

Heading with information:

Summer Vol 34

The Quarterly Journal

May 2017

Texas Technology Program

Image of a golden sunset of strong orange and yellows over a flat field with a silhouette fence line of Texas native plants and a man in a cowboy hat walking towards the sunset looking down to the ground.

Welcome to the Texas Technology Access Program and our Newsletter! This summer issue brings thoughts of vacation, travel and safety. We hope you find the information helpful and you have a safe summer! We thank you for your support of our services. If you have any ideas or suggestions that you would like to see us publish or devices you'd like to see in our Loan Program, please feel free to let us know and email: Olivia Rains orains@austin.utexas.edu

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"Announcements" in large gold letters across top of page with shadows behind the letters.

We are saddened to say goodbye to a past TTAP colleague and friend, John Morris who has passed away in early April. John was with the TTAP team for several years and handled our Loan Program and outreach. John was a tireless advocate for individuals with significant disabilities on a wide range of issues including housing, employment, transportation and community living supports.

Picture of a man with shaved short dark hair and goatee, sitting, in a white t-shirt and denim jeans.

National Home Safety Month in large lettering 2D style type soft orange to soft yellow color and blue shadow for depth.

Even if Amazon Echo is secure, many Internet of Things devices are not. Some security experts are concerned about hacking, government access and who exactly is receiving all this consumer data. Everyone say 'Alexa.'

The summer is most common for vacation trips and some of us will leave our homes for an extended amount of time. Whether an alarm system is to alert of an intruder or, a smart system that can switch on/off lights and read us the news, we have more options than ever before with technology in the home. It is important to look at how far these options go with privacy protection.

The Amazon Echo is a wireless connection point that provides news, weather, music and other forms of entertainment and information. It also allows you interface with various Internet of Things devices that are on your home network. It does all this magic through voice control. By saying a key phrase Amazon calls a “wake word” the Echo comes to life and begins listening for commands. By default, the wake word is Alexa. If you reread that last sentence it may not make sense, especially if you are in the security field. According to Amazon, the Echo only listens for commands once it hears its wake word. How does it know when you have said the wake word if it wasn’t already listening?

“What Amazon created was a gateway to its ecosystem with the Fire and Kindle,” says Joel Bilheimer of Pershing Technologies. “The Echo is an extension of that.”

“What Amazon created was a gateway to its ecosystem with the Fire and Kindle,” says Joel Bilheimer of Pershing Technologies. “The Echo is an extension of that.”

As technology moves forward we are being asked, as both consumers and technologists, to decide between the functionality of the next whiz-bang gizmo and the security features we have come to expect.

“We need to empower ourselves and the next generation to make informed decisions about where that balance lies, but we have to acknowledge the reality of the inexorable march of technology,” says Bilheimer.

“I think my kids, when they grow up, will think of the iPhone 6 the way we think of flip phones,” Bilheimer continues. “Tools like the Echo are going to be so much more normal for them. IoT, smart houses [and] smart cars will be the norm, the standard.”

As with any push forward in technology, there will be, and should be, concerns for security and safety — both from nefarious actors as well as our own government. The likelihood of the Echo getting hacked from a criminal element is very small due to Amazon’s security measures. However, keeping abreast of the latest developments within the security and policing agencies is one way to make sure the devices you have in your, and your clients’, home align with your own level of comfort and transparency.

For more on this article click [HERE](#).

Apps for Driving Safety (written in bold blue lettering with red shadow)

What do you do when you get a phone call while driving?

Summer is a busy vacation time and most will be driving to their destinations. Is there a convenient method to use your phone without getting distracted? The root cause of this problem, which is your mobile phone, can also be the solution for it. A variety of smartphone applications have been

created to ensure the safety of drivers. You can simply get your hands on such an application in order to enhance your safety while driving. Here is a list of such safe driving applications that you can think about installing in your smartphone.

TrueMotion Family - TrueMotion Family app has the ability to monitor your risky behaviors along with time and then provide suggestions for improvement along with time. It will consider the total time you spend driving beyond the speed limit, the number of times you hit hard on the brakes and the number of times that you used your phone while driving.

SafeDrive – People who are extremely concerned about their safety while driving should think about installing this app on their smartphones. In fact, this app would reward you for not using the mobile phone while driving. You just need to open the app and tap on "Play Now" before you start your journey. If you don't touch your phone while driving, you will be able to receive points. Your main objective should be to score runs as much as possible and it would ensure your safety on the road.

Milz – Milz is another safe driving application and it was created by the developers of SafeDrive. As a result, you will be able to find some common features in between these two applications. Milz is targeted towards teens, where they can invite their family members and relatives to contribute towards their good driving habits. In other words, the relatives can donate \$0.10 for every good mile that is driven by the teen. Teens who have installed this app on their smartphones would tend to drive slowly with the objective of collecting more money.

Canary – Canary has been designed for the use of parents, who have teenage children. The parents can simply install this application on the devices of their children and monitor how many times they unlock their phones while sitting behind the wheel. The parents will also be sent notifications when their children go beyond the speed limit.

DriveSafe.ly – Instead of tracking your bad habits on the road, DriveSafe.ly would take necessary measures to keep you away from doing them. If you have DriveSafe.ly installed on your mobile, you will be able to stay away from emailing and texting on the road. It would read the messages aloud and would respond to them automatically with a pre-determined text. In other words, DriveSafe.ly can keep you away from looking at the phone while you drive.

Drivemode – You would get the need to navigate through your mobile phone while driving. In that kind of a situation, Drivemode would come to your assistance. This app would navigate through your phone and you will be provided with the ability to keep your eyes on the road. Drivemode can also consolidate your messaging, navigation and music all in one place. Therefore, you will be able to see multiple things stored in the phone while you drive.

Drive Safe – The main objective of Drive Safe is to help you focus on the road and it would take care of all the incoming text messages and phone calls. In fact, Drive Safe has the ability to respond automatically to all of them. It can simply be activated with the push of a button. Therefore, you will never forget to turn on Drive Safe before you start a journey.

Flo Driving Insights - Flo Driving Insights delivers instant feedback for the people about their driving habits. This app comes along with a variety of advanced features as well. Automatic trip recording is a perfect example to prove the above mentioned fact. The best thing about this app is that it would record your trips even though you haven't turned it on. Flo Driving Insights also has a rewarding system to

complement the good driving habits. It would take your breaking habits, acceleration and cornering into consideration and provide with reward points accordingly.

Driving 101 - Driving 101 differs a lot from the other applications mentioned above. In other words, it would not convert safe driving habits of people into a game. On the other hand, it would not restrict your capabilities on the road. Instead, Driving 101 would work as your one stop news feed and you will be provided with road safety tips on a daily basis. In fact, you can receive fresh tips on every single day and you will be able to learn something new. If you are interested in enhancing your driving habits, you should think of downloading this app to your smartphone.

As you can see, these applications have the potential to ensure your safety while you are on the road. Therefore, you can think of downloading them to your smartphone without any doubt on mind. Some of the safety applications can be downloaded for free, whereas you will only have to pay a reasonable price to download others. The amount you pay to purchase those applications can be considered as an excellent investment done towards the future because they can ensure your safety on the road.

Article from Engadget.

Heat Safety (written in large 2D text orange to yellow)

With hot weather, everyone is at risk for dehydration, heat stroke, and other heat-related issues. People with certain disabilities may be at a higher risk in hotter temperatures. The sunshine is meant to be enjoyed, but be sure to follow these tips so that your spring and summer are not only fun, but safe.

Who's at Risk?

The truth is that everyone is at risk for things like heat stroke, sunburns, and dehydration when the temperatures climb. But people with disabilities or health problems have an increased risk of running into these issues. Many disabilities, like Multiple Sclerosis (MS), increase a person's sensitivity to heat. The body normally cools itself through sweating, but when humidity is high or when disabilities restrict this regulation, the body can quickly overheat and suffer from heat stroke. Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if not treated promptly by an emergency team. Be sure to keep hydrated and take lots of breaks if you are doing any physical activities.

Disabilities or medications that make you or your skin more sensitive to sunlight can also create serious issues in the warmer weather. For example, lupus can cause inflammation in several organs that can be triggered by exposure to ultraviolet light. Though we want everyone to enjoy Utah's beautiful outdoors this summer, be sure to wear sunblock, wear a hat, and reduce sun exposure if you have a disease that increases your sensitivity to light.

What can I do to reduce risks?

Though certain disabilities may have a lower heat or sun exposure tolerance, everyone can take measures to protect yourself from warm weather risks. Keeping yourself cool and protecting yourself from the dangers of the sun can help reduce the risk of sunburns, heatstroke, heat exhaustion, heat rash, and dehydration. These preventative measures can also reduce the risk of future diseases, such as skin cancer.

During the summer months, get back to the basics. Try these tips to keep cool:

Know before you get outdoors

Often, disabilities and illnesses can affect our day to day lives in unexpected ways. Sometimes, it's difficult to know all the health risks that come with your condition. Be sure to ask your doctor about potential risks you might have with your disability or illness. Ask them how you can avoid those risks. Then, be sure to follow their directions.

Also, research your condition on your own. Ask people with similar health issues how they beat the heat. Find techniques that work best for you while still allowing you to enjoy the summer.

Wear sunscreen

You might have heard rumors that some sunscreens cause melanoma, lead to vitamin D deficiency, or even interfere with your hormone levels. But, doctors have debunked these common sunscreen myths.

It's important to always wear some sort of UV protection, even when you aren't spending all day at the pool. Even short periods of sun exposure can damage your skin. Try purchasing a daily moisturizer that has UV protection so you can incorporate some protection in your daily routine. Also remember that sunblock fades, so be sure to reapply it regularly.

Drink and keep drinking

Up to 75% of Americans are chronically dehydrated. Dehydration is no small thing, and the side effects can be deadly. Try making some of these fruit and herb infused waters to keep you and your kids hydrated with healthy flavored water, instead of drinks with added sugars.

Alter your diet (slightly)

During the warmer weather you lose salt through sweat. Don't replace this lost mineral through salt licks, but through your diet. Drinking sports drinks and clear juices while you are working or exercising outdoors can help get your salt levels and electrolytes back to normal in a natural way.

Watch your wardrobe

There's no rule against wearing white before Labor Day. In fact, it's smart. Wearing lightweight, loose fitting, light-colored fabrics can help keep your body cool when it's hot outside. But just because these fabrics are lightweight does not mean they should be short and leave lots of skin uncovered. You can actually stay cooler and more protected by staying covered.

Make a Plan

Learn the boy scout motto by heart and follow it: "Be prepared." If you have serious disabilities or health problems, the best thing you can do to stay healthy in hot or cold weather is to always have a plan. If you are going to spend a lot of time outdoors, know what to expect. Bring plenty of water, extra food, a hat and sunglasses, sunblock, and extra layers of clothes. It's also smart to carry a basic first aid kit with you as a general practice.

We hope this can give you some tips about staying safe in summer's hot temperatures. If you would like more information on navigating the legal aspects and benefits of a disability, we are here to help. Visit us for a free consultation or for more information, and be sure to have a safe and happy summer.

(Article from Summit Disability Law Group)

While the sun is fun, it usually brings with it a collateral downside in the form of heat. For many persons with disabilities over heating can be a health risk or even life threatening. Many a person with quadriplegia or Multiple Sclerosis have had a fun time turned into a bum time due to heat.

Here are some of the more common methods used. Hey, regardless of how you chill, be sure to stay hydrated and drink plenty of ground fluid. No, not beer or margaritas, just plain old water. Shading

Devices: These are any devices that keep you out of direct sunlight. Umbrellas, canopies, and even hats with big broad brims. For the wheelchair user, a clamp and swivel can turn an umbrella into a mobile shading device. Source: Sears

Small photo of a blue and white striped umbrella attached to a handle of wheel chair.

Misting Devices: Misting devices are another low tech body cooling solution. These can be anything from a plastic bottle with a mist sprayer nozzle, automated powered misting systems that mist at the press of a button, or misting fans that move air and a light mist across an area. Source: MistyMate

Small picture of a woman's profile in a turquoise bikini reclining in a pool chair misting herself with a misting device with a swimming pool in the background.

Ambient Air Vests: These vests have a lining made of air-permeable and compression-proof spacer fabric. Ambient air, as a "coolant", is circulated by small battery-operated fans ("ventilation units"), which are placed in outer pockets, through this spacer fabric. The air is distributed evenly and circulates around the entire upper body of the wearer. In this way, warm air containing moisture from perspiration is carried away from the skin and replaced by fresh ambient air. Source: Entek

A picture of a white woman with blonde long hair pulled back wearing a long sleeve black shirt with a purple tee shirt over it and a beige vest zipped up the middle with large pockets one on each side.

Water Based Cooling Systems: These are usually produced in the form of a vest with good old fashioned water used as the cooling element. They are self-contained portable cooling systems that utilize a lightweight vest through which ice-chilled water is circulated for efficient cooling.

Source: KewFlow at Amazon

Picture of a blue vest with black lining.

(Full article **HERE**)

Image of a dark stage with a blue spotlight aiming to the center and reads Demonstration Center Spotlight. Able Center for Independent Living, 1931 E 37th St. #1, Odessa, Tx

The center provides activities, education, and peer counseling for individuals desiring to expand their talents. ABLE is about focusing on abilities. Their website:

<http://www.ablecenterpb.org/Pages/default.aspx>

ABLE Center's Four Core Services

Information and Referral
Independent Living Skills
Advocacy
Peer Counseling and Peer Support

To make an appointment with them you can email or call them at:

General Information: Info@ablecenterpb.org
1931 E 37th St # 1 Odessa, TX 79762
(432) 580-3439

Written in large bold 2D letter text in magenta with blue shadow reads: Welcome, Ana Canevaro!

A picture of woman with short auburn hair, smiling and standing by a wall with framed art photos behind her and pink roses in a pot next to her on a book shelf.

Ana Canevaro has 20 years of experience working with children with disabilities and their families in a variety of roles including as a special education teacher, working as a family advocate and training families in a variety of topics. She also has experience in supporting families with assistive technology and transition. In her new role as the Assistive Technology Specialist for the Texas Technology Assess Program (TTAP), she is managing the Assistive Technology Loan Program and TTAP website. Ana is very happy in her new role and enjoying serving our community!

New Devices for Loan (words in rainbow color)

C Reader Pen-The C Reader Pen scanner is portable, pocket-sized device that reads text out aloud with a human-like digital voice, and it is ideal for hearing words & lines of text read aloud.

Gel Pad Activity Center (Enabling Devices) Three different gel pad switches provide opportunities for exploration. Press the green switch and a fan blows while music plays. Press the red switch and a police light flashes while sirens play and police talk. The yellow switch vibrates while colorful glitter whirls around a dome and music plays. Provides auditory, tactile and visual experiences.

Liquid Level Indicator Liquid level indicator measures 2 different levels of liquid with both a high pitched beep and a buzz. Two levels of beeping gives you advance warning as liquid nears the top of your mug or cup.

Pebble HD Pebble HD has a new HD camera providing a high definition picture. The new lightweight compact design let you carried at your purse, pocket, or clip it on your belt with the included carrying case.

Talking Tape Measure Talking Tape Measure - English - This is a measuring device for those with low vision who love to work with their hands. It measures up to 16 feet and has the capacity to remember measurements. It is accurate to 1/16th of an inch/ 1mm.

Vibrating Fiber Optic Light (Enabling Devices) These fiber optic strings change colors from red, green, blue, and purple. The light makes a wonderful addition to any sensory environment. The strings provide gentle tactile stimulation and they can also be curled as a way to practice fine motor skills.

Central 360 Home Alert (Serene)

The Central Alert 360 is an all-in-one notification system for your home. It alerts you to all the daily sounds in your home such as alarm clock, door knocking, phone ringing, alarm sound from your audio alarms, motion detectors, and storm warning from your NOAA radio.

Pocket Talker

The Pocketalker® Ultra System amplifies sounds closest to the listener while reducing background noise. Ideal for one-on-one conversation, small-group and television listening, or conversing in the car. Use with or without hearing aids. Simply plug in your earpiece, position the microphone near the preferred sound, adjust volume to your comfort – and start listening.

Pocket talker 2.0

The Pocket talker 2.0 helps you hear the sounds and voices most important to you. It amplifies what you want to hear, while reducing distracting background noise. This slim, ergonomically designed amplifier couldn't be easier to use. Simply plug in the headphone or earphone, position the microphone near the preferred sound, adjust the volume to your comfort – and start listening.

VoiceSaver Personal PA System (Califone)

VoiceSaver Personal PA System is ideal for small environments up to 50 people. Just plug in the microphone, clip the amplifier onto your belt and turn it on. The wireless mic has a 100' transmission range.

Visual Alert System

The Visual Alert System alerts you to telephone calls and the doorbell, and has optional accessories that can alert you to an audio alarm, a crying baby or the presence of an intruder.

PRIO (PRC)

The PRIO is an iPad-based communication tool featuring the popular LAMP Words for Life language system. The PRIO is configured as a dedicated device to meet the functional specifications of the Medicare/Medicaid funding requirements, and is locked from computer access and all other non-communication functions.

Switch Assessment Kit

This Assessment Kit includes Grip & Puff Switch, Ultimate Switch, Tilt Switch, Grip Switch Kit, Jumbo Switch, Gumball Switch, Mini-Gumball Switch, Adjustable Angled Switch, Pinch Switch, Thumb Switch, Button Click Switch, Bright Red Switch, Finger Isolation Button, Petite Pillow Switch, and Switch Modifier.

Large dark blue letters with light blue shadow underneath reads: What's Coming Up?

In bold purple letters reads: Abilities Expo, Houston 2017

Logo for abilities expo shows graphic drawn images of four people a two purple, two orange all holding hands, one in wheelchair, one with guidance cane.

Houston August 4 – 6, 2017

NRG Center, Fri. 11am-5pm | Sat. 11am-5pm | Sun 11am-4pm

Register [HERE](#) (FREE!)

What We've Heard written in large blue lettering.

"Everything worked great for class. The students were able to try to the variety of switches that they typically wouldn't have access to. The Dynavox and hook were invaluable. Thank you for this service."

"Thank you for allowing several extensions. The school has provided portable CCTV (VisioBook) after the trials with the Mezzo proved to be a success! Very appreciative."

Logo image of UT tower top, and reads: "What Starts Here Changes. The World The University of Texas at Austin"

Logo for TTAP blue rectangle and reads: "Texas Technology Access Program"

TTAP values your input.

If you have any suggestions, comments, or article you would like to have included in our newsletter, please contact us:

(512) 232-0751/rogerlevy@austin.utexas.edu

(512) 232-0750/anacan@utexas.edu (Until 3.31.17)

(512) 232-0753/orains@austin.utexas.edu

TTAP Demonstration Centers

Able Center, **Odessa**

Brazoria County Center for Independent Living, **Angleton**

Brazos Valley Center for Independent Living, **Bryan**

Coastal Bend Center for Independent Living, **Corpus Christi**

Disability in Action, **Abilene**

East Texas Center for Independent Living, **Tyler**

Easter Seals of Greater **Houston**

Heart of Central Texas Independent Living Center, **Belton**

Life/Run Center for Independent Living, **Lubbock**

Houston Center for Independent Living, **Houston**

Paso Del Norte Children's Development Center, **El Paso**

Project MEND, **San Antonio**

REACH of **Dallas**

RISE Center for Independent Living, **Beaumont**

Texas Technology Access Program at UT, **Austin**

VAIL – Valley Association for Independent Living, **McAllen**

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