Tech It Easy (Text only version. All pictures and special formatting has been removed)

Access Technologies, Inc

May 2016 Edition

Editor: Laurie Brooks

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Technology Makes Voting Easier

(By Ester Harlow, Voting Rights Advocate, PAVA)

Does your vision make it challenging to see the voter ballot?

Does a cognitive or intellectual disability make it difficult to read the voter guide and/or ballot?

Do you have difficulty writing on your paper ballot with a pen?

Many voters including those with low vision, blindness, learning and print disabilities, even physical and dexterity difficulties have found it challenging to cast their vote. But not anymore—now technology will help you regain your independence in voting!

You can use technology to mark your ballot!

After receiving your ballot and envelope in the mail, simply access the online Alternative Format Ballot. It’s a web form where you can mark your choices.

You can use a screenreader such as JAWs or VoiceOver to read the Alternative Format Ballot aloud, or you can use a magnifier like ZoomText, or SWIPING on your tablet, to enlarge the text.

Then, simply use your mouse, trackball, switch or keyboard to mark the form.

If you don’t have the technology, your local elections office does! Each election office has a Surface tablet that allows you to use a screenreader, enlarge the text, and plug in the switch, trackball, or any controller of your choice. If you are not able to travel to your local elections office, they can even bring the technology to your home.

Once you have filled out your ballot, print it, then sign the envelope between the two punch holes. If you are completing a ballot at your local elections office, they even have a printer available.

If you aren’t able to sign the envelope, your local elections office can help you get a Signature Stamp Attestation. This allows you to use a stamp or other mark on your ballot envelope to prove your identity.

To access the Alternative Format Ballot, go to oregonvotes.gov and click on “My Ballot.” Remember, ballots are due by 8pm on May 17.

If you need help contacting your local elections office, call 866-ORE-VOTE or email elections.sos@state.or.us.

If you have any problems or questions about your voting rights, call Disability Rights Oregon at 800-452-1694 or send an email to droregon.org.

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May is Older Americans Month 2016 “Blaze a Trail”

Older adults are a growing and increasingly vital part of our country. The contributions they make to our communities are varied, deeply rooted, and include influential roles in the nation’s economy, politics, and the arts. From 69-year-old NASA Administrator Charles Bolden, Jr. to 84-year-old actress Rita Moreno to 83-year-old Ruth Bader Ginsberg, who took her seat as a Supreme Court Justice at age 60, older adults are blazing trails in all aspects of American life.

In 1963, we began to acknowledge the contribution of older people by using the month of May to celebrate Older Americans Month (OAM). Led by the Administration for Community Living (ACL), this annual observance offers the opportunity to learn about, support, and celebrate our nation’s older citizens. This year’s theme, “Blaze a Trail,” emphasizes the ways older adults are reinventing themselves through new work, and new passions, engaging their communities, and blazing a trail of positive impact on the lives of people of all ages.

On behalf of the Oregon Statewide Assistive Technology Program, Access Technologies, Inc. and iCanConnect-Oregon, join our staff in following the examples of older adults in our community to blaze trails of our own.

Contact your local Area Agency on Aging for more information about Older American’s Month. To locate the Area Agency on Aging office near you, call 1-800-677-1116 or go online to <http://www.eldercare.gov/>

ATI is proud to serve as the implementing entity for Oregon’s Statewide Assistive Technology Program.

The continuum of State Level activities provided through your Oregon Statewide Assistive Technology Program make such a positive impact on the lives of people, and we appreciate every opportunity to share your success stories on how assistive technology devices and services have increased your independence at home, work, school, in your community, as well as with recreational activities.

We would like to share your story — How have our services helped you in gaining independence?

It’s about you, and the independence you have gained through assistive technology services and devices.

Perhaps you have purchased a bath chair, wheelchair, walker or commode at an affordable price through our MarketPlace,

Received a demonstration of hand-held magnifiers, apps, assistive listening devices or ergonomic gadgets that allowed you to make a better informed purchasing decision; or

Perhaps the short-term loan of a portable ramp, manual wheelchair, or knee walker has allowed you to leave your home independently.

Did you receive technology through iCanConnect-Oregon that allows you to remain in touch with your friends and family members across the states or outside of the country?

Don’t be surprised if our staff ask if you’d mind having your story shared, or better yet, why wait, email your success story to us at info@accesstechnologiesinc.org.

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Free Currency Readers

The Bureau of Engraving and Printing might not be handing out FREE MONEY, but they are providing FREE CURRENCY READERS to U.S. citizens, or persons legally residing in the U.S. who are blind or visually impaired.

Individuals interested in receiving a currency reader through the U.S. Currency Reader Program must submit an application, signed by a competent authority who can certify eligibility.

English or Spanish applications are available at Access Technologies, Inc., or can be downloaded at http://www.moneyfactory.gov/uscurrencyreaderpgm.html

iCanConnect – Oregon: Communication is essential for staying healthy, holding a job, managing a household and even participating in the community. Modern technology has expanded the way most people communicate through voice, data and video services. But for people with combined vision and hearing loss, special equipment may be necessary to make a phone call, send an email or even access the Internet. Sometimes this equipment can be as simple as adding a signaler to the telephone to alert an individual when their phone is ringing, or an easy to use cell phone designed with large print and amplification.

For some people it may include FaceTime on an iPad, or a more complex solution like using a braille display to “see” what is on the computer screen.

If you have combined hearing and vision loss, and experience difficulties with your telecommunication independence, you may qualify for free telecommunication tools and training through iCanConnect. In Oregon, iCanConnect activities are carried out by your team of Specialists at Access Technologies, Inc.

For more information, visit our website at [www.accesstechnologiesinc.org](http://www.accesstechnologiesinc.org), call ATI at 1-800-677-7512, or you may email our team at info@accesstechnologiesinc.org.

Pages 4 – 8 of this edition of Tech It Easy contain listings of new durable medical and/or assistive technology devices that are available for sale through our Assistive Technology MarketPlace.

Page 9 of this edition of Tech It Easy contain our Bargain Basement. The Bargain Basement section is a listing of slightly used items which are also available for sale online in our Assistive Technology MarketPlace.

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Advertise Your Used Items on our Website for Free at [www.accesstechnologiesinc.org/marketplace](http://www.accesstechnologiesinc.org/marketplace)

Online and Automatic Voter Registration

(By Ester Harlow, Voting Rights Advocate, PAVA)

Did you know you can register to vote online in Oregon?

Go to oregonvotes.gov and click on “Voter Registration.” It’s easy! You can use your Oregon ID or Driver’s License number, or the last for digits of your Social Security Number to register.

The Secretary of State has started a new program called Oregon Motor Voter. Every citizen adult who goes to the DMV for an ID or Driver’s License in 2016 is eligible for automatic voter registration. They will receive a card in the mail with the choice to opt out or choose a political party. If they do nothing, they will be registered to vote as unaffiliated (not a member of a political party). Almost 35,000 new voters have been registered through Oregon Motor Voter already.

Welcome to Oregon’s new voters!

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Learn about a FREE Equipment Program iCanConnect—Oregon

If you have significant combined hearing and vision loss, you know first-hand that sending emails or chatting on the phone can be difficult.

iCanConnect offers free communication equipment and training so you can keep in touch . . . and be more independent.

Contact ATI to learn about the program’s income and disability guidelines. Refer someone you know or apply for the program yourself.

Phone: (503) 361-1201; Toll Free: (800) 677-7512

Email: info@accesstehnologiesinc.org or Web: [www.accesstechnologiesinc.org](http://www.accesstechnologiesinc.org)