**Granite State Connection**

June, 2021

Editor: Sheryl Dutton

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**NFB Pledge**

I pledge to participate actively in the effort of the National Federation of the Blind to achieve equality opportunity, and security of the blind; to support the policies and programs of the Federation: and to abide by its constitution.

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**President’s Corner:**

Welcome to June and the warmer weather! Hopefully, each of you has begun to make plans to spend more time outside – at the lakes, at the beach, in your garden, on your patio, anywhere – except indoors and shut up.

You can see we have changed the name of the newsletter. With this wider distribution, we hope for wider participation and inputs from more of our members statewide.

So, get out and fire up those grills! It’s summertime, summertime, sum-sum-summertime!

Enjoy!

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**Affiliate News:**

The Membership Coins are in! Your president has received them and is distributing them, mostly in person. It will take a little time, but you will get what you deserve for your patience.

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**Register for the 2021 NFB National Convention:**

The 2021 National Federation of the Blind National Convention is July 6 through July 10. Registration is open and free. By registering, you will get access to the latest information as it is made available, the opportunity to win door prizes, and more! Register for the 2021 NFB National Convention online now, using the link at NFB.org. If any of you need help, contact your president, Deanna O’Brien at the email or phone at the bottom of the newsletter.

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**From the NFB National Office**

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**McDonald’s and National Federation of the Blind Collaborate on Self-service Kiosks**

Baltimore, Maryland (May 2021): The National Federation of the Blind, America’s civil rights organization of the blind, and McDonald’s USA announce a collaboration to make McDonald’s self-service kiosks in company-owned, U.S. restaurants even more accessible to customers who are blind. McDonald’s USA’s company-owned restaurants will implement these enhancements by December 31, 2021.

Using new and advanced technology, enhancements to existing accessibility features include screen-reading software, tactile keypads and the ability for customers to connect their headphones or ear buds to the kiosk and independently place their orders by responding to audio prompts.

“More accessible self-service kiosks are a win both for McDonald’s guests who are blind and for its company-owned restaurants, since they will allow us fully independent access to the menu and ordering options without assistance from restaurant employees or other patrons,” said Mark Riccobono, President of the National Federation of the Blind. “We commend McDonald’s for quickly working with us to implement these innovations and hope that McDonald’s leadership in the industry will serve as an example to encourage other restaurant brands to incorporate accessibility into their customer-service technology plans and specifications.”

The enhancements will be incorporated into 100 percent of existing kiosks in California and 25 percent of existing kiosks in each company-owned restaurant in other U.S. states. McDonald’s will also incorporate these upgrades into all kiosks that are installed in any U.S. restaurant after July 1, 2021, including new kiosks that suppliers are approved to sell to franchised restaurants.

McDonald’s and the National Federation of the Blind will continue to collaborate on training for restaurant staff in company-owned restaurants and other innovations impacting McDonald’s guests who are blind.

“At McDonald’s, inclusion means opening our doors to everyone, and finding ways to exceed customers’ unique needs,” Myrna Bell, McDonald’s Senior Director, Global Diversity, Equity and Inclusion and Strategic Engagement, said. “We are proud to partner with the National Federation of the Blind to offer innovative solutions for our customers and help make everyone’s McDonald’s experience even more accessible and enjoyable.”

McDonald’s kiosks currently include multiple accessibility features, including a reach mode for guests with reach limitations, a screen magnifier, ample clear floor space and a customer assistance call button designed to alert restaurant crew members that a guest may require assistance.

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**Management Improving Access to Health Benefits Information for Blind Employees**

Chicago (May 19, 2021): Under a consent decree entered in federal court in the Northern District of Illinois last week, the federal Office of Personnel Management (OPM) has agreed to take steps to ensure that health benefit information is accessible to blind federal employees, retirees, and other plan participants.

The consent decree resolves a lawsuit brought in 2019 by Jamal Mazrui, a retired blind federal employee, and the National Federation of the Blind, America’s civil rights organization of the blind.

Among other steps, OPM will ensure that health-benefit information on opm.gov is accessible and will notify all providers of federal employee health benefits that they must make their own federal employee benefits websites and mobile apps accessible or face potential consequences to their contracts.

“The federal government is probably the largest single employer of blind people, and all current and retired employees must have equal access to information about their health benefits in order to protect and provide for themselves and their families,” said Mark Riccobono, President of the National Federation of the Blind. “We expect the government to provide leadership in equal access. This resolution is a positive step in that direction and we are pleased that OPM has already taken many steps to ensure the blind have access to this critical information.”

“Everyone should be able to access their personal health insurance information privately and independently,” said Rachel M. Weisberg, attorney with Equip for Equality, the protection and advocacy system for the state of Illinois. “We applaud OPM’s commitment to ensuring that all carriers that provide health insurance coverage will be accessible to the blind community.”

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**Spotlight:**

This month’s spotlight is on Randi Wilson:

Hello, NFB world!  My name is Randi Wilson and I live in Brentwood, NH. I bravely stepped up to introduce myself to all of you for this June newsletter.

My husband and I have been married for forty-three years and together for 46. We met at the tender age of 15, married at eighteen. We have a son and a daughter. Oh, and five grandchildren.

My life previous to losing my vision was a very busy one. I loved to travel, I loved my job and I was fiercely independent. In my life previous to being legally blind, I was a veterinary technician for 20 plus years. My journey into being a visually impaired person started about 12 years ago. And what a journey it's been!

A couple of years ago, with the support of some good friends, I applied for and received my first guide dog - a smallish black lab named Dharma. She is a perfect fit! What a difference she has made in my life.

A couple of things that I learned along the way- it's okay to ask for help, it's okay to learn new things - I learned how to paint with acrylics during all of this, it's okay to have a bad day and one of my favorite things is don't sweat the petty stuff and don't pet the sweaty stuff!

Thanks for reading and see you all at the next meeting!

Randi Wilson and Dharma

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**Canine Corner** **(by Jody Ianuzzi):**

Have you ever been denied a ride by a taxi driver because you travel with a guide dog? This is not only a violation of New Hampshire statute 167D but it is also in violation of the ADA. I contacted the city clerk in Keene and I discovered that in New Hampshire taxi drivers have to get their licenses through the local city and town clerks. Our city clerk has promised that she will require all cabdrivers to sign a statement saying that they are aware they have to transport service dogs. She also wants people to let her know if they experience any problems.

Another difficulty is that many local police departments don’t know the details of the law and have often referred people to the Better Business Bureau. This is not the way it should be handled.

I contacted the New Hampshire Governor’s Commission on Disabilities and they are very interested in helping out with the situation. They also contacted Melissa Allman at the Seeing Eye. She is the access advocate. Together they have written an article that will be in a newsletter shared with all municipal employees.

Education is always the key in promoting access with our guide dogs. If you have any difficulties, I suggest you contact the Governor’s Commission on Disabilities to inform them of the problem.

Together we can change the situation for everyone.

 Jody

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**Dog Guide Users Meeting Notice (from Carol Holmes)**

The Dog Guide Users of NH will be having a general zoom meeting on Saturday, June 19th at 1:00. Our speaker will be Melissa Allman from the Seeing Eye.

She is a senior specialist, in advocacy and government relations.

She is also a lawyer. She will speak on some of the laws that affect our dog guides. One item will be the new regulations on airlines concerning service dogs. She will answer any questions you might have on the laws that concern our dogs and public access. The link to join this zoom meeting will be sent to you the day before the meeting. If you are not on our dog guide list and would like to join us, please let me know and I will send you the link to join. My email is cholmes33@comcast.net.

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**Calendar of Events (Future In Sight tech workshops and fun classes):**

Hi,

Here are the brand new fresh off the press technology workshops for June, which will all be held on Zoom. Please let me know what you’d like to sign up for by emailing me as soon as possible.  Feel free to share, as they are open to anyone who is blind or visually impaired in NH and beyond.

The new tech workshops are listed first.  Then as a refresher, I included the remaining activities and fitness options below that.

\*\*\*Again, please sign up by emailing me as soon as you can.  Thanks.

To sign up please email Stephanie Hurd at shurd@futureinsight.org

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**Tech workshops**

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\*Oodles of Google-Discover Google Apps; their benefits, accessibility, and navigation

June 2 10:30-12:30 EST

Ever wondered just what Google has to offer?  This workshop will take a look at some of the most used and beneficial apps, such as Google Docs, Google Drive, Gmail, Google Assistant, Google Duo, Google Photos, Meets, and Google Calendar.  Google apps are available across platform for Windows PC, Android, and iOS.

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\*Excel with Excel!

June 9th 10:30-12:30 EST

Developing Excel skills is a powerful way to create and analyze data. Whether you want to get a handle on the household budget, keep track of diet and exercise, or track trends. For a work assignment, Excel is accessible and a natural choice.  In this workshop, we will learn how to create, edit and navigate spread sheets from an up-to-date Windows 10 PC, crossing over from NVDA, Jaws, and Narrator.

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\*The Club House App for iOS

June 23 10:30-12:30 EST

This social media app is taking off for all users, and inclusively for people with vision loss. It’s a place to listen, learn, share and enjoy on a multitude of topics.  Some user experiences might be to learn about the stock market, enjoy a singing competition, chat about books, as well as blindness specific conversations. The options are numerous.  This workshop will take a look at how to receive an invite to join Club House, its lay out, benefits and what to be mindful of while using the app.

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\*Learning tools in Word

June 30 10:30-12:30 EST

We will dive in and learn skills to create and navigate documents.  We will cover keyboard shortcuts, options in the ribbons, editing, tables, headings, what can be accessed through the applications key, and so much more! This workshop will be shared from an up-to-date Windows 10 PC, crossing over from NVDA, Jaws, and Narrator.

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**Activities**

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\*Thursday, June 3

11:00-1:00 EST

Book Club Discussion

Zamba: The true story of the greatest lion that ever lived

Author: Helfer, Ralph

Annotation: Hollywood animal behaviorist fondly recalls his eighteen-year relationship with Zamba, an African lion that came to live on his California ranch in the mid-1950s. Helfer recounts adventures with Zamba, including movie productions, and he describes his development of affection training, which uses methods based on love instead of fear.

9 hours

Available on Talking Book/Bard DB67900

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\*Monday, June 7

11:00 AM – 12:30 PM EST

Monday Meet-Ups – Coffee & Conversation

Coffee and Conversation with Kaila

Meet me at the Virtual Diner for a fun get together. Feel free to bring a beverage of choice and be ready to chat about anything from access to menus, ordering online, and more regarding your restaurant experience.

Please sign up by emailing Stephanie Hurd

shurd@futureinsight.org with Monday Meet Ups in the subject line.

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\*Sunday, June 13

6:00 PM - 8:00 PM EST

Deep Sea Fishing

Eastman's Docks - Fishing Fleet, Seabrook, NH. Limited availability. First come, first serve. Information and sign-up forthcoming.

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\*Monday, June 14

11:00 AM – 12:30 PM EST

Summer Happenings in Your Community with Stephanie

Do you like to take part in summer activities, such as going to the lake or the beach, to the park or the pool, theater or outdoor dining? How do you discover what’s taking place, and how do you get there? Join us as we share tips and ideas of how to have some summer fun in our own communities or beyond.

Please sign up by emailing Stephanie Hurd

shurd@futureinsight.org with Monday Meet Ups in the subject line

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Tuesday, June 15

3:00 pm - 5:00 pm EST

Patriotic Crafting

Join us to make a Pony Bead American Flag that you can display for Independence Day.

\*Deadline for registration is June 1, 2021.

Cost: $10.00

Space is limited, please register today at the following link: <https://form.jotform.com/211154092140138>

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Wednesday, June 17

1:00-4:00 PM EST

Tech Training (for 55+): Computing with a Refreshable Braille Display

This workshop will focus on incorporating the use of refreshable braille displays, both corded and wireless. This training workshop will be on Zoom and is geared for individuals who are blind or visually impaired, beginner level with technology, and over the age of 55.

This workshop is organized in partnership with Sight Services for Independent Living (SSIL) with the state of New Hampshire. There will be a limited participants per workshop.

There are still openings, so sign up today!

To register, please contact Stephanie Hurd, Assistive Technology & Activity Specialist, and include “Tech Training” in the subject line: shurd@futureinsight.org

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\*Monday, June 28

11:00 AM – 12:30 PM EST

Monday Meet-Ups – Recipe Round Up

Recipe Round Up with Kaila

From no tech to high tech, we will cover different ways to organize and use your recipes.

Please sign up by emailing Stephanie Hurd

shurd@futureinsight.org with Monday Meet Ups in the subject line

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\*Thursday, June 17

11:00-1:00 EST

Decorate Your Own T-Shirt

Kick off the summer by decorating your own tactile T-shirt. A kit of supplies will be sent to each participant, as we use our creativity to bedazzle our shirts during this imaginative celebratory activity!

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Fit & Fabulous workout series

Workouts are every Friday at 10:30 AM EST through the end of June for an hour with professional instructors, who are great at describing the different movement and exercises.  They also provide any modifications should you need to sit instead of stand; or sit instead of being on the floor.  They make it happen for each person’s situation.

1st Friday of each month – Move and Groove with Barb

2nd Friday of each month- Gentle Bends with Rachel

3rd Friday of each month- Pilates with Laura

4th Friday of each month- yoga with Lauren

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**Calendar of Events (NFB national and affiliate):**

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CHAT NIGHT for NEW HAMPSHIRE AFFILIATE

Date: Sunday, June 6, 2021,

Time 7:00 PM

Location: Anywhere and Everywhere, virtual

Zoom information will be sent out

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National Federation of the Blind of New Hampshire, Monadnock Chapter Monthly Meeting

Date: Saturday, June 12, 2021,

Time 10:30 AM

Location: Anywhere and Everywhere, virtual

Zoom information will be provided to chapter members

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National Federation of the Blind of New Hampshire, Lakes Region Chapter Monthly Meeting

Date: Saturday, June 19, 2021,

Time 10:30 AM

Location: Anywhere and Everywhere, virtual

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/93669651975>

Meeting ID: 936 6965 1975

One tap mobile

+16468769923,,93669651975# US (New York

+13017158592,,93669651975# US (Washington DC)

+13126266799,,93669651975# US (Chicago)

Reminder Zoom information will be sent out.

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National Federation of the Blind of New Hampshire, Great Northwoods Chapter Monthly Meeting

Date: Wednesday, June 16, 2021.

Time 12:30 – 2:00

Unless otherwise notified.

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National Federation of the Blind National Convention

Dates: July 6 through July 10, 2021

Location: Anywhere and Everywhere, virtual

More details coming soon.

In order to fully participate (vote), you must be registered. Registration link is on the National Convention page of the NFB website. If you require assistance registering, please contact Deanna O’Brien, your President, at the number listed at the bottom of the newsletter.

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National Federation of the Blind of New Hampshire, Annual Convention

Date: September 25, 2021

Location: Anywhere and Everywhere, virtual

More details coming.

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**June Tech Tips:**

There is a new app just launched last month.

Fresh from the Apple App store, and it is gloriously free! It is called DeSpecular. It works similar to that of Tap Tap See, but with a very nice twist. Here is how it works. Once you have downloaded the app and registered, whenever you need a sighted boost, take a picture of the mystery object. Once the picture uploads to a sightling, you are given an option to either type a text message or record a message that lets them know what information you are requesting. Your request is sent to multiple volunteers at once. You will be notified how many volunteers are currently responding to your request.

Once you listen, or read the first response, the app asks you if more responses are needed. The responses are either by audio or test. Once you hear them or read the text, you can then rate the person on how helpful they were to you; 1 is very poor to 5 which is excellent.
You can also take as many pictures of the item as necessary in order to get the feedback you are desiring.

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**Top Apps to Help the Blind and Visually Impaired Navigate Better**

Courtesy of Windows community

From finding locations to reading signposts, these essential apps are a great way to help the visually impaired.

As technology becomes smarter, the ways in which it can make everyday life easier grow with it. Assisting the blind and visually impaired is of special interest to developers, especially in the mobile industry.

Below are the first 4 free apps for Android and iOS devices offering top tools for people with eyesight problems. They address a range of tasks, from finding locations and objects to reading signposts, and promote a high quality of life for everyone.

Next month, we will list the rest of the apps from the list provided.

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**1. Be My Eyes**

This service is a great success in the field of mobile apps for accessibility. The goal is simple: people help people. Be My Eyes connects users in need of guidance with ready and waiting sighted volunteers or specialized organizations that are in partnership with the app.

Before it launched in 2015, mobile users with visual disabilities would already video call friends and family for help with different tasks. The story and [**benefits of Be My Eyes**](https://www.makeuseof.com/be-my-eyes-and-seeing-ai-how-these-accessibility-apps-benefit-the-visually-disabled/) simply made an existing courtesy even more efficient.

**Download:** Be My Eyes for

[**Android**](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.bemyeyes.bemyeyes)

| [**iOS**](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/be-my-eyes/id905177575) (Free)

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**2. Lookout by Google**

If there’s a brand you can trust more than others to provide useful and reliable innovations, it’s Google. The Lookout app offers basic visual aids like spotting objects, reading text, scanning food barcodes, and even recognizing banknotes.

Unfortunately, no AI-based accessibility app is perfect quite yet. In this case, there are limits to what the software can identify and how much you can customize its performance, beyond choosing a different language or setting the perfect speech rate and pitch.

Nonetheless, Lookout by Google is one of the best apps of its kind on the Android market today. Just make sure you have a good internet connection and make the most of each new update.

**Download:** [**Lookout by Google**](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.google.android.apps.accessibility.reveal) for Android (Free)

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**3. Sullivan+**

If your main concern is scanning a road or room for obstacles or items of interest, Sullivan+ is another reliable app. Its AI software works well and fast in identifying objects, describing scenes, and reading text.

The extra tools on offer make it even more interesting. For example, you can scan for faces, check a car’s color, video call a contact, and read PDF files.

It can take a few tries to get accurate results, but Sullivan+ is definitely an app for the visually impaired worth getting used to. Its performance is already impressive, so it should only get better.

**Download:** Sullivan+ for [**Android**](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=tuat.kr.sullivan)

[**iOS**](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/sullivan/id1475001234) (Free)

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**4. Supersense**

Clearly, when it comes to supporting blind and visually impaired smartphone users with apps, free doesn’t mean useless. Supersense is one more example of great software that can boost your confidence when out and about, despite very minor flaws.

As long as you have a stable internet connection, its AI tools will constantly explore your surroundings or look for specific objects, from seats and kitchen appliances to animals and buildings.

It also has text scanning and voice command features. Most of this is free to use, but there are premium perks available like greater accuracy, more languages, and barcode scanning.

**Download:** Supersense for [**Android**](https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.mediate.supersense)

[**iOS**](https://apps.apple.com/us/app/supersense-ai-for-blind/id1484547836) (Free, in-app purchases available)

**Keep Exploring How Technology Improves Accessibility**

Considering how widespread mobile use is today, it’s no surprise that developers focus on enhancing smartphones and their relationship with users. Even though apps for the blind and visually impaired are still being perfected, the effort is a major stepping stone.

Yet the bigger picture is even more impressive. Accessibility is now a priority in almost every tech industry, so it’s worth branching out your research and discovering just how much people with disabilities can get into now.

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**Here’s a little bit of humor;**

Family Tree of Vincent Van Gogh.....
His dizzy aunt --------------------------------------Verti Gogh
The brother who ate prunes---------------------------Gotta Gogh
The brother who worked at a convenience store----- --Stop'N Gogh
The grandfather from Yugoslavia ---------------------U Gogh
His magician uncle ----------------------------------Where-diddy Gogh
His Mexican cousin ----------------------------------Amee Gogh
The Mexican cousin's American half-brother ----------Gring Gogh
The nephew who drove a stage coach ------------ -----Wells-far Gogh
The constipated uncle -------------------------------Can't Gogh
The ballroom dancing aunt ---------------------------Tang Gogh
The bird lover uncle --------------------------------Flamin Gogh
An aunt who taught positive thinking ----------------Way-to-Gogh
The little bouncy nephew ----------------------------Poe Gogh
A sister who loved disco -------------- -------------Go Gogh
The brother with low back pain-----------------------Lum Bay Gogh
And his niece who travels the country in an RV-------Winnie Bay Gogh
I saw you smiling. There ya Gogh.

**This Month’s Recipes**

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**Lemonade Pie**

**Ingredients:**

1 prepared pie shell (baked, graham cracker, shortbread – your choice)

6 oz frozen lemonade concentrate (thawed)

1 can (14 ounce) sweetened condensed milk

1 tub (8 ounce) frozen whipped topping (thawed)

8 ounces cream cheese, softened

**Directions:**

1. Mix lemonade concentrate, condensed milk and cream cheese until well blended.

2. Fold in whipped topping.

3. Spoon into pie shell.

4. Refrigerate until firm. Slice and enjoy!

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**Baked Potato Nachos (courtesy of Carolyn Corrigan)**

“Now most of us like French fried potatoes either cut like French fries or cut almost in rounds like potato chips. I mean like these potato nachos.”

This is recipe you will want try out and adjust to your tastes. There are also different ways to do it. We combined Carolyn’s recipe with some suggestions from the editorial board.

This can be a party appetizer or a main dish.

**INGREDIENTS**

1-2 Yukon Gold potatoes, sliced into rounds (Baby Reds also work). (We used a mandolin slicer and sliced to about 1/8 inch thick. Too thick and the potatoes take more time. Too thin and the potatoes overcook.)

Olive Oil

Sea Salt to taste

Garlic Powder to taste

2 cups of cheddar cheese, shredded

8 strips of bacon, roughly chopped or crumbled

3 tbsp chopped chives

**Directions**

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees F. Line a baking sheet with foil. (If you have some sight, you may want to stick the pan in the oven and preheat it to shorten the cooking time.)

2. Mix the olive oil, salt, garlic and sliced potatoes in a bowl until the potatoes are coated.

3. Place the potato rounds in a single layer on the pan (it's ok if they overlap slightly, but not too much).

4. Bake for about 15 minutes. Remove the pan and flip the potatoes. Return to the oven.

5. Continue cooking for 10-15 more minutes. Check for doneness.

6. At this point you can remove from the oven and sprinkle with cheese, bacon and chives. Return to the oven and bake for 5 minutes or until cheese is melted. Or, if you are tired of the oven, transfer the potatoes to a plate, add the toppings and microwave it for 30 seconds or until the cheese is melted.

A great thing to serve with your dish is some sour cream or chopped avocados.

Enjoy!

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**A Penny for Your Thoughts**

“We must be willing to fail and to appreciate the truth that often "Life is not a problem to be solved, but a mystery to be lived.”

**―** M. Scott Peck (author of The Road Less Travelled)

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Remember, we want your inputs!

Please send recipes, events, tech tips, jokes, questions, and your feedback.

Email the Editor, Sheryl Dutton at sheryldutton@comcast.net .

Phone Deanna O’Brien at 603-864-8847.

You can also email Deanna’s husband Dennis at dpobrien7920@msn.com .