DIRECTIONS

Technology in Special Education

Vol. 5 , No. 6

Reviewing Educational Software

by Camilla Hileman

Computer-assisted instruction is one of the most engaging and motivating methods to teach individuals with developmental disabilities. In this software review article, the concentration is on beginning software programs that focus on the control of a mouse, keyboard, or other input devices.

My Very First Software

by T/Maker Company and Broderbund Company

This is a comprehensive program that teaches beginning computer skills. The user learns mouse maneuvering skills such as point, click, double click, and drag, as well as keyboard skills. The program can run in one of four languages: English, Spanish, French, or German. Three lessons are available, My Very First One, My Very First Two, and My Very First Three. My Very First One contains three activities and *Word Fun.* The first activity, *Flip Flop,* requires movement of the mouse to correlate the cursor over squares on the screen to reveal a hidden picture. The squares are removed just by positioning the cursor over each, no clicking is necessary. When all squares are removed, the illustration is colored, a sound, and a rhyme are heard. In *Peekaboo,* the user moves the cursor across the screen until a sound is heard and a faded picture is seen which cues the user to click at that spot to color and enlarge the picture. *Find It* combines moving the mouse and clicking. When a sound is heard (water running), position the cursor over the item that makes that sound (faucet at a kitchen sink) and click. *Word Fun* presents a term, spells it, defines it, and animates a demonstration of it's meaning. The terms include mouse, mousepad, point, click, monitor, and cursor.

My Very First Two includes three activities and *Word Fun. Double Click* displays a picture list with three pictures to locate in the illustration. To find an object, double click on the screen where the object may be hiding. Go to *Color Stamps* to create a picture with stamps. Select the stamp by clicking on it, move the cross hairs to a position on the screen, and click again to have the stamp appear. *Drag and See* has objects positioned around an x-ray machine. The user clicks on the object, drags it (the mouse button depressed) to the x-ray machine, and releases to view what it looks like on the inside. *Word Fun* is the same format as previously mentioned containing the terms, double click, drag, point, click, and cursor.

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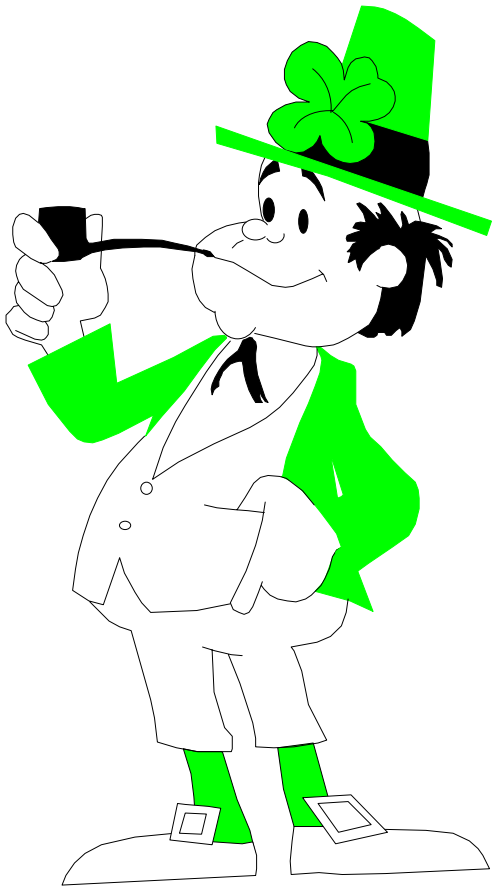

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Accessible Learning

by Lorianne Hoenninger
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In October, I attended the **Closing the Gap** conference in Minneapolis. As usual, it was fabulous and I came home loaded down with new ideas, resources and inspiration. For all of you who have not heard of Closing the Gap, it is an organization started by the parents of a child with a disability. It has grown into the premier resource for technology in Special Education and Rehabilitation. For $31.00 a year, CTG sends out each subscriber a bimonthly newspaper featuring information on all aspects of technology and disabilities. Once a year, CTG publishes an awesome Resource directory that lists every piece of hardware, every software title, most manufacturers and most organizations in the field (it is included with subscription). The conference is held every October in Minneapolis, with numerous presenters from all over the world. Practically every major vendor has a booth, enabling one to preview all the new software and hardware. Closing the Gap can be contacted at (507) 248-3294. Their web address is *http://www.closingthegap.com*.

Literacy is one of the major themes at CTG and one of the shareware products mentioned this year was **Momsoft Early Reader.** Momsoft is a shareware program for Windows 95/98/NT for developing sight vocabulary and word/symbol correspondence. Up to fifteen words can be recorded, with the corresponding word appearing on the screen. The program can be set to run automatically, or can be accessed through mouse movements, mouse clicks or keyboard press. Momsoft Early Reader can be downloaded from http://www.momsoftco.com/earlyread.htm.

For older students, screen readers are important tools for literacy development and several new products were featured this year at CTG. **Text Help** by Lorien Systems is a full featured screen reader and word prediction software program available for both Windows and Macintosh platforms, that can be used in conjunction with any existing word processing program. A screen reader is software that reads text aloud. For students with dyslexia or visual challenges, a screen reader is essential. With it, poor readers can hear their own work spoken aloud, as well as encyclopedias, scanned in text, the internet, etc. Text Help and other related products are available at *http://www.texthelp.com*.

For those who cannot afford Text Help, or for those who want to experiment before purchasing, **JTS Reader** is a text to speech synthesizer for computers running Windows 3.1 or later. It features a male English voice and can read almost any text file. JTS Reader is available form *http://www.islandnet.com/jts/reader.htm*.

WORDTALK is a talking word processing program designed to work with the JTS Reader (for Windows 95or NT) and is available from http://www.islandnet.com/jts/wordtalk.htm. WordTalk is a word processor that will read/write Word 6.0, Write, RTF,

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Vendors - We welcome product news. Please include pricing and contact name with press releases.

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Check out www.dragonflytoys.com or call 1-800-308-2208 to get your FREE Dragon Fly (special play needs) Toy Catalog

Assistive Technology & Wheelchairs

Source: Disability Resources Monthly
Vol. VI, No. 3 - October 1998
<www.disabilityresources.org>

Technology has often been called "the great equalizer" for people with disabilities, enabling them to work, play and learn in the same environments as nondisabled individuals. From "low tech" devices like dressing sticks to sophisticated computers that manage a multitude of tasks with a press of a switch or a puff of breath, technology has opened millions of doors for people with spinal cord injuries and other disabilities. This assistive technology is a new and constantly changing field. The process of understanding how it works, finding, selecting or adapting devices that are appropriate to specific users' needs, funding and using them is an ongoing challenge. This article looks at books, videos and other resources that address these issues. The last section focuses on resources to help consumers select and use wheelchairs.

Books

Evaluating, Selecting, and Using Appropriate Assistive Technology

(1996), edited by Jan. C. Galvin and Marcia J. Scherer, focuses on the often complex process of choosing assistive technology that is appropriate for the individual user. The well-known contributors discuss specific types of technology, technology for specific purposes, and technology for specific kinds of disabilities. Policy, legislation and funding issues are also covered. A copy of the Co-Net CD (see databases below) is also included. This 394-page paperback costs $62+p/h from Aspen Publishers, 200 Orchard Ridge Dr., Ste. 200, Gaithersburg, MD 20878; tel. 800-638-8437 or 301-417-7500; fax 301-417-7650; http://www.aspenpub.com.

A consumer-oriented guide to getting started with adaptive computers, the Alliance for Technology Access's **Computer Resources for People with Disabilities; A Guide to Exploring Today's Assistive Technology** (rev. ed., 1996) features sections on the process of finding adaptive computer solutions, an in-depth "technology toolbox," and a guide to helpful resources and references. This 336-page paperback costs $17.95 ($22.95 spiral-bound or ASCII disk) from Hunter House Publishers, Inc., PO Box 2914, Alameda, CA 94501-0914; tel. 510-865-5282 or 800-266-5592; fax 510-865-4295; e-mail ordering ©hunterhouse.com.

Joseph Lazarro's **Adapting PCs for Disabilities** (1996) provides a non-technical overview of adaptive computing, keyboard alternatives and video monitor access. There are also sections on adaptive communications, ergonomics, relevant projects and laws. An accompanying CD-ROM includes the full text of the book (providing easier access to individuals with print impairments) as well as dozens of adaptive software demo programs. The book and CD cost $39.95+ p/h from Addison-Wesley-Longman Pub. Co., One Jacob Way, Reading, MA 01867-3999; tel. 800-822-6339; fax 800-367-7198; http://www.aw.com. PRICE OK?

Focusing on handy, low-tech devices such as dressing sticks, devices to raise furniture and one-handed cutting boards, Doreen Greenstein's **Easy Things to Make...to Make Things Easy** (1995, approx. 150 pp.) is packed with how-to suggestions for older people with physical limitations. Nicely illustrated and printed in clear, large type (but regrettably lacking a table of contents or index), this large format paperback includes sections on bathrooms, bedrooms, kitchens, living rooms, housekeeping and getting around, and outdoor activities and home security. This paperback costs $15.95 prepaid from Brookline Books, PO Box 1047, Cambridge, MA 02238; tel. 800-666-2665 or 617-868-0360; fax 617-868-1772; http://members.delphi.com/brooklinebks/web/index.html; e-mail BROOKLINEBKS@delphi.com.

For an interesting look at the impact of technology on people with disabilities, see Marcia J. Scherer's **Living in the State of Stuck: How Technology Affects Persons with Disabilities** (2nd ed., 1996). Filled with personal experiences, this significant work offers a humanistic approach to the emotional, personal and social impli-

Please see CHAIRS on page 6

ATFSCP Notes

The Assistive Technology Funding and Systems Change Project

Source: Tech Express, December 1998

<http://www.ucpa.org/html/innovative/atfsc_index.html>

FIRST IN A NEW SERIES -EXCUSE MEMOS: Use of Exclusive Lists to Deny Assistive Technology

By Steve Mendelsohn, Esq.

Many ***Tech Express*** readers will recall the extremely valuable series of "excuse" memos published by the ATFSCP, mainly using examples drawn from efforts by people to obtain alternative augmentative communications devices. Considerable interest has been expressed in the revival and expansion of this series to include a broad range of assistive technology (AT) devices. In addition to covering more devices, we need to deal with new excuses too. Sometimes it seems that excuses are like bacteria: give them an antibiotic and they mutate! Often, the excuses reflect some misunderstanding of the law or misinterpretation of key facts, and in such cases, this column may be of help to you and others in bringing about better results.

We want to be as responsive to our readers as possible. Please send us "excuses" you have encountered from various funding agencies and service providers about why they cannot provide AT devices or services. (send to *atproject@ucpa.org*) With your help, we can make this a regular feature of ***Tech Express*** that responds quickly to what people are actually being told.

For the first column, we turn to Medicaid and look at an excuse that has become particularly common this year.

Excuse

The item you are requesting (a powered wheelchair) is not on our (the state's) list of approved items. Therefore, we cannot purchase it no matter what your doctor says.

Response

On September 4, 1998, the Health Care Financing Administration (HCFA) issued a letter to Medicaid state directors informing them that they should not use "exclusive" lists of approved items. Contact ATFSCP (atproject@ucpa.org) for a copy of this letter and accompanying analysis.

This means that if you need an item of durable medical equipment, a prosthetic device or some other type of assistive technology, it cannot be denied just because it is not on the agency's predetermined list of approved items. For example, if the state Medicaid agency representative said that a power wheelchair could not be approved for you because only manual chairs (or a chair that was different than what your doctor prescribed) were on their list, you have the right to insist that they give you an opportunity to show why the item you are requesting is needed.

They can rely on their list initially, but they cannot continue to rely on it as the sole justification for the decision. Once you have presented evidence for the medical necessity of the particular device you need, they would have to provide additional reasons for denying your request.

If you needed an air conditioner because of a severe breathing problem, Medicaid could not say they only pay for fans! However, they probably could say that filtering or cooling the air is not medically necessary for you, or they could say that a less expensive room air filter will meet your needs just fine. There is a difference between making an individualized decision in your case (even if it's the wrong decision) and saying that they don't have to make any decision in your case because a one-size-fits-all list governs what equipment is available.

Where and How to Make Your Response—Action Steps

1. If you are denied an A.T. device, you should refer to the HCFA guidance issued on September 4, 1998. A copy of the HCFA guidance can be obtained by contacting ATFSCP (*atproject@ucpa.org*).

2. Ask your state Tech Act project or your state Protection & Advocacy office to determine whether the state Medicaid agency is in compliance with this guidance and whether anything has been written in your state's Medicaid manual to reflect these requirements.

3. It may not always be easy to find out if the state is using an exclusive list. If state Medicaid officials say the equipment is not a "covered item," or is not "medically necessary," request further explanation.

If all else fails, there are a variety of legal strategies advocates can use to discover a list of approved items, hidden or otherwise, has been used in denying your request. For the moment, it is enough to say that you have the right to have the decision made on the basis of the facts and circumstances of your own case.

If officials claim that a federal court decision earlier this year in the case of *DeSarlo v. Thomas* authorizes the use of approved-item lists, you can provide them with the letter from the Health Care Finance Administration (HCFA) that gives clear guidance that such lists cannot take the place of individualized assessment. In other words, the list can be the starting point, but it cannot be the final word. §

AAC Initiative Offers Collaboration Opportunities

Katya Hill of the University of Pittsburgh and Barry Romich of Prentke Romich Company announce a joint endeavor of expected impact on the area of augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) and assistive technology. Under conceptual development for the better part of last year, this project seeks to define and develop the concept of automated language activity monitoring. This work was introduced at the ISAAC Research Symposium in Dublin in August 1998 and, subsequently, presented at the Biomedical Engineering Society Conference in Cleveland and at Edinboro University in Pennsylvania. Initial research on the definition of the Language Activity Monitor (LAM) device and function will be presented at CSUN in Los Angeles on March 19.

The concept of automated language activity monitoring is based on the systematic data collection of language sampling to provide objective information on both language and non-language parameters of AAC and assistive writing (AW) device use. Hill and Romich anticipate that automated language activity monitoring will have three major applications. Most significant will be integration of LAM into the clinical intervention process. LAM will provide information to guide therapy. AAC best practice will be expanded to include LAM as a standard component of the intervention process. The second application is use as an objective outcome measurement tool. Finally, the LAM device and function will be a valuable research tool.

The LAM device connects to the serial output of an AAC or AW device. It records characters being transmitted and adds a time stamp to each character or character string. The recorded data can be uploaded periodically to a computer for editing and analyzing. A total system would consist additionally of an editor, language analysis program(s) and clinical intervention program(s). A component of this initiative is the development of a standard LAM protocol. The benefit of a common protocol would be the universal compatibility of LAM data with editing and analysis components. The LAM function will be added to present AAC devices and designed into future AAC systems at little or no extra cost.

A survey to identify and prioritize LAM device features was distributed at the ASHA convention in San Antonio. In addition, names of individuals wishing to participate in future project tasks and beta testing are being collected. Beta testing is expected to begin in the Spring of 1999. Individuals wishing to collaborate or be apprised of LAM initiative

Please see AAC on page 12

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cations of assistive technology. The 189-page paperback costs $17.95+$3.50 p/h prepaid from Brookline Books at the address above.

Directories & Databases

There are thousands of different kinds of devices to help people with disabilities perform different activities. To identify particular products and/or their sources, we generally refer consumers with Internet access to **ABLEDATA** (http://www.abledata.org), an online database that contains descriptions and ordering information for over 24,000 assistive devices, or to the Trace Center version, **Hyper-ABLEDATA** (http://www.trace.wisc. edu/tcel/abledata/index. html).

Hyper-ABLEDATA is also available on CD-ROM as part of the Trace Center's **Co-Net, Cooperative Electronic Library on Disability.** Now in its 11th edition, the **Co-Net** disk includes Hyper-ABLEDATA for Macs and DOS-ABLEDATA for IBM-Compatibles (with or without Windows), directories of service organizations, bibliographic databases and text documents. The CD costs $45 (+$12 p/h if not prepaid) from Trace Research & Development Center, University of Wisconsin, 5901 Research Park Blvd., Madison, WI 53719; tel. 608-263-2309; fax 608-262-8848; tty 608-263-5408; http:lltrace.wisc.edu; e-mail info@trace.wisc.edu.

Trace also produces a print guide to software, hardware and augmentative communication equipment called **The Trace Resourcebook: Assistive Technologies for Communication, Control, and Computer Access.** The 933-page 1996-97 edition includes information about more than 1,500 products. Each entry features a short description, manufacturer information and a picture if appropriate. Appendixes provide more resource information, and indexes allow access by function, input/output features, computer model and manufacturer. The 1998-99 edition should be available by the time we go to press for $50 (+$12 p/h if not prepaid) from Trace at the address above.

Published annually, the **Accent Buyer's Guide** is a handy little guide to adaptive products from the publisher of *Accent on Living* magazine. Items are listed alphabetically by type of product — from "automobile controls" to "writing.' There are also separate lists of sources, organizations and local dealers. This 5" x 7" paperback (approx. 100 pp.) costs $15+$3 p/h from Accent on Living, PO Box 700, Bloomington, IL 61702; tel. 309-378-2961 or 800-787-8444; fax 309-378-4420.

One of the biggest issues computer users with disabilities face is compatibility -which adaptive hardware or software products work with what? Every year, the bimonthly newspaper *Closing the Gap* features an updated **Resource Directory** in its oversized February/March issue. Matrixes to help readers identify specific products that are compatible with their existing equipment, physical needs and skills are provided, along with descriptions of the hardware and software. A subscription to the newspaper costs $31 a year (six issues); the *Resource* Directory issue can be purchased separately for $14.95+$3 p/h ($4 in Canada). Contact Closing the Gap, P0 Box 68, Henderson, MN 56044; tel. 507-248-3294; fax 507-248-3810; http://www.closingthegap.com.

Videotapes

The EASI Guide to Adaptive Technology for People with Disabilities (1995) provides an overview of how adapted technology can open doors for people with disabilities. The 22-minute video focuses on alternative input and output options, and highlights some of the unique tools currently available. An accompanying 20-page booklet lists state technical assistance centers, vendors and organizations. Produced by the Rochester Institute of Technology, the closed captioned tape costs $30 from EASI (Equal Access to Software and Information), P0 Box 18928, Rochester, NY 14618; tel. 716-244-9065; e-mail nrcgsh@rit.edu; http://www.rit.edufr..easi. An open-captioned version is available upon request.

Pamphlets

Assistive Technology for People with Spinal Cord Injuries (1996) describes the many types of products and devices people with SCI can use to function more independently in their daily activities, including devices for personal mobility, home access, staying in shape, hobbies, personal care and workplace access. Resources for

further information and an extensive list of product categories are included. This 29-page publication costs $4.25 from ABLEDATA, 8455 Colesville Road, Ste. 935, Silver Spring, MD 20910; tel. 800-227-0216 or 301-608-8998; fax 301-608-8958; tty 301-608-8912. This publication can be downloaded from Abledata's web site at http://www.abledata.com/funding.htm.

Becky Plank's **Disabled Doesn't Mean Immobile: Adaptive Aids for Transportation; Matching Disability, Vehicle and Equipment** (1992) provides information about adaptive vehicles and accessories. The publication covers everything from selecting cars and vans to specialized accessories and modifications for steering, parking, entering and carrying wheelchairs. Funding, safety and training are also included. The 51-page guide is free (one copy per address) from National Mobility Equipment Dealers Association, 909 E. Skagway Ave., Tampa, FL 33604; tel. 813-932-8566; fax 813-931-4683.

Note – *Disability Resources Monthly* is published by Disability Resources, Inc. Disability Resources, Inc. is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization established to promote and improve awareness, availability and accessibility of information to help people with disabilities live, learn, love, work and play independently. Subscriptions to this extremely informative newsletter are $30 for one year, $55 for two and $75 for three. You may contact them at Four Glatter Lane, Centereach, NY 11720. In addition to contacting them on the web, you can reach them at (516) 585-0290. §

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and plain text files. It supports embedded objects such as images, graphics, sound bites, etc. It can use any font installed on a system, and numerous formatting options are available. WordTalk accomplishes this by automatically uploading text immediately to the clipboard, so a TTS program like JTS Reader or Listen2 can automatically read and speak the text. When you finish typing a sentence it is spoken, when you position the cursor in the document and press a hot key, the sentence at the cursor position is spoken. When you press another hot key, the word to the right or left of the cursor is spoken, and another hot key will speak the letter/punctuation to the right of the cursor. Using these features you can key through a document and hear it spelled letter by letter or spoken word by word, forward or backward.

For those users with DOS platform computers, check out SARAW at http://www.neilsquire.ca. This shareware product was designed to teach basic reading and writing skills to adults who currently read and write in the range of grades two to six. It does require a DECTalk for speech, but if you have one, it can read aloud any entered text.

Next month we will search for software designed specifically for children with Autism/Asperger's Syndrome and PDD. If you have a specific question in the meanwhile, do not hesitate to e-mail me at *lorianne@erols.com*, visit our web site at http://www.members.xoom.com/ALTA or write c/o: Accessible Learning Technology Alternatives, P.O. Box 597, Shirley NY, 11967. See you on the internet! §

Editor's Note

Hi! You haven't heard from me in quite some time..... There is always so much information to relay to you each month, that I always hesitate to take up any room. But his month, I did want to take a minute to welcome Camilla Hileman, the newest regular contributor to *DIRECTIONS*. Camilla is a national speaker on computer-assisted instruction for individuals with autism and developmental disabilities. Her article this month is her second for *DIRECTIONS*, (see "Computer Assisted Instructional Techniques for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities, Vol 4., No. 11, June/July 1998). We look forward to her insightful and beneficial pieces.

I'd also like to take this opportunity to personally thank all of you who have contributed to the DREAMMS for Kids organization over the past year. DREAMMS publishes a number of guides along with our *DIRECTIONS* newsletter, and has for the last 5 years. We are not funded by any government organization, and we are staffed by only volunteers. Our operating revenue is generated through the sale of our publications and the generosity of those who benefit from our services. Truly, from my heart, I thank you for allowing us to continue to pass along this important information to all Assistive Technology stakeholders.

With warmest regards,

Janet

SOFTWARE continued from page 1

My Very First Three introduces keyboard familiarity through *Key Crazy, Juke Box Numbers', Key Sketch,* and *Word Fun.* In *Key Crazy,* touch any key to receive a picture and sound reward. *Juke Box Numbers* displays a juke box with ten numerals, each representing a song, that correspond to the numbers on the keyboard. Press a number on the keyboard to hear a song played. *Key Sketch* utilizes the arrow keys to sketch lines, the letter keys to change the color and/or pattern of the line, and the spacebar to clear the screen. *Word Fun* consists of the terms keyboard, keys, spacebar, backspace, enter, and caps lock. This is a good tutorial for a beginning, young computer user. Ample audio rewards, visual rewards, and hints provide the strong reinforcement necessary during this initial instructional phase. Other titles in the series are My Very First Art Studio and My Very First Storybook. This program has a copyright date of 1996 and is available in Mac/Win CD-ROM for $19.95. Recommended developmental ages are 2-5.

Touch Games 1-Touch Games 2

by SEMERC

Both programs are similar in format and share the objective to develop touchscreen/mouse skills. **Touch Games 1** focuses on sequencing by color and shape and improving memory skills. Six activities are available from the main screen. In *Rockets,* a pre-determined number of rockets (1, 2, 3, or 5) are shown on the screen and as the user touches/clicks on a rocket, it takes off either individually or all at once. The adult options in *Catherine Wheel* include touch/click anywhere, touch/click **near** Catherine Wheel, or touch/click **on** Catherine Wheel. A single wheel is activated according to one of the pre-selected criteria. The wheel's location changes from screen to screen. *Dasher Dog and Annabel* is similar, but using two images on the screen. For example, the dog and a food item are displayed on the screen and the user may only be required to touch/click anywhere on the screen, to touch/click on the food, or to touch/click on the dog and the food to activate the animated reward. A click and drag action is employed in *Honey Bee* as the user drags the bee to the flower. *Hectic Highway* is a color and shape sequencing game. The adult pre-selects color match, shape match, or color and shape match. Match the color/shape pattern given by dragging cars to correspond to the example sequence. An animated character hides behind a door in *Memory Doors* and the user finds its location. Choose 1, 2, 3, or 5 doors to vary the difficulty and make the doors different colors or the same color to increase complexity. No hints are given in the activities and an incorrect response is simply not rewarded. The user is not prompted or given feedback in any other way after an incorrect choice. The screen simplicity is excellent in all of the activities.

Touch Games 2 practices tracking skills and improves pre-writing skills. Five activities are available from the main screen. *Buzz* Off involves a simple touch/click on a number of insects to activate an animated reward. In *Wake Up,* there is a sleeping animal on the screen that the user can touch/click **on** to wake it up and a second time to watch it run off the screen. This activity can be set to an easier level to touch/click **anywhere** on the screen to achieve the same result. Click and drag a school bus along a path to a destination in *Brian's Bus.* The adult option section allows setup of a straight, bendy, or very bendy road. The user can practice tracking skills in an errorless format since the bus cannot be moved past the road's border. Another simple activity, *Magic Painting,* colors in a picture (five are available) with only a touch/click. The adult may select 1, 2, 4, or 8 areas that must be colored to complete the picture and receive the reward. For a novice user, one touch/click colors in the whole picture.

Sort and See presents four scenes: building a house, getting dressed, putting a dog together, and assembling a face. The user selects a scene. For example, if the house is chosen, a house is shown with several target spots displayed on it. On the easy level, a touch/click on any target spot fills in the missing part of the house. The more difficult level shows a part of the house (window, door, chimney, etc.) in an adjacent window that the user clicks on the correct target spot on the house to place it there. No hints are given in *Sort and See* and an incorrect response is simply not rewarded. The user is not prompted or given feedback in any other way after an incorrect choice. The screen simplicity is excellent in all of the activities. These programs have a copyright date of 1996 and are available in Mac/Win CD-ROM for $59.95 each. Recommended developmental ages are 3-7.

Animated Toys by Judy Lynn Software

The objectives of this program include improving tracking skills, increasing attention span, and learning the cause/effect relationship of an input device to the screen. The scanning speed can be adjusted from one to nine. Select an input device from a mouse, a keyboard space bar, or a switch. A switch image (mouse, keyboard, or different colored

switches) is used on the screen as a visual prompt. Set the number of repetitions of an animated segment (activity) from one to eight or to loop continuously.

The program has thirteen different segments that animate when activated by an input device. The preselected switch image appears on the screen along with a clicking sound to prompt the user to activate the input device. Descriptions of some segments are as follows: In *Player Piano,* a click activates a piano to play music. Lego-like blocks build on top of each other with each click in *Lock Blocks*. A click starts a car to knock down dominos in *Dominos Falling. Spin & Listen-Animal Sounds* and *Spin & Listen-Household Sounds* are similar in format. Each has a spinner in the middle surrounded by four different animals or four different household items, respectively. A click starts the spinner and whichever item it stops on, the sound associated with that item is heard. This program has a copyright date of 1997 and is available in Win/DOS diskette for $35.00. Recommended developmental ages are 9 mos. – 4 years.

References

My Very First Software
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www.castle.neth-judylynn

Camilla Hileman is the author of the book Point.. .Click... & Learn!!! A "User-Friendly" Guide to Educational Software Programs for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities, *published by Future Horizons, Inc. (1-800-489-0727). She is a national speaker on computer-assisted instruction and individuals with autism and developmental disabilities. Camilla is available for in-service training, workshops, and conferences. Contact her at: 3061 Belden Circle, Cincinnati, Ohio 45211. E-Mail: camilla827 @aol.com. Look for a review by Camilla regularly in DIRECTIONS. §*

Disability Radio Show "On A Roll"

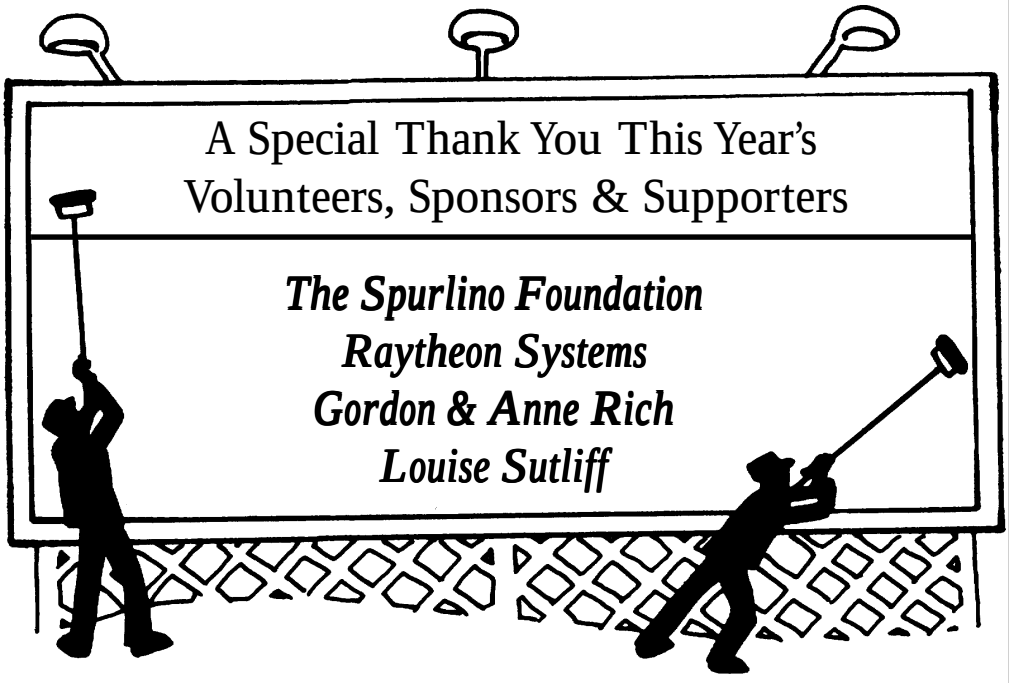
On A Roll, America's only live weekly commercial radio talk show on disability lifestyle issues is living up to its name. Since hitting the airwaves as a local program in Phoenix, Arizona in 1992, On A Roll has steadily gained awareness in the grassroots disability community, and has become a significant national source of news, resources and discussion. On A Roll airs live Sunday nights at 9:05 PM Eastern Time on the Talk America Radio Network, and on the Internet at http://www.onarollradio.com.

Recently, On A Roll signed on with the Talk America Radio Network, creating a total of 36 radio stations that carry the show. That audience is enhanced by a growing number of Internet users who tune in with their computers, using the much-improved RealPlayer G2 software plug in, available for free download at http://www.real.com. On A Roll's recently re-designed web site includes archives of the show and "internet-only" streaming audio features that are updated daily.

On A Roll also gives away free software prizes to all callers, courtesy of its newest major sponsor, Microsoft. The program is also sponsored by the Action Storm Series Power Chairs, and by EasyStand.

"I think we have proven to the radio industry that there is a significant market for a program that promotes the empowerment of all people," said Greg Smith, On a Roll's host and founder, who is a wheelchair user with muscular dystrophy. "Now is a great time for people call the program director at their local talk stations and ask for On A Roll, because now stations are more aware of the show and are more open to it than ever before."

For more information about On A Roll – Talk Radio on Life & Disability, visit the On A Roll web site at http://www.onarollradio.com, or call Greg Smith at 937-767-1838.§



Conferences & Events

Date: March 16 - 20, 1999
CSUN - Technology and Persons with Disabilities
Los Angeles, CA
Contact: Center on Disabilities, California State University, Northridge, http://www.csun.edu

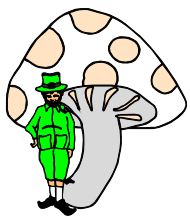
Date: April 16 - 20, 1999
79th Annual American Occupational Therapists Association conference & Expo
Indianapolis, IN
Contact: www.aota.org

Date: April 14 - 17, 1999
1999 CEC Annual Convention
Charlotte, NC
Contact: www.cec.sped.org

June 22 - 24, 1999
NECC '99
Atlantic City, NJ
Contact: 541-346-3537

June 25 - 29, 1999
RESNA '99
Long Beach, CA
Contact: 703-524-6686

Date: October 6 - 9, 1999
Assistive Technology Industry Association
Orlando, FL
Contact: www.atia.org



AAC continued from page 5

developments are invited to contact Katya Hill at the address below. A brief summary paper entitled "AAC Language Activity Monitoring and Analysis for Clinical Intervention and Research Outcomes" is available on the CSUN web site at <http://www.dinf.org/csun39/session0063.html>.

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E-Mail Bulletin Board

Eye Gaze Devices

I am a neurologist and I need to know if someone has experience with eye gaze devices in young girls with Rett Syndrome to control the computer screen etc. Can you help me and my young patient?

calvario@ba.dada.it

Adaptive Tricycle

I am the service coordinator for a family support program inn Winston-Salem, NC called Triad First In Families. We try to locate items for families that have children with developmental disabilities, empowering the family to decide what is best for their lives an what their children need. A mother has come to us requesting a Tonicross Tricycle, foot supports, leg abductor system with two back/trunk supports. Do you have any suggestions or know of a clearing house for used adaptive equipment for children like this? New this will cost around $1,500.00. Thank you,

TriadFIF@netunlimited.net

Head Control for Nintendo

Hi. I live in Longview, TX. My son sustained a spinal cord injury in 1996 at the age of 8. He is a C3-4 quad and has no feeling or movement from the shoulders down. He works on a computer with a head mouse at school and at home. I am looking for a head control for the nintendo so that he is able to play video games. I have heard that there is a company in Dallas that makes one but have not been able to find out the name of the company. I was just wondering if you could help me find one. If so please contact me by email. Thank you.

JAS562@aol.com

Baseball for the Visually Impaired

My sister in law is looking for a baseball that beeps so a visually impaired child will be better able to catch it. My nephew has ocular albinism and it is difficult for him to play catch with his fully sighted brother. Can you suggest a source?

EBHanley@aol.com

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