



## **PERISCOPE**

**A Quarterly Newsletter sponsored by the  
Mississippi Council of the Blind, Inc.**

**Fall, 2023**

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Tax deductible contributions may be sent to:

MS Council of the Blind

P O Box 134

Clinton, MS 39060

Anyone wishing to remember the MS Council of the Blind in a last will and testament may do so by including a special paragraph for that purpose. If your wishes are complex, please contact MCB for clarification.

Contributions to the James Doyle Case Memorial Scholarship Fund or to the Carter Gable Memorial Technology Assistance Fund should be appropriately marked and sent to the above address.

Phone MCB at 769-257-4515

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**President's Message**  
**by Jane Peets**

Hello, everyone. On June 23, MCB held a one-day convention at the home of Eddie Turner. Thank you, Eddie, for graciously hosting this event. A business meeting was held with zoom available to those who could not attend in person. Officers and two board members were elected. The new board roster is published separately in this newsletter. An auction was held with around \$675 raised.

The ACB Convention was held in Schaumburg, Illinois in July. Ralph Smitherman attended as MCB's delegate. Michael and Alison Smitherman were in charge of the exhibit hall. Next year's national convention will be held in Jacksonville, Florida.

MCB has committees to help our organization continue to function. The following members have agreed to serve as committee chairpersons: Awards: Margaret Smitherman; Convention/Picnic: Jane Peets; Finance: Gary Austin; Fund

Raising: Kenneth Maddox; Membership: Rene Virden; Service Projects: Kris McNair; Service to Individuals: Pshon Barrett; Scholarship: Gary Austin; Technology: Kenneth Reed.

Some of these committees are still being formed. I would strongly encourage anyone who is asked to serve as a committee member to accept. Sadly, our membership numbers are decreasing, and we all need to do whatever we can to keep MCB going strong. If you have questions or suggestions concerning MCB, you can contact me at 769-257-4515.

On September 23, MCB will have our annual picnic and auction at Lefleur's Bluff State Park, Pavilion 8. The gate fee is \$2.00 per person. As usual, lunch will be provided. Please let me or Wanda Allen know if you will be attending. Auction items would be appreciated. We hope to have a representative from FEMA or MEMA there to give us information about emergency preparedness.

Thank you all for your continued interest in and support of MCB. It takes all of us to keep moving forward for blind and visually impaired Mississippians.

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(Editor's Note: The MCB Board Highlights for both the July and October board meetings will be included in the next issue of the Periscope.)

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## **MCB Officers and Board Members**

**June 2023 – May 31, 2024**

**by Ralph Smitherman**

### **OFFICERS:**

President: Jane Peets, 2023, 2025, first term full

Cell: 769-257-4515

Email: [janepeets@yahoo.com](mailto:janepeets@yahoo.com)

Vice-President: Gary Austin, 2023, 2025, first term full

Cell: 769-572-7040

Email: [austingl39047@gmail.com](mailto:austingl39047@gmail.com)

Recording Secretary: Ralph Smitherman, 2023, 2025, first term full

Cell: 601-672-0973

Email: [redbird26@bellsouth.net](mailto:redbird26@bellsouth.net)

Corresponding Secretary: Wanda Allen, 2023, 2025, second term full

Cell: 601-720-4237

Email: [wandacallen64@gmail.com](mailto:wandacallen64@gmail.com)

Treasurer: Rene Virden, 2023, 2025, fourth term full

Home: 601-362-2152

Cell: 601-937-5461

Email: [rvirden40@gmail.com](mailto:rvirden40@gmail.com)

## BOARD MEMBERS:

1-year: Kenneth Reed, 2021, 2024, second term full

Cell: 601-455-0105

Email: [reedkenneth42@gmail.com](mailto:reedkenneth42@gmail.com)

1-year: Pshon Barrett, 2021, 2024, first term full

Cell: 601-613-6755

Email: [pshonb@comcast.net](mailto:pshonb@comcast.net)

2-year: Kris McNair, 2022, 2025, second term full

Cell: 601-606-2987

Email: [kris.mcnair@att.net](mailto:kris.mcnair@att.net)

2-year: Alison Smitherman, 2022, 2025, first term full

Cell: 601-331-8084

Email: [amduo@bellsouth.net](mailto:amduo@bellsouth.net)

3-year: Ken Maddox, 2023, 2026, first term full

Cell: 601-937-0025

Email: [madpak3@comcast.net](mailto:madpak3@comcast.net)

3-year: Alvin Daniels, 2023, 2026, second term full

Cell: 601-813-1424

Email: [adaniels121@icloud.com](mailto:adaniels121@icloud.com)

## CHAPTER REPRESENTATIVES:

MCBNM:

JACKSON:

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### **Jackson Chapter News**

**by Jane Peets**

Hello, everyone. I hope you are managing to stay cool during these days of record-breaking temperatures. The Jackson Chapter board met on June 25 at 07:00 p.m. via conference call. At that time the balance in checking was \$3,275.05. The CD was \$11,295.16. Transportation Fund operating account was \$19,939.48. Because of the recent rise in interest rates, the treasurer will be investigating better interest rates for the chapter's CD.

On August 19, we met for our 38th anniversary celebration. There were 22 members present. A 50/50 drawing was held with \$65.00 raised for the chapter. We had a good meal at Fogata Mexican Bar & Grill in Pearl. We celebrated with an anniversary cake and sang “Happy Birthday” to the Jackson Chapter.

The next chapter board meeting is scheduled for September 19, 2023, at 07:00 p.m. by conference call.

I hope to see you at the MCB picnic on September 23, 2023, at Lefleur’s Bluff State Park. Until then, best wishes from the Jackson Chapter.

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### **A Note of Sympathy....**

Since the printing of our last issue of the Periscope, MCB has lost one of our dear, long-time members, Mrs. Freddie Barrett. Mrs. Barrett passed away on July 1, at the age of 99. She was the mother of MCB board member Pshon Barrett. Mrs. Barrett, or Miss Freddie, as many of us lovingly called her, was a friend to MCB, and those of us who attended national ACB conventions fondly remember Freddie and her husband Tommy

volunteering at several conventions over the years, always ready to offer a helping hand, and they did so with a smile.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Pshon, her family, and all those who knew and loved Miss Freddie. She will be greatly missed.

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**Independent Visually Impaired Entrepreneurs**  
**ONLINE Business Expo**  
**November 4, 2023**

IVIE is offering the following opportunity to blind or visually impaired business owners/entrepreneurs. When you join in our Online Business Expo, you can describe your products and services, pass on contact information, and allow participants to ask questions. For IVIE members, the fee for a half hour is \$10 or \$20 for an hour. Not an IVIE member? Then, the fee is \$25 for a half hour session or \$35 for an hour. Nonmembers have the option of having \$15 of the payment used to pay IVIE dues for 2024.

All those participating in the call will use the same Zoom information to connect. The date and timeline would be November 4, 2023, from 11:30 a.m. to 7 p.m. Eastern. At 11:45 a.m., an introduction of all the vendors participating with their

specific time slots would be given along with instructions for those attending. A wrap-up at the end of the presentations would be available for anyone to ask any final questions of those exhibiting online.

The deadline for purchasing a time slot is October 21, 2023. To purchase a time slot or ask questions, send an email to [info@ivie-acb.org](mailto:info@ivie-acb.org) with your request to present/exhibit. Please send your business name, product line, your telephone number, and your email address. You will be sent a link for payment and additional information. If you wish to attend the IVIE Online Business Expo and listen to this unique shopping experience, there is no cost. However, please send an email to register so we can send you the Zoom call details. Send the email request to [info@ivie-acb.org](mailto:info@ivie-acb.org) or contact Ardis Bazyn, phone 818-238-9321.

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### **Get Real! 7 Keys to Develop Leadership Authenticity** **by Randy Conley**

Hey leader...get real! It's time to quit trying to be something you aren't. It's time to be authentic.

Authenticity is an essential component of being a trustworthy leader. People are longing to follow leaders who are sincere and genuine, and when they find one, they will offer that leader

100% of their energy and engagement. You can be that kind of leader if you try, and it's not rocket science to figure out how. Start with these 7 keys:

**1. Be humble** – A recent study showed that only one out of four CEOs were described by their own executives as being humble. CEOs that were rated as highly regarded were nearly six times more likely to be described as humble (34% vs. 6%). Humble leaders use their power to benefit others, share the same values as their followers, and look for ways to empower others to reach their potential.

**2. Be vulnerable** – Take your work seriously but yourself lightly. Don't be afraid to laugh at yourself every once in a while, because when you do so, it shows your followers that you actually are a little human (and just like them). Fear holds us back from being vulnerable with others, but take a little risk and get down to earth with your staff sometimes.

**3. Admit you don't know** – Admitting they don't know something can be incredibly difficult for leaders. After all, isn't that why they're leaders? They're supposed to have the answers for everything! Admitting you don't know something shows you have a realistic appreciation of your own strengths and weaknesses. Being a leader doesn't mean you know all the answers; it means you're willing to work hard to figure them out.

**4. Walk the talk** – It's easy to talk the talk but authentic leaders make sure they walk it as well. Consistency in behavior is imperative for authentic leadership. Your actions need to be in alignment with your words, otherwise people will quickly see you don't actually believe what you say you do.

**5. Admit mistakes** – If you messed up, own it. Don't try to shift blame, make excuses, or throw someone else under the bus. If you made a mistake, admit it, apologize if necessary, and then work hard to repair any damage. Authentic leaders are secure enough in their identities to deal with mistakes in a humble, genuine fashion that results in actually increasing trust and respect with their followers rather than eroding it.

**6. Do what you say you will do** – Following through on your commitments is a must-have for authentic leadership. Maintaining reliability with others through consistent and predictable behavior builds trust and confidence in your leadership. Authentic leaders can be trusted at their word. If you say you are going to do something, then do it.

**7. Act with integrity** – Be honest, do the right thing, make ethical decisions, keep promises, treat people with respect, don't lie, cheat or steal...pretty much everything you learned in kindergarten! Authentic leaders value their integrity above all else. When you leave the workplace each day, you should be able to hold your head high because you conducted yourself with integrity. A leader of high integrity stands out above all others.

The world is in desperate need of authentic leadership, and you can play a part. Start with these seven keys and you'll be on your way to leading with trust and authenticity.

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**From the Editor's Desk**  
**by Alison Smitherman**

Hello, everyone. I have been asked by our newly elected President, Jane Peets, to continue serving as your Periscope editor, and I am honored to do so. With that in mind, I'm asking that if you have any suggestions as to how we might improve our newsletter, please do not hesitate to let me know. New ideas are always welcomed and appreciated.

Thank you to everyone who submitted articles for this issue of the Periscope, as well as those of you who formatted and distributed the newsletter to our membership. Without your much-needed help, the Periscope would not be possible.

The deadline to submit articles for the Winter, 2023-2024 issue of the Periscope is November 21, 2023. As always, I look forward to receiving your wonderful articles.

Until next time, have a safe and fabulous Fall Season!