BREAKING NEWSLETTER

Issue 41 March/April 2023

# President’s note

To my Federation family,

As we enter into spring, I hope all of you will take the time to enjoy the blossoms. The National Federation of the Blind of Florida definitely is blossoming! We just concluded a successful march membership madness campaign for the second year in a row, We kicked off our convention planning meetings, we launched our assistance program for members to attend our national convention, and we continue to offer several different interest meetings to grow each and every one of our members to their fullest potential. A huge congratulations goes out to Shanti Aaron for winning the theme contest for our upcoming state convention. I completely agree with the theme “stronger together”! so, don’t forget to grab your hard hat and help us build this convention! In addition, we, the affiliate would like to thank each and every one of you who submitted a submission for this year‘s theme contest.

I look forward to seeing what each chapter and member will be doing for Blind Equality Achievement Month. It will be here before we know it! Remember, I am here to hear your concerns, your thoughts, and to listen.

Growing Together,

**Paul M. Martinez, President, NFB OF Florida**

Paul09MS@gmail.com

president@nfbflorida.org

Facebook & Twitter @nfbflorida

Find us on twitter and FB @nfbflorida

# How to navigate our newsletter with headings:

To enable the quick keys on/off with JAWS use the command “insert + z”. By default, the quick keys are off in Microsoft Word. To browse through the headings of the newsletter. Make sure you have quick keys on and then press the letter “h”. This keyboard command will move from heading to heading on the document. When you find the title of the heading you would like to read, you can use the “insert +down arrow” or the “insert +numbpad2”.

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# CLUSIV

Building Unseen Talent

**Clusiv is the world's first accessible e-learning platform built for & by people who are blind.**

Clusiv training teaches you the necessary skills needed to access remote job opportunities in today’s modern workforce.

Learn confidence-building techniques for virtual interviews, save files on the cloud, master email platforms, and become a vital part of any remote team with Clusiv’s training.

Clusiv is remote and self-paced so you can learn from the comfort of home. Ask your vocational rehab counselor about Clusiv today!!!

Visit Clusiv.io to find out more.

# Vanda Pharmaceuticals

Vanda pharmaceuticals is dedicated to raising the awareness of Non-24-Hour Sleep-Wake Disorder (Non-24) and supporting the blindness community.

Non-24 is a rare circadian rhythm disorder affecting up to 30% of totally blind individuals. People living with Non-24 experience excessive daytime sleepiness, nighttime sleeplessness which leads to impaired social and occupational function due to misalignment of the internal master body clock to the 24-hour day, disrupting the sleep-wake cycle.

Come visit us at our booth to learn more about Non-24

and sign up for additional information

Non-24

A circadian rhythm disorder

Visit us online at www.non-24.com

Call a health educator toll free at 1-855-856-2424, 24 hours a day

# Stellar MLS

is proud to collaborate with Lundy, Inc. to bring search by voice and enhanced data accessibility to our customers, their prospects, and homebuyers and sellers who are searching for homes in Florida and Puerto Rico. Now, with Lundy's comprehensive voice-activated property search engine via Amazon's Alexa app, blind and visually impaired individuals can be immersed in the home buying experience.

# Florida’s Disability Savings Program

ABLE United has provided thousands of Floridians

with disabilities a new way

to save tax-free without

impacting government

benefits. Open an account

today — it’s more than

just saving, it’s investing

in a brighter future.

Save with the potential for tax-free growth

Save with the help of family and friends

Save without impacting Medicaid or SSI

Use for housing, assistive technology and more

ENROLL BY NOVEMBER 11 AND RECEIVE A $50 ACCOUNT CONTRIBUTION

**ableunited.com**

# OrCam

MyEye Technology for independence

OrCam’s assistive devices help those who are blind, visually impaired or have reading challenges regain their independence.

ORCAM.com

# Birthdays & Celebrations

**The NFBF would like to celebrate:**

***March:***

***Camille Tate – Melbourne***

***April:***

***Joe Minichiello – Jacksonville***

***Latoya Kendrick – Jacksonville***

***Anniversaries:***

***Jeff Davis - April***

WITH AGE COMES WISDOM

As you get older you will understand more and more that it’s not about what you look like or what you own; it’s all about the person you become.

In the end, what really matters is:

Not what you bought, but what you BUILT

Not what you got, but what you SHARED

Not your competence, but your CHARACTER

Not your success, but your SIGNIFICANCE

Not your intelligence, but your IMPACT

Not the length of your resume, but your LEGACY

I will never regret getting older.

I know too many people who never had that privilege.

Live a life that truly matters.

Live your life, not someone else's.

***Here's to another year around the sun. Happy birthday!***

# Important Calendar Events

**NFBF Monthly Calendar Meetings**

**These are the meetings of the National Federation of the Blind of Florida in 2023. Please keep an eye on the Florida list serv for any updates to meeting schedules or Zoom information.**

**First Monday: Tallahassee Chapter, 6:30 p.m.**

In-person or dial in by calling 605-313-4802 access code 790189

**First Tuesday**: No events

**First Wednesday: Diversity and Inclusion**

via Zoom https://zoom.us/j/99374511935

First Thursday: Senior Concerns Committee, 8 p.m.

https://zoom.us/j/99374511935

Meeting ID is: 993 7451 1935

**First Saturday: Jacksonville Chapter**

10:00 A.M. Join us via Zoom, https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9851473331

Meeting ID: 985 147 3331

**First Sunday:** Open Convention Planning-Please note this day may change each year depending on schedules. Please keep an ear or eye out for updated meeting information.

**Second Monday: Communications Committee** (Closed), 7 p.m.

**Second Tuesday: Sports and Rec**, 8 p.m.

https://zoom.us/j/93835426045Meeting ID: 938 3542 6045

One tap mobile

+16468769923,,93835426045# US (New York)

+13017158592,,93835426045# US (Washington DC)

**Second Wednesday**: No events

**Second Thursday: No Events**

**Second Saturday: Broward Chapter**, 10 a.m.

**Treasure Coast Chapter**, 10 a.m.

**Melbourne Chapter,** 10 a.m.

**Palm Beach Chapter**, 10 a.m.

**Gainesville Chapter**, 12:30 p.m. Join via Free conference call, (857) 357-0254

**Second Sunday: Deaf Blind Division**, 5 p.m.

https://zoom.us/j/98765742578

Meeting ID: 987 6574 2578

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,98765742578# US (Chicago)

**Constitution Review Committee** (Closed), 8 p.m.

**Third Tuesday:** Rotation of Homewise and Diabetes Talk-Please keep an ear or eye out for meeting times; these meetings will rotate every other month, with their own Zoom links.

**Home-wise, 8 p.m.**

https://zoom.us/j/95074337811
Meeting ID: 950 7433 7811

One tap Mobile: 6468769923,,,95074337811#

**Diabetes Talk**

https://zoom.us/j/98384245319

Meeting ID: 983 8424 5319

One tap mobile

+13052241968,,98384245319# US

+13092053325,,98384245319# US

**Third Wednesday: Communities of Faith,** 12 p.m.

https://zoom.us/j/91398845944

One Tap mobile: +1(646) 876-9923,,91398845944#

**Blind Parents Connect and FLAGDU** (will alternate each month), 8 p.m.

**Third Thursday: Miami Chapter**, 6:30 p.m.

**Third Saturday: Central Florida Chapter**, 12 p.m.

**Third Sunday: Student Division**, 6 p.m.

**Statewide Chapter,** 8 p.m. via Zoom, https://zoom.us/j/97396225920 Meeting ID: 973 9622 5920

**Fourth Monday: Technology Q & A**

https://zoom.us/j/99135648534

Meeting ID: 991 3564 8534

One tap mobile

+13052241968,,99135648534# US

+13092053325,,99135648534# US

**Fourth Tuesday: Federation Foundations, formerly Book Club,** 8 p.m.

https://zoom.us/j/94787313485

Meeting ID: 947 8731 3485

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,94787313485# US (Chicago)

**Fourth Thursday: Legislation**, 8 p.m.

https://zoom.us/j/94416346364

Meeting ID: 944 1634 6364

One tap mobile

+13126266799,,94416346364# US (Chicago)

**Fourth Saturday: Daytona Chapter,** 12:30 p.m. https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9357099741?pwd=YVhxTVg0Nm1KQytCQ0xJM1JvZDhYUT09

**Tampa Chapter,** 12:30 p.m.

**Fourth Sunday: Affiliate Board** Meeting (Closed), 8 p.m. (unless an open meeting is announced)

# Articles, Announcements and Comments

NEWSWORTHY

In Memory of:

Camille Tate of Melbourne reports the following:

 It is with great sadness that Melbourne reports the loss of a long-time member, Pat LaVeist. Pat and her husband Bill were members of the Melbourne Chapter for a number of years. Pat survived her beloved Bill but has now made her journey home.

It is with sadness that I must report to you the passing of our Dear friend and member Frances Vitulla. Fran went peacefully into the arms of the Lord yesterday around 2:30 P.M. Fran was a wonderful lady who had many interests. She lived for a long time in Hollywood Florida with her husband David. She was a member of the National Federation of the Blind of Florida, Broward Chapter, and eventually became a board member of that chapter.

 She enjoyed reading and playing games at a couple of online communities for the blind and visually impaired. She was especially known on those sites for her skill in dice games.

 During the pandemic, she moved to the Stark area to be closer to her brother and sister in-law, and at that time she eagerly joined the Jacksonville Chapter. Fran was a friend to many who knew her, and she will be truly missed.

 Let us all keep Fran’s family close to our hearts during this trying time.

Since Fran was a member of both the Broward and Jacksonville chapters, it is only fitting to add a few words from Debbie Ryan at this time. Here is what she has to say:

Hello to our old and new friends, neighbors, & Family of our long-time member of Greater Broward Chapter Francis Vitulla.  For the last 3 years we shared her with the Greater Jacksonville Chapter. Fran will come back to Hollywood, to rest in peace next to her beloved Husband David.  She left all of us to be united with David, yesterday March 21, 2023, in the afternoon with her remaining natural family around her bedside.  Sandra, her dearest neighbor took great care of them but once David was gone it was essential Fran, needed to be with one of her brothers, Wes where Marty, his Wife took over the needs of caring for Fran.  They have done an outstanding job caring for their loved one until death do we part for a season. Fran was an excellent friend, funny and smart in many ways.  I will miss her, but we will meet again in the clouds.

In times of darkness, love sees.

In times of silence, love hears.

In times of doubt, love hopes

In times of sorrow, love heals.

And in all times, love remembers.

Congratulations goes out to Scott Wilson and Britany Fraer on the birth of their son, Ian. Here is what Scott has to say: I wanted to announce the birth of Ian Wilson. He was born February 9, 2023, at 8:46 AM. He weighed 5 lbs. 3 oz., 18 inches long. He is thriving and growing rapidly. I know we are all looking forward to hearing all about Scott and Britany’s journey through parenthood.

Scott Larsen of the Daytona reports that his niece Alexa Chappell will be graduating from Highschool in May. We wish her much success as her life begins.

Here is a little news from our Tampa Bay Chapter.

The Tampa Chapter has been extremely busy over the last few months, in January, we executed an amazing baby shower, February, we had elections, and in March, we outlined our goals and Projects for the rest of the year. We are excited to collaborate with the Statewide Chapter in the Melbourne space coast chapter on hosting the 2023 State convention and look forward and seeing all of you there.

The Tampa Chapter recently held elections. Please join me on congratulating Christine Coply, vice president, Dan Hicks, treasurer, and Greg Farley, board member #2.

Sherri Brun of Central Florida reported a recent election that they had. Here is what she says.

I am writing to let you know that the National Federation of the blind of Central Florida held our elections today.  I want to thank those who served in the past and congratulate our newly elected officers and board members who are:

Marilyn Baldwin, President.

Sherri Brun, secretary

Margaret Battis, Board position #1.

Josiah Baker, board position #2.

I thank those who attended our meeting and look forward to working with our officers, board members and chapter members.

Congratulations to all who have served, and to those who will serve in the future on their chapter board. Leadership is hard work, but is also very rewarding.

A spectacular vision: the blindCan Film Festival

When presented with the notion that a blind person can make a film, many people would think it is impossible. Ben Fox, the founder of the blindCAN Film Festival, is showing the Tallahassee Community and the world that blindness isn’t a hindrance to living a full life or using the art of cinema to tell stories.

Fox himself has Retinitis pigmentosa (RP), a form of gradual sight loss that occurs when the retina of the eye is damaged. Before his diagnosis, at just 18 years old, he was accepted to the prestigious Sundance Film Festival. After leaving his passion for filmmaking for years, he founded blindCAN to help other visually impaired people share their stories through film.

“There’s a lot of time that I spent running that I could have spent exploring the possibilities of filmmaking while blind,” said Fox. With determination and a bountiful community of visually impaired people, Fox is mentoring aspiring creatives regardless of their disabilities. blindCAN lets the world know that anyone, including the blind, can be a filmmaker.

The winner of the short, scripted film category of the festival was Micheal Tubiak, who produced the film “When Wet Floor Signs Attack.” Tubiak, who also has RP, hosts a YouTube channel with his friend Steve, where the film was released. The film vilifies “wet floor” signs, which are hard for visually impaired people to navigate around. Tubiak asked his followers on YouTube, many of whom also have visual impairments, to “assemble” as the “RP heroes” (a play on the avengers) and send in videos of themselves defeating wet floor signs. At the end of the film, they were victorious, and not a single sign was left standing in the way of a visually impaired person.

All the way from Connecticut, Tubiak came to the film festival to show his support for other filmmakers. Tubiak’s son helped him make “When Wet Floor Signs Attack,” and as a blind parent, Tubiak is grateful to be raising a family. Tubiak says that “if [he’s] struggling and needs help with something, [his son] is always there” to help him. A large part of the festival was celebrating the ways that blind people show their abilities simply by doing the things that society would deem impossible to do while blind. Many people would view blindness as a major setback to starting a family, Tubiak shows that it’s possible to do so and, as his son says, be the “cooler parent.”

The highlighted feature film of the evening was “A Shot in the Dark,” which was directed by Chris Suchorsky. The film follows the story of Anthony Ferraro, who, in high school, had aspirations of being the first blind wrestling champion of New Jersey. The film was completely independent and relied on crowd funding to complete — it raised a whopping $87,000.

Ferraro was born completely blind but states that his family “never treated him differently.” Throughout the film, Ferraro recounts his experiences of adversity in sports: he was continually told that he had an “unfair advantage” as a blind athlete or accused of faking his disability. By the end of his career as a high school wrestler, Ferraro had 122 wins, and was one of the most decorated athletes at his school. As Ferarro’s older brother Oliver passed away in 2015, the film has a special place in his heart. “It’s a love story for my brother and it keeps him alive,” said Ferraro. To this day, the film inspires him to “[go] out and do what [he] loves, not making any excuses.” Today, through filmmaking, Ferraro shares his story and experiences as a motivational speaker.

Although the festival primarily focused on films made by the blind, it also featured films by people with other disabilities – one of which was “Ahmad,” directed by Kortisaan “Dario” Vandier, a disabled veteran and Emmy award winner. Vandier wanted to share the story of his younger cousin, Ahmad, who died tragically at just 6 years old. Vandier says his inspiration for the film was his need “to give Ahmad a story and a voice,” and show “how people…navigate through trauma, forgiveness, and work to reclaim what is lost.” Gut wrenching and beautifully made, the film was created using the help of the community in Merritt Island, FL, which is where Ahmad grew up. For Vandier, the purpose of making films is to share “positive, purposeful messages and raise social awareness.”

The festival lasted all day long and would not have been possible if not for the efforts of Alpha Phi Omega, a co-ed service fraternity at FSU. Synnove Mikkelsen, Emily Fitzgerald, and Jacob Glance, who are members of the fraternity, were on their feet the entire day assisting Fox with errands, moving around instrument equipment and ensuring everything was running smoothly. Beyond just helping operate the festival, Fitzgerald helped Fox with promotion by creating an Instagram account for the organization. For the members of Alpha Phi Omega, the service work was an incredibly refreshing experience. “It’s such a nice group of people here, and everyone is super kind because they’re all focused on the same goal," said Mikkelsen. The effort put into the blindCAN festival shows the importance of uplifting stories different from our own, and the power of community efforts in raising awareness for social change.

Fox, who is gradually losing his vision, still sometimes struggles to cope with the possibility of being completely blind one day. Towards the end of the festival, he stated that the films being shown, especially Ferraro’s, have made him “come to peace with his blindness.” In the words of Fox, “film is the next evolution of art.” The blindCAN Film Festival is evidence of this spectacular evolution — the film industry has a bright future ahead of it, and that future includes people of all abilities. All you need is a vision.

Thanks goes out to Adriann Keve for locating the above article. I love reading about blind people doing things that others might not think possible.

# Travel the World

***There were no articles submitted for this section. If you have an article you’d like to share, please send it to newsletter@nfbflorida.org. We’d love to hear of your travels.***

# Tips and Tricks

***Submitted by Kaye Baker***

BARD Mobile for iOS, version 2.1, will be released over the next 10 days. This release builds on last fall’s version 2.0 with improvements to search and browse functionality. Searching and browsing will continue to improve with future releases.

Version 2.1 includes:

• New Search options that allow patrons to select Spanish-language content or “all” language content in each inquiry. By default, the language is set to English content only unless directed.

• New Search Music options to supplement the existing Search options. By default, Search Music options exclude any language processing. Version 2.1 allows for a more intuitive music search experience. Music collections will continue to be included within the general Search as well.

• Full access to the longer book annotations available in the More Info, Details menus.

• Various bug fixes, including an issue with the sleep timer volume spiking, and an issue with user id and password fields not being editable while using VoiceOver.

BARD Mobile users can confirm that they are running version 2.1 by checking the bottom of the app’s Settings screen.

***Are you tired of those annoying ROBO texts that flood your phone on a daily basis? This submission from Jerilyn might help us all to run off the ROBO.***

How to Block Robotexts and Spam Messages

You don't have to put up with robotexts and junk messages. Here's how to block spammy texts.

You hear the sound of an incoming text message and excitedly check your phone. But it's just a junk message sent to you by a spammer trying to con you into tapping a link, opening an attachment, calling a number, or doing something else likely to cause you trouble.

Robotexts and spam messages are a fact of life, just like robocalls and junk email. They may not be as invasive as a spam call, since you can largely ignore them, but that doesn't make them harmless. Some phone plans may charge you for incoming text messages and smishing (SMS phishing <https://www.pcmag.com/how-to/how-to-avoid-phishing-scams> ) attacks can be even more dangerous if you're not careful.

However, you don’t have to put up with them. Just as you can fight against robocalls <https://www.pcmag.com/how-to/block-robocalls-and-spam-calls> , you can block and stop robotexts with the right tricks and tools.

Do Not Respond

First and foremost, do not interact with the message. If you click a link or attachment in a spam message, it could trigger malware <https://www.pcmag.com/picks/the-best-android-antivirus-apps>  that infects your phone. You also don't want to respond. Many legitimate robotexts include an option to text STOP to tell the company to remove you from their distribution list, but that doesn't work with scammers.

In fact, by responding to a spam message, you're only confirming to the scammer that your number is valid. From there, your phone number may be disseminated to other scammers, increasing your odds of getting more junk messages. So unless you know the text came from a legitimate company that honors such requests, you're better off not responding at all.

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Block Phone Numbers

You can block a number <https://www.pcmag.com/news/how-to-block-a-number-on-your-smartphone>  that's been sending you junk messages. The drawback with this approach is that spammers typically spoof or switch phone numbers. So even if you block the number, you can still receive messages from the same spammer using a different number.

On an iPhone, open the text message you received. Tap the phone number at the top of the screen and then tap the Info button. At the next screen, select Block this Caller and then tap Block Contact to confirm.

On an Android phone, open the text and tap the three-dot icon in the upper right. The steps then vary based on your phone and OS version. Either select the Block number option or select Details and then tap Block & report spam.

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Report Phone Numbers

You can report a robotext to your mobile carrier by forwarding it to a specific number. To do this on an iPhone, press down on the offending message. Tap More and then tap the right arrow to forward it as a new text. To do this on an Android phone, press down on the message. Tap the three-dot icon at the top and select Forward. Text the new message to 7726, which spells out SPAM. The number works for AT&T, Verizon Wireless, and T-Mobile, all of which will use the information to try and block future spam messages.

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Filter Out Spammers

On an Android phone, you can disable all potential spam messages from Google's Messages app(Opens in a new window) <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.google.android.apps.messaging&hl=en> . Tap the three-dot icon in the upper right of the app and select Settings > Spam protection and turn on the Enable spam protection switch. Your phone will now alert you if an incoming message is suspected of being spam.

On an iPhone, you can filter messages from unknown senders into their own folder within the Messages app. Go to Settings > Messages. Turn on the switch for Filter Unknown Senders.

The top US mobile carriers offer their own filtering and blocking tools for subscribers. For the most part, they're geared more toward spam phone calls, but they can also block numbers that attempt to deliver spam text messages.

Verizon’s Call Filter(Opens in a new window) <https://www.verizon.com/solutions-and-services/call-filter/>  blocks robocalls and spam messages. The basic version is free, while the Plus version costs $2.99 for a single line or $7.99 a month for three or more lines. T-Mobile offers Scam Shield(Opens in a new window) <https://www.t-mobile.com/customers/scam-shield> , a collection of free services to detect, block, and mislead spam and scam callers. It also includes a caller ID feature for numbers not already in your contact list.

The carriers also have technology on the back end to identify and block spam messages in much the same way email providers try to stop spam email messages. If you need more robust robotext filtering, you may want to check out a third-party app.

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SpamHound SMS Spam Filter

SpamHound is a free service that works differently depending on the type of phone you own. The iOS(Opens in a new window) <https://apps.apple.com/app/id1263185195>  app supplements Apple's built-in Messages app to filter out SMS spam. But the Android(Opens in a new window) <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.redwerk.spamhound&hl=en>  app becomes your default SMS app for sending and receiving texts. SpamHound automatically displays past text messages and provides easy access to your contacts, but you can't add GIFs, images, videos, or other files.

As for message blocking, it can detect spam based on keywords and other factors. To fine-tune SpamHound’s powers of deduction, you’re encouraged to create blacklist and whitelist rules for what you want filtered out or allowed to come through.

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SMS Spam Stopper

Designed just for iOS, SMS Spam Stopper(Opens in a new window) <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/sms-spam-stopper/id1451769591>  is a $2.99 app that uses artificial intelligence <https://www.pcmag.com/news/what-is-artificial-intelligence-ai>  to try to detect spam messages. The app attempts to block spam that matches the SMS signatures of the 5,000 spam SMS messages in its own database. You can also tweak the app to block texts from any number not in your contacts. You’re even able to set up allowed words, blocked words, and blocked phone numbers to further control and filter out likely spam messages.

To get you started, SMS Spam Stopper helpfully provides a series of videos to show you how to configure it. After that, any spam messages that it detects are banished to the Unknown & Junk section of the iOS messaging app where you can review them.

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RoboKiller

Designed for iOS(Opens in a new window) <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/id1022831885>  and Android(Opens in a new window) <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.robokiller.app&hl=en\_US> , RoboKiller costs $3.99 a month or $29.99 a year. The app looks at each message to analyze the phone number, message content, attachments, and other elements to determine if the text is legitimate or not.

To set up SMS spam blocking on an Android phone, go to Settings and select the option for SMS Spam Recognition. Though the feature can’t stop SMS spam from reaching you entirely, it will alert you if a text message is tagged as spam so that you can determine whether to respond or ignore it. On an iPhone, go to Settings > Messages > Unknown & Spam. In the section for SMS Filtering, turn on the switch for RoboKiller. If a message is deemed to be spam, RoboKiller moves it to the SMS Junk folder in the Messages app where you can review it.

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TextKiller

The folks behind RoboKiller also offer an iPhone app called TextKiller(Opens in a new window) <https://apps.apple.com/us/app/textkiller-spam-text-blocker/id1514005355>  specifically to block text messages. By default, the app looks for certain words, terms, and other tip-offs to determine which texts are spam. You can assist it by labeling spam messages so it learns from your actions.

You can also set up block filters by adding specific phone numbers and blacklisting keywords such as “Buy now.” Any messages identified as spam are stored in a separate junk tab separate from legitimate texts. The basic version is free but limited. A premium edition costs $3.99 a month or $29.99 a year with a free one-week trial.

# Laugh it up!

It's been said that 'Laughter IS the Best Medicine.' Nothing works faster or is more dependable to bring your mind and body back into balance than a good laugh. Humor lightens your burdens, inspires hopes, connects you to others, and keeps you grounded, focused, and alert. Here's to living a longer, healthier, and happier life! Laughter is the best medicine. Take as much as you can, several times a day.

1. What did the horse say after it tripped?
Help! I’ve fallen and I can’t giddyap!

2. Why can’t you hear a pterodactyl going to the bathroom?
Because the “P” is silent

3. What do you call a well-balanced horse?
Stable.

4. What do you call an angry carrot?
A steamed veggie.

5. Where do polar bears keep their money?
In a snowbank.

6. How do you make an egg-roll?
You push it!

7. What would bears be without bees?
Ears.

8. Why was Cinderella so bad at soccer:
She kept running away from the ball.

9. Why do cows wear bells?
Because their horns don’t work.

10. What did the triangle say to the circle?
You’re pointless.

# Legislation

Legislative Updates

Our legislative issues are still gaining momentum, and it is all because of the great work of our legislative committee that continues to write letters and make phone calls. It is time to begin planning Washington Seminar Junior, where we will meet either on Zoom or in the house and senate member’s local offices. There is no time like the present to attend your first legislative call. Come and learn a little about our issues and about the legislative process.

Notices will be on the email list soon pertaining to the advancement of a couple of our bills.

As always be sure to drop by the legislative meeting on the fourth Thursday of each month to get the latest info from our legislative directors.

Legislative Committee Co-Chairs

Russ Davis

russell@radiorusty.com

904 993 8433

Camille Tate

Ctate2076@att.net

321 372 4899

# Florida Spotlight

Member Spotlight

**In a recent “Newsletter Survey,” a suggestion was made to have a section where students can tell their stories. The member spotlight is just the place. If you are student, and you have a story that you want to have featured in the newsletter, please send it to** **newsletter@nfbflorida.org****.**

**We can’t wait to hear all of the up coming stories from our great students.**

#

# Recipe Conner

**Tastiest fair anywhere.**

**Secret Baked Chicken**

Time: 35 minutes
Yield: 4 servings

 The secret to Secret Baked Chicken is just how simple it actually is even as it explodes with flavor. The chicken is brined to ensure its juiciness and savoriness and then coated in garlicky, smoky, and warm spices. Secret Baked Chicken only takes 35 minutes to make, so the other secret is that it can be made in a hurry even though it tastes like a slow-cooked masterpiece! You may want to keep this secret to yourself!

Ingredients
1 quart of water, warm
1/4 cup plus 1 teaspoon kosher salt
4 chicken breasts, boneless, skinless, and pounded to an even thickness
1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
1/2 teaspoon smoked paprika
1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper
1 tablespoon melted butter, olive oil, or avocado oil

Directions
1 Preheat the oven to 450 degrees F.
2 Spray a large glass baking dish with cooking spray.
3 Fill a large bowl with the warm water and 1/4 cup kosher salt.
4 Place the chicken in the saltwater to brine for 15 minutes and up to 6 hours covered in the refrigerator.
5 Remove the chicken from the brine and rinse with cold water.
6 Pat the chicken dry with paper towels.
7 In a small bowl, combine the remaining kosher salt, garlic powder, smoked paprika, and black pepper.
8 Place the chicken breasts in the prepared baking dish in an even layer with no overlap.
9 Brush the chicken with the butter on both sides.
10 Sprinkle the seasoning mixture evenly over the chicken on both sides.
11 Bake until the chicken is cooked through and no longer pink, reading 165 degrees F when tested with a meat thermometer in the thickest part, about 15-20 minutes.
12 Remove the baking dish from the oven and tent it with foil.
13 Let the chicken rest for 5-10 minutes.
14 Serve hot

Easter Brownies

SERVINGS: 15 brownies

Ingredients

9 ounces semi-sweet chocolate, roughly chopped

½ cup (1 stick) unsalted butter

1 cup granulated sugar

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

4 large eggs, at room temperature

½ cup all-purpose flour

¼ teaspoon kosher salt

1 cup Easter M & M’s, divided

1 cup mini chocolate eggs, roughly chopped and divided

8 ounces chopped white chocolate

Instructions

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Lightly grease then line a 9" x 9" baking pan with parchment paper, allowing the paper to go up and over at least two of the sides to make it easier to lift out the brownies. Place a pot of water on the stove and bring it to a boil, then lower the heat to a simmer. Place the butter and chopped chocolate into a large heatproof bowl that is large enough to nestle on top of the pot of water, without the bottom touching the water. Place the bowl on top of the pot. Using a heatproof silicone spatula, constantly swirl and mix the butter and chocolate together as they melt, until well combined to a smooth mixture. Turn off the heat and carefully remove the bowl from the top of the pot and allow the melted chocolate to cool slightly. In the bowl of a stand mixer, or a large mixing bowl using a hand mixer, cream the sugar, vanilla, and eggs together on medium-high until well combined, about 4 minutes. Lower the speed to low-medium and add the salt, then gradually add the flour and mix until just combined. Pour in the slightly cooled melted chocolate and mix until combined, about 1-2 minutes. Pour the brownie batter into the prepared pan. Sprinkle a handful of Easter M & M’s evenly on top (they will sink into the middle of the brownie when it bakes). Bake at 350°F for 22 to 27 minutes, until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Remove from the oven and allow to cool in the pan for 5 minutes. While the brownies cool slightly, take this time to melt the white chocolate in the microwave in 30 second increments until melted and smooth, stirring in between. Then if you wish, swirl in food coloring of your choice. Transfer the brownie to a wire rack - this is when the parchment paper overlap is helpful! Decorate the top of the brownie with the melted white chocolate, sprinkles, and extra Easter M & M’s and chopped mini chocolate eggs, as you wish. Allow the decorations to set before slicing the brownie into squares.

Storage: Store brownies in an airtight container for up to five days, or in a freezer-safe container in the freezer for up to two months.

Source; Urban Bliss Life

*If you have a favorite recipe you would like to submit for this section, please send it to newsletter@nfbflorida.org.*

# Health and Wellness

March is Colon Cancer awareness month. In the past couple of years, I have learned more about this disease than I ever wanted to know, but the most important thing I have learned is how imperative it is that we all take preventative measures. Here is an article that further solidifies this belief.

Preventing cancer typically comes at the cost of modifying one’s behavior. Medical professionals beg patients to cut down on tobacco usage, develop an exercise routine and incorporate health conscious meals into diets. While this advice is well researched and proven to reduce the risk of developing many cancers, many people may find it difficult to heed.

Because of the significant amounts of time, effort and patience required to follow these seemingly simple guidelines, some of us give up on forming better habits. While struggling with these modifiable behaviors may be detrimental to prevention of an array of cancers, heading off colorectal cancer typically only requires a small commitment by oneself each decade. March being Colorectal Cancer Awareness Month, let’s look at more detail into this important matter.

Colorectal cancer is currently the second leading cause of cancer deaths in U.S. men and women combined. In fact, nearly 35% of the approximately 145,000 new cases each year will likely result in death. Yet while a healthy diet and exercise may help prevent developing such cancer, there is one thing that can prevent over half of the deaths: colorectal cancer screening.

In May 2018, the American Cancer Society (ACS) changed their recommended colorectal cancer screening guidelines for those at average risk to begin at age 45 and proceed until 75 years, instead of the previous guideline of commencing at age 50. This, because over the past few decades, an increase in the rate of colorectal cancers, especially rectal cancers, has been observed in young adults under 50. The data also indicate that people under 55 years are more likely to be diagnosed with late-stage colorectal cancer than older people. As with the previous guidelines, after the first screening by colonoscopy, individuals of average risk are advised to have one screening every ten years.

## **Why Aren’t More Americans Getting Colorectal Cancer Screenings?**

* Despite the minimal amount of time and effort required to screen for colorectal cancer, only one in three people are not up to date on their screenings. Many people may believe that since they have no family history, they are not advised to undergo screening. But unlike many other forms of cancer, only a very small percentage of colorectal cancers are associated with inherited genes. Individuals having a family history possess more risk in development and, therefore, screening should begin before age 45, while those without such profiles should still be undergoing screening from the age of 45. A discussion with your physician about family history, lifestyle and diet allows for a shared decision about what age and type of colorectal cancer screening you should consider.
* When it comes to preventative health services, many individuals may be concerned about the associated cost. While most insurance companies should cover colorectal screening for people age 50 years and older, to find out exactly what is needed to pay the minimal out-of-pocket fees, contact your insurer directly or review your information packet. People age 45 years who are considering a colorectal cancer screen under the ACS new guidelines, the appropriate and cost-effective test can be discussed with your doctor and in consultation with your insurer to determine test coverage. If, however, an individual is uninsured, undergoing preventative screening has still been proven to be highly cost effective. A 2018 study published in the Journal of Gastroenterology suggests that undergoing screening before receiving coverage by Medicare may yield substantial clinical and economic benefits.
* The third main reason that more Americans in the specified age bracket are not receiving colorectal cancer screening may be attributed to anxiety of screening methods. Traditionally, the screening consists of a colonoscopy. A colonoscopy, though tried and true, may sound potentially uncomfortable to some. The use of the thin tube to check for polyps in the colon is usually relatively painless—and often completed before the patient is aware that it has been conducted. But there are other ways in which to screen for colorectal cancer. If an individual is anxious about a colonoscopy, he or she should talk to their doctor about alternative screening methods. Such approaches may include a stool test or a virtual colonoscopy completed using X-rays.

Undergoing colorectal cancer screenings is a conversation you should have with your physician at age 45 if you are at average risk, or earlier if you are at high risk. Screening for cancer is the best opportunity for receiving an early diagnosis. And, as is the case in the majority of cancers, early diagnosis is often life-saving.

# Link City

Here are some important links that may be of interest.

**NFB:** https://nfb.org/

**NFBF:** http://nfbflorida.org/

**Braille Monitor: April, 2023** go directly to the complete issue.

**Presidential Release:** April, 2023 - #527 Presidential Release #526, April 2023 (Audio for Chapter Meetings)

**State of the Affiliate Video**: https://youtu.be/6r2sQ7CYXus

Link to our NABS Podcast, Letter to our Teacher http://anchor.fm/nabs-now

# Inspiration Conner

***Submitted by Sylvia Young***

*This afternoon, as I was putting together this newsletter, I decided to reread this article that Sylvia shared for the last issue. As I read, I was reminded of how often we can be quick to judge others by such things as outward appearance. We often find important things like an outfit someone is wearing, a person’s weight or the way they do their hair. Perhaps a second look at this article can help us look at each other the way our God looks at us. He looks upon us with love an acceptance. Let’s spend a little extra time building each other up instead of allowing ourselves to do the opposite.*

**THE OLD DENTED BUCKET**  Our house was directly across the street from the clinic entrance of Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore .  We lived downstairs and rented the upstairs rooms to out-patients at the clinic.

   One summer evening as I was fixing supper, there was a knock at the door.  I opened it to see a truly awful looking man.  "Why, he's hardly taller than my 8-year-old," I thought as I stared at the stooped, shriveled body.  But the appalling thing was his face, lopsided from swelling, red and raw.

   Yet his voice was pleasant as he said, "Good evening.  I've come to see if you've a room for just one night.  I came for a treatment this morning from the eastern shore, and there's no bus 'til morning."

   He told me he'd been hunting for a room since noon but with no success, no one seemed to have a room.  "I guess it's my face .... I know it looks terrible, but my doctor says with a few more treatments .."

   For a moment I hesitated, but his next words convinced me: "I could sleep in this rocking chair on the porch.  My bus leaves early in the morning."

   I told him we would find him a bed, but to rest on the porch..  I went inside and finished getting supper.  When we were ready, I asked the old man if he would join us.  "No, thank you.  I have plenty."  And he held up a  brown paper bag.

   When I had finished the dishes, I went out on the porch to talk with him a few minutes.  It didn't take a long time to see that this old man had an oversized heart crowded into that tiny body.  He told me he fished for a living to support his daughter, her 5 children, and her husband, who was hopelessly crippled from a back injury.

   He didn't tell it by way of complaint; in fact, every other sentence was preface with a thanks to God for a blessing.  He was grateful that no pain accompanied his disease, which was apparently a form of skin cancer.  He thanked God for giving him the strength to keep going...

   At bedtime, we put a  camp cot in the children's room for him.  When I got up in the morning, the bed linens were neatly folded and the little man was out on the porch.

   He refused breakfast, but just before he left for his bus, haltingly, as if asking a great favor, he said, "Could I please come back and stay the next time I have a treatment?  I won't put you out a bit.  I can sleep fine in a chair."  He paused for a moment and then added, "Your children made me feel at home.  Grownups are bothered by my face, but children don't seem to mind."
I told him he was welcome to come again.

And, on his next trip, he arrived a little after 7 in the morning.  As a gift, he brought a big fish and a quart of the largest oysters I had ever seen!  He said he had shucked them that morning before he left so that they'd be nice and fresh.  I knew his bus left at 4:00 a.m. And I wondered what time he had to get up in order to do this for us.

   In the years he came to stay overnight with us, there was never a time that he did not bring us fish or oysters or vegetables from his garden.

   Other times we received packages in the mail, always by special delivery; fish and oysters packed in a box of fresh young spinach or kale, every leaf carefully washed.  Knowing that he must walk 3 miles to mail these, and knowing how little money he had made the gifts doubly precious.

   When I received these little remembrances, I often thought of a comment our next-door neighbor made after he left that first morning.

   "Did you keep that awful looking man last night?  I turned him away!  You can lose roomers by putting up such people!"

   Maybe we did lose roomers once or twice.  But, oh!, if only they could have known him, perhaps their illnesses would have been easier to bear.

   I know our family will always be grateful to have known him; from him we learned what it was to accept the bad without complaint and the good with gratitude to God.

   Recently I was visiting a friend, who has a greenhouse, as she showed me her flowers, we came to the most beautiful one of all, a golden chrysanthemum, bursting with blooms.  But to my great surprise, it was growing in an old dented, rusty bucket.  I thought to myself, "If this were my plant, I'd put it in the loveliest container I had!"

   My friend changed my mind.  "I ran short of pots," she explained, "and knowing how beautiful this one would be, I thought it wouldn't mind starting out in this old pail.  It's just for a little while, till I can put it out in the garden."

   She must have wondered why I laughed so delightedly, but I was imagining just such a scene in heaven.

   "Here's an especially beautiful one," God might have said when he came to the soul of the sweet old fisherman.  "He won't mind starting in this small body."
   All this happened long ago - and now, in God's garden, how tall this lovely soul must stand.

   The LORD does not look at the things man looks at.  Man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart." (1 Samuel 16:7b)

# Photo Gallery

**Please send in your photos for the gallery for our next issue.**

# Chapters

**Greater Broward Chapter:** Jake McEntyre, President, Phone: 954-946-4148, Email: jmac1920@yahoo.com. Meetings are held the 2nd Saturday of each month at the Westfield Broward Mall located at 8000W. Broward Blvd. Plantation, Florida 33312 from 10:30 a.m. until 12:30 p.m. meetings take place inside the Plantation Police Outreach Center, just inside the north entrance to the mall.

**Central Florida Chapter:** Marilyn Baldwin, President, 407-293-0565 Home and 407-810-0554 Cell. Meetings are held the third Saturday of each month from 11 A.M. to 1 PM at Lighthouse Central Florida, 215 East New Hampshire Street Orlando, Florida 32804. Please like us on Facebook at: https://www.facebook.com/groups/410985858949160.

**Greater Daytona Beach Chapter:** Brian Norton, President, Phone: 386-871-3359 Email: brian.edward.norton@outlook.com. Meetings are held the fourth Saturday of the month from 1:00 till 3:00pm at Houligans Speedway restaurant, 1725 International Speedway Blvd. Daytona Beach, Florida. You can also attend our meetings on Zoom with the following link: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/9357099741?pwd=YVhxTVg0Nm1KQytCQ0xJM1JvZDhYUT09 Meeting ID: 935 709 9741 Passcode: 8888 Follow Us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/nfbdaytona.

**Gainesville Chapter**: Judith Hamilton, President; Phone: 352-373-7806, Email: gainesvillechapter@nfbflorida.org. The Gainesville Chapter has been meeting monthly on 2nd Saturday by Free Conference Call due to COVID 19. (857) 357-0254; Meeting I.D. has not changed-remains 195715. We are looking forward to making more connections and serving in our community when it is safe to do so. We invite and welcome members and those interested in learning about the National Federation of the Blind. Let’s move forward to build the Federation together!

**Greater Jacksonville Chapter:** Kaye Baker, President, phone: (904) 701-8822, Email: nfbjax@gmail.com. Meetings are held the first Saturday of each month. We meet at the Independent Living Resource Center 2709 Art Museum Drive, and on Zoom with meeting ID 9851473331. The Greater Jacksonville Chapter welcomes anyone wishing to attend.

**Melbourne Space Coast Chapter:** Camille Tate, President, Phone: 321-372-4899, Email: ctate20176@att.net. Facebook: www.facebook.com/nfbmelbourne. We meet on the second Saturday of each month, currently via Zoom. Please contact Camille Tate, President for ways you can join us.

**Greater Miami Dade Chapter**: Jorge Hernandez, President, Phone: 305-877-2311, Email: jeh6@bellsouth.net. The chapter continues to meet virtually, and members are encouraged to participate. Our meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month, from 7:00 p.m. until 8:30 p.m.

**Florida State-Wide Chapter**: Paul Martinez, President; Phone: 813-390-5720; Email: nfbf.statewide@gmail.com. The Statewide Chapter meets via Zoom every third Sunday of the month at 8:00 pm. Join us with the following link: https://zoom.us/j/97396225920 Meeting ID: 973 9622 5920 Everyone is welcome to attend.

**Tallahassee Chapter:** Donald Christie, President; Phone: 850-727-6794 Email: doctime59@comcast.net. We meet the first Monday of each month from 6:30-8:00 p.m., at the Lighthouse of the Big Bend located at 3071 Highland Oaks Terrace, Tallahassee, FL 32301. We are meeting in person, but you can also call in via telephone conference at 605-313-4802 access code 790189

**Tampa Chapter:** Miranda Kilby, President; Phone: 352-942-0417; Email: NFBF.Tampa@gmail.com. Join us on the fourth Saturday of each month at our Zoom Meeting https://zoom.us/j/98776627448 Meeting ID: 987 7662 7448Tampa Bay Chapter.

**Treasure Coast Chapter**: Rosemary Brunson, President;, E-mail: treasurecoastnfb@gmail.com. The Chapter will have conference call meetings until further notice. Our calls are held the 2nd Saturday of each month at 10am.

# Divisions

**Deaf-Blind Division:** The Division meets on the second Tuesday of the month. Keep an eye on the Florida List and Save the Date calendar for meeting notices and announcements. President: Brian Norton, president. Phone: 386-871-3359 Email: brian.edward.norton@outlook.com.

**Florida Association of Guide Dog Users (FLAGDU**): Britany Fraer, President; Phone: 804-274-8908, Email: flagdu@nfbflorida.org

# Groups and Committees:

**Blind Parents Connect** - NFB of Florida: Miranda Kilby – coordinator. Phone: 352- 942-0417; Email: mbkilby@gmail.com. If anyone has any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

**F.A.B.S.** - Florida Association of Blind Students: Jannik Pesch, President

**Communication Committee:** Chair - Douglas Ingram contact information: Phone: 850-567-8123; Email: dingram59@comcast.net

**Communities of Faith Group:** We meet on the third Wednesday of each month at noon via zoom. https://zoom.us/j/91398845944

One Tap mobile: +1(646) 876-9923,,91398845944#

Our group is continually growing, and all are welcome. Come and see what this warm and uplifting group is all about.

Marilyn Baldwin Chair, Peggy Fleischer co-chair.

**Diversity and Inclusion:** The committee meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 8 p.m. via Zoom https://zoom.us/j/99374511935

Keep an eye on the list for any notices from the committee. Chair: Marilyn Baldwin.

**Fundraising Committee**: Brittany Fraer contact information: Email: Brittany Fraer <bcwilson4418@gmail.com or fundraising@nfbflorida.org

Phone: 804-274-8908

**Legislative Committee:** The Legislative Committee meets on the 4th Thursday of the month. Keep an eye on the Florida List for meeting notices. Co-Chairs: Russ Davis and Camille Tate.

**Federation Foundations:** We meet the fourth Tuesday of each month at 8 p.m. via Zoom. Join us by visiting https://zoom.us/j/92344776358

Keep an eye on the Florida List for meeting notices and the selection for the month. Coordinator: Camille Tate.

**Newsline:** Russ Davis, Chairperson. 844-827-7371, newslinesupport@nfbflorida.org

**Senior Concerns Committee:** Gloria Mills-Hicks, Chairman; Phone: 813-340-9754; Email: Glorianfb@irescuetax.com. Meetings are held the First Thursday of each month at 8pm via Zoom https://zoom.us/j/99374511935

**Technology Q and A:** Jorge Hernandez – Chair. Phone: 305-877-2311; Email: jeh6@bellsouth.net. Meetings are held monthly on the fourth Monday at 8:00 pm via Zoom. Contact Jorge to find out how to join.

# NFBF Board of Director’s Information

**Please contact any of the board with questions, comments, concerns or for general information.**

***Paul Martinez - President***

Phone: 813-390-5720

Email: Paul09MS@gmail.com or president@nfbflorida.org

***Jorge Hernandez – 1st Vice President***

Phone: 305-877-2311

Email: jeh6@bellsouth.net

***Camille Tate – 2nd Vice President***

Phone: 321-372-4899

Email: ctate2076@att.net

***Kaye Baker - Secretary***

Phone: 904-832-2884

Email: kaye.j.zimpher@gmail.com

***Sylvia Young - Treasurer***

Phone: 850- 322-5937

Email: Treasurer@nfbflorida.org

**Board Members:**

***Russell Davis***

Phone: 904-993-8433

Email: russell@radiorusty.com

***Denise Valkema***

Phone: 305-972-8529

Email: valkemadenise@aol.com

***Peggy Fleischer***

Phone: 386-931-2132

Email: peggyfleischer@bellsouth.net

***Douglas Ingram***

Phone: 850-567-8123

Email: dingram59@comcast.net

# Editor: Kay Baker

To have something posted in the NFBF Newsletter please submit it to the editor, Kaye Baker at newsletter@nfbflorida.org by the 15th of each odd month.