

**WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF THE BLIND
NEWSLINE**

Spring 2019 Edition
“New Beginnings”

Opportunity, Equality, Independence
Founded 1935

Visit our website at <http://www.WCBinfo.org> or call us toll-free at 800-255-1147. Our mailing address is PO Box 1354, Puyallup, WA 98371.

WCB's Newsline is a 2011 winner of the Hollis K. Liggett Braille Free Press Award presented by the Board of Publications of the American Council of the Blind promoting best journalistic practices and excellence in writing in publications of ACB's state and special interest affiliates.

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WCB is a 501(c)(3) organization, which means those much-needed contributions are tax deductible. Payments should be directed to Treasurer Deb Lewis at TreasurerWCB@gmail.com or mailed to PO Box 1354, Puyallup, WA 98371. For other ways you can make a difference, please visit our Donate page at <http://WCBinfo.org/?s=donate>.

To remember 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 WCB at 800-255-1147.

Calling all members:
We will publish the next WCB Newsline in late summer
and are anxious to read your quality content.
We require all submissions by June 30, 2019.

Publication Guidelines

- All opinions expressed are those of the individual authors, not WCB or the Newsline committee.
- We do not accept anonymous letters.
- We reserve the right to publish unless you explicitly tell us not to in your comments, and to edit all submissions for brevity and clarity.
- Articles should be 1,000 words or less and submitted as Microsoft Word files whenever possible.
- Chapter updates may be up to 350 words and may include pictures.
- Do not use indents or tabs.
- Send all submissions to theWCBNewsline@gmail.com.

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Address changes and subscription requests should be sent to Lori Allison at lori.allison2002@gmail.com or by leaving a phone message at 800-255-1147.

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PRESIDENT'S UPDATE

by Denise Colley

As I sit here writing this article we have already seen the first two months of 2019 whiz by. Committees have begun their work and we are looking forward to a great year ahead for WCB. If you are not currently on a WCB committee and would like to learn more about where you might fit in, contact First Vice President Andy Arvidson who is overseeing our committees this year. You can contact him by email at arvidsonandy@gmail.com.

At our 2018 WCB state convention business meeting I announced some key changes we were looking at making in the way WCB does business. In an effort to give more of the membership an opportunity to participate in WCB board meetings, it was decided to hold two face-to-face board meetings (one in spring and the other during convention) and hold bimonthly board meetings as needed using the ZOOM Cloud platform. This will allow every member who wishes to listen to and participate in board meetings the opportunity without having to spend the time or expense of coming to a specific place.

On February 2, we held our first ZOOM Cloud board meeting, and the feedback I have received has been very positive. Not only were those participating able to learn about the business the board was dealing with, but they were also able to ask questions and provide input. Approximately 70 people participated, which I would consider a smashing success for our first time.

On February 21, Deb Cook Lewis and I flew to Alexandria, Virginia to attend the winter meeting of the ACB Board, the presidents meeting, and the legislative seminar. This culminated with our spending a day on Capitol Hill meeting with some of our Congress people. You will read more about the national advocacy and legislative imperatives later in this issue.

On April 5 and 6 we will be holding leadership training for all chapter and special interest affiliate presidents to be held in Richland, Washington. Then, on April 7, we will hold our spring in-person board meeting. The leadership training and board meeting are being held at the Red Lion Hotel Richland Hanford House. Details are already being worked on for these meetings. Watch the WCB listserv for more information.

Thank you to all of you who work so hard for this organization. Without all of you WCB wouldn't be the great organization it is today. We rock!!!!

LETTER FROM THE EDITORS

Dear WCB,

Warmest Spring wishes to you all. New beginnings are all around us as we enter a new season. It is our pleasure to introduce you to some of the exciting new changes happening in your Newsline.

First, we have added a reader feedback section called “It’s Your Newsline!” because it truly is, and we want to hear from you all.

Second, we have implemented a new streamlined design for the layout, which includes several categories. This will allow you to find the types of articles you enjoy more quickly. Some of these sections include:

- Science & Technology – the latest and greatest gadgets, apps, discoveries, and innovations in assistive technology.
- Lifestyle – books, music, movies, art, gardening, recipes, sports, and so much more.
- WCB History – an exciting way to remember and learn from our past as we move forward into our future.
- Legislation & Advocacy – keeping us informed on the current issues and what we can do to effect change.
- WCB Happenings – committee updates and important information you need to apply for scholarships, register for conventions and training seminars, and board meeting recaps.

Third, we are refocusing on our commitment to make this publication the best it can be. In order to accomplish this, we have divided the process into two areas of responsibility, each with its

own editor. We are diligently seeking out great content for every issue, selecting themes to inspire your creative minds, and adding columns by some of your favorite writers to look forward to and enjoy in each issue. Please reach out if you would like to do more writing or have any great ideas to share with us. We are also, with great intention and perseverance, fine-tuning the production process in order to make our deadlines and give you issues in the format of your choice. We are still troubleshooting technical issues to create a publication that is easy to read and navigate, and delivered to you in a timely manner.

We are honored to be serving as your Newsline editors and look forward to another fantastic year of hearing what you all bring to the upcoming issues!

Content Editor Heather Meares

Technical Editor Reginald George

Email us at theWCBNewsline@gmail.com

IT'S YOUR NEWSLINE ... JUST SAY IT!

We are pleased to present you with your very own section to tell us your most important thoughts, voice your valued opinions of our articles, inspire us with your grandest ideas, and share your honest concerns so that we may continue to evolve our publication into the Newsline you can't wait to read! – the editors

I appreciate the Newsline having a theme. It gives me ideas to write about, and some direction for those articles. I do miss having the calendar at the end of the magazine as it is easier to go directly there and find out what's happening.

In hearing the table of contents, I was tremendously impressed by the scope and range of material in this issue. The new editors seem to be refreshingly creative, flexible and open to new ideas.

I liked the tip to set a reminder to stop a few times a day and be grateful. I liked the article on texting on Alaska. I thought that Lisa's recap of the convention business meeting was excellent and perhaps the most comprehensive article ever written on this meeting.

Lastly, I do not understand why everyone is so worried about all the formats of the magazine appearing on the same day. This is not possible anyway because the postal service gets it there when they feel like it. Please send out the email as soon as it's ready, and continue to make an effort on the other three versions to post them as soon as possible.

Those are my suggestions for what it's worth. – Frank Cuta

[Note from the editors: We hear you loud and clear. You should be reading this issue close to the beginning of April, and the calendar is back at the end of the magazine.]

I really enjoyed the winter edition of Newslines. Heather's article about Dorothy, Peggy and Marilyn brought back so many fond memories of working with these wonderful ladies over the years and I was so glad to hear they're all just as sharp as I remember them to be. And I'm not much for cats, but I do think Winston as described by Carl has some wisdom we can all use. Finally, thank you Nancy and Joleen for sharing a wonderful story of tenacity and courage that we can all learn something from. I'm really looking forward to what the next issue brings! – Deb Lewis

Please submit your letters and comments good or bad to theWCBNewslines@gmail.com. We can take it!

FEATURES

The Cheshire Cat Interviews #4: Digging Deep

by Heather Meares

There is no greater new beginning to me than springtime in the garden. It always fills me with a sense of excitement when I wander outside on a cold, snowy day and notice the tiny green shoots of tulips and daffodils making their first appearance, reminding us that the depths of the dark soil below are harboring an explosion of beauty. We just have to be patient. I decided the perfect person to interview would be Sally Mayo, Master Gardener.

For this particular interview I strayed from my normal format of question and answers. Instead I just let her tell her story and we had a lovely conversation between two gardeners. I am now sharing some excerpts from this conversation with you.

Sally: I was interested in gardening for most of my life, but hadn't done it. Generally I would take on too much and become overwhelmed, even as a sighted person. I have a degree in biology, and was very interested in botany and entomology. They were fascinating to me. But life takes its own courses.

About three years ago, we were taking care of my husband's mom, who had dementia. During this time, my husband, Don, also had a stroke. The responsibilities became all encompassing, and I reached a point where I needed some respite. I needed to do something for me.

Over the last ten years I've met people who were involved in the Master Gardener program at WSU and decided to take the courses for certification. I am the only legally blind person in the program. There were some concerns about my ability to do the required work. This included an online class, 50 hours of continuing education credits, and 75 hours of volunteer time in a variety of different areas of our gardening community. These include a clinic, greenhouse, demo garden, and an heirloom garden where seed saving is done. We also have booths at the farmer's market and fair, as well as awareness classes and activities in the schools. I tend to work in the greenhouse area transplanting seedlings into pots.

There are some tasks I found I really couldn't do, such as identifying yellow or discolored leaves that need to be removed or moss that should not be in the pots, but I could do okay planting the seedlings. I really enjoy doing that and helping in the heirloom garden with the seed saving process. I am great at labeling the envelopes of seeds, which are used to propagate these heirloom varieties. By the end of the program, I was being told by my peers that they learn from me every day.

I recently attended a symposium on soil. The speaker was from Chile, and lives in Prosser. She does soil research and works with the orchards to determine the cause of problems based on the soil. She digs holes to literally get to the root of the problem. She can determine if there may be an overabundance of a particular mineral, or perhaps a rock that is blocking nutrients. Soil tests will not tell you these things. They only go down about a foot; she digs way deeper to find the actual roots. What intrigued me the

most was when she talked about the feel of the soil. I may not be able to identify the different colors of soil types but I could certainly learn the textures. I was also very interested when she talked about determining if a soil was too alkaline by pouring hydrochloric acid or lemon juice into a hole. If it is alkaline, it will make a fizzing noise. I could definitely do this based on hearing the sound of the reaction.

Meanwhile, back on the home front, my husband was diagnosed with congestive heart failure and had to make some drastic changes to his diet, such as drinking limited amounts of fluid and cutting down on sodium intake. This meant making more things from scratch in order to monitor the levels of sodium in the food he was eating. After about three months of these changes to his diet, the symptoms began to disappear almost completely; symptoms that had actually been around for several years, undiagnosed. I believe gardening helped me heal from the demands of being a caretaker, and helped him physically heal by growing some of our own healthy food, in times when romaine and kale were being pulled from the stores, I knew where ours came from.

Heather: So the thoughts in my mind as I listen to you talk about your path to becoming a master gardener and finding solutions to your husband's health issues are that they are one and the same. To achieve true healing you must dig deep enough to find the source, the root of the problem.

Sally: Yes, from all the things I've been learning health wise, it is really important for us to be in touch with the ground.

Heather: I think health-wise spiritually, mentally, and physically it's all connected. It absolutely is.

We then discussed adaptive gardening techniques we have experimented with, and the symbiotic relationships between plants, soil, and humans; the ways in which we are continually adjusting the biome, the minerals and nutrients to keep things in a healthy place.

Heather: What would be your final thoughts to share?

Sally: I would say never give up. It's like Thomas Edison trying however many times it took to make the light bulb work. It's the "How did you keep going?" question which he answered. I know all the many ways it doesn't work. So in my gardening experience, the things that didn't work, I know to change and try another experiment to see what results I get. And to be healthier, even if it means growing one tomato plant if you live in an apartment. You will then have some fresh produce, and the experience of growing it.

New Beginnings

by Holly Turri

Back in 2013, my husband Jim, my guide dog Sarabelle, and I embarked on the biggest new beginning in our lives. On May 29th we boarded an Alaska Airlines flight from Ronald Reagan airport near the Capitol and flew to Bellingham, Washington to live

permanently. Since the birth of our children, this interesting, exciting, and fun adventure has been the most rewarding one we've taken as a couple.

To make a new beginning a relatively stress-free venture, there are steps we need to take. Advance preparation goes a long way toward making anything successful. So, if you are planning a move down the street or around the world, here are some things to keep in mind.

1. Make sure public transportation and/or paratransit can be easily reached and used. To do this, look on the internet or make phone calls. As a long time WCB receptionist, I am amazed and saddened by how few people take the time to conduct simple research. Houses are bought in the middle of nowhere. What a surprise it is when the homeowner realizes they can't get to the store.
2. Subscribe to the online newspaper for the new area. This low cost option can reveal the amount and type of crime, the issues of importance to the people where we want to relocate, housing types, availability, and costs, the prices of food, and much, much more.
3. If renting an apartment, if possible take a sighted person and scope out the developments which look attractive. Talk to the office managers. Speak to the residents. Do they seem happy? What are their complaints? Have the "spy" look at the types of cars that are in the complex. Are they rusted wrecks or well maintained? Are kids running around unsupervised? During work days, do lots of young people

hang around with nothing to do? Have them look at the landscaping. Is it well maintained?

4. If purchasing a home, don't take the word of a realtor that "this house is right near the bus line." Walk with this individual to the stop. Often what appears convenient to the sighted lies across a major highway or in the middle of a humongous parking lot.
5. Make sure the things that are meaningful are easily reached. Is the church or temple nearby? Can a WCB chapter be reached? Is our favorite supermarket within easy travel? Is a mall on a bus line?
6. Talk to your health insurer and obtain a list of primary care physicians who are in the new area. Find doctors that are near to the prospective apartment or house.
7. When packing to move, put like items together. Seal boxes well with a sturdy tape. Write in braille and print what each box contains and in what room or area it goes.
8. To avoid bringing unwanted guests to a new home, spray the inside, outside, and after it has been sealed, the tape of each box with roach insecticide. Those little critters like the glue especially on the tape.

New beginnings are wonderful. Planning in advance makes the experience even more exciting, interesting, and relaxing.

“Mom, What’s Happening?” – Starting Again

by Vivian Conger

Barbee looked at me with a question in her eyes when we got to the guide dog school in Palm Springs, California. She saw her old mom and dad and trainer there and was wagging her tail like it was a party. We went inside to sign papers so that her puppy raisers could adopt her officially. She retired that day after giving me eight and a half years of loyal service as a fantastic guide dog.

We all then went to lunch and had a great time. When it came time to say goodbye, there was not a dry eye except for the dogs. They live in the moment you know. They think most things are a party. I said goodbye to my very special Barbee Girl and let them drive away. A very sad day for me, but a new beginning just around the corner too.

A few days later I started my training at guide dog school to receive my new partner. After having a few sessions with JUNO (the trainers acting like the guide), we all received our new guides.

One full week after receiving our dogs, we have walked a lot, learned a lot, will keep learning a lot, get more familiar with each other, and we humans look forward to going home. Again, the dogs live in the moment. They have no idea that in a week and a half their world will be changing again, and that they will be going to live in a very strange, new place.

So...here’s to more NEW BEGINNINGS and adventures to come!

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Accessibility and Navigation Delivered to Your Phone!

by Zack Hurtz

The one thing we all hear growing up in the visual impairment community is the Americans with Disabilities Act is our friend and we should know it by heart. I've studied the ADA and it's lacking in a lot of modern rules for today's advancement in technology which would allow easier navigation and availability of accessible information. I was given a fantastic opportunity through the Evergreen State College to solve a problem I see across all school campuses and I didn't hesitate to begin development.

In collaboration with the computer science programs and the entrepreneurship group here on campus I began gathering fellow students to design and create Reference Point Navigation. In September we sat down and discussed the biggest challenges for blind users to navigate around unknown areas and how we could make it easier for free exploration.

One objective is to deliver accessible detail oriented navigation and information including emergency evacuation routes, bathrooms, staircases and elevators. One feature we're expanding development on is outdoor navigation which includes hiking trails and parks.

Using our digital access we'll be able to allow users to get updated sign information, classroom changes and any other vital information that needs to be given to every day citizens. RPN's dynamic system allows for flexible sources of information granting

users the same access as a sighted person has. As we partner up with campuses we can include things like lunch menus, event fliers and campus resources.

Using text to speech the user receives step by step directions using existing structural landmarks like doors, walls, corners, stairs and digital access points. We verify our maps and our in house mapping service allows for real time error correction. If a user encounters a problem they can submit an error correction report.

For the moment we're using Evergreen as a proof of concept but have interest from the local community. While we're focusing on schools right now we'll expand into hospitals, airports and public areas.

We're currently entered into the Holman Prize competition where we can win \$25,000 and in spring we'll be entering into one of the state's largest business competitions where we can win \$50,000. The goal is to launch and be in five schools within the next two years while also expanding into cities.

If you'd like to donate to our project you can visit the RPN Go Fund Me page and if you'd like to help us win the Holman Prize competition, please watch and like our competition video.

Thank you for your time and interest. For more information please email me at ReferencePointNavigation@gmail.com. We will be doing some open house demonstrations coming up and I'll make sure to send invites out over the WCB listserv.

Holman Prize Video

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bYMc6fJkE5Q&t=1s>

Go Fund Me

<https://www.gofundme.com/development-of-accessible-navigation-for-the-blind>

Visit our site to follow us on Facebook and Twitter

<http://referencepointnavigation.com/contact-us>

For more information on the Holman Prize, please visit the following link: <http://holman.lighthouse-sf.org/>

BITS AND PIECES

compiled by Cindy Van Winkle

This column is presented for your information and enjoyment. Inclusion does not constitute endorsement by WCB. If you have items for inclusion, email theWCBNewsline@gmail.com and put “Bits and Pieces” in the subject line.

Hadley Seminars On Demand

Hadley Institute for the Blind and Visually Impaired now offers seminars on various topics. You can download recordings on topics such as Accessibility and Technology, Cooking and Entertaining, Health and Medical, Explore the Universe with NASA, Business, Employment and Vocational Skills, Professional Development, and much more.

<https://www.hadley.edu/PastSeminars.asp>

Audio Description

For a most current list of audio described movies on DVD, check out the Audio Description Project of ACB.

<http://www.acb.org/adp>

Free App

Be My Eyes is a free app that connects blind and low-vision people with sighted volunteers and company representatives for visual assistance through a live video call. Volunteers help with tasks, big and small.

<https://www.bemyeyes.com/>

Insurance Info

Regence BlueShield provides free aids and services to their customers, such as written information in large print, audio and accessible electronic formats. You must call to request.

Medicare Customer Service at 800-541-8981

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You can also file a civil rights complaint with the US Department of Health and Human Services Office of Civil Rights electronically, by phone, or by mail.

Electronically: <https://ocrportal.hhs.gov/ocr/portal/lobby.jsf>

Phone: 800-368-1019

Mailing address:

US Dept. of Health and Human Services

200 Independence Ave SW

Room 509F HHH Bldg.

Washington, DC 20201

Complaint forms are available at

<http://www.hhs.gov/ocr/office/file/index.html>

WCB HISTORY

A New Beginning In Spite of Ourselves

by Frank Cuta

In 1961 the organized blind movement in this country experienced a "new beginning." Our parent organization, the American Council of the Blind, was born. It was actually an unwanted pregnancy, the parents were not even talking much less sleeping together. It was born out of disunity, misguided loyalties and paranoia and the abuse of power by the leaders of the National Federation of the Blind. Below is a very much shortened version of that story. Take these lessons to heart and perhaps they will never need to be repeated.

I joined the movement in 1969 so at that time the history below was already ten years in the past. Although I knew many of the people mentioned below quite well and still have a great respect for them the facts are mostly gleaned from the book People of Vision. If you are interested in our history you should read it. It is available from NLS.

Although the ACB came into being in 1961, the actual organizational conflict that was our midwife took place principally between 1955 and 1959. The birth of the NFB back in 1940 had been a bold move to improve the lives of blind persons by giving them a platform from which to speak for themselves and gain some meaningful influence over the programs that were established to serve them. We take this influence for granted now but for the first twenty years of this movement organizations like the American Foundation for the Blind (AFB) and the American

Association of Workers for the Blind (AAWB) worked strongly to oppose our right to be heard.

In 1957 Senator John F. Kennedy sponsored a bill in the congress to protect the right of the blind to organize that was finally passed in 1959. We were up to 35 state affiliates and making great progress but we were forgetting to share and care for one another. There was internal strife festering in the heart of the organization.

At the time the NFB was led by an outstanding charismatic individual, Jacobus tenBroek (read his bio in Wikipedia, it is remarkable). He was a stirring speaker and inspired us to come to realize that blindness is not the real problem. Our personal and economic progress is mostly impeded by the public's negative attitudes and misconceptions about blindness.

In 1955 the organization was struggling financially. Its major source of income was the unsolicited mailing of greeting cards. This income was crucial because it was shared with the state affiliates. It reinforced their strength and loyalty, and ensured that they would send delegates to the national convention. We were experiencing a great deal of negative publicity because this type of fund raising is commonly associated with fraud and abuse. In fact seeming irregularities had already drawn the interest of the Better Business Bureau and the fraud division of the US Post Office and the AFB and AAWB were adding fuel to the fire. Associated with this issue was the fact that in contradiction to what we were saying in our unsolicited mailings, we were using a

fake organization, the American Brotherhood for the Blind, to pay some of our board members/officers to do organizational work.

In 1955 a resolution was introduced at the national convention that would have expanded president tenBroek's authorization to hire, fire, and pay staff. This first attempt failed to pass. At the 1956 convention in San Francisco tensions increased when tenBroek announced that he had gone ahead and had an organizational office built on his private property using NFB funds. He had done this without consulting the convention or even the executive committee.

Another organizational leader, Durward McDaniel, thought this a bit presumptuous and began developing procedural controls and better bookkeeping processes that he hoped would be accepted at the 1957 convention in New Orleans. At this convention, at the same time tenBroek was rallying the troops to fight for their right to be heard. He was using his political clout to see that these organizational financial reforms were rejected. There seemed to be no room for compromise or disagreement. TenBroek was becoming more and more defensive and demanding absolute loyalty from his board.

The 1955 resolution with slightly different wording was reintroduced and accepted by the board at a meeting after the 1957 convention. This gave the president unprecedented financial and staff management authority. As communications continued to break down, the two factions that had been developing finally congealed into two hostile polarized camps. In February of 1959 this internal strife erupted into harsh personal attacks from each

side, one against the other. In response to the suggestion that he might consider stepping aside from the presidency in order to let some healing take place, tenBroek claimed that his detractors were just as much traitors as the sighted flunkies in the agencies.

During this period of conflict the NFB's organizational periodical, the Braille Monitor, only printed material supporting the administration's view. Eloquent letters from California, Colorado and Illinois calling for the much needed reforms eventually evolved into the birth of a new publication, the Federation Free Press. Some of the reforms that were proposed at this time were affiliate representation on the nominating and resolutions committees, term limits on the presidency, the adoption of an adequate and responsible system of budgeting and accounting and in general, better checks and balances. The Federation Free Press morphed into the Braille Free Press which eventually morphed into an organization, the American Council of the Blind.

The underlying theme here is power. Should it be in the hands of the membership or its leaders? We need to reject the notion that to be most effective a movement needs to have strong unquestioned leadership that can act quickly and decisively – one that can hide questionable activities from the public until such a time as you are less vulnerable. We should reject the idea that the membership should be ready and willing to confer unquestioning power on their leader. A philosophy that says that rather than compromise with your friends that they are expendable. A policy that proclaims that hypocrisy is justified and the ends justifies the means.

It's my prayer that as long as I am alive that our new beginnings take us the other way. Towards cooperation, caring, sharing and listening to the concerns of our members. Most important of all our movement is a people's movement and we need to trust that blind people are capable of thinking and speaking for themselves.

More Than One Road Leads Out of Our Past: Which is the One to Follow?

by Carl Jarvis

"You spend far too much time looking back in history," a fellow wrote me on a chat list.

"Well," I wrote back, "at 83 years of age, most of my life actually is history."

For example, how many of you remember April 12, 1945? I was a day from my tenth birthday, packing my paper route, the Seattle Star. Remember the Seattle Star? Of course you don't. It folded back in June of 1945. That's almost ancient history.

But there I was, trudging along on a very pleasant April day, delivering my papers. A man had his car straddling the sidewalk, all doors open and his car radio blasting out the news. "President Franklin Delano Roosevelt was announced dead just hours ago!" I stopped in my tracks. The man looked up from working on his car and shook his head. I remember the shock I felt. This was the only president I'd ever known.

1945 seems so long ago. And yet, there I was, a ten year old boy, running and jumping and laughing and clowning around in what is now History. That paper, the Seattle Star, cost 75 cents a month. It was a six day a week paper. No Sunday edition.

Along my paper route many home owners had dug up their lawns and planted Victory Gardens. Some folks had planted their gardens so the crops grew in the shapes of American Flags, or V for Victory.

Mother had a garden patch in which she raised tomatoes, cucumbers, onions, lettuce and beans. And oh the sweet tasting blackberries! Those cruel thorny vines grew out over the steep slopes of Queen Anne Hill, with clusters of ripe berries way out above the street below. We took cardboard boxes, flattened them and put them on the vines, standing on one while putting the next one in front, stepping onto it and moving the back box to the front, until we were at least fifteen feet above the ground, plucking the fat juicy fruit and dropping them into our Crisco cans and stuffing a few into our purple-rimmed mouths.

There was no TV in Seattle in 1945. We had an old Philco radio sitting on a shelf in the kitchen. Every morning we sat silently eating our breakfast while Dad listened to the latest war news. On Sunday evenings we all gathered around the Philco and listened to Jack Benny, Fibber McGee and Molly, Fred Allen and other family programs.

We had no refrigerator, but we did have an old ice box on the porch. Every few days the iceman trudged up the long steep path that led to our house, with a big block of ice on his shoulder, which he dropped into the top of the icebox. That kept the vegetables fresh, but if we had enough money for ice cream, one of us would have to rush to the grocery store after dinner, and buy a quart of Carnation ice cream. Mother would divide the quart into five equal portions while we all looked on in happy anticipation.

That's all history, now. And it started me to thinking. How do we capture the real feeling of those times, and bring them to the children of today? For you see, history is much more than a series of events. History is being able to feel those events as they happened. Understanding how people felt enables us to better understand how the world was then, and how it impacts our world of today.

In looking back at history, we risk viewing it through today's understanding. You know, the Monday morning quarterback. It gives us a far different feeling than how we felt at the moment. Capturing that feeling of the moment is critical to our understanding of those past events and how they impacted our world today.

My parents wrote a Memory Book. In that book they tried to recall how they felt and what they thought about various events in their lives. But today, we live in the Now, and we write in the Now, forgetting that our thoughts will be lost if no one tucks them away. With all our easy communication and amazing technology, we

could well become the "forgotten generation." If no one records the feelings and emotions and conversations of today, it will impact how the next generation sees past events. Instead of understanding, they will remain in ignorance.

In science we know that we must understand each step thoroughly in order to advance to a higher level. And even more so, the same careful attention is required in building a better world.

The History Quiz

by Carl Jarvis

Without a history, an organization is like a ship without a compass.

If you don't know where you've been, how will you know when you reach your destination? How can you even know if you are on the right road? Just as it is with each of us, an organization is a composite of all the activities, events, victories and failures that have brought it to its present being.

Toward this end, the WCB History committee is offering a series of questions, along with some background comments, as reminders of who we were. This "History in Brief" will appear around the first of each month.

So, let's get started with a couple of quizzes, as well as answers and questions to encourage discussion in your group.

History Quiz #1

Washington Council of the Blind (WCB) has a long history. Today's organization is the result of a merger of two organizations. Can you name them? When did the merger take place, and where was the merger meeting held?

Answers

The merger was between Washington Council of the Blind (WCB) and United Blind of Washington State (UBWS). It occurred on March 3, 1990 at the Best Western Executive Inn in Seattle.

Discussion Questions

- Were any of your chapter members at that merger meeting? If so, have them talk about their memories.
- After 25 years, is life better for blind people than it was in 1990? See if other members can think of improvements brought about through the efforts of WCB.

History Quiz #2

The 1990 merger brought together two organizations, WCB and UBWS. Which was the older organization? Name the year each was organized. Do you know the original name of UBWS?

Answers

UBWS was organized in 1935, under the name Washington State Association of the Blind (WSAB). WCB was organized in 1971.

Discussion Questions

- Are any of your chapter members formerly with UBWS or the original WCB?
- How did they feel about the merger?

WSAB was organized during the height of the Great Depression, through the joining together of several local organizations from Seattle, Tacoma, Bremerton, Spokane, Vancouver. (Note: does anyone have additions or corrections to this list?)

For the next six years, 1935-1941, WSAB was an independent state organization, seeking to influence the state legislature in providing basic health and welfare services that local communities could no longer afford. Among the programs the legislature established were Aid to the Blind and Free College Tuition for the Blind.

In 1940, National Federation of the Blind was founded. WSAB was invited to join and in 1941 they became a member affiliate. In 1975 WSAB members voted to change their name to National Federation of the Blind of Washington (NFBW).

In 1980, following serious philosophical differences between NFBW and NFB, Washington was ejected from the national organization. While NFB set about establishing a new chapter in Washington, the majority of the members changed the organization's name to United Blind of Washington State (UBWS), and went forward as an independent organization until the 1990 merger.

WCB was originally established in 1971, in part to support the

staff at the Office of Services for the Blind. The majority of the staff was opposed to the establishment of a Commission for the Blind, being proposed by the WSAB, and also supported by the NFB. Also, there was a growing disaffection between blind people in Washington and the more rigid control by the national office of NFB.

Discuss at your Chapter meetings the organizational structure of WCB and how the business of the organization is carried out from the local chapters to the state level and on to the national level of American Council of the Blind (ACB).

LIFESTYLE

Popcorn in the Front Row #5

by Kevin Daniel

Movies Featured: "Madea's Family Funeral," Green Book," and "Joe Somebody"

As a lifelong movie enthusiast, I'm hoping to bring my perspective, insight, opinion, and recommendations on what to see and what to definitely miss to the WCB community. My hope would be to inspire and ignite interest in theatrical offerings in the hope that readers might be compelled to go see a movie that could offer an escape, educate, inform, inspire, or simply present a wonderful opportunity to get lost in a cinematic vortex of entertainment.

My reviews will span through all genres, ratings, and categories. I will rate each movie I review on a six point braille cell style system, where six dots is the very best rating a reviewed movie may receive (meaning it is extremely good and recommended) and one dot will be the worst rating (meaning it isn't at all recommended and should be avoided). Each article will feature recently released movies that I've screened. All movies have been available somewhere with audio description. In addition, I'll add fun facts, insightful tidbits, and general information about the featured films. I hope you'll enjoy the columns, and GET OUT TO THE MOVIES!

Movie #1 "Madea Family Funeral"

Released on March 1, 2019 (Comedy) Rated PG-13

The final movie in the popular and long running “Madea” franchise was woefully disappointing. I wasn’t sure I wanted to see it, fearing that the “Madea” series had grown old and tired, but the trailer looked appealing and I said, what the heck – I can at least get some popcorn and Junior Mints which typically make bad movies tolerable. Of course, after about nine minutes of watching this movie, I realized that my more than forty plus years of frequenting movies, has yielded an acute sense of predicting duds before I even leave the house. Tyler Perry, the creator of the “Madea” series and the chief character in all the films, probably displayed as poor of an acting job as I’d ever seen him give. It almost appeared that he knew this was the final film he’d ever do in this series and just wanted to get the whole thing over with. The other actors in this film were worse than that. The only good thing about the movie, was the trailer and concept. It could have been funny. Tyler Perry could have made a great movie out of the idea the trailer promised. It did not happen.

I do not recommend this film unless there is a snow storm and you can’t get out of the house, and all your cleaning, laundry, ironing, dusting, reading, toe nail grooming, etc. have been all done, and you are simply bored to nausea. I give this film two out of six braille cell dots, mainly because I like Tyler Perry... usually.

Movie #2 “Green Book”

Released on November 24, 2018 (Comedy Drama) Rated PG-13

Inspired by a true story set in the 1960’s, Green Book chronicles the journey of an African-American concert pianist who chooses

to play through the deep South and his experience while traveling with his white, not-so-racially-adept driver and soon-to-be friend. This was a wonderful story that was well laid out. It acknowledged the inherent racism the title character experienced but didn't beat you over the head with it. It showcased the struggles, but also highlighted a well-defined blossoming friendship between the two main characters who came from different walks of life and world views. It was funny, educational, inspiring, and entertaining. A home run as far as a movie going experience goes. And, of course, the acting performance of Mahershala Ali, who played the main character and won the Academy Award this year for best supporting actor for this very film. He also won best actor last year for "Moonlight," so he is on a nice run and at the top of his craft. The movie did drag a bit at times, but the performances and the great story made up for this.

I'm enthusiastically recommending this film and give it four out of six braille cell dots.

Blast from the Past: Movie #3 "Joe Somebody"

Released in 2001 (Romantic Comedy) Rated PG-13

This fun little gem may be a movie you've never heard of. It stars Tim Allen in a role where he is the romantic lead. It's light-hearted, funny, and has a message that you can leave with that resonates in life. I just happened to catch this movie while channel surfing on cable, and loved it – wondering why I hadn't caught it or known about in the theatre.

If you are looking for a family friendly romantic comedy and you like Tim Allen, I highly recommend “Joe Somebody”! I give this one five out of six braille cell dots.

The Virtual Bookshelf: A Reader’s Column

by Meka White

Anyone who has ever spent a large amount of time with me can tell you that I love books. I enjoy buying them, reading them, borrowing them, and talking about them with anyone who will give me an opening in the conversation to share one of my favorite passions. Reading is not only a hobby but a comfort as well. There is nothing more satisfying to me than to be transported to different settings and adventures as the narrative of the story continues to weave and spin throughout its pages. So, when I found myself in a book slump last year, particularly after having six good months of consistent reading, I was out of my depth.

I won’t go in to the particular reasons for the book slump, but suffice it to say that when it happened, I was unprepared. I’d set a reading challenge to be transported into at least one hundred stories, but I struggled to keep track. Every couple of months or so I would find myself reading a book or two and going right back to being Bookless in Seattle and having to find other ways to entertain myself during the commute.

Toward the end of December, I had to tell myself that although I lost count of how many books I said I’d read for my challenge, it was okay that I hadn’t finished. I am pretty certain that I read over

my initial goal, but since I wasn't actively tracking my book count, I couldn't be sure. Then I decided that on January 1, I would be nicer to myself and approach the challenge differently.

This year, I have set myself a challenge to read sixty books. If I make it, great. If not, I still read a lot of books anyway. I started tracking my reading through an app called Goodreads. The app allows readers to track, rate, and review their reads. You can be as involved as you like, or just stick to tracking and rating. For the more organized among us, you can create different virtual bookshelves and build your own library. By using both the app and its website at <http://www.goodreads.com>, I had a solution at my fingertips. I also started a book thread on Twitter to keep track since sometimes Goodreads can count books multiple times. I told myself that the moment I started obsessing over the numbers, I would stop, and so far, I have been successful.

What about you? Have you created any reading goals this year? If so, that's wonderful. If you haven't, that's okay too. At the end of the day, reading should be something enjoyable and fun, not something that you struggle to do out of misplaced guilt.

If you have more questions about Goodreads, suggestions for subjects that you'd like for me to tackle in this column, books that you think I should read, or if you just want to talk about your favorite books, please send an email to me at mekawh@gmail.com with Virtual Bookshelf in the subject line. I promise, I will be extremely happy to hear from you!

I hope that you will continue to enjoy the journey of books, whether this is a new beginning or a steady trek.

**For the Love of You: Mindful Thoughts, Healthy Recipes, and a Happy Heart
Self-love... a New Beginning**

by Hayley Agers

Is self-love a selfish love? No. Taking care of oneself allows us to give selflessly without expectation or regret.

Self-love is self-acceptance, caring about one's own happiness and well-being, and considering yourself valuable. When you feel valuable, you no longer feel the need to prove yourself to others. We've been taught that being selfless means putting your needs aside and thinking of others first. This narrowed viewpoint doesn't allow us to fill our cup. It can lead to resentment, frustration, and doing things for the wrong reasons. Isn't it better to wholeheartedly bless others, which in turn will leave you blessed?

I was once asked to take on some responsibilities of my co-workers and I agreed, knowing my work load was already more than I was comfortable with. I knew this would leave me exhausted, with nothing left to give to my husband when I got home. Still, I said yes. I wanted to be that dependable person, to see things run smoothly and impress the boss. I wanted to be the person who could do it all. Admittedly, I felt like "they can't do it, but I can, and I'll do it better." I did my job and got those extra things done, but I had a horrible attitude when I got home. I was

having more stomach problems, felt tired and grumpy, and hated going to work. I resented my boss for asking. If I had just said “No, I’d love to help, but I am already overwhelmed” or “is there a way to job share the tasks?” I would have been much more pleasant to be around. I wanted to bless others, but when we take on more than we can chew, that intention becomes a curse.

Here is one thing I am doing to take better self-care. When I’m asked to participate in something, I will say “Thank you for asking, let me think and pray about it and get back to you”. Simple, right? Nope. It takes practice and consistency.

Here are some other ways to practice self-love.

1. Schedule time in your day for yourself. Listen to a book on the train.
2. Tell your family when you walk in the door you need fifteen minutes to have a cup of tea or just unwind. Whatever they needed will still be important after fifteen minutes.
3. Relax and breathe. Take a hot shower or bath. Infuse it with essential oils or your favorite bubble bath. Use an uplifting scented shower gel or relaxing lavender one to unwind. Spoil yourself with a homemade sugar scrub. Play your favorite music, have a glass of wine, or whatever allows you to go inward and process your day before engaging with others. This will help interaction be more positive and meaningful.
4. Plan a few healthy meals instead of grabbing what is fast, easy and unhealthy. If food prep takes away from time with your family, get them involved. Set a nice table, put on some music, and sit down to a meal that you feel good about.

5. Keep a journal. Write down your thoughts. Getting those voices out of your head clears your mind and heart to receive the next blessing. End your journaling with three things you are grateful for. A grateful heart is a happy heart.
6. Find a hobby. Is there something you love doing, but gave up when you lost vision or told yourself you were too busy? I recently began horse riding lessons. I used to ride and compete but gave it up when I began losing vision. I never lost my love for horses or the peace and grounding I felt when I was around them. Get back to that old love or discover a new one.
7. Refocus on your spirituality. Have you become complacent or concentrated so much on serving that you've stopped spending time in praise and thanksgiving? Find a Bible study, support group, or yoga class to center yourself. Read a book that reminds you of your worth and encourages you to use your gifts and talents. Do a daily devotional or simply pray each day.

This quick dinner recipe will allow you more time to relax and do something kind for yourself.

Sheet Pan Chicken Fajitas

- 1 1/2 lbs boneless skinless chicken breasts, cut into thin strips
- 1 red bell pepper, cut into strips
- 1 green bell pepper, cut into strips
- 1 yellow bell pepper, cut into strips
- 1 large onion, sliced
- 6 cloves of garlic, minced
- 2 tsp chili powder

2 tsp ground cumin
1 tsp paprika
1 tsp salt
1/2 tsp ground black pepper
1/2 tsp ground coriander
1/4 cup extra virgin olive oil
2 Tbsp lime juice
1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped
warm tortillas

Optional toppings: sour cream, grated cheese, avocado, salsa

Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

Grease a large rimmed cookie sheet or use a silpat baking mat. Spread the bell peppers, onions, and chicken strips evenly onto the pan and sprinkle the garlic over the top.

In a small bowl, combine chili powder, cumin, paprika, salt, pepper, and coriander and mix well.

Sprinkle the spice mixture over the veggies and chicken, coating as evenly as possible.

Drizzle olive oil over everything and use tongs to toss and make sure everything is well coated.

Bake for 25 minutes or until chicken is thoroughly cooked.

After removing from oven, drizzle with lime juice and sprinkle the chopped cilantro over the pan. Toss with clean tongs.

Assemble fajitas either in a corn or flour tortilla, on a bed of greens, or alongside Spanish rice, and serve with optional toppings.

Orange Vanilla Body Scrub

Use this scrub to get rid of dead, dry skin. Get out of the bath or shower with smooth skin and an uplifted mood, as this is one of the benefits of orange essential oil.

1 cup unscented Epsom salt

1/2 cup olive oil

1/2 tsp vanilla extract

4 drops orange essential oil

In a small bowl, mix together all ingredients until well combined. Place mixture into a food grade plastic container and give as gifts or keep for yourself.

*BE CAREFUL as this scrub can make the floor of the tub slippery! If you choose to put in a glass mason jar, be careful not to place where it could be knocked off and broken.

“An empty lantern provides no light. Self-care is the fuel that allows your light to shine brightly” – Author unknown

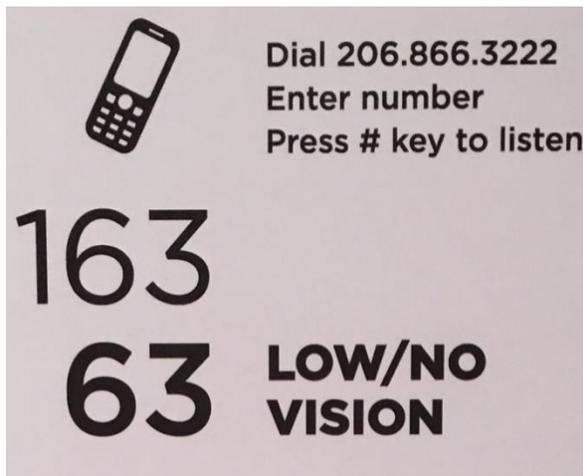
Seattle Art Museum: Always Open

by Colette Arvidson

The Skagit and Island Counties Council of the Blind has made two trips to the Seattle Art Museum for its special tour for people who have low or no vision. We have enjoyed these tours led by staff and volunteers who are trained to provide very specific description of the artwork for us, as well as providing tactile

objects as well as treats before the tour. This year we arrived early and asked if we could find some of the other exhibits outside the tour that are described by way of dialing by phone and entering a special code. The art museum provided us with access, and we were able to find two before the formal tour.

I thought it was a shame that the time and effort put into creating these very accessible descriptions are not easily found, especially if a person who is blind is not accompanied by a sighted person. With that concern in mind and a goal of identifying all currently displayed pieces with no/low-vision descriptions, my granddaughter Olivia and I made the trip from Anacortes to the Seattle Art Museum.



The exhibits that are described are identified by a sign to the side of the artwork. It is about 6 inches by 8 inches in size and includes a drawing of a mobile phone, and the words: “Dial 206.866.3222. Enter number. Press # key to listen.” Then two numbers three times larger than

the directions are listed. The first number shown in the photo above is “163.” That is the number for the background or analysis. On the line below the last two digits of the number are listed, in this case, “63”, followed by the words in capital letters “low/no vision.” If you key in the 2-digit number the visual description plays first and is followed by the by background/analysis.

On another sign near this is the name of the artwork and a summary of other information about the artwork.

After something of a scavenger-hunt through the museum, Olivia and I identified 14 items. These are scattered around the 3rd and 4th floors in the exhibit halls. I've provided a sketched map to the Seattle Art Museum, in the event they would like to share this information with their volunteers, realizing that the pieces move, I can provide it to anyone else who is interested in visiting the museum in the next months. A list of the pieces we found, their code numbers, and the gallery they are in is listed below.

The good news is that in spite of the fact that these are “moving” targets on site at the SAM, they tell me that the numbers and descriptions assigned to these pieces rarely change. That means that any hour of the day or night, if you are interested in your own private tour of the museum, you can call the Seattle Art Museum's number (206) 866-3222 and input the 2-digit code.



Photo to left:
Code 63#.
Native American artwork of fused and sand carved glass titled “Killer Whale (Keet Shagoon),” created by Preston Singletary.

If you are interested in more, the Seattle Art Museum puts all of their audio content on SoundCloud, including the low/no-vision tours at <https://soundcloud.com/seattle-art-museum>. Occasionally for special exhibits an audio tour is provided with descriptions.

For more information on upcoming monthly Art Beyond Sight tours at the SAM, email access@SeattleArtMuseum.org.

Here are the items we found. Even if you don't know the numbers of particular art pieces, you can still receive descriptions by dialing in and trying a variety of two-digit numbers. Your very own scavenger hunt!

3rd Floor described pieces

Modern and Contemporary Art Gallery

57# Trapspring by Lynette Yiadon-Boakye, oil on canvas

92# X by Brenna Youngblood, paper and acrylic on canvas

American Art Gallery

61# Mount Rainier, Bay of Tacoma, Puget Sound by Sanford Robinson Gifford, oil on canvas

Native North American Art Gallery

63# Killer Whale (Keet Shagoon) by Preston Singletary, fused and sand carved glass

4th Floor described pieces

African Art Gallery

70# Standing Figure-Nkondi by Nigerian artists; wood, mirror, glass, chalk

53# Axe by Nigerian Yoruba; wood, iron

83# Three Sets of Twins by Nigerian Yoruba; wood, pigment, beads, nails

69# Coffin by Kane Quaye; wood, paint

77# Massai Collection of 3 necklaces by Massai Women, beads

79# Okumpa Masquerade Player; display of life-size costumed figures with masks of wood, pigment and raffia

Ancient Mediterranean & Islamic Art

68# Mihrab by 18th Century Northern Iranian, Kashan; ceramic with glaze

European Art

84# Psyche Abandoned by Cupid by Nicolas Colombei, oil on canvas)

66# Dining Room, Rue de Naples, Paris by Eduard Vuillard; oil on cardboard)

67# The Italian Room created 1550-1600; room constructed of spruce, willow, fir

Tin Sandwich Madness

by Gaylen Floy

When the going gets tough, the tough get going, right? When that doesn't pan out, some of us pick up a harmonica thinking we need to play the blues. Last summer while rehabbing from knee surgery, a high school chum posted a video of a woman blues "harp" player. My friend played and encouraged me to give it a go.

The humble harmonica, also known as the mouth organ, harp, and tin sandwich, was designed in the nineteenth century to play chords. Blues players have been creative in getting incredible

sounds. There are many kinds of harmonicas. The diatonic is used by most blues players. Diatonic means the harp has 10 holes, each producing two notes depending on whether you blow or draw (inhale).

Researching blues harmonica online looked promising: the diatonic harmonica is very affordable, compact, and lightweight. Online you find professional blues players with YouTube channels offering free beginner and some intermediate lessons. You can even download free backing tracks. Sometimes the instructors play recordings of old school players, explaining how to play the “lick.” You listen to players like Little Walter, James Cotton, and Sonny Boy Williamson.

Beginners start with a good quality harp in the key of C. The Hohner Marine Band 1896 is used by professionals and is easy to play. Cost is just under \$50. More expensive harps can be much more challenging to play because of the size and spacing of holes. Hohner is a solid brand delivering good quality right out of the box, but there are other reputable brands.

Your first task is to get clean single notes. Some people get frustrated and quit. Keep picturing yourself sitting by the campfire under the prairie moon, playing Red River Valley. Let the dogs howl.

The next step to play blues is bending notes. By changing the shape of your mouth, you bend reeds to get sharps and flats. Getting the reeds to bend can take time, as well as hitting the notes precisely. For keeping time, the GarageBand app is

accessible, has a customizable metronome, and you can use its keyboard to check pitch. Though the harmonica is not quite as annoying as bagpipes, practicing bends far away from your friends, family, and neighbors may prove wise.

Along the way, you learn about two basic techniques: lip pursing and tongue blocking. Some players prefer one over the other, some use a combination. Yes, you brush your teeth and apply lip gloss before playing. After playing you let the instrument air out.

So far I am able to crank out a few tunes, bend some, play simple licks, gliss, growl, warble a bit, and am happy as a pig in mud. In my mind I'm sitting on a front porch in Mississippi harmonizing with the cicadas.

Warning: A seemingly rational person cannot live with just one harmonica. Those low-tuned Hohner Thunderbirds sound sultry on slow blues shuffles, but playing them must be like driving an 18-wheeler. Maybe next year.

Awakening the Cacophony

by Heather Meares

Every winter is the same for me. The indigo colored numbness has settled in much deeper than I ever expected. My head is filled with cobwebs and fog. My hands and feet are always cold. My favorite outfit is my flannel pajamas and no matter how hard I try to stay productive, somehow I just keep finding myself under the down comforter and quilts, buried in all six pillows of my bed,

which I like to refer to as my office. Sometimes I wonder if I have mistakenly crawled down a ladder into a well and the ladder has mysteriously disappeared. It is not a bad place. In fact, it is quite familiar. Quiet and muted is the world outside my hibernation. Cars drive through soggy streets and the wind tickles the chimes on all the porches of my neighborhood, reminding me that life still goes on outside my cocoon.

And then one day it happens. My favorite bird returns and awakens me to his beautiful song outside my window. His song triggers a cacophony of my soul. Thoughts of starting seeds in a random assortment of containers in my kitchen start dancing around in my head. A tornado of garden design ideas swirl uncontrollably in my mind: unique greenhouse structures made from repurposed antique items, herb gardens made out of old wagon wheels, chandeliers turned into bird feeders and old pianos transformed into fountains with climbing roses spilling out everywhere. I suddenly feel the need to start writing more and creating music and experimenting with different flavors of spices and herbs in my cooking. I feel compelled to put things together that aren't supposed to go together just because I can.

Once these stirrings begin, I know the inevitable is about to occur. That one random idea that just takes hold of me so strongly there is no point in fighting it.

One year I decided I needed to start a lavender farm and the very next day I ordered over 400 lavender plants which became Calluna Blue Lavender Co., LLC. I ripped out my entire front yard and planted a beautiful triple spiral garden within a giant circle, all

made of different varieties of lavender. I learned to grow, harvest, and create products from my lavender and to distill the essential oils. Another year I decided I needed some tulips. Three hundred bulbs later I was happy.

This year I spontaneously decided I really needed baby chickens ... for eggs and friendship. They will have an eclectic coop with lots of fun signs and chicken music to keep them happy. There will be a compost area in the chicken run, which they will do the work of mixing for me. The compost will then be used in my gardens where I grow lots of fresh vegetables, herbs, and fruit. A wonderful cycle now exists ... I feed the chickens, they give me eggs (and friendship) and add organic matter to the compost, which then feeds the vegetables I grow to feed myself.

And now, the deep intensity of indigo blue inside me gradually lightens to the beautiful shade of a blue hydrangea in summer, which will always be my favorite blue.

WCB HAPPENINGS

The Blessings Behind the Challenge

by Hayley Agers

When you hear the words Braille Challenge, many thoughts may come to mind: blind children, proctors, WTBBL, braille accuracy, and another thing to add to your already busy life. All these things went through my mind too.

The Challenge was held on January 12, 2019 at WTBBL in Seattle. The event was sponsored by the WCB Families Committee, who donated items such as pizza, prizes, and t-shirts. This year, there were seven students who participated from all over western Washington. One was even from Wenatchee.

Students are scored on their braille literacy skills, including spelling, translation, and reading graphs and charts. The day also included a brief overview of braille, using handmade wooden braille cells, a braille name tag ice breaker, a braille word scramble for families to do while their child was testing, a discussion panel comprised of committee members, and a presentation by Guide Dogs for the Blind. It was a very successful day. A great time was had by all.

Now I want to tell you about the challenge from a different perspective ... mine. As a busy wife and mum of two, I have very little time to just relax with my family on the weekends. In January particularly, this was the only weekend I wouldn't be cheering on my daughter while attending a gymnastics meet. I was feeling a little overwhelmed at the thought of giving up that one day to drive

into Seattle for the challenge. I tell you this not to confess my selfish nature, but because I want you to hear that sometimes there is a blessing waiting for us right around the corner. Never give up looking for it.

At the start of the day, when I was struggling to find a seat with the crowd, I found myself sitting at the table with my committee members and other blind adults I had known for many years. Was this comfortable? Yes, and it was nice to be with them, but it wasn't why I had given up my day with my family. I was there because I am passionate about using my blindness journey to reach out to others who aren't quite as far along in their journey.

Today those people were young blind children and their parents. I forced myself out of my comfort zone to walk to an unknown table, hoping for an empty chair and a chance to introduce myself. I first met a young girl, a participant, who showed an interest in my guide dog. Ordinarily, I would not encourage people to pet him when he is working, but I wanted her to feel relaxed and safe talking with me. When I asked her if she likes dogs, her response tugged a little at my mama's heart. "I like animals because they love me back." I went on to ask her about her friends at school and she said she doesn't have many. We need to change that, I thought to myself.

Next, I found a young man, 12 years old, and sat down to talk to him about his interests. We discovered that we both love playing Uno and so I ventured over to yet another unknown table, picked up the braille Uno and took it back so we could play. I was certain I'd win because that's what I do at home. Now nobody in my

family will play with me. He was just as determined that he would win and he did, he beat me three games to one. We laughed and we poked fun at one another. I felt such happiness. It wasn't however, until he said these words to me, that I realized why I was going to be the one walking away feeling so blessed. "This was so cool Ms. Hayley. I play Uno all the time at home with my dad, but I've never played it with another blind person." Why was this, and how could I make sure this wouldn't be his last time?

Finally, I sat and spoke to a little girl and her mum. She was not only blind, but also autistic and the most precious little girl. We spoke, but our conversations were short. Often her mum would need to encourage her to answer me, but I was just so thankful for this interaction with them. It wasn't until my 10 year old daughter and my 13 year old son walked in that I really felt the need for something much bigger than I was there to provide.

In an instant, the two boys began interacting, talking about what games they liked to play, what books they liked or didn't like. It was the blind child encouraging my son to try something new. It was when the little girl I had been trying to strike up a conversation with, reached out for my daughter, then turned to her mum with such excitement saying, "Mum there is another girl here."

When we walked away to leave, my daughter Sydney turned to me and said, "She was really nice, Mum. I could see myself hanging out with her." So why aren't they? Why do so many blind children have difficulties making friends in their local communities and schools? How can I and the WCB Families committee plan

events that will address these issues and give children the skills and confidence to do just that?

This event was an eye opener for me. It will definitely guide my focus, the focus of the WCB Families, and hopefully WCB chapters in the year to come. These were amazing children and families. I walked away feeling so inspired by their bravery, passion for braille, and desire to connect with others.

I encourage you all to step out of your comfort zone today. Be brave enough to risk messing up in order to reach out and touch somebody who could really use your life experiences to help them along. And, in all of that, they might just teach you something too.

Step 1: Plan for Convention

by Cindy Van Winkle

While convention is still six months away, it is not too late to figure out how much it will cost you to attend based on your situation and start putting a little money aside each month, find a roommate, or help your chapter hold a fundraiser to assist you and others to attend.

Dates of convention: October 24-26, 2019

Location: DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Seattle Airport

Guest rooms are all in the tower. Rate is \$102 per night (single and double occupancy) plus tax, with \$10 extra per person for

triple and quadruple occupancy. WiFi is complimentary; self-Parking is \$10 day and overnight.

Registration Rates approved by the WCB Board:

Early Bird registration (by September 15):

- \$35 - Registration only
- \$70 - Registration plus Friday meals, Saturday meals (breakfast & lunch only), or banquet
- \$115 – Registration plus meal package (up to five meals)

Pre-registration (by October 10)

- \$55 - Registration only
- \$90 - Registration plus Friday meals, Saturday meals (breakfast & lunch only), or banquet
- \$140 – Registration plus meal package (up to five meals)

Registration (October 11 through convention)

- \$75 - Registration only
- \$110 - Registration plus Friday meals, Saturday meals (breakfast & lunch only), or banquet
- \$175 – Registration plus meal package (up to five meals)

Vendor Registration is \$100 per table.

In response to feedback from conventioners, the committee has decided on the following:

To hold a Raffle and Silent Auction combo fundraiser.

- A downloadable item list will be made available in the room and be sent out on the WCB email list.
- We'll provide more help in the room with describing items and assisting with bidding.

To bring back breakout sessions

- Program ideas must be received by the Convention Committee no later than April 15 for consideration.

Don't let this convention slip away. Mark your calendar and begin planning now to be a part of Washington's biggest event for the blind community. We want you there!

Scholarships, Scholarships, Scholarships!

by Kim Moberg

In the fall of 2019 are you planning on attending some kind of post-secondary education? If you are, how will you pay for it? Grants and financial aid only go so far. Books and tuition are expensive these days. I have a suggestion. How about applying for a WCB Scholarship?

By the time you are reading this article, we will be accepting scholarship applications and we want as many qualified applicants as possible.

In 2018 we awarded scholarships that ranged in amounts from \$3,000 to \$5,000. There is no set amount. It is all about how many applications we receive, and how you present yourself in your supporting documents and on the application itself.

If you are legally blind in the better eye with correction, are a resident of Washington state, will be attending a college/university or a technical/vocational school, and you can say yes to all three

of these questions then I encourage you to apply for this scholarship.

A couple of reminders to keep in mind when applying:

1. Legal blindness is defined as an individual who has a visual acuity of 20/200 or less in the corrected eye and/or 20° or less visual field in the corrected eye,
2. A legal resident is a person who has physically lived in Washington state for a minimum of 12 consecutive months.
3. You will need to prove that you are either enrolled or intend to enroll in a college/university or technical/vocational school for fall term 2019.

If you can satisfy the items above, proceed with the application. If you have questions about any part of the application process, email scholarshipwcb@yahoo.com and you will receive a reply quickly.

Along with the application itself, you will be asked to submit six documents including two letters of recommendation, proof of legal blindness, grade transcripts, and you will also need to write a personal essay. Tell us about yourself. Help us get to know who you are. If you have applied for this scholarship in the past please make sure your essay is current and up to date. We will also be conducting recorded phone interviews as part of the application process.

If you know anyone that would benefit from this scholarship that does not get our Newsline, please share this information with

them. Remember that folks do not have to be members of WCB in order to apply.

Here's to a ton of applications and some awesome awards being presented at the 2019 convention in October. Our application period will close at 11:59 p.m. June 1, 2019.

Membership Memo #3

by Julie Brannon

This memo is in regard to a behind the scenes component that would be beneficial in every local chapter that helps in retaining and recruiting members, but that is often over looked in the hustle and bustle of chapter happenings. Even though you'll be reading this article after the beginning of the new year when resolutions are generally established for which to strive, goal setting can be done any time of the year, and is definitely a "New Beginning!"

Research has indicated that individuals, or groups, who write down their goals, are 42 percent more likely to achieve them.

Here are some suggested values when goal setting, do remember, it never works to set so many they can never be fulfilled, or so complicated that you give up on them before they start. Goals should propel us toward our mission, probably in the case of chapters toward the larger mission of WCB as stated below:

Washington Council of the Blind (WCB) is a non-profit volunteer organization dedicated to promoting opportunity, equality, and independence in the blind community through education, public awareness, and advocacy.

Below are listed some components of setting workable, achievable and applicable goals for an organization, in this case, your chapters:

1. Goals should be specific
2. Goals need to be measurable
3. Goals need to be attainable
4. Goals need to be relevant
5. Goals need to be time-bound

If you are just beginning a practice of goal setting for your chapter, again, I'd recommend considering one or two short term goals and maybe one or two long term goals; and then be sure to re-visit them occasionally, establish workable plans to help see them to fruition and evaluate how they are progressing.

Happenings on Capitol Hill

by Denise Colley

Each year American Council of the Blind members and friends come together to discuss and become knowledgeable about specific advocacy issues, legislative imperatives deemed most important to bring to the attention of our Senators and Congress people. One full day is spent learning as much as we can about

the importance of these issues, and the second day is spent on Capitol Hill educating those same decision makers about why they are so important to their blind and low vision constituents.

This year, we came to Capitol Hill with three issues of importance to us. Not too surprising, all three issues centered on accessible technology in different forms.

ISSUE 1: Improved access to Durable Medical Equipment

Advances in technology have brought about a wide range of medical equipment that can be used independently at home. This is especially true for people with diabetes who can have access to devices that can both read their sugar levels and take in needed insulin.

However, a large number of such devices are inaccessible for blind users. There are a limited number of models of medical devices available that meet accessibility standards, and, when models are accessible, blind or low vision users are often able to use some but not all of the many tasks the device can perform. Smartphone applications have been developed to help eliminate some of the problems associated with inaccessible medical equipment. The problem is that these apps may be accessible only for a small number of functions, and smartphone devices are expensive, so those who cannot afford the technology are kept from getting the resources they need. In addition, insurance coverage for such products often plays a role in a person's ability to get accessible medical devices.

Our Ask is that Congress must develop legislation that requires manufacturers to make durable medical equipment accessible for blind and low vision users right out of the box. Consumers should not have to find ways to work around the problem of accessibility when dealing with equipment crucial to their health. They need to be able to access products immediately, just like all other customers.

ISSUE 2: Autonomous Vehicles (AV) START Act

The automobile industry continues to develop and test the use of autonomous vehicles. Such vehicles require no direction from a driver and can make decisions on their own. Sight would not be required to drive one of these cars since they could lack steering wheels and other steering functions. Manufacturers envision cars that can be directed through the use of a smart device or interactive screen, which would allow the blind passenger to simply enter in an address without having to enter in play-by-play directions. And because the cars don't require a human operator, blind passengers would not have to be dependent on the availability of another human being.

One of the roadblocks is that currently, driving laws require drivers to pass certain vision tests to get a license, and it is difficult for many state governments and agencies to let go of such policies. Also, a number of states have begun to draft their own state policies on autonomous vehicles. These policies can vary widely from one state to another, complicating interstate travel.

The AV START Act was introduced in Congress in the fall of 2018. This federal legislation attempted to clarify regulations for autonomous vehicles. Those regulations would, in turn, supersede state regulations that continue to pop up around the United States. This would have given manufacturers of autonomous vehicles clearer guidance as they are developed. The AV START Act would have loosened up some policies to allow for further exploration of autonomous vehicles. The legislation did not pass the Senate due to multiple concerns raised around safeguarding safety.

ACB is urging the House and Senate to re-introduce the legislation during this legislative session. The AV START Act would bring about the creation of a framework and a Federal role in ensuring safety when using these vehicles, and would be a step forward in legitimizing the new technology and allowing the government to finally explore how to govern such vehicles.

ISSUE 3: The Low Vision Aid Exclusion

ACB and its affiliates have been working on this legislative imperative for several years now. In November 2008, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) announced a provision entitled Low Vision Aid Exclusion which states that all devices, regardless of their size, form, or technological features that use one or more lenses to help with vision or provide magnification of images are excluded from Medicare coverage based on the statutory eyeglass exclusion. This has resulted in the denial of vital assistive devices for seniors and other Medicare beneficiaries that would provide them with needed solutions for remaining independent in their homes.

The expansion of the eyeglass exclusion has prevented Medicare beneficiaries from having access to such devices as handheld magnifiers, video monitors, and other technologies that use lenses. As those of us who are blind or have low vision know, without these essential tools, we are left with the inability to read prescriptions, medicine bottles and other important materials containing information that is vital to our health and safety. The greatest unwanted effect of this lack of coverage is sacrificing personal independence for more costly residential assistive living, which, in the long run is significantly more expensive and puts far greater strain on the system.

We need to urge the House of Representatives and the Senate to re-introduce the Medicare Demonstration of Coverage for Low Vision Devices Act. This legislation would evaluate, through a five-year national demonstration project administered by the Department of Health and Human Services, the fiscal impact of a permanent change to the Social Security Act. It would allow reimbursement for certain low vision devices that are the most functional for sustaining daily living. Individuals would be eligible to participate in the demonstration project only after they have completed a clinical evaluation by an ophthalmologist or optometrist who would then determine a low vision device as medically necessary. The data obtained from the demonstration would provide valuable information into how the eyeglasses exclusion impacts independence for senior citizens and other Medicare beneficiaries.

All three of these issues impact all of us in one way or another. Since two of us on Capitol Hill were not able to visit all twelve offices and distribute informational materials, we will be relying on some of our members to visit their representatives when they are back home in Washington. We hope that you will answer the call and make an appointment to visit your Congressman or Congresswoman. If any of these issues speak to you, make that appointment or phone call!

Hats Off

compiled by Cindy Van Winkle

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

Gale Chappell (SCCB) on the occasion of her 75th birthday
February 21.

Steve Fiksdal (SKB) who completed a Bachelor of Arts in Leadership Studies from Fort Hays State University, Hays, KS and will graduate in May.

Carol Gray (PCB) on the special occasion of her 80th birthday.

Stephen Hamilton (SKB) on being matched with his first guide dog, Sumiko, a sweet little female yellow labrador retriever from Guide Dogs for the Blind.

Bill Hoage (UBTC) on receiving his third guide dog, Goose, a handsome young, male yellow labrador retriever from Guide Dogs for the Blind.

Vivian Conger (UBWW) on receiving her 8th guide dog, Sallie, a beautiful yellow labrador from Guidedogs of America.

Juanita Johnson (PCB) on celebrating a milestone birthday of 90 years on January 15.

Cindy Van Winkle (PCB) on her appointment to the Grad Council for Guiding Eyes for the Blind where she will serve a three year term beginning April 1, 2019.

Bob and Pat Whitlow (SKCB) on the special occasion of their 55th wedding anniversary.

Christie Zack (PCAB) on the birth of her grandson.

John Ammeter (JCCB) and Barbara Nelson on the occasion of their marriage on March 11, 2019.

If you or someone you know has something for inclusion in Hats Off, be sure to email theWCBNewsline@gmail.com with "Hats Off" in the subject-line. Those items that may not meet the criteria listed below may still be very appropriate in your local chapter's "Around the State" article.

Hats Off notices include:

- Births of children, grandchildren or great-grandchildren

- Birthdays 75 years and older in 5 year increments (yearly after age 90)
- Marriages
- Wedding anniversaries of 25 years or more in 5 year increments
- Graduations from high school, college or vocational programs
- New jobs, career promotions, or retirements
- Partnering with dog guides
- Appointments to city, county, statewide, or national boards or commissions
- Exceptional recognition or awards

Around the State
Guide Dog Users of Washington State
by Vivian Conger, President

We will be holding our 2019 Spring Fling at Lilac Services for the Blind in Spokane on Saturday, April 27. Look for more details on the WCB and GDUWS listservs and by word of mouth.

We have fulfilled one of Marlaina Lieberg's life-long dreams of creating a scholarship fund for folks obtaining a new guide dog. This scholarship is currently only open to GDUWS members but may be open to non-members in the future.

Also look for changes to come to our extremely outdated website soon. www.gduws.net. Please contact me if you have any questions by email blazie.girl@gmail.com.

King County Chapter

by Linda Wickersham

Hello from the King County Chapter.

We hope that everyone survived what was, according to the weather department, the worst February snow storm in history.

After our busy, exhausting fun-filled convention we held our annual Christmas party. We had a wonderful white elephant gift exchange and our current President, Tim Schneebeck, didn't get his usual Frango gift. Before you feel bad for him a little bird told me his family gave him Frangos for Christmas.

We send our prayers and thoughts to Jenny Anderson, President of Snohomish County. We wish her a speedy and pain free recovery.

We hope to have someone come to our Chapter and speak about how to use Uber. We are also waiting for Metro Access to update us.

Congratulations go out to one of our members, Julie Miller who has become a Lions Club member. We know she will be a great asset to them.

Looking forward to a warm and sunny spring.

Snohomish County Council of the Blind

by Jenny Anderson, President

At Snohomish County Council of the Blind, we are very active indeed. We have now established fundraisers everywhere, including Fred Meyer Rewards and Amazon Smile, as well as online with our Facebook page and Website.

As President I have been able to help some members with personal issues. Marille Richards is now our Sunshine Chair. All members want to be involved with something, which is exciting to me.

South King Council of the Blind

by Gaylen Floy, member

To renew outreach efforts this year, our chapter is crafting a mission statement, printing a new brochure, and relaunching our website. These are important steps in connecting with local civic organizations.

The Burien Lions, the club that Marlaina Lieberg and Greg Vicars led, is promoting a putt-putt golf fundraiser at St. Francis church, so we will attend. Kevin and Marcia Daniel visited Gary Lieberg.

Gary plans to move to the Old Soldiers Home in Orting. We will stay in touch and keep him in our prayers.

On June 21 SKB will be part of an all-day music festival with the Federal Way Lions Club. Gaylen will give a short presentation at the Federal Way Lions later this month.

At our February meeting, Joy Iverson celebrated her 30 years teaching braille with the Department of Services for the Blind. "I can't think of anything else I would rather be doing for a career," she said. Richard Ah-siu, an OTC graduate and beep baseball player, joined the chapter. Stephen Hamilton introduced his new guide dog, Sumiko, a yellow lab. Kelsi Watson received good news that a tumor on her lung has almost disappeared. And while most of us experienced snow misadventures, Marie Masterson survived a potential house fire.

At 4:30 a.m., on February 11, a smoke detector blasted Marie out of bed. Smoke was everywhere and she could not spot a source in her condo. Her cell phone was dead, so she contacted her neighbor who fortunately is a night owl. Long story short, smoke was pouring out of one wall and the thermostat had melted. The firemen said she was about five minutes away from open flames.

A week later everything in her condo is fixed and cleaned, but Marie is still rather shaken. She encourages everyone to check their smoke detectors and fire extinguishers. She bought one that wasn't accessible, so make sure you know how to use it. Marie also wants people to keep their phones charged. Know your neighbors. Have a plan. Stay safe!

South Kitsap Council of the Blind

By Kim Moberg, President

Greetings to all of you from your friends at SKCB in Port Orchard. We have been busy planning how to make money for our chapter and when and where both our summer picnic and Christmas party will take place. Our goal as far as fundraising goes is to be able to provide to our members some kind of assistance to the state convention in October. So the way it looks now we are going to be a pretty busy group.

Kim Moberg, President, her family and guide dog Junior took a vacation to Disneyland in January. They really had a great time there with only two rides that Junior was not able to go on. All the people in costume at each of the rides were fabulous. They made sure that the car, boat or whatever they were riding in had enough room for Kim's guide dog. Junior got to meet both Goofy and Pluto. At one point they were stopped by a Storm Trooper who wanted to see Junior's ID. Junior is such a ham! They have wonderful memories and pictures from the trip. In Kim's absence, Pat Whitlow, Vice President, took over as President. She did an awesome job. You rock Pat! Kim loves working with you.

Speaking of Pat and her "Double Trouble" husband, they had their 55th anniversary on Dec. 27. Congratulations to a very awesome couple!

One of our most active members in our chapter will be 75 on April 16. Congratulations and Happy Birthday, Kevin.

We are making plans to do a fundraising event with Outback Steakhouse. We have been doing this for the last several years. There is a bit of preparation but in the end it is worth the effort. By the way if you are free on Saturday, May 4, 2019 and you would like to attend give any one of our members a call and we will reserve a ticket for you. We would love to have you join us.

We would like to welcome Chuck and Jane Ulrig to our chapter! It is always fun and exciting to have new people join us.

United Blind of Spokane

by Debby Clark

Those are exactly what we need here in daunting winter Spokane. It is a good thing we all have guide dogs or wood stoves and fireplaces to snuggle up to. It is still snowing and barely above single digits in temperature. By the time this article comes out we will have our startling spring upon us.

The weather can greatly affect our mobility as blind and visually impaired people. We are always looking for better ways to be mobile. Walking my guide dog Hummus is just a fond memory at this time because of the snow.

Speaking of guide dogs, Debby and Craig Phillips went to the Top Dog Conference in the Carolinas this winter. We will be hearing from them in our February meeting.

December saw us celebrating Christmas with a potluck and white elephant offerings. There was plenty of food and fun.

It was good to be back to meeting together in January. Winter seems to bring on surgeries and less than desirable health.

On a lighter note, we celebrated Melanie's sixtieth birthday. Her favorite cake flavor is chocolate.

We have had four new members since our last update: Lance Waite, Craig Phillips, Rosie Johnson and Dave Raska. These new members have been attending our meetings as guests for a few months and are having so much fun they decided to join us in membership. Welcome, Welcome. We are so pleased and honored to have you all.

Join us at Lilac Services for the Blind on the third Monday of every month.

United Blind of the Tri Cities

by Frank Cuta

UBTC is growing. Our business meetings are averaging between 16 and 20 members. We recently featured a speaker from the senior companion program and are planning to have a speaker from Benton-Franklin Para transit. Other programs have featured tech including a demonstration of Reminder Rosie and several accessible medical devices. Bernie Vinther told us about his new Dexcom continuous blood glucose monitor, and Erick Vasquez told us about the fall sensor in the new Apple watch.

Also in our monthly tech group meeting, we discussed the three principal online music services, the Weather Gods app, how to perform three-way calling on an iPhone, new portable shortwave radios, the new Proctor and Gamble accessible shampoo bottles, the new Color Star color identifier which senses the color of light, the braille maps available from the San Francisco Lighthouse, and our president Sherry Dubbin played us a remarkable YouTube video of a farting hippo.

We had our free annual pizza feed in December which is paid for by the card players who lose hands at our monthly card party. In addition to the card group, the book group, and our tech meeting, we now also have a monthly mall walk at Columbia Center.

On February 27 we attended a described performance of "Butterflies are Free" that was put on by our local community theatre group, the Richland Players. Many thought it the best thing the Players have ever done. Our chapter was asked to consult on the production, and we provided them with all of the special props needed by the blind protagonist.

We made a special effort to invite members from the Yakima and Walla Walla chapters to join us and we had a total of 25 wild attendees who raised the energy level in the theatre a bit. The director remarked afterwards that our group's enthusiastic response was really appreciated by the actors. After the play Reg George organized a dinner at the restaurant across the street. Twelve of us chose to stay and overeat and party for another

couple of hours.

United Blind of Walla Walla

by Heather Meares, President

Our year started out with a bit of adventure and excitement. We decided to change the venue of our meetings for a year to Brookdale, where one of our members lives and hopefully attract some new people to join us, as well as offer some fun joint activities with this community. Perhaps some iPhone training sessions or craft hours with the seniors. The staff at Brookdale is very excited and welcoming us with open arms.

As the character McMurphy in “One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest” did, a grand escape was planned for freedom. Or at least to see the play “Butterflies are Free” with the Tri-Cities and Yakima chapters and it was fantastic. Even the cast was raving that we were by far the best audience they had. For some of us this was our first experience enjoying an audio described play and it was impressive how well it worked. The Walla Walla butterflies have now had a taste of freedom and are clamoring for more road trips ... and I say YES!!!

Also, some great things are happening with some of our members. Alexann Turemann was accepted to Eastern Washington University for next fall, and Vivian Conger has a new guide dog! Congratulations to you both.

We are all looking forward to working more in our community over the next few months, including working with the city on some accessibility issues and continuing to grow our partnerships with the local VA, Delta Gammas, and Walla Walla Valley Disability Network. Joleen Ferguson has been a fierce advocate at our local pharmacies with the prescription labeling issue and has made some amazing progress.

So much to do, so little time. We may be small, but we are mighty.

United Blind of Whatcom County

by Holly Turri

This has been a fun and busy time for UBWC. In November we had a potluck Thanksgiving feast. In December, the annual Christmas party, meeting, and gift exchange was held. In January Bruce Radtke gave an absolutely fascinating talk about a trip he took to the countries in the Balkan area of Europe. Unfortunately, due to snow and more of the same our February meeting was canceled.

Yakima Valley Council of the Blind

by Lisa George, Secretary

YAKITY YAK FROM YAKIMA

Happy Spring to everyone across the state! After the abundance of snow and cold weather, we are ecstatic to feel the sun's warmth shining down on us!

All of our committees are busy with their work, whether it's transportation, outreach, or fundraising, but we still make time for social activities, especially celebrating our milestone birthdays.



Bill Smedley's 70th birthday was in January; Gina Ontiveros' 60th birthday was in February; and Ginny Kohl will be celebrating 87 years in May!

Photo to left:

Anne Ridenour gives happy birthday wishes to Bill Smedley to celebrate his 70th birthday at Good Samaritan Health Care Center in Yakima.

Several members took a road trip to Richland to enjoy the audio-described performance of "Butterflies are Free" and socialize with the Walla Walla chapter at Casa Mia restaurant after the show. Many thanks to Frank Cuta and UBTC for this opportunity!

We're continuing our savings match program to help members get to the annual WCB convention. It was a success last year and it also encourages everyone to be involved in fundraising and planning ahead to experience our fantastic annual WCB convention.

Our first Technology Show and Tell was very informative, with many members participating. One of the most popular items was



a solar-powered talking Bible player that's free to members of Christian Record Services for the Blind based in Lincoln, NE. Check it out at www.christianrecord.org.

Photo to left:
Alice Klein demonstrates her OrCam while Anne Ridenour, Howard Underwood, and Harold Quantrille show their interest.

As always, we'd love to have you join us at our weekly bowling outreach anytime you're in Yakima. Maybe you'll have time when you're on your way to Hanford House for the Spring Board meeting? Darla Hatfield has the highest game this year (so far) with a score of 170 and she needs some new competition. Best wishes for a fun summer!

2019 WCB CALENDAR OF EVENTS AND DEADLINES

APRIL

4: WCB presidents call at 7 PM

7: WCB Board meeting at Red Lion Hotel Richland Hanford House, 802 George Washington Way, Richland, WA 99352

9: Technology Forum call at 7 PM

MAY

1: Deadline to make stipend and loan requests for national convention

2: WCB Presidents call at 7 PM

7: Technology Forum call at 7 PM

31: Deadline for submitting scholarship applications

JUNE

6: WSSB Commencement at 9:30 AM and WSSB Board of Trustees meeting at noon, Vancouver

6: WCB Presidents call at 7 PM

8: WCB summer Board meeting at 9 AM, using the ZOOM Cloud platform

11: Technology Forum call at 7 PM

14: DSB Rehabilitation Council meeting at 9 AM, Seattle

15: WTBBL Patron Advisory Council meeting at 9 AM, Seattle

30: Deadline for submission of articles for the summer 2019 issue of the WCB Newslines

JULY

5-12: ACB Conference and Convention, Rochester, NY

AUGUST

1: WCB Presidents call at 7 PM

SEPTEMBER

5: WCB Presidents call at 7 PM

10: Technology Forum call at 7 PM

13: DSB Rehabilitation Council meeting at 9 AM, Seattle

OCTOBER

3: WCB Presidents call, 7 PM

8: Technology Forum call, 7 PM

24-26: WCB Annual Convention at the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel
Seattle Airport, 18740 International Blvd, Seattle, WA 98188

31: Deadline for submission of articles for the fall 2019 issue of
the WCB Newslines

NOVEMBER

7: WCB Presidents call at 7 PM

12: Technology Forum call at 7 PM

DECEMBER

5: WCB Presidents call at 7 PM

6: DSB Rehabilitation Council meeting at 9 AM, Seattle

10: Technology Forum call at 7 PM