National Federation of the Blind of Maryland

Minute Messages from the Movement

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Note from the President

If the email Gods will cooperate, I will once again be able to bring you Minute Messages From the Movement on a regular basis! So sorry for such a long delay; I still have not figured out exactly why the last message I wrote did not go through, but I am going to get back on the horse and see if this one will work. Let’s hope for the best!

Messages

* Highlights from the NFBMD Board Meeting: The Central MD chapter did a fantastic job hosting the NFBMD board and other affiliate members on April fifth. This was a wonderful board meeting; we were able to get a lot accomplished. Here are some highlights.
* Sharon Maneki made the following announcements at our board meeting: We were very successful in the Maryland General Assembly this year. We achieved our three objectives. As you will remember, our first objective was to keep the $250,000 in the Governor’s budget for the Center of Excellence in Nonvisual Access to Commerce, Public Information and Education (CENA). The General Assembly passed HB396/SB446, bills that instruct the Maryland Department of Disabilities in partnership with the National Federation of the Blind to conduct a study on how Maryland colleges teach accessibility concepts in their various computer science and information systems curricula. The MD General Assembly also passed HB1242/SB419, bills that will provide consistent funding for LBPH. These bills will be signed by the governor on either May 5 or May 15. We will let you know which day as soon as we know. Many thanks to all who wrote letters, sent emails, attended hearings, made phone calls, and came to Annapolis to visit with Delegates and Senators. We were successful because of each of you and our high level of participation. Congratulations to NFBMD on three important victories that will have long term benefits for blind citizens in Maryland!
* Sharon also reported on our progress with our agenda from Washington Seminar: Congressman Van Hollen is now a cosponsor on HR831, the Fair Wages for Workers with Disabilities Act, and on HR 3505, the Technology, Education, and Accessibility in College and Higher Education Act. This came about as a result of our visit with him during the seminar. Congressman Cummings is now a cosponsor of HR164, the Equal Access to Air Travel for Service-Disabled Veterans Act. He is also a cosponsor for HR831. Congresswoman Donna Edwards became a cosponsor of HR831 after members of the National Harbor chapter attended a coffee discussion with her in February. Let’s keep the momentum going! Watch your email for details on Twitter Tuesday, Call Wednesday, and Email Thursday, which will occur next week. These days have been set aside for us to concentrate on HR 831, so let’s try to convince our representatives not all ready signed on to this important legislation to join us!
* Melissa Lomax shared the following announcement at our board meeting: Share your story and change a life! NFBMD is currently seeking story submissions from blind individuals who wish to share successes, obstacles they have overcome, or efforts that they have made to improve their attitude towards blindness. If you would like to share your experiences, please write your story in a Word document and submit it to Melissa Lomax at melissalomax1@gmail.com. If you have a story but are not quite sure how to put it together, call Melissa at
* The board decided the NFBMD will once again have a table in the exhibit hall at National Convention. Along with our Instant Lottery tickets—a staple at our table for many years—we are planning to sell Braille versions of card games not readily available in Braille. We are all excited about this new fund raising project. Thanks to Melissa Lomax, who came up with the idea and is heading up the committee in order to purchase and Braille games. Please contact Melissa at melissalomax1@gmail.com if you would like to help with this project. Also, we will need workers at our table! Darlene Barrett is in charge of scheduling table workers, exhibit set up, etc. If you are attending convention and want to help in the exhibit hall, please contact Darlene at 410-997-9664. Working in the exhibit hall is a fun way to meet people from all around the country, and is a major way you can help the NFBMD raise funds for our affiliate. (Much more was discussed at our board meeting; please consider attending our next meeting so you can be in on the dialogue.)
* Speaking of National Convention… Have you made your reservations yet? Have you registered? National Convention is truly a one of a kind experience you don’t want to miss. Please consider joining members of your Federation family in Orlando this year. For convention information, visit <https://nfb.org/convention>
* NFB BELL is ringing in Maryland! The NFB BELL Program will once again take place in Baltimore and Glendale, Maryland. This two week summer program, which will run this year from July 28-August 8, is for blind and visually impaired elementary school children (ages 4-12) who are just learning Braille, have had no exposure to Braille, or need to work on reading speed and fluency. Children participate in fun and engaging Braille lessons, meet and interact with positive blind adults, go on field trips, complete craft and cooking projects, make new friends, and acquire literacy skills. On the last day of the program, August 8, all BELL participants will come together for a fun activity in Baltimore. Parents of BELL participants will also come together in Baltimore for an informative seminar. To apply for the program visit <http://www.nfb.org/bell>
* It’s a Crab Feast! Join the NFBMD National Harbor Chapter, and the NFBDC affiliate, and enjoy a wonderful pastime.
* When: Saturday, June 14, 1-5 PM.
* Where: Bladensburg Waterfront Park Pavilion; 4601 Annapolis Road; Bladensburg, MD 20710.
* Food Includes: Crabs, fried and Bar-B-Cued chicken, baked beans, potato salad, fresh salad, corn, hot dogs, soda, water, and watermelon.
* Cost: Adults: $55, children under 12, $25.
* For tickets or questions, contact Michelle Clark at 301 583-8585 or email at mcikeyc@aol.com
* The National Harbor Chapter has generously agreed to give a portion of the proceeds from this event to the Maryland NFB BELL Programs!
* Join Team NFBMD and Become an Imaginator!: (My Aunt Mary has donated to our cause. Why? Because it is a worthy cause, of course, but mostly because I asked.) Uncle Whozit is still counting on you! The National Federation of the Blind has a goal to raise $300000 for the Imagination Fund by May 31, 2014. The Imagination Fund not only supports NFB Jernigan Institute programs, it also helps fund special programs and projects in state affiliates. Raising money for the Imagination Fund means finding other peoples’ money! If you want to support the NFB personally, please consider joining the PAC Plan (More about the PAC Plan later in these messages.) If you want to be an Imaginator and raise money for the Imagination Fund as part of Team NFBMD, , please reach out to your family, friends, business contacts, etc. and tell them why the National Federation of the Blind is important to you. Please ask them for a donation.
* How do they donate? People can make a donation to Team NFBMD by visiting <https://app.mobilecause.com/public/social/9716> As a member of Team NFBMD, please feel free to visit this page yourself and use the links provided to ask for donations from your Facebook friends and Twitter followers. You can also send a customized email to your contacts directly from this page and encourage them to donate. If you are asking someone for a donation in person, you can have him or her text the word Maryland to 71777. Or, donors can send a check made out to NFB with Imagination Fund Maryland in the memo line to 200 East Wells St.; Baltimore, MD 21230. The NFBMD has a goal to raise $7500 in commemoration of the upcoming 75th anniversary of the national Federation of the Blind. This seems like a large number, but I know we will be able to achieve this goal if we all participate as one team and reach out to those we know to ask them for their help. We are counting on you; we still have a long way to go to reach our goal.
* If you would like to have the NFB Jernigan Institute create a personal Imaginator page for you, please send an email to imaginationfund@nfb.org

Coming Next Week:

* Reports on Chemestry Day at the NFB, and the end of our spring raffle.
* Information on the MDPOBC Bowlathon!
* A report on bill signings.

Dates to Remember

* May 7, Envelope stuffing event; 200 East Wells St.; Baltimore. Come and lend a hand! This event will begin at 8 AM, and an evening shift will start after 5 PM.
* June 4: Diabetes Seminar: Contact Debbie Brown at 301-881-1892 for more information
* June 8, 2014: TENTATIVE--NFB 6 Dot Dash—A 6K Race to Advance Braille Literacy (Baltimore, Maryland)
* June 14, NFBMD National Harbor Chapter & NFBDC Crab Feast: Bladensburg Waterfront Park Pavilion; 4601 Annapolis Road; Bladensburg, MD 2071021. Contact Michelle Clark at 301-583-8585 to purchase tickets.
* June 21, MDPOBC Bowlathon: More details coming soon; contact Trudy Pickrel (301-501-1818) for more information.
* July 1-6, 2014: [NFB National Convention (Orlando, Florida)](http://www.nfb.org/national-convention)
* July 28-August 8: National Federation of the Blind Braille Enrichment for Literacy and Learning (BELL) Programs; visit <http://www.nfb.org/bell> for more information and to apply
* August 1, 2014: 7:00 PM NFBMD Crab Feast (Baltimore, Maryland)
* September 9: [Web Accessibility Day at NFB Jernigan Institute](http://nfb.org/web-accessibility-day)
* October 15-17: [NFB Technology Train the Trainers](http://www.NFB.org/training-the-trainers)
* November 14-16, 2014: NFB of Maryland Annual Convention (Towson, Maryland)

Please consider [making a donation](http://www.nfbmd.org/donate.html) today to help us build a future full of opportunities. You can also [donate your vehicle](http://www.carshelpingtheblind.org) or support us by [giving your old household goods to our GreenDrop program](http://www.nfbpickup.org).

To submit items for possible inclusion in this weekly email, please send suggestions to President@nfbmd.org Be sure to include any related URLs that might provide further information.