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November 2021

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

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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.)

# 2021 WHITE CANE PROCLAMATION ISSUED BY GOVERNOR MICHELLE LUJAN GRISHAM

STATE OF NEW MEXICO EXECUTIVE OFFICE

SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

WHEREAS, New Mexico enacted the White Cane Law in 1967, becoming the first state in the nation to adopt the model white cane law; and

WHEREAS, The White Cane Law, 28-7-1 NMSA (1978), declares that it is the policy of the State to encourage and enable persons who are blind or visually impaired to participate fully in the social and economic life of the state, and to engage in remunerative employment; and

WHEREAS, The White Cane Law gives persons who are blind or visually impaired the same rights as all citizens to the full and free use of the streets, highways, sidewalks, walkways, public buildings, public facilities and other public places; and

WHEREAS, The White Cane Law gives persons who are blind or visually impaired full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, and privileges of all common carriers, airplanes, motor vehicles, railroad trains, motor buses, streetcars, boats, any other public conveyances or modes of transportation, hotels, lodging places, places of public accommodation, amusement or resort, and any other places to which the general public is invited; and

WHEREAS, The White Cane Law requires that drivers shall take all necessary precautions to avoid injury to pedestrians who are using a white cane or a guide dog; and

WHEREAS, it is important for all New Mexicans to be aware of The White Cane Law; to be aware that persons who are blind or visually impaired use the white cane to travel on public streets, roads, and at places of public accommodation; to be aware that persons with disabilities have much to offer and that their energy, creativity, and hard work greatly strengthens our state and our economy; and to recognize that the white cane is an instrument of safety and independence for persons who are blind or visually impaired

NOW THEREFORE, I, Michelle Lujan Grisham, Governor of the State of New Mexico, do hereby proclaim October 15, 2021 as:

"White Cane Safety Day"

throughout the state of New Mexico.

Attest: Maggie Toulouse Oliver, Secretary of State

Done at the Executive Office this 1st day of September 2021. Witness my hand and the Great Seal of the State of New Mexico.

Michelle Lujan Grisham
Governor OCR in progress. Please wait for additional content.

# NAVAJO RUG FUNDRAISER

By Nathalie Martin

The San Juan Chapter of the National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico is having a fundraiser. Enter the raffle to win a traditional handwoven Navajo rug! It can’t get more authentic than this!!!

The rug measures approximately 22” by 24” and is made of 100% wool. Value estimated at $500!! Tickets are only $5 each! Get yours now to get a chance to win this rug. The raffle will be on December 15, just in time to receive it as a Christmas present.

You can use PayPal to send your money at:

<https://paypal.me/SanJuanChapter?country.x=US&locale.x=en_US>

The name of our account is San Juan Chapter National Federation of the Blind. Please choose the option “Friends and Family” within PayPal to send your money to us.

You can also send checks or money to:

Nathalie Martin

1305 Sycamore St.

Farmington, NM 87401

Make sure to give us your name, address, and phone number so we can reach you to tell you that you’re a winner!

Please contact Nathalie Martin if you have any questions at NFBSanJuanpresident@gmail.com

Here is a picture of the rug. It is a Chinle style geometric design in a bright multicolored zigzag in gold, dark blue, maroon, light pink, bright pink and black.



# EXPLORING THE LAND OF ENCHANTMENT

By Nancy Burns

The long café table seated approximately 15 family members. This was my first introduction to many of Don’s relatives, as we were recently married. The waitress began taking orders, and after each order she would ask “red or green.” As a Californian, I had never heard this question asked while ordering a meal. Fortunately, I was near the end of the table and had observed that the majority of diners had responded green, so I followed the trend. It turns out that green chili continues to be my favorite.

Don and I had met during the convention of the National Federation of the Blind (NFB) held in Dallas, Texas. At that time, I was working as a vocational rehabilitation counselor in Southern California. Don was employed by the Commission for the Blind in Alamogordo. He advised me of an opening for an Independent Living Counselor position through the Commission, for which I quickly applied and was accepted.

After relocating to Alamogordo, I soon became quite comfortable wearing western clothes and boots. Don’s family had told him that I would never stay in New Mexico, as they believed me to be forever a California woman. At the time of this writing, we are celebrating 28 years of marriage and I have lived most of those years in New Mexico. It was easy to adapt to the wonderful and tasty New Mexican food. I am able to handle a little heat, but Don loves his food much hotter.

I also love the Southwest culture, and it is reflected in my home decorating. Interestingly enough, prior to meeting Don, my decorating taste in my Burbank home was highlighted with bright Southwest colors.

We have now lived in Albuquerque for nearly fifteen years. Together we have explored Santa Fe, Taos, the Turquoise Trail, Old Town and many other picturesque and fascinating locations around the state. All of these locations were intriguing, but one of my favorite outings was two awesome days spent in Pecos, located in Northern New Mexico in the Sangre De Cristo Mountains. We shared a rustic cabin with three good friends. Don and I slept in the upper level of the A-frame cabin where I continually forgot, and bumped my head every morning as I stood up. The highlight for Don was a fishing trip to Monastery Lake. All five of us pitched in with food preparation. Don wrapped his fish in foil and cooked it over a barbecue. Fortunately, he had caught five, as no one else experienced much fishing luck. The rest of us provided side dishes, and we enjoyed a wonderful meal along with amicable and fun conversation.

During this same trip, our driver took us further up into the mountains. Aspen trees had been described to me, but obviously, they are much too tall for me to actually touch. Fortunately, there were tiny, baby Aspens, only a foot or two tall, that I could touch. I now know the shape of those delicate Aspen leaves.

Soon after moving to Albuquerque, we purchased a home on the northwest side. One morning, as I stepped into the backyard, I heard the unmistakable sound of a hot air balloon. I yelled to Don, and we both ran out to the front of our house where the pilot was attempting to land. The pilot indicated that he needed to land and could we grab the basket. Don and I, along with several neighbors, helped the pilot to land in the middle of our street. I told the pilot that I had always hoped for such an event, but he said that had not been his intent. It was a fun and unforgettable experience to get up close and personal with a hot air balloon.

Even though Don grew up in New Mexico, he still enjoys exploring it with me. There will more than likely be additional explorations in the Land of Enchantment in our future.

# MEET THE BLIND OF NEW MEXICO WORKING FOR THE PUBLIC

By Pat Munson

The very first fundraiser in a year and a half was a car wash supporting the Albuquerque Chapter. There were about twenty folks washing and drying cars despite the heat. We passed out NFB literature and showed the sighted public that the blind could greatly improve the appearance of their vehicles!

A couple of weeks later the NFB of New Mexico hosted the same fundraiser. It ran as smoothly as the first one and brought in more money in order to forward our work. At this event, some kids were out there assisting with the washing and drying. Great job everyone!

# 2021 SAGE SEMINAR AND BUSINESS MEETING

By Nathalie Martin

The Senior Action Group Energy (SAGE) Division met this past August 25th for their annual Convention Seminar. The seminar was divided into two parts.

In the first section, Veronica Smith, the president of the division, started with welcoming the 33 people in attendance. She then introduced the Board of Directors: Vice-President, Caroline Benavidez; Treasurer, Urja Lansing; Secretary, Nathalie Martin; and Board Member, ShaRon Dandy. Urja Lansing continued by presenting that evening’s topics and the presenters. The theme for the evening was “How to do what we used to do and want to do with vision loss.”

Our first presenter was Peggy Hayes, who came to talk about how to continue reading after blindness. She tells us all about the new HIMS Blaze ET she just got: It is a device that resembles a Victor Stream with OCR reader and can read audiobooks, play music, play the radio, store files, record, identify colors, stand on a table to take pictures to do OCR, but does not read canned goods or prescription bottles.

Our next presenter, Michael Hayes, who is a Certified Mobility Specialist, came to talk to us about orientation and mobility. He gave us tips about how to continue to travel even when blind. He talked about using the Structured Discovery method in order to continue going places.

Caroline Benavidez might have been our last presenter, but she certainly was not the least. Her subject was home and personal management, and she dove into tips and tricks regarding accessible TV viewing at home. She talked about the accessible equipment some companies offer; for example, Xfinity has an accessible remote control with voice input and voice output. She also told us which services have audio description, like Netflix, the Fire Stick, and so on.

The last section of our meeting was focused on the business to be conducted. Nathalie read the minutes from last year’s seminar. Then Urja read the Treasurer’s Report. We then proceeded with the elections. It was announced that everyone wants to stay in their positions except for ShaRon Dandy, who is currently the board member. After conducting the elections, our new board consisted of Veronica as the president, Caroline as the vice-president, Nathalie as the secretary, and Urja for the position of treasurer.

Veronica thanked ShaRon for her years of service on the SAGE board and went on to perform the election for that position. Unlike the previous positions, there were actually two nominations from the floor. Karen Carter and Sue Garnanez were nominated. A vote was made and Sue was elected by acclamation.

At the very end of the seminar, Veronica reminded people that the SAGE Division meets the 2nd Wednesday of every month. Come join us soon!

# WHAT’S HAPPENING WITH SAGE

By Veronica Smith

The Senior Action Group Energy (SAGE) Division and Member at Large group has really been rocking and rolling and grooving over the last few months. In July we had a chit chat meeting where we all talked about what we did the week of the 4th of July. Some of us zoomed into the meeting at the National Federation of the Blind convention while others stayed in and watched the world go by. Some members had cook-outs with family members and still others went on vacation to see family members that they had not seen for over a year.

In August, Sue Garnanez spoke at our monthly SAGE and Member at Large meeting. I know from the questions asked by our members that she kept them interested. I know for a fact that she kept my attention. She has led a very interesting and exciting life.

In September, Art Schreiber was our speaker, another dynamic individual who captured his audience. When I asked him to speak, he laughed and told me he was going to need more than the thirty minutes I usually offer. He told me he was 94 and needed enough time to fit all those years in. After all was said and done, he spoke to us for an hour, and let me tell you, he has a fantastic memory for all those things he has done in his life.

We invited Jessica Bachicha for October and Jeff Blair for our November meeting. Make sure and join us the second Wednesday of each month at 7:00 P.M. MT via Zoom.

If you want to tell your story, contact me and let me know. If you know someone in our organization who wants to present to us, have them contact me. Or if you just want to come and listen, you are always welcome. The Senior Division says it is 55 and older, but our division here in New Mexico has no age limit. If you are under 55, you are welcome to join us each month. If you are over 55, you are welcome to join us each month. We’d love to see you!

# NEW MEXICO STATE CONVENTION 2021

The National Federation of the Blind of New Mexico (NFBNM) held its 2021

state convention via Zoom from August 25-28, 2021. Two evenings before the opening were the Senior Action Group Energy, followed by the NFBNM Board of Directors meeting the next evening.

Friday morning the resolutions committee met, chaired by Sherry Shirek and Urja Lansing. That was followed by the Diversity committee gathering. Their topic was reading labels on cans and the benefits of eating nutritious "whole foods.”

After some lunchtime chat, President Adelmo Vigil gaveled the convention to order. After some announcements, fifth-grader Jessica Johnson recited the Pledge of Allegiance. Then the National Anthem was sung, followed by the NFB Pledge, which was recited by James Miyagishima, Mesilla Valley Chapter.

We then heard from Lieutenant Governor Howie Morales. We thanked him for all his work in improving websites so they are accessible to the blind.

Joe Orozco, Operations Coordinator, NFB of Virginia presented on “Confronting Everyday Monsters and a Few Ways to Beat Them.” He is employed by the FBI, and he told of his duties at this very interesting job.

Tara Chavez, Chairperson of the Pre-Authorized Contribution (PAC) Plan Committee, got the folks to donate almost one-hundred dollars more.

Next was the president's report from Adelmo Vigil, President, NFBNM. He said how pleased he is with the progress we have made this past year. He hopes we can meet for the next convention in March in person.

Terri Rupp, National Representative and President, NFB of Nevada gave the report from our national office. She reminded us how well the NFB national convention ran and how well the Federation is doing.

In “My Blindness, Myself” Jesse Shirek, First Vice President of the West Mesa Chapter, told his story of blindness and how the Federation has helped him live the life he wants. This was followed by the public meeting on the Combined State Plan of the New Mexico Commission for the Blind.

That evening a social gathering was held on Zoom. Jesse and Sherry Shirek, Member and Secretary, West Mesa Chapter invited us into their Zoom home!

Saturday morning got under way with “Amazing Tricks to Get the Most Out of Your Technology for Beginners and Experienced Users” presented by Jesse Shirek, Assistive Technology Supervisor, and Eric Gonzales and Jess Rickards, Assistive Technology Specialists.

“Membership Building and Bonding” was an informal, unstructured gathering that provided a great time to catch up with old friends and acquaintances, and a great time to make new ones. There were productive discussions concerning bringing in more students, parents of blind children, and blind parents of sighted students.

In “From Lights Out to Life is On” Art Schreiber, President Emeritus, told how he awoke blind one morning and how he learned to function as a capable blind person. This was followed by the status report on the New Mexico School for the Blind and Visually Impaired (NMSBVI) from Patricia Beecher, Superintendent.

In “Gender Pronouns: What’s in a Name” Jedi Moerke, President, White Sands Chapter, gave us an update on the modern usage of pronouns in the very confusing English language where rules are rather vague at best. This was followed by the Status Report on the New Mexico Commission for the Blind from Executive Director Greg Trapp.

Keynote speaker Terri Rupp, National Representative and President, NFB of Nevada talked about wearing the correct shoes to tackle the job at hand. She has a lot of energy so is a great addition to the NFB national board and to the rest of us slow pokes!

The business meeting commenced as usual with resolutions, minutes, and the Treasurer’s Report. Elections were held, and the following board members were re-elected to serve for the next two years: Nathalie Martin, Farmington; Urja Lansing, Albuquerque; and Peggy Hayes, Alamogordo.

We hope that by attending our convention, your expectations of yourself were raised, so that blindness is no longer the characteristic that defines you or your future, and that low expectations no longer stand between you and your dreams. We want you to become empowered to live the life you want.

# NEW MEXICO FOLKS ENJOY A BABY SHOWER IN A BACKYARD

By Pat Munson

On Saturday evening, September 18, Sarah Villavicencio and company hosted a shower for Tara and Chris Chavez’s second, still to arrive son. Do not worry, the elder brother, six, was the highlight of the evening! He provided the entertainment with his sticks and rocks while the adults ate dinner. It was exciting for me to see a child playing with real, natural items instead of store-bought toys. He also did not have an iPhone!

After a tasty dinner, folks enjoyed home-made cupcakes. Then Tara opened all the gifts. Baby clothes are so cute these days. I remember when my sisters were babies, all the clothing and blankets were white, and that was it.

The weather cooperated: with a big tree that provided shade until the hot sun set, and a nice breeze, we were all very comfortable. It was nice to see our NFB family having such an enjoyable event. We hope for many more in the future!

# GOOD EATING

## ONE POT CHICKEN

Serves: 5

Submitted by Veronica Smith

Ingredients:

1 large boneless, skinless chicken breast

1 tablespoon butter

1/2 teaspoon crushed red pepper

2 oz cream cheese or 1/4 cup

1 cup heavy cream (we use 1/2 cup, because we don’t like it too rich)

1 cup chicken broth

2 large carrots, peeled and sliced

1 garlic clove, minced

3 or more large handfuls fresh baby spinach

1/4 cup Parmesan cheese

Directions:

Slice the chicken into strips. In a large skillet, cook chicken in 1 tablespoon canola oil on medium to high heat until done, about five minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from pan. Reduce heat and add butter, crushed red pepper, garlic and carrots. Stir constantly until carrots start to soften, about five minutes. Add cream cheese and stir until it melts. Then add the chicken broth and heavy cream. Continue stirring until liquid begins to thicken. Add chicken back into pot and stir until all chicken is covered with sauce. Add in spinach. Sprinkle parmesan over spinach. Cover pan and let spinach wilt.

We always serve this dish over rice, but I’m sure it would be good over anything.

## CHOCOLATE CHIP PUMPKIN COOKIES

Submitted by Nancy Burns

1 cup butter

1 cup white sugar

1 cup brown sugar

2 large eggs

1 teaspoon vanilla

1 cup pumpkin

3 cups flour

2 teaspoons baking soda

1/2 teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1/2 teaspoon ginger

1/4 teaspoon nutmeg

1 teaspoon cloves

2 cups chocolate chips

Preheat oven to350 degrees. Beat butter and sugar until smooth. Add eggs and vanilla. Add pumpkin and continue mixing.

In separate bowl, mix dry ingredients. Add to pumpkin mixture and mix thoroughly. Blend in chocolate chips. Spoon mixture onto cookie sheet and bake 15 to 20 minutes. Leave cookies on cookie sheet 2-3 minutes before placing on rack.

Pour a cup of coffee and enjoy.

# MEETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

December 1, 2021: NFB national scholarship application period opens

December 1, 2021: Braille Readers Are Leaders contest begins

December 2, 2021: Presidential Release, 8:00 p.m. Eastern, CC and Spanish translation available

February 7-10, 2022: Washington Seminar, Washington, DC

March 24-25, 2022: Jacobus tenBroek Disability Law Symposium, Baltimore, MD

July 5-10, 2022: National Convention, New Orleans, LA