National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky

69th Annual State Convention

Holiday Inn Airport/ Fair and Expo Center

Louisville, Kentucky

September 30, 2016-October 2, 2016

Minutes

Friday, September 30, 2016

The 69th annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind state convention got underway early Friday morning with the annual Technology Assistance Division (TAD) Symposium. Approximately 30 individuals attended this all day event. Following the symposium, TAD held its annual business meeting and election of officers. The following board members were elected:

Todd Stephens, President

Sandra Williams, Vice-President

Jennifer Hall, Secretary

Hellena Keaton, Treasurer

Cindy Sheets, Program Manager

Scott Spaulding, Communication Manager

Danielle Burton, Board Member

Following the TAD activities, an organizational meeting was held to establish a Sports and Recreation Division. Prior to convention, a draft constitution was submitted to the state board for consideration. Individuals interested in this new division met, paid dues and elected officers. Jayne Seif was elected president. Stephanie Davis was elected vice-president. Nickie Pearl was elected secretary, and Mary Harrod was elected treasurer.

Next, the resolutions committee met to discuss resolutions that will be brought before the membership during the general business session. Katie Adkins presided as resolutions committee chairperson. Committee members were Michael Freholm and Dennis Franklin.

Later on Friday night, NFBK members and guests had the opportunity to relax and visit with old friends and make new ones at the Friday evening social. Snacks and a cash bar were available. George Stokes provided a variety of music for our entertainment. Lora Felty Stephens organized a silent auction to help off-set the cost of the Friday evening social. A variety of items were donated by members. Favorites included wine from western Kentucky donated by Jennifer Hall. Homemade fudge from Diana Cline of Ashland, cookies and banana bread by Jayne Seif of Louisville. $337 was made by the silent auction.

Saturday, October 1 2016

Saturday began bright and early with the annual NFBK scholarship breakfast. There were two scholarship finalists; Mary Harrod and Avery Baggett. Individuals attending the breakfast included the scholarship finalist , Mary and Avery, along with President of NFBK, Cathy Jackson, our national representative, Jim Gashel and his wife Susan, Charles and Betty Allen, along with scholarship committee members; Lora Felty Stephens, Jayne Seif and Jennifer Hall.

At 8:00 am, before general session began, an organizational meeting was held to organize an Entrepreneur Division in Kentucky. A draft constitution for the new division was submitted to the board for review prior to state convention. Individuals interested in this new division met, paid dues and elected officers. Michael K. Freholm was elected president. Dennis Franklin was elected vice-president. Angela Dehart was elected as secretary, and Todd Stephens was elected treasurer.

Opening General Session:

President, Cathy Jackson called the 69th annual convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky to order at 9:00 am. Jennifer Hall, president of the Four Rivers Chapter gave the invocation. As a special treat, Kennetta Freholm of the NFB of Ashland Chapter sang My Old Kentucky Home and our national anthem, The Star Spangled Banner. Then, President, Cathy Jackson led the membership in the NFB pledge.

President, Cathy Jackson welcomed attendees to the 69th annual convention of the NFB of Kentucky. Katie Adkins, president of the Greater Louisville Chapter welcomed individuals to Louisville. Jim Gashel brought greetings and welcome from our national office.

Roll Call of Chapters and Divisions:

Ashland Chapter: Lora Felty Stephens, President

Frankfort Chapter: George Stokes, President

Four Rivers Chapter: Jennifer Hall, President

Lexington Chapter: No members of the Lexington Chapter were in attendance. Avery Baggett, scholarship finalist from Lexington said hello from Lexington.

Louisville Chapter: Katie Adkins, President

Divisions:

Merchants: Charlie Allen, President

NAPUB: Michael K. Freholm, Vice-President

TAD: Todd Stephens, President

New Chapter and Divisions:

Owensboro: Scott Heads

Scott is working toward establishing a new chapter in Owensboro.

Entrepreneur: Michael K. Freholm, President

This division will receive its charter at this convention.

Sports and Recreation: Jayne Seif, President

This division will receive its charter at this convention.

Report from Our National Representative:

Our national representative, Jim Gashel, brought greetings from Marc Maurer and Mark Riccabono at our national office. He spoke about his involvement and passion for the K-NFB Reader and explained upcoming changes to ways to access this technology. He discussed the World Blind Union and its meeting that was held in Orlando, FL this summer. This was the first time that the World Blind Union has ever held its general meeting in the United States. He discussed ways to keep up with the happenings of the NFB through on-line access to NFB publications and social media.

Kentucky Office for the Blind Annual Report:

Allison Flanagan, executive director of the Kentucky Office for the Blind spoke about the current status of the OFB. She explained that OFB, as all state agencies, took a 4.5% cut in funding. Things are tight, but they will continue to strive to provide services.

Mid-Morning Stretch:

Jayne Seif, President of the new Sports and Recreation Division got us all up and moving with a mid-morning stretch.

The Future of the American Printing House for the Blind:

Dr. Craig Meador, the new president of the American Printing House for the Blind spoke about all of the happenings at APH. Dr. Meador has been at APH since May of 2015, and became president in January of this year. He spoke about the decrease in demand for large print materials and the increase in the need for Braille. He told about the newly develop 20-cell refreshable Braille display that was developed in collaboration among eleven agencies. This new type of refreshable Braille technology is less expensive; the 20-cell display will cost no more than $500. It is hoped that the Orbit Reader will be available for sale by the end of this year. Also, APH is working on the prototype for the first tactile graphing tablet. This technology will allow for immediate tactile graphics and a fluid display. APH is working to develop partnerships with various agencies and the big tech companies to help create products that will give blind individuals access to information.

I Am A federationist:

Diana Cline, treasurer of the Ashland Chapter, spoke about her involvement in the NFB since she attended her first state convention in 2002. Katie Adkins, president of the Greater Louisville Chapter, explained how she has grown as a federationist since she first became involved in the NFB when she attended the national convention in Louisville in 2005.

Introduction of the 2016 NFBK Scholarship Finalists:

NFBK Scholarship chairperson, Lora Felty Stephens introduced our two scholarship finalists. Mary Harrod is completing her master’s degree at the University of Kentucky in rehabilitation counseling. Avery Baggett is completing her bachelor’s degree from the University of Pennsylvania in linguistics. They each had the opportunity to speak to the membership and introduce themselves.

Blindness, Learning in New Dimensions-Blind Incorporated:

David Brown, an employee of Blind Inc. in Minneapolis, MN spoke about his experiences as a student at Blind Inc. And how he now works as an employee in the technology department to keep their equipment up and running.

The BELL Rang in Kentucky:

Katie Adkins and Makenna Harrod spoke about the Kentucky 2016 BELL program. Katie asked Makenna questions about her experiences at BELL, and she answered the questions.

Luncheon Board Meeting:

(See Minutes from the luncheon board meeting.)

Afternoon General Session:

Row, Row, Row Your Boat:

The afternoon general session began with a presentation from Randy Mills, a retired adaptive physical education teacher from the Jefferson County Public Schools. He is involved with an adaptive rowing program for individuals with all types of disabilities. He encouraged anyone who is interested in getting involved in the sport of rowing to get in touch with him.

The State of the NFB of Kentucky:

President of the NFB of Kentucky Cathy Jackson gave an update on the happenings in the NFB of Kentucky during the past year. These are the things she spoke about.

2016 national convention was held at the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel in Orlando.

25 individuals from Kentucky were registered attendees.

Jayne Seif and her daughter attended the Sports and Recreation Division activities, and their experiences led to the establishment of our new Sports and Recreation Division.

Danielle Burton was a TenBroek Fellow, receiving her second NFB scholarship. She is the first TenBroek Fellow from Kentucky.

The NFB of Kentucky Scholarship application process is now entirely on-line, and the deadline was changed from June 1 to July 15.

Building the Federation in Kentucky…Last year we chartered the Four Rivers Chapter, and two new divisions will be chartered this year; Entrepreneur and Sports and Recreation.

October is Meet the Blind Month. Chapters will be busy throughout the state in various ways.

We had a successful BELL program in 2016, and are making plans for 2017.

Washington Seminar: Three of the six scheduled to attend Washington Seminar last winter made it to D.C. in two feet of snow. Cathy Jackson, Jayne Seif and Chris Stewart were able to make it. Others flights were canceled.

Many trips were made to Frankfort during the legislative session to urge legislators to increase funding for NFB-NEWSLINE and the Kentucky Office for the Blind.

On August 9, Cathy Jackson, Todd Stephens and Scott White from the national office met with individuals in Frankfort to discuss the possibility of getting more funding for NFB-NEWSLINE through the Public Service Commission.

NFB Cardinal Newsletter: Lora and Todd Stephens are now editing our newsletter which comes out twice a year, typically in February and August.

World Blind Union: Cathy Jackson served on the host committee for the World Blind Union meetings in Orlando, FL in August.

 PayPal: PayPal should be up and running, and hopefully we will be able to do on-line registration for state convention next year.

Cathy urged members to get involved in their local chapters and divisions. The local level is where so much of the work of this organization is done.

Seventh Inning Stretch:

Jayne Seif got us up and moving once again, leading us in stretches to get our bodies moving.

Legislation and Resolutions:

Katie Adkins served as the resolutions committee chairperson. Michael K. Freholm and Dennis Franklin were committee members. Katie thanked those individuals who attended the resolutions committee meeting on Friday evening. The committee has two resolutions to bring before the membership for consideration this year.

Resolution 2016-01 deals with equal access to educational internships that are required by college and university programs. It urges that required internships be made available and accessible to blind students. Copies of this resolution should be sent to disability coordinators and university personnel across the state. Dennis moved that the motion be passed. The motion passed unanimously.

Resolution 2016-02 deals with the civil rights of blind parents to be parents. Nickie Pearl made the motion to accept the resolution. Scott Spaulding seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Legislation: Katie Adkins explained the budget issues of the Office for the Blind. If the state does not put a certain amount of money into the OFB budget, OFB is unable to pull down federal funds to support OFB programs. Since 2017 is not a budget year, our legislative efforts can focus on the rights of blind parents and on fair wages for individuals with disabilities. She urged members to be on social media and share information with family and friends. We need their help in furthering our efforts.

General Business Meeting:

Secretary Report:

Secretary, Lora Felty Stephens emailed out the minutes from the 2015 NFB of Kentucky state convention to our NFBK list serve approximately two weeks prior to state convention. Katie made the motion to approve the minutes as emailed. Denise seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Treasurer Report:

J. Mike Freholm presented an in depth treasurer’s report. He reported that as of yesterday, Friday, September 30, 2016, the total value of both funds in the Morgan Stanley portfolio was $87,915.76. Nearly half of these funds are dedicated funds for the Allen Scholarship Fund. He explained that since the stock market is really bad right now, these Morgan Stanley funds are in fixed-rate CD accounts that alternate when they are available, so that we periodically have funds available if needed.

In December 2015, we established a separate checking account for the NFB-NEWSLINE Kentucky project. To do this, $5,000 was taken out of the Morgan Stanley investments. Todd Stephens runs the NEWSLINE project. He Receives $1,040 each month for his work. This money is reimbursed from the national office, but is paid from this account. Also, we receive funds from the Kentucky Bench and Bar publication to mark it up and put it on NEWSLINE. Currently, Adam Adkins does the mark-up for this publication and is paid out of the NEWSLINE account as well. Other NEWSLINE expenses May also come out of this account.

The Cameron Fund was established as a way to save funds that are used to provide assistance for individuals to attend state and national convention. Individuals sometimes donate to this fund. When these funds are low, sometimes money is moved from the regular account into this account.

The current balance in the general checking account is $8,890.53. Funds received and expenses for this convention go in and out of this account.

Mike explained that each year we have an expense for our general liability insurance and for bonding insurance for himself and our president, Cathy Jackson.

Mike reported that he collected $31704 as a donation to the Kentucky Red Cross from our affiliate.

Denise made the motion to accept the treasurer’s report. Katie seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

Old Business:

There was no old business to discuss.

Nominating Committee Report:

Angela Dehart served as chairperson of the nominating committee. Committee members were: Ranelle Mackey, Kevin Pearl and Danny Perry. The committee placed the following individuals in nomination for the following offices:

President: Cathy Jackson

1st Vice-President: Katie Adkins

2nd Vice-President: Dennis Franklin

Secretary: Lora Felty Stephens

Treasurer: J. Mike Freholm

Katie made the motion to accept the nominating committee report. Denise seconded the motion. The nominating committee report was accepted.

Angela held the election for president. Cathy Jackson was elected by acclamation.

Cathy took over the election process from this point forward. Katie Adkins was nominated for 1st Vice-President. The motion was made to accept her by acclamation.

Dennis Franklin’s name was placed in nomination by the nominating committee. He stood up and declined the nomination. Michael K. Freholm was nominated from the floor. When asked, he agreed to serve. Michael K. Freholm was elected by acclamation.

Lora Felty Stephens was nominated for the office of secretary. Since there were no nominations from the floor, Lora was elected by acclamation.

J. Mike Freholm was nominated for the office of treasurer. Since there were no further nominations from the floor, J. Mike Freholm was elected by acclamation.

Since Michael

K. Freholm was elected as 2nd Vice-President; this left a board position vacant. Nominations were opened up to the floor for this position. Jayne Seif was nominated from the floor. She is willing to serve. Since there were no further nominations, Jayne was elected by acclamation.

New Business:

There was no new business to discuss.

Adjournment:

The 2016 general session adjourned.

Annual Banquet of the NFB of Kentucky

Nickie Pearl served as Mistress of Ceremonies for the evening’s festivities.

Jennifer Hall gave the invocation.

Jim Gashel, secretary of the NFB, presented the key note address.

Presentation and Signing of Charters:

President, Cathy Jackson presented charters of affiliation to the Four Rivers Chapter, the Entrepreneur Division and the Sports and Recreation Division. The president of each affiliate came forward to receive the charter and to sign it alongside our state president. Chapter and division presidents were:

Four Rivers Chapter: Jennifer Hall, President

Entrepreneur Division: Michael K. Freholm, President

Sports and Recreation Division: Jayne Seif, President

Presentation of Our NFBK Scholarships:

Scholarship Committee chairperson, Lora Felty Stephens presented two Charles and Betty Allen Scholarships. Mary Harrod is completing her master’s degree from the University of Kentucky, and Avery Baggett is completing her bachelor’s degree from the University of Pennsylvania.

Presentation of Awards:

Nickie Pearl, chairperson of the 2016 awards committee, along with her committee members, Karen Mayne and Danielle Burton presented the following awards:

Susan B. Raerick Award: J. Mike Freholm

Harold Reagan Award: Sandra Williams

T. V. Cranmer Award: Jim Gashel

Sunday, October 2, 2016

NAPUB:

The 2016 convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky concluded with the annual NAPUB (National Association to Promote the Use of Braille) meeting. Michael K. Freholm, vice-president, presided over the meeting, as the president, Briley O’Connor recently moved to Minnesota. There was discussion of the success of the 2016 BELL program, and some discussion of plans for the 2017 BELL program. Elections were held, and the following board was elected:

Angela Dehart, President

Danielle Burton, Vice-President

Jayne Seif, Secretary

Cindy Smith, Treasurer

Following the adjournment of the NAPUB meeting, the 69th Annual Convention of the National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky concluded.