

Blindness difficult but surmountable obstacle



Gary Le Gates, a blind 1976 University graduate, punches a braille label to identify his possessions.

By LUCY JORDAN
Collegian Staff Writer

At an amusement park, a young woman waving a cane enters the hall of mirrors. She disappears into the maze. Only now is it obvious: The woman is blind.

Kathy Grant, a 1976 political science graduate, emerges seconds later out of the exit, long before all the others.

Not all blind people have Kathy's daring or galloping gait, but many do move at a quick pace despite their handicap.

"Each person has their own preferences when walking," says Ninette Mellott (1976 University graduate in Russian).

"I have a great knack for getting in and out of cafeterias without spilling my food, but my fiance's specialty is galloping along the sidewalk.

Ninette's fiance, Gary Le Gates, recently completed graduate studies at the University and hopes to teach high school Latin. He, too, is blind. Gary, Kathy and Ninette were all blinded the same way.

Premature babies born in the post-WWII-period were blinded when a high concentration of oxygen was pumped into their incubators. The babies' eyes, positioned under the gas opening, were burned and formed scar tissue over the eye, blinding them for life.

"Being blind from birth has its ad-

vantages," Kathy notes; "You don't know what you're missing. We still feel like everybody else emotionally, intellectually and spiritually."

Professionally, blind people feel the same way; but they don't always get treated that way. Gary has been hunting for a job for months without success. Some prospective employers greet his application with great enthusiasm until they discover he is blind, Gary said.

"Then, they find reasons to cancel interviews," he said.

Less serious but still detrimental are some of the popular fallacies about the blind. A man once asked Gary to gauge his height and appearance by feeling the top of his head and touching his face. When Gary declined, he indignantly said, "But all blind people want to do that!"

"Presupposed ideas about the blind are a hassle because so many individuals think we're scary or need pity, instead of looking at us as people, like themselves, who need to maintain a certain amount of self respect, Ninette said. "Most want a chance to hold their heads up."

According to Charles Ness, assistant dean of University libraries, "There is a special collection of equipment at the library to assist blind students or anyone else who needs the opportunity to help themselves.

"We have taped textbooks, prepared by volunteers from the Faculty Women's

Club and even a talking calculator," Ness said. Persons wanting these materials should call Ness at 865-7246.

Taped transcripts of Playboy magazine and Readers' Digest are available, he said. The library has optical enlargers and large print books for the partially sighted. For the blind there are braille typewriters, braille notetakers, and books recorded on 8 r.p.m. records. Volunteers read textbooks onto tapes for students who inform them a term ahead of time, Ness said.

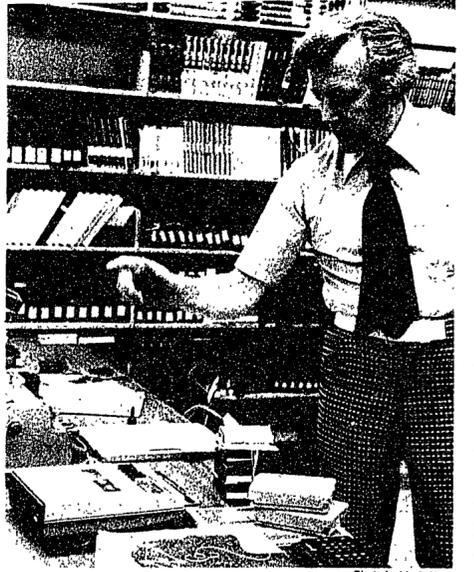
In the future Ness would like to see a closed circuit TV system for the partially blind so they may read better.

How do blind students compete in the academic world? Ninette uses a braille typewriter to transcribe her class notes. "Planning ahead is the key to a successful school career. To get my books taped I have to think a term in advance," Kathy said.

Another piece of equipment is the Opticon reading machine, which works by taking pictures of words, then shaping them into symbols on the hands by use of tiny electric shocks.

The Association towards Building a more Livable Environment for the Disabled (ABLED) has helped remove architectural barriers to the handicapped in State College. Tim Fitzgerald, ABLED founder, said.

"For a blind person, negotiating a revolving door is like dancing through an egg beater," Fitzgerald said.



Charles H. Ness, assistant dean of libraries, explains how to use equipment for the blind. All of the instruments on the table are available at Pattee.

Ways & Means finalizes energy levy proposals

WASHINGTON (AP)—The House Ways and Means Committee wrapped up work yesterday on President Carter's energy-tax program, including a tax on gas-guzzling cars, a levy to raise fuel prices, and rebates for every adult American.

Chairman Al Ullman said that in the long run the bill will meet the nation's requirements "without a jarring economic backlash."

Laurence Woodworth, Carter's chief tax advisor, said that "over-all we think it's a good job."

Woodworth did not seem concerned that the energy saving over the next eight years would be only 2.8 million barrels of oil per day, compared with the 4.7 million recommended by Carter. Some administration officials conceded privately that some industrial-conservation goals outlined by Carter were unrealistic.

Although the package of taxes and credits was changed considerably from what Carter recommended on April 20, both sides agree the thrust remains the same.

It includes a special tax credit of up to \$400 for persons who weatherize their homes; repeal of the tax deductions now allowed for state and

local gasoline taxes; and new taxes and credits designed to make it attractive for industries and power plants to switch from oil or gas to coal.

All that remains for the committee is a final formal vote on the tax provisions on July 13. A special House energy panel then will combine them with non-tax parts of the Carter program before sending the package to the full House. Then, the process will be repeated in the Senate.

Starting with 1979 models, buyers of new cars that get poor gas mileage would face a tax of \$339 or more. That would apply to cars getting between 14 and 15 miles per gallon. By 1985, the tax would range from \$397 for models getting 22.5 to 23.5 mpg to \$3,856 to those getting less than 12.5 mpg.

The portion of the package affecting most people is Carter's tax on crude oil, aimed at hiking the price of energy and thus forcing Americans to save.

This tax would be phased in over three years, starting next Jan. 1. The levy would be paid originally by refineries, but the tax would be passed along through all stages of the distribution chain, ultimately reaching consumers.

By 1980, when fully effective, the tax would be expected to raise the price of gasoline by three to five cents a gallon and of home-heating oil by three or four cents.

During the 3 1/2 years the tax would be in effect, it would

remove more than \$33 billion from consumers' hands. To prevent damage to the economy, Carter proposed — and the Ways and Means Committee agreed — to return the money to consumers.

Taxpayers would get the money through slightly reduced payroll withholding; others, such as welfare and Social Security recipients, would get a special check in the summer of 1979.

These rebates would go equally to adults regardless of their energy habits. The commuter who has to use 25 gallons of gasoline per week and heats with natural gas would get the same rebate as a person who owns no car and heats with coal.

The committee approved these \$22 payments only for 1978. However, it is generally expected that similar "rebates" will be approved later for 1979, 1980 and the first nine months of 1981.

Here are other major provisions approved by the committee: — A renter, homeowner or condominium dweller could cut his federal income taxes by up to \$400 by installing insulation, storm doors and windows and certain other energy-saving devices. The credit would be 20 per cent of up to the first \$2,000 of expenditures.

— Effective in 1978, taxpayers who itemize deductions could no longer write off state and local gasoline taxes.

— A tax credit of up to \$2,150 would be allowed for purchase of solar- and wind-powered equipment for the home.

— The current four-cent tax on a gallon of gasoline would be extended through 1985. Without further action, the tax would drop to 1.5 cents in 1978.

— The two-cent tax on fuel for motorboats would be raised to four cents a gallon.

Money for water projects approved

WASHINGTON (UPI) — The Senate, fearing a veto, stuck with a tenuous compromise yesterday and approved money for half of the water projects that President Carter has targeted for termination.

The Senate refused to approve amendments which would have added funds for six more projects and also rejected an amendment that would have killed funds for all but one project on the White

House "hit list."

Final approval will not come until after the Senate ends its July 4 recess and votes on a \$10.3 billion appropriations measure which also carries money for the Army Corps of Engineers, a number of independent agencies and commissions and two highly-controversial items — the Clinch River Breeder Reactor and the neutron bomb.

The Senate first rejected 73

to 19 amendment by Sen. Floyd Haskell, D-Colo., which would have provided full funding for five projects on the White House list of targets to be ended.

In a separate action, the Senate approved 69 to 23 an amendment by Sen. James Abourezk, D-S.D. — over the strong objections of his colleague Sen. George McGovern, D-S.D. — to remove the money for that project.

Then the Senate, by a 52-34 vote, rejected an amendment by Sen. Thomas McIntyre, D-N.H., which would have deleted funds for all but one of the projects on the "hit list" — the Auburn Dam in California.

The House previously had voted full funding for 17 of the 18 projects but by too narrow a margin to override a veto. By defeating the McIntyre amendment, the Senate assured Congressional ap-

proval of eight projects on the "hit list": Applegate Lake in Oregon, \$7.4 million; Atchafalaya River-Bayous in Louisiana, \$6.3 million; Cache Basin in Arkansas, \$2 million; Hillsdale Lake in Kansas, \$14 million; Richard B. Russell Dam in Georgia and South Carolina, \$21 million; Tallahala Creek in Mississippi, \$5 million; Columbia Dam in Tennessee, \$20 million; and Auburn Dam in California, \$39 million.

Carter 'eager' to talk with Soviet president

WASHINGTON (UPI) — Denying that he has soured U.S.-Soviet relations through his stress on human rights, President Carter said yesterday he would "welcome a chance this year" to talk things over with Soviet President Leonid Brezhnev.

Carter said he felt no "fear, frustration or concern" about relations with the Russians despite Moscow's hostile reaction to Carter's drumbeat of attention on human rights — and on how Russia treats dissenters.

Nor has the Russian reaction spilled over into efforts to build a safer world, Carter said. Far-reaching and difficult talks on banning nuclear tests, demilitarizing the Indian Ocean and cutting production of conventional weapons are

progressing smoothly, he said. Even if he had anticipated the depth of Moscow's reaction, Carter said, he would have gone ahead with the human rights campaign.

At a nationally televised news conference during which he announced his decision not to fund the B1 bomber, Carter declined to confirm he is arranging to meet with Brezhnev in Alaska in August. No time or site for a summit has been fixed, he said.

But he said he thought it would be useful "to get to know one another."

This made it seem likely that a meeting will occur — the first since 1974 between the newly elevated Brezhnev and an American president.

In Moscow, Tass said it was "the U.S. side" which first raised the question of a meeting between Brezhnev and "James Carter." The discussions are merely "preliminary," Tass said.

"I don't agree that there are growing difficulties between ourselves and the Soviet Union," Carter told a questioner at a news conference.

On other matters, Carter called for an end to U.S. statements which have stirred both sides in the Mideast, angering first one side, then another.

More talk on the specific elements of a possible peace agreement should await the arrival of Israeli Prime Minister Menahem Begin in three weeks, he said.

Police log

University police reported a weedeater was taken from Porter Road near Beaver Stadium Wednesday. Estimated value was \$250.

University police reported unknown persons broke into the vending machine in the lobby of Snyder Hall yesterday. Cash removed from the coin box was estimated at \$44.50.

Kelly Ruppel, 420 Bigler Hall, reported her room and car keys stolen Monday night. —by Wayne Johnson

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JEWELRY, was \$4-10. SALE 1/2 off
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HATS, straw & visors. were \$3-10. SALE 1/2 off
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