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Adelmo Vigil

President, NFB of New Mexico

E-mail: nfbnewmexicopresident@gmail.com

(575) 921-5422

Tonia Trapp, Editor

E-mail: nfbnewmexicosecretary@gmail.com

(505) 856-5346

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# PREAMBLE

The National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico (NFBNM) is a 501(c)(3) consumer organization comprised of blind and sighted people committed to changing what it means to be blind. Though blindness is still all too often a tragedy to those who face it, we know from our own personal experience that with training and opportunity, it can be reduced to the level of a physical nuisance. We work to see that blind people receive services and training to which they are entitled and that parents of blind children receive the advice and support they need to help their youngsters grow up to be happy, productive adults. We believe that first-class citizenship means that people have both rights and responsibilities, and we are determined to see that blind people become first-class citizens of these United States, enjoying their rights and fulfilling their responsibilities. The most serious problems we face have less to do with our lack of vision than with discrimination based on the public’s ignorance and misinformation about blindness. Join us in educating New Mexicans about the abilities and aspirations of New Mexico’s blind citizens.

(Adapted from NFB of Ohio newsletter.)

# ELEVENTH ANNUAL DR. JACOB BOLOTIN AWARDS PRESENTED AT 2018 CONVENTION

(Note: This is a press release that came out a few months ago from the National Federation of the Blind in Baltimore, Maryland.)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Federation of the Blind Awards $50,000

Eleventh Annual Dr. Jacob Bolotin Awards Presented at 2018 Convention

Orlando, Florida (July 23, 2018): The National Federation of the Blind (NFB) has presented $50,000 in cash awards to individuals and organizations that are a positive force in the lives of blind people and whose work advances the ultimate goal of helping transform their dreams into reality. At the National Federation of the Blind annual convention in Orlando, the eleventh annual Dr. Jacob Bolotin Awards honored six innovators and advocates who are helping blind people live the lives they want. Awards of $5,000 were presented to each of the following individuals and organizations:

\* Carol Begay Green of Farmington, New Mexico, who developed a Braille code for the Navajo language and will use the funds to teach the code to blind students and others in the Navajo Nation.

\* Peggy Chong, also known as the blind history lady, who shares stories of notable blind individuals throughout history through her website, books, and articles, and who will use the funds to take research trips to complete more of these profiles.

\* IBUG (iOS Blind User group) of Houston, Texas, a network of volunteers using both in-person and virtual training methods to help blind people learn to use the iPhone and other technologies.

\* Ski for Light, an organization that connects the blind, sighted, and others with disabilities through annual cross-country skiing events.

\* The Tactile Map Automation Project (TMAP) of the Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired of San Francisco, developers of an automated process that can produce a tactile map of any neighborhood in the United states from an address provided by a user.

The top award of $25,000 was presented to Be My Eyes Inc., the Denmark-based developer of the Be My Eyes app, which connects blind people with sighted volunteers around the world via video conference to provide real-time visual assistance, such as reading labels or identifying colors.

Dr. Jacob W. Bolotin (1888-1924) was the world’s first physician who was blind from birth. He achieved that goal despite the tremendous challenges faced by blind people in his time. Not only did he realize his own dream, but he also went on to support and inspire many others.

“Dr. Jacob Bolotin was a pioneer who overcame low expectations and discrimination to become a renowned member of the medical profession without the benefit of the support services and civil rights protections available to blind people today,” said Mark Riccobono, President of the National Federation of the Blind. “The National Federation of the Blind is proud to honor the memory and spirit of Dr. Bolotin by recognizing and financially supporting those individuals and organizations who are doing exceptional work to help achieve the shared dream of Dr. Bolotin and the National Federation of the Blind, a society in which the blind, like all other Americans, can pursue their goals and live the lives they want.”

The Dr. Jacob Bolotin Awards Program is funded through the generosity of Dr. Bolotin’s nephew and niece-in-law, Alfred and Rosalind Perlman. The late Mrs. Perlman established the Alfred and Rosalind Perlman Trust to endow the awards. Income from the trust is distributed to the National Federation of the Blind and the Santa Barbara Foundation for the purpose of administering the Dr. Jacob Bolotin Awards Program. For more information about the Dr. Jacob Bolotin Awards Program, including more about this year’s winners, as well as eligibility criteria and application procedures, please visit www.nfb.org/bolotin.

# MY 2018 NATIONAL BRAILLE CHALLENGE EXPERIENCE

By Faith Switzer

In February I participated in the 2018 New Mexico Regional Braille Challenge in Alamogordo, NM. I placed first in my division. In May, I found out I made the National Braille Challenge in Los Angeles, California. I was very excited and nervous at the same time.

June rolled around and it was time to pack for our exciting trip. We left on a Wednesday night because my crazy mom wanted to drive all night so that my little sister Grace could sleep and wouldn’t annoy us the whole drive. We woke up in sunny California. We drove into Riverside, walked around an antique store, felt statues, and smelled flowers. Then we drove to In & Out Burger and ate lunch. This was my first experience eating there. It was yummy!

After that we drove to Anaheim and checked into our hotel room. Then we went for a walk through the Anaheim Garden Walk. There were lots of shops and artwork, but the artwork wasn’t tactile. My mom made my sister and I pose for countless pictures, and I thought it was annoying. We were finally able to go back to our hotel room and go swimming. This was the most fun part of the entire day.

On Friday morning we woke up early and made the 2-hour drive to the Santa Monica beach. We were able to walk in the ocean and build sandcastles. After we left the beach we went to the Santa Monica pier, where we walked and explored the vendors. I met a man who did a 3-D portrait of my face in clay.

After this we ate lunch and then headed to check into The University of Southern California’s campus. After we got the car parked, we met several people from the Braille Institute. They gave us the keys to a furnished two-bedroom undergraduate apartment. The apartment was just like our house. It had a living room, dining room, kitchen, and bathroom. Each room had two twin-size beds. My sister and I made our beds, and then it was time to attend a Meet and Greet where we played signature bingo and listened to a speech from a former Braille Challenge winner. After our Meet and Greet we drove to Universal Studios where we walked around the shops, and there were lots of lights that I could see. I also played in the water that shot water out of the ground.

The next morning I rode the bus to the opening ceremony where the marching band played. The band was fun to listen to. During opening ceremony we were all introduced to the audience via our mistress of ceremonies. After the opening ceremony we went to test until lunch. My first test was for spelling. It was kind of hard. For lunch we had sandwiches, chips and cookies and I had a sprite to drink. I learned that my sister went to child care and my parents attended a class. After lunch there was more testing till mid afternoon. We finally finished and I was relieved it was over.

We took a pleasant walk back to our apartment. We passed the Trojans practicing football on our way. We took the rest of the afternoon to relax, and then it was time to get ready. We all dressed up in our Sunday best.

We rode the bus to the banquet. Every Braille Challenge participant had a 3-D portrait made for them and they were all on display. I walked around feeling everyone’s portrait and reading a little bit about them. Then it was time to sit down and start the banquet. I was served some yummy chicken strips and french fries, and while we ate, we listened to various speeches and awards. I received a medal and a certificate for participating.

After the banquet we had a dance. It was lots of fun. My dad and sister danced with me. My sister and I were very tired at the end of our eventful day, so we rode the shuttle back to our apartment to get a good night sleep. The next morning we packed up and headed home.

# AIRA

By Jedi Moerke

Aira. The visual assistance app everyone’s talking about. Your blind besties and the local blindness agency experts have wide-ranging opinions on the subject; you’ve likely heard everything from “Aira’s the best thing since sliced bread” to “Yeah, not so much.” I, Jedi, am a Cane Travel Instructor at the Adult Orientation Center in Alamogordo. More important, I have been an Aira user, known as an Explorer, for a year and have experimented with Aira across a number of tasks, environments, and domains. I’m here to let you in on the good, the bad, and the tech specs of Aira.

Aira is a visual interpreter service, meaning that it provides instant access to visual information. Explorers are connected to agents (Aira interpreters) using either a smart phone camera or a set of smart glasses controlled by a phone app. There are several types of smart glasses to choose from; the customer service folks at Aira can give you more information about the glasses when you sign up. Don’t worry about your data usage: Aira provides a Wi-Fi connection through either a MiFi hotspot or a Samsung device, depending on which smart glasses you choose. However, your phone does use data when you call in using your phone’s camera.

Now, let’s cover what Aira can do. Aira is great for daily tasks where visual assistance is helpful such as reading complicated bits of mail, identifying and reading packages, labeling appliances and other goods, signing paperwork, and reading fancy restaurant menus. But Aira can also be great for more difficult or interesting tasks such as using the self-checkout at a grocery store, dealing with broken accessibility at an ATM, reading illustration-based instructions, locating and treating stains on clothes, shopping in-store or online, and searching for the right pictures for a PowerPoint presentation. It’s also great for recreational activities such as arts and crafts, playing arcade games, watching a ball game, and watching online videos. Aira is also a great concierge service. Agents can provide information to explorers such as the location and menu information for nearby restaurants, order an Uber or Lyft on the explorer’s behalf, help determine if certain clothes go together, and research information on the go. Agents can also provide directions based on your GPS location, Google Maps, and maps of various locations they find online. All this information is provided to you discretely and on your terms.

Let’s talk about what Aira is not. Aira is not a substitute for good blindness skills. I have encountered many situations where my skills have been a help to an agent. For example, I can non-visually locate and work with items that are difficult to see. My travel skills make working with an agent much more efficient since they only have to pay attention to select items rather than try to interpret the whole environment at a pace that allows full freedom of movement. Also, an agent’s descriptions sometimes take attention away from the environmental clues needed to stay safe. For that reason, agents will not tell an explorer when it is safe to cross a street and will not speak during the crossing. It is important to remember that technology does not always work as expected, so it is useful to have skill-based backups, as well as other technological tools such as SeeingAI, KNFB Reader, and Blindsquare.

Everyone has their Aira story: that moment that was made extra special by the presence of an Aira agent. Mine happened during the last holiday season. I have a friend who is also blind and who has a small son. His school put on a Christmas concert. I purchased a splitter so that we could both hear Aira’s description of the performance. My friend got to “see” her son onstage for the first time since becoming blind. He sang his little heart out on stage and wore a red nose during “Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer.” I was gratified to be able to give this gift to my friend, who is now an explorer.

We’ve touched on the good, the bad, and the tech specs of Aira. While Aira certainly provides a level of independence we’ve never experienced before, it is important to recognize that explorers work with agents as a team. Like with any team, active participation from all members improves a team’s overall effectiveness. To me, it comes down to what Dr. Jernigan said in his 1992 speech titled "The Nature of Independence.” The more options one has, the more choices one can make. The more choices one can make, the more independent they are. While Aira isn’t always the best tool for the job, I can say without reservation that I’m glad to be an Aira explorer. For more information about Aira and its services, visit www.aira.io or call 1-800-835-1934. Oh, and tell them Jedi sent you!

# ARTISTIC VISION WITHOUT VISION: BLIND ARTIST MAKES JEWELRY

By Stephen Montoya, Assistant Editor, Rio Rancho Observer

(Note: This is the text of an article from the Rio Rancho Observer dated August 11, 2018.)

CORRALES — Every artist has a signature that defines his or her vision and interpretation of the surrounding world. What makes jewelry maker Carlos Sanchez’s work unique is he has never really seen a single piece he has created. That’s right: Sanchez is blind, and although he doesn’t have the one thing many people would think is essential to be an artist, sight, he has pushed beyond normal conventions to become a success.

Sanchez is the founder of Legally Blind Artistry and member of the Galeria de Corrales at 3923 Corrales Road. Although he is always on the move to one event or another, Sanchez sat down with the Observer to talk about his life’s journey in a world many said would not be possible.

“My eyes weren’t the best when I was younger but I could see a bit more then,” Sanchez said. “I didn’t know I had a problem, because I wasn’t allowed to leave the yard and when it was dark, I was in bed.” Sanchez didn’t realize it at the time, but he was born with an undiagnosed degenerative eye disease that was passed on to him from his mother, who had the same symptoms. “We have RP (Retinitis Pigmentosa),” he said. “I wasn’t diagnosed until I was 33 because I kept complaining about how hard it was to drive.” Sanchez said his dad told him to get his eyes checked right away to see if his road problems stemmed from his vision or lack thereof. “The minute the eye doctor came back with the results, he looked at me and said I had no business behind the wheel of a car,” Sanchez said with a laugh. “Since then I have had to rely on others to get me around.”

Shortly after his eye diagnosis, Sanchez began a new chapter in his life by attending the school for the blind. “I had to relearn how to function on a daily basis at this point because we had to do everything blindfolded,” Sanchez said. A normal morning of blind school, he said, would begin with cane training, then Braille, a physical education class and then lunch. “After we were done with lunch, we had a brief period where we could take off our blindfolds but then we had to put them back on for practical everyday training,” he said.

Sanchez can see light and some shapes, but he cannot see detail, even with strong prescription glasses, he said. “I had to learn how to find the escalator at a mall, and navigate a crosswalk on a busy street all by myself to get used to my condition,” he said. “Every day it was a lesson on building skills to survive without sight.”

Sanchez’s next journey would take him in the unlikely direction of art after a teacher turned mentor took the time to teach him how to create art by touch. “My teacher, besides my mother and grandfather who were both artists, was Phil Loredo and he took the time to teach me how to feel art, not just with my hands but with my mind,” Sanchez said. Loredo would set up all of the tools Sanchez had to master in the same spots for him to find each time. “I began to get a rhythm and a routine,” he said. “When you are blind, routines are essential for you to find your way around. Phil was great about helping me gain my confidence and soon I was creating jewelry.”

Sanchez said he sold out at his first show in Albuquerque with orders for more jewelry from customers he had just met. “This was the biggest boost for me, because Phil, who was way better than me and my mentor, said he had never sold out with orders in all of his years as a jewelry maker,” Sanchez said humbly. “I knew right then I was on to something.”

Still reeling from his mother’s passing in March, Sanchez said he has a vision to start his own gallery in the small town of Rebera, N.M., just outside of Las Vegas. “It has been hard with my mother gone, but I know she is still with me and now I feel like I am ready to move in that direction,” he said. “I want a place where the blind can touch the items for sale and chronicle my family’s rich history. The blind can lead the blind, believe me.”

For more information on Legally Blind Artistry, go to Legallyblindartistry@gmail.com or call 771-1338.

# WEEPING WILLOW

By Carlos Sanchez

Author's Note: This poem was inspired by and written in honor of my Nino, "Manual" Leonard M. Baca. He was born January 18th, 1948 and passed away August 27th, 2018. He was a big inspiration towards my jewelry making and my Artistry.

Weeping Willow, weep with me

As I blow in the wind, I am the spirit in the tree

I am in the shape of a feather that you can't see,

Because don't you know I've been set free?

My roots are grounded, my pain is deep

But like a tree I stand on my own two feet

The roots are bigger then what you see,

I'm a bird that has been set free.

So take the time and fly With Me

I'm just like you because I can't be seen

In this life you were with me, just like your journey there fighting to see,

Just remember you can see further then what eyes can meet.

Always remember you have the vision to see,

So please take the time to remember me.

My mind let go for you to know I will always be perched on the tree,

But in the end I was never weak.

So take the time and fly With Me,

I let go long ago, and slowly you will see ...

Whatever happens was meant to be,

So take this time and mourn with me ...

And just remember I'm the spirit in the tree.

# SOME THINGS ARE WORTH PURSUING

By Nancy Burns

As the growth of the National Federation of the Blind continues, since being organized in 1940, the road has not always been smooth. The most pervasive problems have been the reluctance of the sighted public to accept the rights of blind citizens. Some of these problems have been monumental and some could be considered as minor skirmishes.

In recent years such issues as voting rights, student rights, and parental rights have been addressed by this organization. Most of these rights have been secured through legislation, both on the state and national level. Some issues such as the right of pedestrian safety are protected by the White Cane Law. But it becomes necessary from time to time to point this out to the general public.

This is an issue that has recently come to the attention of the West Mesa Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico. The New Mexico driver handbook gave token words dealing with the safety of blind and visually impaired pedestrians. In addition, an insulting and demeaning statement was included in the handbook advising drivers not to honk at blind pedestrians as it might frighten them. Once these issues were brought to the attention of the West Mesa Chapter, a connection was made with the deputy director of the Motor Vehicle Department. This connection between the local chapter and the MVD led to a positive conversation resulting in the removal of the offensive language. Further, the handbook acknowledges the existence of the New Mexico White Cane Law.

All of this is to say that we, as members of the largest organization of the blind, must remain eternally vigilant. The unfortunate truth is that as a minority, we the blind of New Mexico and throughout the country must not rest on our successes but must continue to stay in touch with local, state, and national policies. We must do this so that we may continue to live the life we want.

# THE ELTRINEX V12PRO TALKING DIGITAL RECORDER

By Curtis Chong

I have been using hand-held digital recorders of one form or another for more than twenty years. For the most part, I use these handy little devices to dictate short notes to myself when I need to quickly capture information such as a phone number, an email address, or the proper spelling of a person's name. Whenever I leave the house, I carry a digital recorder in my pocket. It is so convenient that it is hard to justify not carrying one with me wherever I go.

Recently, I had occasion to buy the Eltrinex V12Pro Talking Digital Recorder. While the price of $169.95 was a bit offputting, its voice guidance capability was incredibly appealing to me. Before the Eltrinex V12Pro, two things always troubled me about the commercial digital recorders on the market. First, most of the digital recorders I bought simply did not speak to me—quite literally. This meant that if I wanted to change a setting that was buried deep within a menu (for example, the quality of recording or the microphone sensitivity), I had to memorize a sequence of commands. More often than not, if I did not use the sequence very often, I found myself scrabbling to remember what to do, mostly at the least opportune time. Although I was happy when Olympus released its series of talking digital recorders, I was disappointed that a blind person still could not set the date and time without sighted help. Also, without sighted help, it was not possible to move or copy a recording from one folder to another.

Secondly, for most digital recorders, once a person finished a recording, the audio file could be played or deleted but never changed. Only certain Sony digital recorders (which did not have voice guidance) had the ability to add to an existing recording after it was finished.

Now consider the Eltrinex V12Pro. All menu items and settings are verbalized with its voice guidance system. You can even set the date and time and specify whether the time is specified with a 12-hour or a 24-hour clock. In addition, for each recording that is created, you can add information to the beginning of the recording (referred to as a label) or to the end of the recording (appending to the original recording). For each recording that you create, you can hear the file number in the folder where the recording is saved, how much time the recording takes, and how many more hours of recording time you have available. You can protect or unprotect each recording using speech output alone—no visual assistance required. The same is true if you want to know the charge in the battery. Even better, you can independently move or copy individual recordings from one folder to another.

There are a couple of less positive items that bear mentioning. First, the Eltrinex V12Pro takes about eight seconds to power up before you can actually start recording. Other recorders usually power up in less than five seconds.

Secondly, the Eltrinex seems not to work as well with external microphones as other recorders. You are better off using the two internal microphones to record a meeting (did I say that the Eltrinex always records in stereo?)

As of this writing, the Eltrinex V12Pro Talking Digital Recorder is priced at $169.95, and it is sold by LS&S Products. Refer to

www.lssproducts.com/product/Eltrinex-Talking-Digital-Voice-Recorder/voice-recorders-and-personal-organizers to learn more about the Eltrinex and to buy one for yourself. To read the text version of the user's manual, point your browser to

http://help.talking-recorder.com/en-text-manual.php.

# GOOD EATING

## NATHAN'S FAVORITE CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

By Tina and Nathan Hodgman

My son is 7 and he has autism, so he is a very picky eater. His favorite food in the whole world is chocolate chip cookies that we make together. So, I would like to share this very simple recipe, which is our variation on an old favorite.

2 eggs

1 cup butter

3/4 cups sugar

3/4 cups brown sugar

A splash of vanilla

3 pinches of salt

A sprinkle of baking soda

2 1/2 cups all purpose flour

12 oz. Chocolate chips

Preheat the oven to 375°F.

Do not use electric mixers!

First, fold a paper towel and lay it on the counter to crack eggs on. Tap the eggs to break them, counting 1, 2, and break on 3. Add eggs to bowl and whisk.

Scoop a level cup of butter into the bowl, then pour the sugar all over the butter, add vanilla for a count of 2 and stir it all up.

Now add the brown sugar and stir it in right away, so it can't get lumpy.

Hold out the littlest hand and sprinkle salt into the palm--not too much--and pour it in. Do the same thing with the baking soda. If there's any extra baking soda, sprinkle it on the carpet to vacuum up later. Stir the batter some more.

Add 2 level cups of flour, then everybody stirs together. It helps to have music playing because flour is tough to stir by hand. Add the last 1/2 cup of flour and let Mom finish stirring.

Pour in the chocolate chips (except one or two for eating).

Line baking sheets with parchment paper and drop the cookie dough into rows. Try to allow an inch between each one, or spread the dough in an even layer that covers the sheet.

Bake for 10-12 minutes, or until golden brown.

Enjoy with a glass of cold milk.

## BOW TIES WITH SAUSAGE, TOMATOES AND CREAM

By Alexia Harrison

Ready In: 30 minutes

Serves: 4

2 tablespoons olive oil

1 lb sweet Italian sausage, casings removed and crumbled

1/2 teaspoon dried red pepper flakes

1/2 cup diced onion

2 garlic cloves, minced

1 (15 ounce) can Italian plum tomatoes, coarsely chopped

1 (3 ounce) can black olives, sliced

1 1/2 cups whipping cream

1/2 teaspoon salt

12 ounces bow tie pasta

3 tablespoons minced fresh parsley

freshly grated parmesan cheese

Heat oil in heavy large skillet over medium heat. Add sausage and pepper flakes. Cook until sausage is no longer pink, stirring frequently, about 7 minutes.

Add onion and garlic to skillet and cook until onion is tender and sausage is light brown, stirring occasionally, about 7 minutes.

Add tomatoes, olives, cream, salt and parsley. Simmer until mixture thickens slightly, about 4 minutes.

Cook pasta in large pot of boiling salted water until just tender but still firm to bite, stirring occasionally to prevent sticking. Drain well.

Toss with mixture and sprinkle with parmesan.

## PUMPKIN MUFFINS

By Danielle Valdez

This is one of my favorite recipes for fall. I found this online a few years back, and I may have adapted it (I don’t remember). It seems to be a huge hit when I make them for functions.

1 3/4 cups all purpose flour

1 cup sugar

1/2 cup dark brown sugar

1 teaspoon baking soda

1/2 teaspoon salt

2 teaspoons cinnamon

1/4 teaspoon ground cloves

1/4 teaspoon nutmeg

2 eggs

1 (15 ounce) can pure pumpkin puree

1/2 cup coconut oil

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees and place 12 paper liners into each well of your standard-size muffin baking pan.

Measure out the flour, sugars, baking soda, salt and spices in a medium bowl and whisk together. Set aside.

In another bowl, whisk together the eggs, pumpkin puree, coconut oil and vanilla extract.

Pour the wet ingredients into the dry ingredients and stir together. Do not over-mix, just stir until everything is incorporated into the batter.

Scoop the batter into the 12 wells of the muffin pan. It is helpful to use a large scoop (like an ice cream scoop) to evenly distribute the batter into each well. They will be nearly full. This will help give your muffins a nice puffy dome.

Bake your muffins for 26-28 minutes or until a toothpick inserted into the center of a muffin comes out clean.

## CHICKEN AND SWEET POTATO STEW

By Danielle Valdez

This is another one of my favorite recipes for fall. It is a crock-pot recipe I got from a cookbook a few years back.

4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts

2 medium sweet potatoes

2 medium regular potatoes

4 carrots

1 can whole tomatoes

1 teaspoon  salt

1 teaspoon  paprika

1/2 teaspoon  pepper

1/8 teaspoon  cinnamon

1/8 teaspoon  nutmeg

1 cup water

1 cube chicken bullion

Cut chicken breasts into bite-size pieces. Put in crock-pot.

Peel and cube sweet potatoes and add to crock-pot.

Peel and cube potatoes and add to crock-pot.

Peel carrots. Cut into 1/2-inch pieces and add to crock-pot.

Add tomatoes to crock-pot 1 at a time, squishing in hand. Add remaining tomato juice.

Add spices, bullion and water.

Stir and cover.

Cook on low 6-8 hours, or on high 3-4 hours.

## GREEN CHILE PECAN CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES

By Nancy Burns

Since autumn in New Mexico features green chile, I thought it would be appropriate to submit a recipe using the traditional flavor. After moving to New Mexico, my husband encouraged me to use green chile in as many recipes as possible. I enjoy baking and also enjoy adding green chile to my favorite cookie recipe.

2 sticks butter softened

1 cup light brown sugar

3/4 cup white sugar

2 eggs beaten

1 tablespoon vanilla

2 1/2 cups flour

1/2 teaspoon  salt

1/2 teaspoon  baking soda

1/2 teaspoon  baking powder

4-6 tablespoons green chile powder (your choice)

3 cups semi-sweet chocolate chips

1 cup chopped pecans

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. Lightly grease baking sheet.

In medium bowl mix the flour, salt, baking soda, baking powder, and green chile powder. Set aside.

In large bowl combine sugars, butter, eggs, and vanilla and mix thoroughly. Add the bowl of dry ingredients gradually until well mixed. Add chocolate chips and pecans.

Drop batter on cookie sheet and bake 10-12 minutes. Remove from baking sheet while hot. Cool on rack.

Makes 3 dozen. Enjoy!

# USEFUL WEBSITES, APPS, AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS

505-243-8683

Bernalillo County Clerk. Call for early voting, voting locations and absentee voting. Also you can vote absentee online, which is now accessible. Let's all vote this election.

www.hollar.com

This is an online dollar store; most items range from $2 to $5 with free shipping if you buy $25.00 or more.

www.socialsecurity.gov/myaccount

Go here and set up your Social Security account online. This way you can review it regularly to see if it is accurate or if anyone has attempted to use your number. Social Security no longer sends annual updated statements to those under 60 years of age.

www.duckduckgo.com

This is a very useful search engine and has little to no advertisements, unlike Google, etc.

www.seeingai.com

This is an extraordinary free app from Microsoft and is downloadable from the   
Apple app store. It is not yet available for Android but is coming soon. You can complete multiple tasks with one app. It reads short and regular text, reads bar codes and lets you know the product, price, ingredients, etc., does facial recognition, reads currency, identifies colors, reads handwriting, describes the scene around you, and much more. Amazing!

# MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

Saturday, October 13: The West Mesa Chapter will meet from 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon at the Paradise Hills United Methodist Church, located at 4700 Paradise Blvd. NW.  Our topics this month will be Braille literacy and White Cane Safety Day.  We will also discuss future fundraising.  Come join us and bring a friend or family member, and enjoy a cup of coffee, a treat, and a lot of good company.

Wednesday, October 17: If you are interested in a personalized demonstration of several handheld magnification devices, come to the October Creating Options group from 10:00 a.m. to 12 noon at the New Mexico Commission for the Blind, 2200 Yale Blvd. SE in Albuquerque. For more details phone Sarah Villavicencio at 505 841-8844.

Saturday, October 20: NFBNM Albuquerque Chapter annual White Cane Banquet (see www.nfbnm.org for details and registration)

Friday, October 26: NFB of New Mexico Board Meeting, 7:00 PM, Homewood Suites, 1520 Sunport Pl. NE in Albuquerque

Saturday, October 27: NFB of New Mexico Leadership Training, Homewood Suites, 1520 Sunport Pl. NE in Albuquerque