**46th Annual Convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Wisconsin**

**Accessing Nonvisual Independence!**

**March 26th, 27th, & 28th, 2021**

**Anywhere and Everywhere via Zoom**

**The National Federation of the Blind knows that blindness is not the characteristic that defines you or your future. Every day we raise the expectations of blind people, because low expectations create obstacles between blind people and our dreams. You can live the life you want; blindness is not what holds you back.**

**NFB OF WISCONSIN BOARD OF DIRECTORS OFFICERS:**

**President: John Fritz**

**First Vice President: Dave Hyde**

**Second Vice President: William Meeker**

**Secretary: Chelsea Dallin**

**Treasurer: Ben Dallin**

**Board Members: Laurie Holzmann, Tom Jeray, Heather Olson, Karen Riccobono, Carissa Mallmann, and Nicole Wolf**

**NFB PLEDGE**

**I pledge to participate actively in the effort of the National Federation of the Blind to achieve equality, opportunity, and security for the blind, to support the policies and programs of the Federation, and to abide by its constitution**

**Convention Arrangements:** If you have any questions about convention arrangements, contact Brian McCann, 757-472-2494.

**Registration:** Registration is free and will end on the 25th at 11:59 PM.

**Door Prizes:** You may be the lucky winner of a great door prize. Names will be drawn throughout the convention sessions. To be eligible to win, you need only to be registered and to be present in the meeting Zoom room when your name is drawn.

**Dog Relief Area Information:** You may relieve your guide dog the same place as you did yesterday.

**Braille Enrichment for Literacy and Learning (BELL) Academy:** BELL: We are once again excited to be offering our NFB BELL Academy, In-Home Edition for the summer of 2021. This year, students will be organized into classes based on their prior knowledge of the Braille code, which means we will be better able to offer challenging and fun content for Braille learners of all levels. The NFB BELL Academy is appropriate for students ages four through twelve; applications for the 2021 program will be opening in late February. Learn more about the [NFB BELL Academy](https://www.nfb.org/programs-services/nfb-bell-academy).

**INCLUSIVITY, DIVERSITY, AND SOCIAL CONDUCT:** As an attendee at our convention, you not only represent yourself, but also represent our greater organization. We want you to enjoy our time together and to make new friends and renew old acquaintances. Although we encourage members to socialize and have fun, the convention also provides a valuable opportunity to come together to continue the work of our organization, to learn about the important initiatives that we are involved with on local and national levels, and to plan our work for the future.

* The National Federation of the Blind of Wisconsin seeks to provide a convention environment in which diverse participants, including members, speakers, exhibitors, staff, and volunteers, may learn, network, and enjoy the company of friends and colleagues in an environment of mutual respect and professionalism. We recognize a shared responsibility to create and uphold that atmosphere for the benefit of all. Some behaviors are therefore specifically prohibited:
* harassment or intimidation based on race, religion, ethnicity, language, gender, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, disability, physical appearance, or other group identity
* sexual harassment or intimidation, including unwelcome sexual attention, stalking (physical or virtual), or unsolicited physical contact
* public drunkenness and associated behaviors (e.g., belligerence, yelling, hostility, destruction of property)

Participants are expected to abide by these rules and behaviors in all convention venues, including online arenas, social media, and social events. Participants who are asked to stop a behavior that the recipient considers hostile or harassing are expected to comply immediately.

For assistance or to report an incident, please call 504-621-4162. All formal reports will be fully investigated according to the steps outlined in the National Federation of the Blind Code of Conduct. Based on the information found in the investigation, appropriate action will be taken and may involve staff, organization leaders, and legal counsel. Based on the circumstances, hotel security and/or law enforcement may become involved, when appropriate.

We are committed to diversity, equity, and the free expression of ideas. These principles have been delineated in our Code of Conduct found at nfb.org/code-conduct.

**PAC Plan:** You can be a part of our mission to help blind people live the lives we want. Make recurring monthly donations through direct withdrawals from a checking account or charges to a credit card by signing up for our Pre-Authorized Contribution (PAC) program. In addition to the traditional method of establishing pre-authorized contributions from a checking account, we now can accept PAC Plan donations via credit card. And, if you need to take a minimum distribution from an IRA, you can designate that to PAC and avoid paying taxes on the money.

**Vehicle Donations:** The National Federation of the Blind uses car donations to improve the education of blind children, distribute free white canes, help veterans, and so much more. We have partnered with Vehicles for Charity to process donated vehicles. Please call toll-free (855) 659-9314, and a representative can make arrangements, or you can donate online by visiting [www.nfb.org/vehicledonations](http://www.nfb.org/vehicledonations).

**Leaving A Legacy:** Dream Makers Circle: You can help build a future of opportunity for the blind by becoming a member of our Dream Makers Circle. It is easier than you think. Just visit your bank and convert an account to a P.O.D. (payable on death) bank account which is payable after your passing to the National Federation of the Blind or the National Federation of the Blind of Wisconsin. Your legacy gift to the National Federation of the Blind or the National Federation of the Blind of Wisconsin can be made in the form of a will or living trust, an income generating gift, or by naming us as the beneficiary of a retirement plan, IRA, pension, or a life insurance policy. You can designate a specific amount, a percentage, or list NFB as one of several beneficiaries. For additional information, please contact Patti Chang at 410-659-9314, ext. 2422 or at pchang@nfb.org.

Thanks to these Wisconsin Dream Makers: John & Heather Fritz, Linda Pennell

**Free Slate and Stylus Program:** The National Federation of the Blind will distribute a plastic, four-line, twenty-eight cell slate along with a saddle stylus to those that need them. That includes those that are blind and low vision who know Braille or want to learn Braille. The slate and stylus have long been and continue to be valuable tools for writing Braille, which is vital to literacy for the blind. It is the only Braille-writing device that has the same portability, flexibility, and affordability as a pen and pencil. Please visit our free slate and stylus program online application to request your slate and stylus, <https://freeslates.nfb.org//>.

**Free White Cane Program:** The National Federation of the Blind has distributed more than 64,000 free white canes since 2008. The white cane gives blind people the ability to achieve a full and independent life, allowing us to travel freely and safely. We started our free white cane program because we believe that no blind person should be without a white cane, regardless of his or her ability to pay for it. For more information, please go to <https://www.nfb.org/programs-services/free-white-cane-program>.

**Help America Vote Act Training & Technical Assistance (HAVA T/TA) Project:** Casting a secret ballot is a right most Americans take for granted. Speech-output-technology voting machines and accessible absentee ballot-marking tools make it possible for blind and deaf-blind people to cast a secret ballot privately and independently. The goal of the HAVA T/TA effort is to increase the participation of blind voters in the election process by providing training and technical assistance to protection and advocacy personnel, state and local elections officials, developers of accessible voting technology, and blind advocates.

**Resources for Staying in Touch:**

* Safety & Support: As the leading civil rights organization of the blind in the United States, every day we work to bring equality, love, and hope to our community. The blind community, like the rest of society, is not immune to violence and sexual misconduct. We thank the brave survivors for sharing their stories during a recent movement under the hashtag #MarchingTogether. We are committed to and welcome an ongoing process of learning how to heal from past trauma, to prevent future instances, and to protect victims and survivors. <https://nfb.org/programs-services/safety-and-support>
* The *Braille Monitor* is the flagship publication of the National Federation of the Blind. It is published eleven times each year, with a double issue for August and September that highlights the national convention. It is the best source for in-depth information about what is happening in the National Federation of the Blind, as well as everything from how-to articles to profiles of interesting blind individuals to stories about people coming to terms with their blindness and living the lives they want. To subscribe to the *Braille Monitor* or to make any changes to your subscription, call the national office at 410-659-9314, extension 2344, or email nfbpublications@nfb.org.
* The Jacobus tenBroek Library is the only research library on blindness in the United States that is owned and managed by an organization like the National Federation of the Blind. In addition to our main library collection, we are responsible for the preservation of the NFB institutional records, the Jacobus tenBroek Personal Papers, and all NFB literature, including the *Braille Monito*r. We have digitized historical information about our movement, including key records related to its founding in 1940. You can access this and other information about our holdings and services at https://nfb.org/jacobus-tenbroek-library.
* Journal of Blindness Innovation and Research (JBIR): JBIR is a multidisciplinary, peer-reviewed publication presenting primary research, scholarly reviews, and reports of innovative information and research that broadens and deepens our understanding about blindness and the best practices for increasing the independence, self-respect, self-determination, and potential of individuals who are blind. For more information, visit www.nfb.org/jbir.
* Imagineering Our Future: This is the monthly e-newsletter of the National Federation of the Blind. It features a message from President Mark A. Riccobono and highlights our most recent news, action items, and happenings.
* Nation’s Blind Podcast: This is our podcast show that highlights different themes related to blindness, independent living, and news from the National Federation of the Blind.
* Presidential Release: This monthly audio update from President Riccobono, traditionally played at chapter meetings, is posted on the NFB website each month and is also available through NFB-NEWSLINE, as an iTunes podcast, on the NFB Connect mobile app, and through Amazon's Alexa devices such as the Amazon Echo and Echo Dot. You can also receive a thumb drive with the release by making a request to President Riccobono. The Presidential Release is now available in both English and Spanish, and transcripts are posted for use by our deaf-blind members. You can access the release in all formats at https://nfb.org/presidential-releases.
* Voice of the Nation’s Blind Blog: Entries are posted to the Voice of the Nation’s Blind blog regularly. From access tech reviews to stories and advice from blind parents, there’s something for everyone. You can go to www.nfb.org/vonb-blog to read and share the posts.
* NFB on Social Media: Want to ensure that you don't miss any of the latest news and information from the National Federation of the Blind? You can get firsthand access to all our newest videos, photos, and information on our social media channels. Like us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and Instagram (@NFB\_voice), and subscribe to our YouTube channel (NationsBlind), and you won't miss a thing!

**Friday, March 26, 2021**

7:00 pm Resolutions Committee Meeting: Dave Hyde, Chairperson

8:00 pm – Midnight WABS Trivia

Do you like trivia games? If you said “yes” to this question, then come join the Wisconsin Association of Blind Students for some friendly trivia competition. See you there!!

Wisconsin Association of Blind Students

**Saturday, March 27, 2021**

**GENERAL SESSION**

9:00 am Call to Order

Invocation

Pledge of Allegiance

NFB Pledge

9:10 am Legislators

9:15 am National Association of Blind Students Update

Elizabeth Rouse

9:20 am Why Am I A Federationist?

Elana Charles

9:25 am Report from the National Federation of the Blind

James Gashel, Secretary of Natoinal Board of Directors

10:00 am Department of Vocational Rehabilitation

Katleen Enders, DVR Administrator

10:15 am Office For The Blind & Visually Impaired

Doug Martens

10:30 am Wisconsin Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired

Dan Wenzel, Director

10:50 am Wisconsin Talking Book and Braille Library

Katie Malloy, Outreach Librarian

11:05 am Navi-Lens

Tim Fahlberg, Elana Charles

11:20 am Wisconsin Elections Commission: Election Panel Moderator, Ben Dallin

Richard Rydecki, Assistant Administrator

Brianna Hanson, Elections Specialist

Denise Jess, Executive Director, WI Council of the

Blind

Legislators

Noon – 2:00 pm Adjourn

12:00 pm – 2:00 pm Exhibit Hall

Exhibitors: Susan Eggold, Vision Forward

Michele Repischak, Industries for The Blind &

Visually Impaired

Jennifer Lyman, Vanda/Non-24

Barb Schultze, Occupaws

J.J. Meddaw, A.T.Guys

**General Session**

2:00 pm Call to Order

2:05 pm The National Federation of the Blind of Wisconsin

John Fritz, President, National Federation of the Blind of Wisconsin, Board Member, National Federation of the Blind

2:20 pm Finance in the Blind

Panel Moderator, Ben Dallin

Rebecca Chang

2:40 pm Diversity and Inclusion

Denise Avant

3:00 pm Sea Sheboygan

Juju Senfft, Adaptive Director

3:15 pm Structured Discovery

Jennifer Kennedy, Executive Director, BLIND Inc.

Julie Deden, Executive Director, Colorado Center for the Blind

Pam Allen, Executive Director, Colorado Center for the Blind

4:15 pm Keynote Speech

James Gashel, Secretary, National Federation of the Blind

5:00 pm Adjourn

6:00 pm Annual Meeting: National Federation of the Blind - Wisconsin Association of Blind Merchants WABM – Tom Jeray, President

Annual Meeting: National Federation of the Blind -

Wisconsin Association of Blind Students WABS –

Lindsey Fritz, President

Annual Meeting: National Federation of the Blind -

Wisconsin Association of Guide Dog Users WAGDU –

Stacy Feuhrer, President

Annual Meeting: National Federation of the Blind -

Wisconsin Parents of Blind Children WOPBC –

Debi Meng, President

**Sunday, March 28, 2021**

**BUSINESS SESSION**

9:00 am Annual Business Meeting, Meeting Room 7

Invocation

Secretary’s Report

Treasurer's Report

Committee Reports

Legislative Report

Chapter & Division Reports

Resolutions Committee Report

Nominating Committee Report

Elections

National Convention

State Convention

Miscellaneous Business

12:00 pm Adjourn

12:00 pm – 2:00 pm Exhibit Hall

Exhibitors: Susan Eggold, Vision Forward

Michele Repischak, Industries for The Blind &

Visually Impaired

Jennifer Lyman, Vanda/Non-24

Barb Schultze, Occupaws

J.J. Meddaw, A.T.Guys

**Special Thanks from the State President:**

I am honored to take the opportunity to thank our members, our families, guest speakers, and special guests for showing strong dedication to the blind by not only attending the NFB of Wisconsin’s 46th Annual Convention, but by everything they are doing each and every day of the year. Your presence at state and national events and your willingness to help and share, has truly made this convention special. A very special thank you to James Gashel for joining us all the way from Hawaii to share his expertise, wisdom, and experience with us. This convention has truly been a memorable experience. Everyone please have a safe journey back to your homes and we hope to see you all very soon. Go in peace.