

TTAP Newsletter
Volume 3

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From the Directors Desk
By Roger Levy, TTAP Director

With the publishing of this, our third newsletter, I am completing my first year as Director of TTAP. It has been fast paced and challenging. We have seen changes and, hopefully, you have seen expansion of AT opportunities in your community. The staff of the TTAP has come together with the sole purpose of expanding the opportunity for all persons with disabilities statewide to have better access to, and more opportunity to obtain, assistive technology. I am extremely appreciative of all the efforts and successes they have achieved.

I am pleased to announce that even more changes and expansion will be announced in the next issue of our newsletter. In the months to come, we will be formally announcing a partnership which will bring folks refurbished computers for a nominal cost. For individuals who can't afford to buy one outright, there will be a financial loan program to lend the money to them as well as offering other financial services. We will be offering a variety of freeware for folks to try out. Last but not least, our Web site will have a new look.

We appreciate all of the feedback we have received and look forward to hearing from you.

For further information, please contact TTAP at (512) 232-0751 or e-mail rogerlevy@mail.utexas.edu.

News from the Loan Library

New Products available:

- * SpeakQ voice recognition program
- * WordQ writing assistant/word expansion program
- * Readingpen advanced Edition

To try out these new devices, visit our Web site and complete a loan request application.

For further information, please contact the Device Loan Program at (512) 232-0753 or e-mail jcmorris1@mail.utexas.edu

Assistive Tech Q&A

By Darlene West, TTAP AT Specialist

Q. Is there a new version of Windows out?

A. Yes, Windows 7. For a comprehensive analogy of Windows 7 go to the following website: <http://therangerstation.blogspot.com/>

Article: A History of Mobility AT

By Darlene West, TTAP AT Specialist

Assistive Technology (AT) has been around since the first human used a stick to compensate for an injured limb. The first recorded AT showed up in 3500 B.C. in the Rig-Veda, an ancient sacred poem of India which included a written record of a prosthesis. Wheelchair technology has been around since at least 4000 B.C. (some scientist say 6000 B.C.). The first recorded image of combining wheels with furniture for mobility was found on a Chinese sarcophagus which dated to the 6th century. The first recorded self-propelled wheelchair was invented by a 22 year old paraplegic watchmaker, Stephen Farfler, in 1655. It had rotating handles and gears which, when turned, allowed the user to propel the chair independently.

Three Pictures: Wheelchair circa 525 BC, English Wheelchair circa 1655, Wheelchair circa 1700

During the 18th century, comfort for the person with a disability became more of an issue. Wheelchairs were invented with adjustable foot rests and reclining backs. Actually, the first "adjustable" wheelchair was made for King Phillip II of Spain in 1595. But, the design was not shared with the public. In 1700, King Louis XIV used a "roulette" for mobility following an operation. (It's good to be the king!) The wheelchair design that dominated the market in the 1800s was developed in Bath, England by John Dawson, "Wheelchair Maker" in 1783. In 1881, "push-rims" (smaller second rims) were added so the person could propel themselves and be more independent.

In the early 1900s, the first "lightweight wheelchair" was made from Indian reed. It weighed just 58 lbs. These were very common following the Civil War and WWI. In 1912, a 1 and 3/4 horsepower engine was attached to a 3-wheeled chair to create the first motorized wheelchair. These were so popular that wheelchair makers in London, England began to produce them commercially.

In 1932, Herbert Everest (an injured mining engineer) and Harold Jennings (a mechanical engineer) designed the first folding frame wheelchair. In the 1950s they developed the first transistor-controlled motors and adapted them to their wheelchair design.

In 1952, wheelchair sports took place for the first time in England. In 1964, the first Paralympic games were held in Tokyo, Japan. In 1975, paraplegic Bob Hall competed in the Boston Marathon.

In the 21st century, wheelchairs are available for a large range of uses. These include the simple folding wheelchair, sport and racing wheelchairs, stair climbing wheelchairs, climbing wheelchairs that do not require a ramp to enter or exit a vehicle, wheelchairs designed so the passenger can ride in a standing position, and many others.

Three Pictures: Racing type wheelchair, stair climbing wheelchair, and climbing wheelchair

In these first years of the 21st century, the technology and art of wheelchair manufacturing has come a long way in meeting the needs and fostering the independence of individuals using them. What's next? Perhaps a hover chair with built-in guidance system (GPS) and automatic temperature control?

Spotlight on TTAP Demo Centers

East Texas Center for Independent Living

ETCIL offers the following services and programs:

- * Independent Living Skills Training
- * Advocacy
- * Peer Mentoring
- * Information and Referral

Home by Choice - Assists Medicaid-eligible adults and children relocate from nursing facilities, like nursing homes and state operated facilities, into independent living

Deaf Services - Includes various communication tools for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing, including a Certified Sign Language Interpreting Service.

Social Security Representative Payee Program - A benefits program where ETCIL manages the finances for individuals who receive Social Security benefits.

Hearing Loss Resource Specialist Program - Assists individuals who have a hearing loss in obtaining services from service providers, accommodations by employers. Strives to remove communication barriers through education and advocacy.

ETCIL is located at:
4713 Troup Hwy.
Tyler, TX 75703

Contact ETCIL:
Local telephone: (903) 581-7542
Toll free long distance: (877) 581-7542
Local TTY: (903) 581-4615
Fax: (903) 581-8289

Tech Corner

WordQ is a writing program which works with any word processing software. State-of-the-art word prediction suggests words when you have trouble spelling or choosing the right word. A special text-reading mode helps you proofread. With Microsoft Word, WordPad, Notepad or Outlook, text can be highlighted and read aloud within that application.

SpeakQ is a voice recognition program which plugs in to WordQ.

WordQ/SpeakQ is for those who can type but who have trouble writing and reading. They can benefit from a combination of word prediction, speech output and speech input to generate text when stuck with spelling and word forms, identifying errors, proofreading and editing

For further information see the Quillsoft web site at: <http://www.wordq.com/>

One Picture: WordQ CD case

What's on TTAP for Fall

Closing The Gap 27th Annual Conference
October 15-17, 2009
(Preconference Workshops October 13-14, 2009)

Minneapolis, Minnesota
Contact: Closing The Gap
526 Main St, PO Box 68
Henderson, MN 56044
Tel: (507) 248-3294
FAX: (507) 248-3810
E-mail: info@closingthegap.com
www.closingthegap.com/conference

Eleventh International ACM SIGACCESS Conference on Computers and
Accessibility
October 26-28, 2009

Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
www.sigaccess.org/as

ATIA 2009 Chicago
October 29-31

Chicago, Illinois, USA
E-mail: [atia<at>atia.org](mailto:atia@atia.org)
www.atia.org

Just for Laughs

Picture of a pie chart with title Time spent authoring a report in Microsoft Word

Writing report 15%

Editing report 5%

Proofreading 5%

Fixing automatic formatting you didn't want in the first place 75%