

THE MAGPIE NEWS

The Quarterly Newsletter from
The Norfolk & Norwich Association
for the Blind



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May we wish all Magpie News readers a very healthy and Happy New Year and a big thank you to everyone who sent us cards, greetings and New Year wishes; we appreciate your kind thoughts.

If you would prefer to receive your Magpie News in a different format please let us know.

We can supply it in the following: Large Print, CD, email, Braille or memory stick

Contents

1	New Chief Executive Officer	20	Attleborough Club
2	Fundraising Main Events for 2011 – Jeremy Goss	21	Singing Group
3	NNAB Holidays 2012	22	Living Arts Group
4	Pilgrimage to the Holy Land	23	Theatre Group
5	Product News	24	Heritage Group
6	Sight Information Service	25	Gardeneyes
7	Closure Dates for the Norwich Equipment Centre	26	Sports Programme
8	The Breckland Equipment and Information Centre	27	Fundraising News
9	Information Booklets	28	Charity Christmas Cards
10	Moving Forward Together	29	Christmas Annual Raffle
11	Handy Hint	30	Flag Days and Street Collections for 2012
12	Christmas Party	31	Gt. Yarmouth & Waveney Hospital Transport Service
13	'The Grease Experience' at The Theatre Royal	32	A new way to contact your police
14	Mobile Equipment & Information Centre	33	HM Revenue & Customs Enquiry Centres
15	Focus Days at NNAB Equipment Centres	34	Items for sale
16	Sight and Sound Drop in Day	35	Charity Shop
17	Computer Taster Session	36	Thomas Tawell House
18	Art & Craft Sessions		
19	NNAB Photography Group		

Every effort is made to ensure that the content of this newsletter is correct, however we cannot be held responsible for errors and omissions. Goods and services featured do not carry any recommendation from The Norfolk and Norwich Association for the Blind. If you should inadvertently receive more than one copy in print of this newsletter please pass it on to friends, doctor's surgeries etc.

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1. New Chief Executive Officer

As you may already know John Child, our Director is retiring after nearly 20 years at the end of May. His replacement as CEO is Brigadier Max Marriner. We thank John for his enthusiasm and contribution over the years and welcome Max to take up the gauntlet.

2. Fundraising Main Events for 2011 – Jeremy Goss

2011 has been a wonderful and very enjoyable year for me working as the NNAB Event Fundraiser. I believe we have made excellent progress in reaching the department's objectives of raising funds and raising the profile of the charity within Norwich and Norfolk. The organisation has 'achieved' greatly over so many years and I'm delighted to be in a position to contribute to its success.

During the last 12 months I have seen how the charity has positively affected so many people living within Norfolk and I will use my natural commitment, desire and enthusiasm to further enhance its caring and compassionate reputation. Thank you to all those who have made financial donations and have assisted me in making the events work so well.

The events and projects which stood out above all others last year were:-

The Back to Bayern Fundraising Event raising £26,000.

The Back to Bayern Fundraising Event winning the 'Innovation In Fundraising' top award during the 2011 National Visionary Conference of local UK societies.

The NNAB 2011 Gala Ball raising £7000.

Mills & Reeve, one of the country's top 50 Law companies, nominating the NNAB as their chosen charity of the year for 2011.

3. NNAB Holidays 2012

If you are interested in our holidays and would like a holiday pack, please contact Donna Hewitt 01603 629558.

She was hoping to venture out of the country again this year to Belgium, but due to lack of interest she will look into holidays for either late April/May in the UK.

The following dates are available:-

Saturday 30th June to Saturday 7th July - Great Yarmouth.

Sunday 30th September to Saturday 6th October - Llandudno, Wales.

Monday 12th to Friday 16th November - Turkey & Tinsel Break, Great Yarmouth.

4. Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

After the article in November's edition a number of people have contacted John Child about a possible visit. To make it feasible and for a special trip to be organised more numbers are required. As a rough guide the eight day tour will cost £1200 - £1300 per person and has to be booked one year in advance. The trip would be organised by Worldwide Christian Travel. A sighted guide would be required by each person. We need more interest before taking it forward. If you are interested please complete the return slip.

News from the Equipment and Information Centres

For information about equipment, events and general enquiries please contact Dorothy or Chris on 01603 629558.

5. Product News

We are delighted that in the Norwich Equipment Centre we now have two of the latest desktop Video Magnifiers available: The Clear View One from Optelec and the Magnilink Vision from Professional Vision Services.

Come along and have them demonstrated to you.

On February 8th Optelec invite you to see their new equipment at the Norwich Equipment Centre 10am - 3pm.

We also have a new version of Large Print Scrabble on display at Norwich, Kings Lynn and Great Yarmouth.
Price: £29.16.

6. Sight Information Service

We are very pleased with the response we are having to our offer to provide information via our Sight Information Service. We have been very successful in forming links with Health Centres and Libraries throughout the county. We are very pleased that there have been so many positive responses to our offer to work with them and dates for Sight Information Points are being booked for this year.

Sessions for 125 Norwich City College students, all studying on the Health and Social Care course, have been provided in the Bradbury Activity Centre. Sessions are also being held for the staff of The Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk.

7. Closure Dates for the Norwich Equipment Centre

This will be closed on Thursday March 22nd for Annual Stocktaking and on Tuesday March 27th for Staff Training.

8. The Breckland Equipment and Information Centre

Sarah Pawsey and Janette Marler (our community workers for this area) are available in The Breckland Equipment and Information Centre which is held in Wayland House, The Street, Watton on the second and fourth Mondays of the month. On the second Monday of each month they will now be in the larger Dragonfly Gallery where you will be able to enjoy a coffee and chat. We shall also be hoping to invite speakers and arrange mini exhibitions. Let us know what you would like.

9. Information Booklets

Just a reminder that in the Equipment Centres we do have a wide selection of information leaflets and booklets covering a range of subjects such as:-

Eye Conditions, registration, help for carers, lighting in your home, Torch Trust, Talking Books.

We always welcome any comments about our service or if you would like to suggest a special interest day that you would like us to arrange, please do contact me, dorothybowen@nnab.org.uk 01603 629558.

10. Moving Forward Together

The NNAB is planning a residential learning holiday at the Virginia Court Hotel, Cromer, 16th - 18th October 2012. Our previous holidays here have been very successful and we look forward to welcoming guests again this year.

This mini-break will include sessions addressing issues surrounding sight loss. An evening of local entertainment will be included, as well as two breakfasts, two evening meals and one lunch.

We would like to invite applications from visually impaired people and their partners who wish to learn more about life as a VIP.

The total cost (inclusive) will be £210.00 per person.

If you think you may be interested I would love to hear from you as soon as possible.

Please contact Dorothy Bowen on 01603 629558 or email dorothybowen@nnab.org.uk

11. Handy Hint

When buying a book of stamps, there is a single 'v' cut in the side of the book indicating first-class and a double 'v' for second class. There is no need to worry if postage prices increase after you have bought the book as the stamps no longer have their value printed on them so you can continue to use them.

News from YoungEyes at NNAB

12. Christmas Party

Santa swapped his sleigh for a red Harley Davidson motorbike to kick start Christmas for our YoungEyes families. In fact ten super bikes turned out to escort the man in the red suit and his Elf to the Norfolk and Norwich Association for the Blind's headquarters for the annual YoungEyes festive fun.

They were all members of the Norwich-based Eaton Hog Bikers Club, who revved up a seasonal storm for the children, their families and friends. The Lord Mayor of Norwich, Jenny Lay joined over 100 guests to enjoy an afternoon of music and games at the Bradbury Activity Centre, plus a chance to design the decoration of Christmas Biscuits. Festive food for the occasion was provided by Norwich Sunblinds.

It was a fantastic afternoon and a great opportunity for the children and their families to let their hair down and get into the Christmas spirit. The bikers provided a brilliant wall of sound when they arrived. They created our very own Route 66!

13. 'The Grease Experience' at The Theatre Royal

One Saturday in December The Bradbury Centre hosted the 'Cool Club', a Club for vision-impaired youngsters aged 10-14 years. Jointly staffed by NNAB staff and teachers from the Education Sensory Support Service, a group of ten young ladies met at the Bradbury to enjoy each other's company playing games, dancing to the X Box Kinect, designing Christmas tree decorations and sharing a lunch. In the afternoon we all walked down to the Theatre Royal to enjoy a spectacular performance of 'Grease'. Prior to the show we were treated to a touch tour of the stage, where we saw the 'Grease Lightning' car. The girls had the opportunity to try on a 'Pink Ladies' fleece and a 'T Birds' jacket! It was full day but so enjoyable, we hope to repeat the experience again next July with a visit to see 'Oliver'.