CONNECT
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Editor's Desk

Dear friends,

Interesting events happening around ,doing their bit to make the world inclusive and give every human the same opportunities ,bring positive thoughts in my mind as Connect Special chugs on to the fourth year !!

Thank you friends, for being my support and encouraging me in doing my bit.

Happy Reading!!

Regards,

Bhavna Botta

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INDIAN CONGRESS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES-

A curtain raiser

Congress for Persons with Disabilities is a civil society movement initiated by Thomas Kraus in Berlin 22 years ago, in his own words, "We have a dream. We want to share this dream with you. The time for a positive change has come. You can drive this change. The wind of change first blew 22 years ago, when the idea to organize a Congress for Persons with Disabilities was first voiced in Berlin. Since then, thousands of people all over the world have attended congresses in Europe, South America and Asia. The congresses became the starting point for positive change in the lives of people with special needs in many countries.

The first global congress marks a very important step along the way. It's time to unite the forces of all people across the globe and remind the world of the values that really matter. It's time to demonstrate the potential of cooperation in a friendly and creative environment where diversity is respected and individual issues are not a barrier to understanding"

– Thomas Kraus, initiator of congresses of person with disabilities worldwide since 1998. (**www.socialartist.events**).

The need for the Indian Congress for Persons with Disabilities started when a delegation of spirited individuals consisting of Rabindran Isaac, Sumanth Iyengar, Micky Joseph, and Vinay were invited to the World Congress for Persons with Disabilities held in Ekaterinburg, in the summer of Russia, September 2017.

A ten-minute discussion with Thomas and the collective experience they had in Russia, inspired the delegation for a need to have such a movement in India.

What followed thereafter was **First Indian Congress for Persons with Disabilities** which was held at Karl Kubel Institute, Anaikatti, Coimbatore, India in collaboration with Amaze Charitable Trust & Nandhavanam on 1st March 2018 to 4th March 2018.

The foothills of Western Ghats witnessed the gathering of 75 delegates consisting of persons with disabilities, caretakers, and representatives of NGOs from all over the country.

A three-day Congress at Karl Kubel Institute in collaboration with Amaze Charitable Trust & Nandhavanam consisted of musical concerts, sessions, workshops, hikes, panel discussion, dances, singing and lot more.

All of them were conducted by Persons with Disabilities themselves. What was to be considered as a trial ended with a resounding success. Never before such an event captured the minds and imagination of persons with disabilities.

The First Congress had few unique moments that worth mentioning, like the session we had with Swarnalatha from Swarga Foundation. A true hero by all means. A panel discussion on relationships. And a Trek to Nilgiris Biosphere park. And there was a special bonding created over the dining table among the delegates.

The Congress helped us indulge in ourselves and not worry about our indifference and to appreciate each other for what we truly are. All the time we were interacting with a new person and realize that we share similar ideas and viewpoints. For us, it was an awakening to a new idea and set new goals

Inspired by the success , the 2nd Indian Congress for Persons with Disabilities is scheduled in Bengaluru on 29th, 30th April and 1st May 2019. **Shri Mahantesh G K - Founder, Managing Trustee, Samarthanam Trust for the Disabled**, is partnering with us to host the event at their campus in HSR Layout.Lots of hidden talent and fun to be showcased !! We are going forward keeping our mission of -

The main focus is on persons with disabilities themselves and their abilities.

· Platform to facilitate friendship and fellowship among the delegates attending the Congress from different parts of the country.

· To promote the role of persons with disabilities in creating an inclusive society.

· To create a matrix of support system, to nurture the inherent talents of persons with disabilities by partnering with representatives of Community.

· Spread awareness to community by voicing the true expectation and needs of persons with disabilities and their contributions to the society.

· To make the principles and values of the UN Convention on the rights of persons with disabilities visible and effective.

-- Manjunath Reddy,

Joint Secretary, Organizing Committee,

2nd Indian Congress for Persons with Disabilities.

2019 Reading Systems Roundup

Originally published at

Access and Inclusion through Technology

https://inclusivepublishing.org/news-and-events/news/2019-reading-systems-roundup/

Individuals and organizations need to choose reading systems that offer the accessibility features they need. Requirements vary between individuals, and might include support for a screen reader, the ability to change the visual presentation of the contents, a read aloud feature, a feature to enlarge images and so on. An updated roundup of popular EPUB reading apps. has been prepared which is based on detailed accessibility evaluations conducted using a protocol developed by and with people with print disabilities.

With the advent of digital publishing and eBooks, the opportunity now exists for people with reading disabilities to enjoy an unprecedented number of books and other publications. Publishers are increasingly adopting standards, techniques and tools to ensure that their titles are accessible.

A digital book is accessed using a reading app, which is used to open, read and navigate the content. It is important that individuals and organizations can choose reading systems that offer the accessibility features they need. The required features will vary between individuals, and might include support for a screen reader, the ability to change the visual presentation

of the contents, a read aloud feature, a feature to enlarge images and so on.

Here we present a roundup of popular EPUB reading apps. The summary reviews are based on detailed accessibility evaluations conducted using a protocol developed by and with people with print disabilities. Here's our round up of popular reading apps:

Amazon Kindle

Books from the world's largest eBook store are read using the Kindle app. The app is available on most computer and smartphone platforms, including Amazon's own Fire Tablets. The Kindle app has been evaluated by our testers on iOS, Android, Windows and Fire tablets.

The voices on the Fire tablets are high quality and natural sounding. Your own documents can be easily added to the app by sending them by email. Support for visual adjustments is good on all platforms. There are useful features in the app such as "word wise" that explains the more challenging words in the book. On some books it is possible to combine the eBook and audio book for a synchronized reading experience (purchases necessary). Titles in the Kindle eBook store indicate whether they are screen reader supported or not.

Image descriptions are not announced using Voiceover or Talkback. There is no built-in read aloud feature in the app on Android, and the Speak Screen feature on iOS does not provide visual emphasis of the words being spoken.

Digital Editions

Adobe's reading software is widely used for reading pdf files. It is available on most phone and computers platforms. It is often recommended by public and academic libraries because the titles loaned from their systems use the Adobe copy protection.

 it is convenient to have pdf and EPUB reading in the same app.

This reading system is difficult to recommend. Our evaluators found Digital Editions on Windows could be unstable and struggled with larger books. Reliability issues are also reported on iOS and Android. Navigating the table of contents with a screen reader was unsatisfactory. There is no function to change the screen colors or font, and no built-in read aloud feature, limiting the appeal to people with learning differences such as dyslexia.

Dolphin EasyReader

This specialist reading app for Windows, Android and iOS is designed to provide many features required for people with reading disabilities,including screen reader support, several options for visual adjustments and read aloud. The app can be used to open titles on your device The mispronunciation of words by the read aloud feature can be corrected.

Edge

The web browser built into Windows 10 is an eBook reader too! Books from the Microsoft bookstore can be read in the app.Books can be opened straight from a website or Windows Explorer.

The implementation of Read Aloud with visual highlighting was praised. The visual adjustments include a wide choice of background colors, the ability to increase the letter spacing, and showing parts of speech in different colors, which is appreciated by some readers with reading difficulties.

iBooks

Apple's bookstore uses the iBooks app. If you have an iPhone, iPad or Mac it will already be installed.

The visual display of the title can be adjusted to suit the reader's needs. Some images enlarge to full screen when selected, useful on a smaller screen and to people with low vision.

 iBooks is not available on Android or Windows.

RedShelf

This cloud based eReader is access through your preferred browser on your computer, tablet or phone. It can be used to read textbooks and novels and consumer titles purchased from the RedShelf store. No software installation is needed, just point your web browser at the RedShelf site. Word definitions are one step away, and it is easy to add highlights and create flash cards which are instantly stored in the cloud.

Simply Reading

This Android app can be used by anyone, but special attention has been paid to creating an easy to learn interface for a new screen reader user. It can be used to directly connect to Bookshare, Sugamya Pustakalaya, Gutenberg and Dropbox.support for Braille displays (including the Orbit Reader) using Brailleback. Functions can be performed with easy gestures as an alternative to navigating the menus.

Voice Dream Reader

This specialist reading app for iOS and Android is designed to provide many features enjoyed by people with reading disabilities. Many useful features are provided for people with print disabilities, including several options for visual adjustments and read aloud, and screen reader support on iOS.