September 2023 minutes of the Chapter meeting

The National Federation of the Blind of the of California

San Fernando Valley Chapter

Date: September 16, 2023

The meeting was called to order at 10:08 am. We began with The Pledge of Allegiance, the NFB

Pledge and the 1 minute message..

Question of the day: Are you planning to buy an Apple device? If so, which one?

Attendance:

Julian Vargas, Jane Suh, Robert Stigile-, President, Joy Stigile,

Robin Smith, Jo Anne Seaman, Candace Luther, Lindsay Kerr, Tiffany Johnson, Ron Hilliard - Member-AT-Large,

Bill Grosjean, David & Valerie Delawder, Racquel Decipeda, Jaymee Castillo, Keith Cabala, Sheila Biglang-awa-Secretary, John Albarran,

Julie Skujins, Jose Lomeli, Shelby Felter, Lynne Nishihara, Juanita Herrera and Scott Williams

Total attendees: 24

Members: 23 and 1 guest.

announcements:

Jo Anne asked since its Tom's birthday on the 30th, she was thinking to have a little celebration.

robert announced that starting next month October will be our membership dues for the year 2024. You can send your $10 dues by Zelle at nfbevents@gmail.com or through PayPal. He'll send the info in the Chapter list serve. Cash is not preferred but if that's the only way for you to pay your dues, Robert will accept it.

Then at noon today, Robert mentioned if you are ' guide dog user, there is a NAGDU - National Association of Guide Dog Users Yappy hour.

Next, on October 7th the National Deaf Blind Division will be having a meeting from 5 pm to 8 pm Pacific time.

In behalf of Hearts For Sight, Racquel announced the following: October 15th hike in Topanga Canyon. There will be a video coverage from the State because one of their grants called Parks California had chosen Hearts For Sight, so they can feature and let the rest of the State of California know about all their programs. Bus will be provided so if you're interested please reach out to them. Next program is a surfing event in Huntington Beach on October 21st. It will be limited and can only sponsor a few people between 20 and 25. In November will be the Malibu Creek hike. Then for the Monster Bash, they will be changing plans this year. They might have a movie night instead. One of the reason why they're changing it this year is because there is another group doing a Halloween party that same day. So Joseph Burton decided not to copy with the Diamond Club group.

Julian's tech corner: Julian will entertain questions and inquiries after the meeting and will be happy to answer them. So hold on your questions till after the presentation so we could avoid interruption. To begin, he mentioned that he that opportunity last Saturday to appear on a national technology show called The Richmond Tech Show. Locally it’s here on KFI AM 640 and 200 stations around the world, in streams and in different Podcast. Rich Demiro is a local tech reporter from KTLA news on channel 5 in the mornings. It’s the first time that he'd had a segment like that with a blind person to talk about specifically about technology that very helpful to us. Its available on podcast and its show 36. You can go to his website at richontech@tv or you can use your favorite podcast player. Julian uses Overcast and also posted the link on Facebook where it will take directly to the segment where Julian appeared. The important thing is Rich likes to take feedbacks. Give feedback and let him know that you appreciate him in giving airtime to this kind of discussion. Moving on to the next topic, Apple has the big announcement called the Wonderlest event. The Apple watch gets a refresh and now have the Apple watch 9 the Ultra 2. Apple also introduce the iPhone 15, 15 plus, 15 pro and 15 ProMax. The 15 and the 15 pro are 641 inch screens. The 15 plus and the Promax are 6.7 inch screens. It has a 128 gig, 256 gig, 512 gig and 1 terabyte. With Promax, they started with 256 and 512 and the higher end would be 1 terabyte. The IOS17 is coming out next Monday on the 18th. Go to applevis.com and read all about it. Julian will talk about this more on his Breaking Blindness Barriers on October 7th. For the new people and if you are still not a member the group, send Julian an email at help at techjv.com. If you are unable to attend the meeting, it is also available on podcast called Breaking Blindness Barriers podcast.

then his next item is the news about the CA Department of Motor Vehicles has made the digital ID available now to everybody. Basically you download their DMV1 app. Sign in to it or if you don't have a DMV account, you have to create 1. Then scan your ID and answer questions to verify yourself. You'll end up having that digital ID that lives in that wallet app. It does not replace your physical card so don't throw it away. At the moment, the digital ID card has only been accepted at a few airports and LAX is 1 of them. With the TSA at the airport ready to check in, you should have the wallet app ready to show. You're able to send them from your App to their reading device and will scan you in. Next item, the be my AI that Julian had spoken before and he got accepted as a beta tester. This will be a game changer for us. The things that he liked about it are for example, the description that gives the photo and you submit to it is absolutely stunning. The neat thing about is that you can ask a follow up question. But for the time being, the Open AI is not allowed to process faces. When you send a photo, it’s going to try to blur out that information. It will send a message saying “it can process that right now.” This is something that is being worked on and there’s an avid discussion on apllevis.

Secretary’s Report

Juanita read the minutes and had a comment about Betsy seconded when Keith made a motion to move our Chapter meeting to the 16th of September. Then Juanita had noticed that Betsy was not a member until she was voted in at the end. Robert agreed that Betsy should’ve not done that but since its passed so we’ll just let it go. But Robert will make a not of it in the future.

Tiffanny made a motion to approve the August minutes, seconded by Joy and the motion carries.

Treasurer’s Report

Nancy sent out the Treasurer’s Report last night.

Lynne clarified the $1 was a test, like PayPal does.

Fundraising Committee

A recap from last month’s fundraiser with Panda Express. We would like to thank the members who participated and purchased through our online fundraiser and those were Racquel, David and Valerie, Mia Rose for Jo Anne and Nancy Albarran.

With the online purchases, we made an amount of $242 not including tax or tips. The 33% that will begiven to our Chapter amounted to $67.76. A check will be sent out to Robert.

Besides the system’s issue, we could’ve done better if we had more time to implement and promote it ahead of time. So for more support and participants, we could make it better next time or next year.

So, jumping on to our next fundraiser event for this month, Joy had sent out the information in our list serve ,

we are going to burrito our way and guacon our event with Chipotle! It will be tomorrow September 17 between 4 and 8 pm.

We were approved for having at least 35 invitees and/or hit the minimum target of $150 in sales. A 33% from the total sales will be donated to our Chapter. So please come and join and also invite people. We need all of your support.

For the upcoming month for the rest of the year, Joy had lined up a few fundraising events. So stay tuned!

Jaymee had added and mentioned to those who has Facebook accounts or even Instagram to please share the link that she posts. She has been sharing all these fundraising together with instructions and information’s on our Facebook page. What she would like everyone to do is to share the link and invite people.

Holiday Party

Robert asked volunteers to join the committee for our Holiday Party. Tiffany mentioned that she had been calling places. Candace will be helping her with it.

 Lynne will give the information about a restaurant called Magnolia Grill and Charlie & Friends which is located in Burbank. Robert pointed out that when looking for places, we need to ask and check if we have enough space for 30 to 40 people.

State Convention

It will be on March 14th to the 17th. It will be at Rancho Cordova, Marriott Hotel. More details will bend out soon.

In the meantime, our Affiliate Board with the constitution that states that we have to have election for 4 Board members in the odd numbered years. There will be a mini-convention for 3 hours on November 4th from 4 pm to 7pm Pacific time. It will be on Zoom. There will be a nominating committee. we have 4 board members that are up for election. And they are Michael Richardson from Losa Angeles, Sheryll Herston from Los Angeles, Karen Steele from Shasta and Veronica Martinez from Bakersfield. Stay tuned for more information.

Robert mentioned that one of the highlights from the Presidential Release is about Legos and is now called Lego Bricks. These Legos now have Braille on it.

The other thing that Robert would like to mentioned is and that some of you might have received it and he wanted to explain about it. there is a membership program that the National Office has been incorporating . So, many of you who are current members, you may have received an email from our National Office saying that if you click on a link and you can go put a password in it and you can see your membership eligibility. And whether or not you’re signed up for the Braille monitor and etc. Things are going forward, you can have your own membership eligibility.

He had received an e-mail as Chapter President, he went in and looked at everybody’s membership eligibility. To the point of last weekend, everyone who has been a member of our Chapter, their status has been expired. The reason for that is because, since every year we have membership dues for January 1st through December 31st as the membership year for the National organization, and on January 1st, if Robert didn’t go in and since they don’t know if our Chapter members are paying their dues. They don’t have access to that. So what had Happened is that Robert didn’t realize that he has to go in every year and have to go in and stay on our Chapter membership portal. He has to change on January 1st and update the membership to see for those who have paid dues from expired to current. Since he had not changed or updated. It, everyone had been expired. So Robert had a big job for the next few months to do it on the membership portal.

 Lastly, Robert introduced our speaker guest named Shub, CEO of Celeste. They are making smart glasses for people’s visual loss. The way how the glasses work is that they have a camera, mike and speaker in the middle of the glasses. The glasses is connected to a cellphone app. People can take photos and read text, detect objects and describe their environment. There are 2 buttons on the glasses to turn it on or off or control the AI. As they speak with people, they are trying to develop this smart glasses. If you are interested getting it, you can go to their website at seleste.io.

 It will be a $100. It will take a couple of months to have the glasses. They’re still working on the product and still improving on it. They update the glasses 2X times a week. The session was opened for more discussion. Lynne, Julian, Robert, Keith, Candace Jo Anne, Jane, Scott, David and Shelby

Joy made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Ron. The meeting was adjourned at 12:05 pm.

Respectfully submitted by

 Sheila Marie B.C.

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Chapter Secretary.