The Arizona Vibe Newsletter

National Federation of the Blind of Arizona

May 2025 Edition

# **Table of Contents**

Welcome to the Arizona Vibe

Navigation

Words from Our President

What’s in a Name?

The Tech Desk

2025 BELL Academy!

National Convention in New Orleans

East Valley News

Tucson News

Phoenix News

Guess Who Took Another Trip Around the Sun

Dates to Remember

Cooks’ Corner

Grins and Groans

# **🌵 Welcome to the *Arizona Vibe* – A Fresh Take on NFB of Arizona News!**

Hello, NFB Family,
 We’re thrilled to introduce you to the *Arizona Vibe*—a new season, a new look, and a new name for our state newsletter! We will produce this quarterly, but as events and issues come up, there may be newsletter announcements that come out in between that time (we’ll call them the Arizona Pulse). So stay tuned!

Before we dive in, we want to take a heartfelt moment to thank **Debi Chatfield**, who faithfully brought us *News and Views* over the years. Her commitment, creativity, and care in keeping us connected have been the foundation on which we now build.

*Arizona Vibe* is not a replacement, but a **fresh revision** of that legacy—infused with the energy, diversity, and forward motion of our community. In each issue, you’ll find affiliate updates, upcoming events, helpful resources, and more—all with a tone that reflects our uniquely Arizonan spirit.

We hope this new format will continue to inspire, inform, and unify us across the miles. The *Vibe* is alive—because of *you*.

With gratitude and excitement,
 —NFB of Arizona

Sharonda Goode, Editor

# **Navigation**

The NFB of Arizona newsletter has been produced in such a manner that makes it easier to peruse through the articles. If you are using JAWS or NVDA, press the letter H to move through the headings. If you wish to go back to a previous article, simply press the shift key + the letter H. For MAC users, press Control Option Command plus the letter H and to go backwards through the articles, press Control Option Command shift plus the letter H. Happy reading!

## **Words from Our President**

##

## **🌞 What’s in a Name? Why We Chose *Arizona Vibe***

When thinking about the future of our newsletter, we wanted something that felt true to who we are—something vibrant, welcoming, and full of purpose. After reflecting on what brings our members together from all corners of the state, one word kept rising to the top for me: **vibe**.

The *Arizona Vibe* is more than a name. It’s the rhythm of our blind community here in the desert—the passion of our members and leaders, the vibrancy at our events, the strength in our advocacy, and the deep connection we share as we journey together.

By choosing this name, we honor where we’ve been while embracing where we’re going. It’s a cheer to the warmth of Arizona, the resilience of our members, and the pulse of progress that keeps us moving forward.

Whether you’re a new member or a longtime Federationist, we invite you to catch the *Vibe*—and be part of shaping what’s next.

If you have news, recipes, tips or tricks, announcements, or anything else you would like included in our newsletter, please feel free to send it to our newsletter email at:

Nfbarizona.vibe@gmail.com

## **💻 The Tech Desk**

**AI and Accessibility: A Powerful Pairing**

On March 22, the NFBA Tech Committee hosted a dynamic Zoom seminar all about **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**—and it was a huge success! With around **55 participants from across the country**, the session was packed with great demonstrations, curiosity, and flowing conversation. Topics covered included apps for the computer such as Be My Eyes, FS Companion.ai and Aira Desktop; mobile apps, such as Speakaboo, PiccyBot, and even wearables, such as Meta Glasses and Envision Glasses.

Our special guest, **Jonathan Mosen**, head of the Center of Excellence in Nonvisual Accessibility (CENA) and the host of the Access On podcast, delivered a powerful and practical talk on **AI prompting**, helping attendees understand how to effectively communicate with AI tools like ChatGPT and others. His expertise sparked plenty of questions and inspired attendees to think differently about how AI can support accessibility, productivity, and everyday life.

Whether you’re new to AI or already exploring its potential, this seminar had something for everyone—from smart prompting tips to a range of accessible tech resources.

In the March 26 Access On podcast, some snippets from our Tech Seminar were featured. In addition, Jonathan has given us his word that future podcasts will feature tips from the seminar!

👏 **Great job, Tech Committee!** Your leadership and dedication to tech empowerment continues to keep our members connected and informed.

🎧 **Want to catch the replay or grab the resource list?** Send an email to **nfbaztech@gmail.com** and the committee will get you set up!

Attention:

If you have tech tips that you’d like included in our newsletter, you can send them to

Nfbarizona.vibe@gmail.com

## **Senior Expressions:**

## **From Kinberly Fetterman, Senior Division President:**

The Seniors Division meets every fourth Saturday of the month at 2:00 p.m. over Zoom. Anyone who is 55 and above is eligible to be a member, but all are welcome to attend.

##

## **Silver Canes and Freedom Fridays**

ANNOUNCING
 Freedom Fridays Who can Attend?
 Through our Silver Canes program for seniors!
 Are you Blind or low vision and at least 55 years old?
 If so, you’re invited to attend a community focused FREE event held at our Phoenix and
 Tucson locations each Friday from 9 AM to 2 PM excluding holidays.
 Experience the freedom that comes from connecting with the blind or low vision
 community and learn blindness skills along
 the way. Best of all, our Senior Support group will remain part of the Freedom Friday line-up
 and will continue to be available for both in-person and virtual attendees at the usual
 11 AM time slot.

Friday’s activities are open to anyone
 55 years of age or older who are blind or have low vision.
 When?

Beginning in February, every Friday from 9 AM – 2 PM
 Except holidays.
 Where?
 Saavi Services for the Blind
 Phoenix:
 2920 N 7th Street
 Tucson:
 3350 E Grant Road

What is Freedom Fridays?
 A rotation of fun learning experiences each Friday
 designed with older people losing vision in-mind.
 In-person attendees will enjoy a complimentary lunch and a fun-filled
 day of activities like:
 Learning how to cook and manage home life.
 Exploring access technology.
 Hands on experiences in the woodshop.
 Working out in our fitness facility.
 Reading and writing in our Braille Club.
 Hearing from Guest Speakers.
 Taking part in local field trips and so much more.
 Interested?
 Contact us to register or learn more at
 getsaavi@saavi.us

or by calling the center nearest you!
 Phoenix:
 602.795.0195
 Tucson:
 520.795.1331

**2025 BELL Academy!!**

## **The bells are ringing once again this summer!**

It’s not too late to sign your blind or low vision child up to ring those bells. The National Federation of the Blind of Arizona is so excited to offer our Braille Enrichment through Literacy and Learning (BELL) academy this summer. Hosted by Saavi Services for the Blind, we offer blind and low vision children an opportunity to cap off their summer vacation with two NFB BELL Academies: With one opportunity in Phoenix Arizona, at Saavi Services for the Blind 2920 N 7th ST, Phoenix AZ 85014, and the other in the Tucson Saavi Services for the Blind located at 3350 E Grant RD, Tucson AZ 85716, both programs run from Monday, May 26, to Friday, June 6th. That’s right! We begin our fun on Memorial day. This gives our students free reign over the entire training centers all day, so they are very confident and ready to shine in their parade of canes the next on day two.

What do we do at the NFB BELL Academy? The better question may be what we won’t do. Along with discovering the fun of learning Braille, our bell ringers will gain confidence using their canes all over our campuses and in really fun places in our communities like playgrounds, movie theaters, the light rail, City buses, candy shops, and much more. They will learn to cook lunch for each other and make healthy and delicious snacks. They may even be able to show off their confidence in doing chores around the house. Our bell ringers will learn to use computers, tablets, and other access tech, learn to conduct science experiments, play sports and games together, and make lifelong friends.

There are a few things every bell ringer can count on.

1. They will come home tired.

2. They will come home very excited about all the things they did and be ready to come back bright and early the next morning.

3. They will finish the NFB BELL Academy knowing they have many great blind friends, and that they will never be alone in their goal of living the lives they want.

To sign your child up for the NFB BELL Academy, please visit <https://az.nfb.org/nfbaz-bell-academy>. The NFB BELL academy is free of charge. Lunches are provided, and transportation may be available upon request.

How can you help? We are always looking for members who can help prepare class materials, read to our bell ringers, help prepare some lunches, and so much more.

 For more information, visit Roxanne Torres in Tucson at rtorres@saavi.us, or Somaya Tarrin in Phoenix at Starrin@saavi.us.

## **National Convention in New Orleans July 8-13**

Each year, the NFB holds the National Federation of the Blind convention. As the website says, it is the largest gathering of blind people from all 50 states. It is a week full of fun, and all kinds of seminars. Don’t let the term “Seminars” be miss-leading. There are all kinds of fun activities to do while you plan your week. Seminar topics include:

· Braille

· Technology

· Employment

· Learning to work as a blindness professional

· Resolutions
 Be a part of the policy of the NFB.

· General sessions
 These are the largest meetings in the convention. This is where we hear from members of our government, including the social security administration, Vocational rehab, and many many others.

· Numerous hospitality events hosted by all 50 states, including the convention planning committee

· A banquet to cap everything off.
 Listen to our national president give a keynote speech that will inspire you through out the year.

If you are tired of hanging around the hotel, and who wouldn’t be? Make sure to check out all the local events and attractions around the city. This year, our convention is in New Orleans. It is from Tuesday, July 8 – Sunday, July 13. Location: New Orleans Marriott/Sheraton New Orleans

The site to read all things convention is:

<http://www.nfb.org/convention>

## **East Valley News:**

Thinking about heading to **New Orleans** for this year’s NFB National Convention? ✈️ Don’t forget to check your **REAL ID** status! Starting soon, you’ll need one to fly domestically, so now’s the perfect time to make sure you're ready to roll.

In other exciting news, **Debi Chatfield** took on the water in March as part of a **dragon boat race** team! And here is the exciting news she shared!!!

## 🇺🇸🚣🏼‍♀️**Hang on to your paddles!**

I am thrilled to share that I have been selected as one of the 50 athletes representing the USA in Dragon Boating, Senior C division! This past year has been filled with challenges and triumphs, and I am honored to have reached this milestone. I want to express my heartfelt gratitude to everyone who supported me throughout this journey. Special thanks to my coach who built a remote control system, easing my worries about steering and OC1 during time trials, and my gym trainers who push me to be stronger every day. My dream would not have come true without the love and support from my family. I am also incredibly grateful to the Senior C coaching staff and management for their inclusivity and belief in my abilities despite my blindness. For my friends and fellow candidates who have not been selected yet, don't give up! Keep going, be there in Tampa, and fight for your seat. It's a bittersweet moment for me; while I am excited to achieve this goal, I wish everyone who has worked hard and dreamed of this journey could experience it with us. One stroke, one beat, one boat! Together, let's go to Germany in July and win some gold!

Got news from the East Valley? Let our East Valley coordinator know by emailing Tina Sohl at:

tinabir80@gmail.com

## **Tucson News:**

On Friday, May 2, the Tucson Chapter had a barbecue! From 4:00PM to 8:00PM, those ready to eat good food and have fun times gathered at the Saavi Tucson location. A huge thanks to all who volunteered and an even bigger thanks to those who came!!!

## **Phoenix News:**

The NFB Phoenix Chapter Norma Robertson-Wagner Annual Picnic took place on April 12, 2025 from 11:00AM to 3:00PM.

There was a raffle with three great prizes. The kids had fun playing in the water as well as other activities. And we had a photo booth with a wonderful Hawaiian theme.

We had hamburger and hotdogs, with all the fixings, delicious homemade desserts, and lots of great side dishes. With over 60 people in attendance, there were friendships renewed and new ones created. We can’t wait to do it again next year!!!

## **Guess Who Took Another Trip Around the Sun? Birthday/Anniversary Shout-outs**

I am asking for your help to build a list of birthdays/anniversaries for all our members. I would like to congratulate/shout them out right here in this column. You can send your lists to Sharonda at:

Nfbarizona.vibe@gmail.com

Happy birthday and congratulations for taking another trip around the sun.

April

02 - Moreblessings Chikavanga, Phoenix

02 President Donald Porterfield, Tucson

10 - Lori Kirsop, Phoenix

16 Kris Crawley (Anniversary, 16 years), Mesa

May

3 Roxanne Torres

20 Steve Sesma

25 Joy Harris

27 Deitrick (Slim) Fields

28 Bella Hilliker

31 Joe Giacinto

July

5: Jordan Moon, Phoenix

19: Voin White, Phoenix

20 Debi Chatfield, Mesa

## **Dates to Remember:**

Saturday May 3:

 Phoenix Chapter Meeting – Starting at 9:30 a.m.

 Tucson Chapter Meeting – Starting at 1:00 P.M.

Saturday May 10: Arizona Affiliate Board Meeting

Saturday, May 17: East Valley Chapter Board Meeting – Starting at

Monday, May 26: The start of BELL Academy in both Tucson & Phoenix

Friday, June 6: Last day of BELL Academy

July 8-13: National Federation of the Blind National Convention, New Orleans, Louisiana

## **Cooks’ Corner:**

Here’s your chance to show off your favorite recipes—either ones you have on repeat in your house, or recipes you plan to make!

Send your favorites that you would like featured in our newsletter to:

Nfbarizona.vibe@gmail.com

## **Grins and Groans**

In keeping with the spring theme, here are a few jokes to make you either laugh out loud or groan even louder!

 **What kind of socks does a flower wear?** Garden hose!

 **Why did the worm get a promotion?** Because it was outstanding in its field!

 **Why couldn’t the flower ride its bike?** Because it lost its petals!