National Federation of the Blind

Of North Carolina

56th Annual Convention

September 11th–14th, 2025

Courtyard Carolina Beach Oceanfront

DETERMINED VISION

Through darkened seas, a spirit bright. Guided by touch and inner sight. With seahorse friend and mermaid song, this journey proves the heart is strong. Obstacles fade as courage grows, determination brightly glows. In depths unseen, new worlds unfold. A tale of triumph untold.

The NFB of North Carolina Board of Directors welcomes you as we learn from seahorses and mermaids.

In case of an emergency please notify Sharon Weddington at 704 302-7308.

National Representative, Norma Crosby

Norma Crosby was born in Conroe Texas. She was born legally blind because her mother contracted rubella during her pregnancy; however, Norma’s blindness remained undetected until she began walking. At that time her parents began to notice that she seemed to bump into things that a sighted child should see, and they had her vision tested. A determination was made that she was blind when she was two years old. Years of surgery followed with no improvement.

Norma was an active child. She joined her siblings in most of the games they played, and her blindness was not a real obstacle when she was small, but she couldn't read the blackboard when she started school, and she experienced a number of problems related to her vision as she grew older.

Norma always attended school in rural communities, a circumstance which she describes as “both a blessing and a curse.” Because no one in her life knew anything about blindness skills, she wasn't able to learn Braille or cane travel. She used large print books, which were bulky and heavy for a tiny girl. Since her vision was extremely limited, she had to read with her nose practically touching the pages of her books, even though the print was enlarged. Despite the lack of training in blindness skills, Norma feels that she received a quality education because she had caring teachers who always found ways of making it easier for her to learn. She was fortunate to have the same teacher from her first grade year through her third grade year, and that teacher was determined that Norma would be included in everything the class did. Her name was Jean Todd, and she spent countless hours offering Norma one-on-one instruction. Other teachers with similar attitudes were a part of Norma's life throughout her K-12 experience.

Professionals in the field of work with the blind were not as helpful. When Norma asked for Braille training, she was told by a rehabilitation professional that she was wasting his time, and she was made to feel guilty because, according to him, she was depriving a “real” blind person of the opportunity to learn by making this frivolous request. Eventually she was able to convince him that he should provide her with training, and he traveled to her small town and spent two hours with her. This was woefully inadequate, but it did allow her to learn the alphabet, Braille numbers, and some punctuation symbols. Her experience with inadequate Braille training has made Norma a strong advocate for providing Braille education to children with low vision.

After completing her education, Norma found herself living in a small community with no opportunities for a blind person. She knew she had to leave her rural home if she was to become successful. Her father was opposed to her leaving, but her mother understood that a different environment would provide Norma with a better chance of living the life she wanted to live. So she took the unusual step of going against the wishes of Norma's father; drove Norma to the bus station in Lufkin, Texas; and purchased a ticket to a better life for her daughter. Norma traveled to Austin that day, and although she had no idea what she would do to become successful, she was confident that she would be able to make a life for herself.

Norma began her working life as an employee at the Travis Association for the Blind. That employment did not last long because Norma found that she couldn't live on the $1.05 an hour that the sheltered workshop was paying its trainees, and her questions about how to make a higher wage went unanswered. In fact, it became clear that she was unlikely to be paid the federal minimum wage anytime soon, so Norma began to look for other work. She also married during this time and began a family. Her first son was born on March 10, 1976, and her second son was born on March 10, 1978. Once her children were out of diapers, Norma started work at the Texas School for the Blind. She worked as a dorm parent at the school from 1979 to 1982.

After a divorce Norma found the National Federation of the Blind and became an active member in 1983. By 1985 she was living in Houston, and she was an important part of the National Federation of the Blind of Texas leadership. She didn't hold elective office in the Federation, but she worked hard to help the affiliate president and other leaders to carry out the organization's mission. She became president of the Houston Chapter in 1989, and she continued in that role for eight years.

When Norma joined the Federation, she met Glenn Crosby. Glenn was serving as president of the National Federation of the Blind of Texas, and as the two worked closely together, a personal relationship developed. They were married on April 15, 1989. Each of them had two children, and the two families have blended into a harmonious group. Glenn and Norma are now the proud grandparents of seven grandchildren, ranging in age from three to twenty.

Four years before they married, Glenn asked Norma to begin managing the office for his food service business, and they became professional partners. The Crosbys owned five food service locations during the late 1980s and early 1990s, but they sold all but two of the locations and were operating those two locations when they retired in 2013.

Though both Norma and Glenn grew up in Texas, they decided they wanted a change in 2001, and they spent about a year in South Dakota. Then they spent several months in Ajijic, Mexico. Ajijic is near Guadalajara, and, while they enjoyed their time there, they needed to be closer to home for business reasons. So in 2005 they moved to Ruston, Louisiana. Shortly after arriving in Ruston, Norma was elected to serve as president of the North Central Chapter of the NFB of Louisiana. She remained in that position until January of 2009, when she and Glenn made the decision to move back to their native Texas. They now live in Alvin, near Houston, on four acres of land and have a few cows.

In 2012, Norma was chosen to serve as the first president of the Lone Star Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of Texas. Then, at the affiliate's 2014 convention, she was elected to serve as the state president. While Norma believes strongly that it is not necessary to hold an office in order to be an effective leader, she is honored to serve as both the president of the [NFB of Texas](https://nfb.org/about-us/state-affiliates/texas) and, since her election at the 2015 National Convention, as a member of the organization's national board of directors.

She currently serves as the Treasurer for the National Federation of the Blind.

For more information please visit

<https://nfb.org/about-us/leadership/boasrd-directors/norma-crosby>

Thursday, September 11th

Advice From the Ocean

Be shore of yourself.

Come out of your shell.

Take time to coast.

Sea life’s beauty.

Avoid pier pressure.

Don’t get so tied down that you miss out on life’s beautiful waves.

3:00 PM to 5:30 PM

Convention Check in

Must have name tags to get into meetings.

ALL MEETINGS WILL BE HELD IN THE CAPE LOOKOUT ROOM.

6:00 PM

Ocean Fun and Games

Friday September 12th

Swim through life’s currents like a mermaid.

Graceful, determined, and always ready for a new adventure.

7:00 AM to 8:30 AM

Convention Check in

Hospitality Room Open

9:00 AM

General Session

Invocation – Robert Parrish

Pledge of Allegiance – Vernon Richmond

NFB Pledge–Angela Haynes

9:30 AM

Ship ( Senior Health Insurance Program)

10:00 AM

National Update – Norma Crosby, National Rep

10:30 AM

Apps to make life easier – Donna Permar

10:45 AM

Tips and Tricks for maximizing productivity as an assistive technology user– Jeremiah Rogers

11:15 AM

Calling all seniors who want to have fun – Glenn Crosby

11:45 AM

Vanda Pharmaceuticals – Vicki Preddy

12 PM

Lunch

1:30 PM

Nominating Committee Report

2:00 PM

Informative Updates from ABLS (Accessible Books and Library Services)

2:30 PM

Insightful Visionaries – Carolyn Covington

3:00 PM: Adjourn to the Beach

3:00 PM to 4:30 PM: Convention Check In

6:00 PM to 9:00 PM: Exhibit Hall

Location: Pre-Function Hall

Vendor List

Accessible Books and Library Services

Friends of the Library

Humanware

JW.Org

Vanda Pharmaceuticals

Mecklenburg Chapter

Triangle chapter

Coastal Carolina Chapter

Krazi Krafts

CEO Hair Care

Divas Alliance

Bling Jewelry and More

NFB Newsline

Eye Catching Jewelry

NFB of NC Silent Auction

Saturday September 13th

Be like the Seahorse, patient and persistent.

Finding strength, gentle movement, and steady progress.

7:00 AM to 8:30 AM

Hospitality Room Open

7:30 AM to 8:30 AM

Convention Check In

8:00 AM to 8:15 AM

Meditation on the Beach with Robert Parrish

9:00 AM

General Session

Welcome

Invocation

Remembrance

Treasurer’s Report

Committee Reports

Round Table with Norma Crosby – All members invited

Officer’s Meeting

(Presidents, Secretaries, and Treasurers must be present)

12:00 PM

Lunch

1:30 PM

Chapter Reports

2:00 PM

Basket Auction

2:45 PM

Elections

3:00 PM

Adjourn to the beach

6:00 PM

Banquet

NFB of NC Officers and Board of Directors

President: Sharon Weddington

First Vice President: Larry Herring

Second Vice President: Marlon Stover

Secretary: Elizabeth Arcabascio

Treasurer: Seth Lamkin

Directors

Allen Grant

Angela Haynes

Donna Permar

Gerald Moreno

Gloria Thomas

Robert Parrish

Vernon Richmond

USEFUL APPS FOR BLIND AND LOW VISION PEOPLE

BARD

NFB Newsline

Chat GPT

Shopping:

Amazon

Instacart

Walmart

Innosearch

Food and Other Delivery Services

Uber Eats

DoorDash

Postmates

Instacart

Transportation

Uber

Lyft

Navigation:

Blind Square

Voice Vista

Visual Assistance

Seeing AI

Be My Eyes

AIRA

Entertainment

Apple Music

Spotify

Pandora

Netflix

Youtube

Gaming

Audio Wizards

Manamon 2: The Eternal Requiem

Shades of Doom

Blind Drive

The Vale: Shadow of the Crown

A Blind Legend