



Description equipment weren't working. Next, President of the ARTability Advisory Board arrived and the physical area was inaccessible for his needs. Shockingly, the Open Captioning system worked like a charm.

But all of this really was the perfect start to the summit. Because many of us who work in accessibility know that things don't always work the way they should and, despite our best efforts, we struggle to make simple things happen when it can feel like we are fighting for our patrons to achieve "equal access not special access".

And so on we went from there. With that kind of start it was almost a refreshing way to open up to each other and discuss the nitty gritty of what we face. And a spirit of sharing and helping each other was instantly achieved.

And our invited experts were there to give us new roads to follow and offer help where they can. Mollie Lakin-Hayes represented the Arizona Commission on the Arts as well as giving her perspective as an Audio Describer. Tony DiRienzi

gave invaluable leads from his viewpoint as Executive Director of the Statewide Independent Living Council. And Matt Lehrman, President of Alliance for Audience introduced us to an amazing tool for promotion – [www.showup.com](http://www.showup.com) – where discounted tickets are sold and where we can inform the community on accessible programming being offered.

By the end of two hours, we all came away feeling less isolated and more informed. And as one participant stated “I expected to learn something, but I didn’t expect to learn this much”.

And here’s to our Accessibility Coordinator, Eileen Bagnall, who was a huge resource and took these notes that we are devoting this issue of the newsletter to share with you here.

## **Audience Awareness and Generation**

### **Summit Notes**

#### **EQUAL ACCESS:**

Accessible performances need to make the Disability Community feel as if they are part of the experience, not “Special”.

### **ASL Performances:**

The Herberger Theatre Center now has a staff of ASL Ushers. This crew is ASL literate and at least two are scheduled for each ASL performance in the space. This provides a level of communication for the ASL audience not often seen in theatres.

### **Cancellation of ASL Service:**

If there are no users of the service do you cancel it? Arizona Theatre Company requires the signers to stay for the performance and sign. We have a section of seating reserved for ASL but understand that at times someone who utilizes the service may not sit in that section and/or “self-identify” as an ASL patron. It also serves as a marketing tool for audience members and helps in getting the word out.

Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts is moving to an on request situation for accessible services. With proper advance notice (2 weeks) they will provide audio description, ASL translation or captioning for audience members. The goal is to make their services more available to the Disability Community and not to second-guess what events they want services provided. It will also help by spending money on services used and give them more bang for their accessibility buck.

### **Marketing Resources:**

Arizona Commission on the Deaf and Hard of hearing lists events on their website: [azcdhh.org](http://azcdhh.org). Alliance for Audience will also lists accessible events on their site: [showup.com](http://showup.com). Their site lists all arts and cultural events in the Phoenix area and will soon be expanding to include Tucson and other parts of the state. Accessibility Services are listed for all events. There is an e-mail database being created to alert consumers to upcoming ASL Interpreted, Audio Described and Captioned events. Members can also

add or edit to their list of events. Annual membership is \$45.

Also check with other disability service organizations such as ABIL (A Bridge to Independent Living) at [www.abil.org](http://www.abil.org) and SILC (Statewide Independent Living Centers) at [www.azsilc.org](http://www.azsilc.org) to find out about listing opportunities in their newsletter or on their websites. Make sure that your accessible services are listed in your ads if at all possible.

### **Assisted Listening Devices:**

Ginny Clark-Wright from Self-Help for the Hard of Hearing offered the following pointers:

1. Make sure that all staff are trained on the use of the devices.
2. Not all Assisted listening Devices will work for all hearing disabilities.
3. Advertise the availability of the devices on your website, in the season brochure, in your program and in the theatre

Phoenix Theatre hands out the devices in the lobby at their Concierge Desk which increases the

visibility of them and creates an awareness of the service.

### **Volunteers:**

UA Presents has a staff of volunteers and paid ushers but reinforces the training throughout the season – not just at the beginning of the season.

The Herberger Theatre Center has a staff of Ambassador Ushers. Their job is to assist with accessibility services, greet signers and describers when they arrives and hand out Large Print Programs. HTC runs three theatres, has a staff of 650 volunteer ushers and in season will run up to twenty shows a week. They are the front line for accessible services but the rental group hires out the services.

### **Advertising:**

Shari Bombeck of Sun Sounds Arts encourages organizations to advertise where people get their info. Sun Sounds will run free PSA's about events –

you just need to get them the info in the form of a press release.

Scottsdale Center for the Performing Arts has now added the following tag line onto their press releases: "trouble hearing, trouble seeing, need special seating ... ". They are looking to target press with next season's flexible accessibility services. The info will now be on their web-site, in their brochure and on their rack cards.

**Facts:**

Tony DiRienzi from the Statewide Independent Living Center of Arizona offered the following facts for Maricopa County:

11,000 audio description users

18,000 Wheelchair users

Thousands of ASL individuals – the most integrated group of disabled individuals with the highest employment rate.

Up until 1960 there were laws that allowed for people with disabilities to be sterilized to prevent the

“spread of disability”. For this reason many people with disabilities don’t want to “self-identify “as having a disability. SILC has been addressing the cultural issues of the Disability Community.

Disability is cross generational and crosses all forms of disabilities. Younger PWD have had more services available in their lifetime and have less baggage about asking for the services.

Mainstreaming – disability community members are not all linked to social service agencies. You need to reach out to all members of the community to reinforce the message that accessibility is for everyone.

**New Ideas:**

Allan Prewitt of Phoenix Theatre is beginning curbside accessibility services this year. They will have a trained volunteer on for every performance to greet patrons at the curb and assist with getting them into the theatre.

Mollie Lakin-Hayes of the Arizona Commission on the Arts offers her staff the Accessibility Tip of the Week during staff meetings. She encourages her

staff to always use “People First Language” – not labeling a person by their disability. Contact her at 602-229-8220 to get a copy of Design for Accessibility. It’s a wonderful book that addresses accessibility in the arts.

Arizona Opera has an accessibility table in the lobby for all of its performances. They offer assisted listening devices, large print and Braille programs and audio description transmitter for AD performances. Pre-show they scroll their accessibility services on the Super Title screen.

### **To Increase Audiences:**

You need to build awareness from within your entire staff and with the community. Create a committee / task force with members of the disability committee. Form a plan of action to increase attendance. But most importantly the arts are an individual experience and that create a personal connection with your audience.

There are no right answers! Start with the phrase "May I help you?" and then follow up with "How?". A perfect example is the use of ASL Interpreters versus Oral Interpreters. Not all individuals who are deaf use ASL or can lip read. You need to be flexible in adapting to the request.

SILC and ABIL will be holding an Independent Living Summit in the beginning of August. Any and all promo materials for accessible events can be dropped off to the SILC offices or ARTability for distribution at this meeting. Contact Eileen or Rebecca at ARTability (602-757-8118/520-631-6253) or Tony at the SILC office (602-262-2900).

### **In Conclusion:**

We are just seeing and exploring the tip of the iceberg. As the population ages and medicine advances, different levels of ability will grow and change. It's time to come up with fresh ideas and to begin to move forward.

And let's keep the dialogue flowing.  
artabilityaz@hotmail.com is always a place to send  
an idea and get it to the right people. And here's to  
more summits in late 2005 and 2006!

## **ARTability Special Edition Summer** **Calendar**

**NOTE: PLEASE CALL EACH PRESENTER FOR  
SPECIFIC ACCESSIBILITY INFO.**

### **Phoenix Visual and Performing Arts**

**ACTOR'S THEATRE** Herberger 222 E. Monroe,  
Phoenix, AZ 85004 **602-253-6701X103**  
"Nickel and Dimed" (September 9<sup>th</sup> through 25<sup>th</sup>).

**ARIZONA MUSEUM FOR YOUTH** – 35 N. Robson  
St., Mesa, AZ 85201 **480-644-2468**  
Jeepers Creepers: Bugs in Art (through August 5<sup>th</sup>  
2005). Dreaming Tomorrow: The Art of Robert  
McCall (August 26<sup>th</sup> through January 1<sup>st</sup> '06)

**ASU ART MUSEUM 480-965-2787**

RAMPA: Signaling New Latin American Art Initiatives (through August 20<sup>th</sup>). Look Alikes: The Decal Plates of Howard Kotler (through August 27<sup>th</sup>). Fur, Feathers and Family: Our Relationship with Animals (through August 6<sup>th</sup>). Mark Newport: Super Heroics (through September 3<sup>rd</sup>).

**BEAD MUSEUM** – 5754 W. Glenn Dr., Glendale, AZ  
85301

**623-931-2737**

Permanent exhibits on display – Beads From Nature; The Language of Beads; Prayers Beads, Rosaries and Talismans; A Linc With The Ancients: A Selection of Pre-Colombian Beads and Artifacts.

**TEMPE CENTER FOR THE ARTS 480-967-2001**

Exhibits at spaces throughout Tempe. Call for information.

**HEARD MUSEUM 602-252-8848 (recorded info)**  
**602-252-8840 (Admin.)**

Several ongoing exhibits at two spaces. Call for information.

**HERBERGER THEATRE** 222 E. Monroe Phoenix, AZ  
85004

**602-254-7399**

“The Wonder Bread Years” (July 19<sup>th</sup> through August 28<sup>th</sup>), “Beauty & The Beast (July 20<sup>th</sup> through August 21<sup>st</sup>),

LUNCHTIME THEATRE at The HERBERGER – “Liza Live” (June 28<sup>th</sup> through July 7<sup>th</sup>), “Don Juan: Love After Death” (July 12<sup>th</sup> through 18<sup>th</sup>).

**GREAT ARIZONA PUPPET THEATRE** 302 W.

Latham St Phoenix, AZ 85003 **602-262-2050**

“Jack Rabbit and the Dessert Tortoise” (June 29<sup>th</sup> through July 10<sup>th</sup>)

**MESA ARTS CENTER** 1 East Main St., Mesa, AZ  
85211

**480-644-6500**

Exhibits by Joyce J. Scott (through August 21<sup>st</sup>), Michael Shaughnessy (through August 7<sup>th</sup>), Patricia Clark & Gene Cooper (through October 9<sup>th</sup>), Anna Skibsa (through October 9<sup>th</sup>).

“Inaugural Concert Starring Michael Crawford” (September 17<sup>th</sup>), “Quetzal” (September 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup>), “The Guys” (September 27<sup>th</sup> through October 1<sup>st</sup>).

**PHOENIX ART MUSEUM** 1625 N. Central Ave.

Phoenix, AZ 85004 **602-257-1880**

Dream On: Surrealism and Beyond (through October 3<sup>rd</sup>), Surrealism USA (through September 25<sup>th</sup>), Emilio Pucci (July 2<sup>nd</sup> through November 6<sup>th</sup>), Printed Anatomy: Medical Illustrations from Renaissance through Age of Reason (July 8<sup>th</sup> through September 4<sup>th</sup>), Yangtze Remembered (September 24<sup>th</sup> through January 1<sup>st</sup>).

**PUEBLO GRANDE MUSEUM** 4619 E. Washington

St. Phoenix, AZ 85034 **602-495-0901**

Ongoing exhibits - The Hohokam: The Land and The People, Doorways to The Past: Hohokum Houses. Journey To The Past: 75 Years at Pueblo Grande Museum (through October 30<sup>th</sup>).

### **Tucson Visual and Performing Arts**

**ARIZONA THEATRE COMPANY 330 S. Scott Ave  
Tucson, AZ  
520-622-2823**

"Pride and Prejudice" (September 10<sup>th</sup> through October 1<sup>st</sup>). Accessible Performances: Audio Description September 22<sup>nd</sup> & 28<sup>th</sup> at 2p, Open Captioning September 22<sup>nd</sup> at 2pm and ASL October 1<sup>st</sup> at 8pm.

**ARTS FOR ALL** 2520 N. Oracle Rd. Tucson, AZ  
85705

**520-622-4100/ 520-624-0303**

"Aladdin" (August 12<sup>th</sup> through 28<sup>th</sup>) All performances accessible.

**UA PRESENTS** 1020 E. University Blvd., Tucson, AZ  
85721

**520-621-3341**

"Roger Clyne & The Peacemakers" (September 24<sup>th</sup>).