A Visit to Baltimore

By Meliora Hatcher

(A parity of *A Visit From St. Nicholas* by Clement Clarke Moore)

‘Twas the NABS Atlantic Seminar, when all through the nation

Students packed their suitcases, buzzing with anticipation;

They boarded trains and busses and crowded airplanes

Sweeping and tapping their long white canes;

The students traveled swiftly on land and by air

Excited for everything awaiting them there;

And my fellow FABS on their flights, and I on mine

Landed in Baltimore a quarter to nine,

When from a distance I heard such a tapping

That woke me up from my airplane napping.

I followed the sound through the airport

To find my friends gathered in the food court.

We traveled to the NFB home base:

The Jernigan’s Institute is what they called the place.

There, we saw many fascinating things

Like all the tech and ideas that give the blind their wings.

Then, we traveled to the hotel

After telling the institute farewell.

As the NABS convention began,

We made many friends in the NABS clan.

We gained insight from every speaker

As we caught the NFB fever.

We learned all about skills and philosophy.

I learned to fight for respect with all ferocity,

Because blindness is not my defining characteristic,

So please don’t call my white cane a stick.

I have dreams and skills and much to offer

In my story, I am the only author.

I may be blind, but I am proud,

I have a voice, and it will be loud.

Blind students everywhere raise the bar!

Your future is brighter than the shiniest star.

As I wave Maryland my final good-bye

I turn to my friends with a bitter-sweet sigh.

Safe travels to all

And to all a good night!