**Dots and Dashes**

**November 5, 2024**

# **Mark Your Calendars for the Audio Description Gala!**

ACB’s [**2024 ACB Audio Description Awards Gala**](https://adawardsgala.org/) will air on Thursday, November 14 at 7:30 p.m. Eastern. The broadcast of the show will include captions, audio description, ASL interpretation, and Spanish dubbing.

Join hosts Marilee Talkington and Alie B. Gorrie as they welcome guests from the arts, entertainment, and sports worlds to celebrate accessible films, series, video games, and more. Awards will be presented in categories such as Innovation, Popular Entertainment, Live Events, Spanish Media (USA), and International. The winners of the Audio Description People’s Choice Awards will also be announced.

The Awards Gala will be available on multiple platforms:

* [ACB Media 1 (English)](https://www.acbmedia.org/home/streams/media1/) and [ACB Media 8 (Spanish)](https://www.acbmedia.org/home/streams/media8/)
* [ACB’s YouTube channel](https://www.youtube.com/@ACBnational)
* [ACB Community](https://www.acb.org/acb-community-events) watch party on Zoom and Clubhouse
* [ADAwardsGala.org](https://adawardsgala.org/)
* [Peacock](https://www.peacocktv.com/), courtesy NBCUniversal (subscription required)

Visit [ADAwardsGala.org](https://adawardsgala.org/) for more information.

# **Exercise Your Creativity and Help Make National Park Brochures Accessible**

Join the 2025 Descriptathon and help make national parks more accessible! ACB, the National Park Service, and UniDescription (UniD) are recruiting volunteers to create audio descriptions for selected national park brochures. Teams are composed of people who are sighted and people on the blindness spectrum, all of whom will collaborate to describe maps, paintings, and visual images within park brochures. All meetings are held remotely, so you might find yourself learning about a park in your state or across the continent.

The Descriptathon will be a full-day event, taking place February 25-27, 2025 (volunteers are expected to attend all three days). Participants will likely spend ten hours of prep time in the five weeks before the kick-off on February 25 (approximately two hours a week). During this prep time, team members will learn about audio description, how to use the UniD tool to describe their brochure, and get to know their teammates. Four to six hours might be needed to finalize the brochure description after the three-day event. Volunteers should have solid computer skills and be comfortable learning new technology.

If this sounds great and you're ready to commit and join a team, please complete this short online form: [**D11 Registration form**](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://mandrillapp.com/track/click/31066765/forms.office.com?p=eyJzIjoiSnJTdWtEaXFpTWhoU0VHNTkwRFN4R3Q0OVBrIiwidiI6MSwicCI6IntcInVcIjozMTA2Njc2NSxcInZcIjoxLFwidXJsXCI6XCJodHRwczpcXFwvXFxcL2Zvcm1zLm9mZmljZS5jb21cXFwvcGFnZXNcXFwvcmVzcG9uc2VwYWdlLmFzcHg_aWQ9dXJXVEJoaExlMDJUUWZNdlFBcFVsTzlLa1lOWjN4bER0ZGE5eHZqd3dWTlVRMFJaVGtwYVRrNDVRMUpLUWpGYVZrdzRUVVkzTWtRelR5NHUmcm91dGU9c2hvcnR1cmxcIixcImlkXCI6XCIyNjM2ZjhjYWQ4MDI0NWM2YTg4YmExNDBhYTUyZWFmNVwiLFwidXJsX2lkc1wiOltcIjY3MGQ0MjYwNGEwMjZkNzhjMWU5MWIzMjBjMzgzZTU1OGMxYjhjOTlcIl19In0__;!!PvDODwlR4mBZyAb0!S0Rwcjj3EuV0ZgiEtvPGqCvN7k_5NTfwHhpHi_3eD3SwKry55SZaPIvl97zomI6pi0zBMztub9AoDatOlgtoWoRk48gkBUiSJg$) or email [**brett.oppegaard@hawaii.edu**](mailto:brett.oppegaard@hawaii.edu).

# **Advocacy Update**

On this episode of the ACB Advocacy Update, Claire and Swatha preview the 4th annual audio description awards gala with ACB’s Audio Description Project Coordinator, Tabitha Kenlon and one of the hosts of the gala, Alie B. Gorrie. Listen as we tease all that is happening this year at the gala, including what it was like recording at 30 Rockefeller Center in New York City. Don’t forget to join us on November 14th at 7:30 p.m. Eastern on Peacock, [**adawardsgala.org**](http://adawardsgala.org/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR1js7PkXsyMpL3WwjUnQXbV55uKBk5rNYMo24Y1oazAUWFqgtZDqp8svkk_aem_Rjy-3hHdvmc1rE8hYGc3Mg), ACB Media, or on YouTube for the most glamorously inclusive award show of the year!

Click here to listen to the podcast: [**https://acb-advocacy-update.pinecast.co/**](https://acb-advocacy-update.pinecast.co/?fbclid=IwZXh0bgNhZW0CMTAAAR1js7PkXsyMpL3WwjUnQXbV55uKBk5rNYMo24Y1oazAUWFqgtZDqp8svkk_aem_Rjy-3hHdvmc1rE8hYGc3Mg).

# **Need a Portable Magnifier?**

ACB’s Lubbock thrift store received a donation of a ClearView Go Portable Magnifier, in its original box. Before we put it on sale to the general public, we thought we would give the ACB family a chance to purchase it. Here are the specifications: Full HD – 1080p with autofocus. Magnification range: Live image mode: 1.4x to 20x, 2.0x to 32x (default), or 3.5x to 60x. Additional magnification in captured image: 5.5x Video magnifier with large 15.6” screen that easily folds away. Read text and view objects up close, in the distance and view yourself. Dimensions (folded): Approximately 15.94 x 15.04 x 2.4 inches. Dimensions (in use): Approximately 15.75 x 15.04 x 22.2 inches. Lightweight: 10.36 lbs / 4.7 unique zoom and pan features 3 selectable magnification ranges to suit your eye condition. Read down pages without moving reading material thanks to the moveable camera. Connect to TV screen for even bigger image with HDMI. New, this item sells for over $3,700. We are asking $500 plus $41.25 for tax, and $20 for shipping. If you have specific questions about it, please email the store at [acblubbock@acb.org](mailto:acblubbock@acb.org) or call (806) 762-1453.

# **Holiday Auction Coming Up**

The 13th Annual ACB Media Holiday Auction is just around the corner. This year’s auction will be filled with lots of wonderful gifts for the holidays.  We will be showcasing homemade delicious food items, original crafts, jewelry, the latest technology and beautiful quilts. The auction will be on Sunday, December 1 at 6 p.m. Eastern, and there will be two days of the Sneak a Peek Appetizer Auction on Friday, November 29 and Saturday, November 30 to whet your appetite. Now is the time to sign up!

Here’s how to register:

1. You will need to log in to [members.acb.org](https://members.acb.org/).  If you haven’t already created an account, click on CREATE AN ACCOUNT, complete the registration form and when you are finished entering your information click on the ‘CREATE AN ACCOUNT’ button.
2. At the top of the next screen, there will be the Holiday Auction Registration link. Click on the link and then click on the Holiday Auction sign up button.
3. After signing up, you will receive an email with detailed Holiday Auction information. If you do not receive this email, check your junk/spam folder. If you still have not received the email, call (612) 332-3242.

**Sneak a Peek Auction guidelines:**

* Contact Leslie Spoone at (407) 678-4163 or email [**lesliespoone@cfl.rr.com**](mailto:lesliespoone@cfl.rr.com) with your bid. Please provide your name, phone number, email address, item number, and bid amount.
* Bids must be in $5 increments.
* The Sneak a Peek Auction information communicating the high bid on each item will be emailed out at 5 p.m., 8 p.m. and 9 a.m. Eastern time. After the close of each mini-auction, an email will be sent announcing who has won each item.
* Billing for both the Sneak a Peek and Holiday auction will take place starting on Monday, December 2 for all the winning purchases. The auction items need to be paid for by December 19.

# **Volunteer of the Month**

The Community Support Committee would like to congratulate Marci Duty, who was voted Volunteer of the Month for September. Thank you, Marci, for all you do for our ACB Community!

# **Election Coverage with Audio Description**

On CBS News: America Decides: Election, 2024election coverage will beairing from7 p.m. to 2 a.m. Eastern (4 p.m. to 11 p.m. Pacific) tonight, and it will feature live audio description for the first time.The live audio description will be provided on the Secondary Audio Programming (SAP) channel by Descriptive Video Works (DVW). Live audio description will only be available on the CBS Television Network feed and on CBS affiliates equipped for the service.

You can check with your local CBS affiliate to ensure that they will be passing through the audio description signal on the evening of November 5, 2024.

Please provide your feedback about the audio description experience. There is a lot of talking on election coverage, and will be much like Olympic coverage, with the describers trying their best to insert important information into the broadcast without speaking too much over the main television commentators. Send feedback to [**leadership@acblists.org**](mailto:leadership@acblists.org) or to [**kim.charlson@perkins.org**](mailto:kim.charlson@perkins.org).

# **FCC Seeks Comment on Customer Service Experience, Including Accessibility**

On October 23, the Federal Communications Commission launched a formal proceeding to review the quality of support that cable, broadband, satellite TV, and voice service providers give their customers. The Notice of Inquiry (NOI) seeks information on current customer service practices. It aims to empower consumers to easily cancel subscriptions, talk to live customer service representatives, easily consent to or decline automatic service renewals, and improve the accessibility of customer service engagement, among other things.

The Commission seeks to build a public record on the current state of customer support and ways that the FCC can further protect families and businesses that rely on these critical services.

Specifically, the Commission seeks comment on:

* **Simple Cancellation –** Providing more cancellation options and better disclosure of cancellation practices at the point of sale and on bills.
* **Automatic Renewal of Service –** Ensuring providers obtain explicit customer consent for broadband and voice service providers before automatically renewing a service and/or increasing prices after a trial or promotional period expires.
* **Access to Live Representatives –** Helping to avoid bouncing consumers from one call menu list to another in a time-consuming effort to obtain resolution.
* **Installation, Outage, and Service Calls –** Extending cable operator installation, outage, and service call rules to also apply to satellite TV, voice, and broadband services.
* **Individuals with Disabilities –** Improving the accessibility of customer service resources for individuals with disabilities.
* **Expanded Cable Customer Resources –** Updating current cable operator customer service requirements to reflect marketplace and technology changes.

Additionally, the NOI explores whether to harmonize the FCC’s existing cable operator customer service rules with customer service requirements for voice, broadband, and Direct Broadcast Satellite (a.k.a. satellite TV) consumers. The Notice is part of a broader government effort, “Time is Money,” to crack down on everyday headaches that waste our time and money.

For more information, visit [**https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-review-customer-support-offered-consumers**](https://www.fcc.gov/document/fcc-review-customer-support-offered-consumers).

# **GAO Seeking Input on Accessing Healthcare**

The General Services Administration (GAO) has developed a [survey](https://tinyurl.com/bdrew9j4) to obtain the lived experiences of people with disabilities regarding the barriers they've faced trying to access healthcare. The survey will be open until November 30, 2024.

Survey link: [**https://tinyurl.com/bdrew9j4**](https://tinyurl.com/bdrew9j4)

# **Black Hills Regional Ski for Light**

The Black Hills Regional Ski for Light event celebrated its 45th anniversary this past January. The 2025 trip will depart from Omaha on Saturday, January 18th, with several stops along I-80 to pick up attendees. We will spend the night at the Best Western in Chadron, NE, where we will gather for dinner and a brief meeting. On Sunday morning, we will head to Deadwood, aiming to arrive by 2 p.m. Our activities will be based in Deadwood, with skiing at Terry Peak and cross-country skiing and snowshoeing at The Meadows. We will return on Friday, January 24th.

The event offers a variety of activities, including downhill skiing, cross-country skiing, snowshoeing, and snowmobile rides. Terry Peak features adaptive equipment, such as the mountain man sled, which allows both blind and physically disabled individuals to experience the thrill of skiing with the help of a strong guide.

Evening events are packed with fun, including a slot machine contest, a fantastic barbecue buffet provided by the local community, karaoke, dances, bumper cars on ice, and a table game room. There is so much more to share, but instead, we have included three links for you to explore:

* Bus Across Nebraska, <https://busacrossneb.org/>: Our 501(c)(3) organization that handles logistics and transportation for the event.
* Black Hills Regional Ski for Light, <https://www.bhsfl.org/>: The official event website, where you can watch an informative video on the homepage.
* Facebook, <https://www.facebook.com/groups/BHSFL/>: The event's Facebook page, featuring many photos from the 2024 event.

If you have questions, contact Ward and Kathy Kinney at (402) 630-3640.

# **Survey on Navigation**

McCoy Adkins, a student at Butler Tech, is working on a project that focuses on navigation and blind people. He has created a survey regarding current navigation tools in place, as well as ideas for future designs. Now he needs your help. If you are interested in participating, you can take the survey at [**https://forms.gle/bzufvLJiwZTTHQYp7**](https://forms.gle/bzufvLJiwZTTHQYp7).

If you have any questions, send an email to McCoy at [**McCoy.Adkins42@gmail.com**](mailto:McCoy.Adkins42@gmail.com).

# **Try NOA at Vista Center**

Biped.ai invites you to a hands-on demo of NOA, the groundbreaking AI vest for blind mobility, at the Vista Center headquarters! This is your chance to experience cutting-edge autonomous driving technology on your shoulders.

What is NOA? It’s a vest with a U-shape form that comfortably rests on your shoulders around your neck, equipped with depth perception cameras on the left side with a 170° field of vision, a full-day lasting battery in the back, and a powerful computer with many buttons on the right side.

Using bone-conduction headphones, NOA alerts you of obstacles around with real-time spatial audio, guides your way with turn-by-turn direction, and describes your surroundings with outstanding precision powered by AI.

**Date: November 15th, 2024**

**Time: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Pacific**

**Place: Vista Center San Jose**

# **NASA Assistive Technologies Startup Summit**

Are you ready to transform lives with technology? The **NASA Assistive Technologies Startup Summit** offers a unique opportunity for forward-thinking entrepreneurs and innovators like you to leverage NASA’s groundbreaking innovations and build the future of assistive technology.

The summit will be held December 5th and 6th, 2024, at Carlyle Tower, Alexandria, VA. You’ll connect with industry leaders, discover cutting-edge innovations, and take the first steps in creating a technology-based business that makes a meaningful impact on people’s lives. Registration is free, but space is limited.

The deadline to register is **November 15th, 2024**. Don’t wait – secure your spot now and start making an impact. Register online at [**https://stemcommventures.com/registration/**](https://stemcommventures.com/registration/).