

# The Braille Buzzzz....

## A way to stay connected to the dots!



### *Romeo and Juliet . . . Don't forget to save the date!*

Where? ISDB Campus

When? April 14-16

Who? ISDB students

Why? To provide wonderful entertainment, and to raise funding for the 2015 Braille Challenge prizes!



### UEB Updates

**Transitioning to UEB:** The Hadley School for the Blind is pleased to offer a new "Transitioning to UEB" course for professionals, beginning in January 2015. The course will be available in print and braille (online version is in development). Thanks to the American Printing House for the Blind (APH), this professional course will be tuition-free through the end of calendar year 2015.

For more information, visit: [www.hadley.edu/UEBtransition.asp](http://www.hadley.edu/UEBtransition.asp)

**Please save this date on your calendar - March 6, 2015.** IESDB, with the assistance of the Department of Education, will be hosting a UEBC (Unified English Braille Code) workshop on this date on the ISDB campus in Gooding. We are pleased that Dr. Frances Mary Andréa will be returning as our presenter. This workshop will meet two objectives: We will be reviewing the new braille code/format/rules with braille writers. We will have a discussion determining how we, as Idaho stakeholders, might implement the recommendations of BANA over the next few years.

#### **Available PDF UEB Symbol List Charts (best if printed on 11" x 17" paper):**

The first is from Duxbury and lists the contractions and short forms in alphabetical order:

[http://duxburysystems.com/images/ueb\\_black.pdf](http://duxburysystems.com/images/ueb_black.pdf)

The other is from Aroga Technologies and presents the contractions and symbols by category:

<http://www.aroga.com/unified-english-braille-chart-tabloid-11-x-17-pdf-format/>

### Braille Challenge

**Campus:** February 12, 2015

**Boise:** February 28, 2015

**Idaho Falls:** February 28, 2015



Practicing opportunities and FAQs are available at the following sites:

<http://www.brailleinstitute.org/braillechallenge-for-students/sample-contest.html>

<http://www.brailleinstitute.org/braille-challenge-homepage/faq.html>



**Meet BSU Bronco fan and Certified Braille Transcriber, Erin Rainey . . .** who, earlier this year, successfully completed the Literary Braille Transcribing Course offered by the National Federation of the Blind Jernigan Institute. The 20-lesson course is rigorous in that it requires task-specific, rule-dependent formatting. Lesson 20 tests cumulative knowledge by requiring participants to transcribe a portion of a book.



- **Where do you work as a paraprofessional, and how long have you worked with students who are blind or visually impaired?**

*I have worked for the past eleven years with the West Ada School District (formerly Joint School District #2 – Meridian). My first job in the district was with a deaf-blind high school student. When he left the district 1-1/2 years later, I became an itinerant VI paraprofessional. I came to EHS in 2006 and have been here ever since. I am beginning to add students from other schools once again*

- **What do you enjoy most about your job?**

*I love getting to know each individual student; their personalities, their quirks, their challenges – but most importantly their gifts. Outside of working directly with the student, I enjoy studying and refining my braille skills. I'm a natural loner who has always loved doing puzzles. That's what braille is to me . . . a giant puzzle.*

- **What's the most challenging part of your job?**

*That's easy – educating the general population of teachers about low-vision students. Some teachers take to it so easily and are excited about the new experience. Those are the teachers who internalize the accommodations and recognize how these skills add to the effectiveness of their teaching—for all of their students. Some, however, are like fish out of water and can't seem to make the effort stick. The majority of teachers fall somewhere in between.*

- **Describe how you felt when you received the news that you passed the transcriber's course.**

*I had submitted my manuscript with the expectation that it would be months before I received a response. After reviewing the scoring process, I honestly didn't expect to pass the first time around—the simplest oversights could possibly be enough to fail. I was surprised to find an envelope in my box the following month with a letter from The Library of Congress. I was alone when I opened it. I took a deep breath, took my time and quickly scanned the letter looking for the score. When I saw it, I wanted to scream but I threw my arms up as though I had made a touchdown – then I screamed.*

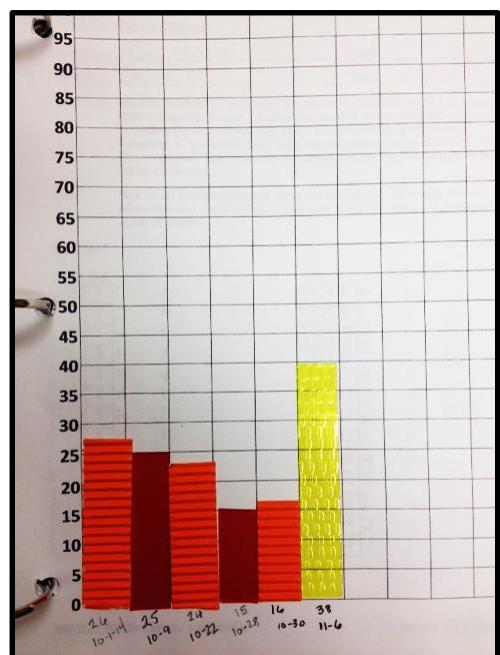


Submitted by Susan McCoy, IESDB Outreach, Meridian

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When thinking about fun ways to increase braille fluency, I decided to try using the APH talking book player in conjunction with a braille copy of a story to investigate two things: would the pairing increase the WPM reading rate of my student, and would the activity be fun? I would have to say that the answer to both of those questions is yes! My 3<sup>rd</sup> grade Kuna student, Miah Hallett, was a willing participant as we read and listened to *Green Eggs and Ham* by Dr. Seuss. We, initially, set the playback speed at the slowest rate possible and Miah followed along, tracking the braille, as the story was read. We listened to a few pages during each of our braille lessons, listening and tracking a chunk of the story, several times. We, then, increased the speed to see if Miah could comfortably follow along with the player. She did just that, and she seemed to enjoy the challenge of trying to keep up with the narrated voice. Afterwards, we read the chunks of the story outloud without the talking book player. Because of the additional practice, I, definitely, noticed an increase in fluency, and our weekly reading timing illustrated these results, as well.





Thank you to all of our contributors for the month  
of December!

A braille version has been  
transcribed by Melodee Davies  
and is available upon request. Please contact  
Susan McCoy at [susan.mccoy@iesdb.org](mailto:susan.mccoy@iesdb.org).

