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**NFB Pledge**

I pledge to participate actively in the efforts of the National Federation of the Blind to achieve equality, opportunity and security for the blind; to support the policies and programs of the Federation; and to abide by its constitution.

**Meeting Announcements**

We will not be meeting in December. Our holiday party will be spending time on the Victory Casino Cruise on December 17. If you are interested in going, please contact Maria Rigogliosi, whose contact information is contained in this newsletter under the article about our casino cruise. We will resume our normal schedule beginning in January 2020.

We hope everyone has a fun-filled, wonderful and safe holiday with family and friends!

**Membership Dues**

It is that time of year again! We will begin collecting membership dues for 2020 until January. Dues are $10 and may be paid via cash or check. Make checks payable to MSCC. You may mail your dues to:

Melbourne Space Coast Chapter

P. O. Box 120311

Melbourne, FL 32912

Remember, your dues maintain membership in the Melbourne Space Coast Chapter, the National Federation of the Blind and the National Federation of the Blind of Florida. Additionally, your dues help defray the cost of printing our newsletter, meetings held at The Fountains of Melbourne and other costs associated with running our chapter.

**2020 State Convention**

The 2020 State Convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Florida will be held at the Embassy Suites USF in Tampa, Florida. The date will be over Memorial Day weekend, May 22-25, 2020. It will be a big year for us because we are celebrating the 50th anniversary of the Florida affiliate! Room rates are $104 per night and you are encouraged to start saving to attend. Activities and agendas will be provided as they become available. Registration and banquet fees have not yet been set but will be published upon availability.

Remember, the Embassy Suites rooms can accommodate 3-5 people, depending on how comfortable all parties are with one another. Each suite has a pull-out sofa bed, refrigerator and microwave. Additionally, breakfast and a Manager’s Reception are included in the room rate; the reception is held daily from 5:30 p.m.-7:30 p.m. More details will follow as they become available.

**2020 National Convention**

The annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind has been announced! The convention will be at the Hilton Americas in Houston, Texas. Mark your calendars for July 14-19. Next year will be the 80th anniversary of the National Federation of the Blind! The room rate will be $104 per night and reservations can be made beginning January 1, 2020. Registration and banquet fees have not yet been set. This is advance notice for any members who wish to attend the convention.

If you have never attended a National Convention, there may be assistance provided, via application, for first-timers. Standby for further information. All members are encouraged to attend our national conventions. Additional details will be provided upon availability.

**Victory Cruise Casino**

Bon Voyage!!!  IT’S TIME TO ROLL!!!

Considering events that took place on our last Victory Cruise in September, we have been given a free trip by the cruise line! Yes! A FREE TRIP!!!

Our Holiday Extravaganza will be held on the Victory Cruise Casino boat on Tuesday, December 17. Due to a medical event, not involving any of our members, Victory Cruise is comping a casino boat ride for us. This means the boat trip and the cruise bus service to Port Canaveral will be free of charge. We may bring as many people as we can fit on the cruise bus. FREE! If you feel you need assistance while on the boat, please bring a Personal Care Assistant (PCA), because the staff on the boat will not aid.

The procedure from the last time remains the same. Your name, email address and date of birth, as well as the same for your PCA, will be required. All participants will need to bring their photo identification. If you will need to use SCAT to reach the pick-up points for the cruise bus, please contact Maria Rigogliosi, at 321 795-7376.

**Newsletter Distribution**

The chapter newsletter is changing its distribution schedule effective January 2020. In order to accommodate the schedules of those who participate in printing our newsletter, we will move from one issue a month to one every two months. This procedure will begin in January. Instead of 12 issues annually, there will now be six. Our affiliate publishes a newsletter every two months, on the even month, so there will be access to news throughout the year. If we find this procedure does not work, we will return to a monthly issue.

**Communications in the NFB**

There are various ways of communicating within the National Federation of the Blind. Information distribution occurs in some of the below ways:

* List Serv: This vehicle for passing information is one of the most popular. Each of our list servs function like an email blog. We have a master list serv, where every member who is subscribed to a list will receive general emails from the net master list. For example, announcements that are organization-wide, like releases pertaining to litigation (whether we have initiated it or it has been resolved), important news regarding programs (requests for participants in studies or symposiums) and notices from various divisions (the recent release about the addition of a new NAGDU Division in North Carolina). There are specific list servs as well. Each state affiliate has a general member list serv (like NFBF-L), divisions (Blind Lawyers), chapters (NFBF-Melbourne), etc. Signing up is easy. Go to nfbnet.org and scroll for whichever list you would like to join. Some lists may be closed, for example, you may have to be a part of the group or division to be added as a subscriber.
* Conference Calls: The NFB shares information through conference calls. Membership in our organization is nationwide and it is impossible for all of us to be together face-to-face each month to hold meetings. The conference call system is invaluable to keep us connected to one another. As evidenced by postings to our chapter list, most of you are aware that various divisions, committees and groups meet on a scheduled date and time to conduct business, share information or discuss and fraternize with each other. For example, Legislation meets the third Tuesday of each month, Diversity and Inclusion meets on the first Wednesday of each month, Technology meets on the fourth Monday of each month, Book Club meets on the fourth Thursday of each month and the list goes on. Always keep an eye on the lists because meeting announcements are posted. In addition, the affiliate now has a monthly calendar that is posted to Facebook and the Florida list, indicating date, time and conference login information.
* Newsletters: Our chapter publishes a newsletter. Starting in January, our newsletters will print every two months. Additionally, our Florida affiliate publishes a state newsletter every two months as well. These newsletters are often filled with information from across our chapter, affiliate and even nationally.
* Publications: The National Federation of the Blind has several publications throughout the year. Of particular note is our Braille Monitor. It is published regularly and signing up for a subscription is easy. The Braille Monitor can be accessed in several different ways. You can subscribe to receive it via thumb drive (which can be listened to using your Talking Book Player from the Talking Book Library), in large print, Braille or through your smartphone using either the Podcast app or Newsline app. It is also available by calling Newsline through your phone.

As evidenced above, there are many ways to receive and send information throughout our Federation. If you have an interest in any of these communication vehicles, please feel free to contact Camille Tate, (321) 372-4899.

**The National Federation of the Blind knows that blindness is not the characteristic that defines you or your future. Every day we raise the expectations of blind people because low expectations create obstacles between blind people and our dreams. You can live the life you want; blindness is not what holds you back.**