May 2024 minutes of the meeting

The National Federation of the Blind of California

San Fernando Valley Chapter

Date: May 11, 2024

The meeting was called to order at 10:12 am. We started with the Pledge of Allegiance, the NFB Pledge and the 1 minute message.

Question of the day: If you’re able to afford a robot guide dog or a robot cane, which one would you use?

Attendance:

Julian Vargas, Robert Stigile-President, Joy Stigile, Robin Smith, Julie Skujins, Jo Anne Seaman, Donna Roysner, Lynne Nishihara, Lilia Mares, Candace Luther-Vice President, Lindsay Kerr-Treasurer, Tiffany Johnson, Ron Hilliard - Member-AT-Large, Bill Grosjean, David and Valerie Delawder, Racquel Decipeda, Sheila Castro-Secretary, Jaymee Castillo, Keith Caballa, Linda Crawford-guest, John Albarran, Anita Arakawa, Anthony Melena, Jane Suh, Shelby Felter,, Juanita Grinnell & Terry Almy.

Total: 29. 1 guest and 28 members.

Announcements:

* John proudly announced that he and Nancy Albarran are expecting a baby girl! Nancy is 4 months pregnant and is due on October 23rd. Everyone was excited by the news and congratulated the couple.
* Racquel, co-founder of Hearts for Sight, shared the following announcements:
  + Wilderness Wonders Trekking through Chino Hills and Carbon Canyon Park will be held on Sunday, May 19, 2024, at 4500 Carbon Canyon Road, Brey, CA 92823. A bus will be provided by HFS, with pick-up at 8:30 am from Chino Hills and departure at 2:30 pm. Participants are advised to wear water shoes as there will be small stream crossings. RSVP details will be provided in the listserv.
  + HFS is offering Mental Health Services, including a Transformative Psycho-educational Group tailored to support friends and families of individuals who are blind or visually impaired, starting on May 28th. They are seeking 15 participants, and the cost is $160 for 8 sessions via Zoom, each focusing on a different topic.
  + HFS continues to offer Yoga classes every Thursday at 8:30 am. In June, there will be a visit to the Los Angeles Garden in Arcadia, along with a bike ride. Details will follow soon.
* Keith will be writing a book called "Perfect Family," discussing what a family should and shouldn't be. He aims to make a statement with his writing and asserts himself as the toughest legally blind adult in America.
* Tiffany announced that she will host a practice session for her speech, which she will deliver at the scholarship ceremony on May 19th. The practice will be held on May 17th at 6 pm via Zoom. Interested individuals can request the Zoom link. The scholarship ceremony, taking place from 12 noon to 4 pm, will also be held via Zoom. Tiffany can send you the Zoom link if you would like to join.
  + Tiffany's second announcement is about the creation of a foundation in honor of Les Sebatnik. Together with the Independent Program from Way Finder Family Services, they will host a Barbecue Fundraiser on July 27th at Eucalyptus Park in Los Angeles. Those interested should reach out to Tiffany for further details.
* Robert reminded everyone that the June Chapter meeting will be on June 1st instead of June 8th due to an Open House event at the Guide Dog School from 10 am to 2 pm. The event will include a silent auction, food, puppy trials, and promises to be a fun day for all. The address is 13479 Glenoaks Blvd, cross street Roxford, in Sylmar.

\* His next announcement is a request for anyone, male or female, seeking a roommate for the National Convention in July, to please inform Robert.

* Robert also mentioned the Waymo event on May 23rd. Waymo is a company developing fully autonomous self-driving vehicles. The meet-up will be at 3 pm at the YMCA Santa Monica at 1332 6th Street. There are already 35 sign-ups. Robert explained the origin of this support, citing his role as the 2nd Vice President of the NFB of California and signed an open letter to support this event. He was recently featured in TV interview on FOX11 in support of Waymo. Attendees will have the opportunity to ride in the vehicles, and food and drinks will be provided. Access rides should be planned accordingly, and the event will last about 2 hours

\* Next, Robert reminded everyone about the availability of grants for the convention. Please send him an email no later than May 31st indicating that you are applying for grants. In your email, include your flight and hotel confirmation details, along with your convention registration and banquet. Once you receive your grant, you are required to attend the National Board meeting, all general sessions, and the banquet attendance are a must. .

\* Julian's Tech Corner updates are as follows: Apple has made several announcements. They will be refreshing the iPhone SE and releasing new models of iPad, iPad Pro, and iPad Air. The iPad Pro will feature a faster processor. For more information on these updates, visit www.applevis.com. Regarding Zono speakers, Julian advises against updating them as it may disrupt accessibility features. However, it's worth noting that many sighted users are satisfied with the update. Zono system commented on this change, describing it as courageous. For further details, feel free to reach out to Julian.

\* Terry announced a new system called "Glidance," a device that enables travel without the need for a guide dog or cane. Visit Glidance.io to learn more.

Secretary’s Report

Joy made a motion to approve the April minutes with the corrections, seconded by Tiffany and the motion carries.

Treasurer’s Report

Lindsay sent out the May Treasurer’s Report on May 9, 2024 in the list serve.

**Committee Report:**

**Fundraising**

Robin suggested holding the first fundraiser with Poppin Good Popcorn either this month or in June. She also recommended scheduling a fundraising meeting. Robert is available every day next week except for Monday. Therefore, the meeting has been scheduled for Friday at 8 pm. Zoom information will be sent out via the listserv.

Additionally, Robert spoke with Eddie Salcedo regarding potential fundraising opportunities at the Jazz bar and the pizza place. Eddie will be available on Tuesday to discuss the possibility of hosting a fundraising night. Robert will provide an update from Eddie and further discuss this at the fundraising meeting on Friday night.

Robert also inquired with Sheila about any additional information regarding activities. Target shooting and bowling day have been added to the list, and he suggested including an archery activity as well.

**Adopt a Child Program**

Candace, Tiffany, and Lindsay are currently working on the Adopt a Child program. They are actively searching for families with blind children to participate.

Robert discussed the PAC plan, which stands for Pre-Authorized Contribution Program. If you sign up for the PAC plan, you can donate any amount, which will be deducted from your checking or debit card on a monthly basis. Your donation goes to our National Headquarters, with our Chapter contributing $50 every month. This helps our National Organization afford various programs, such as scholarship grants. Thirty scholarship finalists have been selected to receive these grants. Another program we support is the Washington Seminar, among others. If you're interested in the PAC plan, you can visit nfb.org/PAC and fill out the form online. For any questions, feel free to reach out to Robert.

The Resolution period is approaching at the National Convention. Resolutions guide us in our actions throughout the year and the next. People write resolutions and submit them for approval at our National Convention. The deadline to submit is June 4th. If you believe there's something important that needs to change or be considered, Robert suggests writing a resolution for it.

A Career Fair will be held, and you must sign up for it separately from the registration. Keith has already signed up. You can bring your resume, and companies like Google and NASA will be present. The deadline is May 31, 2024.

The National Convention will take place from July 3rd to July 8th, 2024. You must reserve a hotel room. The Rosen Center is fully booked, but there are two overflow hotels: Rosen Plaza and Rosen Shingle Creek. Both will honor the Convention room rates.

The Dream Big Contest

It will run from May 16th to July 6th. For every $25 you donate to the NFB, your name will be entered into a drawing. During this period, you can choose to donate to four funds and they are: 1. sun fund, 2. jernigan  fund, 3. white Kane fund and 4. Tenbrook fund.

Each time you donate to one of these funds, your name will be entered. You don't need to be present to win. The prizes include banquet tickets, round-trip airfare and hotel accommodation for the next convention, $2,000, and the possibility of winning a Monarch, a new high-end computer worth thousands of dollars.

Legislation.

Then, Robert discussed the next topic about legislation. He sent an email asking everyone to

contact our Senators to encourage their support for HR3935. He wants to inform everyone that it has passed the Senate and will now return to Congress for approval. Congress needs to pass it, so Robert encourages everyone to urgently call their Congressional members during the upcoming week before May 17th, Friday. Ask your Congressional members to support and co-sponsor HR3935. This bill addresses the re-authorization of the FAA every 5 years. While the FAA provides basic services to airlines, it does not cover the ADA. The Air Carrier Access Act handles disability-related matters for airlines. This year's re-authorization includes provisions for improved training of airline personnel for people with disabilities, making in-flight entertainment accessible, and creating a free travel ID number system for service animals when booking flights. Robert recommends that everyone call their Congressional member. Unsure how to find your Congressional member? Bill asked Robert on how to find who your Congressional member is? Robert suggests two methods: visit house.gov, enter your Zip code, and it will identify your Congressional member (you may need to provide your full address), or call the House Office switchboard and ask to be transferred to your Congressional member (you may be asked for your Congressional member's name or just your Zip Code). If you need the House Office’s number, please reach out to Robert.

Next, Robert shared that each week on the State Board, they receive a notebook from our National President Marc Riccobono. In the last notebook, they discussed preparation for disasters, such as the recent tornadoes in the mid-eastern part of the United States and the absence of a major earthquake since 1994. It's important to discuss preparedness for oneself and pets. We must be prepared and consider what items we should have for emergencies. More ideas, inputs, and information were further discussed by the group.

Robert asked everyone if any one has any idea or anything to share or any question for trivia question in our introduction for our Chapter, just send him the info.

Lastly, Keith made a motion to have Linda join as a new member to our Chapter, seconded by Jo Anne and the motion carries.

Candace made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Tiffany. The meeting was adjourn at 11:56 am.

Respectfully submitted:

Sheila Marie B.C.

Cell: 818-404-7646

Chapter Secretary

NFB.SFV