## CONVENTION NOTES:

**Note 1:** A Federation information desk is in the registration area from Friday morning through Tuesday in case you have questions or need assistance.

**Note 2:** Rosen Shingle Creek room rates are: singles and doubles, $83; triples and quads, $89. In addition to the room rates, there is a 13.5 percent tax. There is no charge for children under seventeen in the room with parents as long as no extra bed is required. Proof of convention registration is necessary, including the showing of an NFB registration badge, if requested. Otherwise, regular hotel rates must be paid. This is a non-smoking hotel; smoking is permitted only in specified areas outside.

**Note 3:** Guide Dog Relief Areas:

There are two guide dog relief areas at the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel. The one closest to the sleeping room section is located outside lower lobby level at the rear side of the hotel, toward the outdoor function space and pool area. The one closest to the meeting room section is located in the Panzacola-Sebastian wing on level one. Go past the Sebastian Ballrooms K and L (Exhibit Hall and Independence Market), exit through the doors across the end of the wing that lead to the event parking lot, and turn left.

**Note 4:** All requests for announcements by President Riccobono during General Sessions must be submitted in Braille*.*

**Note 5:** Raffle tickets will not be sold in the registration area, and no raffles or other such drawings will take place during convention sessions or at the banquet. The single exception will be that national divisions may (if they request it in advance) conduct drawings during the sessions or at the banquet. Groups or affiliates wishing to conduct their drawings (or any person wishing to know the winners) may go at noon on Tuesday to Wekiwa 5, Level 2.

**Note 6:** Child care for children between the ages of six weeks and twelve years is available during convention sessions, most meetings, and the banquet. Preregistration and payment by June 15 are required for child care. Child care is organized and supervised by Carla McQuillan, the executive director of Main Street Montessori Association. Duncan McQuillan serves as the activities and staff coordinator. Please note that child-care services provides morning and afternoon snacks, but parents are required to provide lunch for their child(ren) every day. Times listed are the opening and closing times. A late fee of $10 per quarter-hour per child will be assessed for late pickups. Child-care services hours are:

Thursday, June 30 8:30 am to 12:30 pm and 1:30 to 5:30 pm

Friday, July 1 Closed

Saturday, July 2 8:30 am to noon and 12:45 to 5:30 pm

Sunday, July 3 9:00 am to 12:30 pm and 1:30 to 5:30 pm

Monday, July 4 8:30 am to 12:30 pm and 1:30 to 5:30 pm

Tuesday, July 5 8:30 am to 12:30 pm and 1:30 to 5:30 pm *and*

Banquet, July 5 6:30 pm to 30 minutes after the banquet ends

**Note 7:** Divisions, Committees, and Groups: The Federation carries on its business through the affiliated divisions, committees, and groups listed below:

### DIVISIONS:

Amateur Radio, NFB: *Rachel Olivero (AD9O), President*

Assistive Technology Trainers: *Nancy Coffman, President*

Communities of Faith, National Association of the Blind in: *Tom Anderson,  
President*

Computer Science, NFB in: *Curtis Chong, President*

Community Service, NFB*: Darian Smith, President*

Deaf-Blind: *Alice Eaddy, President*

Diabetes Action Network for the Blind: *Michael Freeman, President*

Human Services: *Merry Schoch*, *President*

Educators, National Organization of Blind: *Cayte Mendez, President*

Guide Dog Users, National Association of: *Marion Gwizdala, President*

Krafters, NFB: *Joyce Kane, President*

Lawyers, National Association of Blind: *Scott LaBarre, President*

Merchants, National Association of Blind: *Nicky Gacos, President*

National Association to Promote the Use of Braille: *Steve Booth, President*

Office Professionals, National Association of Blind: *Lisa Hall, President*

Parents of Blind Children, National Organization of: *Kim Cunningham, President*

Performing Arts: *Julie McGinnity, President*

Professionals in Blindness Education, National Organization of: *Eric Guillory, President*

Public Employees: *Ivan Weich, President*

Rehabilitation Professionals, National Association of Blind: *Melody Roane, President*

Science and Engineering: *John Miller, President*

Seniors, NFB: *Ruth Sager, President*

Sports and Recreation: *Lisamaria Martinez, President*

Students, National Association of Blind: *Sean Whalen, President*

United Blind Industrial Workers of America: *Sandy Halverson, President*

Writers: *Eve Sanchez, President*

Veterans, National Association of Blind: *Dwight Sayer, President*

### COMMITTEES:

Ambassadors: *Dan Burke, Chairperson*

Automobile and Pedestrian Safety: *Maurice Peret, Chairperson*

Autonomous Vehicles and Innovations in Transportation: *Sachin Pavithran, Chairperson*

Blind Educator of the Year Award: *Edward Bell, Chairperson*

Blind Federal Employees: *Ronza Othman, Chairperson*

Cash and Caring: *Ramona Walhof, Chairperson*

Communications: *Corbb O'Connor, Chairperson*

Distinguished Educator of Blind Children Award: *Carla McQuillan, Chairperson*

Employment: *Dick Davis, Chairperson*

Empower Underserved Populations: *Ron Brown, Chairperson*

Genetic Education*: Ronit Ovadia Mazzoni, Chairperson*

Imagination Fund: *Everette Bacon*, *Chairperson*

Jacobus tenBroek Award: *Marc Maurer, Chairperson*

Jacobus tenBroek Memorial Fund: *James Brown, Chairperson*

Kenneth Jernigan Fund: *Allen Harris, Chairperson*

Library Services: *David Hyde and Marci Carpenter, Co-Chairpersons*

Membership: *Jeannie Massay, Chairperson*

Newel Perry Award: *Allen Harris, Chairperson*

PAC Plan: *Scott LaBarre, Chairperson*

Promotion, Evaluation, and Advancement of Technology: *Mark Jones,*

*Chairperson*

Public Relations: *Chris Danielsen, Chairperson*

Research and Development: *Rachel Olivero and Chancey Fleet,   
Co-Chairpersons*

Resolutions: *Sharon Maneki, Chairperson*

Scholarship: *Patti Gregory-Chang, Chairperson*

Shares Unlimited in NFB (SUN): *Sandy Halverson, Chairperson*

Spanish Translation: *Conchita Hernandez, Chairperson*

White Cane and Affiliate Finance: *Alpidio Rolón, Chairperson*

### GROUPS:

Blind Cancer Survivors Support: *Isaiah Nelson, Chairperson*

Blind Musicians: *Linda Mentink, Chairperson*

Blind Parents: *Deborah Kent Stein, Chairperson*

Blind Professional Journalists: *Elizabeth Campbell and Bryan Bashin,*

*Co-Chairpersons*

Careers in Automotive Related Specialties: *Marcus Simmons, Chairperson*

Legislative Initiatives: *Don Burns, Chairperson*

Living History: *Michael Freholm, Chairperson*

NFB in Judaism: *David Stayer, Chairperson*

NFB Lions: *Ramona Walhof and Milton Ota, Co-Chairpersons*

Orientation and Mobility: *Edward Bell*, *Chairperson*

Piano Technology: *Don Mitchell, Chairperson*

Travel and Tourism: *Amy Baron, President*

Webmasters: *Gary Wunder, Chairperson*

## NAVIGATING THE HOTEL

(Adapted from an article by Mary Ellen Jernigan in the May 2011 *Braille* *Monitor*)

In recent years I have written a description of the layout of the convention hotel. Although I have tried, I haven’t been able to come up with an image as memorable as “a high top tennis shoe lying on its side” to picture the footprint of the hotel. Nor can I speak easily in terms of north, south, east, and west, because if you were to walk in the front door with compass in hand (which I did), you would find that you were heading not south, not east, or even southeast, but a little east of southeast—120 degrees to be exact.

The first thing to understand about the hotel is that the meeting rooms are located in an area that is totally separate from the part of the hotel that contains the sleeping rooms. The sleeping room elevators do not go to the meeting room levels. This means that the starting place to find any meeting room is always the main lobby.

When you have come in the front door, the hotel registration desk is located to your left along the same wall as the front door. Directly across from the front door toward the far side of the lobby you will find the Birdcage. The Birdcage is a tall, free-standing structure about three feet across filled with colorful, chirping, tropical birds, and is used by hotel staff and guests alike as a major landmark and meeting place. Just beyond the Birdcage is a balcony railing overlooking the level below. Since the odd compass orientation of the hotel makes speaking of facing, turning, or walking north, south, east, or west not particularly meaningful, I will use the following terms in describing the lobby: front door side of the lobby, balcony side of the lobby, facing the balcony, facing the front door, and standing at the Birdcage.

There are two sets of elevators in the main lobby. One set serves the lobby level, the lower lobby level, and floors 1 through 10. These elevators are located inside of a short, free-standing elevator corridor, which is perpendicular to and directly across from the hotel check-in desk. The corridor has an opening at both ends—one end opening toward the hotel check-in desk, and the other end opening toward the balcony side of the lobby. If you turn right as you exit the elevator corridor at the balcony end of the corridor, you will be heading directly toward the Birdcage.

The second set of elevators serves the lobby level, the lower lobby level, and floors 10 through 14. To find this set of elevators from the front door, cross the lobby to the Birdcage (at this point you will be facing the balcony rail overlooking the lower level) and turn right, walking until you dead end at a display case outside of the entrance to the Cala Bella restaurant. The elevators are now immediately on your right.

The numbering system for the sleeping rooms is based on the floor and the wing in which the room is located, with the floor number given first followed by the wing designation and then the room number. On each sleeping room floor as you leave the elevator area there is a tactile placard on the wall giving a diagram of the wing layout. The letters and numbers can be read tactilely.

If you are standing at the Birdcage facing the balcony rail, the staircase leading down to the lower level will be to your right along the balcony rail. Farther to your right is the fine dining Italian bistro Cala Bella. If you are facing the balcony rail and turn left at the Birdcage you will be walking along the balcony side of the lobby. You would pass the opening into the 1 to 10 elevator corridor on your left, and then continuing on you would find the concierge on your right. Immediately beyond the concierge’s desk is a small single elevator which serves only the lobby level, the lower lobby level, and sleeping rooms located on the third floor. Just beyond this elevator are the entrances into the spa and fitness center. In this corner of the lobby you will also find men’s and women’s restrooms and a staircase leading to the third floor sleeping rooms.

Located on the lower level of the lobby is the large Café Osceola, which is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner, offering both buffets and á la carte menu options. Also on this level is the 18 Monroe Street Market. This market is open 24 hours a day and is a combination of convenience store and quick-service restaurant. The restaurant part of the operation opens at 6:30 am and continues well into the evening, offering hot and cold deli-style sandwiches, salads, pizza, hot entrées and desserts either for dine-in or take-out to your room or the outside eating area near the pools. This is a large area containing tables and chairs.

The hotel swimming pools and hot tubs, outdoor function space, and recreation areas, and the Cat-Tails Pool Bar & Grille are all accessed from the lower lobby level. All of this outdoor space is located on the rear side.

Outside on the front entrance side at the lobby level is a stand-alone facility housing a restaurant called A Land Remembered, open for dinner only. As you leave the hotel, a long covered walkway to the right of the front entrance leads to A Land Remembered.

## MEETING SPACE

The meeting space is connected to the main lobby and sleeping room section by a wide passageway accessed only from the lobby level. Standing at the Birdcage facing the front door side of the hotel, walking forward across the lobby, and making a left turn just before going out the front door places you at the entrance to the passageway connecting the lobby and meeting space. Or if you are coming into the hotel through the front door, making a right turn immediately after passing the bell stand will place you at the entrance to this passageway.

Along both sides of the passageway are restaurants and shops. Walking toward the meeting space, the first thing on your left will be Smoooth Java, a full-service coffee bar featuring Starbucks coffees; followed by Headwaters Lounge, which serves appetizers, salads, and sandwiches, as well as beverages; and finally the Banrai Sushi restaurant. The right side of the passageway as you walk toward the meeting space has a guest services counter where you can obtain tickets and transportation to various local attractions or arrange for an Enterprise rental car, followed by a number of retail shops, as well as the Tobias Flats & Watering Hole, serving soups, salads, grilled flatbread sandwiches, and desserts. New since our last visit is Mi Casa Tequila Taqueria, serving guacamole prepared tableside, a variety of Mexican dishes, and specialty margaritas.

After passing by the retail shops and eateries, you come to a large rotunda, which serves as the entryway to the hotel’s meeting space sometimes referred to as the “Convention Center.” Continuing straight ahead, crossing the Rotunda to the far side, you will find a wide, short flight of steps leading up to Level 2 of the meeting space. At the base of the steps to the right and the left are escalators and staircases leading down to Level 1 of the meeting space. The escalator and staircase on your right take you to the Panzacola-Sebastian wing of the meeting space on Level 1. All of our meetings and activities on Level 1 are in the Panzacola-Sebastian wing. The escalator and staircase on your left lead to the Gatlin wing of the Level 1 meeting space. A small escalator located to the right of the steps also leads up to Level 2 of the meeting space.

None of our meetings or activities takes place in the Gatlin wing. Should you go down that escalator or staircase on your left, you cannot get to our meeting space in the Panzacola-Sebastian wing except by coming back up to the Rotunda and taking the other escalator or staircase leading to the Panzacola-Sebastian wing.

With respect to the escalator and staircase, the staircase is located between the up escalator and the down escalator. A small elevator also serves the meeting space in the Panzacola-Sebastian wing on Level 1, the Rotunda, and the meeting space on Level 2. Please note that there is also a small elevator that goes from Level 2 to the Rotunda and to the Gatlin wing on Level 1. This means that should you happen to take the Gatlin wing elevator from Level 2, you would need to get off at the Rotunda. Remember, if you end up in the Gatlin wing (either by taking the wrong elevator, the wrong staircase, or the wrong escalator), you need to return to the Rotunda to get to the Panzacola-Sebastian wing. Level 2 of the meeting space is also served by two short escalators going only between the Rotunda and Level 2—the down escalator being found near the small elevator serving the Panzacola-Sebastian wing, and the up escalator being found near the small elevator serving the Gatlin wing.

If you continue straight ahead after you reach the top of the short flight of steps leading to Level 2, you enter a corridor containing the ten Wekiwa meeting rooms. These rooms are along both sides of the corridor with 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 on the right, and 10, 9, 8, 7, and 6 on the left.

If at the top of the steps you were to turn left and continue walking until you cannot go farther and then turn right, you enter a corridor containing the eleven Suwannee meeting rooms. These rooms are along both sides of the corridor with 11, 12, 13, 14, and 15 on the right side, and 21, 20, 19, 18, 17, and 16 on the left. There are restrooms just ahead of you before you make the right turn into the Suwannee meeting room corridor.

Also located on Level 2 are the St. John’s meeting rooms, but we do not use the St. John’s rooms for any of our meetings.

The General Sessions, the Board meeting, the Banquet, the Exhibit Hall and Independence Market, Registration and Preregistration, Resolutions Committee meeting, and a number of our other activities and meetings are located on Level 1 in the Panzacola-Sebastian wing. The Panzacola-Sebastian wing contains the Panzacola Ballroom and the Sebastian Ballroom—both of which divide up into many smaller meeting room sections. The names of the sections of the Panzacola Ballroom begin with F, G, or H. The sections of the Sebastian Ballroom begin with I, J, K, or L.

As you enter the Panzacola-Sebastian wing from the escalator, staircase, or small elevator you are entering an L-shaped passageway. As you continue walking straight ahead, you are walking along the short arm of the ‘L.’ The Panzacola meeting rooms F-4, F-3, F-2, and F-1 (in that order) will be on your left. There will be no rooms on your right. This short arm of the ‘L’ is about 200 feet long and ends at the Panzacola registration counter. (We are not using the Panzacola registration counter, but it is a good landmark to use to find the intersection of the long and short arms of the ‘L.’) Turning left at the Panzacola registration counter, you enter the very long (about 500 feet) arm of the ‘L.’ Along the left side of the long arm of the ‘L’ passageway (also known as the Panzacola-Sebastian Pre-function area) will be entryways (in this order) to the Panzacola G and H rooms and the Sebastian I, J, K, and L rooms. Along the right side of the passageway are glass doors and windows to the outside of the hotel, restrooms, and the Sebastian registration counter. Preregistration on Friday, July 1, will be at the Sebastian registration counter. Registration on Friday, July 1, for those who have not preregistered, will be farther down the ‘L,’ beyond the Sebastian registration counter. Later in the week, all registration will be at the Sebastian registration counter. During much of the convention, the hotel plans to offer buffet-type fast food service (quick breakfasts, beverages, soups, sandwiches, salads, chips, and perhaps some hot entrées) in the Panzacola-Sebastian Pre-function area.

General Sessions will be held in Sebastian I and J. The Exhibit Hall will be in Sebastian K and L, which is the last section of the Sebastian Ballroom at the very far end of the 500-foot passageway. Doors across the far end of the passageway lead outside to the event parking lot. Exiting these doors and turning right will lead to another dog relief area.

As I bring this article to a close, I offer one final navigation tip. If after studying this material you remember only one thing—it should be this: To go to any meeting of any kind from inside the hotel you must get yourself to the Rotunda.

See you at the Rotunda!

Thank You.

## The National Federation of the Blind acknowledges with gratitude our convention sponsors listed below. Their messages follow.

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