Greetings from the Sunshine State!

 As a native Floridian, I know quite a bit about the weather in the Sunshine State and thought I would share what I know with you! During the month of July, the sun always shines during the day in Florida. Sometimes the sunshine is the liquid sort and you should expect it every day. Though you may be considering bringing rain gear with you for our national convention, there is no need to do so. NAGDU will provide it for you. At the NAGDU table in the exhibit hall (B-17) we will have ponchos emblazoned with the brand new NFB logo. These large ponchos measure 52” X 86” and feature a very roomy hood. These ponchos are $10 each and will definitely keep you dry! We will also be selling our 20 oz. Oktoberfest beer steins for $5.00, as well as raffle tickets for a very unique Blue Tooth Tech package consisting of a keyboard, waterproof speaker/microphone, and a miniature USB battery charger/flashlight valued at $195! Raffle tickets will be $1.00 each or 6 for $5.00.

 The National Federation of the Blind is recognized as an innovator in the field of blindness. As a strong and proud division of the NFB, NAGDU is the leading force in the guide dog Movement. During our meeting on July 1, we will reflect our heritage with the NFB and our leadership in the service animal movement by launching an innovative, amazing resource that will dramatically change the way guide and other service animal users protect their civil rights. If you are a guide dog user or interested in guide dog users’ issues, you will not want to miss this exciting, groundbreaking announcement! We will also hear from an expert in Sharia law who will discuss the official view of service animals under Islamic law and practice.

 On Thursday, July 3, we will hear from several guide dog training programs who have instituted new programs that are changing the way guide dog users undergo training, including fast-track training, community training, and training that incorporates both residential and community training. We are looking forward to a packed room, so plan on coming early and staying late to mix & mingle with your fellow guide dog users and trainers! Both our meetings will be held in Salon 3, Level 2 of the Rosen Plaza Hotel & Convention Center. Registration begins at 6:00 p.m. and will close at 6:45 p.m. Our meetings will begin promptly at 7:00 p.m.

Did you say you’re not able to make the meeting? Not so! You can be a part of this exciting pair of meetings, even if you’re not in Orlando! This year, NAGDU will be streaming our meetings live. The live stream will be available from the homepage of our website! Simply go to

<http://nagdu.org>

and find the link to the live stream. Our meetings will be held on Tuesday, July 1 and Thursday, July 3 beginning at 7:00 p.m. Don’t miss a minute of the most dynamic gathering of guide dog users in the world and the incredible announcement that will be made! If you would like to make a contribution to defray the cost of our live stream, you can do so by going to our donation page

http://nagdu.org/donation

The National Association of Guide dog Users is the leader in guide and service animal policy, education, and advocacy for guide dog users! We are also the most dynamic, innovative, and energetic organization of guide dog users in the world! Our influence and strength are the result of our robust membership. If you are not a member of NAGDU or one of its affiliate divisions, you are invited to join our ranks and support our goal of Living the Life You Want as a guide dog user. Membership in the National Association of guide dog Users also makes you a member of the National Federation of the Blind. Joining is painless and simple. Our dues are only $5.00 annually and you can join and pay your dues online. For more information about joining NAGDU, please go to

http://nagdu.org/membership.html

 Don’t forget about the NAGDU Information & Advocacy Hotline where you can hear information about service animal laws and regulations, as well as connect to a live advocate who can help you in the event you face access problems because of your guide dog. You can call the Hotline 24/7 by calling 888-NAGDU411 (888-624-3841). The Hotline recently received a sizable grant from Twilio Cloud Communications to support the Hotline for years to come. Thanks to Twilio for their generosity and support of this valuable resource!

 Finally, you are invited to read our NAGDU blog – Harness Up! You can read the blog and sign up for notifications when new posts are published by going to

<http://harnessup.wordpress.com>

 I look forward to seeing you in Orlando or having you participate on our live stream. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to get in touch with me. My contact information is below my signature.

`Fraternally yours,

Marion Gwizdala, President

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