

Sr. Terri Nederhiser's Story
Submitted to the Iowa Department for the Blind
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The Iowa Department of the Blind does not throw you a rope when you are diagnosed with a condition that leads to loss of center or peripheral vision or total loss of vision. Instead they give you a sailboat that allows one to cruise through the world of vision. I came to Iowa to primarily care for my aging mother and found myself with wet macular degeneration that was progressing rather rapidly. Somehow I was put into contact with the Department of the Blind and they immediately began coming to my home to help me learn Braille. They provided me with a learning manual and all the supplies I needed to write in Braille. And when I asked if there was such a thing as the New Testament in Braille, they contacted the Iowa Lions Foundation and I received the New Revised Standard Version of the New Testament and the Psalms. I have these books to use as long as I wish. To reflect and ponder a passage it is much less distracting to read the passage by seeing or touching the words rather than by manipulating a cassette recorder.

With help from the Department of the Blind I have become computer literate using JAWS. Now I can even balance my financial reports with the bank statement because they provided me with instructional cassette tapes on how to use Excel. I was invited to join the Iowa Book Club for the Blind and that gave me the courage to accept an invitation to also join the AAUW book club. Most books chosen by the AAUW book club I have been able to get from the Iowa Library for the Blind.

I have friends in other states that have impaired vision but they have not had the opportunities I have had. They are not aware of all the help there is. If they lived in Iowa I believe they would be much more informed about the possibilities of cruising through the world of vision. All Iowans should be very proud of this jewel they have. I am very fortunate to have arrived back in Iowa when I did. And the Department of the Blind keeps challenging us. Not sure what these digital books are that one can download but here again the Department of the Blind gives one the opportunity to discover yet another way to cruise through the world of vision.

Thank you!

Sr. Terri Nederhiser