
University of Delaware/
Alfred I. duPont Hospital for Children
P.O. Box 269, 1600 Rockland Road
Wilmington, DE 19899-0269
Phone: 800-870-DATI (3284) or 302-651-6790
TDD: 302-651-6794; fax: 302-651-6793
Email: dati@asel.udel.edu
Web address: www.dati.org

DATI is funded by the Rehabilitation Services Administration (RSA) of the U.S. Department of Education, Grant #H224A050008 to the University of Delaware. This publication does not necessarily reflect the position or policy of RSA/ED, and no official endorsement of the materials should be inferred. The University of Delaware is an equal opportunity employer and prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, creed, age, national origin, marital status or disability in conformity with applicable laws.