



PERISCOPE

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

Spring, 2023

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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 601-672-0973.

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by Ralph Smitherman

Hello, everybody. Well, Spring is upon us. I hope all is well with everyone. Continue to stay safe.

MCB lost a true friend and advocate. As you know, Miss Ella Reed passed away earlier this year. Ella was on the MCB Board of Directors and was truly looking forward to our face-to-face 2023 MCB State Convention. Ella will be missed by all who knew her.

Now, concerning our state convention: We will hold the convention in late June. The dates are June 23, 24, 25. We will meet in Pearl, Mississippi, at the Holiday Inn Trustmark. The address is:

Holiday Inn Trustmark
110 Bass Pro Drive
Pearl MS 39208

The room rates per night are \$129. You may make your reservations by using the code, "COB". Just call the local hotel at: 601-939-5238. We will have a meal on Friday night and a meal on Saturday night. We are planning a program for Saturday morning and the business meeting on Saturday afternoon. I hope everyone will plan to attend this year. It will be nice to have a face-to-face weekend convention. The hotel staff has worked well with us in the past. Many thanks to our convention committee. And, yes, we will send out the registration form soon!

Just a friendly reminder: If you have not paid your 2023 state dues, please do so! Remember, Rene Virden is our Treasurer and dues should be sent to her.

A few highlights: Recently the Mississippi School for the Blind held a stakeholders meeting. There were around 30 participants at the meeting - some by phone, some in person. A sub-committee was formed to discuss pertinent items, and this sub-committee will bring to the group its recommendations. No particular date has been scheduled for the next meeting. I remain connected with the Coalition for Citizens with Disabilities. Generally, on Fridays we receive a legislative update concerning bills that would affect the disability community. I have sent to Toni Hollingsworth a support letter; her program is a five-year grant; therefore, she has to apply for the grant this year. It is my pleasure to represent the Mississippi Council of the Blind.

Hey, don't forget about the Community calls sponsored by ACB. As you know, several calls take place each week. All persons are welcome to participate. This is one way to make new friends.

The ACB National Convention is fast approaching; this year the convention will be held in early July in Schaumburg, Illinois. Once again, some of the events will be Hybrid. A major bright spot at the national convention is the Exhibit Hall. High-tech and low-tech items are displayed. Another area of interest is the tours. Read more about the convention in the ACB Braille Forum!

In closing, I want to thank MCB for giving me the opportunity to serve as President these past four years. I know that with covid we have been sidelined somewhat; however, we must continue to move forward, and it will take all of us to do so! Thank you, Board of Directors and Committee members, for being ready and available; that makes my job as President much easier.

MCB Board Meeting Highlights
by Jane Peets, Recording Secretary

The MCB board met via Zoom on Saturday, January 21, 2023, at 10:10 a.m.

Motions passed to adopt the minutes and the treasurer's report as distributed.

Treasurer Rene Virden informed the board that she has acquired debit cards for the general operating account and for the technology fund account as directed.

Eddie Turner told the board that the only weekend available for booking a convention in April was April 7-9, Easter weekend. Wanda Allen, Convention Chairman, cannot be available for a convention in May. The next available booking would be June

23. A motion passed to have a face-to-face weekend convention at Holiday Inn Trustmark Park on the weekend of June 23, 2023.

ACB has asked for deposit privileges to MCB's bank account to streamline this process. A motion passed to provide the necessary banking information to ACB to allow direct deposits.

The next MCB board meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2023, at 10:00 a.m. CST.

Jackson Chapter News

by Jane Peets

Hello, everyone. The Jackson Chapter had its first board meeting of the year on Tuesday, January 17, 2023, at 07:00 p.m. Our meetings are held by conference call and are open to interested persons. The number is 716 429-1589, code 6222255.

Our next board meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, March 21, 2023, at 07:00 p.m.

On February 11, the chapter had a social at Moss Creek. I was unable to attend but was told that there were 26 in attendance. A 50/50 drawing was held, and Peggy Maddox was the winner. Congratulations, Peggy!

I hope you all are planning to attend our convention in June. I plan to be there and will be glad to see everyone. Until then, best wishes from the Jackson Chapter.

North MS Chapter News

by Sara M. Rogers

Greetings from the North MS chapter of MCB to all of our fellow Council members and friends.

Certainly, it has been a long time since you last heard from us, but we are still here and recently began to assemble and socialize with one another this year.

Sadly, we are fewer in numbers after having lost several long-time valued Council members over the past few years which includes (3) members in 2020: Ms. Elnora Long in June, Mr. Wayne Parish in July, and Ms. Betty Kelly in August. Also, we lost Mr. David Puckett in February 2021. Although we mourn the passing of our beloved members, we vow to continue our work in the community.

So far, during the month of January we got together for a nice lunch at Romie's Grocery, and we enjoyed a Valentine's Day social at Harvey's restaurant during the month of February.

Springtime has come yet again, so enjoy the smell of the blossoming flowers, the chirping of the birds and all that comes with this wonderful season! Until next time...

Sara M. Rogers
MCBNM

VA Happenings

submitted by Melanie Shurden

VIST Coordinator (Jackson VA)

To round out 2022, a group of blind and low vision Veterans using the G.V. "Sonny" Montgomery VA in Jackson teamed up with STRIVE4You and clients at the Addie McBryde State Rehab Center f/t Blind to enjoy a day of activities and lunch at a nearby restaurant. With cooler weather, activities were all indoors and included basketball, corn hole, bocchia ball, dice, and even ballroom dancing! With our State blind center located near the VA, It was an opportunity to make connection with non-Veteran blind/low vision Mississippians as well as to have a fun

conclusion to our year, experiencing opportunities for growth and confidence-building as we prepared for 2023!

If you know of a Veteran experiencing vision loss, please ask him or her to contact me by telephone at 601.364.7937 or by email at melanie.shurden@va.gov.

Seven Traits of a Team Player

Team members work best together when they mesh well - that is, when they respect each other and enjoy each other's company. While not everyone on a team will be friends, respect is mandatory for successful teamwork. Effective team players tend to exhibit the following traits:

1. Takes Accountability: Team players accept an appropriate amount of personal responsibility. They will follow through with whatever tasks they accept.
2. Has a Great Attitude Toward Challenges: A friendly, positive attitude is required to work well with others. Team players recognize that they must share responsibility and that they cannot control every aspect of a project.

3. Has Strong Communication and Interpersonal Skills: Teamwork requires clear, effective communication. Team players communicate well with those on and off the team. They also know how to build the right working relationships, providing the maximum number of resources for their team.

4. Is Often Times Competitive by Nature: While competitive behavior can prove detrimental to a team, it can also drive the team forward. Team players who demonstrate a competitive spirit can push the group forward towards success.

5. Aware of the Bigger Picture: Team players understand that the actions of themselves and their team members impact the organization as a whole - and they see just how important appropriate actions are.

6. Is the Consummate Diplomat and Professional: Team players conduct themselves with a professional attitude, respecting other team members. They do not allow minor conflicts or small roadblocks to get in the way of their ability to work on a team.

7. Is Team-Oriented: Processes and procedures work differently in a team environment than they do for an individual. An effective team member will consider what works best for a team when laying out a path to success.

Summary: It takes a great deal of patience to be the ideal team player, but a team player attitude is an incredibly valuable asset in any working group. Team players are respectful, accountable and forward-thinking. By embodying these traits, you can positively affect the team and stand out as a leader.

Farberware Smart Voice Activated Microwave Oven

by Jane Peets

Hey, do you ever talk to inanimate objects? Well, I do. Guess what, there is now a microwave oven that not only listens to what you say but actually responds and does what you tell it to do.

Farberware has made a smart voice activated microwave oven. You just say “voice gini” and give a command such as cook for 30 seconds, open door, set the time, and many more. This is a product not made specifically for the blind but which we can use straight out of the box. I bought mine from Walmart.com for around \$190. It is 1.1 cubic feet in size and 1,100 watts. I know that four of our members have bought one and they all are really enjoying the freedom this appliance provides. I just wanted to get the word out to anyone who might be interested.

ACB Audio Description Project Discussion List

If you like to be entertained and informed, the ACB Audio Description Project (ADP) discussion list is for you! It's a great way to keep up with everything in the world of audio description (also known as AD), which includes movies, live theatre, museums, educational videos, national parks, and much more. You'll get updates on the latest films, tv and streaming series, events, and attractions that are providing AD; announcements of AD news; and invitations to share your AD experiences with the ADP advocacy team. You can choose whether to receive each message posted to the list individually or as a weekly digest. Simply send a blank email to ADP-List+subscribe@acblists.org with "Subscribe" in the subject line, and you're in!

Editor's Corner

by Alison Smitherman

I would like to thank those of you who submitted articles for this issue of the Periscope. Also, thanks to the staff and volunteers of Talking Book Services for formatting and distributing our newsletter. Without your continued help, this newsletter would not be possible.

The deadline for submitting articles for our Summer, 2023 issue is **May 21, 2023**. Articles received after the deadline date will not be included in the Summer issue.

Remember, the Periscope is available in five different formats: large print, braille, CD, NLS cartridge, and email. If you wish to receive the Periscope in a different format than what you are currently getting, please contact me via my contact info listed on page 1 of this newsletter, and I will make sure you get your newsletter in the format you want.

Until next time....

Happy Spring to all!