**President’s Update**

**January 2019**

**Now that the holidays are in the rearview mirror, and 2018 is a memory we can look to what 2019 has in store for us.**

**We can begin making reservations for the 2019 National Federation of the Blind national convention. You can call the Mandalay Bay in Las Vegas, Nevada at 877-632-7800. The hotel will take a deposit of the first night’s room rate for each room reserved. If you use a credit card the amount will be charged against your card immediately. If a reservation is canceled before Friday, June 1, 2019, half of the deposit will be refunded. The convention rate is $99 for singles, doubles, triples, and quads. The hotel taxes are 13.38 percent and 8.25 percent respectively. The resort tax has been waved for our group. You should inquire about internet access fees and other charges for hotel amenities. I suppose I should mention that the convention is scheduled from July 7 through the 12.**

**The NFBK Board of Directors will be meeting within the next month to talk about how we might best facilitate a plan to get as many of our NFB of Kentucky members as possible to Las Vegas. Some very promising ideas have already been tossed around.**

**On January 28th Jayne Seif, Lora and Todd Stephens, and I will represent Kentucky at the annual Washington Seminar in Washington D. C. We will present three issues to our Kentucky representatives. They are: The Access Technology Affordability Act (ATAA), Greater Accessibility and Independence through Nonvisual Access Technology (GAIN) Act, and The Disability Employment Act (DEA). If you would like to study these issues in greater depth you are welcome to visit** [**www.nfb.org**](http://www.nfb.org) **and look under the legislative agenda. It is always an exciting time on the hill hobnobbing with our Congressmen and Senators. Over the years they have come to know the strength, persistence, and power of the National Federation of the Blind. We have been complemented on our efficiency, Knowledge of the subject matter, and how well we present ourselves.**

**Our State Assembly is just about ready to kick off another legislative session. I am working diligently with McKenzie Cantrell to get Our Parent’s Rights bill introduced this year. I am keeping my fingers crossed that this important issue isn’t sidelined again in 2019. This bill will give blind parents and future blind parents a stronger voice in the courts in regard to adoptions, custody hearings, and foster care cases. It will also protect blind parents against ne’er-do-well social workers who believe infants and children will be safer in homes with sighted individuals.**

**Don’t forget that the National Scholarship application period is now open. For those of you who will be attending college next fall, working on your Under graduate degree, Masters, or your Ph.D., you should go to our web site at** [**www.nfb.org**](http://www.nfb.org) **and take a careful look at the scholarship application. As part of the process an applicant must contact me for an interview. I will then write the committee a letter of recommendation that will be placed in your file. You can call me to set an appointment at, 502-366-2317. More details about our NFB of Kentucky scholarship will be coming in just a few short months.**

**Nickie Pearl will be leaving on Wednesday, January 9th to attend the Louisiana Center for the Blind. She has been enrolled in the Orientation and Mobility Immersion Program. Upon successful completion of the three-month program, Nickie will come home and finish her required hours to become a licensed O & M instructor. If all goes as planned, she will continue her training under the skilful grooming of Ron Brown. Ron serves as our Second vice President of the National Federation of the Blind and President of the Indiana Affiliate.**

**January 7, 2019 is indeed an important date to remember…Lora Stephens turned fifty today! We celebrated Saturday evening with around forty of Lora’s closest friends and family at Diorio’s Pizza. It was crowded, but no one seemed cared. It was great to party with Lora and visit with friends we hadn’t seen in quite some time. Happy Birthday Lora!**

**I hope all of you will continue your support of the National Federation of the Blind in 2019. After all, you helped make 2018 the successful year it was.**