



## **PERISCOPE**

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

**Fall, 2025**

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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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**A Note From The Editor**

**by Alison Smitherman**

Greetings, MCB members and friends!

I trust that you have had an enjoyable summer filled with lots of fun activities and time spent with family and friends. Hopefully, the weather will be cooling down soon and we can enjoy the much-awaited fall temperatures along with the festivities that the season brings.

This issue of the Periscope is packed with information that we hope you will find helpful and enjoyable to read. I want to thank those of you who submitted articles as well as those who formatted and mailed the Periscope. Without your help, this newsletter would not be possible.

Please note that in this issue we have included a current list of our officers and board members, as well as a list of our committee chairs. You might wish to hang on to these for future reference.

The deadline to submit articles for our Winter, 2025-26 issue of the Periscope is **November 21, 2025**. If you have any questions or concerns or need assistance with your article, please feel free to contact me. My email address and telephone number are on page 1 of this newsletter.

I hope to see you at the picnic in October. In the meantime, Happy Fall, Y'all!

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### **President's Message**

**by Jane Peets**

Hello, everyone. I hope you are all doing well. I am much better and continuing to regain strength.

If you are on our Google group, you have probably noticed a slight increase in activity of posts. I am forwarding emails generated by various groups within ACB to keep you more informed about subjects that might be of interest to you. Thanks to the efforts of Eddie Turner and Ralph Smitherman, we now have 65 members' email addresses entered on our Google group list.

Thanks, guys, for the hard work.

Our MCB picnic is not too far away, 10/04/25 at Leflore's Bluff State Park from 11:00 a.m. until. We will be grilling hamburgers and hot dogs and are asking for attendees to bring a side dish or dessert if you would like. We will have an auction, so bring an auction item or two and bid, bid, bid!

During our last board meeting, it was requested that the state committee chairpersons be published in this issue, so here goes:

Awards: Margaret Smitherman

Convention/Picnic: Jane Peets

Finance: Pshon Barrett

Fund Raising: Kenneth Maddox

Membership: Rene Virden

Periscope: Alison Smitherman

Service Projects: Kenneth Maddox

Service to Individuals: Pshon Barrett

Scholarship: Bill Mayfield

Technology: Kenneth Reed

The next MCB board meeting will be on 09/20/25 at 10:00 a.m. on the Zoom platform. Meetings are open to all interested individuals, and the Zoom link is sent to the Google group.

Some of you may have heard the concerning news that classes at Mississippi Schools for the Deaf and Blind now combine deaf and blind/visually impaired students in the same classroom. A group including former teachers of MSB, parents, and former students are in the process of expressing our opinions that this is not in the best interests of the students of either school or of the teachers. I am included in this group. I will try to keep you informed of the outcome of our efforts. If you share this opinion, please be prepared to express yourself to your legislator if this becomes necessary.

See you at the picnic!

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## **MCB State Board Meeting Highlights**

**Saturday, June 21, 2025**

**by Recording Secretary Ralph Smitherman**

The MCB Board met on Saturday, June 21, 2025, by Zoom. A quorum was established. Ralph Smitherman opened the meeting with prayer!

The minutes from the March 2025 meeting were approved as well as the Treasurer's report. President Peets will post the committee chairs in the Periscope. The committee reports and the chapter reports were given.

The ACB national convention was discussed, and the delegates were as follows:

Delegate: Ralph Smitherman

Alternate delegate: Jane Peets

Nominating representative: Ken Maddox

Our state picnic is being planned for October 4, 2025, the menu being grilled hamburgers and grilled hot dogs. No charge to any member. We are to meet at the pavilion at LeFleur's Bluff Park around 10 AM. We will need an accurate count of those who plan to attend no later than September 20, 2025. Corresponding Secretary Wanda Allen will send out a notice to our membership concerning our picnic. If there are any questions, contact Ken Maddox or Ralph Smitherman.

As you may remember, we participated in the interstate auction earlier this year. Pshon Barrett and Jane Peets will be working on obtaining items for another interstate auction scheduled for 2026.

Ralph Smitherman and Eddie Turner will be working on updating our Google Group membership list.

Our next scheduled state board meeting is set for Saturday, September 20, 2025, at 10 AM, by Zoom - all members are welcome to attend!

The meeting adjourned at 10:55 AM.

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**MCB Officers and Board Members**  
**June 1, 2025 - May 31, 2026**

**OFFICERS:**

President: Jane Peets, 2025 - 2027, second term full

Cell: 769-257-4515

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

Vice-President: Pshon Barrett, 2025 - 2027, first term full

Cell: 601-613-6755

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

Recording Secretary: Ralph Smitherman, 2025 - 2027, second term full

Cell: 601-672-0973

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



Corresponding Secretary: Wanda Allen, 2025 - 2027, third term full

Cell: 601-720-4237

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

Treasurer: Rene Virden, 2025 - 2027, fifth term full

Cell: 601-937-5461

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

## BOARD MEMBERS:

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

Cell: 601-937-0025

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

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

Cell: 601-813-1424

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

2-year: Billy Mayfield, 2024 - 2027, first term full

Cell: 601-454-2004

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

2-year: Gary Cooper, 2024 - 2027, first term full

Cell: 601-214-9683

Email: [gary.cooper1209@gmail.com](mailto:gary.cooper1209@gmail.com)

3-year: Alison Smitherman, 2025 - 2028, second term full

Cell: 601-331-8084

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

3-year: Mike Duke, 2025 - 2028, first term full

Cell: 601-506-6802

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

## CHAPTER REPRESENTATIVES:

MCBNM:

JACKSON:

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### **Northeast Mississippi Chapter News** **by Bob Stanford**

We all have had a very busy summer and are planning a social luncheon for Saturday, September 6.

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## **Jackson Chapter Happenings**

Hello Everyone,

The Jackson Chapter is still marching on, trying our best right now to stay cool.

We sent a Graduation Card and gift to the senior at MSB. We had our board meeting in July; all members of the board were present. The chapter has 59 members, and we have \$4,590.61 in checking and our CD has a balance of \$11,623.27.

We celebrated the chapter's birthday at our August social at Piccadilly, There were around 20 people in attendance, Janice Gable gave a brief history of our chapter, and we had our 50/50 raffle.

I hope everyone is doing well, and I hope to see y'all at the State Picnic in October.

Ken Maddox  
Jackson Chapter President

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## **In Memorium**

**Janice Sanders: December 16, 1938 – June 25, 2025**

A longtime member of the MCB and long serving president of the Pine Belt Chapter, Janice Sanders, passed away in her home on Wednesday, June 25, 2025.

Janice and her husband, John, were instrumental in keeping the Pine Belt Chapter afloat during its final years. She sold many donuts and raffle tickets on the Chapter's behalf, as well as serving as board member and president for many years.

Janice brought joy to everything she did. She was an active member in her church, the local chapter of Share Care, and was always willing to lend a hand with disability awareness activities held in the Hattiesburg area. Reaching out to her connections in Minnesota, Janice brought guide rails for bowling to Southern Lanes in Petal, where she and I knocked down a couple (and I do mean just a couple) of pins throughout the years.

Janice was active in the Business Enterprise Program in St. Paul, Minnesota. In her free time she enjoyed singing, dancing, bowling and beep ball. She was a wonderful friend and advocate; she will be greatly missed.

Submitted by  
Kris McNair

## **Voting In ACB – An Opinion**

**by Michael Smitherman**

At the 2025 ACB Conference and Convention, there was a proposed amendment to the Constitution to do away with the affiliate vote. As a member in good standing, I supported this amendment. Why, might you ask?

Back in 1961, when ACB was formed, the affiliate vote was very important because the constitution was drafted in a way that only people who attended convention were able to vote, and the delegates were supposed to represent the members who did not attend the convention. Today, the constitution was changed to allow every member in good standing a vote, and through an online voting system called Vote Now, you can vote with your phone or smart device and never leave your recliner.

I voted for the constitutional amendment to do away with the affiliate vote because I belong to three affiliates, including MCB, ACBDA, and CCLVI, and I believe that voting in several affiliates decreases the importance of the individual vote. There is no excuse not to vote, just like in local, state and federal general elections. Furthermore, I am not going to call the three state or special-interest affiliates to tell someone how I voted because then it would no longer be a secret ballot. In the last ACB elections, I voted with my state because our delegate

called me. Otherwise, I would not have called him or her, and I made no contact with ACBDA or CCLVI to let them know how I voted.

This is just my opinion, and everyone has to vote their convictions. I will close by saying “No vote, no complain!”

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### **New Fitness Classes Being Offered by Angel Eyes Fitness & Nutrition and AmeriHealth**

Fitness classes tailored for the Blind & Low Vision community — open to all! Every 3rd Saturday, 11 AM – 12 PM CST. AmeriHealth Caritas Louisiana Wellness and Opportunity Center: New Orleans: 3155 Gentilly Blvd; Shreveport: 3709 Jewella Ave.

For more info call or text: 678-374-9302.

**Editor’s Note:** These classes are available on Zoom, but I do not print Zoom links in the Periscope due to the possibility of them getting posted to the internet. You should be able to call or text the above telephone number and get the Zoom link.

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### **A Quote to Ponder**

*"If the blind put their hand in God's they find their way more surely than those who see but have not faith or purpose." — Helen =Keller*