

TEACHERS' FEATURES FOR THE 2026 CONVENTION

By Carla Hayes

It's hard to believe that it is almost time for the ACB Annual Convention and Conference in Saint Louis. Per usual, AABT has a plethora of presentations and activities planned for you! Read on for more Details.

We have two sessions planned during Virtual Week of the convention, both of which will be co-sponsored with the Braille Revival League and will take place on Friday July 10th. First, at 10:00 AM: We will have a fascinating session titled "Seeing Braille Wait I Thought I Had to Feel Braille."

Seeing Braille, a program for the PC, lets blind or sighted presenters demonstrate braille to sighted audiences, in person or online. By exploring dot positions, letter patterns, numbers, punctuation, and uncontracted or contracted words or phrases, users can learn braille by sight and take the mystery out of braille for audiences such as parents, classmates of blind children, and the public in general. Our presenter will be Neva Fairchild, (Texas American Foundation of the Blind, aging and vision loss specialist) from Dallas Tx. Immediately following this program at 11:30 AM, join us for "Patty Goes To Peru."

Patty Slaby, itinerant teacher of blind and low vision from Arcadia, Wisconsin, will tell us about her inspiring Mission Trip to Lima Peru. She will share about her experiences at an orphanage where she presented and demonstrated how it is to live as a blind individual. She will summarize some of her adventures and describe the time she spent with the children being immersed in Spanish.

We kick off our presentations in St. Louis with our annual breakfast which will take place on Saturday July 25 at 7:00 AM. For the first time ever, BRL and AABT will be co-sponsoring this event. Even if you cannot be in Dallas, be sure to join us via Zoom at 7:45 AM for our breakfast program, "Rejuvenate Your knowledge of The History of Braille."

Carlie Lee will cover the history of braille at the Missouri School for the Blind and Jane Herdth will discuss the use of braille in today's world including technology and a program for deaf-blind, Protactile. Hands on items will be available. Our Presenters will be Carlie Lee, community relations facilitator and Jane Herdth, director of outreach, Missouri School for the Blind, Saint Louis, MO.

Tuesday July 28th Will be an extremely busy day and you will have a difficult choice to make. If you prefer to remain in the hotel, you can join AABT, BRL And LUA who will Be co-sponsoring two sessions: at 3:00 Pm LUA Presents "Meet The Narrator" where we will hear from a talking book narrator, AND at 5:00 PM "LUA Presents News and Updates at NLS. If a "field trip" would be more to your liking, AABT is recommending the tour to the Missouri School for the Blind from 12:00 to 4:30 PM. This historic school initially opened in 1865. Today it is a modern and thriving school. Visit the track, the gymnasium, the auditorium, classrooms, the library, and student dorms.

As you can see, we have a variety of exciting activities planned for you. As teachers, we beg you not to "be absent." After all, we wouldn't want to have to send a truant officer after you! Please join us for all or some of our activities. You will be glad that you did!