



Metrolina Association for the Blind



Robert Scheffel  
President & CEO  
MAB

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## Paterson is Nation's First Visually Impaired Governor

**A**s David A. Paterson takes over the governor's office in the state of New York, there exists much media coverage over the fact that he is the nation's first visually impaired person to serve in such a capacity. This single fact seems to outweigh all other facts about Paterson's road to the governor's office – his race, his political skills and savvy, his organizational abilities and even his failings as a human being. Why is this? With all of the abilities, capabilities and attributes that this man possesses, why would we choose to single out his visual impairment as primary among them?

gives hope to us all that life's obstacles can be overcome.

Perhaps it's our need for charity, our need to help our fellow man. Paterson's successes allow all of us to identify with the helping process and allow us to feel good about ourselves.

An interesting phenomenon is beginning to play out daily in cities and towns across America – relegating blindness and severe visual impairment to a status of irrelevance in the lives of people affected by these conditions. For this reason, history will show that



David Paterson and wife  
Michelle Paige Paterson

Perhaps it's because we are a nation that pulls for the underdog. We want the lesser competitor to rise above the odds and march to victory. We were inspired by Davidson College's win over Georgetown in the recent NCAA competition. Such inspiration

Paterson's rise to the governor's office and his successes and/or failures in that capacity will be attributable to many things (judgment, organization, delegation, etc.), but visual impairment will not be among them.

# CATS INSTALLS BRAILLE SIGNS ALONG GOLD RUSH ROUTES

Charlotte's transportation system continues to prove its dedication to ensuring safe travels for blind and visually impaired commuters. A new feature is now in place to assist CATS customers traveling in Center City. The Charlotte Area Transit System (CATS) has installed Braille markers at bus stops along the Gold Rush Red and Orange lines. "We continually look at ways to improve the accessibility of our services,"

said Jim Zingale, CATS' Chief Operating Officer. "The addition of Braille on our Gold Rush signage will make it easier for people with vision impairments to get around."



The Braille signs will help customers know if they're standing at a Gold Rush stop and whether the Red or Orange line stops at that location. The wording in Braille will spell out either Red or Orange and two signs will be installed on each Gold Rush bus stop sign or pole. The Metrolina Association for the Blind (MAB) worked closely with CATS to determine the exact placement of the signs and will teach customers how to find the signs at CATS' bus stops.

The Gold Rush is a free service that transports customers to destinations across Center City Monday through Friday. The Red Line travels Trade Street from McDowell to Sycamore from 6:45 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. The Orange Line travels Tryon Street from Tenth Street to Carson Boulevard from 7:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

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## Charla Rose Houston 2008 Recipient of AER Alfred Allen Award

MAB's own Charla Rose Houston, Certified Vision Rehabilitation Therapist (CVRT) has been named the 2008 AER Alfred Allen Award recipient.

The Alfred Allen Award was established to honor professionals who have spent their career in direct service to people with visual impairments. Through the extent and quality of the services that they have provided, these professionals exemplify the character, dedication, insight and sharing that epitomize

the spirit of and commitment to direct service to people with visual impairments.

Alfred Allen served the American Association of Workers for the Blind (AAWB) and its member as Secretary-General for 18 years. He began his career in service for the blind in 1921 at the Hadley School for the Blind in Winnetka, Illinois, where he served as its Director for several years. From 1943 until his death in March of 1957, Mr. Allen was an Assistant Director with the American Foundation for the Blind in New York.

Congratulations to Charla Rose, for she is certainly deserving of such a national award!

# Charles Bonnet Syndrome (CBS)

## It's Not a Hallucination

Charles Bonnet Syndrome (CBS), also referred to as “visual hallucinations,” is a term used to describe a situation in which individuals with visual impairments begin to see things that they know are not real. These “hallucinations” people experience can take various forms, from simple patterns of straight lines to detailed pictures of people or buildings.

Research shows that Charles Bonnet Syndrome affects between 10-40% of individuals who live with low vision. Many of those who are affected by CBS suffer from Adult Macular Degeneration (AMD).

Typically, CBS affects people with serious sight loss and usually only those individuals who have lost their sight later in their life. It can, however, affect people of all ages and often occurs after a period of worsening sight. These visual hallucinations generally stop within a year to 18 months.

What causes CBS? Unfortunately, little is known about how the brain stores the information that is communicated from the eye to the brain. What we do know is that for sighted people, the information that is sent from the eyes to the brain prevents the brain from creating its own pictures. When one experiences vision loss, their brain is not receiving as many pictures from the eyes as they were previously; thus, sometimes new fantasy pictures or old pictures which were stored in the brain are released and experienced as though they are currently being seen. Those who are affected by CBS often experience these visual hallucinations when there is little activity going on around them, for example, when sitting alone in a quiet environment that is familiar to them or when they are lying in bed at night.

There are two different types of scenarios that victims of Charles Bonnet Syndrome experience. Both can appear in black and white or in color, they can involve movement or stationary scenes, and they can seem extremely realistic, such as cows in a field, or unrealistic, such as fairies or dragons.

The first type of visual hallucinations includes patterns and lines, which can become very intricate, such as brickwork, netting, mosaics, or tiles. The second, more complicated, type of hallucination generally includes people or places. Often times, entire scenes will appear, such as landscapes or groups of people, and can appear either life-size or can seem reduced or enlarged in size. These visions appear sporadically and can last anywhere from a few minutes to several hours.

If you or someone you know has symptoms similar to those of Charles Bonnet Syndrome, call your family doctor, eye care provider, or MAB for further information.

An event to help educate the Queen City and raise funds for MAB

## 2008 BRAILLE ROAD RALLYE

**M**etrolina Association for the Blind is proud to announce its first Braille Road Rallye. On June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2008, the Central Carolinas Region Sports Car Club of America (SCCA) will host this unique fundraiser which will be an exiting event for both our sighted and visually impaired neighbors.

You may ask, “What is a Braille Road Rallye?” It is important to start off by stating that the MAB



Braille Road Rallye is *not* a car race. Participating teams will be required to obey all traffic laws. The Rally is, however, a time/speed/distance competition in which teams follow a road course from a starting point, through four checkpoints, and to a finish, where the team with the closest-to-the-official elapsed time will be recognized as the rally winner. Each team will consist of a sighted driver and a visually impaired navigator whose responsibility is to read Braille or large print directions to the driver; thus, guiding them through the designated course.

A wide variety of vehicles with “WOW” factor such as hot rods, and classic cars and trucks, are anticipated, as well as celebrity participants.

Once the participating teams reach the finish line, they will be welcomed by a fair-like environment, in which drivers will display their cars in a car show, MAB will host interactive activities and an awards ceremony, and the public will be invited to celebrate the day’s success.

You may also be asking, “why a Road Rallye?” The Braille Road Rallye’s key purpose is to educate the local community about the various visual impairments and life with vision-related disabilities. The secondary purpose of the rally is to provide visibility of MAB and its range of services to Charlotte’s growing visually impaired population.



### Ladies and Gentlemen, Start Your Engines!

For further information and for ways you can participate in the first MAB Road Rallye!

Please contact:

**Abby Dorfmeier (704) 644-4295**

## HOW CAN I HELP WITH THE BRAILLE ROAD RALLYE?

**A**re you interested in supporting MAB's 2008 Braille Road Rallye? There are several ways in which *you* can help MAB successfully bring the Road Rallye to life.

- Do you have a vehicle with “**WOW**” factor?

We're seeking both drivers and vehicles!

- Will you have some time and energy to share?



MAB would be flattered if you are available for planning and/or volunteering on the day of the rally!

- Can you help spread the word about the rally to your friends and family?
- Do you have a product or service you would like to donate on the day of the event?

Braille Road Rally coordinators

are seeking 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, and 3<sup>rd</sup> place prizes, raffle prizes, and food and beverages contributions.

- Are you a business owner interested in being a corporate sponsor?

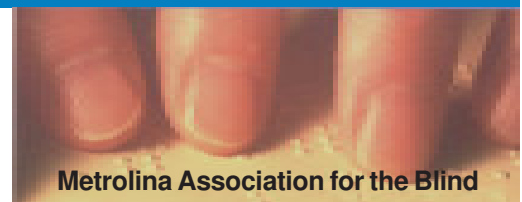
**Please contact Abby Dorfmeier, PR & Marketing Coordinator, (704) 644-4295.**

### Our Mission:

To reduce or eliminate the daily living problems imposed upon people by blindness or severe vision impairment.



### MAB Matters



### Did You Know

You can subscribe to *MAB Matters* Quarterly Newsletter? It is available in four accessible formats: Print, Braille, Audio CD, and E-mail notification with a link to the newsletter on MAB's web site (PDF format). Contact Kelly Austin at (704) 887-5129 or [kaustin@mabnc.org](mailto:kaustin@mabnc.org) to sign up.

## Points of Etiquette

Points of etiquette to keep in mind when interacting with a person who is blind or visually impaired

- **Use your name** when introducing yourself to people who are blind or visually impaired.
- Use a **natural conversational tone of voice** when speaking.
- **Greet people** who are blind or visually impaired when they enter a room. This lets them know that you are present and ready to assist.
- **Be precise and thorough when you describe** individuals, places, or things to people who are totally blind. Don't leave things out or change a description because you believe it to be unimportant or unpleasant.
- **Use visually descriptive language** by making reference to colors, patterns, designs and shapes.
- **Offer to guide** people who are visually impaired or blind by asking if they would like assistance. If they accept your offer, present your upper arm to them.
- Guide people who request or accept your assistance by allowing them to take your arm just above the elbow. Make sure **you walk ahead** of the person you are guiding.
- While guiding someone with visual impairments, **be descriptive about what they will encounter along the walking path**. For example, mention that there is a curb or step a few steps ahead.
- **Guide dogs are working mobility tools**. Do not pet them, feed them, or distract them with out permission while they are working.



### MAB Board of Directors

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# Calendar of Events

## Let's See the City!

### Spring 2008 Calendar of Events

#### **April 2008**

Did you know that **April is Women's Eye Health and Safety Month**? While women often manage the family health concerns, they fail to consider themselves. Women often experience vision changes as a result of hormonal changes, age, and smoking. Ladies, be sure to take care of your vision this month!

#### **Wednesday, April 23, 2008,**

**VIP Travel Club**, Town of Mount Airy, NC

Time: 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

Fee: \$15.00

Contact: Karen Howard (704) 336-2344

Registration Deadline: April 19, 2008

#### **Thursday, April 24, 2008**

**NCDSB Public Hearing**

5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

Raleigh, NC

Gov. Morehead School for the Blind

309 Ashe Avenue

Raleigh, NC 22699

(919) 733-9822

#### **Wednesday, April 30, 2008**

**NCDSB Public Hearing**

11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Charlotte/Mecklenburg County Public Library

Dalton Conference Room

310 N. Tryon Street

Charlotte, NC 28202

(704) 416-0100

#### **May 2008**

Did you know that May is **National Sight-Saving Month**? UV rays can burn delicate eye tissue and raise the risk of developing cataracts and cancers of the eye. Protecting your eyes from UV dangers and choosing the right sunglasses this summer will help save your sight in the future.

#### **Friday, May 9, 2008**

**Senior Health Fair**

Location: Tyvola Senior Center

#### **Tuesday, May 20, 2008**

**VIP Travel Club – Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden,**  
Gastonia

Time: 9 a.m. – 4 p.m.

Fee: \$15.00

Pick-up location:

\*(9 a.m.) Marion Diehl Recreation Center, 2219 Tyvola Road

\*(9:30 a.m.) Metrolina Association for the Blind, 704 Louise Avenue

Drop-off location:

\*(4 p.m.) Metrolina Association for the Blind, 704 Louise Avenue

\*(4:30 p.m.) Marion Diehl Recreation Center, 2219 Tyvola Road.

#### **June 2008**

June is **Vision Research Month**! While millions of Americans benefit from vision research, there are still several visual impairments which have no effective treatments or cures. Donate your time and money to help discover these cures!

#### **Saturday, June 14, 2008**

**Braille Road Rally**

Contact: Abby Dorfmeier

(704) 644-4295

#### **July 2008**

July is the month for **UV Safety**. Summertime means fun in the sun, but always pair your SPF 15+ with UV ray blocking sunglasses!

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## **Annual Mother Daughter Tea**

### **A Great Success!**

*"Virtue and Happiness are Mother and Daughter."*

Benjamin Franklin

**T**he relationship between a mother and daughter is unlike any other. The depth and warmth exchanged between the two is heartwarming. Just as Melissa and Charlotte Woolf proved, when you get a group of mothers and their daughters together, that mother-daughter bond often extends a welcoming arm to those in need.

Melissa Woolf and her daughter Charlotte hosted their 11<sup>th</sup> annual Mother Daughter Tea to benefit MAB. This year's event raised over \$1,500 and will be put towards the purchase of a Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) for an MAB client in need. The Woolf's Mother Daughter Tea began as school project for Charlotte, in which she was required to complete an ethnographic essay. Little did she know her project would explode into the successful annual fundraiser which it has become. "I was able to take a school project and teach my friends about [the cause]. We picked out talking watches for clients and raised awareness at the same time," Charlotte said.

"The Mother Daughter Tea has our guests think outside of their box, out of the norm."

To Melissa and Charlotte's surprise, they received several feedback stories about their guests' experiences with blindness and low vision among family and friends.

The Woolf family and their guests have contributed an essential gift – a gift of independence. MAB would like to extend a ward "Thank you" to Charlotte and Melissa, and everyone who has contributed to their time and efforts to further the MAB mission.

## MAB Receives PCI Certification

Over the past decade, Bob Scheffel and other agency affiliates have noticed the security of customer data increasingly become a priority for everyone. Even though MAB was undergoing and passing several annual security audits by various customers, it was deemed necessary that MAB obtain an Industry Standard Security Certification to demonstrate to current and prospective customers that MAB was running a secure operation.

After reviewing the security landscape, it was determined that while no one security certification would perfectly fulfill everyone's requirements, PCI Certification would be the best option for MAB because PCI is considered one of the more comprehensive data security standards in a cluster of regulations that have emerged over the past decade; Basel II, Gramm-Leach-Bliley Act (GLBA), Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA), Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002, California Senate Bill 1386.

PCI DSS stands for Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard. It was developed by the major credit card companies as a guideline to help organizations that process card payments prevent credit card fraud, cracking and various other

security vulnerabilities and threats.

The PCI DSS is a multifaceted security standard that includes requirements for security management, policies, procedures, network architecture, software design and other critical protective measures.

The PCI standard comprises two basic steps:

1. Pass quarterly remote vulnerability scans conducted by an a Visa and MasterCard Qualified Independent Scan Vendor such as McAfee.
2. Successful completion of a security self-assessment questionnaire. The self assessment questionnaire asks specific questions about your internal security practices.

After working in conjunction with an independent consultant, MAB completed its PCI Certification in March of 2008.

MAB must validate their compliance on a quarterly basis. This validation gets conducted by independent auditors who are PCI DSS Qualified Security Assessors (QSAs).

### The Metrolina Association for the Blind



Phone: (704) 372-3870  
Toll Free: (800) 926-5466  
Fax: (704) 372-3872  
Web: [www.mabnc.org](http://www.mabnc.org)

704 Louise Ave.  
Charlotte, NC 28204-2128

Low Vision Satellite Clinic  
1318-AO Central Ave.  
Phone: (704) 285-7490

A United Way agency since 1938, MAB provides critical rehabilitation programs benefiting 722 Charlotte area residents in 2005/2006 and more than 11,000 individuals monthly in all fifty states through its Braille, large print, and audio compact disc transcription services.

