**President’s Update**

**August 2019**

**It’s All about Convention**

Our National Federation of the Blind convention has come and gone. I’m proud to say that it was an outstanding convention! We registered 39 people from Kentucky. This is more people than we have registered in the past few years. The Mandalay Bay Hotel and Resort was a huge hotel to navigate, but I think we all did a pretty good job of learning our way around. The final registration numbers for the 2019 NFB convention capped off at 3,284. We didn’t quite break our record, but there’s always next year. Our 2020 convention will be held in Houston, Texas. If you are like me, you are already looking forward to what is in store.

The plans for our National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky state convention are coming along quite nicely. Just in case you have forgotten the dates for the 2019 convention, it will be the weekend of September 20th through the 22nd. I am pleased to tell you we will once again be in Louisville at the Hilton Garden Inn Northeast, 9850 Park Plaza Ave., Louisville 40241. You’re free to start making reservations right now. Just call, 502-423-0018. Be sure to tell the customer service representative that you are with the NFB of Kentucky. Room rates are $135 per night, per room, plus tax. The total cost of a room with taxes will be $156.60. Members who have paid their dues by August 1st and preregister by Sunday, September 15th will have their room subsidized $35 per night. This subsidy is per room not per member. Members who are attending their first NFBK convention will be given one night’s stay in the hotel plus their lunch and banquet, courtesy of the NFBK. The cutoff date for making reservations is Monday, September 2nd. Reservations may be accepted after this date based on hotel availability. However, I must let you know that I have been told by hotel management that the hotel is at capacity that particular weekend. **Once you have your reservation, you must give me a call at 502-366-2317, or email me at** **cathyj1949@gmail.com** **so that I can put your name on the master list that will be given to the hotel. Please note that failure to contact me will result in your not being given your room credit. First-timers must also contact me in order to assure that you receive your financial assistance.**

**It is important to us that our families be involved in the convention. We will offer on-site child care, provided there are at least three (3) children who need the service, and whose families plan on utilizing child care for the entire day. Once we have hired sitters and they have committed to working all day, or part day, we must hold up our end of the bargain by paying them, regardless of the number of children being cared for. The cost will be $20 per child, or $30 for a family of two or more children. If there are not enough children enrolled, all money will be refunded. We will provide lunch, snacks, and dinner. Our children are precious to all of us. Therefore, you must register your child or children by September 10th so that we can adequately provide for their safety and overall enjoyment while in our care. There is a category provided on the registration form to sign up your kiddos. If you have any further questions, you should contact Jayne Seif at 502-500-7675, or by email at,** **jayneseif@att.net****. Jayne is a licensed teacher at the University of Louisville Early Childhood Learning Center and will be in charge of hiring staff. Please know that there will be at least one licensed worker on duty at all times. Doors will open at 8:30 AM on Saturday morning, September 21st, and will remain open the entire day until 15 minutes after the banquet which will end at around 9:30 PM.**

**We will once again preregister via PayPal. This system of payment surely made things much simpler for everyone involved. You can register for the NFBK State Convention through PayPal, located on our state website at** [**www.nfbofky.org**](http://www.nfbofky.org)**. You can simply scroll down to the NFBK Convention Registration Form and click to make your reservations. If you have any issues with your online registration, you can contact Todd Stephens at** **todde.stephens@windstream.net****. Preregistration is considered registrations initiated through PayPal before Sunday, September 15th. Please note that any payments received on or after September 15th will be considered late, and the discounted pricing for preregistering will not be reflected on PayPal. Those of you who preregister are expected to pay the $15 registration, $15 for lunch, and $18 for your banquet. Procrastinators who do not meet the preregistration deadline will pay $20 to register $20 for lunch, and $23 for banquet. Please remember to include your child care fees, if applicable. The preregistration deadline for childcare is Sunday, September 1st. There will be a 2.9 % plus a thirty cent convenience fee charged for each PayPal transaction.**

 **Bright and early on Friday morning at 8 AM our Technology Assistance Division is once again planning a spectacular event. There will be an exhibit room with local and out of town vendors representing companies and agencies that focus on blindness assistive technology, services and resources.**

**I have spoken to Jayne Seif, President of the sports and Recreation Division who tells me they are working on an activity for Friday afternoon, but it is still too early to divulge the plan. All I can say is if you were there last year and took part in the twist on a scavenger hunt, then you know you don’t want to miss out on this year’s excitement.**

**There will be an open meeting of the resolutions committee in the Crescent Room Friday evening at 6:30. If you are interested in hearing the resolutions that will be presented and voted on during the business meeting, you are invited to attend. Jayne Seif is chairing this committee. If you have a resolution to submit, or want to propose an idea, you should contact Jayne at,** **jayneseif@att.net****, or by phone at, 502-550-7675. Resolutions are the framework of our organization.**

**Friday evenings are always filled with loads of merriment. Our social committee: Nickie Pearl, Sandra Williams, Jayne Seif, Lora Stephens, and Karen Mayne have announced this year’s theme. We will be commemorating the Apollo 11 50th anniversary Moon Landing. If you are a trivia buff you will want to bone up on the facts surrounding this historical occasion. If dancing is in your blood you will want to wow us with your best imitation of Michael Jackson’s Moon Walk. And smile…the photo booth will be open. Have your picture taken with your family and friends, or even take a chapter group picture. We will have someone taking pictures throughout the evening. You can purchase a 5 x 7 photo for $5 to remember our 2019 state convention.**

**We will have an auction this year, but the committee has decided to do something different. They are soliciting more valuable items that will be bid on through a silent auction. Periodically throughout the weekend we will announce the highest bid so we can keep the competition going. Then at the banquet the items will be sold to the highest bidder.**

**Let’s not forget the reverse raffle. This is a big fundraiser for the NFBK. Raffle tickets are being distributed. I am hoping that you will get in touch with me soon so that you too can help in this effort. A reverse raffle is exactly what it implies. It is the last name drawn who is the grand prize winner, not the first. The tickets are $10 each. First place is awarded $500 and second place receives $250. But don’t forget all of those $25 prizes that are drawn throughout the contest. We will begin drawing on Friday evening and conclude at the Saturday banquet. Once we begin pulling tickets, no additional tickets can be added. That’s why it is so important to make sure we have all tickets sold before that first name is announced.**

**The gavel will drop at 9:00 AM sharp as we call our 2019 National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky state convention to order. I am just in the beginning phase of agenda planning, so I can’t be too specific yet. I am excited to welcome back Amy Buresh as our National Representative. Amy is the President of our Nebraska Affiliate and a member of the National Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind. We are pleased to have Cora McNabb, Director, of our newly formed state agency, the Kentucky Department of Vocational Rehabilitation with us again. It has been nearly a year since the agencies were combined. She should have some exciting information to share with the attendees. Our BELL Academy students will be back for an encore performance. Makenna, Addie, Anthony, Joshua, and Kai are an outstanding group of kiddos. You will see what I mean when you meet them on Saturday morning. It’s always a pleasure to showcase our scholarship finalists and give them the opportunity to introduce themselves to all of us. Riley Seif attended the NFB EQ STEM Academy earlier this summer. I am anxious for everyone to hear all about her experience.**

**Our convention platform has changed this year. Instead of having our business portion on Saturday afternoon, we are planning a more exciting agenda which we hope will add a new dimension to the convention. There are going to be breakout sessions featuring a variety of products and assistive technology that will appeal to all ages. We will learn how this technology is applicable in our day-to-day lives along with instructions for use.**

**I always look forward to our annual banquet! There’s just something special about the evening. The atmosphere is electric. You can tell by the laughter and chatter of the crowd that everyone is relaxed and ready to enjoy themselves. The evening’s festivities will kick into high gear with our keynote address given by our National Representative, Amy Buresh. It is a tradition at our banquet to present our NFBK scholarships to blind young men and women who are determined to pursue their education. These candidates will receive a check in the amount of $500 or $1,000 to be applied to their college expenses. However, I hope we can give them much more than money. I hope they leave the convention knowing that they are a part of the NFBK family. The banquet is also the perfect backdrop to recognize our members who have given so selflessly of their time and talent. Our chapters and divisions are the heart and soul of the NFBK, and they too deserve to be acknowledged. Again, our banquet is the perfect place to make these presentations. If you have someone you would like to nominate for an award you should contact Angela Henderson at,** **angela.c.dehart@gmail.com** **or by phone at, 606-694-5096. I will include a list of the awards and their criteria at the end of this article.**

**During our Sunday morning session, we will get down to business. First off I will give my State of the NFBK address. Next on the agenda we will discuss legislation, present resolutions, conduct our business meeting, and elect our board of directors. According to our constitution we elect our board of directors in the odd numbered years. Therefore, at this convention we will be electing the six board positions.**

**As we continue to move forward in the convention planning process, we will keep all of you in the loop as more specific details become available.**

**If you would like to make a donation to the National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky, you should do so by making your check payable to NFB of Kentucky and mailing it to our Treasurer, Mike Freholm, 2012 Harris Way, Russell, KY 41169.**

**Let’s go build the Federation so that we and future generations can live the lives we want.**

**Cathy Jackson, President**

**NFB of Kentucky**

**Our 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.

Respectfully Yours,

Cathy Jackson, President

NFB of Kentucky

Our NFBK Awards

I thought this would be a good chance to share with all of you the criteria for each of the awards. By doing so I am hoping that everyone will have a better understanding of what qualities we are looking for in our candidates.

SUSAN B. REARICK AWARD

Susan B. Rearick was a first grade teacher at the Kentucky School for the Blind in the early to mid 1900’s. She was a forward thinking individual who expected more from her blind students than did her peers at the school or the public in general. Because of her high expectations of her students she clearly represented the teachings and philosophy of the National Federation of the Blind. The person who receives this award can be a blind or sighted Kentuckian.

HAROLD L. REAGAN AWARD

Harold L. Reagan was the first president of the National Federation of the Blind of Kentucky and a member of the National Board of Directors of the National Federation of the Blind. As such the emphasis for receiving this award should be placed on the recipient’s leadership in the organization. This award can only be given to a blind Kentuckian.

T.V. CRANMER AWRARD AWARD

The T. V. Cranmer award is a very special one. Tim; as he was known to all of us, served for many years as an officer of the NFBK. He also held the position as chairman on the Research and Development Committee at the national level. This award is given to a blind person who has served many years in the NFB and will continue to be a driving force in this organization. The Cranmer award is given to a blind person, but it is not restricted to individuals living in Kentucky.

ROBERT E. WHITEHEAD AWARD

Our Robert E. Whitehead (Bob) was the second sitting president of the Kentucky Affiliate. This award is presented to an affiliate chapter or division that strives to build membership in the organization. The chapter or division is also actively changing the public’s perceptions about blindness through innovative projects and community outreach.