PRESIDENT’s UPDATE April 2018

I certainly hope that by the time this Update hits the streets winter has loosened her icy grip on Kentucky. I can’t believe the weather forecasters are predicting snow for Sunday, April 8th.

This session of the Kentucky legislature is just about over. Our Parent’s Rights Bill did not get out of the Judiciary committee. Because of all the hubbub over the budget in Frankfort these past few weeks, our bill wasn’t the only one that got shelved. Have no fear, there is always next year. We have a sponsor, McKenzie Cantrell. We just need to make sure it is introduced early on in the session.

Let me remind you to make your hotel reservations for this year’s National Convention in Orlando, Florida at the Rosen Shingle Creek Hotel, July 3rd through the 8th. Room rates are $88 for singles and doubles, and $93 for tripples and quads. A $100 deposit is required when you make your reservation. You can make your reservation by calling: 866-996-6338. Be sure to let them know you are with the NFB. Being able to preregister is not only a convenience, but it saves you time once registration opens at convention. You will be in a line to pick up your packet that moves much more quickly than the line for those who chose to wait until they were on site. You also save money. Preregistration is $25 and your banquit ticket is $65. On site, your registration is $30, and your banquet ticket is $70.

For members who would like to attend their first National Federation of the Blind Convention, you might be interested in knowing that you can apply for a Kenneth Jernigan Scholarship. First-timers should write a letter which contains the following information: your contact information, local and state affiliation information, the amount you are requesting, and why you believe that you would be a good investment for the NFB. You will also need to find another member who is going to convention to act as your mentor. You will need to include this individuals name and contact information in your letter as well. Then, you should contact me by email at: cathy.jackson@nfbofky.org or by phone at: 502-366-2317 so we can have a breif chat. You should forward me your letter with the information I described above to cathy.jackson@nfbofky.org. After all conditions have been satisfied, I will write a letter of recommendation to the Kenneth Jernigan Committee and forward your letter and my letter of recommendation to the committee. The deadline for applying is April 15th.

If yyou haven’t marked your calendar for the weekend of October 12, 13, and 14 now is the time. You don’t want to miss our 2018 National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky State Convention. I am continueing to work with the Hilton Garden Inn Northeast to tweek the contract. We don’t want any hiccups. Having said that, I hope that by the next Update that all of this will be wrapped up and we can get down to some searious convention planning. I do know that Todd Stephens, President of our Technology Division is working closely with Michael Freholm, President of our Entrepreneurs Division to present a job fair on Friday, October 12th. Jayne Seif, President of our Sports and Recreation Division has some great ideas rolling around in her head for another Friday afternoon filled with family frendly activities. Last year was the first time our Sports and Rec Division hosted an event, and I must say it was well received by the membership and our families. Be there or be left out.

This year NFB of Kentucky will present our third annual Braille Enrichment through Literacy and Learning Academy (BELL). The American Printing House for the Blind has once again been gracious enough to donate the space we need. We are booked for the week of Monday, July 23rd through Friday, July 27th. We will focus on Braille instruction, Orientation and Mobility, daily living skills, science, technology, and arts and crafts. I promise there will be time for field trips and some recreational activities. Jayne Seif is our BELL coordinator and Lora Felty Stephens is our lead teacher. Between these two ladies there is a wealth of knowledge about educating children, especially blind children. As long as Jayne and Lora are at the helm of our BELL program there is nothing to worry about.

Our BELL program continues to grow. As a result we need to constantly be looking to see how we can become more creative and inovative. When we started this venture we had virtually no equipment or supplies, except for what we were able to beg, borrow or steal. Now that we are confident that our BELL Academy will continue to be recogtnized as legitiimate program for educating blind children, there are things we need to do in order to give ourselves that true professional classroom look. This is a low budged operation. Although we did have some money left from last year, we have already spent some of it to purchase a child-size table and chairs. We also need area ruggs and a couple of bean bag chairs so that we can create a separate space for story telling and relaxation time. Wait…wait…here it comes. We are hoping our chapters and divisions, as well as our members would like to make a donation so that we can purchase other needed items and still keep a balance in our BELL account. If you are so inclined you can make your contribution to the National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky and indicate it is for BELL in the memo section. Then mail it to our Treasurer, Mike Freholm, 2012 Harris Way, Russell, KY 41169. Any amount would be greatly appreciated.

The deadline for our National Scholarship application process has come and gone. However, the window of opportunity is now open for our NFB of Kentucky Scholarship program. For those who are interested in advancing your education whether it is working on your undergraduate degree, your masters, or even your PhD you should visit our website at [www.nfbky.org](http://www.nfbky.org). Be sure to read the instructions carefully. We don’t want anyone disqualified on a technicality.

We know that blindness is not the characteristic that holds us back, but the low expectations that creat the barriers. Let’s continue to show through our actions that blind people are just like everyone else. We just happen to be blind.

**Cathy Jackson, President**

**National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky**