

WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF THE BLIND

NEWSLINE

Summer 2018 Edition

Opportunity, Equality, Independence

Founded 1935

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President's Message

By Denise Colley

I was amazed the other day when I looked at the calendar and realized that the year is more than half over. Time goes by quickly when you are a vital active organization.

Since my last president's message WCB has experienced some successes and the loss of a couple of longtime active members. One of our successes was the passage of a key piece of legislation related to the status of service animals in Washington State. House Bill 2822 now makes it a civil infraction for anyone to misrepresent an animal as a service animal. "It shall be a civil infraction under chapter 7.80 RCW for any1person to misrepresent an animal as a service animal for the purpose of securing the rights or privileges afforded disabled persons accompanied by service animals set forth in state or federal law." If a person is found to have committed such a civil infraction he/she will be assessed a monetary penalty. Thank you to our Guide Dog Users of Washington State affiliate for their hard work on this legislation.

In the previous issue of the Newsline you read my article about the passing of long-time member, Sue Ammeter, and her tireless advocacy and legislative work on behalf of people who are blind/visually impaired. On the 11th of May we lost Marlaina Lieberg, another long-time member of WCB, and another tireless advocate for the rights of blind/visually impaired people. Marlaina is also remembered by many of us for her devoted work with ACB radio and the plethora of fun and informative interviews she did on her two weekly shows Blind Spot and

Marlaina. It is with heavy hearts that we had to say goodbye to these two great advocates and friends. Their strong leadership will be greatly missed throughout the WCB and ACB families.

By the time you read my article, the WCB board and a few other leaders will have met for a day and a half action planning workshop; the purpose of which was to engage in critical discussion and planning for the future direction of WCB. Those attending were asked to complete a short informational survey prior to coming in order to collect our thoughts and ideas. The information from the surveys was compiled and analyzed, and the findings were shared with the group, to help inform our preparation and planning. Stay tuned for more information on what we believe will be an exciting future for WCB.

We are an organization with a lot of potential. However, to achieve this potential will require the efforts of many more of us. A lot of you are WCB members that I have never met or don't know very well, so I don't know where your strengths lie. As I share with you more about the key areas we want to focus on, I hope many of you will reach out to me and let me know where you believe you would best fit. You can contact me by phone at (360) 438-5783 or by email at dmc0124@comcast.net.

As I've said many times before, WCB is not just about the officers and directors. It is only when we all do our small part that we will continue to grow and thrive.

Where's the Gap

By Holly Turri

Introduction

When I was a young blind woman, I heard about the “divide.” There were many articles about it and many late night discussions devising strategies to cross it. When I read the current theme for this Newsline, I felt very nostalgic. As the Bible says “there is nothing new under the sun.” As I did in the early 1980’s, I began to ponder: what is the gap? Where is it and how is it bridged?

1. What is the gap?

Obviously this is society’s expectations of blind individuals. Many times, these are lower for us than for our peers. Companies can’t or won’t see the abilities of blind workers. As my mom used to say “an employer who says “no” is one with little imagination.”

2. Where is the gap?

Too few blind people have jobs. To many of us receive SSI and other financial assistance. Last week I learned that Washington state is blessed to have the lowest unemployment rate in our country for all citizens. Journey to other parts of the nation and the situation is radically different.

current problems do not need to be enumerated. Daily news exposes these very clearly. If our nation continues down the current path, the gap between rich people, and those who live below the poverty line will widen and deepen. Not only is this true for blind people but all population groups are effected. We all will need to work together to develop strategies to bridge the growing chasm.

3. How can we bridge this gap?

Education, legislation, and advocacy are the building blocks for this bridge. Since blind/low vision citizens share many of the concerns of most Americans, we need to consider strategies to work together with others who are dealing with the same issues. As a group we are a small number. A house is stronger when built with many bricks.

Washington Council of the blind has been a leader in advocacy. Thanks to our many strong and dedicated pioneers, we have shown that although we are small in numbers, we have a mighty voice.

Washington state has the highest education level in the nation. We are blessed to have the lowest high school drop-out rate and the largest number of citizens who continue on to college and/or other training options. Programs like YESS2 prepare our young people for adulthood.

Washington Council of the Blind is blessed to have a well-endowed and vibrant scholarship program. Let your friends, coworkers, and strangers know about it. It is not just for people attending four year college and grad school. Trade school, and community college students can apply.

Conclusion

Many hands make light work. If we all follow the above strategies in our communities, state, and nation, with time and effort the gap should narrow. Our goal should be to make a better world for our grandchildren. Vote. With accessible ballots, the polling place should be our friend. Continuing to outline and expose our concerns with local, state and national legislators will go a long way to making the bridge a strong one which can handle the heavy vehicles of change.

Celebrating 100 Years By Cindy Van Winkle

From weaving baskets and winding brooms to manufacturing products for the aerospace industry and the U.S. military, The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. has been providing employment opportunities for 100 years for people who are blind. For over 40 of these years, people who are DeafBlind or blind with other disabilities have also found gainful employment with the Lighthouse, and it is no longer just located in Seattle. A manufacturing facility opened in Spokane ten years ago and in Summerville, SC just two years ago, and there are ten other locations along the west coast offering service business through Base Supply Centers and Contract Close Out for the military. The Lighthouse has become the largest employer of people who are blind on the west coast and who are DeafBlind in the country with over 260 employees who are blind working in all aspects of the organization.

A centennial is certainly reason to celebrate, and the Lighthouse will be holding a gala event on Saturday, September 15th from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at The Museum of Flight. Purchasing a ticket for the Centennial at a cost of \$200 includes admission into the museum during business hours day-of, a nice dinner, drinks, entertainment, and more.

Check out the event website at

<https://bit.ly/2zkBnsP>

to learn more about the event itself (including speakers), to learn of the Lighthouse's rich history through photos and stories, and to RSVP by September 1st to secure your place at the table.

Turning 100 is a momentous occasion for the Lighthouse and for every employee who has found gainful employment there since its humble beginnings in 1918. It certainly is a reason to celebrate!

The Big Event

By Cindy Van Winkle, 2018 Convention Coordinator

It's not too soon to be making your plans to join in this year's main event for people who are blind or have low vision in Washington state. The 2018 WCB annual Convention, "Paving the Way" takes place November 1, 2, and 3 at the Crown Plaza, Seattle Airport. So mark your calendars and make your plans because we're working on a weekend you won't want to miss.

Friday and Saturday will boast topics around advocacy, employment, recreation, exercise, hobbies, community involvement and safety, just to name a few. Throughout Friday, exhibits will be open with vendors representing products and services; it will be like a mini mall for people who are blind. And on the lighter side, attendees can choose to show off their talents on Friday night at the very entertaining Showcase of Talent or on Saturday night when karaoke will be offered for the first time during hospitality. Speaking of which, the best way to wind down at the end of a busy day is to socialize and relax over adult beverages, snacks, and great conversation offered all three nights at hospitality.

Some other highlights of the weekend will be fun door prizes, a Multi-Raffle Extravaganza with fabulous packages to win (this is in place of the silent auction), guide dog users breakfast/business meeting and lunch program on Saturday, a scholarship reception to honor and learn about this year's award recipients, our annual business meeting (open

to all), and a banquet to celebrate the accomplishments of 2018 and to culminate an exciting weekend.

The convention bulletin with all the important details will be up on our website www.wcbinfo.org by September 1st. But here's a little more info to help you plan for your participation in it.

Room rates at the Crown Plaza will be \$99 plus tax based on double occupancy including free WIFI, airport shuttle, and parking.

We will be offering three levels of registration rates. The early bird pricing will be available through September 15, preregistration rates will be in affect September 16 through October 15, and registration will be at full price from October 16 until Friday, November 2. So be sure to register early!

The bottom line! Advocacy, education, networking, and lots of fun is some of what is awaiting you during this jam-packed weekend. Whether a member of the Washington Council of the Blind or not, we want you to be a part of this big event. So make your plans, bring a friend, and let's make memories!

**Finding Our Way
ACB Convention 2018
St. Louis, MO
By Heather Meares**

As I arrived at the Union Station Hotel in the wee hours of somewhere between Friday night and Saturday morning after a very long day of travel, I was escorted through stairs, elevators, and passed between multiple people before even getting to the front desk to check in, then taken through another myriad of bridges, glass doors that required keys, elevators, and more mazes of hallways that eventually led me to my room. As I traveled these long paths my thoughts were two-fold. I could literally sense the grand and awesome history in the quietness of these halls, and, how will I ever find my way around this majestic beast?

The next morning I chose to accept this mission with full intentions of being as self-sufficient as possible. After aimlessly wandering the halls of just my floor trying to retrace the path to the elevator, I quickly re-evaluated this plan, looking for anyone who might be able to assist me. I found another struggling victim and we figured it out together and I made it downstairs. I then sent out a text message to anyone from WA to say I am here...now what?

Cindy Van Winkle came to the rescue and we found the registration area to make me legitimate and then I was set free to start figuring things out on my own, I then found more of my WA people, Frank Cuta and Joel Valdovines, and spent the rest of the day with them, attending opening session that evening, and experienced one of the light shows on the ceiling of the lobby .

The rest of the days all kind of blended together in a big jumble of general sessions in the mornings, exhibit hall chaos, midway seminars covering a vast array of topics including the latest technological

advances from Google, Amazon, Apple, and of course all the vendors like Humanware and many more. Also sessions on accessible prescription labels and how to advocate in your local communities, audio described movies, and braille innovations from many different sources. These things were all very exciting to me and trying to squeeze it all in was challenging but well worth it. The guest speakers in the general sessions were all very good in their own ways, but I particularly enjoyed it when one of the audience members got really rude and the entire room booed him and told him to be quiet. I also enjoyed it when the lost and found items of the day were being listed, including a dog bowl with treats, which an anonymous guide dog spoke up with great enthusiasm to claim! And of course the final day of business meetings was quite the heated experience and I must say how very proud I am to be part of our vibrant, outspoken, and passionate WA delegation. I listened and learn from our state leadership in so many ways, and am truly looking forward to continuing my own personal journey and growth within this organization.

As wonderful as all these things were, I have to say what impacted me the most was the sensory experience of it all. Feeling the vastness of the open areas which were two or three stories high and the echoing of hundreds of lost people trying to find their way with canes, guide dogs, wheelchairs with bells, sighted guides and whatever means necessary. Touching the carvings on the walls of this ancient building, feeling the heat of the fireballs shooting out of the lake during the light and music show, listening to the beautiful water fountains at the Botanic Garden tour and feeling the cold water splash on me as I went through it, but that's a story for another day, the humidity of the air that felt like walking through jello, and hearing the bluegrass music at the banquet on the final night. Knowing that no matter how lost I felt, I was not the only one feeling this way.

We are all a part of a very big picture in our own unique way. Being independent does not equal being alone. In fact it is the exact opposite. We are all trying to find our way as individuals, local chapters, state and

national organizations, and we absolutely cannot accomplish this on our own. Much progress has been made for the blind community , but there is still much to accomplish and we must do so as a united group.

Finally, I would like to thank you WCB for sending me on this amazing adventure of a lifetime. I am honored to have been chosen as your First Timer and hopefully will be able to pay it forward in the future!

The Cheshire Cat Interviews...Who Are You? No. 2

By Heather Meares

This is the second half of the interview you all read in the Spring issue. Since then we have suffered the loss of several members that has affected us as individuals and an organization, in ways that are too difficult to comprehend at times. So where do we go from here without them and how do we get there? My personal answer is we all have to start using all the knowledge and wisdom they left us and actually do something with it. The gaps that we now have are huge...advocacy, perseverance, and the willingness to do whatever it takes to make our WCB organization not only good, but truly great. With that I give you the insight of some of our members when asked these questions.

What is the most life changing experience you have had and how did it improve your life?

How would you personally like to contribute to the future and positive growth of WCB as a member?

Frank Cuta - “Throughout history the biggest challenge we face is the changing of public attitudes. For the first couple of years struggling to get through college as a partially blind person I pretended to be sighted. In 1969 I came to the realization that if we could only change public attitudes about blindness, being blind would not be so bad. I picked up a white cane and joined the organized blind movement. Since then there

have been many challenges and even battles. I fought for the creation of a Commission for the Blind in Washington state. I picketed and demonstrated against unfair workshop practices. I beat down the walls at Huntsville and got admitted to Space Camp. I participated in a class action lawsuit against the State of Washington for implementing a program of inaccessible information kiosks, and I managed to stay employed as an electrical engineer for 39 years. The biggest challenge to making our WCB Board work well is to put aside our egos and remember that we are all public servants first. Our organization will only remain stable and viable if we concentrate on developing new ways to support our members instead of just more ways to put more demands and restrictions on them. Lastly, I believe that we need to come to terms with the different definitions of blindness and how they apply to the requirements in our Constitution and the National Constitution.”

Reginald George - “I have had many transitions in my life. Learning to read Braille at an early age and opening the world of books, leaving the relative safety of a school for the blind for public school, moving away from home, marriage, career changes. My evolution into the person I have become happened gradually over time. It came with growing maturity, not giving up, doing things I like to do, and learning to be as good at those things as I could possibly be. All of that led me to apply for a job in Washington State as an Assistive Technology Specialist with the Department of Services for the Blind. This has improved my life by making me feel empowered and self-actualized I have learned not to listen to the voice in my head that tells me not to try because I won’t succeed anyway. Mastering life is a series of small steps, honing skills, taking your dreams seriously, getting up every day and doing something new, continually challenging myself by trying different things and determining what fits, and never giving up. By educating myself on the matters that affect all disabled people I can write and speak articulately when given the opportunity. I want to listen and learn from those who have fought our battles over the years and understand what it will take to maintain and enhance our dignity and independence in the future, to inspire and galvanize others to be involved and make a difference, and

help support WCB chapters and individual members when technological solutions are required. By remaining active and involved, listening for the best ideas of others and helping bring them to fruition, and serving as a liaison between the agencies and services I am involved with, over time I hope to make a positive impact. Knowledge is only valuable when you share it freely. I love the heart of WCB, which is a part of ACB. We make the world a kinder, better place to live, one step at a time. It is important to me in this time of difficult budget choices that we remember the values and goals that drew us into the organization. Only a thriving organization of caring, involved people can ensure we will be around to do good work in the future. So don't forget the fun. Mentoring emerging leaders, recruiting younger members and reaching out to older blind are all important pieces of the puzzle and I am excited to do my part.”

Hats Off Compiled by Cindy Van Winkle

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

Steve and Kelly Fiksdal (SKB) on the celebration of their 35th wedding anniversary.

Cindy Glidden (UBSPO) and her husband Ray on the special occasion of their 45th wedding anniversary.

Shirley Gray (KCC) on the joyful event of her 90th birthday.

Annee Hartzell (UBWW) on graduating with her new guide, Willis, a Black Labrador Retriever from Guiding Eyes for the Blind.

Joan Ladeburg (KCC) on her retirement after over 30 years employment with The Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. in Seattle.

Deb Lewis (GDUWS) on her reelection to the Board of Publications for ACB and her election as second vice president for GDUI (Guide Dog Users International).

Bob Mahoney (PCAB) on his retirement after 40 plus years from the Lighthouse for the Blind, Inc. in Seattle.

Heather Meares (UBWW) on being selected as WCB's First Timer to attend the ACB Conference and Convention held in St. Louis, MO this summer. Also Heather has been appointed to the Patron's Advisory Council for the Washington Talking Book and Braille Library.

If you have something for consideration of inclusion for future Hats Off articles, please send to thewcbnewsline@gmail.com with "Hats Off" in the subject-line.

Around the State

Jefferson County Council of the Blind

By Carl Jarvis

They say that every cloud has a silver lining. And Nancy Villagran is proof that organizations also have silver linings in their darkest hour.

Nancy had barely become used to being JCCB's vice president, when we were shocked by the news of Sue Ammeter's sudden passing, and Nancy was called upon to take up the duties of president. With an outward

calm resolve, Nancy assumed the presidency and began putting the pieces of JCCB back together.

By way of introduction, Nancy tells us, that she studied art and had careers in advertising, illustration and landscape design. Painting and drawing have been life-long passions. About seven years ago she began losing acute vision to macular degeneration. She could no longer draw, or read, or drive a car. She was frantic, trying to reshape her life without the ability to pursue the things that had always been meaningful to her. She says “I stumbled around for two years, literally and figuratively until I had a bad fall and ended up in a wheelchair. When I was in rehab, one of the Physical Therapists told me about Carl and Cathy’s service to the newly blind. They came to my home with a cane, talking watch and magnifier that instantly improved my life. They introduced me to JCCB which offered information and support that made it possible to do many of the things I thought I had lost forever. I am eternally grateful. I am on a mission now to make JCCB stronger and more available to anyone with fading vision in Jefferson County.” Nancy paused and then said in a firm voice, “It shouldn’t take two years to find us!”

Putting action to her words, Nancy signed JCCB up for a booth at the annual Jefferson County Picnic. The event will be held Sunday, August 19 at the HJ Carroll Park. JCCB will share the booth with DASH (Disabilities Awareness Starts Here). Contacting radio station KPTZ, Nancy arranged an interview with Phil Andrus on his popular Friday afternoon program, Tossed Salad. We talked about the many contributions to our community, made by Sue Ammeter, as well as JCCB and Peninsula Rehabilitation Services. On Monday, June 18, the Accessible Communities Advisory Committee (ACAC) included a tribute to Sue Ammeter in their regular meeting held at the Coyle

Community Center. JCCB members John Ammeter, Nancy Villagran, Pat Teal and Carl and Cathy Jarvis participated.

As we look forward, the silver lining around our dark cloud is growing bigger and brighter. Perhaps the day will come when the people in Jefferson County say, “Motherhood, Apple Pie and JCCB”.

Mixing it up at United Blind of Spokane

By Debby Clark, President

We like to change things up here in Spokane on the third Monday of each month. In March we had a great meeting, lots of door prizes, food and a fund raiser with a little Tupperware twist. The last half hour we devoted to this fun fund raiser. A special catalog with a forty percent return back to us is how we painlessly raised some great funds. Any organization can do this. Check with your local Tupperware person.

In April the Wenatchee chapter joined us for a lunch of lasagna and all the trimmings. Rae and Patti Hail spoke to us about the new fake service animal law just passed in WA. State. Rae also had great tips on self advocacy for us and as a guide dog team. It was so great to have them with us!

May saw us with a very large and somewhat rowdy group. I keep saying this but we had lots of fun. Our speaker, John had much to say about avoiding negative self talk. He gave us good alternatives. He also read us a very cute book written about his late wife and her guide dog by his granddaughter.

Join us at Lilac Blind Foundation between eleven and one the third Monday of the month.

South Kitsap Council of the Blind

By Kim L. Moberg, President

I am so amazed at how much this little chapter is doing. In January when I began as president, the first thing I thought about was that we needed a way to jazz up the meetings. Some of our members live quite a distance from where we hold our meetings. Because of this, we do not do many social events. So first I began exploring what we could do during the meetings. I chatted with several members to see what they would like to see added. Many said that they wanted more than just a business meeting.

The first thing we added was a tips and tricks time in our meeting. Pat Whitlow, Vice President, always has something ready. This has really gotten the members talking and sharing.

Danielle Miller from the Washington Talking Book and Braille Library (WTBBL) spoke at our March meeting. There is always something happening at the library. She shared with us the process it takes to get a book in digital format so that they are available for us to download and listen to.

In late April we did a fundraising event at the Outback Steakhouse. We had a lot of fun doing this.

Our annual summer picnic will be at the end of July. We are praying for nice weather.

An upcoming event that we are going to try after one of our meetings in the near future is to have a game and craft time. This is going to be a fun event. It is fun to learn and share with these people in this chapter. Have a great summer everybody!

United Blind of the Tri-Cities

By Janice Squires, UBTC Member

I feel in my heart, a true rejuvenation of our Tri-Cities chapter. President Sherry Dubbin has felt the importance of two simple things, a phone call and a thank you! Sherry has involved so many of our members in an easy reminder calling program, and a special thank you goes to Reefa Dahl, Antoinette Reisenauer, Ruth Shook and Diane Allen. Sherry has assigned Joy Kelley to write thank you notes, on our new letter head UBTC stationary, to all of those people and businesses who have shown to us, a simple kindness or an activity that benefits our chapter. Also, the sunshine committee has been extended not only to include Diana Softich and her get well wishes and sweet Holly's birthday greetings, but ideas such as contacting, visiting or making a meal for members, who may need a little cheering up!

Our business meetings have grown in attendance, keeping the meeting packed with good and educational topics and including special speakers, such as Sheila Turner, an Independent Living specialist. The most sincere appreciation goes to Frank Cuta for putting together a 40 year history of the United blind of the Tri-Cities, which he shared with us at our March meeting.

As long as we are thanking people, Pat Johnson, our new membership chair and her committee, are putting together a fabulous new membership packet. As we eat our way around the Tri-Cities, Karyn vandecar is always the one to organize our lunch bunch.

After 25 years, we are finishing our narrated play season with “Ruthless”. The plays will begin again in September, and a huge thank you to Frank, Sherry and Brenda for coordinating and keeping this successful activity moving forward!

Erick Vasquez, is the newest UBTC member to serve on the board of the Edith Bishel Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Daniel Lipparelli and his staff are doing a tremendous job at the center, with activities such as narrating the history and touring of the Hanford ABC houses, the second annual children’s Beeping Easter egg hunt and the newest activity, tandem bike riding in the park!

Happy Summer!

United Blind of Whatcom County chapter Happenings

By Holly turri, president

During this most beautiful time of year, the U.B.W.C. has been active. Our meetings have had engaging speakers. Yvonne thomas-miller spoke about the programs the Lummi nation has for disabled citizens. Bruce Radtke gave a fascinating narration about his trip to Britain.

On June 2nd, we participated in the Farmers’ Day parade in Lynden, WA. 16 people rode on a hay wagon float. We were fascinated by the variety of farm equipment which rode in the event. Our group sang songs with a guitar and a banjo player.

As a fundraiser, we are selling coupon books. So far the response has been excellent.

Our book club is still meeting. Miller's Valley by Anna Quindlen was the most recent title which was discussed.

United Blind of Walla Walla

By Annee Hartsel, President

Happy Summer, Everyone! The United Blind of Walla Walla is on the move. We are busy planning future Fall Events with the Delta Gamma Sorority, talking about fundraisers, and devising strategies to bring universal talking Prescription access to our area. We are happy to report that both Wal-Mart and Rite Aid now offer this service to our citizens. Now, it will be *Getting The Word Out!*

We are discussing a future fundraiser with the Walla Walla Sweets and hope to host a barbecue for area chapters of the WCB. As of publication of the Newsline, the Barbeque will be September 14, 2018, along with the possible tour of the Fort Walla Walla Museum. All we ask is a small donation between \$5.00 and \$10.00 to cover food costs! All are welcome! RSVP by September 10, 2018!

Finally, we are revisiting accessible traffic signals, transportation issues, and hope to visit local schools and Senior Centers to get the word out about the UBWW and WCB! We meet the 4Th Tuesday of each month; contact us if you wish to attend a meeting! You may reach us at 949 705-8802.

Yakima Valley Council of the Blind

By Lisa George, Secretary

The temperatures are rising, things are growing & we're excited to report that our chapter is as well. Four new members have joined in 2018 & we've finalized plans for two upcoming outreach events.

YVCB is collaborating with our local non-profit low-vision clinic, Vision for Independence Center, & WTBBL for a fun & informative day at a local senior center on Wednesday, July 25th. That Saturday, July 27th, instead of our usual social meeting, we will be partnering again with WTBBL for a reception for current WTBBL patrons & other interested people in the Yakima Valley. We are optimistic that these opportunities will increase our visibility & attract more people to our chapter.

We're also initiating a new program designed to help our members get to the annual WCB convention. It's called SMMAC ... Savings Match for Members Attending Convention. For every dollar "deposited" with the chapter before the deadline, we will match funds up to \$150 per member. We're hoping this will encourage everyone to be involved in fundraising (at the local level) & plan ahead to experience our fantastic annual convention.

As always, we'd love to have you join us at our weekly bowling outing anytime you're in Yakima. Our hearts are heavy that our dear friend, Bud Adams, passed away on May 20th, but we feel his presence every week, especially when someone bowls three strikes in a row for a turkey!

BLIND SELF-DEFENSE

By Andy Arvidson, 1st Vice-President, WCB

When I was younger I wanted to learn Karate. I have now chosen to take up learning and teaching self-defense through the art of Soo Bahk Do. This is the story of how that came about.

My youngest son came to live with my wife Colette and myself in the Rainier Beach Area of Seattle. He was very timid and shy. We signed him up for martial arts classes and finally joined ourselves. That was 21 years ago.

When I started classes I had no idea that I would want to share the self-defense methods that I was learning. It happened that as an early student, our teacher at that time called and asked me to lead the first part of the class as he was arriving late. That experience encouraged me down this path.

Colette and I eventually became International Certified Instructors and opened our own studio in January of 2005. Since that time we have been teaching self-defense and martial arts classes. In 2015, just before we were both testing for our 5th degree Black Belt level, Randy Tedrow contacted me through the Washington Guide Dogs for the Blind Alumni listserv and asked if I would help him with the self-defense sessions he was doing at the WCB Convention that year. I jumped at the opportunity.

Stepping back a bit, I did not think that I could do what I have done because of my vision loss. Going to a martial arts instructor and asking to be taught as a blind man was at first intimidating, but he already had a blind student, which encouraged me to say wow maybe I can do this too! So, I signed up and over the years have learned a lot. Not just about how

to do martial arts but also how to help sighted instructors to properly teach their blind students. The wife of my instructor told me that I made her husband a better coach because he had to learn how to teach more verbally. For example, when a teacher says do it this way, what does this way really mean?

In 1999, I wrote an essay on Soo Bahk Do from the Dark Side. It still gets read occasionally. It talks about these issues so that more instructors can learn effective techniques for working with students who are blind.

In my earlier years, everything was just about me. Hopefully, I have grown out of that. The word altruistic seems to fit into my life today, as I really like to share what I have been given the opportunity to learn with others. It is my belief that we should all step out and take a risk occasionally and hope for the best.

Starting our own business in 2005 was a big step in setting up what we have today. I had to show people that just because I could not see well did not mean that I wouldn't be successful. I have now adapted to my low vision status enough that people ask me all the time if I am training a guide dog? I just laugh and say no she is working to help me see. When I am in the studio and teaching our students I can usually tell what they are doing even when my back is to them. Like a mother with eyes in the back of her head.

So do not let a challenge hold you back from reaching your goals. If you want something badly, go out and get it. Achieving your best is the way life should be. Don't ever give up. We can do together what we cannot do alone. If you want to do martial arts, do it. If, you want to sky dive,

do it; don't let fear stand in your way. Do not let someone tell you that blindness will keep you from achieving your best, just smile and say watch me!

Family Corner

Bridging The Gap from sighted Mom to Blind Mom By Debby Clark

I had to hang up my car keys when our first daughter was ten months old. I was diagnosed with retinitis pigmentosa at the age of thirty six. I went from independent sighted mom to independent blind Mom in a very short time period. I got the skills I needed to accomplish this feat from Department of Services for the Blind and Lilac Blind in Spokane.

At first I could take my children on city buses and our strollers and buggy were like my new version of a car. I literally wore out the rubber on the wheels because I was not going to just sit around and mope. I walked with a cane and took my girls to swimming lessons, shopping, to pet stores and much more. We then moved to a small town north of Spokane and the bus transportation went away.

I received my first guide dog from Guide Dogs for the Blind almost 25 years ago. My girls were five and eight. My dog and I took the girls to swimming lessons and everywhere we could walk in Deer Park. I picked up my girls from school and dropped them off with my guide dog. I picked all my daughter's teachers while demonstrating my guide dog and blindness related products. The children loved it.

Later I was at all my children's sporting events as a quote watcher unquote. The girls were adamant that I come to everything and so I did. The girls had sleep overs, lots of parties and were quite involved in camps and church activities. I was one of the youth leaders at our church and hosted back yard bible camps. People did not dare to tell me that something was impossible for a blind Mom to do!

My sighted husband Jeff made the choice to cut back his work load so he could be there for us. He would often work out of town prior to that.

Nobody ever said it was easy. I have lots of assistive devices to help as a blind mother. My girls are now thirty and thirty three. One was Navy and now works at the Department of Defense and the other a very sought after dental assistant. I helped them get their first jobs at fifteen with a doctor and business friends. We had birds, rats, cats, turtles, a rabbit and of course my three guide dogs. My children were not my assistants. I was always the mother and not the one who needed help.

I am very thankful for a great and supportive husband. He never let me be dependent on him when I could do it myself. I had a great network of friends that kept me sane. Raising children in this day and age can make you a little crazy. Fortunately God says that nothing is impossible to he/she who believes.

Hang in there all you blind Moms. It can be done well!

By the way-we adopted both of our girls as tiny infants. The first when I was sighted and the second as a blind Mom.

Tips for a Healthy Happy Home

Quick- Fix Ideas for Summer Meal Sensations

By Hayley Agers

For the last five weeks, I have been on a journey to find recipes that I and my family can enjoy together. On the nights that my kiddos and David have pasta, I substitute with zucchini or sweet potato noodles. When they have rice, I use cauliflower rice. When they have dessert, I eat "So Delicious" ice cream made with cashew milk or I zoodle an apple, sauté it up a little and sprinkle with shredded coconut, a little vanilla, and some cinnamon. I've also been trying to use my crock pot more to avoid having the oven on. And I've been making freezer meals such as marinated chicken so that on a busy night, I just pull that out of the freezer, it's already marinated and I can grill it or bake it in the oven. From my ongoing journey to bridge the gap so that I do not have to cook separate meals for myself all the time comes this occasional series of columns which will cover healthy grain, soy, egg, and dairy free alternatives. And who knows, maybe they will decide they like my versions of these recipes even better than the originals.

In the summer, I truly believe that all backyards or homes should smell like BBQ, but it's really a good idea all year round.

I don't know about you, however grilling is difficult for me. Here is my solution. Avoid turning on your oven which will heat up the house and simply use your crockpot.

This recipe comes from the book "The What's for dinner solution" by Kathy Lipp

BBQ Pulled Pork

Ingredients:

5 lbs. pork roast

2 Tbsp. liquid smoke flavoring

2 tsp beef bouillon

1/3 cup of water

Bottle of your favorite BBQ sauce.

Directions:

Place pork roast, liquid smoke, beef bouillon, and water in a crockpot. Put on the lid and turn crock pot to low. Cook for 8 hours, turning once half way through. When pork is done and fork tender, remove it from the crock pot to a plate. Using two forks, shred the pork. Drain the liquid from the crock pot, reserving a little if you like. Put pork back in crock pot, pour over your favorite bottle of BBQ sauce and stir to combine.

***Editor's Note:

Be aware that many barbecue sauces contain gluten or other ingredients not on this list and therefore should be avoided if that is important to you.

*Serve on a hamburger bun plain or topped with coleslaw

*This freezes well. So immediately put any leftovers in a large Ziploc bag, press out all the air, close and label it, and put it in the freezer.

When ready to use, take out the night before, thaw in your fridge, and place in a sauce pan to reheat. I love freezer meals that are ready to go when I am not.

*This BBQ pork is also great on top of sweet potato noodles, if you are gluten free or grain free, like me. Here is my favorite recipe for sweet potato noodles. You can find it at

www.inspiralized.com

Sweet Potato Noodles

2 sweet potatoes, made into noodles using a spiralizer

Olive oil to drizzle

Salt & pepper

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Line two cookie sheets with parchment paper or a Silpat liner. Place zoodled sweet potatoes on the sheets, making sure not to overlap too much. Drizzle with olive oil or spray with olive oil cooking spray. Sprinkling with salt and pepper and toss across all of the noodles. bake for 15 to 20 minutes, checking after 15 to make sure they don't burn. They are done when soft, but slightly crisp in spots

*A spiralizer comes in many forms. It can be a handheld version found at Wal-Mart which makes cleanup fast and easy. it can also come as an attachment to your stand mixer. or a stand-alone, powered unit. I highly recommend this if you are trying to reduce carbs or grains.

Blackberry Cobbler

Submitted by Cindy Van Winkle

Here is an easy cobbler recipe that makes a great any time dessert.

3 to 4 cups fresh blackberries (if using frozen, thaw first)

1 stick butter or margarine

1 cup flour

1 cup sugar

1 cup milk

2 tbsp baking powder

1 tsp vanilla

Preheat oven to 375F

in 9" square pan, melt butter in oven.

Rinse berries and set aside.

In bowl, mix flour, sugar, baking powder, vanilla and milk.

Pour crumble in pan, do not mix.

Pour berries over flour mixture.

Bake in oven about 35 minutes or until crust forms on top.

Top with whipped cream or vanilla ice cream on the side.

Bridging the Savings Gap for People with disabilities

Introduction by Reginald George

At the ACB convention this year Tony Stevens, Director of Advocacy, gave us an overview on one of the most significant advancements for those of us with disabilities in some time. These are the 529 Able Savings accounts recently launched in Washington State.

Rather than trying to explain this myself and possibly confusing the facts, I turned to an excellent resource. The following information was edited by me, and comes directly from the Able National Resource Center located at

<http://ablenrc.org>

and managed by the National Disability Institute.

Phone: 202) 683-6094

Email: info@ablenrc.org

1. What is an ABLE account?

ABLE Accounts, which are tax-advantaged savings accounts for individuals with disabilities and their families, were created as a result of the passage of the Stephen Beck Jr., Achieving a Better Life Experience

Act of 2014 or better known as the ABLE Act. The beneficiary of the account is the account owner, and income earned by the accounts will not be taxed. Contributions to the account, which can be made by any person (the account beneficiary, family and friends), must be made using post-taxed dollars and will not be tax deductible for purposes of federal taxes, however some states may allow for state income tax deductions for contribution made to an ABLE account.

2. Why the need for ABLE accounts?

Millions of individuals with disabilities and their families depend on a wide variety of public benefits for income, health care and food and housing assistance. Eligibility for these public benefits (SSI, SNAP, Medicaid) require meeting a means or resource test that limits eligibility to individuals to report more than \$2,000 in cash savings, retirement funds and other items of significant value. To remain eligible for these public benefits, an individual must remain poor. For the first time in public policy, the ABLE Act recognizes the extra and significant costs of living with a disability. These include costs, related to raising a child with significant disabilities or a working age adult with disabilities, for accessible housing and transportation, personal assistance services, assistive technology and health care not covered by insurance, Medicaid or Medicare.

For the first time, eligible individuals and their families will be allowed to establish ABLE savings accounts that will largely not affect their eligibility for SSI, Medicaid and other public benefits. The legislation explains further that an ABLE account will, with private savings, "secure funding for disability-related expenses on behalf of designated beneficiaries with disabilities that will supplement, but not supplant,

benefits provided through private insurance, Medicaid, SSI, the beneficiary's employment and other sources."

3. Am I eligible for an ABLE account?

The ABLE Act limits eligibility to individuals with significant disabilities with an age of onset of disability before turning 26 years of age. If you meet this age criteria and are also receiving benefits already under SSI and/or SSDI, you are automatically eligible to establish an ABLE account. If you are not a recipient of SSI and/or SSDI, but still meet the age of onset disability requirement, you could still be eligible to open an ABLE account if you meet Social Security's definition and criteria regarding significant functional limitations and receive a letter of certification from a licensed physician. You need not be under the age of 26 to be eligible for an ABLE account. You could be over the age of 26, but must have had an age of onset before the individual's 26 birthday.

4. Are there limits to how much money can be put in an ABLE account?

The total annual contributions by all participating individuals, including family and friends, for a single tax year is \$15,000. The amount may be adjusted periodically to account for inflation. Under current tax law, \$15,000 is the maximum amount that individuals can make as a gift to someone else and not report the gift to the IRS (gift tax exclusion). The total limit over time that could be made to an ABLE account will be subject to the individual state and their limit for education-related 529 savings accounts. Many states have set this limit at more than \$300,000 per plan. However, for individuals with disabilities who are recipients of SSI, the ABLE Act sets some further limitations. The first \$100,000 in ABLE accounts would be exempted from the SSI \$2,000 individual resource limit. If and when an ABLE account exceeds \$100,000, the beneficiary's SSI cash benefit would be suspended until such time as the

account falls back below \$100,000. It is important to note that while the beneficiary's eligibility for the SSI cash benefit is suspended, this has no effect on their ability to receive or be eligible to receive medical assistance through Medicaid.

Additionally, upon the death of the beneficiary the state in which the beneficiary lived may file a claim to all or a portion of the funds in the account equal to the amount in which the state spent on the beneficiary through their state Medicaid program. This is commonly known as the "Medicaid Pay-Back" provision and the claim could recoup Medicaid related expenses from the time the account was open.

5. Which expenses are allowed by ABLE accounts?

A "qualified disability expense" means any expense related to the designated beneficiary as a result of living a life with disabilities. These may include education, housing, transportation, employment training and support, assistive technology, personal support services, health care expenses, financial management and administrative services and other expenses which help improve health, independence, and/or quality of life.

***"This could include remodeling your home for better safety or access."

7. Do I have to wait for my state to establish a program before opening an account?

No. While the original law passed in 2014 did stipulate that an individual had to open an account in their state of residency, this provision was eliminated by Congress in 2015. This means that regardless of where you might live and whether or not your state has

decided to establish an ABLE program, you are free to enroll in any state's program provided that the program is accepting out of state residents.

8. Will states offer options to invest the savings contributed to an ABLE account?

Like state 529 college savings plans, states do offer qualified individuals and families multiple options to establish ABLE accounts with varied investment strategies. Each individual and family will need to project possible future needs and costs over time, and to assess their risk tolerance for possible future investment strategies to grow their savings. Account contributors or designated beneficiaries are limited, by the ABLE Act, to change the way their money is invested in the account up to two times per year.

9. How is an ABLE account different than a special needs or pooled trust?

An ABLE Account will provide more choice and control for the beneficiary and family. Cost of establishing an account will likely be considerably less than either a Special Needs Trust (SNT) or Pooled Income Trust.

With an ABLE account, account owners will have the ability to control their funds and, if circumstances change, still have other options available to them. For many families, the ABLE account will be a significant and viable option in addition to, rather than instead of, a Trust program.

10. How Will I know Which State ABLE Program is Right for Me?

As of January 2018 there are over 30 ABLE programs nationwide inviting eligible individuals to open an ABLE account, most of which are enrolling individuals regardless of their state of residence. When comparing State ABLE programs you may want to consider the following questions in order to find a program that best meets your needs:

Opening an Account

- What proof will the ABLE program require for you to document in order to open an account or show that your disbursements are qualified expenses?
- Is there a minimum contribution to open an ABLE account?
- Is there a fee to open an account and, if so, how much is that fee?

Maintaining the Account and Fees

- Is there a required minimum contribution to your account? If so, what is the amount?
- Are the fees front end loaded or are they reduced if you leave your funds invested for several years?
- Are there restrictions on how often you can withdraw funds from your account?

Investment Opportunities

- What are the investment options the state ABLE program offers?
- Are the options likely to meet your needs for limiting risk with the growth of your contributed dollars to the ABLE account?

- Does the program offer any unique or value added program elements to help you save, contribute to your account, grow the account, and manage your invested dollars?
- Does the state program offer any unique or value added program elements (such as a match or rewards program, financial literacy info or program for beneficiaries) to help you save, contribute to your account, grow the account, and manage your invested dollars? If so, what is it?

Unique to Your State

- Does your state have a program and, if so, do they offer a state income tax for contributions to their account?
- Is there a “debit card/purchasing card” available with the program? Are there added costs to this?

For more information contact <http://ablenrc.org>

Bridging Community and Faith Groups By Nancy Lind and Bill Munson

Hello Council friends! This post is to share the name of an organization I have been enjoying for some time now. They are officially known as Bridge Disability Ministries. Obviously they also take their name from the metaphor of building bridges. The event I've enjoyed so much is their SEC (Sunday Evening Celebration).

This is a monthly get together that is hosted by area churches around the Puget Sound region. It includes food, community and fun, but beyond

that there is an opportunity to develop friendships and appreciate diversity in the greater Seattle community. Bridge Ministries is a faith based group, and yet has achieved an inclusive reputation for sharing their resources with everyone. The variety of backgrounds, abilities and experiences of people attending the SEC's make for great memories and the chance to meet new people and explore resources. This all takes place in a casual and welcoming setting. Each event is unique and held at a different location.

Check out their website at www.bridgemin.org . Best of all, these events are no charge to the public. You can send Bridge an email up to the day of the event to let them know you're attending. This helps them not run out of food! I hope to see some of you at an upcoming SEC event, their Fall Schedule is below!

Upcoming Events, all are from 4pm – 6pm

Sep 23rd Calvin Presbyterian, 18826 3rd Ave NW, Shoreline, WA 98177

Oct 28th St. Margaret's Episcopal, 4228 Factoria Blvd SE, Bellevue, WA 98006

Nov 11th Newport Presbyterian, 4010 120th Ave SE, Bellevue, WA 98006

Dec 1st St. John Vianney, 12600 84th Ave NE, Kirkland, WA 98034

Bridge Contacts for more info: Bill Munson (425) 471-4530 [or] Jackie Kieszek (425) 885-1006 ext. 118

Pomp and Circumstance Times Four at WSSB

By Lisa George

Washington State School for the Blind has four new graduates, reaching all across the state: Monique Cerna, Redmond; Oryann Fitim, Vancouver; Rebecca Haglund, Spokane; and Klaira Perez, Wenatchee.

The ceremony was held June 1 in Vancouver and featured a senior class slideshow presentation, a senior duet, the Roy J. Brothers and Board of Trustees awards, a graduation address by WSSB Principal Sean McCormick, and Joy Ross as the inspirational commencement speaker. Oryann spoke on behalf of her “senior sisters.”

At the conclusion of the event, attendees followed the new graduates across the campus to the courtyard for their decade-old tradition. Every graduate had the opportunity to ring the bell for each year they spent at WSSB. Congratulations, graduates!



Caption for photo above:

WSSB Principal Sean McCormick, family, and friends gather around, as new graduate Monique Cerna rings the school bell. Klaira Perez, Rebecca Haglund, and Oryann Fitim wait for their turn.

Caption for photo below:

New WSSB graduate Oryann Fitim pulls the rope to ring the school bell six times, once for each year she attended the school.



Superintendent Update-Learning to Juggle

By Scott McCallum

Most people might consider the summer to be downtime in public schools, but summer time at WSSB is somewhat akin to juggling. Each year, we celebrate and simultaneously breathe a sigh of relief when our graduates walk across the stage signifying the end of one phase and the beginning of another. This moment also represents the beginning of a much-deserved break for many teachers and support staff. For some of us at WSSB, however, the summer signifies an intense series of tasks,

repairs, updates, and summer programs.

First, I would like to recognize and celebrate our four graduates in the class of 2018: Monique Cerna, Oryann Fitim, Rebecca Haglund, and Klaira Perez. I am excited to see what the future holds for each of our graduates. As Oryann said during her commencement address, she and her “Senior Sisters” are ready for their next adventure in life.

Now, back to juggling. Each summer, WSSB hosts a myriad of summer programs. We have our own summer program that focuses on the Expanded Core Curriculum for the Blind. We collaborate with our wonderful friends from the Department of Services for the Blind (DSB) to offer the Youth Employment Solutions (YES) program on our campus. In addition, for the first time, the National Federation of the Blind of Washington will be hosting Washington’s first Braille Enrichment for Literacy and Learning (BELL) Academy at the WSSB campus. We also welcome about 50 education professionals from Washington and Oregon to the “Summer Institute” to help prepare them to meet the needs of students who are blind or visually impaired in the public schools.

To keep things exciting, we add a few more balls into the rotation in the form of campus improvements, repair, and restoration. This summer we hope to complete a variety of campus projects before we welcome students back for the 2018-19 school year. This summer, each of the cottages are being reroofed, our parking lots will be resurfaced, and we will complete a much needed sewer-line repair. All of that is in addition to the typical cleaning and readiness efforts we complete in preparation for another school year.

With all of that in the works, we have also experienced a few staffing changes at WSSB. As some may know, Emily Coleman has accepted the Outreach Director position at the Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired in Austin, TX. We are excited for the new opportunities that this move will provide Emily and her family and wish them the best. WSSB completed a national search for a new Outreach

Director. I am thrilled to announce that Pam Parker will be WSSB's new Outreach Director and the State Vision Consultant. Pam has over 30 years of experience as a teacher of students with visual impairments and certified orientation and mobility specialist. Most recently, Pam has been serving as the WSSB Outreach Mentor Teacher for new and soon-to-be TVIs and O&M specialists in Washington, while also maintaining a caseload of students. Pam completed her administrative training program through Washington State University.

Juggling so many balls at once can be extremely challenging. I am confident in our wonderful team of professionals at WSSB and know that we will be ready. It will not be long until we welcome all WSSB staff back to campus. Shortly after that, students will bring the nervous anticipation and excitement of a new school year to WSSB. I find that WSSB, filled with the positive energy of our students and staff, is truly magical. Bring it on. I cannot wait!

**Paws Forever
In Honor of Marlaina Lieberg
By Vivian Conger, President, GDUWS,
and Heather Meares**

Fearless adventurer. Fiery heart. Fashionista. Fierce advocate. Anyone who knew Marlaina knows that if there was something she felt needed to be accomplished she would fight for it , no matter what.

It was very important to Marlaina, the first President of Guide Dog Users of Washington State (GDUWS), to serve as its President for one last term. Knowing she would most likely not fulfill that term . Vivian Conger ran for Vice President prepared to step up if need be. "I would

do just about anything for Marlaina.” Says the current President of GDUWS.

We lost Marlaina Lieberg on May 11th, 2018, but we certainly have not lost her vision.

Over the years GDUWS has held an annual gathering, the Spring Fling, which was a big priority to Marlaina and something she desired the organization continue holding. This event was one of the last things she was able to attend. This event, as well as our annual convention, which coincides with the WCB convention every year, are going to remain priorities for GDUWS.

A proud guide dog handler for over 50 years, a longtime dream of Marlaina’s was to create a scholarship fund for anyone who is getting a guide dog to assist with some of the personal expenses incurred when bringing a new guide home. This dream is now becoming a reality. The GDUWS board has approved the Marlaina Lieberg Scholarship Fund and is in the process of setting it up. Policies and details of this scholarship are not yet finalized, but are in progress. If you would like to contribute to this you may do so on the GDUWS website, www.gduws.net where you will find a donate button along with more information about the organization. If interested, you may also become a member of GDUWS!

Vivian states, “It is my personal mission to bring her dreams and goals to fruition and I am committed to this as the president of GDUWS. Our focus will continue to be on the growth and involvement of our membership, as well as getting a reliable source of fundraising so that we will be able to contribute more to the scholarship fund and to do additional projects in the future.”

No matter how many pairs of wonderful shoes Marlaina may have had, they will truly be impossible to fill by one person, so with this I give you one last thought. There are many causes and battles that need to be

fought. Which one speaks to you and what will you do about it?

Ernie) Arthur Jones Sr. A Life Remembered **By Joleen Ferguson**

July 13, 1937—June 1, 2018

He never attended a state or national convention of either blindness organization; for more than a year, he was unable to attend his local Washington Council of the Blind (WCB) chapter, United Blind of Walla Walla. He has, however, shaped beliefs of hundreds if not thousands about blindness over the past 13 years through his monthly Walla Walla Union Bulletin articles, “A Different View”. At times they were reprinted in the WCB Quarterly publication, Newsline “From the Senior Side” (see June, 2012 issue),

<http://wcbinfo.org/publications/newsline/newsline-june-2012-edition/>.

Ernie was youngest of five siblings born to Dorf and Fern Jones near Kelso, WA. His mom died when he was three and his dad, a taxidermist, worked near home to keep track of his family. He remarried when Ernie was about 13 giving him two additional step siblings and four half brothers and sisters.

Ernie began wearing very thick glasses at age three. He attended school in the Kelso area and in Tumwater, WA but did not graduate from high school. After school, he moved to Spokane to work at Deaconess where his oldest brother was a physician. In seven months, he moved back to

Olympia and was an orderly at St. Peter's Hospital for three years. During this time, he was "adopted" by the Morehouse family.

Next, he worked at the capitol building 13 years. At this time, he married Joan Pattee and had two sons and a daughter (Ernie Jr. (Skip) Kevin and Lisa). After his divorce, he lived with his sons. During this time, Skip became sick and needed to stay home from school. Dorothy Morehouse agreed to babysit. It was this 8-year-old who loved Dorothy and proposed that she and his dad marry and they did.

, Ernie decided to get his GED, and take Nursing Training. Upon graduation, he moved with his family to Colville, WA where he worked as a registered nurse at the hospital. After 10 years of marriage to Dorothy, and with first family grown, Marjorie Tidwell was born, 1980. Ernie loved his family, his work, and the property where he farmed. Yet, his vision deteriorated and he had to quit driving, nursing, and leave the farm.

He, Dorothy and Margie then vacationed in India, where Ernie's brother and his wife, Ralph and Viola Jones were missionaries at Spicer Memorial College. There, they met and unofficially "adopted" Don Halder.

Don lived with Dorothy, Ernie and Margie when the family moved to College Place, WA. The city lot with small garden was not large enough and they moved again in 1990 to a larger lot between Walla Walla and College Place, their final home.

Ernie obtained a computer with software that spoke the screen contents, Jaws. With this, he developed a large circle of online friends and wrote monthly articles for the Walla Walla Union Bulletin. He also authored a book, *Onesimus the Runaway Slave* and was writing another book.

Ernie trained with two successive guide dogs. After Malita died suddenly, he obtained Randy who retired when Ernie passed away. Randy, age 12, has moved to live with a cousin on a farm. After a period of grieving, Randy has rallied and is enjoying retirement.

Ernie inherited a gene that causes cancer to begin in the colon and other parts of the GI track. He underwent countless surgeries and bounced back from many close calls with death. Eventually he lost most of his intestines and colon to cancer.

Dorothy, his wife of nearly 50 years preceded him in death, June 31, 2017. A steady and loving support, her death was a huge blow to Ernie. His last year was difficult with two major cancer surgeries. In late March he was declared cancer free. In late April, the cancer had returned with a vengeance. Knowing the end was near; he faced it with good humor. He was concerned about his family and responsibilities. Two days before his death, he stated that he needed to plan peanuts and do weeding. Besides gardening, writing was his passion.

Ernie passed away June 1, 2018, surrounded by his grand-daughter Cassie, daughter Margie, and niece, Jody. Ernie leaves behind two sons, Ernie Jones Jr., Kevin Jones, and Lisa Hensdell from his first marriage. And daughter Marjorie Tidwell from his second marriage. He also considered Donald Halder one of his sons. Ernie leaves behind 10

grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren. He will be greatly missed by his family, friends, church, online community and newspaper followers.

Calendar of Deadlines and Events

August

31: Deadline for submitting applications for first timer scholarships to WCB fall convention.

31: Deadline for submitting WCB awards nominations.

September

11: Technology Forum call, 7:00 p.m.

14: Department of Services for the Blind Rehabilitation Council Meeting, 9:00 a.m., Seattle

15: Early bird registration Deadline for the WCB annual convention

21: Washington State School for the Blind Board of Trustees meeting, 11:00 a.m., Vancouver

October

9: Technology Forum call, 7:00 p.m.

15: Deadline to register and make hotel reservations, for the WCB Annual Convention

November

1-3: WCB annual convention, Crowne Plaza Seattle Airport Hotel

13: Technology Forum call, 7:00 p.m.

16: Washington State School for the Blind Board of Trustees meeting, 11:00 a.m.,

Vancouver

December

7: Department of Services for the Blind Rehabilitation Council Meeting, 9:00a.m., Seattle

11: Technology Forum call, 7:00 p.m.

Bits and Pieces **Compiled by Cindy Van Winkle**

This column is presented for your information and enjoyment. Inclusion of information, products, and/or services does not constitute endorsement by the Washington Council of the Blind. If you have items for inclusion, email: wcbnewsline@gmail.com and put "Bits and Pieces" in the subject-line.

Braille

Fiddle is a 3D printed puzzle to help users learn how to read braille and is new in the world of technology. These puzzles, when it takes full shape, spell out the name of the object in Braille. Learn more about the company and its quest to make education accessible.

<http://bit.ly/2p8E9da>

Mobility

Apprentices from Leonardo aerospace company created a sensor technology to help visually impaired wheelchair users with navigation to their classrooms. A sensor attached to a wheelchair picks up a signal from a white track on the ground and announces the classroom to which the student has arrived.

<http://bit.ly/2HxmbaX>

Technology

Do you own an Amazon Echo? Here's a quick guide with tips and tricks for utilizing the device.

<http://bit.ly/2FByQNK>

App

Microsoft recently launched a new app for users with blindness or low vision. Soundscape, the free iPhone app available in the US and UK, calls out points of interest around the user using three modes. Download the app.

<http://bit.ly/2DaJlkQ>

Education

Whether it be your child, friend, or student, the American Foundation for the Blind offers five tips on how to empower a teenager who is blind to be successful as they prepare for college.

<http://bit.ly/2CLqVXR>

Emojis

Disabilities will now become part of the social conversation conveyed through emojis. Apple submitted 13 new emojis to "better represent" people with disabilities. Among the list are a guide dog in-harness, a man and woman walking with a white cane, and a man and woman signing to one another. Read why many in the disabled community see this is a positive step.

<https://bit.ly/2ItOGqJ>

Submissions Needed

Calling All Members:

Newsline needs articles from you. We will publish the next Newsline in late December and are looking for articles from you.

Rules for Submission:

- Word Count in article: 750
- Chapter updates: 350
- Block style paragraphs
- Articles may be edited for clarity and space

Send submission to:

thewcbnewsline@gmail.com

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