

Colorado Center For The Blind Logo



NFB Logo

**FEBRUARY, 2016**

**SENIORS IN CHARGE NEWSLETTER**

**Connecting Blind Seniors Across Colorado**

***LET’S HEAR IT FOR THE SENIORS!!***

As many of you know, we have very active seniors who meet twice weekly at CCB (Colorado Center for the Blind).  Our staff works with them if they want to gain more skills of independence such as using the white cane for independent travel, reading and writing Braille, technology, and Duncan has just started a sewing class.

Today I want to highlight our folks who are learning to use the Apple products.  The favorites are the iPhone and the iPad.  They love being able to send and receive email, get pictures of their grandchildren and other members of the family, but in general staying in the mainstream of technology.  They all learn to use Voice Over so they don’t have to depend on their sometimes undependable sight.  Some also downloaded the KNFB reader and are learning to use it to simplify their lives.

We are so proud that seniors don’t want to be left behind in this rapidly changing world.  Voice Over has made such a huge difference for those of us who are blind. We can gain the same access as everyone else.

That old cliché about “teaching old dogs new tricks” is just wrong.  We’re not old dogs. We are staying in the mainstream and getting access to all the information that is out there.

**So, let’s hear it for the seniors!**

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***BRAND NEW – THE WILD WILD WEST CHAPTER***

Please come join us at our brand new Wild West Chapter of the NFB of Colorado. The next meeting will be held on Saturday, March 5th, at 12:00 noon at the Carmody Recreation Center in Lakewood at 2200 S. Kipling St., Lakewood, CO 80227. During our first meeting we held elections to appoint a chapter President & Vice President. We had a meet and greet while enjoying some food and conversation. We are trying to build a strong chapter where people from the west side of town can go to enjoy time with other federationists and community members as well as members of our Colorado Entrepreneur community. We are hoping this will be a great and long history for the Wild West Chapter. If you have any questions please call Brad Basta at 303-775-7841. Thank you and we hope to see you there!

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***DO YOU LIKE TO WRITE?***

The National Federation of the Blind has a Blind Writer's Division to encourage any and all visually impaired people to take pen or stylus or keyboard “in hand,” and write your story!

2016 is the 36th year for the NFB Blind Writers Division writing contest for youth and adults. It is open for submission now and will close April 1st. There are prizes and the opportunity to get exposure for your writing. The Division has an online magazine, “Slate and Style,” and may print your story for many others to read and enjoy!

The youth contests are for: Short Fiction, Poetry and a new category called Federation History. The contests are divided into 3 grade levels: Elementary, Middle School and High School. This year, the youth contest is for students who use Braille and must be submitted in hand embossed Braille either with a slate and stylus or Braille writer – No Exceptions!

The adult contests submissions are not in Braille, but must be submitted online, and are for those who are 18 years old or older and they must be unpublished original entries. The categories are Fiction, Nonfiction, Poetry or Stories for Youth.

The winners will be announced at the NFB National Convention in Orlando Florida, in July, at the Writers Division business meeting. Please go to the following web site for all the details and guidelines:

<http://writers.nfb.org/contestpage.html>

 Never written before? Or maybe have tried a little? Now is a great chance to go for it! Writing is a wonderful opportunity to express and share your feelings, beliefs and knowledge.

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***THE BLIND CAN TEACH THE BLIND***

Do you enjoy doing crafts? Are you having trouble working on your projects because of vision loss?

The National Federation of the Blind has a Krafter’s Korner Division, which is a group of blind and visually impaired people who teach a wide variety of crafts to others with vision limitations.

The classes are held on the telephone or online! That's right! This reporter took a class in basket weaving and now has a nice basket that we use for incoming mail! Some of the other classes are: beading, knitting, macramé, clay, origami, plastic canvas, sewing, and more.

The group also has Monday Night Chats at 6:30 pm, Mountain Time. You may call: 1-605-781-1000. When prompted, enter 87502 plus the pound sign. Then you will be part of an interactive meeting that discusses all things crafty! You can ask questions, get tips and learn more about the group and how it works. On February 22, you can listen in and get instructions to make an Irish dishcloth. Bring a hook, your favorite yarn and some snacks! On February 29, the topic will be UFOs – Unfinished Fabric Objects, to discuss project status and get advice.

Yes, the call is long distance. If you don't get long distance service on your phone, you will have to pay for the call. The meetings usually last about an hour.

You can get more information by calling the group president, Joyce Kane at 1-203-378-8928, or by email at: blindhands@aol.com.    You can also visit their web site at [www.krafterskorner.org](http://www.krafterskorner.org/)

This is a nonprofit organization. They do ask for a $20 annual membership fee which allows you to take all the classes you want for the whole year! As they say, “Krafters Korner is for everyone and it takes everyone to make Krafters Korner what it is!”

Happy Crafting!!

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***HADLEY’S LOW VISION PROGRAM***

***STILL GOING STRONG!***

The Hadley School for the Blind is still offering a free program on CDs, especially for those with Low vision. They offer lots of helpful tips for:

 Keeping Prescriptions in Order

 Low Vision Cooking

 Simple Kitchen Tasks

 Tactile Marking

 Looking Your Best

 Going Out

 and more!

If you have not yet signed up for this program, all you need to do is call The Hadley School at : 1-855-830-5355, and tell them you'd like to get in on the Low vision Program. They will send the free CDs for you to listen to and keep! Nothing to lose – no cost – and lots of very helpful information to gain!

**Thank you Hadley School for the Blind!**

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***TRASH AND TREASURES***

We are starting a new column in our Seniors in Charge Newsletter! In this column we would like our readers to be able to place “want ads,” either to find and buy something they need or want, or to offer their crafts, products or services for sale to others. For more information about submitting an ad, please **contact Estelle at 303-789-7538**.

Neither The Colorado Center for the Blind nor the National Federation of the Blind are responsible for the accuracy of the ads or the quality of the goods or services. Please use the contact information in each ad for more information. Acceptance of ads are at the discretion of the editor.

To start the ball rolling, we have 2 ads for this issue:

*1. Ambron Products is selling a tactile, Braille and large print coloring book for the blind, visually impaired and sighted to share!* For more information, please go to: [www.ambronproducts.com](http://www.ambronproducts.com/)  or call Estelle at 303-789-7538.

*2. If you have a car or other vehicle that you no longer want or need, you can donate it to the National Federation of the Blind to help support programs for the blind and visually impaired. Please call: 1-855-659-9314 Thank you!*

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***ARE YOU TIRED OF BEING AN IDLING “VEHICLE?”***

***By John Batron***

Do you think you are too old to “cut the mustard?” Are you just sitting around waiting for the end? Maybe you are a blind man or woman who thinks just because you are blind you are useless. Or maybe someone in your family has convinced you of that. Say bull!

I say come to the Colorado Center for the Blind and see seniors from 50 – 90, with their engines running at high speed because they are not ready to stop and sit idle. We go out to lunch, to movie theaters, get involved in community projects, book clubs and much more.

Did I forget mentioning that there might be something you used to do that you don't think you can do now? I bet you still have it, or is it that you are listening to those other voices and not your idling motor that wants to rev up and go!

Come join the **Seniors in Charge** at the **Colorado Center for the Blind**. We need you! You don't need to be blind to be a part of our group. We need you and you need us. Once again you can be a vital part of society!

Join the Federation of the blind! John F. Kennedy once said, Ask not what the Federation can do for you. Ask what you can do for the Federation.

Just remember: You are not getting older, you are just getting better. Your vehicle wants to operate on all cylinders. We need to feed it with positive fuel, not negative stuff that will pollute our environment.

If you disagree with any or all of my comments, please feel free to sound off and send us your comments. I welcome you to do so. It will feel better than sitting idle!

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***JOHN BATRON, SONG WRITER!***

John Batron, a member of the CCB Senior Group, has a talent for writing catchy songs. In the past he came up with a lively theme song for Seniors in Charge, a training program for Seniors that is held regularly at CCB.  It doesn’t take much for John to break into song and,

while he may not win a Grammy, we sure do enjoy his creativity and humor.

Recently, John visited the children at the CCB Confidence Camp (summer program for children aged 7-12) and he was inspired to create a theme song all about Confidence Camp.  John taught the kids the song he had written, and they had a blast learning it and practicing it together.  John later said, “It was the best day of my life!”

On the last day of Confidence Camp, the students put on a talent show where they told jokes and sang songs for the audience, which consisted of their parents, CCB staff, and other students.  As the finale, John joined all of the children at the front and led them in his song celebrating Confidence Camp.  Everyone loved it!  Not only did the song bring joy to those who heard the little voices (and John’s big voice) singing it, but to see two generations enjoying each other in this way was very heart-warming.  Thank you John, for your big heart and also your creativity!

Here are the words to the Confidence Camp song:

Confidence Camp, Confidence Camp,

 We want to go to Confidence Camp,

To get the training and skills we need,

To be a vital part of society,

And we owe it all to the CCB;

So, thanks to Julie and thank you Brent,

For giving us our confidence!

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***SENIOR GROUP PROBLEM SOLVERS***

The Senior Group meets at the Colorado Center for the Blind every Tuesday and Friday morning.  Many of topics come up for discussion and participants share practical advice, tips, and support for managing various issues that arise in our lives as we live with visual impairment.  We wish you could join us in person, but if not, here is a sampling of our recent discussions, which we hope will be of benefit to you.

**Question:**  While walking with my cane, I have been hit in the face by low-hanging branches!

**Answer:**  Some neighbors might not be aware of what a hazard branches that hang low or stick out over the sidewalk can be for a blind person.  You might trying knocking on the door of the house and politely requesting that they trim back the tree or bushes

causing the obstruction.  Being friendly and pleasant will generally bring about a good result.

If this doesn’t take care of the issue, you could carry your own clippers and take care of the problem yourself.  In fact, a few seniors in the group mentioned routinely carrying clippers with them for this very issue.  Not only will you benefit, but so will others traveling the same path—both blind and sighted too. (even sighted people sometimes fail to duck in time!) As a last resort, contact the city government with your concerns.

**Question:** How can I easily remember phone numbers, shopping lists, dates etc, without having to write down the information, or without having someone read the information to me when I need it?

**Answer:**  A mini recorder works great for saving bits and pieces of information such as this.  Walmart and Target sell small, hand held digital recorders. You may find that a simple way to obtain a recorder.

A very good solution however is a “Wilson recorder”, which is generally only available online (try a Google search to find a vendor).  The Wilson recorder has only 3 buttons—record, play/pause and delete.  The Wilson is small and easy to hold in your hand.  It has a clip on the back so you can clip it to a belt or purse and access it quickly when needed.  It also has a USB cable so you can save the information to a computer if you like.  The Wilson uses batteries and costs around $35.00.

**Question:**  I want an easy way to keep track of credit cards, ID cards, discount cards, etc.

**Answer:**  There are lots of ways to manage the many cards we all seem to carry with us nowadays.  Give each card a unique “identifier” in order to keep them all straight.  Try out some of these ideas and decide what works best for you:

-- Wrap a rubber band around a card.

-- Affix a paper clip

—Attach little “post-it” sticky flags

-- Cut a tiny, unwritten on corner off of the card.

-- Put a drop of puffy paint in a place on the card that doesn’t contain

any data.

-- Use tiny sticky dots

-- Braille can be punched onto a plastic card.  For example, add the

braille letters “MC” in a corner of your master card.

-- Or, just use a braille label.

-- Plastic sleeves are available for individual cards.  You can tell by

 touch when a card is enclosed in a sleeve.  Or, put all of your

 cards in sleeves and just mark the sleeve in some way

without harming the card itself.

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***GOOD HUMOR CLUB***

A blind man is sitting on a park bench. A Rabbi sits down next to him. The Rabbi is chomping on a piece of matzo.  Offering to share, he breaks off a piece and gives it to the blind man. Several minutes later, the blind man turns, taps the Rabbi on the shoulder and asks, "Who wrote this?!!"

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The world would be a much cleaner place if blind people used brooms instead of canes.

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Picture of sighted people walking around town and crossing the street with white canes. They can’t look up because they are too busy looking at the smart phones!!

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***LAURA’S QUICK SLOW-COOKER TURKEY CHILI***



Picture of a bowl of Chili

This is an easy chili recipe that you can throw in the slow cooker and forget about all day. Great topped with cheddar cheese, crushed corn chips, and a dollop of sour cream. Add a liner to the slow cooker for easy clean up. Available in grocery stores.

Ingredients

1 tablespoon vegetable oil

1 pound ground turkey

2 (10.75 ounce) cans tomato soup

2 (15 ounce) cans kidney beans, drained

1 (15 ounce) can black beans, drained

1/2 medium onion, chopped

2 tablespoons chili powder

1 teaspoon red pepper flakes

1/2 tablespoon garlic powder

1/2 tablespoon ground cumin

1 pinch ground black pepper

1 pinch ground allspice

salt to taste

Directions

* Heat the oil in a skillet over medium heat. Place turkey in the skillet, and cook until evenly brown; drain.
* Coat the inside of a slow cooker with cooking spray, and mix in turkey, tomato soup, kidney beans, black beans and onion. Season with chili powder, red pepper flakes, garlic powder, cumin, black pepper, allspice and salt.
* Cover, and cook 8 hours on Low or 4 hours on High.

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***WHAT’S COOKING?***

Do you have a favorite recipe, or even a question about a cooking or baking project? We'd like to hear from you. Share your recipes (if you are willing to give them out!) and share your tips & suggestions too. We will try to answer questions you may have, as CCB has great resources to help you solve your problems.

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***RESOURCES FOR SENIORS AND OTHERS***

***WITH ANY VISION IMPAIRMENT***

We plan to use this space to pass along information about helpful resources, and will try to include different resources in each issue:

**The Colorado Center for the Blind**

Address:  2233 W. Shepperd Ave., Littleton, CO 80120

Phone:  303-778-1130

Web site:  [www.cocenter.org](http://www.cocenter.org/)

            The Center provides support groups on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, for discussions, and classes in Braille, cooking, mobility and technology. For more information, please call our Director of Senior Services, Duncan Larsen, at the above number, extension 226.

**Access-A-Ride**

The RTD Access-A-Ride program provides local transportation in the Denver metro area for people with disabilities who cannot access the fixed route bus or light rail.  Please call 303-299-2960 for more information.

**Colorado Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing**

Phone:  303-333-3482

Web Site:  [www.ccdhh.com](http://www.ccdhh.com/)

E-Mail: tedp.ccdhh@state.co.us

            Colorado residents who are deaf, hard of hearing or deaf- blind may qualify to receive free telecommunications equipment and assistive technology. Please call the above number for more information.

**Colorado Gerontological Society**

Phone:  303-333-3482

Web Site:  <https://www.senioranswers.org/>

You may call the above number to learn more about low cost vision, hearing, dental services and Medicare and Medicaid counseling.

**Century Link Exemption from Directory Assistance Charges**

Century Link Corporation Center for Customers with Disabilities

P.O. Box 2670

Omaha, NE 68103

1-866-826-4839

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***NEWSLINE – NEWS FOR EVERYONE!***

If you have enjoyed reading various newspapers and magazines, but find that more difficult to do with vision loss, try Newsline! It is a program from the National Federation of the Blind that you can call into and have many newspapers and magazines read to you over the phone! This is a free service from NFB and will definitely help to keep you informed! You can call: 1-410-659-9314, to get all the information you need about receiving this service. Many people listen to their news using Newsline and can select from local newspapers and those from many other cities, as well as a large variety of magazines!

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***A BRAILLE CHOCOLATE BAR – ANYONE?***

Yes, we still hold drawings for Braille chocolate bars, with each newsletter issue,  which includes names of anyone who calls, writes or emails us about the newsletter with comments, suggestions, articles, or even criticism! We also plan on adding an additional prize of some useful items for people with vision loss! We do want to know if anyone out there is reading, enjoying or even benefitting from this newsletter - That has been our intention!

Our currents winner is:  **Judy Hollyhead**

Congratulations!!

**\*\*For questions about senior services, please contact:**

**Duncan Larsen, Director of Senior Services**

**dlarsen@cocenter.org**

**(303) 778-1130 X226**

**2233 W Shepperd Ave**

**Littleton CO 80120**