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OF THE BLIND
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NEWSLINE

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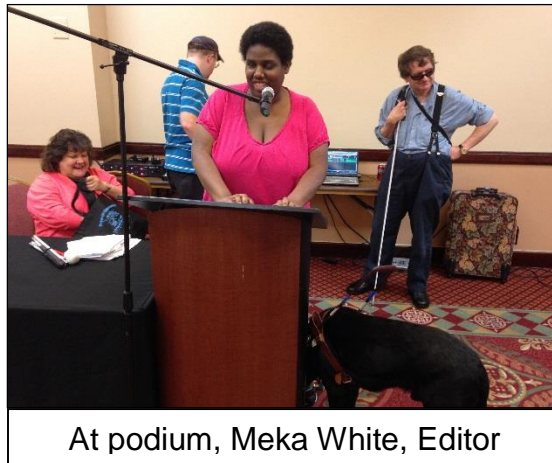
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To remember the Washington Council of the Blind in your last Will and Testament, you may include a special paragraph for that purpose in your Will or Trust. If your wishes are complex, please contact the WCB at 800-255-1147.

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From the President's Desk

By Cindy Van Winkle, WCB President

"The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity." — Amelia Earhart

On July 26, 1990, President George W. Bush signed into law the American's with Disabilities Act. This did not just happen! It took many years of drafting and redrafting language, discussions between people with disabilities and legislators, attorneys and other citizens. It took tenacity to persevere, but the true guts and glory was all in the decision to take action, to not quit, despite setbacks and the misgivings of others, to stay the course and see the mission through until the ADA was signed into law! This year we celebrate the 25th anniversary of this monumental signing. I was proud to attend the Seattle area celebration, and you can read more about this local event commemorating the ADA in Sue Ammeter's accounting in her article "Happy Birthday ADA" found in this issue of Newslines.

"There are two primary choices in life: to accept conditions as they exist, or accept the responsibility for changing them." – Dr. Denis Waitley

How many times do we feel stifled by our circumstances? How often do we allow others to take ownership of our future? It may be found at a public place, an employer, a friend, or sadly even someone in our own family, who creates a stumbling block for us. But we must somehow rise above those circumstances. We must make that difficult decision to act! And then exercise a tenacious spirit. Only then can we create change in our lives, whether

personal or for the greater good of a community. The responsibility for change belongs to each one of us!

"If you can dream it, you can do it." - Walt Disney

What do you dream about? Having a family? Going to school? Getting a job? Learning a new skill? Going to Disneyland? Or maybe it's getting more involved in the Washington Council of the Blind! Well, why not do it?

In fact, at this year's WCB State Convention, we will be electing a new President, First Vice President, Treasurer and three director positions. Depending on the outcome of the elections of these positions, it is very possible other offices could become open as well. We will also be electing the Alternate Delegate to represent WCB at the 2016 ACB Conference and Convention in Minneapolis (attendance at a previous ACB Conference and Convention is required). This year's Nominating Committee is chaired by Lori Allison and serving along with her is Julie Brannon and Steve Vandecar. If you are interested in being considered for one of these open positions, email a letter of intent summarizing your activities in WCB, your local chapter and community, as well as any other information that would qualify you for the position you seek so the committee can get to know you. Send to lori.allison2002@gmail.com no later than October 15, 2015.

"I believe that every right implies a responsibility; every opportunity, an obligation; every possession, a duty." -- John D. Rockefeller, Jr.

Each of us as a member of the Washington Council of the Blind has a responsibility to do what we can to ensure we elect a strong

and capable leadership, who will represent and lead our organization well. If you are able to attend convention, you will have the opportunity, and therefore, I believe an obligation, to vote in these elections at our business meeting. This is also when we consider amendments to our constitution and bylaws, resolutions and an annual budget, all important decisions the membership in attendance will make which will prioritize the activities of WCB in 2016.

By the time you read this, the bulletin will have been emailed out to our membership, it will be available on “the Buzz” by calling 800-255-1147 and pressing 6, and it and the registration form will be up on our website at www.wcbinfo.org for your attention. Vendor information will also be on our website, and the program will be there in early October all in an effort to help you make your decision to join us at the Seattle Airport Marriott!

So now it’s time to take action! Be an involved member and help set the stage for the future of WCB!

Five Little Words

By Holly Turri

On the way to the 3rd quarter WCB Board Meeting, a simple event occurred which changed my world. I hope it will do the same for you.

After alighting from the Access Bus, I automatically thanked the driver, told him how much I enjoyed the ride, and wished him a nice day. He said in very broken English, “No one hardly say this to me. When they do, I love my job.”

Although I thoroughly enjoy my life, here in Washington State, I was raised southern. Saying this stuff was drummed into my head from infancy.

How sad it is that all of us don't have the time to say the five beautiful words which make the world go round more smoothly. Too often we think these words are "mine", "right now", "no!" and "you need" Yes using these and taking these actions will get what we want, but at what cost?

As my 26 year old daughter said to me, "Courtesy is free, but the dividends are incalculable." Too bad we all are too busy to remember this.

What are my five little words that make the world run better and lift us over the potholes of life? They are: "Please", "Thank you", and "I appreciate".

Since my Saturday encounter, I am trying to use these words more liberally. I hope to see how much happier I am and even more importantly, the person to whom I say these may appear to feel. Why not join me? Passing it forward is more than a monetary gift.

Change Don't Come Easy
By Meka White

Transition is nothing new to me. Both of my parents were in the army, so I have done my fair share of traveling. I was born in Texas, started school in Germany, spent some rather formative elementary school years in Maryland, and then moved to Georgia in 1990, where I received the bulk of my education. My mom is

originally from the state of peach orchards and red clay roads, and I have more family than I can shake a stick at in what feels like every county. There's even a recording of me doing an interview in a home-grown southern drawl that makes me cringe, just a little.

How did I end up in Washington? Well, it all started with the Internet...which is a story for a different time, but come to hospitality and I'll tell you all about it. The short, but very significant, version is that I met Cindy online and was in desperate need of a change. She made an offer that I couldn't refuse, and it opened the door for me to take a step toward independence. I had a studio apartment at the time and I left everything behind: family, furniture, and all. I took a bus from Georgia to Washington State, which has pretty much discouraged me from ever wanting to take another long road trip again. But I moved up here, jumped right in to a local chapter, and learned everything I could about WCB. There were growing pains and mistakes, but what would life be like if you had nothing to learn from? I lived in Bremerton for almost fourteen years, and I honestly had no intentions of ever leaving.

In November, I took a job that would require me to relocate. Another member of WCB took me in and helped me acclimate. I surfed on her couch for about three months while working, going back to Bremerton on the weekends, and looking for a place to live. In my mind, I believed that this was it. I had a job, I was going to keep it forever, and live in my current apartment for about as long.

In many ways, the move from Bremerton to Federal Way was much harder than moving 3000 miles from home. Back then, I had all of the optimism and none of the common sense, so I was pretty fearless about the whole thing. I was willing to leave everything for parts unknown without a thought about consequences. I just knew what I wanted to do and I did it. This time around, the move was

harder. My friends were in Bremerton. My support system that I could call or lean on was back there. I was really sick and the 20-year-old's solution of 'well, it'll all work itself out, just wait and see', is not something that I have managed to believe as easily.

Two months after I moved for the call center job, I realized that I absolutely hated it. I didn't want to do it anymore and I wanted something different, but wasn't willing to leave a job without having another one. Six months in, I applied to the Lighthouse and interviewed at the end of one week and found out that I had the job at the beginning of another, and proceeded to be a nervous wreck.

How would I do anything? I hated shop class in high school, knew nothing about doing handiwork around the house, and my visions of using tools usually ended with an imaginary trip to the hospital and a viral video on YouTube. But you know what? I was determined to learn everything, no matter how freaked out I was about it. I have de burred airplane parts, learned to use a hand shear and punch press, and realized that there are many, many ways to package an item. I'm happy and feel valued, and the transition has been well worth it.

Fourteen-and-a-half years later, my mom is visiting me from Georgia and it has been a real treat having her here. She is seeing the independent woman that I have become. She's met my friends and now considers them her family. I'm working, I'm happy, and while life isn't perfect, I am content.

There is a song, 'Change Don't Come Easy'. The scariest part is making that first step. It takes courage, determination, and sometimes, tears. But it can be done!



Meka and her mom, Betty.

Change don't come easy, but if it did, the rewards wouldn't be as great!

Star Struck in Dallas!

By Danette Dixon, WCB First Timer

WOW...What a week in Dallas, where the stars shine bright! My week started off with an orientation to the hotel. OHHH...Boy, did I ever need to be orientated. This is a huge hotel and very confusing. My tour around was done by a trainer from Leader Dog "David". He helped me a ton, those first few days. More about how much he helped later; read on. I love that everyone was willing to help each other. It did not matter which Guide Dog school or even which state you were from, all helped each other.

Monday at General Session, we heard from Shubham Banerjee, who developed a BRAILLE EMBOSSER first out of Legos. This 13-year-old wants to make this smaller and affordable for the blind. Loved his enthusiasm!

I enjoyed hearing from Regal Theaters. More movies are coming out in audio description. I have seen a few movies in audio description and now do not want to see a movie without. Thank you Regal.

Also, Comcast has closed captioning, video description and voice guidance remotes. I'm hoping more cable companies will follow Comcast.

On Thursday we heard from the Author, Chen Guangcheng, who wrote "The Barefoot Lawyer" through his interpreter. He told his

story of advocacy, imprisonment, and escape to freedom from China. Yes, I will be getting this book on BARD.

Now about Guide Dog Users Inc. (GDUI) Hearing from 11 different Guide Dog Schools, I never thought there was that many different schools. Texas has its own Guide Dog School for people just in Texas. One day we learned about the old harnesses compared to the now day harnesses. They passed around all the different ones. I cannot remember how many, but there were a lot. At first they were very heavy. Lots of improvements have happened since the beginning.

At the GDUI reception, 11 different schools were represented. Many trainers and friends were there. After everyone was introduced, we had a chance to honor all schools. Beforehand, we wrote a small message in a book, and had the chance to give it to each school. At this reception, I left Velma in my room because she was limping and moving very slow. After visiting for a while, I found David again, who walked me back to my room. David was amazing; he looked at her feet, hips, went for a short walk, and watched us work a little. The next day David stopped us to see how Velma was doing and, of course, she was doing awesome. I think she just needed to rest, since we walked five miles that day.

At the GDUI Suite, they sold dog toys: towels for a wet dog, portable food bowls, and much more. This was a place where you and your dog could come and relax; get a massage for your dog, or a Vet Technician could look at her.

I took a class to learn how to give Velma a massage. I could tell she liked it because she was making her groaning noises. Since

Velma is getting older, it would be a chance to feel lumps or tender spots on her.

Cindy and I took the "ONE TOUCH SELF DEFENSE" class together, so Cindy found out how strong I am. Sorry Cindy, if I left bruises.

A few amendments I was really interested in were: A Talking Microwave and more cable companies to follow Comcast.

Exhibits: at the ACB store I got a sports bottle, a backpack and at Maxi Aids, I got a new watch. I cannot remember from where but I got Velma more stuff. So most of my money went to my little ROCK STAR "Velma".

The banquet was very nice. I sat with my WCB family. The guest speaker was Christine Ha, who won the 3rd season of Master Chef. She has a book out and is doing a show called, "The 4 Senses", in Canada.

My WCB family at convention made sure I had lunch or dinner with someone. They helped me feel honored and special at convention. I liked being able to talk to folks back home every night. Lots of support. I had a wonderful time catching up with old friends and making new ones.

One funny thing: - I was teased the whole time because my luggage was bigger than Cindy and Tim's together. Of course I had to have all of my accessories.

THANK YOU WCB FAMILY, if I can manage it, I will be in Minneapolis in 2016.

Summer Board Report

By Steve Fiksdal

First, we need to commend all who attended the Board meeting as we had over 50 members in attendance. The meeting was conducted again this year at the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library in Seattle.

Financially WCB is looking pretty good. In spite of a sluggish market our investment portfolio has held steady over the year. This even after a withdrawal of \$20,000. WCB's advisor at Morgan Stanley has done a stellar job in managing our investments.

Cindy reported that 47 people attended the Seattle Mariners game on July 26th.

In an effort to bring the ACB Convention to those at home in Washington, a daily forum call was offered. The day's events were discussed and the calls were well attended each night.

Cindy announced two new committee appointments: Lori Allison as Chair of the Nominating Committee and Deb Lewis as Chair of the Resolutions Committee. Nomination Committee will be accepting Letters of Intent for the offices of President, First Vice President, Treasurer, three Board positions, and Alternate Delegate to the ACB Convention.

Cindy announced that Sue Ammeter was honored at the ADA 25th Anniversary Celebration for her contributions to the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Estimates of attendance range

from a few hundred to seven hundred people crowded into Westlake Park. It was a warm, sunny day and a few heads were burnt, including mine.

Rob Turner of ATS Northwest joined the meeting to provide an overview of our annual holiday fundraiser. The event, which spans two performances, is attended by 300 – 400 people at each show. The event raised over \$50,000 for WCB.

Committee Report Highlights

Advocacy Committee – Sue Ammeter reported that the committee has been busy with a number of cases, which include everything from Social Security Disability denials to collection notices printed on a Prosecuting Attorney’s letterhead to that of a member, who fell into a construction ditch. One case in particular involves a state employee, Deb Lewis, who in order to earn a reduction in health care premiums is expected to maintain an online diary of sorts chronicling fitness activities. However, the website is inaccessible. After months of communication with the state, Deb will be filing an Equal Opportunity Employment complaint against the Washington State Health Care Authority. If any of our readers are state employees, or know state employees, who are experiencing similar frustrations, Deb Lewis would like to hear from you.

Scholarship Committee – Danette Dixon reported for committee chair Tim McCorkle that they are now accepting applications for college scholarships. The deadline for sending a letter of application has past and the committee will now begin interviews.

Convention Committee – Cindy is now serving as co-chair of the committee. This year’s theme is “WCB: Keys to Our Future”. The

convention will be held on November 5 -7 at the Seattle Airport Marriott in SeaTac, WA. As there is probably more on the convention in the newsletter, I'll leave it at that.

History Committee – Chris Coulter reported that they are creating a thumb drive that will house archived historical documents. Frank Cuta and Berl Colley were recognized for their contributions to this project.

Environmental Access Committee - Dorene Cornwell suggested selling reflective gear with the WCB logo on it. This was well received. The committee is considering redefining its description in such a way as to be more representative of the committee's role. The revised description may come in the form of a constitutional amendment to be considered at convention.

Membership & Aging Committee – Carol Brame announced that the Puyallup fair is fast approaching and that volunteers are needed to work WCB's booth at the fair. Members are needed on September 17, 26 and 27. Pig in the Park, a Spokane festival, is scheduled for September 27th. Spokane member Tracy Fejeran is coordinating this event.

Families with Blind Children – Lori Allison noted that planning for the 2016 Braille Challenge has begun. The committee is also considering the formation of a student organization.

Agency Reports

As we're running out of time (and words) it's important to note that HB 2195 passed during the Special, Special, Special Legislative session, which provides for a stable funding source for WTBBL.

Denise Colley also noted that the Library received a \$25,000 grant to fund outreach activities.

My word count is drawing to a close so I apologize for not being able to highlight everything worthy of mentioning. The work of WCB is never done, nor is my report.

The 3rd Time's a Charm

By Denise Colley, Chair, Legislative Committee

This year was another long session for the state legislature, but, alas, even 120 days wasn't long enough. It took the regular legislative session and two special sessions for both the House and Senate to pass a budget!

The Washington Council of the Blind legislative committee focused on two specific legislative issues this year.

House Bill 1143 was a bill that would allow a registered voter to return a completed ballot and signed declaration by fax or email. It would remove the requirement that the original ballot and the signed declaration be returned in hard copy to the county auditor before the date of certification in order for the ballot to be counted. The county auditors were highly supportive of this bill, and the Washington Council of the Blind was in support and available to do whatever was needed.

Unfortunately, this bill did not come out of the House Rules Committee, so did not pass this year. There is strong sentiment that it will be back in some form next year.

The second, and of most importance to the blind community was the budget request by the Office of the Secretary of State to provide for a \$2.4 million funding shortfall by the Washington State Library (WSL). When the legislature shifted WSL's funding from the state general fund to the Heritage Center account, no one could predict how significantly the recession would reduce the fee-based revenue that was to be generated to fund WSL and its programs. \$2.4 million was needed just to maintain the library's current reduced services, and the 2015 legislative session needed to find a way to provide a more consistent and stable funding source for the future.

How you ask would this affect the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library (WTBBL)? As a program of the State Library, any funding cuts to WSL would result in cuts to state funding received by WTBBL. Since there is nowhere else to cut in terms of staffing and operating costs, any more decreased funding would have to come from WTBBL's production of locally-produced digital audio and braille books.

As has been the case when faced with funding crises in the past, WTBBL patrons and the membership of the consumer organizations of the blind stepped up and took action. A Call to Action letter was sent out by the Patron Advisory Committee of the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library to all library patrons, asking them to contact their state legislators requesting they give priority to resolving the budget shortfall for the Washington State Library. The message was, and continued to be that a funding solution is crucial to preserving the special services that we as blind people depend on from WTBBL. The legislative hotline was flooded with calls, emails were sent, local town halls were attended, meetings were held with key legislators, and hearings

were attended and testimony given. In short, leaving no doubt where we stood on this critical issue.

At the same time, a state library funding coalition representing the many diverse groups supportive of the Secretary of State/State Library budget request was established. Members of the WCB legislative committee, NFBW and the PAC participated. Its purpose was to identify existing resources that could be used to demonstrate the message, such as developing talking points and a possible letter writing campaign.

The outcome of all of this was the introduction of House Bill 2195. Currently, there is a \$2 surcharge for recording fees such as for real property, marriage licenses, and other vital statistics documents. This surcharge is deposited into the Heritage Center account and managed by the Office of the Secretary of State. HB2195 would Increase that surcharge by \$1, generating revenues of approximately \$2.9 million per biennium, and would provide for a permanent and stable funding solution for funding the state library. This legislation was moved forward and became a part of the final 2015-17 biennial state budget.

Once again our hard work paid off, and services that are so vital to us are maintained. Never think you don't make a difference!!

Happy Birthday ADA

By Sue Ammeter, Board Member

Wednesday, July 22, dawned as yet another beautiful sunny day. Approximately 700 people gathered at the Westlake Park/Center in downtown Seattle. The occasion was a celebration and rally to

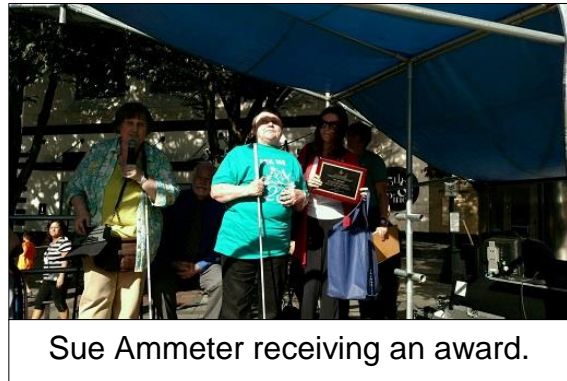
commemorate the 25th anniversary of the signing of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Since WCB was one of several sponsors for the event, we were well represented along with a large contingent of staff from the Department of Services for the Blind and students from the OTC and YES II programs.

Because there is a lot of work that goes in to planning an event like this, a steering committee had been established to accomplish this goal. Steve Fiksdal and I served, representing the State Rehabilitation Council for the Blind (SRC) and other committee members represented state agencies, the City of Seattle, employers and community-based organizations. I am the Chair of the SRC and Steve serves as Vice Chair. The Steering Committee met frequently to plan the program, to recruit volunteers and to handle all of the logistics that go in to doing a rally and celebration such as this. For example, each attendee received a goody bag which contained brochures, a gift card for Starbucks and a bottle of water donated by Services for the Blind. The water was a much welcomed treat as we sat in the hot sun and listened to the program!

The rally began with a recorded message from Senator Patty Murray and the reading of proclamations from the City of Seattle, the City of Bellevue and from Governor Jay Inslee. During the rally there were frequent “shout outs” from the crowd and several “people moments”. “People moments” were spread throughout the afternoon and they were short presentations from persons with disabilities, parents of children with disabilities and community based organizations about how the ADA has changed the civil rights for and inclusion of people with disabilities.

The keynote speaker was State Senator Cyrus Habib. Senator Habib spoke about his childhood, the cause of his blindness and about the work that he is doing in the State Legislature. He encouraged the crowd to let their voices be heard in Olympia and to commit themselves to fighting for the civil rights that we were given through the ADA. Finally, he asked that we join him in: 1) figuring out what equality looks like in the 21st century with our focus on technology; 2) engaging in and discussing the issues that affect us now and 25 years down the road, such as education, transportation, employment and voting; 3) thinking broadly, since we know what it's like to be excluded. It is important that we be inclusive: i.e., advocating for those with hidden disabilities, advocating for people with disabilities in developing countries and modeling equality for others.

The next part of the program was very special for me as one of the persons who worked hard in securing the passage of the ADA. The Department of Services for the Blind presented beautiful bronze and mahogany plaques to Jack Michaels (posthumously), Mary McKnew, Toby Olson, Paul Wysocki and me in recognition of and thanks for our advocacy, leadership and tireless commitment to the vision of civil rights for people with disabilities. "Your work to pass this historic legislation has done much to make equal opportunity a reality for all Americans with disabilities" the plaque read. The plaque is signed by Director Lou Oma Durand and she and SRC staff member Deb Lewis made the presentations. Paul, Toby and I worked to pass and implement the ADA through our roles on the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and



Employment and Jack fought tirelessly to improve transportation and services to veterans. In addition to being an advocate Mary served as a policy advisor in the areas of disability, education and legislative issues for Governor Gardner and Governor Lowry.

As we left the rally, the Queen song “We Are The Champions” boomed from the speaker system and that song was a perfect ending for the celebration. However, as I rode home I thought about what the future will be like for people with disabilities and wondered who will pick up the torch to ensure that our battle for inclusion and equal treatment goes on.

Grab Your Keys

By Cindy Van Winkle, Convention Co-Chair

The Seattle Airport Marriott will be the place to be November 5-7, 2015 as the Washington Council of the Blind (WCB) celebrates KEYS TO OUR FUTURE! Members, friends and those interested in blindness related issues and concerns are encouraged to take part in this annual convention, which in WCB tends to be more like a family reunion!

With a room rate of \$99 plus tax per night, you’ll want to make your room reservations early (no later than October 15) by calling 206-241-2000 (be sure to mention the Washington Council of the Blind) to ensure this incredible rate.

Registration options vary from \$35 without meals to \$95 with up to five meals, and in between, \$50 will cover Friday, Saturday (both with breakfast and/or lunch) or the banquet. Although the

registration rates vary, the deadline to make them is October 15, 2015.

Now here are some convention highlights!

General Sessions take place from Friday morning at 8:45 to 4:30 pm and Saturday, 8:45 am to noon. Throughout Friday there will be presentations on the ADA, distance learning, creating a personal fragrant garden, acquire no-interest equipment loans, Old Time Radio, rehabilitation services – “Then, Now and in the Future”, Uber as a new transportation option, and the technology forum will come alive.

On Saturday morning we'll learn what's happening on a national level from Jeff Thom, First Vice President of ACB, be inspired by the employment panel, learn what's happening in the world of ophthalmology, and hear reports from the directors of our three state agencies serving the blind.

On Saturday afternoon, the business meeting will help set the course for the work of WCB in 2016 and every member is encouraged to actively participate in elections, resolutions, amendments to the constitution and bylaws, our annual budget and other decisions to be considered by the membership assembled.

The exhibit hall, open Friday from 10am to 4pm, will be bigger and better than ever before with many blindness related products and services. This is also where you can peruse and bid on many wonderful items for the Annual WCB Silent Auction.

This year we will be offering a Self Defense Seminar taking place on Friday, November 6, at 3:00 pm. The cost of \$10 will cover associated supplies. Space is limited to 20 participants so be sure to sign up for this on your registration form if you wish to participate.

And still there's more! Door prizes will be given out to those in attendance throughout general sessions, the Awards Luncheon and banquet. And the Showcase of Talent will provide great entertainment on Friday night. With each night of convention we will gather in the hospitality room to mingle with friends, old and new.

The convention will culminate on Saturday evening with our scholarship reception followed by our banquet which will kick off with the final hour of our annual silent auction, and then include the awarding of scholarships and WCB external awards, and an address by our national guest, Steve Speicher.

The complete bulletin can be found online at www.wcbinfo.org where you will need to fill out the online registration form, or it can be heard via phone by calling "The Buzz" at 800-255-1147 and press 6. If you need assistance filling out your registration or with the online payment process, you may leave a message on "The Buzz" and someone will return your call to assist you.

We all carry keys with us when we leave our homes. Throughout the weekend of November 5-7, 2015, we'll be gaining other keys to carry with us, KEYS TO OUR FUTURE! Hope you'll be there to get yours!

Apply Now to Perform in the WCB Showcase of Talent!

By Alan Bentson

Once again, I have the privilege of being the emcee and coordinator for the WCB Showcase of Talent at the WCB State Convention. The showcase is on Friday, November 6, from 7:30 to 9:00 pm, in the main ballroom, where all the other main events are held. The time to let me know that you'd like to participate in the showcase is NOW! Not a moment later. Some guidelines:

You must be registered at the WCB Convention to be in the show, so be sure to mark the box on the Convention registration form that asks if you want to appear in the showcase of talent.

You can sing, dance, do acrobatics or anything you like as long as it is under five minutes long. As a practical matter prepare a four-minute act, as your act will inevitably take longer on stage than it does in your living room.

If you wish to sing live, I will be happy to accompany you on piano, help you find an accompanist, or include the name of your chosen accompanist on the program. If you wish to sing with a karaoke track, please send me the file as soon as you possibly can, as we want to compile them on a single disk.

With the occasional very rare exception, the plan is to have the program set before the convention starts. Participants will be asked to come to a rehearsal, which will begin at 6:00 pm on Friday night. The closer to six o'clock you show up, the more time you will have to rehearse your performance. There will be 15 or possibly 16 performance slots.

The WCB Talent Showcase is a great way for us to display all the wonderfully talented people we have as members, and to have a lot of fun at the end of a busy convention day! Please write to me just as soon as you can with the name of your act!

Contact: Alan Bentson
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a.bentson@comcast.net

Letting Bylaws be Bylaws

By Frank Cuta, Chair, Constitution and Bylaws Committee

Again this year we cannot just let bylaws be bylaws. It is the job of the Constitution and Bylaws Committee to manage proposed improvements to our primary governing document.

We have been asked to make some very constructive changes this year and I hope that you agree that they are worthwhile. In this article I will just summarize them. They will also be distributed in their entirety via the WCB-I email list and to anyone who sends a request to frank@cuta.net. Our committee meets after the pre-convention board meeting to formally give each of these either a do pass or do not pass recommendation. Any additional amendments must be submitted in readable electronic form before this meeting convenes.

The first proposed amendment comes to us from the board and would change eligibility for crisis assistance from once in a lifetime

to once every five years. The second proposed amendment expands eligibility for the first timer award to persons who have not previously attended a state convention as a voting member. This would open it up to many former exhibitors and scholarship winners. The third proposed change is actually a correction to the language stipulating how vacancies on the board are filled. There is currently an ambiguous statement in Article VI that stipulates that an appointed replacement will serve until the next business meeting. What actually happens is they not only serve until the replacement is elected but until that person formally takes office on January 1.

The members of the 2015 Constitutional and Bylaws Committee are Danielle Maher, Rhonda Nelson, Stuart Russell and Frank Cuta.

Dear Gabby

An anonymous advice column that offers solutions to everyday challenges for people with vision loss.

Dear Gabby:

I am a mom of a 4-year-old son who is blind. He is receiving braille services in our local school district in a preschool program. However, I would like to know what my husband and I could be doing at home to encourage him as a child with visual impairment. Any help you can provide would be appreciated. -- **Puget Sound Area Mom**

Dear PSA Mom:

The fact that your son is already receiving services through the vision program in your school district is a great start. Be sure to

stay involved in the IEP process and never be afraid to advocate for his needs, even if it means inviting an outside source who understands the needs of your child to take part in those meetings (a right you can choose to exercise).

The Washington Council of the Blind has a committee created to support the needs of Families with Blind Children. So we encourage you to seek out the chair of this committee by going to the “contacts” page on www.wcbinfo.org and looking under committees.

Always remember, your son is a child first and foremost; he just happens to be blind. So reading, play, physical activities and personal responsibilities should be age and developmentally appropriate and may just require a little creative thinking on your part to assist with accessibility.

Now here are some other great resources that might help you with providing supportive learning at home.

When getting him a cane, measure him standing from ground to the tip of his nose. This will give him a little room to grow. When the cane gets to his armpit, it's time to get a new one. Also, although folding canes are more portable, a young person would most likely be better paired with a straight cane, which will be much more durable for an active child.

Kiddie Canes can be found at:

Maxi Aids

www.maxiaids.com, they also sell some games and toys.

When getting books, for a beginning braille learner, order books done in Grade 1 braille.

Braille books can be purchased through the following:

National Braille Press
www.nbp.org

Beulah Reimer Legacy (BRL)
www.beulahreimerlegacy.com
This is a one person company and April usually has a great selection. She can also do books to order.

Seedlings Braille Books for Children
www.seedlings.org

Games, toys, accessories, etc.

Future Aids, the Braille Superstore
www.futureaids.com

Independent Living Aids
www.independentlivingaids.com

Thank you for writing and don't hesitate to reach out to the Washington Council of the Blind if you have further questions or concerns!

Have a question for Gabby? Email it to: newsline@wcbinfo.org and your question may appear in a future issue of Newsline.

Reggie Weighs In

By Reginald George

With so many concerned about health, it's way past time to take a look at the latest affordable options in talking scales. Pun intended. We all remember these, right? The first one I owned ran on 8 AA batteries and would scream "overload overload goodbye" at you if you weighed more than 300 pounds. Talking scales are great because you don't have to look down at a hard-to-read display, but the downside is your weight is belled out for the world to hear.

If you're concerned about privacy, then a Bluetooth talking scale that can connect wirelessly to your smart phone might be your best bet. Stay away from the trendy brands like Fitbit and iHealth to find ones that are priced competitively to traditional scales. These can track weight, BMI, and other activity over time for multiple users and interface with other apps.

But be careful of the hype: one scale I located by a company called Greater Good for only \$24 appears to offer smart phone tracking, but it requires taking a picture of the display with your smart phone's camera to track it in their app. Not a good solution. The iHealth scales cost around \$100 and have connectivity issues. There are less expensive solutions, and one I liked is from MIRA Brands (Top Pick #2). It has extra-large numbers and a 400-pound weight capacity. It does not speak, and you need a special app to read the weight in your iPhone.

For those of us who might be a little less technological and want a truly affordable solution, let's all be patriotic and go American!

“American Weigh” that is. Turns out they are made in China. My illusions were shattered.

My Top Pick #1 is the American Weigh talking scale -- a very lightweight glass-topped scale with a wide sturdy platform, which can weigh up to 330 pounds.

I liked this scale for several reasons:

1. It has “step and weigh” technology. This means when you step on, the scale turns on. When you step off she says goodbye.
2. It runs on 3 included AAA batteries that are easy to install and last a long time.
3. The female voice is loud and clear.
4. The price is very affordable.

Note: Step and weigh scales can be triggered by strong vibrations such as footsteps nearby, so if it turns on accidentally in your home, that is likely why. It’s important to place any scale on a solid surface, not carpet. Most scales use something called strain gauge technology, which means that they should weigh within 1% of your actual weight.

The more you weigh, the more the possible variance -- if you weigh 300 pounds, it could be plus or minus three pounds or so. So to be sure, take two or three readings, and choose the one you like! The four sensors in most scales average out the differences for a more accurate reading. My experience with this particular scale has been that it has been accurate within a pound or two and closely matches with my doctor’s scale, so I’m happy with that.

Other Alternatives:

All the higher-capacity scales I located require you to tap the scale with your foot first before stepping on to activate and zero out the scale.

The most affordable high-capacity talking scale I found is the American Weigh IMPERIAL which goes up to 550 pounds (Top Pick #3).

There is one talking body fat scale, the Phoenix TBF440 (Top Pick #4). But the reviews aren't that good. I include it here because some of us might really want that additional functionality.

Please feel free to share your experiences with talking scales on our WCB-L discussion list.

Top Pick #1

American Weigh Large LCD Talking Digital Scale

Price: \$18.07

Capacity: 330 pounds

<http://www.walmart.com/ip/American-Weigh-Large-LCD-Talking-Digital-Scale/22187484>

Top Pick #2

MIRA Bluetooth Bathroom Scale with SmartPhone and Tablet tracking (works with iPhone, iPad and Android):

Price: \$34.50

Capacity: 400 pounds

http://www.amazon.com/MIRA-Bluetooth-Bathroom-SmartPhone-tracking/dp/B00OMB4LT4/ref=sr_1_27?s=hpc&ie=UTF8&qid=1440281446&sr=1-27-spons&keywords=bluetooth+scale

Top Pick #3

American Weigh IMPERIAL High Capacity Talking Bathroom Scale

Price: \$34.99

Capacity: 550 pounds

<http://www.scales.net/imperial-high-capacity-talking-bathroom-scale>

Top Pick #4

My Weigh Phoenix TBF 440 Talking Body Fat Scale

Price: \$67.44

Capacity: 440 pounds:

<http://www.amazon.com/My-Weigh-Phoenix-Talking-Scale/dp/B000LJF08M>

Bonus Pick

Taylor Digital Talking Luggage scale

If you have read this far, then you deserve to learn about this great scale that you can use when you jump on the plane to go to your next convention. Know before you go, if your suitcase will be too heavy and save all that stress!

Price: \$22.62

<http://www.walmart.com/ip/Taylor-Digital-Talking-Luggage-Scale/19725445>

Fourth Grader Takes the Challenge!

By Cindy Van Winkle

Ten-year-old Holly Connor was one of the nine participants of the Puget Sound Area Braille Challenge, co-sponsored by the Washington Council of the Blind and Washington Talking Book &

Braille Library held in February. This was one of several preliminary events held throughout the U.S. and Canada. Scoring for all participants were submitted to the Braille Institute in California, who sponsors this national competition.

How exciting it was for Holly when she learned that she made it into the finals as one of the top ten scorers in the Sophomore Age Group. She was then one of sixty finalist invited to take part in the national competition where participants from Kindergarten through high school compete in the following categories: reading comprehension, braille speed and accuracy, proofreading, and spelling and reading tactile charts and graphs.



Holly being interviewed

Learn more about the Braille Challenge by visiting:
<http://brailleinstitute.org/braille-challenge-homepage.html>

WCB contributed funds for Holly and her parents to fly down to Los Angeles for the Braille Challenge in June. A trip to Universal Studios, dancing and other social activities were the fun added to their whirlwind vacation thanks to the organizers.



Holly at Universal Studios with her parents.

Although Holly did not place in the final competition of the Braille Challenge, she gave it her all, and we are so proud of this young lady for taking the challenge! We

especially appreciate her love of braille and her infectious enthusiasm, energy and effort. Keep on rocking your braille skills Holly, and we hope you'll join in the fun again next year!

News from the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library
By Danielle Miller, Program Manager/Librarian

The good news is that our budget for the next two years came out even with what we have had for operations the last two years. Much of this was made possible by the passage of HB2195 which increased filing fees that go in to the account that supports us by \$1.00. I believe it is your continued and tireless support that keeps WTBBL funded and in the awareness of the legislature. Thank you.

It has been a busy summer with me filling in (with assistance from the fabulous Rocio Vargas) as the youth services librarian. Mandy Gonnsen left a while back to pursue a teaching certificate at the University of Washington. All things considered, our Summer Reading program went really well and had the kids unmasking their inner heroes and sharing the stories of the heroes in our lives and in our imaginations. The Summer Reading program culminated with an event at the library with pizza, crafts, capes, shields, and a wonderful guest, Sergeant Edgar Gonzalez, a medic with the Army Reserves. We have a job announcement ready to go for our search for a new Youth Services Librarian. I hope to have the recruitment out by the end of September 2015.

Again, thank you for your continued support. I look forward to seeing many of you at convention.

DSB Highlights

By Lou Oma Durand, Executive Director

Thinking about the future:

Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) staff, our customers, our stakeholders and partners have been thinking strategically together about the next five years. How is our environment changing? How are the needs of our customers changing? What can we at DSB do differently or better to create more success? We want to experience an exceptional level of customer service and results by 2020.

Many creative ideas have emerged from these conversations. A big thanks to those of you who responded to our survey. Your feedback is so valuable!

As a result, we have prioritized three Strategic Initiatives.

- The first is to improve our communication and outreach to diverse and targeted populations; to do a better job of telling the story of success, of what blind individuals accomplish and contribute to our communities.
- The second initiative is to enhance and maintain our expertise in serving blind individuals. This includes ongoing blindness awareness experience for DSB staff and service providers; advocating for accessibility solutions in all environments; increasing recruitment and leadership development of qualified blind individuals at DSB.
- The third major initiative is about infusing an employment focus into every phase of our vocational rehabilitation process (whether it's an informational interview, developing a resume, finding a job site, a work experience or internship, or actual

job search). Everyone is ready for some kind exposure to the world of work.

We want our Strategic Plan to be a dynamic process that infuses and focuses the work we do every day. Success measures are built into the plan, so we can evaluate our progress at key points, and communicate results among everyone.

You can review the DSB Strategic Plan at <http://www.dsb.wa.gov/about/stratplan2020.html>.

Resources and partnerships:

While DSB didn't suffer any large impacts from this year's marathon legislative session, the agency may still face challenges from other sources, including increased costs, and funding allocation requirements imposed by The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). Challenges like these were considered during the strategic planning process, and we are working to maintain and improve the services we provide our customers.

At the same time, DSB is working to enhance partnerships with WorkSource One-stop Centers across the state. We look forward to increased opportunities to connect our customers to the resources offered there, such as real-time labor market information, workshops, apprenticeships, job match services, and more.

We are stepping up our emphasis on serving transition age youth, our assistance to those interested in self-employment and small business start-up, as well as working with employers and customers on keeping qualified people in jobs they already have.

Upcoming events:

To introduce more customers to our programs and services, DSB is hosting a series of events across the state. These events will be held in recognition of Disability Employment Awareness Month and White Cane Safety Day on Thursday, October 15. More information on the White Cane Safety Day Event is available online at <http://www.dsb.wa.gov/events/October.shtml>.

Thanks to each of you for what you do every day to support blind and visually impaired individuals in your community, and for your powerful partnership with DSB!

Baseball for the Blind

By B. Yang, Sports for the Blind

It was a particularly humid day for Spokane in early June. The sun was a merciless tyrant overhead, its heat as constant and as continuous as a techno beat. Even the bat was hot to the touch.

Kristi could hear her fellow baseball players arranging themselves into their fielding positions. Each player called out his or her zone number, starting at one and ending at six. The two short stops, situated by first and third bases respectively, completed the count-off by yelling out, “5” and “6!”

“Ready?”

At the sound of the catcher’s voice, all seemed to fade from Kristi’s mind. There was no more playing field, no more opposing team, no more horrid heat. All that mattered was the timing as the pitcher cried out, “Ready? Pitch!”

It is peculiar how some moments may seem to last forever in the minds of those who know that a split second is all it takes to make or break certain situations.

As the “Ch” sound left the pitcher’s lips, Kristi took a small and quick step to her left, pressing her weight down onto the ball of that foot. Using it as a fulcrum, she spun in a controlled counterclockwise direction. Her hands, clasped tightly by her right shoulder about the neck of the bat came across in a flat arc. With a jolt, she felt the connection as she struck the ball. Exhilaration filled her like a rising tide, interspersed with the thrill and adrenaline evoked by the competitive sport.

First base began buzzing, and without any hesitation, Kristi dropped the bat and took off towards the sound, running as fast as she could. Somewhere off to her left, she heard the spotter yell out, “6!” and knew that the fielders were chasing after the ball. Gritting her teeth and lowering her head, she sprinted forward for all she was worth. Just before the player in zone 6 yelled out, “Caught”, she felt the impact of her body colliding with the foam pillar that constituted first base!

“Safe!”

Beep baseball is an adaptation of America’s favorite pastime and is specifically geared to teach blind athletes the meaning of self-confidence through the medium of action and reaction. As a blind child, I was always the last one to be picked in gym class. It wasn’t because I was any less athletic than anyone else; it was merely the fact that I couldn’t see that made me such a liability. Now though, I play Beep baseball with the utmost confidence and

encourage any and all to literally step into the shoes of a blind athlete!

There are many rules to this game, and in truth, if I were to lay them all out, you would have to suffer through a small novel. But because I am a gracious man, I will shorten it down to the bare basics.

Each team has at the minimum, nine players. Six of these players actually play, cycling through batting and fielding, while the remaining three catch, pitch, and spot. When batting, the goal is to synchronize your swing with the speed of the pitcher's pitch. As I tell my players, consistency is key. You must strike four times in order to be counted out, and you can never end on a foul ball. You may have an additional "pass ball", in which you do not swing and gauge where the pitcher is pitching. Once the ball is hit out to the field, one of the bases will begin to buzz, and if you reach the base before the fielders catch the ball, you score a run for your team.

The fielders are split into 6 different zones, all of which are numbered. The spotter, who can see, calls out the zone to which they think the ball will go to, and the player in said zone and in the zones around him will all scramble for the ball. Communication is paramount in these situations to avoid collisions. The spotter may only shout out one zone number and cannot change their mind. The rest is up to the fielders.

Our Beep Baseball team, The Spokane Lion Pride, is part of our larger organization: Sports4TheBlind. Our goal is to make sure that our blind players stay active, reducing health risks and also raising self-awareness and confidence. If you have any further

questions or wish to volunteer and/or know anyone that may be interested in playing, feel free to check us out at:
www.sports4theblind.org

Around the State

Greater Everett Area Council of the Blind

By Chris Coulter

We, here in Everett have jumped head-first into summer and I don't think we'll be coming up for air until sometime around the middle of November. That's okay, though. life is good.

Gloria Walling came to our June meeting in her capacity as a member of the WCB Board of Directors. She was accompanied by Tim Walling. They enjoyed lunch and conversation with us and Gloria gave us information about convention, and dates and deadlines we should be aware of.

On June 18th we held a Burger Bash fundraiser at one of Everett's Wendy's locations. Thanks to Gloria Riley and Anita Both for arranging the event and printing up coupons for customers to give to their servers as part of the fundraising. Thanks also to several chapter members who helped pass out coupons and talk to people about our chapter.

We held our annual picnic on Saturday, July 11th at Lundeen Park in Lake Stevens. I don't have an exact number count of people who attended, but we all enjoyed ourselves. Donald Causer's brother-in-law really makes a mean cheeseburger!

Also in July, Danette Dixon attended the ACB Conference and Convention as the winner of our state’s first-timer award. I know that she had a good time and learned a lot from the experience.

On September 26th we will be holding an outreach event at the Everett Public Library. You’ll be hearing more about this when updates are posted to WCB-L or you can email President Danette Dixon or Chris Coulter for more information.

As you can see, we’ve been really busy this summer and we’ll be rocking and rolling at least until our state convention is over. Stay tuned for another update from us in the December issue.

Guide Dog Users of Washington State

By Danette Dixon

MY FIRST YEAR AS A BOARD MEMBER FOR GDUWS

This has been an amazing experience for me. I have never been on any board and I have learned a lot. Just a couple things I have learned: communicating with others, listening, and being involved with fundraising activities.

The first thing was the Spring Fling in May. Marlaina put on an amazing event. We heard updates from many Guide Dog Schools, and learned about talking prescriptions (it said Nisha’s name pretty well). Someone from Uber came to talk and had a promotion code to use. I have used Uber a couple times and, yes, it is more convenient than a taxi.

After lunch we had a discussion panel regarding guide dog retirement, and I realized that retiring Velma will not only affect me, but also all my family and friends. They will have to go through some grief; this would be a sad day for them also. Last we heard a talk about GPS systems, what we use, what we like and what we do not like. This involved participation from all. The Spring Fling was held along with the WCB Leadership Conference. I hope we will continue to have a Spring Fling each year.

In June we did a fundraiser at a Slugger's Beep Baseball Game. Sheri threw the first pitch and Marlaina was the game announcer. Meka sang "The National Anthem". Sheri and I sold snacks and raffle tickets. Even a few puppy raisers came, we had a fabulous time.

In July I was selected to attend ACB National Convention in Dallas as a first-timer; what an honor! To learn more about what I did there, be sure to read my article called 'Star Struck in Dallas in this issue of Newsline.

This year has been an amazing experience for me. I feel I have grown a lot as a part of this wonderful organization. I would encourage anybody to get involved in leadership or even join GDUWS. Thanks for the opportunity to grow and find some of my strengths.

Jefferson County Council of the Blind

By Carl Jarvis and Sue Ammeter

How do we go about changing public attitudes toward the blind? Here in Jefferson County, we do it one activity at a time such as being involved in a variety of cross-disability community based organizations.

Since 2007 JCCB members John and Sue Ammeter and Pat Teal have served on the Jefferson County Voting Accessibility Advisory Committee (VAAC). They have worked hand in hand with the County Auditor and the Deputy County Auditor to raise awareness about the use of the Auto-mark voting machine and in removing barriers at our courthouse. In January, 2015 a new County Auditor was elected and a new Deputy Auditor was appointed, so the VAAC are working to educate them about voting access issues.

In 2013 the Emergency Preparedness and Integration Advisory Committee (EPIAC) was formed and JCCB members Pat Teal, John and Sue Ammeter offered to serve on this committee. These meetings provide an opportunity for consumers and agency staff to work collaboratively to learn about and address issues that will impact emergency preparedness. For example, at the July meeting Carl Jarvis came and talked about the barriers that confront older blind adults with fading vision. Our County's Director of Emergency Management is always present at these meetings so we have learned a great deal from him.

In 2013 the Jefferson County Accessible Communities Advisory Council (ACAC) was formed. Pat Teal and Sue Ammeter, attend these meetings. Sue reports that they have just submitted a grant for state funding for several projects aimed at educating consumers, the general public and businesses about access issues. "And we are hoping to sponsor a movie about disability at our upcoming Port Townsend Film Festival. If we receive this grant the majority of the work will need to be performed by the ACAC members since we have minimal staffing from the Department of Public Health", Sue said.

So as you can see JCCB members are involved in our community and we will make a difference.

Finally, we want to wish member Jo Candler and husband Clair good success as they leave Port Townsend to settle in Tacoma.

King County Chapter
By Linda Wickersham, President

The King County chapter has been busy this summer.

I am pleased to announce we have a new member, Linda Crown. Also, one of our long time members, Shirley Gray, celebrated her 95th birthday on June 14th. Shirley tells me her family came from all over the country to celebrate with her.

Meka White came to our June meeting and gave us a great report on the state activities. The only thing I regret is we didn't insist on her singing for her lunch, since she has such a great voice!

John Rockford came to our July meeting to speak about the new cancellation and no-show policies for Metro Access. John told us the Feds insisted on the changes because Metro was being too strict on us.

On August 2nd we gathered at Tim Schneebeck's home for his annual barbecue. As always, Carrie Long did an outstanding job with the food. A good time was had by all.

Kevin Daniel came to our August meeting to speak about employment opportunities at the Lighthouse, and gave an update about Beep Baseball and the other sports activities he is involved with. Giving an excellent presentation, we look forward to welcoming him back sometime soon.

Lian, our member from China, had eye surgery on June 2nd in China. She was in the hospital for 10 days. They repaired her

retina and removed her cataracts at the same time. Her husband Mike left on August 14th to go to China. They are planning to return on September 8th. Although it's too soon to know the results of her surgery, our prayers and good wishes are with her for the return of her vision.

Julie Miller and her guide dog, Marley, just completed the AKC good citizen class. This course is six weeks long. The instructor was so impressed with Marley at the second class that she would not have to complete the course, but could take the test the next week. On August 21st Marley passed the test with flying colors and is now a good citizen! Congratulations to the great team, Julie and Marley!

Peninsula Council of the Blind

By Stuart Russell, President

For the month of June, Eric Hunter chose the classic "Skid Road" by Murray Morgan for our book club reading. When he checked with the Talking Book & Braille Library, he discovered that there was no recording of the book. He brought his concerns to library manager, Danielle Miller, and now it's available nationally on the Bard Web Site for everyone to enjoy. Although not a formal history, it is a series of portraits of early Puget Sound pioneers, politicians, and scalawags. This book is loved by many generations of Puget Sound residents, and I'm sure you will enjoy reading it as much as I did.

On July 11th, the Hunters hosted a very special gathering. The potluck was held outside on their patio. We were surrounded by beautiful flowers, and an awning protected us from the sun's rays. The lilies were in bloom, and a gentle breeze carried their spicy

fragrance. Of course, there was good food. Joanne made her famous bacon spaghetti from a recipe her mom found back in the 1950's off a match book bearing an advertisement for the Hunts Foods Company with the infamous recipe for bacon spaghetti.

On Sunday, July 26th, several PCB members boarded the Seattle ferry, to join their WCB family at the Mariners game. The game went into overtime, and the Mariners won against the Bluejays 6 to 5.

After many years of separate picnics, this year, the PCB and SKCB chapters came together for one Grand Picnic. The chapters provided hamburgers, hot dogs, and sodas. Everyone brought food to share. Some members hadn't seen each other in years, so there was a lot to talk over. At my table, one of our younger members, was chatting with a senior from SKCB. She shared about her experiences working with the YES program (Youth Employment Solutions). Then they started chatting about what it means to be blind. They said that blind folks improvise and do whatever they need to do in order to get through any situation. The combined picnic was a great success and we look forward to next summer's gathering.

Pierce County Association of the Blind (PCAB)

By Lori Allison, President

Where has the time gone? It is hard to believe that this is already the end of August. The PCAB family has been hard at work planning ideas on revitalizing our meeting structure and different ways of doing outreach events. With this task well underway, we

have had five new and return members join us in the past two months.

On August 9 PCAB held our annual picnic at Spanaway Lake Park; the weather was perfect. This year’s committee worked hard planning this tremendous outreach event. Lakenia Garnes chaired the committee and Hayley Edick was in charge of the games. Kathy Wilson took on the job of getting the door prizes and, of course, David Edick handled the music and sound. Oh, let’s not forget those who took charge of the food: Chris Zack, Kitty Cummings and Arnold Kammeyer, along with Poor Boys BBQ, owned by Steve Cummings. This event takes a great effort from all members and I must say that this year everyone outdid themselves to make this happen. Excellent Job!

In October PCAB will be looking at the future starting with the elections of our leaders. I hope that we will have several nominations for each office and that whomever gets elected will have the future of PCAB and WCB in their hearts.

PCAB meets on the third Saturday of the month, so if you are in the neighborhood stop in and say hello.

South King Council of the Blind

By Marie Masterson

The Holiday Report

Hi there! My name is Holiday. I am a stunning Yellow Labrador and a guide dog to boot; just ask my mom, she’ll tell you!

Mom is a member of SKB. They meet once a month at Marlaina's Mediterranean Kitchen in Burien. The restaurant smells YUMMY, but I never get any of the lunch; darn it! These people are very busy working on good stuff like accessible pharmacy labels for low vision people.

For fun they like to play something called Beep Baseball. The team even went to Canada and played a game against the Canadian National Beep Baseball team. The season is coming to a close soon and they will have a celebration banquet in that town called Burien.

They also have a program called FOOD: Fun, Opportunity, Outreach, and Dining. They help restaurants learn that low vision people eat food and have fun!

The group is very excited about the WCB Convention in November! They are planning on getting some awesome things called door prizes. I get a prize when I find a door, KIBBLE! My mom is even making a quilt for the silent auction. She likes doing that quilting thing. I just like to lay on the floor and sleep. The SKB chapter is a very hospitable bunch of humans. They plan on hosting an evening at the hospitality suite at convention. I am very proud to say that I had my input on that issue, and I, Holiday, hereby decree that there will be dog treats and fresh cool water for us guide dogs. Hmm, maybe we should add dog massages or free brush outs? Anyway be sure to check out hospitality at convention!!

The chapter has a real cool website, which you can find at, southkingcounciloftheblind.org. There is very snazzy info and pictures on the site.

Well, I need to go out and do my business now. I hope to report on the chapter people and their activities in the future. See you at convention!

Bark 4 Now,
Holiday

South Kitsap Council of the Blind
By Carol Brame, Treasurer

Here we are and it's August already. WOW! Time has flown, don't you think so too?

In June sadly we lost Steven Kuntz and Loraine Osborn, into Heavens Gates. Both are greatly missed by everyone who knew and loved them. Our hearts go out to their families and friends. \

We are having a fundraiser at the Outback on September 19th starting at noon to help us get to our convention. Due to ill members we did not have our car wash this year. Also, we got a letter from the owner of the Kitsap Cards that he is selling out, and that we might not be able to do that fundraiser either.

What a wonderful picnic we had with PCB at Evergreen Park this year. It was a nice turnout, but we missed Joanne Hunter, who ended up in the hospital and others who could not attend. It was a very nice day, lots of laughs, great food, and wonderful stories.

Lori Allison did make it to our June meeting as our guest speaker for WCB. She did a great job. Then we all went to the Pancake House and had a good time.

Since April, we gained a new member named Doris. She found an old PCB member Sharon, who plans to join us in September. Doris invited Sharon to the picnic and she did join us. Also, we might have a man named Danny come and join us. He just moved back to the area. I am so excited to get to meet him.

We did not have a meeting for two months, because in July our members were too busy and in August we had the picnic, WCB Board Meeting, and a wedding being held where we meet on our meeting day. Smile!

We are praying for those who are near or affected by the fires, and for all our ill WCB family members.

We all wish you a great rest of your summer. Take care everyone and live life to the fullest!

United Blind of Seattle
By Casey Dutmer, Secretary

The United Blind of Seattle (UBS) held its final meeting before summer on June 20 at Razzis Restaurant in Seattle. Approximately 25 members were present.

Steve Fiksdal, a candidate for President of WCB, addressed the group. He talked about his platform which is "All Members". He said that to him input from the membership of WCB is very

important because he believes the ideas and needs of members is what drives WCB.

Although we don't meet in July or August, our chapter is very active. Approximately 25 people took part in the chapter's annual Green Lake Walk. We walked around the perimeter of the lake about 2.9 miles. We had lunch before the walk, and afterward we were treated to some nice refreshing ice cream. A good time was had by all.

Our spaghetti fundraiser has been changed to September 12 at Center Park Apartments in Seattle.

UBS is also planning our annual "Friends Day", which will be held on Saturday, October 17, from 12:00 until 3:00 pm at the Washington Talking Book & Braille Library.

If you're looking for a chapter to join, come and see what UBS is all about.

Last year shortly after I arrived in Shoreline, I went and met a lot of members and had numerous conversations about many topics and issues. This also is a great way to learn about WCB.

If you wish to join us for a monthly meeting, we meet on the third Saturday of the month at Razzis Restaurant located at 8523 Greenwood Ave North, Seattle.

Hope to see you at one of our meetings.

United Blind of Spokane
By Debby Clark, Vice President

It's a wonderful life at the monthly meetings of United Blind Spokane. We have the best food, friends and fun!

In June our fundraising guru, Jeff Clark, got us involved with KHQ television and Craven's coffee. We won a contest to have them come out and serve us coffee, and film a spot to be shown on a regular basis for the month of June and July. Our friends all told us they saw us on TV multiple times. It was a great way to have community exposure. The coffee was great and so were the people. Danielle was interviewed. The film crew told us that we were the most fun group that they had ever had!

In July we talked about how to get more of us to convention this fall. We welcomed our newest member, Donna Newman, and guide dog, Azure. She is a very welcome addition to our group. Danielle brought her new dog, Bryan, to our June and July meetings as well. We now have quite a herd of dogs under the tables: Bryan, Azure, Denim and Monica. We love them.

Tracy and Jesse had a great time volunteering at the youth camp for blind and visually impaired Children of St. Joseph's. They joined other members of Sport's for the Blind to teach Beep Baseball and Kickball. The kids' ages are 10-13, also enjoyed board games and other activities. Tracy gave the kids tote bags and puff paints for crafting.

In June and August we had fundraisers at Papa Murphy's. These times are great fun and a way to get to know each other, rather

than at meetings. Thank you Tracy, Jesse, Danielle, Deborah, Melanie and Jeff for all your hard work and the community exposure that these events bring! Oops I forgot Vivian.

Our President, Danielle, went to the WCB Summer Board Meeting and was greatly encouraged by the great work being done by the committees, especially the environmental access, history and advocacy.

Join us at Lilac Blind Foundation on the third Monday each month from 11 am to 1 pm.

United Blind of the Tri-Cities
By Karyn Vandecar (First Lady)

It is August already! Where did the summer go???

On September 3rd we are having our Annual Picnic at the beautiful home of Dixie McDaniels! Janice Squires is busy taking Subway sandwich orders. We really enjoy Dixie's beautiful yard and her wonderful hospitality! Thank you Jan for coordinating everything again this year.

Our lunch bunch went to Dickie's BBQ in August. Good service and good food. Since we are a blind group, the owner took our orders and delivered our food to us!

We now have a very informative Technology Group that meets each month at the home of Mel and Sherry Dubbin. This month, we learned how to order items from Amazon using our iPhones.

Our monthly card group is still having a lot of fun and losing nickels for our annual pizza party in December.

Our Book Group is reading The Barefoot Lawyer (about a blind man escaping China) and Songs of Willow Frost (Jaime Ford)

We had a very special guest speaker at our August meeting, volunteer fireman, Ron Fryer. He talked to us about fire safety and gave us tips on how to be safe in our homes. We now know how to be more prepared in case of a fire.

Our President, Steve Vandecar, is still going through cancer treatment and is doing well. He has finished six treatments and will be having scans to see if he needs more treatments. Thank you all for your prayers!

Our group buys season tickets to the Richland Players, so we can attend four plays each year. The next play will be "Same Time Next Year" in September.

Busy! Busy! Have a wonderful rest of the summer. Come visit us—we treat visitors well!

United Blind of Walla Walla

By Alco Canfield, President

Hello from UBWW!

Mumford and Sons and Foo Fighters have left, and the crowds have all gone. The event was a great success, and Walla Walla is still in one piece.

As the saying goes, “Life’s about changing. Nothing ever stays the same.” In that regard, I would like to begin by talking about a very special individual, Virginia Mabley. She passed away suddenly at home on Saturday, July 11th. Virginia and Elwood Mabley lived and loved for 69 years. She was a steady supporter of UBWW, transporting people to our meetings. She was always gracious and helpful, a real class act!

Several of us were fortunate enough to attend her memorial service and to hear about her numerous accomplishments and the many people she touched during her lifetime. We will miss you, Virginia.

In May, Ki Bealey, Director of Public Works for the City of Walla Walla, spoke to us about the various street repair projects taking place this summer. He asked for our input about four-way stops, sidewalks and ramps. We suggested that Ki use our “Contact webmaster” on UBWW to communicate with us. We discussed detectable warning strips, and Joleen offered to send Ki information about the guidelines for their use.

Ki plans to send us a list of traffic signals in Walla Walla. He will send us links to receive updates from the city.

Joleen has worked tirelessly to involve O&M instructors in the planning process, re: accessible signals in Walla Walla to ensure the best possible setup for blind/visually impaired pedestrians.

Steffie Coleman, Certified Orientation and Mobility Specialist, will be coming to Walla Walla on September 25th to give an in-service to city planners concerning best practices for accessible signal

design. More specific information will be forthcoming in the December Newslines.

Until then, Happy Fall!

United Blind of Whatcom County

By Holly Turri, Secretary

Social activities update:

Events Line

To better keep our members informed, we have initiated an events phone line. To hear our happenings - Dial 360-296-2735.

Vision Series

On Wednesday July 27, we concluded our Vision Series. The topics discussed included: high tech devices, such as iPhones, CCTVs, and computers. 12 attended.

Book Club

This quarter we had one book discussion. It was "Wild: Lost and Found on the Pacific Crest Trail" written by Cheryl Strayed.

Bellingham Bells

On June 28 several members attended the Bellingham Bells baseball game. An excellent time was had by all.

National ACB Convention

This year for the first time, we had four members attend the ACB Convention in Dallas, Texas. All of us were first timers. Thanks to

the Community Food Coop in Bellingham, two UBWC members received scholarships.

Summer Picnic

On Friday, July 31 our summer picnic took place at Fairhaven Park. This was a new venue which was so beautiful and well appointed. Almost 25 people attended. Excellent food and lovely music were featured. Of course, the fascinating and interesting conversations made the event special.

Yakima Valley Council of the Blind

By Lisa George, Secretary

YAKITY YAK FROM YAKIMA

Once again, the Yakima chapter has sad news to share. After battling health issues since last fall, Harry “Bud” Kohl, passed away on July 8. Bud was an integral part of our chapter since the day he joined. His leadership as President, his positive and enthusiastic attitude, and his unfailing support to others will be sorely missed. Our prayers are with Ginny and all of Bud’s family and friends.

Gina Ontiveros and Dolores Acosta attended their first WCB Board meeting in Seattle on August 15th at WTBBL. It was an informative experience and has reinforced their desire to attend their first WCB Convention this November.

We will be marking White Cane Safety Day on October 15th by participating in an event originated by the Yakima DSB office. It will be held at Kissell Park and be a great opportunity to interact

with the public. The plan is to have a maze for people to navigate with sleep shades and/or canes.

Our next social activity will be at the Central Washington State Fair in late September. Whether we're picking up "good vibrations" with The Beach Boys, "just a swingin'" with John Anderson, "turned loose" with Loverboy, or celebrating with Three Dog Night, we're sure to be enjoying our time together and singing as loudly as possible.

As always, bowling on Fridays is a mainstay for our fellowship. There's always room for more bowlers, so if you're in Yakima on a Friday morning, please join us! Our connections with each other and experiences together make for memorable times.

Happy 94th Birthday to Anne Ridenour on September 8th!

We hope everyone has a safe Labor Day and enjoys the cooler weather!

From Our Kitchen to Yours
Created by Debby Clark

Fresh Peach Freezer Jam

More than wonderful.

Ingredients:

- 7 cups squished delicious fresh peaches, very ripe
- 1 tablespoon lemon juice
- 2 packages MCP brand powdered regular pectin
- 6 cups organic sugar or any sugar

Method:

Put squished peaches, the way you like them, into a large stainless or glass container along with lemon juice and pectin. Stir till well mixed and pectin is dissolved. Set aside and let sit for 30 minutes. At the end of the 30 minutes pour sugar into peach mixture and stir till completely mixed and dissolved. Let sit for another 10 minutes and stir to make sure the sugar is dissolved. Put into freezer containers and freeze. This jam is a little runny but is superb on toast, pancakes, waffles, and whatever else you can imagine. A fabulous taste of summer all year long! This recipe makes about a half of a gallon of jam.

Recipes from Mama Betty

Meka's mom has been visiting from Georgia and making some of her favorite recipes. Here are a few to share.

Seafood Salad

1 four-pound bag of salad shrimp
24 ounces of imitation crab meat
6 hard-boiled eggs (chopped)
1/4 cup chopped onion
1/4 cup chopped bell pepper
1/4 cup pickled relish
2 tablespoons celery seeds
3 chopped tomatoes
1 cup elbow macaroni
2 cups mayonnaise (or as much as desired)

Boil and strain macaroni before adding to large mixing bowl. Cut imitation crab in to small pieces. Combine and mix other ingredients, saving the tomatoes for last. Refrigerate for four hours, but for better taste, eat after two days. Best eaten with Ritz crackers.

Cream Style Corn

1 16-ounce bag frozen corn
1/2 cup butter 1 stick of butter
1/4 cup sugar
1/2 cup flour
1 cup water
Salt and pepper to taste

Boil corn, salt, pepper, butter, and sugar in a pot for 15 minutes. Add water to a bowl and gradually mix with flour. Pour mixture slowly into pot while occasionally stirring, until you have a thick consistency. Continue to stir for 2 to 3 minutes. Enjoy!

Mom's Special Trifle

1 pound cake, prepared
1 Angel Food Cake, prepared
2 16-ounce containers of Cool Whip
A bag of frozen strawberries
2 cans of chunky pineapple (drained)
8 ounces of walnut pieces
1 cup sugar
One large box of vanilla instant pudding

Slice both cakes and lay each piece in a large aluminum pan. Place one piece of pound cake in, and then a piece of angel food cake, continuing to alternate until the pan is full. You will have leftover cake which you will need for the next layer. In a pot, thaw out the strawberries by adding the sugar and placing it on the stove for two minutes on medium, stirring continually. Spoon half of the strawberry mixture onto the cake slices. Then layer pineapple and walnuts over the top of that. Mix cool whip and vanilla pudding in a bowl thoroughly, or until, according to Mama Betty, you can taste the vanilla. Spread cool whip mixture over the

top, and then add your cake, the rest of the strawberry mixture, pineapples, walnuts, and cool whip until there is nothing left. Spread cool whip mixture evenly and refrigerate until you are ready to eat.

Hats Off

Compiled by Cindy Van Winkle, WCB President

We extend our heartfelt congratulations to, and celebrate with, the following WCB members:

Shirley Gray (KCC) on the very special occasion of her 95th birthday!

Danielle Maher (UBSPO) on her new partnership with Bryan, a male Labrador Golden cross from the Seeing Eye!

Anne Ridenour (YVCB) on the celebration of her 94th birthday!

Randy Tedrow (GDUWS) on becoming the new owner/operator of Avia Café in the Federal Aviation Administration building in Renton through the Blind Vendor Program!

Chris White (UBWC) on celebrating her milestone 90th birthday!

If you have something for consideration of inclusion for future Hats Off articles, please send to newsline@wcbinfo.org with "Hats Off" in the subject line.

Bits and Pieces

Compiled by Meka White

This column is presented for your information and enjoyment. Inclusion of information, products, and/or services does not constitute endorsement by the Washington Council of the Blind. Send submissions to Newsline@wcbinfo.org and put "Bits and Pieces" in the subject line.

37 of the late Jim Kitchen's free talking games for Windows now available in the Kitchen's Sink

<http://blog.bryansmart.com/2015/08/12/kitchens-sink-1-0/>

This is a collection of free games for the blind that were created by Jim Kitchen of Chardon, Ohio. Jim was an extraordinary person that dedicated the later years of his life to creating free games for the blind community. Over the years, his games were released by the comically fictitious Kitchen's Inc. As Jim's game collection grew, the joke became that he had programmed everything except the kitchen sink. With his passing, I present to you The Kitchen's Sink, containing all 37 of his SAPI-speech-based Windows games and apps, in one fun-packed place! If you enjoy these games, please share them with others!

What is NVDA?

NVDA is a free, open source screen reader for Microsoft Windows. It is developed by NV Access in collaboration with a global community of contributors. To learn more about NVDA, download a copy or make a donation, visit the main NV Access website.

NVDA 2015.3RC1 has just been released. This is a release candidate, which means that unless any critical issues are found, this will be identical to the final 2015.3 release. Highlights of this release include initial support for Windows 10; the ability to disable single letter navigation in browse mode (useful for some web apps); improvements in Internet Explorer; and fixes for garbled text when typing in certain applications with Braille enabled:

<http://community.nvda-project.org/blog/NVDA2015.3rc1Released>

If you want to hear how this version of NVDA works with Windows 10, here is an audio tutorial: <http://www.nvda-kr.org/en>

Attention Blind and Visually Impaired Students!

ACB Students have unveiled a redesigned website with a great new look! They are also seeking application submissions to fill two positions, one for Student Advocate editor, and another for a Junior Representative to the ACB Students board. Check out this vibrant, special interest affiliate of the American Council of the Blind by going to: <http://www.acbstudents.net>

2015 Calendar of Deadlines and Events

September

- 1: Career Forum, 8 pm
- 8: Technology Forum, 7 pm
- 13: Parenting Forum, 8 pm
- 14: Call in for convention free room, 800-255-1147 (press 0)
9 am - Noon
- 15: Book Club Forum, 7 pm
- 17: WCB booth at the Puyallup Fair
- 22: Special Events Forum on UEB, Part 2, 7 pm

28: Diabetics Forum, 7 pm

October

1: Presidents call, 8 pm

6: Career Forum, 8 pm

11: Parenting Forum, 8 pm

13: Technology Forum, 7 pm

15: Deadline to register, make hotel reservations, and request stipends for the WCB Convention.

20: Book Club Forum, 7 pm

26: Diabetics Forum, 7 pm

27: Special Events Forum on UEB, Part 3, 7 pm

November

3: Career Forum, 8 pm

5-7: WCB convention, Seattle Airport Marriott, Seatac, WA.

8: Parenting Forum, 8 pm

10: Technology Forum, 7 pm

17: Book Club Forum, 7 pm

23: Diabetics Forum, 7 pm

21: Submission deadline for the December issue of Newsline, newsline@wcbinfo.org

24: Special Events Forum on Celebrating the Holidays, 7 pm

December

1: Career Forum, 8 pm

3: Presidents call, 8 pm

8: Technology Forum, 7 pm

13: Parenting Forum, 8 pm

15: Book Club Forum, 7 pm

Announcements

The Newsline is available in large print, on cartridge, via email, and on our website at www.wcbinfo.org.

Subscribe to the Newsline email list to receive the quarterly publication via email and other important announcements from WCB by sending a blank email to newsline-l-subscribe@wcbinfo.org.

Newsline Article Submissions

To be considered for inclusion in the December issue, article submissions and other information for publication must be received by Saturday, November 21, 2015. Articles should be sent as a Word document and should not exceed 750 words, while chapter updates should be no more than 350 words. Contributions may be edited for clarity and space considerations. Email to newsline@wcbinfo.org.

Address changes and subscription requests should be sent to Denise Colley at dmc0124@comcast.net or by leaving a phone message by calling 1-800-255-1147.