

Kentucky Cardinal

The Kentucky Cardinal

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The editorial staff of the Kentucky Cardinal proudly dedicates this issue of the Kentucky Cardinal in loving memory of long time Federationists Denise Franklin and Charles Allen. Our NFBK family was greatly saddened in mid-November, just prior to Thanksgiving, as we heard of the passing of our longest active member, Charles Allen, and then, just a few days later, of the passing of our own Denise Franklin.

As the shock has worn off, we realize how much we will miss these two very special people. Each of these individuals spent their lives living the Federation philosophy. Their passing leaves a great hole in our NFBK family. As Federationists, though, we are proud to have known them, and we pledge to move forward as we continue to live the lives we want in true Federation style. We know that Denise and Charlie would expect nothing less from us.

Love and Laughter: In Memory of Denise Franklin

By: Nickie Pearl

Nickie Pearl is the daughter of NFB of Kentucky state president, Cathy Jackson. Nickie currently serves on the NFB of Kentucky state board, as well as on the Greater Louisville Chapter Board. She knew Denise Franklin all of her life. Here is what she shares in loving memory of Denise.

Sometimes in our lives we have those people who just pop in for a bit and then there are others who hang around for a life time. Everyone we encounter or have a relationship with is there for a reason, to teach, to encourage, to raise us up, or to point us in a different direction. Some people are like shooting stars. They are beautiful and awe inspiring, but once you've seen and experienced them, they'll never be forgotten! Denise Franklin is that shooting star and for me was that person who was around for a lifetime. As a child, whether it was for NFB meetings or just my parents hanging out with the Franklin's, Denise was always so warm, loving, and fun. That loud booming laugh is happily edged in my memory. We are all blessed beyond words to have had this amazing person in our lives, for no matter how long, although her time with us was extremely too short, we can rejoice in her memory and keep her spirit in our hearts.

I had asked several people for memories or stories about Denise and the overwhelming consensus was her booming laughter, her warmth, her positivity, her kindness, her fun spirit and that Denise was the most genuine person they had ever known.

Tonia Gatton had this to share. I'll be forever grateful for the words of wisdom Denise shared with me when my mom was sick and about to have surgery for the brain tumor. We were at state convention at Lake Barkley. I called my dad at lunch and learned about the plans for surgery the next day. I scrambled to get a ride to

Lexington with an OFB staff member. While, hurriedly saying my good-byes. Denise gave me a huge hug and told me to be sure and tell my mom anything I wanted her to know before the surgery, just in case.

As many of us, Tonia has trouble picturing NFB functions without Denise. Tonia says, "Denise had a tremendous presence that always filled a room with joy and enthusiasm, her ability to float around the room selling split pot or reverse raffle tickets just like those butterflies she loved. Always chatting with everyone, making friends, making jokes and making everyone feel comfortable.

Since my mom & Denise were best friends for my entire life, there are rarely stories that do not involve Denise. Many of which are not appropriate to share with you, but all involve laughter, fun and some tears. Cathy says that Denise was the one person she could count on to give sage advice, and the one person who could always help her through a tough decision. I know their lives are entering twined like few others. Between school at KSB, their 40 plus years in the NFB, working together at the Braille Service Center, and the ups and downs of life, these two have shared more experiences as friends as most do in their life.

As blind people, we do not want to be looked at as amazing or outstanding for the actions in which we go about our daily lives, these words from others can sometimes reflect as pity. Denise always had a quick wit and would respond to these words of pity with a quick retort that always were firm, poignant and endearing. Her smile and charm could more likely than not disarm those negative nellies and they would end up walking away with a different perspective. Now, on the other hand, when your fellow blind person tags you as amazing or outstanding, it's usually at the other end of the spectrum, which we will call, inspiring!

The first encounter Todd Stephens had with Denise was on an elevator at state convention back in 2011. Todd & his roommate were confused about the exact location of their room and Denise offered her assistance. The room number was given, Denise pressed the button to their floor and when the doors opened, Denise announced this was their floor. Not knowing that Denise was just as blind as they were, Todd preceded to ask Denise if she could help them find their room. In less than a minute, Denise had them in front of their door and gratitude and good-byes were said. Later that evening, Todd & Bob bumped into Denise again and a conversation about vision loss ensued and the fact that Todd or Bob had no useful vision. Denise was quick to mention that was something they had in common. Todd & Bob thought for sure she was kidding. Denise assured them she was not kidding.

How could this totally blind person have the ease and grace to escort them to their room earlier in the day? This was an amazing, but incomprehensible action and they immediately took a liking to Denise and knew she was something special.

Even for my youngest daughter, Haley, Denise was something special. You see, Haley has always been a little shy and reserved; not much on being too far away from me or home. Ladybug was Denise's nickname for Haley. Ladybug would always ask on our way to a NFB function if Denise was going to be there. Ladybug would go on to say, "I like her, she's funny!" The exact age of Haley escapes me, but Haley had to be somewhere between 6 and 8 years old. Denise asked if she and Dennis could take Haley out to eat, to the mall and have her spend the night. I of course was all for it, but was a tad skeptical that Haley would actually spend the night with them. We worked out a contingency plan if Haley decided no-go on spending the night. Now, another thing you must know about Haley, she loves attention and you can only imagine the amount of attention she got from Denise on this excursion. Haley got to pick the restaurant, Haley got to pick out some pretty items to buy, Haley got to pick the movies, Haley got to pick the music, and you see where I'm going with this! To my surprise, Haley spent the night without a word of despair or a note of anxiety. I believe Haley ended up spending the night with Denise a couple more times and always had lots of stories to share.

Strength, beauty and poise, these are the three words that come to my mind to best describe Denise during her battle with leukemia. By no means am I saying she didn't have her moments of fear or despair, I, honestly don't know, I suppose she had placed her fear and faith in God's hands, and she honored his plan. Visiting her in the hospital, talking to her on the phone, playing cards, she always had her smile, her laugh, her positivity. Other than that horrible cancer, she continued to live her life on her terms.

Perfect example of that, once a year a group of us card players have a card tournament and last year it fell on July 30th. Denise had a consolidation treatment scheduled for that week and if all went according to planned, she'd get out of the hospital on July 30th. While talking to her, keeping up with how her treatments were going, she mentioned how her labs would be back Saturday morning and if all looked as good as they had that particular day, she'd leave the hospital and head directly to the card tournament. I was shocked! I figured, a hot shower and a long nap in her own bed would be the only thing on her mind for that Saturday, boy was I wrong, she was there and as usual she kicked my butt in cards!

Talk about always finding the silver lining. I believe most women would throw a fit over losing their hair, no matter the reason, but not Denise! Her response, "Well, at least I'll save money by not going to the salon every 6 weeks". And, "Hopefully it will grow back in thicker than it was. Denise so pulled off the bald. Her head was so perfectly shaped, it was beautiful. Every time I'd see her after she went bald, I'd go up and rub her head and give it a kiss. You can only guess that she was a favorite patient to many of the nurses and doctors. Constantly cutting up with them and trying to make their day better and trying to win them over with dark chocolates or some other kind of sweets. Denise meant so much too so many people and made such a lasting loving impression. She could probably charm the mean out of an alligator!

I wish I could share all of my wonderful Denise memories with you, and there are many of yours I could not fit into this article. Denise was truly the most genuine person I ever knew. There are just a plethora of adjectives to describe her, but not enough words to express how much I miss her. From her love of the Kentucky Wildcats to her love of everyone's dogs, from her infectious laughter, to her enthusiasm for life, from her loyalty and passion to her caring and warmth, Denise will never be forgotten because she is our shooting star!

Without Denise's input, I cannot give you accurate information on how long she served on the various boards and committees of the NFB of Kentucky, NFB of Greater Louisville and NAPUB. We all know she was the go to person for things to that nature, and even Cathy does not remember a lot of the details. Denise did follow Dennis into the NFB way back in the mid 1970s and they are responsible for getting Cathy involved in 1975. She served as the Greater Louisville President a few different times over the years and was the creative brain behind the chili supper and auction.

Denise was one of five Kentuckians who created the NFB's national division, National Association to Promote the Use of Braille (NAPUB). Denise along with Betty Niceley, Tim Cranmer, Emerson Faulk and David Murrell, were all NFB visionaries and leaders. They worked diligently to push the NFB's agenda of equal rights and access forward.

From 2000 till 2014, Denise served as editor of this very publication, The Kentucky Cardinal. She took much pride in producing this newsletter and was a very talented writer. You may remember the Kernel book entitled, Beyond the Funny Tree. This was the name of Denise's short story with the same title. Denise's story caught the attention of the Kernel book editors; her story was published in that book and that edition bared her title. I have started this very article and scrapped it three different

times now. Denise was always my sounding board for ideas and structure, not to mention grammar and spelling. I miss her input and knowledge as well as her fluent writing style.

The NFB of Kentucky board will miss Denise's easy going, but diplomatic manner. For the short time I served with her on this board, her comments and input was always complimentary, on point and well thought out. Her many years of contributions to this affiliate has placed her on numerous committees, has charged her with various tasks and has placed her before us presenting a wide range of information and topics. Denise's use of Braille, like many of you, gave her a love and intimacy with the Braille cell that she was passionate in sharing and making sure Braille use never became obsolete. I suppose, NFBK will have to invest in a bull horn, because none of us have a loud mouth like Denise!

In closing, I would just like to say, how grateful I am to have known and been such a close friend to Denise. She truly was a friend, role model, mentor, second mom and someone I enjoyed being around. We all have fond memories of Denise and grasp the enormity of her passing. As many of you told me, no one can take Denise's place. So, let's make sure to always keep Denise in her place, in our hearts and in our memories.

Dennis Franklin has requested that any donations in memory of Denise be donated to the Kentucky Braille enrichment for Literacy and Learning (BELL) Academy. If you would like to make a donation, please send it to NFBK treasurer, J. Mike Freholm at 2012 Harris way, Russell, KY 41169. Please indicate that the donation is in memory of Denise for the BELL Academy.

Charles Alan: his legacy

By: Jennifer Hall

Jennifer Hall serves on The Cardinal editorial staff. George Stokes, president of the Frankfort Chapter interviewed Betty Allen in order to gain much of the material shared in this article.

It is said that the sum of a man's life results in the legacy that he leaves behind. Charles Allen left a tremendous legacy, not only in the love he had for his wife Betty, but the love he had for an organization that he believes will stand the test of time. This love created a desire to see changes in the blindness community, both at the

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state and national levels. Charles Allen devoted his life to making sure blind people can live the life they want. Join me on a journey with other Federationists and his loving wife Betty to see how Charlie's legacy unfolded around us.

Charles Allen was born in Muhlenberg County. His parents moved his family later on to the Louisville area so that Charles could attend the Kentucky school for the blind (KSB). Charles lost his eyesight at the age of seven because of being a curious child. Betty said that he and some friends combined chemicals from his mother's collection and put them into a jar with a lid tightly secured. After removing the lid, Charles felt the explosion in his face as these combined chemicals exploded. This horrific accident led to his blindness. He attended KSB until his junior year of high school. He, then, had to return home after his father's passing. Charlie was then responsible for earning a living to take care of his mother and family. In the interview with George and Raynelle, Betty explained that Charlie's first job was a telephone solicitor. She said he was excellent because he was always so very persuasive!

Charlie had met several great friends along the way at KSB, including Harold Reagan and Robert Whitehead. Charlie joined the Louisville Association of the Blind in 1968. He became the third president and Betty recalls Charlie faced a little opposition. At the encouragement of Dr. Kenneth Jernigan, Charlie led the call to change the name of the organization to the National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky. The change was difficult at first, but people came around in the end, Betty said. Charlie and Betty met each other in November 1971 after a blind date through Bob and Janet Barnes. They fell madly in love, and by that April, they were married. Betty recalls, later in the interview, that they spent their first vacation together, like a honeymoon, at their first national convention in New York City. Charlie loved hearing different accents and languages, and on their first trip to New York City that summer, he told her that he believes he heard all 70 languages believed to be in New York City on one street! Their first home was a small visitor's cottage off of Brownsboro Road in Louisville. Betty said that it was \$65 a month, a five dollar increase after Charlie moved in! After taking a vendors position in Frankfort, the couple moved there and continue to call Frankfort home. Charlie was a key leader in making sure that the state created local chapters. Betty remembered one of the first was a chapter in Henderson. She said that most of these local chapters had members that were so excited, but were so much older. Charlie served as a vendor for 47 years. Betty recalls his presidency of the National Association of Merchants for a two-year period. She said, he did not like that position and felt very uncomfortable because he liked to voice his opinion on many issues, and in that position, he was limited. One of his most noteworthy accomplishments as he served

as NFBK president was the battle that was waged and one to create a separate agency for blind Kentuckians. Betty recalled that one of Charlie's favorite things in the Federation was meeting new people across the nation. She remembers his friends in Hawaii, New York, California, and so many other states. There was no exception to that rule. When Charlie came to the state convention in Kentucky, he loved to meet and introduce himself to all that he could.

Here are what some Kentucky Federationists have to say in memory of Charlie:

Avery Baggett remarks, "Although I did not have a chance to get to know Charlie Allen well, the one time I did get to meet him was meaningful for several reasons. At the state convention in September of 2016, I was awarded the Charles Allen Scholarship and I was lucky enough to meet him at the scholarship breakfast. There, he exuded the kindness and generosity that, in my mind, cemented his legacy in Kentucky as a magnet of goodwill. Through his gift I was able to finish the long path it had taken me to graduate from college. Without his support I would have found it much more difficult to afford my last semester. Charlie Allen imparted some great wisdom on me; the only limits to my success are those that I place on myself. I hope to be like Charlie Allen and give back to the community which has supported me in my blindness in any way I can. I am sorry that I did not have the time to get to know him better, and I feel for Betty Allen. My deepest sympathy goes out to her and their many friends."

President Cathy Jackson remembers, "There was never a time when Charley wasn't around. It will seem strange without him.

The Charles and Betty Allen Scholarship are funded because of Charley's generosity, and desire to see blind students get an education.

Thank you Charley!"

Jennifer Hall remembers, "I attended my first state convention because of two wonderful people in that first Henderson chapter that Charlie helped create. Lloyd and Joeretta Agnew took me to this First State convention, where I was blessed and honored with the opportunity to meet some of the greatest names in the NFB, both at the national and state level. One of the first people Lloyd introduced me to was Charlie Alan and his wife Betty. It was somewhat overwhelming because I met Dr. Marc Maurer, Mrs. Mary Ellen Jernigan, Cathy, Lora, and so many wonderful people that have helped me definitely learn to live the life that I want. I will forever be grateful to Charlie and his dedication to making sure that other local chapters around the state were created"

Lora and Todd Stephens remember, Charlie was always generous and enjoyed treating his friends in the Federation to dinner. It was a little known tradition that on the last evening during Washington Seminar he took everyone from Kentucky out to a nice dinner to celebrate our successes on the hill. At her first Washington Seminar, Lora remembers going out to a wonderful German restaurant, and Todd says that the seafood restaurant where he went in D.C. with Charlie and the others was the absolute best seafood he has ever eaten. We appreciate his generosity and the time he spent "breaking bread" with his fellow Federationists."

Together, Charlie and Betty, along with business partners have created the Alan scholarship fund. This scholarship fund was endowed for the NFB of Kentucky in hopes that blind students would reach for the stars and achieve anything they put their minds to. Charlie had a great love of learning. Betty and Charlie wanted to make sure that blind students didn't have anything keeping them from their educational goals, especially financial restraints.

Charlie Alan's legacy will live on for years to come through every effort he has made to make this organization what it is and through the scholarship awards that students will receive in honor of him in the future. He used his time, energy, and financial resources to make sure blind Kentuckians would know how to live the life they want.

At the end of George Stokes' interview with Betty Allen, Betty said that Charlie definitely lived the life he wanted to live. George asked Betty if there was any advice Charlie might give to future NFB Kentucky members and she said that he would probably say, "Go for it!"

If you would like to make a donation in memory of Charles Allen, please send it to NFBK treasurer, J. Mike Freholm at 2012 Harris Way, Russell, KY 41169. Any donations will be used to help bring Allen Scholarship finalists to our state convention. Please indicate that the donation is in memory of Charles Allen.

Being Blind Isn't Easy

By: Cathy Jackson

Cathy Jackson is president of the NFB of Kentucky. She serves as a board member on the NFB national board of directors. Here are her thoughts in regards to how the

general public misunderstands blindness.

If anyone tells you it's always easy being blind, they aren't being honest. As a matter of fact, those of us who have some usable vision often times have it harder than someone who is totally blind. The public in general only understands perfect vision or total blindness. Anything in between is a mystery.

I will be the first to admit that it took me several years to realize that I should be using a white cane. The cane is a benefit to me personally and it also alerts others to the fact that I am blind. I can also tell you that I am treated quite differently when I have my cane and when I don't. It is like adding a layer of confusion. People see me reading signs and moving out of the way of others coming toward me and yet I have this cane that is associated with blind people.

On the way home from the NFB of Oregon State Convention where I had been serving as the national representative I had to change planes in Chicago's O'Hare airport. I was pretty tired and hungry and being harassed by an airline attendant wasn't something I was ready for. I walked up to the counter to ask what gate I would be departing from to catch my flight to Louisville, Kentucky. Wouldn't you know she decided that I needed a wheel chair to transport me. I tried to assure her I was fine and if she would just give me the information I needed and point me in the right direction I could travel independently. Besides I had been sitting for several hours and needed to stretch my legs, to which she replied; "not on my watch". I was told to "stay put". When she turned around I collapsed my cane and bolted. I was counting on the fact that if I put my cane away I would be just another passenger in the airport, and I was. Should I have folded my cane and ran, probably not. Looking back that was the coward's way out. I should have stood my ground. However, during those few seconds of irrational thinking I decided it was too difficult to be blind. Was that the right thing to do? As an blind person with some vision, I often face these choices. There really isn't a right way to handle these situations. We as blind individuals must all work together to educate society on the reality of blindness.

The World Blind Union: Another Amazing Experience

By: Cathy Jackson

NFBK president, Cathy Jackson reflects on her experience as she attended the first ever assembly of the World Blind Union to be held in the United States last August in Orlando, Florida.

Over the past fifteen years since I have been a member of the Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind I have had some amazing opportunities. I have had the privilege of visiting other affiliate conventions serving as their national representative. I have been appointed to chair and serve on numerous committees. But, the opportunities just keep coming. This past summer I was chosen to be a volunteer on the host committee for the joint assembly of the World Blind Union and the International Council for the Education of the visually impaired held here in the United States for the very first time. We were in Orlando, Florida staying at the Rosen Center Hotel, a place very familiar to those of us who have attended national conventions over the past few years.

There were around 900 individuals registered from at least 99 countries. The true spirit and philosophy of the NFB never shined brighter than it did during this week. Many of us volunteered to serve on the host committee alongside several of our staff members from our national office. For eight days we marshaled our guests from various meetings and special events just as we do at our national conventions. It was interesting to hear our members give directions in English, and then again in Spanish and French. Our guests were totally amazed that other blind people were taking them from place to place and giving them directions. They lovingly called us "talking signs" and "human beacons". But interestingly enough, by the end of the week, they too were directing others to meetings using our marshaling techniques.

The wealthier countries were able to afford to send a sighted guide with the blind person, while those from the poorest countries traveled alone without a cane, I might add. We brought several of the long white canes that we use for our free cane-give-away program. It astonished me to see the number of blind people from other countries who can't afford a cane in their home land. They were so proud to get their hands on their very first cane. It also provided them the opportunity to get an impromptu O&M lesson while there were here from our professionals, Roland Allen and Ron Brown. For those of you who may not know, Roland and Ron are both blind gentlemen who are licensed Orientation and Mobility instructors.

We were available in the hospitality suite where one could come for a snack, something to drink, or just to socialize; much the same as we do at our national convention. The difference being this is where culture met culture. They were grateful to be able to take as much bottled water as they liked since fresh drinking water is a scarcity in so many countries. They certainly enjoyed the variety of snack food too. They found it hard to believe that we were actually encouraging them to

take what they wanted---again, something unheard of at home.

We were told early on at one of our volunteer conference call meetings to expect all levels of independence. And, to remember that those who would be attending most likely have not been exposed to the training that we are accustomed to receiving here in the United States. Most of all, we must never forget that even though the National Federation of the Blind places much higher expectations on blind people than does the rest of the world, we must meet people where they are.

Blind people are not held in high regard in most countries, something that is hard for us to comprehend. I will admit I went to Orlando with very low expectations. In reality I was quite surprised. Yes, there were those who needed someone to meet them at their room every morning to escort them to a meeting. But, on the other hand, there were many more that were quite independent. If I were to be totally honest, we have seen some of our own members at our conventions that fall short of living up to our expectations. Nevertheless, we take them under our wing to mentor and encourage. Opening ceremonies featured our U. S. space program and the Blind Driver Challenge. I think the latter really caught the attention of our visitors. This was something they were not prepared for. I attended other meetings, and the one thing that I was continually made aware of is just how far advanced we are here in the good old U. S. of A. Not only in the area of accessible technology, but in the field of education and rehabilitation of the blind.

Cultural night was a hit with everyone. As you can guess this evening's activities featured American-style entertainment. We had an opportunity to ride the mechanical bull, pitch a baseball, visit and talk with Captain Michael Forman, a real astronaut, and listen to a genre of hit music. The food was just as enjoyable. We indulged on hot dogs, popcorn, pretzels, soda and beer. All-in-all a night none of us will forget for quite some time to come.

We were also proud to be in attendance when our very own Fred Schroeder was elected president of the World Blind Union. He will serve a four-year term. I can't wait to see how things progress in the movement with Fred at the helm.

I believe through our actions we definitely empowered the blind from other nations to go back to their native countries and begin building on our can-do philosophy and independent attitude. I know personally this was as much a learning experience as a teaching one.

By: Avery Bagget

Avery Bagget was a proud recipient of a 2016 NFB of Kentucky Scholarship. She graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in December with a BA in Linguistics. We are pleased to have Avery as a part of our NFBK family. She attended her first Washington Seminar this year. Here is what she has to say about her experience.

This year I had the honor and privilege of attending the NFB Washington Seminar. Every year the NFB chooses a number of issues important to the blind community to present to members of congress, and this year 52 NFB affiliates sent representatives to lobby.

The issues chosen this year were important to me on a personal level. Briefly, they are as follows:

The Accessible Instructional Materials in Higher Education act (AIM HE) would establish a board of interested parties to define accessibility and evaluate all materials used in higher education. George W. Bush signed a similar law in 2004 but this precedent was more limited in its scope, applying only to text books for K-12 grade students. The AIM HE act would encompass a much broader swath of technologies. Everything from meal plan cards to software to healthcare systems would be offered in an accessible format. Colleges could opt into this program. They would receive guidelines for accessibility and "safe harbor" - or protection from certain liabilities - as they become more inclusive. What do we want to accomplish? Let's educate the educators on how to be inclusive.

The Affordable Accessible Technology Act (AATA). This bill, if passed, will provide a refundable tax credit to ANY legally blind person who purchases a piece of accessible technology. The tax payer could get credit for up to \$2000 over a 3 year period. What do we want to accomplish? Just as a sighted person can get money back for buying an electric car, a blind person could get money back from buying a Braille Note?

National Library Services (NLS) Appropriation for Refreshable Braille Displays --this legislation would disperse \$5,000,000 to the NLS to purchase approximately 10,000 refreshable braille displays to allow simultaneous reading of books. In the long run this would save \$10,000,000 annually from savings of upkeep and shipment of hard copy Braille books. The displays would be a loan from the library, allowing users to download files to the display whenever they want. This would eliminate waiting lists and save money. What do we want to accomplish: Braille books are heavy and

expensive? Let's make available the Braille equivalent of a Kindle.

The Marrakesh Treaty -- this treaty allows participant nations to bypass copyright law for accessible items for legally blind persons. United States participation would make accessible many more international published works in the U.S. and vice versa. Currently, 25 nations have ratified the treaty; the U.S. is not among them. What do we want to accomplish. Books without borders.

Of these four important issues, I feel most passionate about AIM HE. Limits of accessible academic resources played a large and direct role in my life last fall during my final semester of college. I had to devote half of my school work time fixing bugs and finding work around for technology that did not work for me like it did for my sighted peers. I was at a severe disadvantage in this academic uneven playing field. Teachers and administrators want to be inclusive of all students, but there are few accessible resources currently available to guide them in offering learning options. AIM HE would fix that gaping hole in our system.

The AATA is a common sense proposal to get our motivated blind citizens back to work, back in school, or looking forward to enjoying their retirement. There is nothing inherently expensive about accessible technology; it is so expensive because blind people constitute such a small proportion of the population that we do not have the buying power to drive the prices down. It is a classic example of supply and demand in action. I hope that this tax credit would increase the number of people investing in them by purchasing technology. In the end, this would lead to higher demand and lower prices. I see this as a positive feedback loop for good. There are already tax credits for much less consequential goods. It's about time we invest in our blind citizens, too.

The NLS appropriation is good economic sense. By spending 5 million dollars now, the US would save 10 million dollars every year hereafter. The beauty of digital files is that there is zero extra cause to produce an extra unit. Essentially there are no diminishing returns if the NLS switches to digital. Last year, the NLS was approved to switch over to digital Braille files, but there was no funding to make that a reality. With 5 million dollars the NLS could purchase and loan out 10,000 refreshable Braille displays, leading to creation of a better Braille distribution system. In the beginning there may be questions as to the logistics of this undertaking; there were similar questions raised when the Daisy players were first sent out. We trust that the NLS will have the wisdom and skills to pull off another great switch.

The Marrakesh treaty, which was ratified in 2013, endeavored to set a uniform standard among international copyright laws. However, accessible written items were not part of the initial agreement. The NFB is hoping the senate will revisit and amend this treaty to allow the free flow of accessible materials across international borders. I was horrified to learn the sobering statistic that only 5% of the worlds printed material is accessible. There is such a simple fix to this. We only need to amend the Marrakesh treaty to include accessible materials. This change would mean, for example, that if I or any student wants to go back to school to learn French, there will be much better access to French publications.

This was a wonderful experience. I came away with a sense of empowerment, realizing that I can make a difference. I take great pride in being able to add valuable material to the group dynamic. I thought going into this week that I would be more of an onlooker than a participant. But Cathy, Laura, Todd, and I developed a solid presentation that seemed to impact the congressmen and congressional aids we met. I've come away with a renewed pride in my country and the democracy it represents. I urge you that if you have any issue you want to see happen in congress contact your congress member and communicate your passion.

I also came away with a renewed since of the great diversity of our American heritage. On my last afternoon I visited the National Museum of the American Indian. There I enjoyed a varied and exotic meal at the Mitsitam Café. I was inspired to be reminded of the many rich gifts our native minority population offers our American life. I was challenged to discover how I, a relatively new member of the visually impaired minority, can use my gifts for the wider common good.

NFB-NEWSLINE Kentucky Update

By: Todd Stephens, State Coordinator

Within the last 25 months, NFB-NEWSLINE Kentucky has subscribed 137 individuals to the service. The NEWSLINE team and community partners have worked very diligently to accomplish this milestone, but we are not yet done! There are 1,989 current NFB-NEWSLINE Kentucky subscribers. Our goal was to crack the 2,000 subscriber mark by year's end, but unfortunately, that didn't happen for us. With that said, not all is lost, there's still plenty room for growth and plenty room for your contribution. Again, I'm asking you, can we count on you to assist with bringing new subscribers aboard? By introducing an individual with a print impairment to the NFB-NEWSLINE audio reading service (please reference: www.nfbnewsline-ky.org), you

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are helping to increase our service subscribership, which supports our funding. In addition, you are providing an opportunity for someone with a print impairment to take a step forward in increasing their independence. How so? For those who have a print disability, NFB-NEWSLINE allows for independent access to timely and relevant print information through an electronic interface, which enables those who use the service to have the same access to crucial information as those who do not have a print disability.

With regard to our efforts to seek stabilized funding for the NFB-NEWSLINE Kentucky audio reading service, On August 8, 2016, NFB of Kentucky President, Cathy Jackson, Director of Sponsored Technologies, Scott White, Assistant to the Director of Sponsored Technologies, Tammy Albee and NFB-NEWSLINE Kentucky Coordinator, Todd Stephens met with members from the Kentucky Public Service Commission (PSC), Tom Dorman, Chief of Staff for Representative Rocky Adkins, and Leah Mason, Staff Attorney for Senator Gerald A. Neal. The purpose of this meeting was to explore options for relocating the Accessible Electronic Information Service Program (NFB-NEWSLINE Kentucky) to the Kentucky PSC; however, only to the extent that the PSC would serve as an escrow agency of sorts, whereby a nominal amount (one or two cents on the dollar max) could be assessed and collected. When and if program funding for the Accessible Electronic Information dropped below its minimal threshold creating insufficient funding for the project to meet its operational obligations, the funds collected would then be transferred to the Kentucky Office for the Blind so that the project could meet required financial obligations. The Kentucky Office for the Blind is the designated agency that currently serves as the funding mechanism for the Accessible Electronic Information Service Program. In keeping the Kentucky Office for the Blind as the designated funding mechanism, this agency would remain eligible to receive federal matching dollars.

The governing committee led by Attorney, Leah Mason had several questions that they required answers to from the National Federation of the Blind regarding NFB-NEWSLINE (R) operations. Many of these questions were answered, but some, unfortunately, were not answered to the committee's satisfaction. Attorney Leah Mason has communicated that legislators have a responsibility to the residents of Kentucky to see that all of these questions are answered fully. President Jackson and Todd Stephens have been advised that the offices of Senator Gerald A. Neal and Representative Rocky Adkins are unable to work with them in securing sustained funding for the Accessible Electronic Information service Program, as long as these questions remain unanswered. At this point in time, we presently find ourselves at an impasse for securing anticipated stabilized funding through the state

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legislature. The NFB-NEWSLINE Kentucky team will continue to explore the options that present themselves to reach this critical goal!

Thank you for your time and be sure to visit us and give us a Like on [Facebook](#) Or at: [M.Facebook](#)

BELL Academy Update

By: Jayne Seif, State Coordinator

The BELL will ring for the second year here in Kentucky. Thanks to the generosity of the American Printing House for the Blind we will once again have the use of its wonderful facility for a week this July to host our Kentucky Bell Academy.

This year I was able to attend a seminar at the Jernigan Institute for those coordinating BELL Academy programs. It was a wonderful opportunity to learn about the concept of the program as a whole, ideas on fundraising, branding, and the ins and outs of running the program. Most importantly was the excellent opportunity to network with those just starting out in BELL, as well as, those with more experience. These contacts have already proven valuable and will, I believe, serve to make us stronger as we continue growing our BELL Academy in years to come.

So, please spread the word far and wide. Kentucky BELL Academy will be held at APH July24-28, 2017. Applications are now being taken online at the following address:<https://nfb.org/bell-academy/>

Chapter and Division Round-Up

Ashland Chapter Update

Members of the Ashland Chapter Met on a beautiful Saturday afternoon in October to take a white cane walk around the perimeter of Central Park in downtown Ashland to promote awareness during Meet the Blind month. They took along Braille alphabet cards to give out to community members as they walked. On December 19, seventeen individuals including chapter members, new members, friends and guests met at the Kentucky Hall of Fame Café in the Ashland Town Center Mall to celebrate the Christmas season. We were pleased to have two new members join us. Mike

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and Barbara Smith, long time Federationists from West Virginia recently moved to Grayson, Kentucky where they will continue their work with the International Christian Braille Mission as it has moved from Charleston, West Virginia to its new location on the campus of Kentucky Christian University in Grayson, Kentucky. Instead of having an ornament or gift exchange this year, chapter members decided to take up a donation for the Salvation Army. We wanted to give back to the community, instead of doing something for ourselves.

The Ashland Chapter recently met from 4:00 to 7:00 in the party room at Giovanni's Pizza on Greenup Avenue in downtown Ashland on Monday, February 27. Ten of us were in attendance, and we look forward to doing it again on April 17 - same time, same location. We look forward to continuing to do the work of the Federation.
Lora Felty Stephens, President

FOUR RIVERS Chapter Update

The Four Rivers chapter has had an exciting winter. In October, we had our monthly meeting at the Paducah public library where we discussed the white cane event that a few of our members were able to attend. In November, we had a great time of fellowship and thanksgiving while celebrating at Saxby's, the newest addition to the Paducah area. For Christmas, we were small in number, but we had a great time of fellowship at the very trendy restaurant, Flamingo Roll. 2017 is gearing up to be a very productive year for our chapter and we are looking forward to all the excitement!
Jennifer Hall, President

Lexington Chapter Update

During the fall and winter season, NFB of Lexington has remained committed to the mission of the National Federation of the Blind. The chapter organized a White Cane Walk downtown and other activities in October in an effort to raise awareness about the abilities of people who are blind. Some members of the chapter participated in the Eye Opening Symposium and other advocacy and educational events in the community. NFB of Lexington has welcomed new members and is excited about the chapter building outreach and activities. NFB of Lexington is a resource for the Central and Southeastern Kentucky area providing information about blindness issues and the National Federation of the Blind.

For more information, contact Pamela Roark-Glisson, President (859)948-8484 or

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email [Pam Glisson](mailto:Pam.Glisson). Follow us on Facebook at National Federation of the Blind in Lexington Kentucky.

Pamela Glisson, President

Greater Louisville Chapter Update

Greetings from Louisville!

Louisville hit the ground running with activities during Meet the Blind Month. We started the month off with a table at the St. Stephen's Martyr Health Fair. Members handed out NFB literature and demonstrated various adaptive devices that we use for daily living. We also were proud to have several members run/walk in the annual VIPS 5K. After the 5K several members also handed out literature to families at the 5K. We also had a table at the Office for the Blind's Open House. At this event we were able to talk to several students of various ages about NFB. Finally, members also participated in White Cane Day in downtown Louisville.

In December, we held our annual Christmas party. Members prepared all the food this year. Kids were paid a special visit by Santa Claus. We also collected and donated several presents to students at the Kentucky School for the Blind.

In January, we got the year started off right with a focus on fitness. Several members from the recently chartered Sports and Rec division joined us to give us an update on the division and also discuss accessible fitness apps.

On March 4th, we will hold our annual Chili Supper and Auction at Crescent Hill United Methodist Church. This is our largest fundraiser of the year and we hope to once again make this year a success.

Katie Adkins, President

Entrepreneur Division Update

One wonderful result of our now historic 2016 convention is we found ourselves with two brand spanking new divisions. The one I'm here to talk about is the Entrepreneurs Division. Our new constitution states, "The purpose of the division shall be to provide a forum for engaging in discussions, sharing information and resources that will put the members of this division on a path to understanding and developing entrepreneurial keys to success."

Does this sound like something you'd be interested in being part of? We are currently

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working on seminars and other educational opportunities so we can learn how to accomplish our goals.

Would you like to be involved? Want to keep up with what's happening with the new division? Join our listserv! Just go to www.nfbnet.org and look down the list for NFBK Entrepreneurs. Then follow the instructions on the page to sign up.

Michael K. Freholm, President

Sports and Recreation Division Update

On your mark. Get set. GO!! This October the Sports and Recreation Division of the National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky was chartered at the annual State Convention. We held our first meeting and elected the following officers to our first board: Jayne Seif as President, Stephanie Davis as Vice President, Nickie Pearl as Secretary, and Mary Harrod as Treasurer.

We don't appear to be having much of a winter here in Kentucky, but we have started a workout group in anticipation of the cold weather keeping us away from the gym, the outdoors, or wherever you go to get out and work out. We are running this group through Google Hang outs.

We plan to start out slow so don't be afraid to give this a try. The link and info are posted on our Facebook page.

Our next event will be on March 20, at the Kentucky School for the Blind. A lot of us old folks want to learn to play goalball and we have decided to let the kids teach us. It is our hope that through such partnership we can both have the opportunity to learn and educate. Look for info this spring as we plan to meet up with the kids once again and school or be schooled at a round or two of beep baseball.

As a population with disabilities, the blind are often one of the greatest at risk for health issues related to a sedentary lifestyle. As you all know we don't believe at all that this has to or should be the case. So in an effort to help people get out and live the life they want we in courage you to check us out. Don't worry no one is going to make you run a marathon, well not on the first day anyway, we truly want to meet you where you are and find out just where it is you want to go. So help us help you get out there!! You can find us through our Facebook page or contact us through our list serve by following this link www.nfbnet.org/mailman/listinfo/nfbk-sportsandrec_nfbnet

Technology Assistance Division (TAD) Update

TAD is in the planning stages for our Pre-Employment Transition Student symposium. Pre-Employment Transition Students (Pre-ETS) are students ages 14-21 with an IEP, 504 plan, or a disability who are currently receiving services or are potentially eligible. The training will be held at the Paul Sawyer Public Library in Frankfort. The time and dates of this symposium will be 10:00 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. on Tuesday, April 25th and April 26th. Students will attend only one of the two sessions and lunch will be included.

TAD had tailored the annual symposium to attract students at the NFB State Convention; however, due to conflicts in schedules for students who reside in Louisville and the symposium being an all-day event, we were unable to get the student participation that we targeted. It is for this reason that we initiated outreach to students through their TVIs through the form of a survey, which was posted on the TAD website from late October through mid-December to determine what the interest would actually be. We received responses from TVIs in Fayette, Wolfe, Jessamine, Clark, and KSB. The survey reflected that 39 students classified as Pre-Employment Transition Students would be interested in the training. To ensure the proper instructor student ratio, we are scheduling this training as a two-day event. What we have determined from this survey are that all of these counties are fairly close to Frankfort, KY, so we will need to have other future sites around the state to make sure that all students who are interested have an opportunity to participate. Please find our program topics for this training below.

Our thanks go out to George Stokes who has been working diligently with Tad to secure the location in Frankfort as well as exploring options for lunch contributions. George has agreed to serve as the MC for this event!

Program Topics

Apps for Daily Living: Is this app right for me? Is this app accessible? How do I get it onto my phone or tablet? Our team will answer these questions and more. We will work with students to introduce several apps that we use from a number of categories to promote our independence that run on both iOS and Android platforms. This will be a classroom training session allowing for interactive instructor-student based training for all participants.

Creating Your Virtual Image: Many job applications today are only accepted online. TAD will work with students on obtaining and accessing free email accounts through hosts like Google and Yahoo (for those who do not have established email accounts). Students will tackle a mock online job application. We will address issues with potential magnification and screen reader compatibility. The classroom session will also cover the importance of techniques in submitting accurate, complete and professional applications.

Advocating the Right Way: The art of advocacy is exercising your legal rights as a person with a disability in a systematic and professional manner to intercede on your own behalf. This lesson will be taught interactively and will focus on the lessons in advocating effectively and responsibly regarding potential opportunities in the workforce. There is a right way, and there is a wrong way. We must do our diligence in learning tactics that are effective. The reality is, sometimes, there is not a second opportunity.

You can visit the Tad webpage at: www.nfbkentuckytad.org and on Facebook at: [click here](#)

Todd E. Stephens, President

Have You Heard?

We have two ladies to be very proud of in their accomplishments this past December. Avery Baggett, A member of the Lexington chapter, has graduated with her bachelor's degree. She graduated on December 22, 2016 and will walk in the ceremony on May 15, 2017 at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Her bachelor's degree major was Linguistics and she will be working on her M.A. In linguistics at the University of Kentucky. We wish Avery all the best in her endeavors!

Mary Harrod, a member of the greater Louisville chapter, finished her second Master's degree in vocational rehabilitation from the University of Kentucky in December. Mary is currently employed at the Charles W McDowell Center in Louisville. Mary is the mother of Makenna Harrod, who attended our BELL Academy last summer. We wish both Avery and Mary the best of luck as they continue to pursue their educational and career goals.

As they deal with their loss of long-time member Charles Allen, the Frankfort Chapter

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wishes to announce that it now has a new 2nd Vice-President. George Stokes, president, reports, Mr. Calvin Samuels has filled our vacancy. Calvin is one of our newest Members. Calvin and his wife, Stephanie, show tremendous interest in the activities of NFB and NFBK. We are pleased to have them and we wish them the best.

Todd and Lora Stephens have been asked to participate in the Kentucky Association for the Education and Rehabilitation of the Blind and Visually Impaired (KAER) Conference in Lexington, KY on Tuesday, March 21st. The title of their presentation is: Becoming Informed and Empowered through Accessible Electronic Information.

Description: Students who are visually impaired often require specialized technology to compete with their sighted peers. It is for this specialized technology that the proverbial playing field is leveled; and thus, the visually impaired can compete effectively and efficiently for opportunities in education and for opportunities in employment.

Todd and Lora will introduce and discuss two pieces of assistive technology software that have and are making a valuable contribution in the lives of individuals who are print impaired.

Introducing the world's largest audio reading service for the print impaired that currently has over 370 (international, national, state and local newspapers), 50 award winning magazines and more. This audio reading service known as NFB-NEWSLINE(R) is absolutely free to individuals who qualify under a print disability.

Introducing the KNFB Reader app, a 2015 Apple VIS Golden Apple award winner. This app is available in iOS and Android that accurately and quickly transforms a smart phone into a mobile reading machine. This is accomplished through software which converts text to speech, providing an alternative format to the printed word for individuals who would otherwise be unable to access.

Cook's nook

The following recipes come to us from the kitchen of Diana cline, treasurer of the NFB of Ashland. Some of you will remember the yummy fudge that Diana has donated to our silent auction during the Friday evening social at state convention for the past two years. Members of the Ashland chapter always look forward to all of the

good cooking that Diana brings when we have pot luck get-togethers. So, we know that these recipes will be quite delicious. Enjoy!

Old fashioned goulash

2 lbs. Ground chuck
Chopped onion
3 tbs. Minced garlic
2 1/2 cups water
1/2 cup beef broth
1/3 cup olive oil
2 15 oz. Cans tomato sauce
2 15 oz. Cans tomatoes
1 tbs. Italian seasoning
1 tbs. Chili powder
1 tbs. seasoned salt
1/2 tbs. Black pepper
2 cups elbow macaroni

1. Brown meat with onion.
2. Add all other ingredients except elbow macaroni.
3. Reduce heat, cover and cook for 20 minutes.
4. Add elbow noodles and cook until desired tenderness.

This recipe makes a lot of goulash. It freezes well.

Broccoli pasta salad

16 ounce rotini pasta
Chopped fresh broccoli
Shredded carrot
Shredded sharp cheddar cheese
Marzetti slaw dressing

1. Cook rotini noodles to desired tenderness.
2. Mix noodles and remaining ingredients together and chill.

Amish peanut butter spread (church spread)

2 cups brown sugar
2 tbs. Light corn syrup
1 tsp. Maple or vanilla flavoring
1 cup water
2 cups peanut butter
16 ounces marshmallow creme

1. Combine brown sugar, corn syrup, water and flavoring in a medium saucepan. Bring to a boil.
2. Remove from heat and set to cool.
3. Combine peanut butter and marshmallow creme. Mix well.
4. Pour cooled syrup into peanut butter mixture. Mix until smooth and well blended.

Serve with graham crackers, bread, muffins, cookies, apples or bananas.

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2016-2017

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