

Music Education Network - for The Visually Impaired -

An International Coalition of Parents, Educators, and Students

- MENVI Headquarters -

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News Journal – Summer / Fall 2010

Issue 31

MENVI


- Announcements: Hieroglyphic Braille; Online News; More on Piano Teaching -

HIEROGLYPHIC BRAILLE CODE LAUNCHED

Congratulations to those of you who have learned to read the new hieroglyphic braille code! Hopefully, you might tolerate some attempted humor as an effort to ease the editor's embarrassment; that is, for braille fonts in our last two journals appearing as ASCII text in print editions.

No, transcribers, there's no need to toss away your "*Music Braille Code 1997*" manual quite yet. However, thanks to our member, Andy English, a very interesting aspect regarding ASCII braille as a proofreading tool might be of some interest to our readers.

Andy is one of the few music transcribers who can read the ASCII equivalent as a proofreading device. Bettye Krolick, sometimes called the *Godmother of Music Braille*, was my first experience with a transcriber who could read the ASCII code, and actually preferred it for proofreading. This was a particularly unique skill, as she was one who normally worked with direct manual transcription using a computer. For those who do not know much about how transcribers work, read on:

Music braille and certain other codes can be created with electronic translation such as with the *Goodfeel™* program (*Dancing Dots*), or it can be done on a computer as though braille on a mechanical braille writing device using standard six-key entry. If viewed within a print environment, the braille may appear as ASCII code:  ASCII equivalent: **A .->”?A:<\$]\$.** Thank you Andy, for this perfect opportunity to make an informative lesson out of an accidental editorial oversight.

Thanks also to Tina Davidson, who has volunteered to transfer our Word docs into readable PDF files for those of us who prefer not to read braille facsimile with the ASCII code.

NEWS JUST FOR ONLINE MEMBERS

As indicated in our last issue, we have begun an ongoing column dedicated to online users. These articles are contributed by our MENVI online webmaster, Jared Rimer.

As your Webmaster, I would like to introduce you to our new staff. In an earlier article, I indicated that there were three staff members who could help out with online activities. Two of the original three are no longer with us. New staff members who have joined me are, Jacob Sexton and Kelly Sapergia. Jacob does list management work for the network, and is a contact point for list management. Kelly handles accessibility work. Although he is not listed on the network, we can consult with him when needed. Contact me (Jared) should you need either of their assistance.

We have a strict privacy policy, which is on our website (soon to be re-structured for general and verbal appearance). For those who do not have web access, we can fax a copy for you to review. Each web page indicates the policy items appropriate to that page. If you are on the Internet, you can view the privacy policy at www.menvi.org/privacy.html at anytime. Please accept our apologies for the recent discussion list collapse, as we are now taking new steps to develop a special roster list of subscribers in order to avoid a recurrence of this kind of problem.

Finally, please remember to keep your contact information up to date. If your address should bounce from our subscription lists for newsletters and rosters, you'll be called by phone only once. Member subscribers are responsible for updating their personal information. Once an address is removed, no further contact can be made. If you have questions, comments, or concerns, kindly contact us by telephone or E-mail at any time.

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EXCITING NEW BRAILLE SERVICES!

Lydia Machell of *Prima Vista* announces:

“I'm very proud to announce that Prima Vista is now offering braille transcriptions of songs from the hit T.V. series, ‘*Glee*’. We're delighted that the publishers, Music Sales, are supporting braille music.

Their latest *Glee* publication ‘*Glee Songbook, Easy Piano*’ came out this month and now you can buy the pieces from Prima Vista at <http://primavistamusic.com>.

“Titles include John Lennon's ‘*Imagine*,’ the soul classic ‘*Lean on me*,’ and Journey's ‘*Don't stop believin*’. Each title is available as either a bar-over-

bar piano score or as a topline score - vocal line with guitar chords and lyrics. And, as always, you can browse the sound samples for the songs you want and buy them as digital downloads or as embossed copies. Find out all about it at our website's dedicated *Glee* page at www.primavistamusic.com/content.php?id=13

“A special thanks goes to those of you who have supported the ‘*Feel the Music*’ campaign; every signature helps to convince publishers that there's a real need for braille music of every kind. If you haven't already signed up, learn more about our campaign at our website's *Feel the Music* page at www.primavistamusic.com/content.php?id=9.”

TEACHING EARLY PIANO FORMATS TO A BLIND STUDENT ... *Continued*

Article adapted from CTEBVI Journal (formerly CTEVH), Summer 2009 – with permission

CTEBVI stands for *California Transcribers and Educators of the Blind and Visually Impaired*. It is open for membership to all who are interested in the educational welfare of blind individuals. www.ctebvi.org

Let us expand our discussion further of teaching reading skills with bar-over-bar piano music formats.

Following is the continuation of an edited lesson from “An Introduction to Music for the Blind Student, Part III – Teacher Training [used here with permission]:*

Try this:

The most difficult concept in teaching a blind student to read music braille in bar-over-bar format is that of how to keep track of, and to assemble, both hand parts. One exercise that can be used to help this process is that of creating special piano-like reproductions using only rhythmic tapping. The student will simply tap the rhythm of one hand while reading with the other; when arriving at a hands-together part, he or she moves the tapping hand into position to survey the accompanying part. One, then two measures at a time should be read first, then assembled after memorizing both hands.

Following are two sample exercises given in braille piano format; both are for rhythms, and only require hands together in one measure.

1. First, assign the student to right hand rhythms while you tap the rhythms of the left hand in a duet style.
2. Switch parts.

3. Now the student reads from left to right hand part, reading with the same hand, and tapping with the same hand. No need to switch hands, as we are only concerned with surveying the two parts at this point.
4. Once arriving at measure 7 with hands together, pause; read each part, then assemble both.

Skill in becoming familiar with bar-over-bar can be greatly heightened with this approach. Keep in mind that we must develop the ability to keep our place in the braille and to maintain accurate contact with the music. Continuous flow at this point is not important when arriving at hands-together parts. This approach and exercise is intended to develop a communication with the music, and to maintain contact with the correct measure at all times.

Sample 1:

▲ both hands tap

Sample 2:

**Part III is a teacher's training course soon to be released by Dancing Dots (www.dancingdots.com)*

Special Reviews:

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON – AN ICON, AND A ROLE MODEL

Our reviews of special schools are by no means published in any order of priority. CSUF has been a long-standing center of unfailing support for blind music majors in the California university system. Professional transcribers are contracted to support students for the entire journey through their schooling. Outstanding DSS support and competent computer assistance and production, create a very successful environment for any serious blind music major. Without the support of specialists like Jeff Senge, Marc Trinh, and Elizabeth Buchanan, university music majors would indeed be left to forage on their own devices, making success very difficult if not impossible.

Special thanks to MENVI DSS specialists, Jeff Senge of CSUF, and Mary Ann Cummins-Prager of California State University, Northridge, for making our blind students' college experience so successful!

Reminders: Would you like to see articles of your own published? Are there other issues that you would like to see addressed in your Journal? If so, take some time to let us know your needs. Or, contribute your own article proposal to MENVI Headquarters!

Is your membership roster information up to date?

Be sure to fill out an updated application online, or ask Jared to fax one to you