QUE PASA

August 2020

Newsletter of the National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico, published on www.nfbnm.org, on New Mexico Newsline, and on NFB Newsline.

Adelmo Vigil

President, NFB of New Mexico

E-mail: nfbnewmexicopresident@gmail.com

(575) 921-5422

Tonia Trapp, Editor

E-mail: nfbnewmexicosecretary@gmail.com

(505) 856-5346

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# PREAMBLE

The National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico (NFBNM) is a 501(c)(3) consumer organization comprised of blind and sighted people committed to changing what it means to be blind. Though blindness is still all too often a tragedy to those who face it, we know from our own personal experience that with training and opportunity, it can be reduced to the level of a physical nuisance. We work to see that blind people receive services and training to which they are entitled and that parents of blind children receive the advice and support they need to help their youngsters grow up to be happy, productive adults. We believe that first-class citizenship means that people have both rights and responsibilities, and we are determined to see that blind people become first-class citizens of these United States, enjoying their rights and fulfilling their responsibilities. The most serious problems we face have less to do with our lack of vision than with discrimination based on the public’s ignorance and misinformation about blindness. Join us in educating New Mexicans about the abilities and aspirations of New Mexico’s blind citizens.

(Adapted from NFB of Ohio newsletter.)

# POLL RESULTS: TELL ME SOMETHING THAT YOU ARE GRATEFUL FOR

Here are the answers we received, in no particular order, and with no identifying information:

I am grateful for my family and friends. Both are always ready to listen to me and both are always ready to guide me if indeed I need guiding, and I am always there for them.

I am grateful that I still have my mother.

I’m grateful for the fact that my nearly 98-year-old grandfather is still with us. I’m grateful to be back at work after taking time off during the lockdown. I’m grateful for the fact that my brother- and sister-in-law have provided me with safety glasses to wear in addition to my masks, and that they’ve brought me food and drink during the pandemic.

Truthfully, I am grateful for Absolutely Everything! To mention only a few specifics--my sense of humor and those who understand it, cooler days of late, my good health, the opportunities to serve others, and our governor.

I am grateful for my friends at the Commission for the Blind and all of the support that I have received from them. I am also grateful for my husband and his complete support over the many years that we have known each other.

I am grateful for my friends and family who give me loving support through both difficult and good times. I am blessed to have all of them in my life.

I am grateful to God for His amazing love and the many blessings He has given me: my wonderful husband, a job that I love doing, a home, good friends, and so much more.

I am very grateful for my talking books and to be able to knit. I have not been held back by the Coronavirus because I have these two items to keep me company.

I am so thankful for Instacart, Doordash, and Walmart delivery. It is so nice to get items delivered when you can access them independently without having to rely on Uber and Lyft and spending more money to get to and from a store. These 3 apps have helped me out considerably. It is nice to have more options, and I am so thankful for the essential workers that work hard to help us live the life we want!

I am thankful for the proliferation of knowledge on various subjects, and having reliable accessible technology to educate myself on many topics of interest.

I am grateful for what I have and who I have in my life. Many blessings always.

# MEMBER SPOTLIGHTS

By Gabriella Smith

Some of us were thinking that with all the new members we’re continuously getting in our state affiliate, you might want to know who’s doing what and where. So we’ve decided on spotlighting a couple of members in every issue of Que Pasa. This issue we begin with Ernie Esquibel of the Albuquerque Chapter and German Benitez of the West Mesa Chapter.

Our first spotlight is Ernie Esquibel. Ernie has been a member of the National Federation of the Blind for 5 years. He joined after he lost his sight to diabetes. After he lost his sight, Ernie stayed at home for a year doing nothing, until someone told him about the NFB. He was connected with a cane instructor and was soon invited to attend his first chapter meeting. He was impressed by the people he met, and he wanted to learn more.

When he was new to the NFB, Ernie was asked to emcee the White Cane Banquet. He was very nervous and even attempted to ask for someone else to be the emcee, but Peggy Chong insisted that he do it anyway. Behind the podium, he found his sense of belonging and realized the NFB was his family. He says it was an amazing experience, and it encouraged him to further develop his ties with the Federation.

Ernie is the fundraising chair for the NFB of New Mexico. He believes fundraising is not about the money, but about community outreach. He says his favorite part is the relationships he builds with the community. Ernie says it is difficult to plan a fundraiser during the pandemic, but he would like to run a bake sale through Zoom, and he already has orders for biscochitos. When he is able to, he would love to be able to host a “fall crawl”-style outdoor event with live music.

Ernie’s goals for the future are to grow the National Federation of the Blind, continue fundraising, build connections with the mayor’s office, and be a good example to the community. The Federation is his job and his family.

Next is German Benitez. German has been a member of the NFB since 1997. He started in the student division, attended an NFB national convention, and found his home in the NFB philosophy. German is now the president of the West Mesa Chapter and says he enjoys it. Like everything else, he says, it comes with both rewards and challenges. He was elected in April, and he says he is still learning the ins and outs of the position. His favorite part about being president is getting to learn from previous presidents and the other members of the chapter.

German is also the West Mesa Chapter’s fundraising chair. He enjoys selling things, but it can be difficult balancing that with being president. German says he is thankful for his good fundraising team, so it’s not just him making decisions. He says his favorite part about being fundraising chair is getting to decide how the chapter will raise money, and he gets to hear ideas from everyone in the fundraising committee.

German was born in Mexico and grew up in Texas. He lost his sight due to a high fever when he was seven. He didn’t know any other blind people until he was 14, and he didn’t know about the NFB until he moved to New Mexico in 1997. His hobbies include reading, talking on the phone, and going on walks. German hopes one day to be able to work for either Humanware or Hims providing tech support.

# ADA 30TH ANNIVERSARY PROCLAMATION BY GOVERNOR LUJAN GRISHAM

STATE OF NEW MEXICO EXECUTIVE OFFICE

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

Proclamation

WHEREAS, the Americans With Disabilities Act was introduced in the U.S. Senate on May 9, 1988, in order to clearly and comprehensively prohibit discrimination

on the basis of disability, which was both commonplace and accepted at the time; and

WHEREAS, Tom Harkin, a U.S. senator from Iowa, introduced the legislation in a speech partly delivered in signed language on behalf of his deaf brother; and

WHEREAS, the legislation guarantees to people with disabilities rights in employment; state and local government services; public accommodations, and telecommunications;

and

WHEREAS, the Americans With Disabilities Act also requires removal of architectural and communication barriers and requires reasonable employment accommodations

for people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, the Americans With Disabilities Act passed the Senate on September 7th, 1989, and the House of Representatives on May 22nd, 1990, with strong bipartisan

support in both chambers, sending a resounding message that this nation would no longer tolerate isolation, segregation and second-class citizenship for

people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, President George H. W. Bush signed the Americans With Disabilities Act on July 26th, 1990; and

WHEREAS, known commonly as the ADA, the Americans With Disabilities Act is the landmark civil rights legislation for people with disabilities; and

WHEREAS, July 26th, 2020, marks the 30th anniversary of the historic signing of the Americans With Disabilities Act:

NOW THEREFORE, I, Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor of the State of New Mexico, do hereby proclaim July 26th, 2020, as

"AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT DAY"

throughout the state of New Mexico.

Attest:

Maggie Toulouse Oliver

Secretary of State

Done at the Executive Office this 17th day of July 2020.

Witness my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Mexico.

Michelle Lujan Grisham

Governor

# ATTORNEY GENERAL, STATE TREASURER, AND STATE AUDITOR RECOGNIZE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT DAY

For Immediate Release:

July 24, 2020

Contact: Matt Baca -- (505) 270-7148

Attorney General Balderas, State Treasurer Eichenberg, and State Auditor Colón recognize Americans with Disabilities Act Day

Santa Fe, NM---Today, Attorney General Hector Balderas joined State Treasurer Tim Eichenberg and State Auditor Brian Colón in recognizing the Americans with Disabilities Act Day. On July 17, 2020, Governor Michelle Luján Grisham declared July 26, 2020 as Americans with Disabilities Act Day in honor of the 30th Anniversary of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

“It is important for us to recognize the anniversary enacting this historic piece of legislation, which provides access and opportunities for individuals with disabilities, but we must continue the fight,” said Attorney General Balderas. “We will continue to stand with New Mexican families and fight for equity and justice.”

“We are proud to offer ABLE New Mexico through the State Treasurer’s Office,” said Eichenberg. “Nearly 500 New Mexicans have opened accounts through ABLE to save money for their needs, without jeopardizing the assistance they receive from other programs. We can serve so many more people in New Mexico, though. We hope that this celebration of the Americans with Disabilities Act Day will shine a light on ABLE New Mexico so that folks will reach out to us for more information.”

“Having grown up with a father who had Muscular Dystrophy and passed away at the age of 49, the importance of the Americans with Disabilities Act is personal to me. I am proud to recognize this day, for all who live with a disability and thrive because of the support the ADA guarantees, in honor of my father,” said Auditor Colón. “The ADA guarantees rights for our most vulnerable populations--individuals who are our family, friends, neighbors, and colleagues. It gives assurances they will not face discrimination on the basis of a disability. Today we mark the 30th anniversary of the passing of this important legislation and celebrate how it is possible to agree, regardless of politics, that nobody should be treated differently or unfairly because they live with a disability.”

This past October the Attorney General, State Auditor and State Treasurer hosted a summit on disabilities: The Dream Bigger Summit - Creating a More Inclusive New Mexico. The summit scheduled for October 2020 will be postponed due to COVID-19.

# BEYOND MY BATTLE

By Carlos Sanchez

I'm still fighting for my Independence

My freedom was taken away from me

So long ago the battle started

I fight a fight you can't see

But some choose to walk away and not noticed me

But I hear the flag waving, she's waving at me

Her bright vivid colors have set me free,

Red white and blue is what makes me, me

The battle will continue, but I will fight this fight even if I cannot see,

I will become stronger because there is still a vision in me

I will see 2020 further than what eyes can meet

So many things are beyond my battle,

But I will stand strong and be proud and fight for me

I will work harder to climb that ladder,

When my hands are weathered and my knees are weak

I remember the distance I traveled independently

Some say pain is weakness leaving the body

I say pain is there to remind you to be stronger

I will fight until I can no longer,

This means war.

# ROCKY BOTTOM, VIRTUALLY: A FIRST FOR EVERYONE

By Veronica Smith, President, SAGE Division

For the first time ever, the National Federation of the Blind went virtual. Some might say, “what in the world is virtual?” Well, in the times we are now living in, the 21st century, it means we attended a meeting via our computers or our telephones, whether they were landlines or cell phones. It was, for sure, an interesting ride.

For the first time ever, because of the Coronavirus that has made our lives anything but normal, schools are closed or on some kind of abbreviated schedules--mostly not in-person. Banks can only be accessed through drive-up windows or by appointment, and grocery stores and most restaurants can only be entered if, and only if, you are wearing a mask around your nose and mouth.

Social Distancing has become the term you hear most often, and that means you cannot or should not stand closer than six feet from another person. So needless to say, having an in-person national convention could not and did not happen. Instead, we went virtual, thus having the largest NFB convention ever. 8,261 individuals logged in or dialed in to hear sensational, dynamic speeches. Needless to say, they were inspiring and invigorating.

Our spectacular Senior Division Seminar was a bit confusing for everyone who attended. Zoom had already been mastered by some; but even so, using Zoom for a meeting of this size, with well over a hundred people, made it a bit tedious. But somehow we got through it, and after all was said and done, it was successful.

The meeting started out with Ms. Kattie Dugan from Georgia and Mr. Darryl Rice from Michigan sharing their 2019 experiences as participants in the second annual Senior Retreat at Rocky Bottom, South Carolina. This was a time for the senior blind, 55 and older, to get together and learn what it means to be blind and independent. They learned how to function using Learning Shades (blindfolds). These individuals were also expected to use long white canes or dog guides to get around. They learned to cook without sight, and they learned how much fun it was to take long walks through nature. They learned how to mark their appliances so they could independently use them. Everyone enthused about how much fun they had.

We also enjoyed what author Ms. Deborah Kendrick had to say about her two newest books: When Your Ears Can’t Help You See, and Navigating Healthcare When All They Can See Is That You Can’t. The books talk about what it’s like to lose both sight and hearing. In these books, Ms. Kendrick writes about techniques, skills and common sense to navigate healthcare, and she gives suggestions about how to determine best practices for yourself. Right now the only place you can find these sensational books is through National Braille Press.

Mr. Ben Cooper from Benetech Corporation gave an update on BookShare, an online service for downloading books. He told us about the hundreds of thousands of digital books that are there for the taking for a small price of $50 a year. That’s not at all a bad price for the 900,000-plus books and magazines that they have. Just imagine buying each of the 180 books one of the participants said they had read in one year. Wow, that is a lot of books!

We enjoyed listening to a panel of individuals who shared what the senior divisions in their states were doing. As the president of the senior division in New Mexico, I talked about when the division was started in 1996 by Christine Hall. She was instrumental in bringing it to life and naming it SAGE, which stands for Senior Action Group Energy. Years ago the division was quite active, but in recent years it has been meeting only once a year at the state convention.

In January of this year, I asked our affiliate president, Adelmo Vigil, if we could hold division meetings via conference call. In February, it came to pass. The first few months were slow: only a very few people attended the meetings. In May we combined our meeting with the Chapter At Large, and several more people joined the meetings. In June we began having a guest speaker, and we are excited and hopeful that this will be the key to having more individuals attend. If you want to find out more about our senior division (SAGE), call Veronica Smith at (505) 269-1034 or send an email to nfbnm.sage@gmail.com. Our goal is to meet the second Monday of every month via Zoom. The meetings start at 7 PM and last anywhere from one hour to one and a half hours.

The Senior Division was not the only virtual event that you could dial into or access through the Zoom platform. You could actually enjoy the Exhibit Hall, Board Meeting, Fund Raising Committee meeting, or membership meeting. You could join in and listen to the impassioned arguments that people presented about why their proposed resolutions should be passed. You could enjoy music played by the Performing Arts Division, or you could hear how this or that was made at the Crafter’s Korner. Like any other convention, there was just too much to do during the week of July 14-18.

After all was said and done, I am positive that we all had a spectacular week at our first ever National Federation of the Blind virtual convention. Not once did I get lost going from room to room. Not once did I have to wait in enormous lines to get something to eat. Not once did I pay way too much for food or lodging, and not once did I die from the heat. I did, however, bring my own dinner to the banquet festivities for the first time ever, and I missed the comradery with my friends. All in all, we were living the life we want!

# SAGE AND CHAPTER AT LARGE JOIN FORCES

By Veronica Smith

The senior division of the NFB of New Mexico, Senior Action Group Energy (SAGE), has recently joined forces with our Chapter at Large group. We are meeting every month on the second Monday. All are welcome, regardless of your age or what part of New Mexico you call home. That is because sometimes a person may feel like a senior even though they are not, and sometimes people who have an NFB chapter in their area enjoy the chance to get together with their blind peers outside of their regular chapter meetings.

We would love for you to come and join us. Come with questions. We might just have the answers. And if you would like to be a speaker at one of our meetings, please let me know. I am the current president of SAGE, and I can be reached at nfbnm.sage@gmail.com or by phone at (505) 269-1034.

 We meet each month via the Zoom platform. Don’t feel threatened by using it, because it is like many other things: scary at the beginning, but in reality, not as hard as it might appear.

Here is the information you will need in order to join us!

If you dial into the meeting with a phone call, you should bear in mind the following two commands which you can enter using the phone's keypad:

Star 6 is the command to mute and unmute yourself during the meeting.

Star 9 is the command to raise or lower your virtual hand.

To join the meeting, call 408-638-0968. Enter the meeting ID 995-8835-2622, followed by pound.

If you are using your iPhone to dial into the meeting, take advantage of the following one-tap mobile link here:
+14086380968,,99588352622#

Here is the direct link to join the Zoom meeting using the Zoom software on your computer:

<https://zoom.us/j/99588352622>

If any of this information is confusing, please feel free to call me directly at (505) 269-1034.

# DOES HISTORY REPEAT ITSELF?

By Nancy Burns

The unfortunate truth is that history does indeed repeat itself. Throughout the decades, racial inequality, wars, and social injustice have been only a few of the causes of massive demonstrations in this country. The number and scope of details available to the public about a given event have changed with the ability to capture these events with modern technology. The process of photographing and bringing real-time events directly into homes through social media and the Internet impacts society on a level never before experienced.

Social injustice weighs heavily on all minorities, large or small. One such minority group is that of people who happen to be blind. The National Federation of the Blind (NFB), founded in 1940, was organized to fight for the rights of blind or visually impaired citizens. There have been peaceful demonstrations to bring the issue of social injustice to the general public. These demonstrations are always small and non-violent.

On May 25, 2020, Minneapolis Police detained George Floyd, an African American male. Video of this event clearly shows a white officer brutally holding Floyd down with a knee across his neck. Floyd can be heard saying that he could not breathe. His pleas were ignored. He was taken to the hospital where he later died. Rioting immediately broke out as people demanded the arrest of the offending officer.

Now let’s back-track to January, 2020, when a virus later known as COVID-19 seemed to be creeping its way into the U.S. The apparent origin of this frequently-deadly virus was determined to be in China. All too soon, COVID-19 became a real pandemic taking the lives of people all around the globe. Doctors and scientists were at a loss as to the cause as well as the cure. As weeks turned into months, the death toll rapidly rose. Social distancing became a common phrase, as it was believed that close interaction was a factor in the spread of this killer virus. Weddings, graduation ceremonies, and other events were canceled or rescheduled.

Face masks and gloves were strongly recommended to be used when going out in public. As the virus spread, scientists and doctors believed that it was being spread from human to human. Hospitals were filled to capacity with infected patients, and the death toll continued to rise. Stores, shops, and non-essential businesses were closed in an attempt to slow the progress of COVID-19. People were ordered not to congregate in large groups. Unemployment rates sky-rocketed. The federal government was slow to act, but Congress did finally approve financial assistance for those workers impacted by job loss.

The U.S. economy continued to plunge, and the Stock Market was shut down for the first time since the Great Depression. Anxiety and frustration grew throughout the country. Long food lines became all too prevalent. Frustration increased as demands were made for businesses to reopen. Scientists and doctors scrambled to determine the exact cause, as well as to find a cure and hopefully a vaccine, in order to curtail the spread of this killer virus.

Add all of this to the fact that a white police officer took the life of a black male, and you have the perfect formula for the creation of chaos. Rioting erupted in every large city of the U.S. Store fronts were shattered, businesses looted, and buildings set on fire. Minneapolis, Pittsburg, New York City, San Francisco, Los Angeles, and many other cities were under siege. The frustration of job loss, food shortages, and forced quarantine set the stage for this violence.

Life became more difficult for the blind population. Some were able to work at home. In most cities public transportation was curtailed, if it existed at all. Without the ability to get around, such things as appointments with doctors and other service providers were delayed or even canceled. It became necessary for many people to pay for grocery delivery rather than independently shopping. Blind students were severely impacted because of the inability to receive hard-copy lessons. Learning by computer was not always possible.

My life now extends back not only for years, but for decades. This fact has allowed me to personally observe many of these uprisings. One such horrific incident was due to the results of the Rodney King trial. At that time, I was living in Burbank, California. A business appointment had taken me to South Los Angeles. Miraculous timing allowed me to miss the intersection of Florence and Normandie by minutes. A racially-explosive incident at that intersection sparked the beginning of six horrific days of looting and burning. The cause of this violent uprising was the fact that the media had just released information that the four white officers were acquitted in the trial based upon the savage beating of Rodney King, an African American construction worker. King suffered broken bones and numerous cuts and bruises along with brain damage. The incident was partially filmed, and that was finally entered as evidence into the trial.

There are certain similarities between the Rodney King beating and the murder of George Floyd. Both incidents were followed by days of violence and unrest. The murder of Floyd has once again brought the issue of police brutality directed toward the African American population into the spotlight. Combine this violence with the devastating results of the pandemic, and the fuel for civil disobedience has been ignited. The issue of police brutality against citizens of color is again front and center. Both of these disasters along with other similar racially-explosive violations brought attention to the problem. Long-standing discrimination can never be eradicated quickly or easily. This is a socially complex issue: it is not easily erased.

As a blind woman, I have experienced discrimination, but not the violent kind directed toward my black brothers and sisters. The subjects of my discrimination have been mostly around housing and employment. As a college student, I had been introduced to the NFB and found welcome support and guidance. Along the way, it became clear that solidarity and a united front formed the backbone of this organization.

It was my honor and privilege to participate in several non-violent demonstrations organized by the NFB. Many of these were peacefully protesting the attempt of an organization of sighted people to take over programs of the National Federation of the Blind. Others were to protest the practice of paying subminimum wages to blind workers. We were generally able to attract the interest of local newspapers. The NFB participants carried picket signs and chanted words of explanation about our cause. To my knowledge, the demonstrators were never brutally assaulted; and we did, hopefully, get our message out to the public.

Discrimination against blind citizens is all too often based on pity and the inaccurate assumption that we are inherently inferior. Blind citizens rarely endure the violence directed toward our black brothers and sisters, but we stand in support of their cause. NFB’s peaceful demonstrations target the general public. Equality and first-class citizenship is the goal of these efforts. These issues create a common thread connecting all minorities. Discrimination is discrimination. If it exists against one segment of society, it exists against all of us.

Social change does not come quickly or easily, as we have learned. It is our desire to stand shoulder to shoulder with our black brothers and sisters, as well as with other minority groups who are experiencing societal injustice. The National Federation of the Blind was organized and is still based upon love, not upon violence. Nearly all minorities face some form of discrimination. Each and every one of us shoulders the responsibility of creating positive changes. Those of us who are members of a minority group must keep working in order to bring about a brighter and a more positive future. The National Federation of the Blind is determined to accomplish just that.

# PAT MUNSON NEVER GIVES UP

By Pat Munson

Note: For a decade or so during my 35-year teaching career, I taught English to highly-educated foreign students. They had to master listening, speaking, reading and writing in English to continue their education at UC Berkeley.

Since native speakers of English learn by listening, I never considered all the problems with grammar and the use of idioms, and we shall not discuss spelling!

By contrast, nothing is changed in the French language without approval. Once one learns pronunciation, spelling and grammar, one is set for the most part. The same is true for a number of other languages.

Now let us get back to lovely English. When I attended kindergarten, we read Dick and Jane, or perhaps that was not until first grade. The exact grade is not important, for the issue at hand is the spelling of words. I believe I was taught simply to memorize spelling. I'm sorry to report that my brain never mastered that skill.

Now back to the matter at hand ... I shall be attending kindergarten on TV channel five with the Albuquerque Public Schools (APS). I started learning last spring but could not master phonics well enough to graduate to first grade! Being tenacious, I shall make cards and work on those sounds that are consistent. I shall also start my phone book-sized tome of all the words that do not fit the rules! If five-year-old folks can progress, perhaps I can also!

One interesting learning tool for mastering spelling is stretching out one arm and writing the letters in the air; I do this in both Braille and print. Perhaps this helps the brain to retain the word pattern.

Another component on the TV lessons is listening to stories the teacher reads aloud. Sighted learners see the pictures; usually the pictures are described so I get the idea. Some stories are educational, such as the history of Smokey the Bear. Since he was born in New Mexico, the story is important to learners. Another story discussed caterpillars and their transformation into butterflies. I do not remember being so well educated at such an early age.

Other days, the stories were fun. Mr. Lyon guarded the bridge. If one wanted to cross the bridge, one must say please and then thank you. Yet another set of stories discussed pets, farm animals and wild creatures. I found it interesting that the teachers stated that pets usually live in the house and eat special pet food, farm animals reside in a barn, and so on. Wild creatures are completely on their own.

The last set of pets were those one does not have to feed, walk or train. We learned about a pet rock which was painted, had a face and even toenails! My favorite is Mr. Hot Dog! He can be wearing a bun or not!

So, I shall be ready to study as soon as the lessons are on TV channel five at eight in the morning. I shall really do my best with sounds in English, and listening to stories, either fiction or nonfiction.

Young children who do not speak English as their first language learn the way we did and simply repeat what they hear. They are not confused by idioms or grammar, which make no sense and follows no rules. If you are looking for an interesting way to spend an hour, come join the lessons. Perhaps Mr. Hot Dog will make a repeat performance!

# GOOD EATING

## GRANDMA RITA'S HOME-MADE FLOUR TORTILLAS

Submitted by Carlos Sanchez

4 cups flour

2 tsp. baking powder

1 tsp. salt

3 tbsp. shortening or lard

1-1/2 cups warm water, approximately

Mix all dry ingredients. Cut shortening into dry ingredients.

Add water, a little at a time, to make a medium dough (soft but not sticky). Knead until smooth.

Cover dough and let it rest 20 to 25 minutes.

Shape into flattened balls and let rest again for about 10 minutes. Roll out on a lightly-floured board, turning ¼- way between each rolling.

Brown on a hot, ungreased griddle or Comal.

## APPLE CAKE

By Nancy Burns

2 sticks butter, softened

2 cups sugar (I used 1 1/2)

4 eggs

2 cups flour

2 tsp. baking powder

2 tsp. baking soda

2 tsp. cinnamon

6 cups Granny Smith apples, coarsely chopped

1 cup pecans, coarsely chopped

2-3 tsp. green chile powder (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Spray bunt pan with cooking spray.

Combine butter and sugar. Beat until creamy. Add eggs one at a time until blended.

Slowly add flour, baking powder, baking soda, and cinnamon. Mix well.

Slowly add apples and pecans. Mix with spoon, then spoon mixture into pan.

Bake 50-60 minutes until toothpick comes out clean. Let cool completely before removing from pan.

ENJOY

## **PARMESAN TILAPIA (BROILED)**

**By Sarah Villavicencio**

1/4 cup Parmesan cheese, shredded
2 tbsp. butter, softened
1 tbsp. and 1-1/2 tsp. mayonnaise
1 tbsp. fresh lemon juice
1/8 tsp. dried basil
1/8 tsp. ground black pepper
1/8 tsp. onion powder
1/8 tsp. celery salt
1 pound Tilapia fillets

Preheat your oven's broiler. Grease a broiling pan, or line pan with aluminum foil.

In a small bowl, mix together the Parmesan cheese, butter, mayonnaise and lemon juice.
Season with dried basil, pepper, onion powder and celery salt. Mix well and set aside.

Arrange fillets in a single layer on the prepared pan. Broil a few inches from the heat for 2 to 3 minutes. Turn fillets over and broil for a couple more minutes.

Remove the fillets from the oven and spread them with the Parmesan cheese mixture, including the sides. Broil for 2-3 more minutes or until the topping is browned and fish flakes easily with a fork. Be careful not to overcook the fish.

All seasoning is to taste, more or less, however you prefer.

You can add cayenne for a kick. Dried cilantro instead of basil is also good.

Serve with a side of rice and veggies. Enjoy.

## SUMMER OVEN BAR-B-Q DINNER

By Daphne Mitchell

If you reside in congregate housing or an apartment community, chances are you haven’t had access to the common resources such as outdoor cooking spaces this summer. Longer days and near-perfect weather lend themselves essential to the good ole backyard barbecue or cookout. Although you won’t be able to enjoy the fragrance of a life pit, the following recipes are mouthwatering and may help to dampen the forbidden song of the communal grill siren. Here are a few recipes that will harken to the epic Albuquerque and West Mesa cookout last summer, where Ernie Esquibel was crowned the Watermelon Eating Champion.

There is a twist to these recipes: they are all Keto-approved and low-carb. Everyone should try them out! You will notice the majority of ingredients are all foods you possibly have in your pantries, refrigerators, or freezers or are relatively inexpensive and easy to find at any grocery store. Pork baby back ribs, mashed cauliflower and roasted asparagus is one of my favorite summer meals.

### OVEN ROASTED BABY BACK RIBS

1 cryovac package of pork baby back ribs (I usually grab a 3-lb slab)

1 tbsp. granulated onion

1 tbsp. granulated garlic

1 tbsp. dried oregano

2 tbsp. Tony Chachere’s or other Cajun seasoning, divided

1 tsp. ground red or cayenne pepper

1 tsp. chili powder

½ tsp. Pink Himalayan salt or your salt of choice

2 tsp. brown sugar substitute (or traditional brown sugar for a non-low-carb version)

2 cups vegetable or chicken stock

½ cup of apple cider vinegar

Favorite low-carb BBQ sauce, such as G. Hughes

Note: I usually marinate ribs overnight in the refrigerator, and allow the ribs to come to room temperature on the countertop for 20 minutes before placing them in the oven.

Pour all seasonings into a small container (granulated onion through brown sugar substitute--except only use 1 tbsp. of the Cajun seasoning). Mix well with a fork and spoon. Taste the blend, and adjust seasonings to your liking.

Open your baby back ribs and pat them dry with a paper towel. Place the ribs onto a cutting board or other preparation surface.

Pour half of the seasoning blend onto the rack of ribs facing up, and massage the blend into the meat. You want to make sure you cover as much of the meat as possible. Once you have completed this side of the rack, flip it over and repeat the same process on the other side.

Thoroughly wash your hands, and grab some aluminum foil or other material/vessel to place your ribs in for marinating overnight. Remove your rib bundle from the refrigerator about 20 to 30 minutes before you plan to put it into the oven.

Turn on the oven to 300 degrees F to preheat, while you mix the wet solution for the baking process.

In a medium-sized bowl, pour 2 cups of vegetable or chicken stock, ½ cup of apple cider vinegar, and the remaining tbsp. of Cajun seasoning and mix well with a fork or whisk. Set aside.

Unwrap your ribs and place them into an oven-safe pan (I use a 16X13X3 inch roasting pan for this job). Pour all of the liquid into the roaster with your ribs. Lift the rib rack, to make sure the rack is sitting in the wet solution throughout the cooking process. Thoroughly wash your hands, and then cover the roaster pan with a lid or aluminum foil.

Once your oven is preheated, allow the ribs to bake at 300 degrees F for 2.5 to 3 hours. Take the roaster out of the oven at the appointed time, and increase the oven temperature to 400 degrees F.

While the oven is preheating to 400 degrees F, carefully remove the lid/aluminum foil from the roaster and permit the steam to escape. Grab a small bowl, your barbecue sauce, and a utensil to distribute the sauce onto the ribs. Pour as much barbecue sauce as you prefer into the bowl. Use your utensil to distribute or mop the ribs with the sauce.

Once coated with the amount of barbecue sauce you like, place the roaster uncovered into the oven for 30 to 45 minutes. This will caramelize the sauce into a glaze on the ribs. Allow the ribs to stand on the stove top for 5 to 10 minutes prior to cutting into individual portions.

### MASHED CAULIFLOWER

If you’re making the Summer Bar-B-Q Dinner, then welcome to the easier recipes! Most recipes for mashed cauliflower will instruct you to boil or microwave the cauliflower until it is fork tender. However, I am not a fan of the texture of the cauliflower when using either of those methods, nor the process of ringing out the cauliflower after it is cooked. I roast the head of cauliflower in the oven and add half of a parsnip to improve the texture of the mash.

1 medium head of cauliflower, trimmed

½ parsnip, peeled

A spray or two of cooking spray or a small amount of olive oil

2 oz. unsalted butter, softened

2 oz. cream cheese, softened

1 tbsp. minced garlic

Salt and pepper, to taste

A splash of milk, stock, or heavy whipping cream, to thin

If you are making this recipe as a part of the Summer Oven Bar-B-Q Dinner, place the vegetables into the oven as the ribs begin the caramelization step. If you are making this recipe independently, then preheat your oven to 400 degrees F.

Wash the head of cauliflower and scrub the outside of the parsnip clean. Pat both dry and place on a cutting board or other preparation surface.

Pull the outer leaves from around the base of the cauliflower and discard. If desired, you may remove the stump from the bottom of the head of cauliflower with a knife. Peel the outer layer of skin from your parsnip with a potato peeler or knife, and discard.

Lightly coat the head of cauliflower and parsnip with cooking spray or olive oil, and distribute a small amount of salt and pepper onto the vegetables. Place the vegetables on a cookie sheet or other shallow pan and then into the oven for 30 to 45 minutes.

While the vegetables are roasting, take your butter and cream cheese out of the refrigerator to soften. Once the vegetables are fork tender, allow them to cool for 5 minutes.

You will need an emersion (stick blender), traditional blender, or potato masher for the next step. I usually use an emersion blender or the vitamix to make the mash. For this recipe, I will give directions for using an emersion/stick blender.

In a 2-quart saucepan, melt 1 tbsp. of the unsalted butter on medium heat on the cooktop. Coarsely chop the cauliflower and parsnip into large manageable pieces inside of the roasting pan with a knife; add the chopped vegetables to the saucepan once the butter has melted. Use the stick blender to mash the vegetables for approximately 15 seconds. You will need to slightly lift the stick blender and move it around the saucepan to achieve a uniform mash. Always turn the emersion blender on and off inside of your cooking vessel.

Add the remainder of the unsalted butter, cream cheese, and minced garlic to the vegetables. Gently stir with a spoon. When the butter and cream cheese have been incorporated into the mash, return the stick blender to the saucepan and blend again for another 10 to 15 seconds or until it reaches your desired level of thickness. You may add a splash of milk, heavy whipping cream, or stock to achieve your preferred mash consistency.

Get a small saucer, and serve yourself a taste of the mash. Grab a clean spoon and taste. Adjust seasonings as desired. Remember you can add shredded cheese, bacon bits, chives or any other ingredient you would use in traditional mashed potatoes, and make it your own.

### ROASTED ASPARAGUS

1 lb. fresh asparagus

2 tsp. lemon pepper

1 tsp. Pink Himalayan Salt

1 fresh lemon

1 pat butter or 1 tbsp. olive oil

If you’re making the asparagus with the Summer Oven Bar-B-Q Dinner, place them in the oven to roast when the ribs begin the caramelization process. If you’re making the asparagus as a stand-alone dish, then preheat your oven to 400 degrees F.

Divide the bundle of asparagus into 3 even piles. Pick-up the first bundle; make sure to tap the flat ends on the counter, to assure the stems are even. You’re going to remove the tough, woody, fibrous ends of the asparagus. Hold the bundle near the center and apply light pressure to the end of the bundle with the flat ends. Each stem will naturally break, where the fibrous portion ends. Repeat this step for the other two bundles of asparagus. You can discard the ends, or freeze to make homemade vegetable stock at a later time.

Wash the remaining stems of asparagus and your lemon. Pat them dry.

Place all stems in an 8X8 square baking dish. Add the lemon pepper and salt to the dish and use your hands to coat the asparagus with the seasoning.

Grab the lemon and roll it on a clean flat surface, to begin releasing the juice. Once the lemon has softened, cut it in half lengthwise. Hold a half of the lemon, cut-side up, and begin squeezing the lemon juice onto your asparagus in the pan. If you keep the lemon cut-side up, you will lessen the chances of any of the seeds falling into the baking dish.

Add the butter or olive oil to the pan at this time, and place the other half of the lemon in the baking dish. Cover with aluminum foil or a lid. Allow to roast for 30 minutes. Let the asparagus stand for a few minutes and squeeze the other half of the lemon onto the asparagus, if desired.

The yummy Summer Bar-B-Q Dinner is ready to serve!

# MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

August 27-29: NFB of New Mexico State Convention, held virtually via Zoom

September 13, 2:00-3:00 PM: NFB Open House Gathering Call

The National Federation of the Blind invites blind people to learn more about being a member and the benefits. Take advantage of this opportunity to hear from active members and leaders on the myths and uncertainties of the Federation. We will discuss membership, philosophy, and purpose.

February 8, 2021: Washington Seminar and Great Gathering-In